

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.

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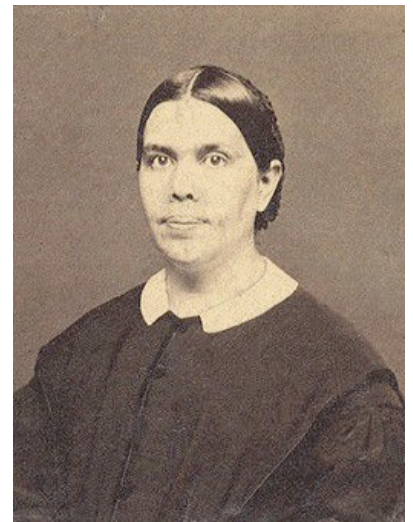
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS BECOMING MAINSTREAM



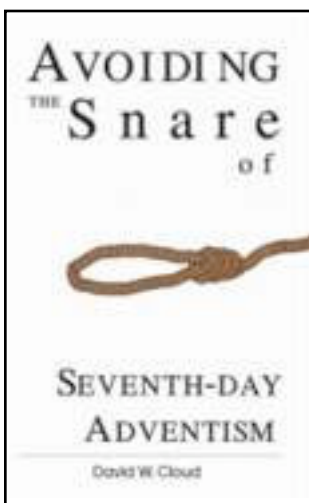
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Seventh-day Adventists are entering the mainstream of evangelicalism. SDA pastor Doug Batchelor, for example, is syndicated on web streaming sites Oneplace.com and Lightsource.com alongside popular evangelicals such as John MacArthur, David Jeremiah, Greg Laurie, and John Piper. Seventh-day Adventism was founded upon the alleged prophetic ministry of a female preacher named Ellen G. White. During the years between 1844 and 1915 she supposedly received approximately 2,000 visions and dreams in which she was instructed concerning such things as the alleged divine origin of Adventism as an end-times restoration church, the doctrines of Investigative Judgment, Soul Sleep, and Annihilationism, the necessity of Sabbath-worship, and the SDA health system. For the first one hundred years of their history, Seventh-day Adventists were separate from other denominations, but since the 1960s they have become more mainstream. They participate in such things as the National Religious Broadcasters and

Inter-Varsity Fellowship conferences and Billy Graham evangelistic crusades. Some Seventh-day Adventist churches are listed as members of the Willow Creek Association founded by Bill Hybels. Dallas Seminary professor Howard Hendricks spoke at the Seventh-day Adventist Southern College in Collegedale, Tennessee, in 1994. The Adventist doctrine of salvation is a subtle mixture of grace and law. They profess to believe that salvation is by grace through faith, but they redefine this in a way that is contrary to Scripture. Simply stated, their doctrine is as follows: The sinner is powerless to live up to God's holy

standard, the Law of God, but God has come to his aid through the sacrifice of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. God offers enablement to the sinner by which he is empowered to keep the Law. Christ's blood covers all shortcomings, (but only) as long as these are properly confessed and forsaken. God offers grace and power; the sinner must take these and develop within himself, by God's strength, the character demanded by the Law. This unscriptural doctrine of salvation, which is gathered from courses and books published by official Adventist presses, cannot and does not offer any security for the adherent. For more information see the carefully-researched book *Avoiding the Snare of Seventh-day Adventism*, available from Way of Life Literature.



Doug Batchelor (top left) and Ellen G. White. Our book on the SDA church is available through our website.



