

# Friday Church News Notes

The following is another installment of the Friday Church News Notes designed especially for use in churches. It is published by Way of Life Literature's Fundamental Baptist Information Service.

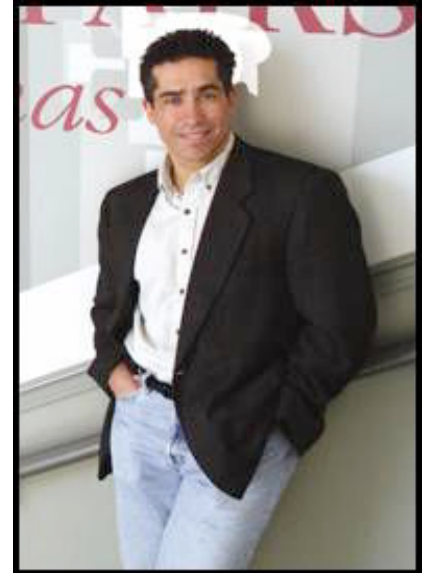
May 18, 2007

Vol. 8, Issue 20

## HEAD OF THE EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY JOINS THE RCC

Friday Church News Notes, May 18, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>

Francis Beckwith, a professor at Baylor University (a Baptist institution) and president of the Evangelical Theological Society, was received into the Roman Catholic Church on April 29. In his blog Beckwith said his departure from "Protestantism" was prompted by his study of the early church fathers ("ETS President Resigns," Baptist Press, May 9, 2007). I have often warned that the so-called "church fathers" of the early centuries were deeply influenced by heresy and are not dependable teachers. They should be looked upon as fathers of the Roman Catholic Church, in fact, for they developed heresies such as infant baptism, baptismal regeneration, sovereign election, inquisitionism, hierarchicalism, and priestcraft. Our absolute doctrinal standard is not the uninspired writings of the "church fathers" but the infallible Bible itself. Beckwith was also doubtless influenced by his unwise decision to study at Roman Catholic institutions, including Fordham University, a Jesuit school in New York. The Bible solemnly warns that "evil communication corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. 15:33). Protestantism has never been far enough removed from the Roman Catholic Church. Bible-believing Baptists are not Protestants and have never traced their heritage through Rome.



## CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSIC GROUPS PLAY IN BRUCE ALMIGHTY SEQUEL

Friday Church News Notes, May 18, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>

Four Contemporary Christian and "crossover" bands are scheduled to play at the premier to the sequel to the blasphemous *Bruce Almighty* movie. The sequel, *Evan Almighty*, is based loosely on the biblical Noah and depicts a congressman who is charged by God with building an ark. The Hollywood comedy makes a mockery of the fear of God. *Bruce Almighty*, which starred Jim Carrey, was about a man who was given divine powers after he cursed God for the difficulties in his life. The groups that are playing at the movie's premier on June 11 are Switchfoot, Relient K, Jeremy Camp, and DecembeRadio. The gross worldliness of Contemporary Christian Music is evident on every hand for those who have an eye to see and a heart a care.



Switchfoot

## STARBUCKS PRINTING ANTI-BIBLE SLOGANS ON CUPS



Friday Church News Notes, May 18, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>  
As part of its “The Way I See It” campaign to collect different viewpoints, the Starbucks coffee chain is printing anti-Bible slogans on coffee cups. A quote written by Bill Schell, a Starbucks customer in London, Ontario, says: “Why in moments of crisis do we ask God for strength and help? As cognitive beings, why would we ask something that may well be a figment of our imaginations for guidance? Why not search inside ourselves for the power to overcome? After all, we are strong enough to cause most of the catastrophes we need to endure.” Another quote, written by Joel Stein, columnist for the *Los Angeles Times*, says: “Heaven is totally overrated. It

seems boring. Clouds, listening to people play the harp. It should be somewhere you can't wait to go, like a luxury hotel. Maybe blue skies and soft music were enough to keep people in line in the 17th century, but Heaven has to step it up a bit. They're basically getting by because they only have to be better than Hell.” Starbucks argues that the slogans are printed on the cups merely to “spur discussion,” but they are giving people a large forum for spouting anti-Bible views and the company is accountable for what is printed on their cups. Tricia Moriarty, Starbucks communications manager, said: “We are committed to this program. ... Certainly, we have no plans to remove any of them” (“Starbucks Markets More 'Anti-God' Coffee Cups, *WorldNetDaily*, May 9, 2007). Starbucks is based in Seattle, Washington, a lovely city that is a bastion of Humanistic, New Age philosophy.

