

Friday Church News Notes

Pentecostal Evangelist's Healings Not Verifiable

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Todd Bentley, who is at the head of a Pentecostal healing "revival" in Lakeland, Florida, claims that multitudes have been healed and some raised from the dead. He slams people on the forehead, shoves them, and has even kicked an elderly lady in the face and banged a crippled woman's legs on the

platform. "Holy laughter," spiritual drunkenness, violent shaking, and "falling under the power" are an integral part of the "revival." The meeting has a sideshow feel with raucous music blaring and Bentley, who is covered with tattoos, crying out, "Come and get some," and "[Miracles are] popping like popcorn." He claims to know what is happening

in the audience, calling out things like, "Someone's getting a new spinal cord tonight." The crusade began in April at Ignite Church and the crowds keep coming. Bentley's healing claims have been spectacular, with one man even saying he can now see out of a glass eye. The Associated Press tried to follow up on a list of 15 names that were given by Bentley's ministry that is supposed to represent healings that can be medically verified. "Yet two phone numbers given out by the ministry were wrong, six people did not return telephone messages and only two of the remainder, when reached by The Associated Press, said they had medical records as proof of their miracle cure. However, one woman would not make her physician available to confirm the findings, and the other's doctor did not return calls despite the patient's authorization" ("Controversial Revivals Draw Even Pentecostal Critics," *Christian Post*, July 13, 2008). It seems to me that the ability to see out of a glass eye could be easily verified. Bentley could send the guy for an eye examination, and that would be that, but don't hold your

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CHRISTIANS ARRESTED IN IRAN

More than 35 Christians who converted from Islam have been arrested in Iran since the beginning of the year (May 28, 2008, Adnkronos.com). The Iranian parliament is discussing a new law that would make it a capital offense for anyone born to a Muslim father to convert to another faith. Some have been put to death in the past even without such a law. At the same time, Muslims come to Western democracies and brashly demand the right to proselytize people into their faith.



DRESS CODE AT CHRISTIAN ROCK FESTIVAL

Creation Northeast, which was held last month in Pennsylvania, is one of the big Christian rock festivals that have been held annually since 1979. There was rock music galore and extreme sports and public baptisms and catchy T-shirts (e.g., "Caution: Unsocialized Home Schooler") -- and a



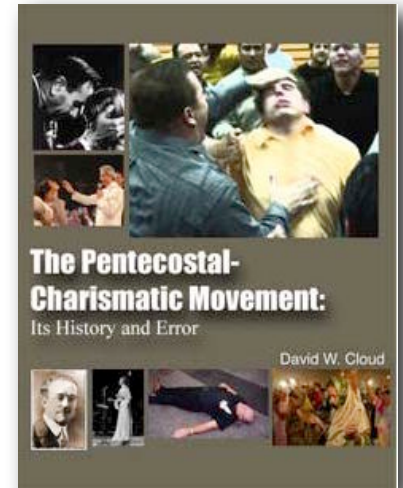
dress code. The Creation festival web site says: "MODESTY is the key word. While the style and fashion these days seems to be 'less is best,' we do not want to be guilty of causing another person to stumble. Girls: Bathing suits are NOT permitted, except in the showers. Tank tops are fine but bellies must be covered (even though the fashion now is to show it off). Shorts and/or skirts need to be long enough and shirts big enough." We say more power to them for having any type of dress code in this day and time, but it doesn't go far enough to be truly modest. They say they don't want to be guilty of causing another person to stumble, and that is a fine biblical principle. But when we took a survey last year of men as to how they are affected by various types of female

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BENTLEY, Cont.

breath. Bentley claims to be following in the footsteps of the apostles and exhibiting “kingdom power,” but he is doing no such thing. The apostles did not conduct healing meetings. They didn’t call out psychic healings. They didn’t shake and laugh hysterically and stagger around like drunks and flop around on the floor. We believe in divine healing for today, but we don’t believe in Pentecostal showmen (see “I Believe in Miracles” <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/ibelievein-miracles.html>). The devil is just as much in the business of religion today as God, and the only way we can discern the difference is by comparing all teaching and practice to the Bible. In *The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements: The History and the Error*, we document the phoniness that has characterized the ministries of Kathryn Kuhlman, Aimee Semple McPherson, William Branham, A.A. Allen, Jack Coe, Oral Roberts, Derek Prince, Charles Price, John Wimber, Charles and Frances Hunter, Benny Hinn, and many others.