PARADISE GATHERING: ANOTHER ECUMENICAL ROCK & ROLL FEST

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This week I became aware of the Paradise Gathering when a pastor friend received an announcement of it in the mail and informed me of it. The Paradise Gathering is a youth “awakening” that is scheduled to congregate on a one-mile square field in Paradise, Kansas, on May 25, 2008. The objective is to spur a spiritual awakening in America and to “accelerate Christ's kingdom purposes” through a massive gathering of young people aged 15 to 22 to pray and worship by means of loud contemporary music and Scripture verses displayed on jumbotrons (with no stage or live music). Though thousands are expected to participate, many important things about the Paradise Gathering are vague in the extreme. It is allegedly the outgrowth of a “vision” by an experienced youth worker and 18 collaborators, but none of their names are given nor is their denominational affiliation revealed, except to say that they “include most of the major streams of the church.” There is no doctrinal statement and no warning about the apostasy, carnality, and worldliness that is rampant in “youth ministries” today. Sixty-seven Christian leaders have already signed on as “advocates” of the organization's objective. These include representatives of radically ecumenical organizations such as Youth for Christ (which often works hand-in-hand with the Roman Catholic Church), Youth With A Mission, Episcopalian, Assemblies of God, and Willow Creek. Pentecostal denominations and organizations are represented, including Assemblies of God and Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee. There are female church leaders such as Virginia Ward, associate pastor of Abundant Life Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts. And many Southern Baptists have signed on with this unscriptural hodgepodge, including Merrie Johnson, Kelly Davis, Joe Ball, Terry McIlvain, Scott Stevens, Paul Turner, Allen Jackson, Steve Rohrlack, and Richard Ross. The Paradise Gathering's ecumenical philosophy is evident on its website. It says, for example, that “Christ commands oneness in the church and grieves when it is not present.” This idea is based on a popular but bogus interpretation of John 17 and a heretical doctrine of the church. Most of the various denominations today are more akin to the harlot of Revelation 17 than to the biblical church of Jesus Christ. In the high priestly prayer of John 17 Jesus was not praying for the unity of all professing Christians; He was praying for the supernatural unity of all born again Christians, and that prayer was answered and accomplished. Further, Christ was praying for those who keep the truth (John 17:6, 8, 14, 17, 19). He was praying for those who love and obey the Word of God and keep its sound doctrine. This is certainly not a prayer that envisions the modern evangelical-charismatic crowd that downplays and ignores doctrine for the sake of a broad “unity,” nor does it envision an interdenominational unity of any sort.

STUDY FINDS THAT HALF OF SOUTHERN BAPTIST PASTORS BELIEVE IN TONGUES FOR TODAY

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A new study by LifeWay Research indicates that half of Southern Baptist pastors believe the Holy Spirit gives some people a “special prayer language” today. More than 400 Southern Baptist pastors were contacted by phone and asked, “Do you believe that the Holy Spirit gives some people the gift of a special language to pray to God privately?” The replies were 50% “Yes”; 43% “No”; and 7% “Don't know” (“LifeWay Released Prayer Language Study,” Baptist Press, June 1, 2007). This study is a further demonstration that the charismatic movement is having a wide impact within the Southern Baptist Convention. Central Baptist Church of Hixson, Tennessee, hosts an annual Fresh Oil & New



Wine Conference, which features speakers such as Rodney Howard-Browne, the “Holy Ghost Bartender,” and draws hundreds of Southern Baptist pastors and church members. Southern Baptist Pastor Dwain Miller of Second Baptist Church in El Dorado, Arkansas, prophesied to Ron Phillips (senior pastor at Central) that God would use him “to bring renewal to the SBC's 41,000 churches.” He was referring to a charismatic “renewal.” The Fresh Oil & New Wine Conference for 2007 features radical charismatic speaker John Kilpatrick, who led the “Brownsville Outpouring” in the 1990s as the pastor of the Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Florida. When the “outpouring” began in June 1995 Kilpatrick fell to the floor and lay there almost four hours. He said, “When I hit that floor, it felt like I weighed 10,000 pounds. I knew something supernatural was happening” (*Charisma*, June 1996). Supernatural, yes; Holy Spirit, no!!!

