

Friday Church News Notes

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BAPTIST MEGACHURCH CALLS FEMALE PASTOR



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First Baptist Church of Decatur, Georgia, in the very heart of the "Bible Belt" in America, called Julie Pennington-Russell as pastor on June 17. Of the 500 members present for the vote, only "five hands of dissent were visible at most" ("Baptist Megachurch Makes History," *Christian Post*, June 19, 2007). (The church claims to have 2,700 members, but it appears that the vast majority aren't very active, to say the least.) First Baptist Church is associated with the very liberal Cooperative Baptist Fellowship as well as the Southern Baptist Convention. Pennington-Russell has pastored two other churches, Nineteenth Avenue Baptist in San Francisco from 1984-1992 and Calvary Baptist in Waco, Texas, since 1998. Of the latter she says, "They were writing a fresh chapter for Baptists." Indeed, they were, and it is a chapter in presumptuous disobedience to Scripture. Al Mohler, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, observed that not only does First Baptist's call of Pennington-Russell set a precedent for women in major pulpits but the church itself is in the heart of the South and "has a proud place in

the history of the Southern Baptist Convention." Pennington-Russell, who is scheduled to speak at the January 2008 meeting of Jimmy Carter's very liberal New Baptist Covenant conference in Atlanta, said that she is "for anything that brings people together rather than divides them," but the Bible that she allegedly preaches is a very divisive book. It divides those who worship God from those who worship idols, those who believe Jesus Christ is the only Saviour from those who don't, those who are born again from those who aren't, theological conservatism from theological liberalism, sound preachers from heretics, and those who take the Bible seriously from those who don't. *"But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. ... I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (1 Timothy 2:12; 6:13-14).

ACTOR WARNS SOUTHERN BAPTIST PASTORS OF THE SEEKER SENSITIVE PHILOSOPHY

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Television and movie actor Kirk Cameron, who was converted in about 1990 and today is a partner with Ray Comfort in The Way of the Master evangelism ministry, delivered a message by radio via the FamilyNet booth at the Southern Baptist Convention's recent meeting in San Antonio. We don't know much about Cameron, but we do know that he hit the nail on the head in this message. "Can I speak to you from my heart for a moment? I realize that, theologically, I'm not worthy to wash your socks. But imagine this scenario with me, if you will:

Imagine I'm a 'seeker' -- I'm a non-Christian, sitting in your church week after week after week listening to you. Am I ever going to hear the message that will save my soul from Hell? Will you ever tell me the truth clearly enough so that I realize that my sin has made me an enemy of God: that I am currently on the path that leads to destruction, with the wrath of God dwelling upon me, and that unless I repent and put my faith in the Savior, I will perish? Or have you decided that it's better to simply entertain me, and on Sundays I can come to have my 'felt needs' met with good music and good advice? Pastor, while I would appreciate that, it's the ultimate betrayal of my trust in you if you don't tell me the truth. Will I ever hear the words 'repent,' 'surrender,' 'turn to the Savior,' 'be born again'? If you don't tell me those things, how will I ever know to do it? Please don't leave it up to the Wednesday night small-group leader. They're taking their cues from you. You're leading the flock. And now I speak to you as a Christian. If you and I fail to teach the whole counsel of God, and we don't warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come, and run to the love of Christ on the Cross to save their soul, we make a terrible mistake. It doesn't matter how happy a person is -- how much a sinner is enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season -- without the righteousness of Christ, he'll perish on the Day of Judgment. The Bible says, 'Riches profit not on the Day of Wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.' You see, that's how Kirk Cameron realized he needed a Savior. I had riches, but I knew that it was the righteousness of God that I needed in order to be saved from my sin."



BOYCOTTING FORD? WHY NOT MICROSOFT, APPLE, INTEL, AND SUN?



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Each year the Human Rights Campaign

publishes a list of companies that meet its standards for supporting the "gay rights" agenda. In 2006 there were 138 U.S. companies that made that sad list. Ford Motor Company is one of them, and I have often wondered why Ford has been singled out for a boycott. I am not a fan of Ford, but the fact is that it has never been a righteous company! The founder was not a godly man and did not run the company by Bible standards, to say the least! Three other major car manufacturers are on the same list: Daimler Chrysler, General Motors, and Volkswagen of America. It seems to me that those on the boycott bandwagon should be consistent. Consider if we were to stop buying and using products from just these 138 companies (and these are certainly not the only unrighteous companies in business today). It would be difficult to compute, for one thing, because Apple, Microsoft, Intel, and Sun Microsystems are on the list. And we wouldn't be able to fly much, because Boeing is on the list. And we have not yet mentioned the myriad of products made by Bristol-Myers Squibb, Cisco, Clorex, Corning, Cummins, DuPont, Dow Chemical, Eli Lilly, Honeywell, Johnson & Johnson, Kraft, Lucent, Motorola, Owens Corning, PG&E, etc. We live in a wicked world, and I'm glad this is not my home. I am also glad that I don't have to try to go out of the world while I am traveling through it. "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. ... For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth" (1 Corinthians 5:9-10, 12-13).

