

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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THE SIMPSONS' POPULARITY DEMONSTRATES AMERICA'S REBELLION AGAINST GOD

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The Simpsons Movie, a spinoff of the Simpsons sitcom, grossed \$72 million in its first weekend. The Simpsons animated sitcom, the longest running sitcom in U.S. television history, is scheduled to begin its 19th season this fall. *Time* magazine has named it the 20th century's best television series, and in 2000 it was awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. The movie has been promoted heavily by 7-Eleven and Burger King. The Simpsons mocks the traditional family and religion. Consider a few quotes from Homer, the movie's star and the head of the Simpson family clan: "If the Bible has taught us nothing else, and it hasn't, it's that girls should stick to girls sports, such as hot oil wrestling and foxy boxing and such and such." "I'm not a bad guy! I work hard, and I love my kids. So why should I spend half my Sunday hearing about how I'm going to Hell?"

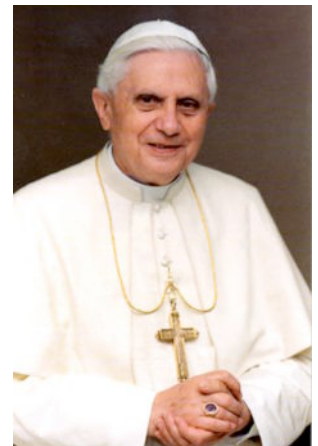
"I'm normally not a praying man, but if you're up there, please save me Superman." "Here's to alcohol, the cause of--and solution to--all life's problems." "Son, when you participate in sporting events, it's not whether you win or lose: it's how drunk you get." The Simpson's is not mere entertainment. It is a reflection of America's rebellion against God. The world is in open defiance to Almighty God, but this defiance will end in eternal disaster. It is described in Psalm 2:1-5 -- "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." God will have the last laugh and the final derision.



POPE CALLS FOR END TO WARS

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Speaking in Lorenzago di Cardore, where he was on vacation, Pope Benedict XVI renewed the call of his predecessors to end wars ("Benedict XVI: Never Again, War," Vatican Information Service, July 22, 2006). The call was first made by Pope Benedict XV in August 1917 during World War I. He spoke of establishing a "just and lasting peace" on earth. Pope Paul VI called for the end of war in his speech before the United Nations, and John Paul II called for peace on earth in the International Prayer for Peace which was founded in 1986 in Assisi, Italy. The inaugural meeting brought together representatives of 32 Christian denominations and 11 non-Christian religions, including Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Judaism, Muslim, Animist, Shino, Zoroastrian, Bahai, and



Peace and safety...

North America Indians. The Dalai Lama was one of the speakers. Animists from Africa prayed to the Great Thumb and North American Indians prayed to Mother Earth. In spite of the addition of chants and bells and incense and smoke and fire, the papal prayers have gone unanswered for the simple reason that there will be no peace in this sinful earth until the Prince of Peace comes. "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Thess. 5:1-6).

GERMAN CHURCH HOSTS "EROTIC SERVICE"

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The church of the Carthusians in Cologne, Germany, hosted an Erotic Church Service earlier this year. The service, which was attended by 400 people with 600 being turned away for lack of space, featured a female dancer dressed in a skin colored stocking. Above the entrance of the church was the caption, "A warm welcome to the Vineyard of Love," and wine and rose leaves were strewn on the people from the ceiling. The barefoot "vicar," Armin Beuscher, announced that eroticism and lust are not taboo areas and that "lust has to be lived out" ("Hundreds queue for Erotic Church Service," *The Times*, June 12, 2007, from a report that appeared on German television). The members of the congregation were asked to massage one another on the forehead and hands. In conclusion the vicar said, "Praise God with your body, your lust and tenderness." The service was organized under the auspices of the German Protestant Kirchentag, one of the largest Christian festivals in Europe. It is affiliated with the Evangelical Church in Germany, which is the Lutheran state church. The Carthusians is a monastic order within the Roman Catholic Church and was founded in the 11th century. Their monasteries are called Charterhouses.

