

Friday Church News Notes

Widely-Quoted Report Critical of Virginity Pledges Said to be Biased

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The following is excerpted from "Study Critical of Virginity Pledges," CNSNews.com, Dec. 31, 2008: "A study in the January issue of *Pediatrics* that is critical of virginity pledges nonetheless reveals that teens who are more religious have their first sexual encounter at the average age of 21, or four years later than teens who are not as religious. The study [authored by Janice Rosenbaum], using data from the national Adolescent Health Survey, examines 934 teens with strong religious backgrounds, 289 of whom took abstinence pledges and 645 who did not. ... Robert Rector, senior research fellow on domestic policy at the Heritage Foundation, told CNSNews.com that he has conducted several studies based on the same adolescent health survey data used in the *Pediatrics* study and come to much different conclusions. 'It was really quite extraordinary that you find in this survey that kids who took this very brief exposure to virginity pledges have dramatically better life outcomes compared to kids from the same socio-economic background,' said Rector. This included 'dramatically lower rates of teen births, abortion rates down, teen sex down, out of wedlock births down, number of sexual partners down a third to a half compared to kids from a similar socio-economic backgrounds. That's extraordinary.' ... 'It's not an abstinence versus non-abstinence message at all,' Rector told CNSNews.com.

'It's very clear that these kids that have what I call pro-abstinence, anti-permissive sex attitudes do substantially better in life. They are much more likely to abstain from sex through high school and teens who have abstained from sex through high school are twice as likely to graduate from college.' ... 'What [Rosenbaum's] really lobbying for is clearly an elimination of abstinence teaching,' Rector said. 'And so she's saying, when you look at these kids that have pro-abstinence attitudes, those pro-abstinence attitudes provide dramatically positive results but they are not linked to the virginity pledge *per se*, therefore we should do away with those pro-abstinence attitudes.

Somehow these kids sort of miraculously absorb those messages and values, so we should stop teaching those messages and values,' Rector said, 'even though her data shows that all those kids that have those pro-abstinence attitudes do much better in life.'"



CHRISTIAN ROCK EVANGELISM



Defenders of Christian rock claim that it is a necessary tool for evangelism. The book *Reaching a Generation for Christ*, edited by Richard Dunn and Mark Senter, describes this philosophy: "Contemporary music is still one of the best tools to build bridges with Christian kids and one of the best hooks to go fishing for the unsaved." I have been investigating Contemporary Christian Music off and on for 30 years. I have listened to and read the lyrics to hundreds of songs, visited at least 300 web sites produced by CCM musicians and their fans, listened to CCM radio stations in various parts of the country, etc. While there is some gospel preaching done by CCM artists, this is definitely not the main emphasis. In fact, evangelism comes across as a very low priority. Consider the SONGS themselves. Only a very tiny percentage of present a clear gospel message. Furthermore, in a large number of cases, the message, whatever it might be, is drowned out by the raucous music. The large majority of WEBSITES produced by CCM artists or fans do not contain a gospel message or a challenge to the unsaved. Most BIOGRAPHIES or interviews of CCM artists do not contain a clear testimony of salvation or any challenge to the unsaved. Consider, finally, the CONCERTS. It is rare for a clear gospel message to be given at Christian rock concerts. In reality, it's all about the sensual music. The bottom line is that CCMers are in love with rock & roll.

A CALL TO ABANDON THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM



The following is excerpted from “Christians Called to Abandon Public Education,” *WorldNetDaily*, Dec. 28, 2008: “some people are fed up with public school treatment of Christianity and have launched a campaign calling for a rescue of kids from government education programs--a ‘Call to Dunkirk.’ The name Dunkirk is famous for the hundreds of thousands of World War II allies saved in May 1940 when a flotilla of pleasure boats, fishing craft and others rescued the soldiers from the beaches near Dunkirk, France, where they were trapped by an advancing German army. ... Bruce Shortt, the author of *The Harsh Truth about Public Schools*, said, ‘culture is shaped by how we’re educated. Why should we be surprised we’re losing culturally and politically when we continue to offer up our children as living sacrifices to the Molech of government schools?’ he said. ... Voddie Baucham, Jr., author of *Family Driven Faith*, noted children spend about 14,000 hours in public schools. ‘Whoever controls those 14,000 hours controls our children’s worldview,’ he said, citing Charles Francis Potter, a signer of the *Humanist Manifesto*. He wrote, ‘What can theistic Sunday school meeting for an hour once a week do to stem the tide of a five day program of humanist teaching? The left knows that whoever controls the children owns the future. That’s why so many ‘60s radicals like Bill Ayers went into education. Now they effectively control the government school system and its curriculum. But worse, we give them our children,’ Shortt said.”