Our book on the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement details the confusion and error that is rampant within this movement.



CHRISTIAN ROCK DRESS CODE, Cont.

dress styles, they told us that “tight” is just as enticing as skimpy. Most of the men indicated that tight skirts and tight blouses and form-fitting jeans hold a “VERY great potential” for lust. One man said tight skirts are “very inviting and a potential for lust.” Another said, “You don’t even need to see skin; they provide all the curves.” Another: “I would say the number one problem is any garment that is form fitting ... anything that is tight, no matter how long it is, leaves nothing to the imagination, and that defeats the whole purpose of covering the skin in the first place!” Another said: “One thing I see in my church is tight clothing. Oh, it may very well be covering but it is revealing the shape in a woman. This can be even more tantalizing to a man.” Another wrote: “The point is that it is not the type of clothing that can trip a man up, rather it is the amount and the level of cling to the body.” (See “Survey of Christian Men on the Subject of Women’s

Clothing,” <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/survey-christianmen-womensclothing.html>.) In light of this fact we must argue that tank tops are NOT fine! And neither are tight pants and tight blouses and tight t-shirts, etc. One other comment I would make is that the Christian rock crowd loves to label us “legalistic” and “pharisaical” for maintaining a dress code, but this is grossly hypocritical on their part. As we see, they have their own dress code! The only difference is that we try to base ours solidly upon the Bible and not draw short of true modesty no matter how much it sets us apart from society, whereas they waffle a great deal and give in too much to worldly fashion and the youthful concept of cool.

DOES THE BIBLE SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THE STYLE OF CHRISTIAN MUSIC?

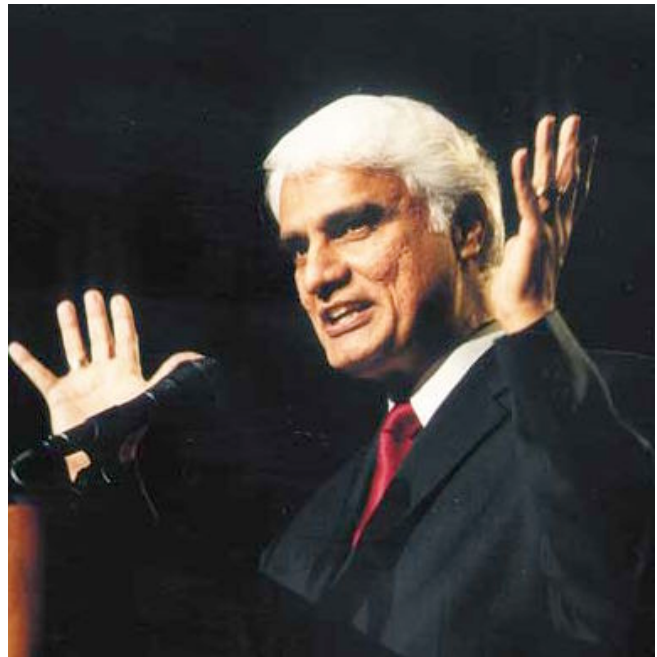
It is widely believed today that the Bible doesn’t say anything about the style of Christian music; therefore, we are free to use any style we please as long as the lyrics are sound. This is the philosophy that lies at the heart of Contemporary Christian Music, but it is false. The Bible gives some simple and clear-cut principles about music that can be adapted to any culture in any part of the world. We have used them in South Asia since 1979. I refer to principles such as these: (1) Christian music must be spiritual and therefore not fleshly (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Gal. 5:16-17). (2) Christian music must not be conformed to the world (Rom. 12:2; Jam. 4:4; 1 John 2:15-16). (3) Christian music must not be associated with darkness and idolatry (Eph. 5:11; 1 Cor. 10:21; 1 John 5:21). The music we use in the Bible-believing churches in South Asia in a pagan Hindu culture fits these Bible principles. It is

largely indigenous, meaning that most of the songs and hymns in our hymnbook were written by national believers, but the music doesn’t sound like the pop music on the FM radio stations or the soundtracks to the popular movies or the music at the Hindu festivals. It is spiritual, separated, and distinctively different from the realm of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Within the Bible’s principles about music there is a large liberty but there are also clear and distinct boundaries. I thank God for it. He took away my old worldly song 35 years ago and gave me a new song.

