

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.

July 13, 2007

Vol. 8, Issue 28

POPE REAFFIRMS THAT THE RCC IS THE ONE TRUE CHURCH



Friday Church News Notes, July 13, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>

A new document approved by Pope Benedict XVI reaffirms that the Roman Catholic Church is the one church that Jesus founded and that Protestant churches aren't true churches. The document, which was released on July 10, is entitled "Responses to Some Questions Regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine on the Church" and it revisits statements made by the Vatican II Council in the 1960s. It says that while the "Christian communities separated from the Catholic Church" can act as "instruments of salvation," they are not true churches and they only act as "instruments of salvation" because they partially participate in "the fullness of grace and of truth which has been entrusted to the Catholic Church." In addressing Eastern Orthodoxy the document calls them sister churches "because of apostolic succession, the priesthood and the Eucharist," but says they fall short because they do not recognize the supremacy of the pope. Though this document (which was

produced by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which is the old office of the Inquisition) is being widely reported in the news media, there is nothing new here. We have long pointed out that Vatican II reaffirmed the supremacy both of the Catholic Church and of the Pope, and ecumenical dialogue with Protestants and Orthodox is allowed only within the context of this supremacy. Vatican II stated: "It was to the apostolic college alone of which Peter is the head, that we believe that our Lord entrusted all the blessings of the New Covenant, in order to establish on earth the one Body of Christ into which all those should be fully incorporated who belong in any way to the people of God" (Decree on Ecumenism, chap. 1, 3, p. 415). The San Giovanni Laterno Church is the first church of Rome and an inscription on the front (translated from Latin) says, "MOST HOLY LATERAN CHURCH, MOTHER AND MISTRESS OF ALL CHURCHES OF THE CITY AND THE WORLD." Rome has never renounced this heresy.

HEAD OF COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP SAYS WE ARE FREE TO EXPERIMENT

Friday Church News Notes, July 13, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>

In his report at the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's annual meeting at the end of June, executive coordinator Daniel Vestal said Baptists must celebrate their freedom. He said: "We are free from the institutions of the past even as we birth and build new institutions for the present. We are free to work with people of other faiths for social justice and racial reconciliation. ... We are free to experiment. We are free to explore" ("CBF Pares Budget," Baptist Press, July 2, 2007). In fact, while we are free to reject human tradition, the divine model for the church is 2,000 years old and we have no freedom to change it. Further, we have no freedom to join hands with unbelievers for "social justice," for the Word of God says, "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14).

The apostles and leaders of the first churches did not join hands in “social justice” issues with pagans in the Roman Empire. Further, we are not free to experiment and explore beyond the bounds of the inerrant Scriptures. Of course, few within the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship actually believe the Bible is verbally-plenarily-inerrantly inspired. The CBF announced a new partnership with the liberal American Baptist Convention, which allows unrepentant homosexuals to be members of churches. Leaders of the two groups took the Lord's Supper together. The CBF also adopted a statement of support for Jimmy Carter's ultra liberal New Baptist Covenant. The new moderator of the CBF is a woman. The CBF was formed in 1991 by men who were disgruntled at the conservative trend within the Southern Baptist Convention.



EVANGELICALS PROMOTING THE WORLDLY *EVAN ALMIGHTY* MOVIE

Friday Church News Notes, July 13, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>

Many evangelicals are promoting the worldly movie *Evan Almighty*, which blasphemously depicts a man in the role of Almighty God.

Christianity Today has promoted the movie and the Baptist Press ran a favorable review. Four contemporary Christian bands (Switchfoot, Relient K, Jeremy Camp, DecembeRadio) performed at the premier to



the movie, which is the sequel to the sacrilegious *Bruce Almighty* film. Based loosely on the biblical story of Noah, *Evan Almighty* depicts a congressman who is charged by God with building an ark. It turns the biblical flood, one of the most significant and serious events in human history, into a comedy, making a mockery of this terrible but righteous judgment. One review warns that “there are three jokes made about the male anatomy; a woman is shown getting into bed wearing lingerie; Evan is shown partially nude; there are some crude elements as well as several mild profanities ... and the Lord's name is taken in vain multiple times” (“Movie Review: 'False Theology' Sinks,” OneNewsNow.com, June 21, 2007). God is depicted in “irreverent and unholy ways” and adds an eleventh commandment: “Thou shalt do the dance,” referring to a silly dance that Evan performs throughout the film. The movie denies the Bible by claiming that the Flood was not about God's wrath. Beyond all of this, a foundational error of the movie is the very fact that the thrice holy God is depicted as a man and is humanized after a “cool” fashion. This apostate generation will regret playing around with such holy themes. “There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness. There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up” (Proverbs 30:12-13).

