

# 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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## MOST AMERICAN YOUTH INVOLVED IN VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

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A new study shows that 90% of children ages 8-18 have played violent video games. This was reported in "Video Games: General and Pathological Use," *Trends and Tudes*, March 2007. The study found that the average 8-12 year-old boy plays video games 16 hours per week, while the average 13-18 year-old boy plays 18 hours. Only about one-half of parents restrict the use of the games. One-third of the boys surveyed said they felt addicted to them. The survey indicated that the amount of time spent playing video games is related to "several important negative outcomes for youth including poorer performance, increased physical aggression, and increased risk of obesity." Video game sales in the U.S.



(equipment and software) in 2006 was \$12.6 billion. That is a lot of money and a lot of influence upon society. Many of the games are immoral and violent, and most of them feature background rock music. Some of the top selling games are Grand Theft Auto, Star Wars Knights, Warcraft, Final Fantasy, and Mortal Kombat. The Bible warns, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he..." (Proverbs 23:7), and, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). Violent video games are not innocent entertainment. The multi-billion dollar advertising industry knows that people are powerfully affected by what they see and hear. At best the popular video games are an addictive waste of this life's fleeting hours. "Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied" (Proverbs 27:20). "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me" (Psalm 101:3). "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:15-17).

## EVANGELICAL YOUTH LEAVING CHURCH IN LARGE NUMBERS

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A new survey by LifeWay Research, the publishing arm of the Southern Baptist Convention, found that "seven in 10 Protestants ages 18 to 30 -- both evangelical and mainline -- who went to church regularly in high school said they quit attending by age 23" ("Young Adults Aren't Sticking with Church," *USA Today*, Aug. 7, 2007). Some 35% of those said they had resumed attending church regularly by age 30, so that would mean that about 7 in 10 drop out temporarily while 3 in 10 drop out more permanently. This tallies with my own experience in and knowledge of the Southern Baptist Convention and probably would be true of independent Baptists, as

well. In the Southern Baptist churches in which I grew up it was almost expected that young people would leave church for awhile to “sow their wild oats.” One of the many problems with this is that even if these young people do get saved and return to church later in life they bear massive spiritual scars that follow them to the end of their lives and that weaken the cause of Jesus Christ. Further, as the survey indicates, a large percentage of those who leave church do not return. “Sowing wild oats” becomes a permanent way of life. The very best time to get saved and to get serious about serving Christ is in one's youth. A much smaller percentage of people get saved later in life, and when they do their lives are deeply scared and it is not uncommon that they have tarnished their marital status with divorce and remarriage so that they are limited in their ability to serve in the church. Interestingly, the aforementioned survey found that those who stayed with or returned to church “grew up with both parents committed, pastors whose sermons were relevant and engaging, and church members who invested in their spiritual development.” This demonstrates that it is largely the quality of the Christian home and church that determines how children turn out. Godliness and spiritual consistency are necessary. Hypocrisy and worldliness in the home and church tend to drive young people away from Christ and the Bible. “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6).

## RESPONSE TO “MORE COUNTRY MUSIC TRASH”

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I received the following interesting response to the article in the August 3 issue of Friday Church News Notes entitled “More Country Music Trash.” In that article I warned about the spiritual and moral danger of America's country music. I said, “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.” We illustrated this warning with a new song by Brad Paisley that talks about a man who drinks and carouses and cusses and laughs at dirty jokes and other “minor vices” but won't go to hell because the “devil has got bigger fish to fry.” The response to this article is as follows, and it demonstrates how that many professing Christians love the world too much to heed clear biblical warnings. “GREAT piece of writing! Very well examined and explained. I have long told my wife and sons that Country music is perhaps more dangerous than all the open and blatant Rock and devil worshipping stuff because of this layer of supposed God and country. It promotes and glorifies an uneducated backward 'simple' lifestyle, and you are right on the money when you discuss the acceptance of it by so many 'country church Christians.' I tried to bring this up when I spoke with folks that attended a country church when we lived in North Florida, but let me tell you, it was like hitting them in the toe with a hammer. That stuff is engrained in their lives and they will NOT give it up. I do NOT understand how they either CANnot or WILL not see it for what it really is!”