CONCLUDING NOTE BY BRO. CLOUD: I have been preaching this for 35 years. The public school system was one of the most spiritually-negative influences in my life. It helped set me on a course of rebellion that didn’t end until many years later when I was converted at age 23. Opponents of home schooling complain about the lack of “socialization,” but it was precisely the socialization that destroyed my faith and developed in me an appetite for the world. The Bible warns, “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33). I give home schooling much of the credit for the fact that all of our grown children know and serve the Lord, that they are raising their children for Christ, and that two of them are missionaries.

BUDDHISTS CAPTURING CHRISTIANS AND FORCING THEM TO CONVERT

The following is excerpted from “Buddhist Clerics Take Christians Captive,” *Worthy News*, Dec. 22, 2008: “Buddhist clerics and local council officials are holding 13 newly converted Christians captive in a pagoda in a southeastern mountainous district of Bangladesh in an attempt to forcibly return them to Buddhism. A spokesman for the Parbatta Adivasi (Hill Tract) Christian Church told Compass on condition of anonymity that ‘the plight of the Christians is horrifying.’ Local government council officials in Jorachuri sub-district in Rangamati district, some 300 kilometers (186 miles) southeast of Dhaka, are helping the Buddhist monks to hold the Christians against their will, he said. ‘The 13 tribal Christians were taken forcefully to a pagoda on Dec. 10 to accept Buddhism against their will,’ he said. ‘They will be kept in a pagoda for 10 days to perform the rituals to be Buddhists--their heads were shaved, and they were given yellow saffron robes to dress in.’ All the captive Christians are men between 28 and 52 years old, he said. They became Christians around four months ago ... ‘The chairman threatened to beat the Christians unless they change their faith to Buddhism,’ he said. ‘The chairman also threatened, ‘If you become Christian again, we will not keep you alive.’”

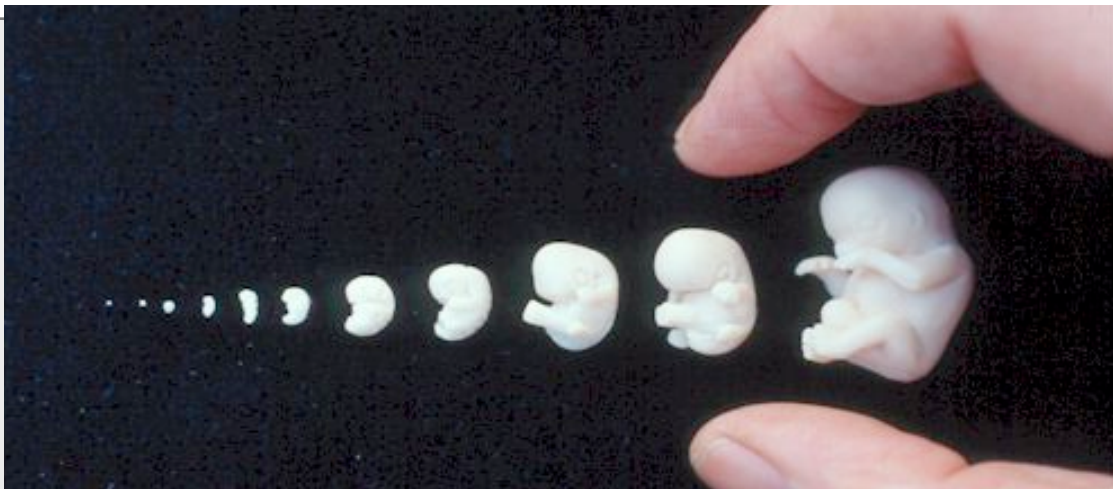


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Christmas Crackdown on Christians in China

