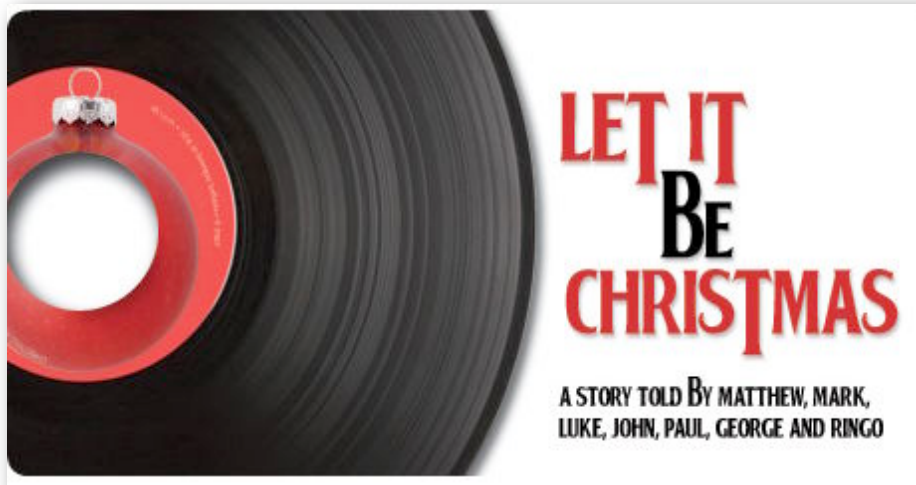


Friday Church News Notes

The Beatles as a Christmas Theme

Friday Church News Notes, November 23, 2007, www.wayoflife.org

Granger Community Church in Granger, Indiana, is featuring Beatles Music as their 2007 Christmas theme. Pastor Tim Stevens says: "With *Across the Universe* currently in the theaters and the new Beatles-themed Cirque du Soleil show in Vegas called *Love*, the Beatles are as hot as ever. Using the music of the Beatles we will be telling the Christmas story all December. And we've been getting great feedback from music lovers of all generations" (<http://www.leadingsmart.com/leadingsmart/2007/11/let-it-bechrist.html>). They are advertising it as "Let it Be...Christmas -- A Story Told by Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, George and Ringo." Earlier this year *The Church Report* listed Granger Community as one of the 50 most influential churches in America. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Corinthians 6:14-17).



MENNONITES DIALOGUE WITH ROME

Mennonites from 10 countries spent nearly a week dialoguing with Catholic leaders in Rome October 18-23, 2007. The event was hosted by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. Nancy Heisey, president of the Mennonite World Conference, said, "We were so warmly welcomed that it was almost overwhelming" ("Mennonite Delegation Visits Catholic Leaders in Rome," *The Mennonite*, Nov. 5, 2007). The Mennonites had a private audience with Pope Benedict XVI, who twisted Christ's words in John 17 out of context with his claim
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ATHEISTIC BABBLING



AAI 2007 CONVENTION
ATHEIST ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL

SEPT 27-30: WASHINGTON DC

RICHARD DAWKINS • SAM HARRIS
DAN DENNETT • CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS
DAN DENNETT • CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

A recent conference sponsored by the Atheist Alliance International claimed that "science must ultimately destroy organized religion." Speakers included Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and Christopher Hitchens. The conference, held in Crystal City, Virginia, drew hundreds of spectators, but it was an exercise in complete nonsense. If this world is the product of mere chance and there is no divine Creator to whom man is accountable, no life after death, life is utterly meaningless and it matters not what you believe or what you do. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good" (Psalm 14:1).