BAPTIST WORLD ALLIANCE STRESSES UNITY OVER DOCTRINE

Friday Church News Notes, July 13, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>

At the July 2-7 meeting of the Baptist World Alliance in Accra, Ghana, outgoing general secretary Denton Lotz said, “Some Baptists seem concerned only about doctrine, but Jesus talked about unity as a great doctrine of the faith” (*Christian Post*, July 4, 2007). In fact, the Lord Jesus never offset unity against sound doctrine and never in the least way denigrated the fight for sound doctrine. To the contrary, through His Spirit Christ taught His people to “teach no other doctrine” than that found in New Testament Scripture (1 Timothy 1:3), which is the very narrowest and strictest view of doctrinal purity that can be imagined, and He taught us not only to hold to sound doctrine in all points but also to fight for it, to “earnestly contend for the faith which once delivered unto

the saints” (Jude 3). The apostle Paul constantly fought against doctrinal error and false teachers. Practically every one of his epistles reflects this battle. The New Testament also teaches us that as the church age progresses and the time of Christ's return draws near that false teaching and apostasy will increase (2 Timothy 3:13; 4:3-4). Thus, the fight for doctrinal purity must grow even fiercer in these last days if God's people are to remain true to the Bible. The Baptist World Alliance has been a part of the apostasy for a long time.

TEXAS SUPREME COURT VINDICATES PASTOR IN CHURCH DISCIPLINE LAWSUIT

Friday Church News Notes, July 13, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>

The following is excerpted from *The Church Report*, July 4, 2007:

“The Texas Supreme Court, in a unanimous decision, ruled in favor of Pastor Buddy Westbrook, represented by the Liberty Legal Institute, and dismissed the lawsuit against him. Westbrook had a lawsuit brought against him by a church member who refused to repent following a divorce and remarriage. According to the lawsuit, Peggy Penley was a member of Crossland Community Bible Church in Fort Worth and had a relationship with another man and desired to divorce her husband. Westbrook, in accordance with the church's disciplinary process, sent a letter to church members informing them of Penley's unrepentant attitude and called for a disassociation from Penley by the congregation. Penley sued the church, the elders, and Westbrook on grounds that the pastor violated confidentiality statutes. 'We conclude

that the secular confidentiality interest Penley's professional-negligence claim advances fails to override the strong constitutional presumption that favors preserving the church's interest in managing its affairs,' wrote Justice Harriet O'Neill, who delivered the opinion of the Court. 'This is a great victory for pastors across Texas,' said Kelly Shackelford, Chief Counsel of the Liberty Legal Institute, which represented Westbrook.”



HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WARN AGAINST DRINKING DURING PREGNANCY

Friday Church News Notes, July 13, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>

Health professionals are warning that any drinking of alcoholic beverages during pregnancy endangers the child. Paul Mason, Children's Commissioner of Tasmania, Australia, says: “Theoretically no women of child-bearing age should drink alcohol, full stop, no matter how unfair that sounds. There is no safe level of drinking alcohol in pregnancy. The baby's liver does not process the alcohol and the alcohol takes oxygen away from the baby's brain development. It is an effect of oxygen starvation” (“Women Shouldn't Drink Alcohol,” *The Mercury*, July 2, 2007). Gavin Stone, with the Drug Education Network of Australia, says alcohol use in pregnancy is the leading cause of birth defects and mental disabilities in the Western world, affecting one in 100 infants. These children are afflicted with such things as learning disabilities, poor co-ordination, low IQ, and problems with daily living. A Canadian study showed that 90% of children affected end up with mental health issues.



FORMER “RADICAL ISLAMIST” SAYS THE OBJECTIVE IS A WORLDWIDE ISLAMIC STATE



Friday Church News Notes, July 13, 2007, <http://www.wayoflife.org>

The following is excerpted from a testimony by Hassan Butt of England, from the *Daily Mail*, July 2, 2007: “When I was still a member of what is probably best termed the British Jihadi Network--a series of British Muslim terrorist groups linked by a single ideology--I remember how we used to laugh in celebration whenever people on TV proclaimed that the sole cause for Islamic acts of terror like 9/11, the Madrid bombings and 7/7 was Western foreign policy. ... More important, [this thinking] helped to draw away any critical examination from the real engine of our violence: Islamic theology. ... I left the British Jihadi Network in February 2006 because I realised that its members had simply become mindless killers. ... what drove me and many others to plot acts of extreme terror within Britain and abroad was a sense that we were

fighting for the creation of a revolutionary worldwide Islamic state that would dispense Islamic justice. ... the foundation of extremist reasoning rests upon a model of the world in which you are either a believer or an infidel. ... I was taught by Pakistani and British radical preachers that this reclassification of the globe as a Land of War (Dar ul-Harb) allows any Muslim to destroy the sanctity of the five rights that every human is granted under Islam: life, wealth, land, mind and belief. In Dar ul-Harb, anything goes, including the treachery and cowardice of attacking civilians.”

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.