## RICK WARREN QUESTIONED FOR HIS TIES WITH PORNO DISTRIBUTOR

Friday Church News Notes, May 18, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>  
The following is excerpted from “Murdoch Pastor Gets Heat for Mogul's Porn Channels,” *WorldNetDaily*, May 10, 2007: “Mega-pastor Rick Warren is being challenged by other Christian leaders for not disciplining a prominent member of his California Saddleback Church flock for being one of the world's leading pornographers. That would be Rupert Murdoch, chairman of News Corp., which, in addition to building a media empire on the chests of topless models and edgy, pushing-the-envelope Fox TV network shows, recently began building a stable of hard-core porn channels for its BSkyB subsidiary. 'Rupert Murdoch [claims to be] a born-again Christian and Rick Warren claims to be his pastor,' says Chris Rosebrough, head of the Christian Accountability Network. 'As a Christian, Murdoch is committing an egregious sin by owning, expanding and profiting from pornographic channels, and Rick Warren, his pastor, has a biblical duty to call Murdoch to repentance and/or put him out of the church.' ... Murdoch also owns Zondervan, the company that published Warren's explosive bestseller *The Purpose Driven Life*. ... Warren, who did not respond to WND's email requests to address the controversy, has at least twice publicly claimed Murdoch as a member of his church. ... In a Nov. 12, 2006, *Orange County Register* story, Warren was asked



**Media mogul Rupert Murdoch distributes pornography through many of his holdings, yet is apparently a member in good standing in Rick Warren's Saddleback Church**

about pastoring a man who publishes tabloids featuring topless women. He responded: 'I don't have to agree with 100 percent of what another person does in order to work with them on the 20 percent that we do agree on.' The article also points out Murdoch was among the first patrons to support Warren's PEACE plan, contributing \$2 million. ... even before the BSkyB venture into hard-core porn, Murdoch's News Corp. was steeped in the business. 'News Corp. is a major owner of DirecTV, which sells more pornographic films than (*Hustler* magazine founder and porn film producer Larry) Flynt,' says porn fighter Gail Dines, professor of American Studies at Boston's Wheelock College. 'In 2000, the *New York Times* reported that nearly \$200 million a year is spent by the 8.7 million subscribers to DirecTV. Among News Corp.'s other media holdings are the Fox Broadcasting and cable TV networks, 20th Century Fox, the *New York Post* and *TV Guide*. Welcome to synergy. Murdoch also owns Harper Collins, which published pornography star Jenna Jameson's best-selling book, *How to Make Love like a Porn Star*.'"

## U.S. ARMY BASE BROADCASTING MUSLIM PRAYERS

Friday Church News Notes, May 18, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>  
The U.S. Army base at Fort Riley, Kansas, is broadcasting Muslim prayers five times a day over its loud speaker system. When challenged about the practice, which began about two months ago, the Army said it is preparing troops heading to Iraq and Afghanistan. Dub Skidmore, of the Public Affairs Office at the post, says that the soldiers must be immersed in Islamic culture (OneNewsNow, May 9, 2007). In fact, Islamic prayers are purely religious, and Baptist prayers would doubtless not be allowed. Sarah Holler, whose husband has been stationed at Fort Riley for about five years, protests: "My kids are subjected to it, I'm



subjected to it, and spouses and soldiers that aren't getting deployed are being subjected to it. And one of my concerns is actually that soldiers who have already been deployed to Iraq are coming home and hearing it in their own country." For an American Army base to broadcast Islamic prayers is certainly ridiculous and probably unconstitutional.