MENNONITES, Continued

that “it is Christ Himself who calls us to seek Christian unity.” Heisey told the pope that they shared a “great common heritage of faith” as well as “the challenges of being God’s people in this time.” She called the meeting with the pope “overwhelming” and “a very intense kind of experience” (“EMU Professor Meets Pope,” *Daily News-Record*, Harrisburg, Virginia, Nov. 20, 2007). The give and take ecumenical aspect of theological dialogue was emphasized in comments made by Mennonite delegate Mulugeta Zewdie of Ethiopia: “As Mennonites, we have something to share and to learn at the same time. The dialogue and this visit can help [us] fellowship with Catholics at the local level.” The Mennonites were introduced to worshippers at the Santa Maria Maggiore [St. Mary Major] basilica. This blasphemous church features a large crucifix depicting Mary hanging on the cross with Jesus, a painting of Mary’s alleged bodily assumption into heaven, a statue of Mary as the Queen of Peace, and a painting of Jesus crowning Mary Queen of Heaven. The Mennonites trace their origin to the European Anabaptist movement of the 16th century, but few Mennonites today preach the new birth in a scriptural fashion. Mennonite Christianity has largely deteriorated into a form of godliness without the power thereof (2 Tim. 3:5). Once upon a time Mennonites boldly and unequivocally rejected Rome’s false gospel, but today they seek unity with Rome. It is not the Roman Catholic Church that has changed. [For a picture of Mary hanging on the cross outside of Santa Maria Maggiore see part four of the report “In the Footsteps of Bible Translators” at the Way of Life web site -- <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/in-the-footsteps-bibletrans/index.html>]



Ian Paisley Commends Faith of Catholic Singer

The following is excerpted from “The Faith of Dana--Not to be Commended” by Ivan Foster, pastor of Kilskeery Free Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland, November 10, 2007: “It has been widely reported that at a reception to launch a new book by the singer Dana, Dr Ian Paisley spoke of her as a ‘a woman of great faith and steel who had stood up for what she believed in,’ and added, ‘I’m glad to stand with her’ (*Belfast Telegraph*, Nov. 7, 2007). He is also quoted in the same article as saying: ‘I hope that when everyone on this island reads this book I hope they ponder what it says.’ The article began with the words: ‘It was all smiles last night as the Reverend Ian Paisley praised Eurovision singer-turned-politician, Dana Rosemary Scallan, on her new book.’ That makes very sad reading for all faithful Christians. ... The faith of Dana is that of a faithful Roman Catholic and doubtless her book will be commending the teaching of that religious body to its readers. ... On his own website Dr Paisley rightly refutes the teachings of Rome as unscriptural (<http://www.ianpaisley.org/toc.asp?loc=rome>). He is therefore at variance with his own teachings when he commends the faith of Dana. ... That such a statement should have been made by Dr Paisley and the necessity for such a statement as this to be issued is but further evidence of the alarming and sad changes that the emergence of the Stormont coalition has initiated.” **CONCLUDING NOTE FROM BRO. CLOUD:** The Bible warns, “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Cor. 15:33), and politics definitely puts one into intimate communication with evil. When I visited Northern Ireland in the early 1990s Baptist preachers told me that they did not respect Dr. Paisley

for his politics, and their concern was well founded. Dana performed for Pope John Paul II on his visit to Ireland in 1979 and composed a special song just for him entitled “Totus Tuus” after his personal papal motto, referring to his total dedication to Mary. She also performed for the pope in 1987 in New Orleans, in 1993 at Denver, and in 1995 in New York City. Her album “The Rosary” is about praying to Mary as the Queen of Heaven, and her album “We Are One Body” is a call for ecumenical unity.



FOLLOW-UP ON BOB GRAY AFFAIR IN JACKSONVILLE

- The following is excerpted from "Preacher Helps" #93 by Evangelist Don Boys <DBoysphd@aol.com>: "A November 11 report on *First Coast News* in Jacksonville revealed that an audio recording has been discovered that supports the molested victims of Dr. Bob Gray who died recently of a heart attack! The husband of one of the victims made the recording a couple of weeks before Gray was arrested in May of 2006. Both the husband and his wife attended Trinity Christian Academy and they are not part of the civil suit or demanding money from the church. The husband said, 'I want people to understand we're not out to take a ministry down.' Present at the meeting were some of his family members, Trinity pastor Tom Messer, and two Trinity leaders, including a deacon. All knew that the meeting was recorded. Ann Steward, now a North Carolina pastor's wife, and former member of Trinity was featured on the newscast and repeated what she told me and my wife: She was molested by Gray many times while a young child, and at age 21, went to Tom Messer, hoping to

