

Friday Church News Notes

The Emerging Church, Paganism, Catholicism and the New Age

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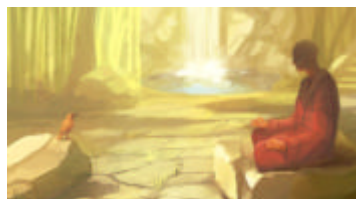
Richard Rohr and the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico, is hosting an emerging church conference for three days beginning March 20. Speakers include Brian McLaren, Phyllis Tickle, and Shane Claiborne (left). It is billed as “the first large gathering of Roman Catholic, Mainline Protestant, Evangelical, and other Christians seeking to explore this emergence and convergence together.” Rohr is a Franciscan priest who is heavily involved in contemplative mysticism and liberal “social-justice” works. He holds to a universalistic, panentheistic doctrine and believes that much in the Bible, such as the Garden of Eden, is mythical. Like Thomas Merton, Rohr integrates pagan contemplative practices with that of ancient Catholic “saints.” He has adapted such things as Buddhist koans and Hindu mantras. In January 2008 Rohr and his organization sponsored a conference called “Jesus and Buddha: Paths to Awakening.” The announcement said, “The teachings of both Jesus and Buddha call us to transformational honesty. They are both teaching us how to see, and how to see all the way through! They both knew that if you see God for yourself, you will see the Divine in all things.” Rohr says that his philosophy teaches “us to be both-and” and “keeps us from either-or.” It “keeps us from the false choice of liberal or conservative” and “allows us to enjoy both sides of things”; it “is far beyond my religion versus your religion” and “allows us to be both distinct and yet united.” In fact, this is the essence of Hinduism, the New Age, and the Emerging Church. Biblical Christianity, on the other hand, teaches us that there is truth and error, right and wrong, good and bad, God and the Devil, light and dark, that there is only one way of salvation and many false ways, and that men are either saved or lost. The end-time New Age Tower of Babel is being built before our very eyes.



NEW AGE COMING TO MUSLIMS IN GAZA

The Center for Mind-Body Medicine based in Washington, D.C. is busy educating Muslims in Gaza in New Age techniques such as meditation, guided imagery, and biofeedback. Thousands there have been trained in these techniques (“Stressed Gazans Turn to Meditation,” AP, March 12). Mysticism is the glue of the New Age movement. It is what holds all of its diverse aspects together. Mysticism brought the East to the West and is bringing the New Age to society in general. Mysticism is focused on experience, feeling, emotion, intuition, and perception. The 1950s Beat generation and the 1960s Hippie

generation were hooked on mysticism, both through Eastern religious practices and hallucinogenic drugs, and this attraction has since grown and spread through every level of society. Books by mystical New Age gurus such as M. Scott Peck, Deepak Chopra, and Shakti Gawain sell tens of millions of copies.



CHRISTIAN ROCK HASN'T WORKED

From the inception of Christian rock in the 1970s, we have been told that it is needed in order to “reach the youth.” It is THE music of ecumenical evangelism. Now we learn from the latest Barna Poll that less than one-half of one percent of youth in America aged 18-23 have a “biblical worldview.” The poll defined this as such things as believing that absolute moral truth exists, that the Bible is completely accurate in all of the principles it teaches, and that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life. Those are pathetically basic truths, so say the least, but the number of young people in America that believe them is infinitesimal. How can that be with all of the ecumenical evangelism programs and all of the churches broadcasting Christian rock? The fact is that there is no spiritual power in Christian rock. Romans 12:2 forbids us to be conformed to the world, and God is never pleased with disobedience to His Word. The Bible says that the Christian race must be run according to the divine rule or there is no reward. “And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully” (2 Tim. 2:5). Even sincere disobedience is displeasing to God. When Uzzah steadied the cart holding the ark, God struck him dead (1 Sam. 6:6-7). It appears from the record that Uzzah was sincerely trying to assist in the service of God, but God did not accept it because it was not done according to His Word.



PARENTS TO BLAME FOR AMERICA'S LIBERAL DRIFT

The following is excerpted from *WorldNetDaily*, Nov. 17, 2008: "The big victory on Election Day by 'liberal' Democrats shouldn't be a surprise, because American parents, even many conservatives, have been training their kids to be liberals for too long, says Reb Bradley, author of 'Born Liberal, Raised Right: How to Rescue America from Moral Decline--One Family at a Time,' ... 'A few decades ago, people were just as human as we are in this decade,' he writes. 'Like us, they got angry, they lusted, they coveted, and they drowned their grief by one means or another. But in one important way, they were different from us--they had greater self-control. Because they were more self-restraining, they did not allow themselves to be ruled by their anger; hence the murder rate was markedly less. They lusted, but they had greater sexual self-restraint. They coveted other people's money and possessions, but they had the ability to not act on their covetousness. In the last 40 years we have lost the virtue of self-control. No longer is our society populated by individuals who can restrain or govern themselves. To lack the capacity to control one's urges or passions is to lack what our nation's Founders called personal *self-government*.' ... These ideas are not really new, explains Bradley. They are just in need of rediscovery. He points out that in 1926 Minnesota Gov. Theodore Christianson established a state crime commission. At the end of its research, the commission concluded that criminal tendencies were not the result of poverty, education or environment. Instead, it made the following observation: 'Every baby starts life as a little savage. He is completely selfish and self-centered; he wants

what he wants when he wants it: his bottle, his mother's attention, his playmate's toys, his uncle's watch, or whatever. Deny him these and he seethes with rage and aggressiveness which would be murderous were he not so helpless. He's dirty, he has no morals, no knowledge, no developed skills. This means that all children, not just certain children but all children, are born delinquent. If permitted to continue in their self-centered world of infancy, given free rein to their impulsive actions to satisfy each want, every child would grow up a criminal, a thief, a killer, a rapist.'" The Bible says, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Proverbs 22:15).



