

# Friday Church News Notes

## More Emerging Church Coolness: THE PURPLE PEOPLE LEADER

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Pastor Steven Furtick (right) of Elevation Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, has announced a series of talks on leadership principles entitled "Purple People Leader." Whatever can be said about these people, one thing is sure; they are worldly cool. The name is a take on the silly 1950s pop song "Purple People Eater." Since it hit #1 on the Billboard chart in 1958, the song has sold one hundred million copies. It is about a "one-eyed, one-horned, flying purple people eater" that comes to earth to play in a rock & roll band. Furtick says, "Rather than run from culture we have chosen to harness it..." (Elevation Church, "Basis Beliefs"). But the Bible warns that the devil is the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4), and God's people are not to be conformed to it (Rom. 12:2). We must carefully weigh the acceptability of anything we adapt from "culture." The silly cannot be effectively used to represent the spiritually solemn, nor the ungodly the godly, nor the unclean the clean, nor the profane the holy. Furtick's thinking reflects the misguided belief of Mark Driscoll

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## ROCK STAR KARAOKE AT SADDLEBACK CHURCH

The latest edition of Saddleback Church's publication "The Slice of Life" advertises "Rock Star Karaoke." The announcement says, "Are you a single adult looking to blow off some steam and sing your heart out? Then join us for Rock Star Karaoke this Saturday, January 24 at 8:00 p.m. in Tent 2 and sing your favorite hits and watch others do the same! This is your chance to feel like a rock star, so bring your friends!" Church wasn't nearly this fun in Paul's day, but he was stuck in that old-fashioned "be not conformed to the world" mentality (Romans 12:2). That was a real drag, but the seeker churches have been liberated from such wearisome business.

## THE SHACK CONTINUES IN NO. 1 SPOT

"The Shack" has held first place on the New York Times bestseller list for Paperback Trade Fiction for 33 weeks. Though its author, William Young, is not a member of a church and is even reticent to call himself a Christian and though its doctrine of God is grossly heretical, the novel is being touted as a helpful Christian book. "The Shack" has been endorsed by CCM artist Michael W. Smith, Eugene Peterson (Regent College professor and author of *The Message*), Mark Batterson (senior pastor of National Community Church in Washington, D.C.), and Gayle Erwin of Calvary Chapel, among many others. The gross error of this book was exposed in the report "The Shack: Father-goddess Rising," Lighthouse Trails Research, April 23, 2008. Following is an excerpt: "With themes of overcoming loss, working through anger, and restored relationship between man and God, Young's novel has

excited many. ... Yet, in the midst of such enthusiasm, does *The Shack* glorify Jesus Christ--or contradict the Bible with a false image of the Lord our God? The novel's main character, Mack Philips, has lost his daughter. She has been murdered, her bloodied dress found in an isolated shack. Four years later Mack receives an invitation from God to spend time with the Trinity in the very shack where the dress was found. Nowhere in the Bible do Father, Son, and Holy Spirit simultaneously assume physical forms on earth. The Shack, however, portrays Jesus as a carpenter, the Holy Spirit as an Asian woman, and God the Father as a large black woman named ... Papa. ... At one point the book's version of Jesus praises the fictional Father-goddess, exclaiming, 'Isn't she great?' Contrariwise, in the entire Bible there is not one single reference to Father, Son,

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**Purple People Leader, from page 1.....**

and the Acts 29 planting network. Driscoll claims to be “THEOLOGICALLY CONSERVATIVE AND CULTURALLY LIBERAL” (“Pastor Provocateur,” *Christianity Today*, Sept. 21, 2007). He criticizes “hardcore fundamentalism that throws rocks at culture.” He defines himself as “relevant,” “contextual,” and “cool” (“Conference examines the emerging church,” Baptist Press, Sept. 25, 2007). Mark Driscoll’s church sets up a “champagne bar” at its New Year’s Eve parties. They have “beer-brewing lessons” for men, show R-rated movies, and operate the Paradox Theater to host secular rock concerts. Scott Thomas, director of Acts 29, says, “We won’t water down our theology to reach more people and we won’t attack the culture in the name of Christianity” (<http://www.acts29network.org/about/welcome/>). These are contradictory statements. You can’t be faithful to the Bible (having rock-solid theology) if you “contextualize the gospel” and refuse to attack the sinful and satanic side of culture, which is a very large side of it in a world in which the devil is god! God’s Word commands, “*And have NO fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, BUT RATHER REPROVE THEM*” (Eph. 5:11). John the Baptist lost his head for rebuking a political leader for his immorality. Too bad he did not have one of Driscoll’s books to help him learn how to be culturally liberal. The emerging John would have been much, much cooler.