expose the truth. She told him about the incidents, but her words were twisted to 'lie to the congregation.' Ann told me that on the Sunday night following her meeting with Messer, the church was told that Gray had committed an 'indiscretion that was neither sexual nor immoral,' suggesting to gullible members that nothing serious happened. And that is the mantra that has been shouted (or whispered) at Trinity since 1992. Ann told Jeannie Blaylock (who has been incredibly fair) of *First Coast News*, 'It was just a cover-up.' It was supposed to be church discipline, but it was a farce and fraud. Dennis and Pat Cassell, former longtime Trinity members and employees at Trinity Academy, were also featured on the newscast. The Cassells told me that they resigned from Trinity and walked out when it was obvious that Pastor Messer was manipulating the events to cover up 'Gray's sin and to mitigate the church's legal exposure.' Pat Cassell, told *First Coast News*, 'The victims are vindicated. The kids are vindicated. Tom [Messer] knew and covered it up

for years.' Dennis Cassell says, 'The truth is finally out and that's what we've been praying for many years.' He was Trinity's coach."



Evangelicals and Mormons Continue to Dialogue

A "National Student Dialogue Conference" was held October 19-20 in Salt Lake City to facilitate communication between evangelicals and Mormons. Students and teachers from Biola, Wheaton College, Denver Seminary, Fuller Seminary, and other deeply compromised "evangelical" institutions participated. Jerry Root, a professor at Wheaton College, said, "... truth is not reality, but truth is what I think about reality ... I must not be afraid of honest doubt that accompanies debate and discussion" ("Students Aim to Bridge Theological Gap," *Deseret Morning News*, Oct. 27, 2007). In fact, the truth is the Bible and it does not change and to entertain doubts about its reality and finality is sin. Without faith "it is impossible to please [God]," and, "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). We are not called to dialogue with those of other faiths; we are called to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every person (Mark 16:15), because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and there is only one true gospel of salvation (Rom. 1:16; Gal. 1:6-7). This is exactly what the early churches did as recorded in the book of Acts, and there is to be a sense of constant urgency to this work. "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Mat. 24:44).



Wheaton Professor Jerry Root

CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AMERICA SETTLES ANOTHER BATCH OF SEXUAL ABUSE LAWSUITS

The Society of Jesus (Jesuits) has agreed to pay \$50 million to 110 people in Alaska who claim to have been sexually abused by priests in childhood when they were altar boys and altar girls ("Jesuits to Pay \$50M," AP, Nov. 18, 2007). The priests have been shielded by the Catholic Church and were never criminally charged. They worked in rural Alaskan villages.

LAUSANNE III TO FORM "NEW WORLD EVANGELISM STRATEGY"

The third international Lausanne gathering is scheduled to be held in Cape Town in October 2010. The objective is to form new strategies for world missions and to "serve to unite and energize the Church" ("Lausanne III," *Christian Post*, May 7, 2007). The first gathering was held in Lausanne in 1974 under the direction of Billy Graham. The second was held in Manila in 1989 and brought together 3,600 participants from 190 countries. We don't need a new strategy for missionary work; we have a divinely given one in the New Testament and it works just fine! The Lord Jesus Christ gave the churches their marching orders in Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20; and Acts 1, and the book of Acts and the New Testament Epistles show us how to carry out these orders. A large percentage of those who participate in these conferences are "professional missionary strategists" who are armchair theologians rather than actual church planting missionaries. They are busybodies in other men's affairs, with their man-made ecumenical "unity" and their criticism of biblical separatists and their gross worldliness. Lausanne is an unscriptural hodge-podge of Methodists, Lutherans, Baptists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Pentecostals, Charismatics, and you name it.

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.