A MASTER'S DEGREE IN FOOLISHNESS

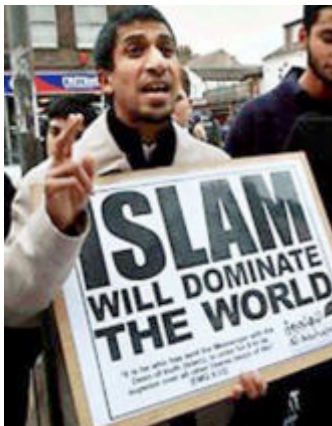
Liverpool Hope University has begun offering a Master of Arts degree in "The Beatles, Popular Music and Society." This reminds us that the Beatles are the most popular and influential rock band of all time. *Rolling Stone* magazine ranked them number one in its list of 100 "Greatest Artists." They have sold over one billion records internationally. This is in spite of the fact that none of the Beatles could read a note of music. They have been called "a revolution" and "a cultural earthquake." More than 8,000 books have been written about them. Their 2000 album, titled "1," debuted at No. 1 on pop charts in the U.S.A. and 16 other countries and sold more than 3.6 million copies the first week. Even Contemporary Christian musicians are Beatles fans. Phil Keaggy pays "homage to the Beatles" on his 1993 *Crimson and Blue* album. Galactic Cowboys admits that their biggest influence is the Beatles. Caedmon's Call often performs Beatles music. dc Talk opened its "Jesus Freak" concerts with the Beatles' song "Help." The lead guitarist for Jars of Clay is said to be a "Beatles fanatic." We give many more examples of this in the article "The Beatles and Contemporary Christian Music," which is available at the Way of Life web site. The Beatles' evil influence permeates Western society and can be felt throughout the world. When John Lennon blurted out in 1966 that the Beatles were more popular than Jesus, he might have been right. The Beatles have had a vast influence upon the hearts and minds, not only of the unsaved, but also of professing Christians, and have helped to create a corrupt form of Christianity that merges paganism with Christ, a Christianity that believes it is wrong to judge sin or to live by strict biblical standards or to say that there is only one way of truth. The average Christian today thinks nothing of going to church on Sunday and then watching R-rated movies and listening to R-rated music the rest of the week; and he knows more about rock stars and sports idols and raunchy television sitcoms than he does about the Bible. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Timothy 3:5).

EUROPEAN UNION BANS USE OF “MISS” AND “MRS”

The following is excerpted from the *Daily Mail Reporter*, London, March 16, 2009: “Brussels bureaucrats have decided the words are sexist and issued new guidelines in its bid to create ‘gender-neutral’ language. The booklet warns European politicians they must avoid referring to a woman’s marital status. This also means Madame and Mademoiselle, Frau and Fraulein and Senora and Senorita are banned. ... Man-made is also taboo; it should be artificial or synthetic. ... They have reacted with incredulity to the booklet, which has been sent out by the Secretary General of the European Parliament. Scottish Tory MEP Struan Stevenson (right) described the guidelines as ‘political correctness gone mad’. He said: ‘This is frankly ludicrous.’ ... West Midlands Conservative MEP Philip Bradbourn said, ‘I will have no part of it. I will continue to use my own language and expressions, which I have used all my life, and will not be instructed by this institution or anyone else in these matters. ... The Parliament, by the publication of this document, is not only bringing itself as an institution into more disrepute than it already suffers, but it is also showing that it has succumbed to the politically correct clap-trap currently in vogue.’”



Struan Stevenson opposes the handbook which takes politically correct speech to new levels in the EU.



MUSLIMS ATTACK “CHRISTIANS ON FACEBOOK” WEB SITE

The following is excerpted from Persecution Blog, March 12, 2009: “Todd Snider, whose pro-Israel site on Facebook was hacked and destroyed by Hezbollah supporters, is not alone; Facebook Jihad is breaking out all over. The group Christians On Facebook has become the latest target of attack for hackers who are posting pro-Islam messages. At 11:15am CDT today, the group’s name was changed to ‘La ilaha illallahu Muhammadur Rasulullah,’ which means ‘There is no god but Allah; Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.’ Since then the name has changed no fewer than ten times. The Christians on Facebook group itself has over 327,000 members from all variations of the Christian faith. This channel or group hack appears to have been designed to replace the fundamental tenants of Christianity with those of Islam.”

GOD IS IN HIS HOLY TEMPLE AND ALL WILL BE WELL FOR THE RIGHTEOUS

“The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD’S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men. The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup. For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright. (Psalms 11:4-7).

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UNCONDITIONAL LOVE?

The emerging church claims that God's love is unconditional, but this is a serious error. God's love is unfathomable, but it is not unconditional. Consider the following statements that the Lord Jesus Christ made: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (John 14:21). "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (John 15:5-6). "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:21-23). "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).

CONCLUSION: 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. We trust that our readers will not be discouraged. 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. The News Notes remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the Lord's coming. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ? "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 mailing list. To SUBSCRIBE, UNSUBSCRIBE, or CHANGE ADDRESSES go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/wayoflife/subscribe.html>. Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org.