STUDY FINDS THAT MARIJUANA USE INCREASES RISK OF PSYCHOSIS

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A massive study funded by the British Health Department found that even infrequent use of marijuana can increase the risk of psychosis by 40 percent. The research was published July 27 in the medical Journal *The Lancet*. Dr. Stanely Zammit, one of the study's authors, said, "The available evidence now suggests that cannabis is not as harmless as many people think" ("Even Infrequent Use of Marijuana Increases Risk of Psychosis," FoxNews.com, July 27, 2007). Dr. Robin Murray of King's College said: "We've reached the end of the road with these kinds of studies. Experts are now agreed on the connection between cannabis and psychoses. What we need now is for 14-year-olds to know it." Surveys in the Britain have shown that about 20% of young adults use marijuana regularly. There is no doubt that marijuana is a dangerous drug. I used it heavily for about 3 years before I was converted, beginning with my tour of military duty in Vietnam, and it had a dramatic and negative impact upon me.



MORE COUNTRY MUSIC TRASH



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I have often warned about the spiritual and moral danger of America's country music. It is as wicked as rock & roll, pop, or rap, but it is often considered safer because of its thin veneer of God and country, and it is therefore not uncommon for professing Christians, even those who claim to take the Bible seriously, to listen to it. But it has the same addictive and sensual back beat as rock & roll (a back beat that the rock & rollers themselves call "sexy") and the lyrics are just as wicked. The themes of country music are drinking, complaining, drinking, quitting your job, drinking, quitting your marriage, drinking, dancing, drinking, loneliness, drinking..... I think you get the idea. Only the Lord knows the true extent of the evil fruit of country music, how many men and women have become drunks, how many marriages broken, how many babies born out of wedlock, how many fights, how many terrible accidents caused by drinking and driving, how many suicides, not to speak of the eternal consequences. A new song by Brad Paisley illustrates the moral danger of this music. Entitled "Bigger Fish to Fry," it says: "I cuss, And I smoke, I laugh at dirty jokes./ The minor vices, man I know 'em well./ I've closed down bars. I've lusted in my heart./ My exes think I oughta burn in hell./ But the devil, he won't notice when I die./ Yeah, don't you figure he's got bigger fish to fry?/ Politicians taking pork barrel bribes. Crooked CEOs are getting off with no time. ... Yeah there's gonna be bonfire burning, An everlasting barbecue/ But with all the bad stuff going on, There ain't gonna be room for me and you." This song foolishly claims that only the worst sinners go to hell and that God will overlook "the minor vices." Beware of country music and its damnable philosophy that you can have the world and Christ, too, and that immorality and drinking and rebelrousing are things that God winks at. "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Ephesians. 5:3-6). Music is a powerful thing, and it behooves God's people to be exceedingly careful about the music in their homes, cars, personal music players, and churches.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND PREACHING HARRY POTTER'S MESSAGE

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The Church of England has published a guide advising youth workers how to use Harry Potter to discuss Christian themes ("Church Preparing to Preach Potter's Message," *The Times*, July 18, 2007). The guide, entitled "Mixing It up with Harry Potter," was published by Church House Publishing. John Pritchard, the Bishop of Oxford, said, "There's nothing better than a good story to make people think, and there's plenty in the Harry Potter books to make young people think about the choices they make in their everyday lives and their place in the world." The hero of the



Harry Potter story is a young wizard who uses alleged good magic to make his way in the world and to overcome his enemies. Biblically speaking, there is no such thing as good magic or a good wizard, witch, or sorcerer. All of these things are condemned in the strongest terms. "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee" (Deut. 18:9-12). God warns His people in the clearest terms, "... have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11), and, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils" (1 Cor. 10:21).

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST HOSTS "BOSSY BINGO"

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The St. John's United Church of Christ in Minier, Illinois, is hosting "Bossy Bingo" for the community. The occasion is the annual Corn Daze festival on August 4-5, 2007. Following is the description from the church's mail-out: "Bossy Bingo will be set up on the north side of the park where a plot will be divided into 400 squares. You choose the square you think Bossy will pick. Bossy will be let loose on the plot to do what cows do. If Bossy chooses to land a pie in your square--you win. The winner splits the pot 50/50 with the St. John's Youth. In the past the winner's share has been between two and six hundred dollars." The church's Saturday evening service for August 4 features reading of poems and a violin special but no Bible preaching.



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.