

Friday Church News Notes

American's Say Non-Church Worship is Biblical

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According to a recent study, the majority of Americans believe that alternatives to church are a biblical way to practice one's faith. This is a change from past decades, when a majority said that church was the only right way. Non-church alternatives included engaging in faith activities at home with one's family (acceptable by 89%); participating in a house church (75%); watching a religious television program (69%); and listening to a religious radio broadcast (68%) ("American's Say Non-Church Worship Fully Biblical," *Christian Post*, Feb. 18, 2008). This shows that there has been a dramatic decrease in respect for the church and in proper understanding about the church. As important as the family is, it is not a church. And religious television and radio broadcasts cannot take the place of church. As for "participating in a house church," it depends on one's definition. A proper New Testament church can meet in a house or in its own building or in the woods. The location is irrelevant. What is required for a church to be scriptural is that it is organized along biblical lines, particularly in the ordination of qualified leaders (Acts 14:23), the maintenance of a strong biblical doctrinal foundation (1 Timothy 1:3), a biblical disciplinary system (1 Corinthians 5), and a proper biblical objective, which is the fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:44-48; Acts 1:8). Paul wrote to Titus and said, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee" (Titus 1:5). There were believers in Crete and doubtless there were Christian families in Crete, but something was lacking. The believers had to be organized into proper churches and pastors ordained. Today, though, there is widespread resistance to pastoral authority. We realize that some pastors have abused their authority, and we are 100% opposed to such abuse, but that is no excuse to reject the biblical pattern of the church. "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25). "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Hebrews 13:17).

WAS CHRIST COOL?



A "cool" Jesus is very popular today, but was He cool? Jesus was a friend of sinners in that He came to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10), but He was always an enemy of sin and He never participated in any sinful activity. He was involved socially with sinners, attending their weddings and feasts, but He was not a "party animal." He lived and preached righteousness in every situation. He was a friend of sinners even while being "separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26) because of His absolute holiness. Matthew 11:19 says that Christ was "a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners," but this was what His enemies said

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EVIL COMMUNICATIONS CORRUPT GOOD MANNERS: NEW EVANGELICAL APOSTASY

When light associates with darkness and truth associates with error, the result is always the corruption of light and truth. "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. 15:33), and, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9). This is evident in the history of New Evangelicalism. It is a movement that originated in the late 1940s and described the mood of positivism and non-militancy that characterized the post-World World II generation. It was a generation that was tired of fighting and that rejected the dogmatism and separatism of its fathers, the old-time fundamentalists. Harold Ockenga, (right) who claimed to have coined the term "neo-

evangelical" in 1948, described it as "a repudiation of separatism" (Ockenga's, foreword to *The Battle for the Bible* by Harold Lindsell). The new generation of evangelicals determined to abandon a militant Bible stance. Instead, they would pursue dialogue, intellectualism, non-judgmentalism, and appeasement. What was the result? In 1978, only 30 years after the New Evangelicals repudiated separatism, Richard



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WAS CHRIST COOL? continued

about Him. Actually, He was neither gluttonous nor a winebibber; and He was a friend of publicans and sinners, not in that He partied with them but in that He loved them and sought to save them. Christ was *not* “non-judgmental.” He reproveth sin. He exposed the rich young ruler’s covetousness (Mat. 19:16-22) and the woman at the well’s fornication (John 4:16-18). Christ often warned about eternal, fiery hell (e.g., Mat. 5:22, 29, 30, 7:19; 10:28; 11:23; 13:40, 42, 50; 23:33; Mark 9:43-48; John 3:36). His very first message was “repent” (Mat. 4:17), and He warned that those who do not repent will perish (Luke 13:3; John 3:36). He called people evil (Mat. 7:11; 12:34). He looked upon people with anger for their hardness of heart (Mark 3:5). He warned people to stop sinning (John 5:14; 8:11). None of this sounds very “cool” in a worldly sense, nor would it be an effective way to keep a worldly party hopping! Christ is not cool, but He is Wonderful! “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

NEW EVANGELICAL APOSTASY, Continued
Quebedeux documented the dramatic changes that had already occurred. In his book *The Worldly Evangelicals* Quebedeux observed that the acceptance of evolutionary theories and the rejection of biblical inerrancy had become common place. He wrote, “The position affirming that Scripture is inerrant or infallible in its teaching on matters of faith and conduct, but not necessarily in all its assertions concerning history and the cosmos, is gradually becoming ascendant among the most highly respected evangelical theologians” (p. 88). Quebedeux also observed that “the wider culture has had a profound impact on the evangelical movement as a whole” (p. 115). This is a direct result of their repudiation of separation. He documented how that “in the course of establishing their respectability in the eyes of the

wider society, the evangelicals have become harder and harder to distinguish from other people” (p. 14). He described how that evangelicals had developed a tolerant attitude toward drinking, smoking, rock music, Hollywood movies, abortion, profanity, pornography, homosexuality, and that “EVEN MARIJUANA, now virtually legal in some areas of the United States, is not as forbidden among young evangelicals as it once was” (p. 119). A large number of independent Baptist churches are heading down the same path that the New Evangelicals trod 60 years ago, and they will doubtless end up in the same mess, because the road of compromise runs never up but only down and leads only to apostasy.

Is Spiritual Warning an Attack?