SAY SOMETHING NICE SUNDAY

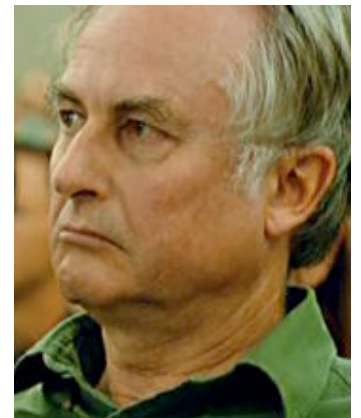
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The Charleston Baptist Association in South Carolina, which is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, declared the first Sunday of June as “Say Something Nice Sunday.” The purpose was “to urge Christians of all denominations to step back from the conflict and discourse that has gripped many churches and denominations today and to not utter not even a single word of criticism” (“Churches Urged to Say Something Nice,” *Christian Post*, June 3, 2007). This ridiculous thing will probably catch on and grow. First Baptist Church of Charleston, which claims to be the oldest Baptist church in the South, participated and said it hopes that the one day will stretch to more days and “then just maybe if we encourage one



another and ask for God's help, we might change the world!” How the mighty are fallen! This ancient Baptist church is obviously apostate. Jesus Christ did not instruct us to change the world by some positive-only philosophy; He instructed us to save lost sinners by proclaiming the Gospel, and the Gospel begins with the very “bad news” that every man and woman without Christ is a hell-bound sinner. When the apostle Paul preached the Gospel to the church at Rome, he spent two chapters on the “negative” message of man's fallen condition before he ever got to the “positive” message of salvation in Jesus Christ. See Romans 1-3. Further, the idea that “negative statements” are always harmful is foolish even in the natural sphere. When someone has a terrible pain and goes to the doctor, does he want the doctor to spout some nice platitude or does he want to hear the naked truth? Speaking the truth in love, even the most negative aspect of the truth, is nicest and the most helpful thing one can do for this sin-cursed world. “Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful” (Proverbs 27:6).

ATHEISTDELUSION.NET

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Michael Penfold has developed a new web site entitled atheistdelusion.net to counteract the writings of Oxford professor Richard Dawkins. It contains links to multiple resources refuting Dawkins' errors and blasphemies.



Dawkins

CALIFORNIA LAWMAKERS PASS HOMOSEXUAL PROTECTION BILL

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The following is excerpted from "Bill Threatens References to 'Mom' and 'Dad' at School," WorldNetDaily, May 24, 2007: "In a move with national implications, California's state Senate passed a bill today that establishes a new definition for 'sex,' threatens references to 'mom' and 'dad' and could restrict the presentation of scientific evidence to students. The plan, SB 777, which actually would turn the state into a promoter for the homosexual lifestyle, is much like a bill approved by lawmakers last year but vetoed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who said adequate legal protections against discrimination already existed. The new measure passed on a 23-13 vote. For more than a year, advocates for the homosexual lifestyle repeatedly have pressed lawmakers in California--which wields national influence as the biggest purchaser of curriculum--to adopt their agenda. The new plan now goes to the state Assembly, which approved a similar plan in 2006. The newest legislation, sponsored by state Sen. Sheila James Kuehl, D-Santa Monica, a lesbian, would ban textbooks, references, teaching aids, activities, events, discussions, posters, announcements, workbooks and anything else within the public school system from anything that 'reflects or promotes bias against' homosexuality, transgenders, bisexuals or those with 'perceived' gender issues." CONCLUDING NOTE FROM BRO. CLOUD: It appears that sooner or later this strange bill will be passed and signed by a California governor, even though it is blatantly unconstitutional. If America's Bible believing Christians don't repent of their worldliness and half-heartedness and get serious about serving Jesus Christ, no human effort will protect us from the onslaught of paganism. I wonder how many Christians even pray earnestly for their nation on a daily basis?



CONCLUSION: Friends in Christ, do not be discouraged by any of this. It is God's will that we know the times (1 Chron. 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. David Cloud is the director of Way of Life Literature and author of the Friday Church News Notes.