## SOUTHERN BAPTIST PROFESSOR CALLS FOR REGENERATE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Friday Church News Notes, May 18, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>  
John Hammett, professor of theology at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, is exhorting Southern Baptists to return to the practice of a regenerate church membership. He recently told seminary students that the most pressing problem facing the Southern Baptist Convention is not decadent, post-modern culture but the "Southern Baptist culture," which has lost sight of regenerate church membership and "allows anyone to join the church and maintain their membership without any interview process or accountability" ("Prof. Promotes Regenerate Membership," Baptist Press, May 8, 2007). He could have mentioned the worldliness that is rampant in SBC congregations, but he is absolutely right in this warning. I grew up in the Southern Baptist Convention and it was customary for young people to join churches without any biblical evidence of salvation. Further, people remain on the membership rolls in Southern Baptist churches even when they are not active, and any attempt to discipline sinning members is exceedingly rare. According to a 1997 study by the Strategic Information and Planning department of the Sunday School Board only 32.8% of the 16 million SBC church members even bother to show up on a given Sunday morning and only 12.3% participate in any further aspect

of church life. In 1998 Dean Register, president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, testified: "It's very unusual for Southern Baptist churches to take disciplinary action against an individual" (*The Sun Herald*, Biloxi, Mississippi, Sept. 13, 1998). John Hammett also said that pastors must be committed to staying with a congregation long enough to institute regenerate membership and church discipline, but the fact is that Southern Baptist Churches are typically run by deacon boards, and when a pastor tries to institute such "unprecedented" biblical practices he is given the boot! I was once invited to preach a Bible conference in a Southern Baptist church by a pastor who wanted to strengthen the church in these very matters, and I accepted the meeting and went not knowing that the church was associated with the SBC. After I preached on taking the Bible seriously in all matters, the church fired the pastor!

## ENVIRONMENTALIST LIKENS MANKIND TO A VIRUS

Friday Church News Notes, May 18, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>

Paul Watson, president of Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, says mankind is "acting like a virus" and "killing our host the planet Earth" ("Sea Shepherd Founder," BusinessMedia.org, May 6, 2007). He wants to see the world's population reduced from 5.5 billion to one billion and cities and individual communities reduced to no more than 20,000 people. He calls on humans to "stop flying, stop driving cars, and stop jetting around on marine recreational vehicles" and wants to see a return to sailing ships. According to Watson, "We need vast areas of the planet where humans do not live at all and where other species are free to evolve without human interference." We wonder why Watson doesn't lead the way in the population reduction program. If he merely evolved, it makes absolutely no difference whether he lives or dies, since blind evolution means that life is mere chance and death is nothing. In fact, if Watson's evolutionary tale is true it makes no difference in the large scheme of things if every species perishes and the earth itself is destroyed. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).



### MORE ON PAUL WATSON

**Paul Watson is at the far, far left of the environmental movement, even going so far as to ram and sink other ships which he believes violate his environmental ethics. He is the captain of a boat that policed the seas for illegal whalers in the 1980s. He traveled to Canada to protect baby seals from being bludgeoned for their fur. He is a founding member of Greenpeace and in 1977 founded the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society. In 1979 he sunk the whaling ship Sierra in Portugal.**

**The Sea Shepherd flagship has its bow filled with cement for ramming other boats, is armed with water-cannons, protected by electrical barbed wire, and flies the skull and crossbones on its flag. Watson has his own 10 Commandments. Number 10 reads: "Don't get caught by the forces of anthropocentrism," with which we would agree. God created us to be deocentric.**

**CONCLUSION:** Friends in Christ, do not be discouraged by any of this. It is God's will that we know the times (1 Ch. 12:32; Mat. 16:3) and that we be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. These things remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the coming of the Lord. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ day by day? "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:11-14). This material is sent only to those who personally subscribe to the Fundamental Baptist Information Service list. To SUBSCRIBE or UNSUBSCRIBE or CHANGE ADDRESSES go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbis/subscribe.html>. Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061. 866-295-4143, [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org). David Cloud is the director of Way of Life Literature and author of the Friday Church News Notes.