It seems that compromisers always misconstrue spiritual warnings. They label it an attack. They call it “shooting the wounded” and “throwing stones.” They characterize it as hatemongering. Southern Baptists Ed Stetzer and David Putman, in the book *Breaking the Missional Code* (Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2006), complain that: “Entire ministries exist to attack any cultural influence upon the church” (p. 183). Note the emotionally-charged term “attack.” They are referring to preachers who warn against such things as the filth of rock and roll and the immodesty of modern fashion. I would reply, first, that this statement is misguided in two ways. First, the biblicist warning ministries I am familiar with do not warn about ANY cultural influence, but only about those cultural influences that are worldly after a biblical definition, so this statement, in its exaggeration, is a neat

little strawman. Second, a spiritual warning that is given by a Spirit-filled child of God and that is based on Scripture is not an attack; it is not hurtful; it is not meanness; it is an act of obedience to God and compassion to the offender. If a bridge is out on a dark, stormy night and I stand in the middle of the road and wave my hands and shout for drivers to stop, I am not attacking those people. God’s Word commands, “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11), and, “These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority” (Titus 2:15). Obedience to these and the many similar commands in Scripture is not wrong, and all of the huffing and puffing of compromisers will never make it wrong. My niece, Julia, recently repented of her sinful ways and got right with the Lord. When that happened, her thinking about spiritual warnings and biblical

preaching changed dramatically. In her testimony she wrote: “The Lord has given me a love for holiness and a great respect for people that take the Bible seriously. The church that I once condemned for being over the top Christians that took the Bible too seriously are now number one in my book for their boldness in Christ. The same is true for my Uncle David and his wonderful family. He never seemed to stop praying for me, when in all truth in my mind he was just another one of those judgmental Christians, trying to ram the Bible down your throat. Now I hope I grow up to be just the same!” Please pray for Julia in her new walk with Christ.

Beware of Amusing Children with TV/Videos

The following is excerpted from *Training Your Children to Turn out Right*, an excellent book by David Sorenson (Northstar Ministries, 1820 W. Morgan St., Duluth, MN 55811, 218-726-0209, www.northstarministries.com, dhs.northstar@charter.net) -- "I am convinced that discipline of the mind itself is a major key to learning. ... Parents are guilty on two scores here. First, many a parent errs by encouraging shallow habits of entertainment. Children are allowed and even encouraged to sit and watch TV entertainment. Let us assume that what they watch is not spiritually and morally harmful (though often it is). Yet, they are allowed to essentially place their minds in neutral. They are tacitly encouraged to just sit there and be entertained. The word 'amuse' is made up of the basic word 'muse' which means to think and the alpha prefix 'a' which means to negate or 'not.' Therefore, to 'amuse' one's self essentially means to not think. And that is exactly what an entire generation of American children are doing. Whether it is cartoons, or videos, or other video entertainment, many children are tacitly encouraged to seek to be amused. Children are conditioned to be mentally lazy and pursue only what entertains their little minds. When it comes to buckling down and actually concentrating, they just shift gears mentally back into neutral and seek something to entertain themselves again. Secondly, parents are guilty of

not taking the initiative and [training the children] themselves, sitting them down and training their minds to concentrate on things which may not be interesting to them but are things which they ought to learn" (*Training Your Children to Turn Out Right*, 1995, pp. 53, 54).



THREE-FOURTHS OF MOSQUES IN AMERICA PREACH JIHAD

The following is excerpted from "Study: 3 in 4 U.S. Mosques Preach Anti-Western Extremism," *WorldNetDaily*, Feb. 23, 2008: "An undercover survey of more than 100 mosques and Islamic schools in America has exposed widespread radicalism, including the alarming finding that 3 in 4 Islamic centers are hotbeds of anti-Western extremism, WND has learned. The Mapping Sharia in America Project, sponsored by the Washington-based Center for Security Policy, has trained former counterintelligence and counterterrorism agents from the FBI, CIA and U.S. military, who are skilled in Arabic and Urdu, to conduct undercover reconnaissance at some 2,300 mosques and Islamic centers and schools across the country. 'So far of 100 mapped, 75 should be on a watchlist,' an official familiar with the project said. Many of the Islamic

centers are operating under the auspices of the Saudi Arabian government and U.S. front groups for the radical Muslim Brotherhood based in Egypt. Frank Gaffney, a former Pentagon official who runs the Center for Security Policy, says the results of the survey have not yet been published. But he confirmed that 'the vast majority' are inciting insurrection and jihad through sermons by Saudi-trained imams and anti-Western literature, videos and textbooks. The project, headed by David Yerushalmi, a lawyer and expert on sharia law, has finished collecting data from the first cohort of 102 mosques and schools. Preliminary findings indicate that almost 80 percent of the group exhibit a high level of sharia-compliance and jihadi threat ... Experts say there are at least 40 episodes of extremists and terrorists being connected to mosques in the past decade alone. Some of the

9/11 hijackers, in fact, received aid and counsel from one of the largest mosques in the Washington, D.C., area. Dar al-Hijrah Islamic Center is one of the mosques identified by undercover investigators as a hive of terrorist activity and other extremism. It was founded and is currently run by leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood. Imams there preach what is called 'jihad qital,' which means physical jihad, and incite violence and hatred against the U.S. Dar al-Hijrah's ultimate goal, investigators say, is to turn the U.S. into an Islamic state governed by sharia law."

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.