**The Shack, from page 1.....**

or Holy Spirit--or to any of His angels--as female. ... There is an apparent dismissal of the importance of Scripture, which is reflected in slippery theology found throughout the novel. Young writes, ‘Nobody wanted God in a box, just in a book. Especially an expensive one bound in leather with gilt edges, or was that guilt edges?’ ... The Father-goddess of *The Shack*, it seems, is never about guilt or punishment. She benignly informs Mack, ‘I don’t need to punish people for sin.’ ... An excellent writer, Young plays to emotion and touches on legitimate hurts and concerns. The author excels at imbuing his deity with attributes of love, forgiveness, and mercy, and this is what many people have responded to. Increasingly in novels and movies the Lord is blithely used as one of the characters and given words from the mouth of man.”

**MICRO MARVELS OF THE HUMAN EYE**

The following is excerpted from Creation Moments, <http://www.creationmoments.com/radio/transcript.php?t=2294>: “The tiny computer chip--the basis of modern computers--is a thin wafer of silicon only about 7 millimeters across--about one fourth of an inch. This tiny chip might have the equivalent of 100,000 transistors built into it. Despite its size, hundreds of connections might be attached to it. The design of the computer chip is a marvel surpassed only by the amazing technology that can build it. If you were to find a silicon chip lying in the silicon sand at the beach, you would never be able to convince even one engineer that the chip had formed through the chance movements of all that silicon based sand! Now consider the human eye. The retina at the back of the eye is a very thin membrane,



much thinner than even the clingiest food wrap. This retina contains not transistors but much more sophisticated photo receptors, each of which is a high gain amplifier. The retina doesn’t have 100,000 of these, but rather it has 200,000 for each square millimeter of retina! But the greatest wonder of all is how any scientist can say that your miraculous eye is the result of unguided genetic mistakes that, just by chance, resulted in the eye. Indeed, God's fingerprints are all over the creation, just as our human work is seen in the computer chip. How can one who can design only the computer chip dare question the One who can design the eye--and so much more!”

*The Friday Church News Notes is designed for use in churches and is published by Way of Life Literature’s Fundamental Baptist Information Service. Unless otherwise stated, the Notes are written by David Cloud. Of necessity we quote from a wide variety of sources, but this obviously does not imply an endorsement. For instructions on how to unsubscribe to this list or to change mailing addresses, please consult the information paragraph at the end.*

## SEA ICE ENDS YEAR AT SAME LEVEL AS 1979

The following is excerpted from Michael Asher's Blog, DailyTech.com, January 1, 2009: "Thanks to a rapid rebound in recent months, global sea ice levels now equal those seen 29 years ago, when the year 1979 also drew to a close. Ice levels had been tracking lower throughout much of 2008, but rapidly recovered in the last quarter. In fact, the rate of increase from September onward is the fastest rate of change on record, either upwards or downwards. The data is being reported by the University of Illinois's Arctic Climate Research Center, and is derived from satellite observations of the Northern and Southern hemisphere polar regions. Each year, millions of square kilometers of sea ice melt and refreeze. However, the mean ice anomaly--defined as the

seasonally-adjusted difference between the current value and the average from 1979-2000, varies much more slowly. That anomaly now stands at just under zero, a value identical to one recorded at the end of 1979, the year satellite record-keeping began. ... Earlier this year, predictions were rife that the North Pole could melt entirely in 2008. Instead, the Arctic ice saw a substantial recovery. ... In May, concerns over disappearing sea ice led the U.S. to officially list the polar bear a threatened species, over objections from experts who claimed the animal's numbers were increasing."

## ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY FLAUNTING HOLY MATRIMONY

The entertainment industry typically flaunts God's holy law of marriage. Recently it was reported that popular actor Johnny Depp is planning to wed his "long-term partner" Vanessa Paradis. The two have lived together for years and have two children. Paradis "has frequently made it clear she isn't a fan of traditional nuptials" (*The Kathmandu Post*, "City Post," Jan. 19, 2009, p. 3). In October 2008 she told *Elle* magazine, "Maybe one day, but it's something I can really do without." The Bible says, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4).

## COUNTRY MUSIC GARBAGE

We have often warned about the moral danger of country music. Recently we were informed of another example. Consider the lyrics to Toby Keith's song "God Love Her": "Just a girl born in Dixie, washed in the blood/ And raised on the banks of the Mississippi mud/ She always had a thing about fallin' in love with a bad boy/ Yeah they could see it all comin'/ But her daddy never dreamed/ She'd grow up that fast, you know what I mean/ The way a girl gets when she turns seventeen, kinda crazy/ She's a rebel child and a preacher's daughter/ She was baptized in dirty water/ Her mama cried the first time they caught her with me/ They knew they couldn't stop her/ She holds tight to me and the Bible/ On the back seat of my motorcycle/ Left her daddy standing there preaching to the choir, you see/ God love her Oh, me and God love her." Only the Lord knows how many young people have been morally corrupted and spiritually ruined through the influence of this type of filthy music and the country music culture that has grown up around it. This song pretends that a girl can love the Lord and be "washed in the blood" and love wickedness, too, but the Bible says, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). Beware of country music. It is immorality wrapped in a thin veneer of vain religion. "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Titus 1:16).



## OPRAH MINISTERS CLAIM THAT “GAY IS A GIFT FROM GOD”

Two “ministers” who appeared on the Oprah Winfrey Show earlier this month claimed that homosexuality is God’s gift. Ed Bacon of All Saints Episcopal Church in Pasadena, California, declared, “Being gay is a gift from God” (“Oprah Tackles New Issue,” *WorldNetDaily*, Jan. 19, 2009). Michael Beckwith, founder of Agape International Spiritual Center in Los Angeles, enthusiastically agreed, giving Bacon a high-five. Bacon said that his mail ran 30-1 in favor of his position, and he characterized the protests as “mean-spirited.” To the unrepentant rebel, it is mean-spirited and unloving to preach the Bible literally and to “reprove, rebuke, exhort” as God commands (2 Timothy 4:2). The Pharisees doubtless thought Jesus was mean-spirited when He rebuked them for their errors as recorded in Matthew 23. The rebel mistakes correction for persecution. “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Proverbs 1:7). In fact, preaching the truth of God’s Word in this dark world is a most compassionate thing. Southern California probably has the greatest number of religious kooks per square mile of any place on earth. When I visited Los Angeles in 1972 to worship at the headquarters of the Self-Realization Fellowship, even my drug-sotted, pagan-polluted mind was astounded at the vast number of “churches” and religious cults that were listed in the yellow pages.



Bacon lays hands on members of his church

## POPE TO HAVE HIS OWN GOOGLE CHANNEL

The Vatican has announced that it is collaborating with Google for the pope to have his own video channel. Texts and video of his speeches as well as papal news will be posted to the channel (“Pope to have Own Google Channel,” Yahoo.com, Jan. 17, 2009). Bible-believing pastor friends, try getting your own Google channel and see what happens! The late Pope John Paul II recognized the power of the internet and began using the web aggressively to broadcast his teaching. The Roman Catholic Church is not currently the power it was during former times, but she

is still the seat of the age-old apostasy and wields great influence throughout the world. She is morphing into something new today, adapting herself to Protestantism, theological liberalism, Pentecostalism, evangelicalism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and the New Age. According to Bible prophecy, Rome will collaborate with the antichrist and be destroyed during the Great Tribulation (Revelation 17). She is not the only harlot Christian religion, but she is the Mother of Harlots.

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