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## POPE SAYS EVOLUTION IS TRUE

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Speaking to a group of 400 priests, Pope Benedict XVI said evolution is backed by “strong scientific proof,” though it does not answer life's “great philosophical question.” He says it is wrong to present creationism and evolution as contradictory, and that you can believe in God while being an evolutionist. The pope claims that “there are many scientific tests in favor of evolution, which appears as a reality that we must see and enriches our understanding of life



and being” (“Evolution and God Do Mix,” *New York Post*, July 26, 2007). In fact, the Bible *cannot* be reconciled with the theory of evolution. Following are just a few of the Bible facts that cannot be reconciled with the theory of evolution: (1) Genesis says God created the world and everything in it in six days. (2) Genesis says all creation was made to reproduce after its kind. (3) Genesis says man and animals are distinctively different creations. (4) Genesis says the world was created in six days and then the process of creation was finished. (5) Genesis says the world was created perfect then fell under sin and God's curse and has been deteriorating ever since.

## **CAMBODIA BANS DOOR-TO-DOOR EVANGELISM AND LITERATURE DISTRIBUTION**

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Cambodia has banned door-to-door evangelism and the distribution of Christian literature except inside church buildings. The government says such activities “disrupt society” and “cause other insecurities” in this largely Buddhist nation (*WorldNetDaily*, July 31, 2007). Officials admitted that the ruling is aimed at reducing Christian evangelism. The vast majority of Christians in Cambodia were among the 3 million people who died in the 1970s under the brutal communist regime of the Khmer Rouge led by Pot Pol, but the number of churches has grown rapidly since the collapse of communism in the early 1990s.

## **RIPPED JEANS, THE FASHION INDUSTRY, AND THE COOL FACTOR**

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What is it about the world that Christians are to separate from? When God's Word says to love not the world it is referring to the evil things of the world rather than to the things that God created. It is referring to “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:15-16). This is a perfect description of the modern fashion industry. It is geared to showing off the body in a sensual way and fulfilling the lust of the flesh and the eyes and the pride of life. The very concept of **BEING “COOL,”** which is so important to young people, has to do with something that excites the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. One web site says that ripped



jeans are “cool” and then goes on to describe why they are cool. It is because they “sport the 'I don't care' look” and are “a mark of rebellion.” Further, they were made popular by rock stars (Brittney Spears, we are told, wore them to her wedding) and are thus hip. Ripped jeans also “make the wearer stand out in the crowd and get noticed.” Thus this youthful web site teaches us that “cool” refers to something that appeals to the lust of the flesh and the pride of life. One of the most powerful things in human society is the lust of the eyes, and the most powerful lust is that of sexuality. Men, in particular, have an endless propensity to lust, and this is why Jesus said: “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Mat. 5:27-28). The fashion industry appeals directly and continually to this powerful lust by enticing women to dress in a skimpy, revealing, tight, tantalizing manner that attracts the man's lust.

# THE EVIL BUSINESS OF PRIDE

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The following is from David Thomas's commentary on Proverbs, 1885: "*These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look...* Haughtiness is an abomination, because it implies self-ignorance, unkindness, and irreverence. How true is the language of old Quarles concerning pride. 'As thou desirest the love of God and man, beware of pride. It is a tumour in the mind that breaks and poisons all thy actions: it is a worm in thy treasure, which eats and ruins thy estate; it loves no man--is beloved of no man; it disparages virtue in another by detraction; it disrewards goodness in itself by vain-glory: the friend of the flatterer, the mother of envy, the nurse of fury, the sin of devils, and the devil of mankind: it hates superiors, it scorns inferiors, it owns no equals;--in short, till thou hate it, God hates thee.'"

# REBELLION AND MODESTY

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The following is excerpted from the book *The Fall and Rise of Christian Standards* by David Kidd (Xulonpress.com or 866-909-2665): "It is most curious then why dress and other appearance issues are so often a point of contention for Christians. Many who see the connection of the biblical principle of identity to other areas of life, somehow cannot see it in this one. The same person who would never use the world's profane speech will wear its equally profane clothes. ... It is no coincidence that one of the first evidences of rebellion against God-ordained authority is a pushing of the limits of modesty and decency in clothing. When was the last time you saw a rebellious teen-age girl insist on wearing long, loose-fitting dresses? The heart attitude of rebellion is manifested by resistance to a boundary which is identified with obedience to headship authority, and will always move away from restraint and modesty, and toward permissiveness and sensuality."

**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.