MUSLIMS EXPECTING ISLAMIC MESSIAH TO RETURN WITH JESUS

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Many Muslims are expecting the Islamic messiah, called the 12th Imam or the Imam Mahdi, to return and establish Allah's kingdom on earth, establishing Islamic rule and law throughout the world, and that Jesus will accompany him. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the president of Iran, believes in the coming of the 12th Imam and Iranian radio has broadcast prophecies of his coming. Consider the following excerpt: "In short, when he reappears, peace, justice and security will overcome oppression and deceit and one global government, the most perfect ever, will be established. ... Another beautiful moment of the Savior's appearance is the coming down of Prophet Jesus (PBUH) from heaven. Hazrat Mahdi receives him courteously and asks him to lead the prayers. But Jesus says you are more qualified for this than me. We read in the book *Tazkarat ol-Olia*, 'the Mahdi will come with Jesus son of Mary accompanying him.' This indicates that these two great men complement each other. Imam Mahdi will be the leader while Prophet Jesus will act as his lieutenant in the struggle against oppression and establishment of justice in the world. Jesus had himself given the tidings of the coming of God's last messenger and will see Mohammad's ideals materialize in the time of the Mahdi. ... Be joyous, my heart, miracles of the Messiah will soon be here. ... Grieve not of sorrow and melancholy, as assured I was ... last night that a Savior will come, it's clear" ("Police Storm Home," *WorldNetDaily*, June 23, 2007). We see that Jesus is given a subordinate position in these prophecies to that of the 12th Imam, who is alleged to be a direct descendant of Mohammed. The Muslims as such are not referred to in Bible prophecy (though the Muslim nations surrounding Israel are described and their future is given), so we don't know exactly how all of this will play itself out. We do know that the Antichrist will rule the whole world and his prophet will do miracles to deceive the nations (Revelation 13; 2 Thessalonians 2). And we know that the next event on God's calendar is the Rapture of New Testament saints and that we need to be ready for this imminent event (1 Thessalonians 4:13 - 5:9).



INFANTICIDE, ABORTION RESPONSIBLE FOR 60 MILLION GIRLS MISSING IN ASIA

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The following is excerpted from a FoxNews report, June 13, 2007: "There is a little-known battle for survival going in some parts of the world. Those at risk are baby girls, and the casualties are in the millions each year. The weapons being used against them are prenatal sex selection, abortion and female infanticide--the systematic killing of girls soon after they are born. According to a recent United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) State of the World Population Report, these practices, combined with neglect, have resulted in at least 60 million 'missing' girls in Asia, creating gender imbalances and other serious problems that experts say will have far reaching

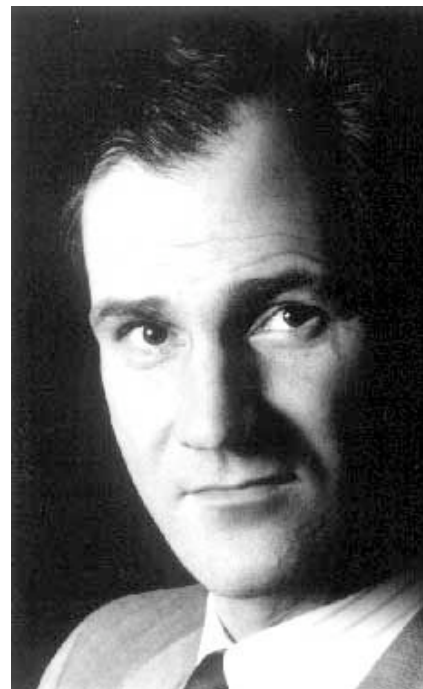
consequences for years to come. ... Steven Mosher, the first American social scientist allowed into China, puts much of the blame on Beijing's one-child policy, which took effect in 1979. Female infanticide was the result, he said. ... In India, where the child sex ratio is calculated as the number of girls per 1,000 boys in the 0-6 years age group, the problem is severe. ... In certain parts of the country there are now fewer than 800 girls for every 1,000 boys. ... Like China, there is a strong son preference for various socio-economic reasons, such as the son being responsible for carrying on the family name and support in old age. ... Complicating matters even further in India is the dowry system, where families pay large sums in order to marry off their daughters."

CHILDREN BAD FOR PLANET

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The following is from *The Berean Call*, May 7, 2007, "Having large families should be frowned upon as an environmental misdemeanor in the same way as frequent long-haul flights, driving a big car and failing to reuse plastic bags, says a report to be published today by a green think tank. The paper by the Optimum Population Trust will say that if couples had two children instead of three they could cut their family's carbon dioxide output by the equivalent of 620 return flights a year between London and New York. John Guillebaud, co-chairman of OPT and emeritus professor of family planning at University College London, said: 'The effect on the planet of having one child less is an order of magnitude greater than all these other things we might do, such as switching off lights. The greatest thing anyone in Britain could do to help the future of the planet would be to have one less child.' In his latest comments, the academic says that when couples are planning a family they should be encouraged to think about the environmental consequences. 'The decision to have children should be seen as a very big one and one that should take the environment into account.' ... Several countries have already implemented these suggestions. Muslim extremists delight in pointing out that to take over much of Europe all that is needed is to let the Europeans simply die off.

Numerous reports have shown that countries such as France have passed the point of no return. They simply do not have enough children to even keep their population stable and despite financial inducements, potential parents have no desire to perpetuate their nation." "Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate" (Psalm 127:3-5).



John Guillebaud

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. David Cloud is the director of Way of Life Literature and author of the Friday Church News Notes.