The following is excerpted from “China Launches Christmas Crackdown,” BosNewsLife, Dec. 26, 2008: “Christians in several parts of China were behind bars on Christmas Day after a police crackdown on worship services and Bible study, a Christian advocacy group said Thursday, December 25. In one of the latest incidents, officials of the country’s main law enforcement agency, the Public Security Bureau (PSB), raided a house church Christmas party in Yucheng county of Henan province on Christmas Eve, detaining nine Christian women, said US-based China Aid Association (CAA), which has close contacts with the believers. ... The raid came after authorities in Anhui province reportedly seized a house church building and a related school in Dianlong village providing Bible studies the previous day. Tensions in

began December 22 when security forces of several agencies and Religious Affairs officials interrupted a Bible training gathering affiliated with the house church in Dianlong village , arresting 19 students and two pastors, CAA said. ... Government officials also announced that they would demolish or sell the building used for the Bible training. ... ‘The County Bureau of Religion posted sealing tape to shut off the house church building,’ CAA explained. Both church leaders reportedly expect to be summoned by local police soon. ... Earlier in on December 21, a house church in Yili city in China’s Xinjiang Autonomous Region, was reportedly banned. Pastor Xie Xianhua, who leads the church, was warned he could face arrest if he continued his house church service.”



The World’s Smallest Computer

The following is excerpted from Creation Moments, <http://www.creationmoments.net/radio/transcript.php?t=2271>: “The cells of all living things are filled with highly detailed information. The incredible system that is used for storing this information makes our best computer information systems look like a child’s simple slate board! Believe it or not, it takes more information to make a complete human being than can be stored in the average city library. And all of this information is stored in less than a few thousand millionths of a gram of material within each of our cells. You have literally billions of copies of it! Our most sophisticated computer system cannot even come close to being able to store information like that. It is estimated that one billion species of plants and animals have existed since creation. The information storage system within the cell is

so compact that all of the information to make every one of those one billion species could be held in a teaspoon--with room left over to hold all the books ever written if they, too, were stored with the same efficient system. Even more amazing is that this information storage system is not only able to store information like a computer but, unlike a computer, it can also copy itself and correct errors if any creep into the information! How could anyone believe that this brilliant information storage, copying and correction system could have come about by chance? To believe that this could be created by no one is certainly an act of faith. But it is clearly the wrong faith! And that highlights what the origins debate is really all about.”

FRET NOT THYSELF BECAUSE OF EVIL DOERS

“Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming. The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation. Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked” (Psalms 37:1-16).

Homeschoolers Taken to Court in Brazil

The following is excerpted from OneNewsNow, Jan. 5, 2009: “A Brazilian family has been charged with intellectual abandonment for choosing to home school their children. Cleber and Bernadeth Nunes of Brazil decided to home school their children three years ago despite the fact it is against the law in their country. Cleber says they made the decision because it was in the best interest of their children. ‘It’s well-known the fact that education here in Brazil is a failure,’ the father says. ‘The statistics show that more than 70 percent of teenagers from 15- to 19-years-old [are] illiterate.’ He also adds that violence in school is rampant with more than 80 percent of teachers suffering some form of violence from students. ... As part of the trial involving the Nunes family, the children were tested by 16 teachers in a variety of subjects. Cleber says they passed with very high scores and then were ordered to undergo a mental examination. ‘The psychologist reported that they are mentally healthy,’ he says. Yet despite the growing evidence against the charges, the judges refused to drop the case. One of the judges ruled that the test scores should not even be

considered because the quality of public schooling versus home schooling was not on trial, and that home schooling can never replace public school. According to Cleber, that decision proves that the court is ignoring the welfare of the children, and that the real goal is to indoctrinate children in order to be controlled by the state. The Nunes plan to appeal the decision.”



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