RAVI ZACHARIAS'S PROGRAM DROPPED BY VCY AMERICA

The following is excerpted from the announcement by VCY America radio of the discontinuation of Ravi Zacharias's *Let My People Think* program. "Since September 5, 1993 VCY America has aired 'Let My People Think' (LMPT) from Ravi Zacharias International Ministries (RZIM). ... VCY's concern with RZIM first surfaced in September 2004 when it was learned that Ravi was to speak at an 'Evening of Friendship' with Evangelicals and Latter-day Saints (Mormons) coming together at the Salt Lake Tabernacle on November 14, 2004. ... In listening to the message Ravi Zacharias preached at the Salt Lake Tabernacle, one could not object to anything he said. However, there was concern over what was not said that became troubling. Speaking at the Tabernacle, Ravi refused to address the core doctrinal issues that demanded addressing, namely the false Christology of the Mormon church and their false revelation from Joseph Smith. The Apostle Paul warned about false christs and a false gospel, but this was never uttered from Ravi. ... On April 23, 2008, VCY America received a call from a concerned listener stating that Ravi Zacharias was the 2008 Honorary Chairman of the National Day of Prayer Task Force and that his prayer for the nation was not offered in the name of Jesus. She contacted RZIM and learned that this it was deliberate not to mention Jesus' name in that Jews would be participating in the event and they did not want to cause offense. ... VCY staff contacted RZIM which confirmed that Ravi would not be praying in the name of Jesus. ... VCY found it appalling that Dr. Zacharias was willing to capitulate to the un-Scriptural interfaith ecumenism and discard the name of Jesus. We are not here as Christians to appease those of

other world religions. We cannot come to God except through His Son's righteous merits. ... Zacharias' prayer stands in stark contrast to the first prayer of the Continental Congress, which was delivered on September 7, 1774, by Reverend Jacob Duché. That distinctly Christian prayer ended with the words: 'All this we ask in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ, Thy Son and our Savior. Amen.'"



TRINITY COLLEGE AND CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSIC

We received the following notice from a reader recently: "I have written to you a number of times and appreciate the strong stand you take. I wanted to give a heads up on Trinity Baptist Church and College in Jacksonville, Florida. I was called into the ministry some years ago and have been faithfully serving at my local church. I feel that God would have me get an advanced degree, so while I was researching it I was leaning toward Trinity. My reasons were because they are accredited which I felt would be something of importance for my ministry. A few days ago I was checking in on Trinity's web site and saw that they are having a group named Calling Levi in their 10am service. They had a link to this group's web site and when I clicked on it I had to turn down my speaker because out came contemporary Christian music. This group formed while they were students at Liberty University and on their endorsements page they are endorsed by the late Jerry

Falwell as well as Assembly of God and Community Church pastors. I knew that they were going the way of progressivism and was hoping that I could stick it out while I was there, but having folks such as these in their services is just too much. I know you did a Friday notes segment on them in 2005 but you might want to put out an update, just in case people are thinking about this. I am saddened by this because I thought Trinity was a good school."

PASTORS AND CHURCHES ATTACKED IN INDIA

The following is from Voice of the Martyrs News and Prayer Update, June 10, 2008: "On May 27, Pastor Rampal Kori was beaten by two Hindu militants in Rewa, Madhya Pradesh, India. According to The Voice of the Martyrs contacts, 'The militants repeatedly struck the pastor, who was returning from prayer meetings, with an iron rod and accused him of forcibly converting villagers to Christianity. They also robbed him of 3000 Rupees (US \$70). Pastor Kori sustained serious injuries that required stitches in his head.' Meanwhile on May 26, in an unrelated incident, militants demolished a thatched church in the district of Adilabad, Andhra Pradesh. On June 1, another group attacked the Masihi Mandir Church in the district of Oriya Para, Chhattisgarh state, during a morning church service. VOM sources added, 'At approximately 11:00 a.m., the militants barged into the church building and destroyed the facility's furniture. The attackers accused the believers present of forcibly converting people, and threatened them with dire consequences if they continued to worship Christ.'"

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.