

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

- Week of April 16, 2023 -

Sunday Morning Service -----	45
Sunday Evening Service -----	26
Wednesday Eve., 04/19/23 Service -----	20

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

- Week of April 16, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,494.60
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 04/16/23:	\$ 1,494.06

- Week of April 9, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,650.00
Foundation Piering Fund -----	\$ 255.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 04/09/23:	\$ 1,905.00

- Week of April 2, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,986.05
Foundation Piering Fund -----	\$ 50.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 04/02/23:	\$ 2,036.05

- Week of March 26, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 775.36
Foundation Piering Fund -----	\$ 5,150.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 03/26/23:	\$ 5,925.36

- Week of March 19, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,102.90
Foundation Piering Fund -----	\$ 325.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 03/19/23:	\$ 1,427.90

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed for church operating expenses EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,600.00



FOUNDATION PIERING FUND -

Amount Received, Week of 04/16/23: \$ 0.00

Amount For Entire Project ----- \$13,600.00

Amount Received So Far ----- \$13,253.00

Total Still Needed To Pay Off Entire Repair: \$ 347.00

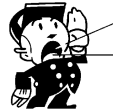
LISTEN TO -



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WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. Admit that you are a sinner.
2. Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.
3. Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.
4. You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).
5. By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, Who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.



THANK YOU For Your Continued Faithfulness In Giving!

During the early part this pandemic, we were unable to meet in the church-house. But - that did not mean that the expenses of having a church-house were suspended. We still had bills to pay - electricity, gas, water, trash pickup, phone, internet, facility insurance, copier lease, office supplies, etc., and, praise the Lord, His people kept praying, watching online, & supporting their church with their giving.

Sadly, some people only give when they are in attendance at church - sort of like paying for "services rendered" - but the truth is that they are robbing **THEMSELVES** of God's blessings when they withhold their tithes and offerings and only give when they are here (see Malachi 3:10). Thankfully, most of our people have remained faithful, in so many ways, during this crisis, including financially.

WE HAVE 3 WAYS YOU CAN GIVE:

1. **By mail** - 23 East Wells Blvd., Sapulpa, OK 74066
2. **Drop it off** - call the Church Office to arrange it. 224-1924
3. **Online** - Go to the link below and give electronically:

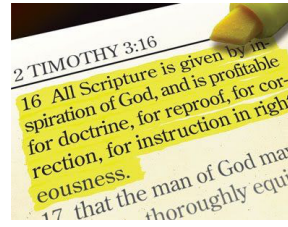
<https://tithe.ly/give?c=433047>

**WE ARE GLAD WE CAN NOW GATHER TOGETHER TO PRAISE GOD & STUDY HIS WORD TOGETHER IN THE CHURCH-HOUSE!
YOUR FAITHFUL AND GENEROUS GIFTS WILL HELP US KEEP UP WITH THE BILLS AND CONTINUE OUR RENEWED OUTREACH EFFORTS!**

Church Directory

Todd W. White -----	Pastor
Debra Carlton, Mickie Shatwell, Lois Mae Floyd -----	Pianists
Derek Quinnelly -----	Greeter
Larry & Mary Byars -----	Outreach
LeAnna White -----	Custodian
GinaMarie Shufelt -----	Flowers
Seth White -----	Sound/Video
Larry Byars, David Smith, Derek Quinnelly -----	Trustees

REMINDER



The Attack On Biblical Inspiration

by Evangelist David Cloud

The authority of the Bible is foundational to everything in the Christian life and ministry, and there is a great and relentless attack upon the infallible inspiration of Scripture in our day. God's people need to settle this matter in their own hearts and be able to give an answer to

those who cast doubt upon Scripture.

The individual, home, or church that gives even an inch to those who are casting doubt upon the Bible's plenary (full), verbal inspiration are in great spiritual danger. They are playing right into the hands of that enemy whose first words to mankind were, "**Yea, hath God said?**" They have taken the first step toward shipwreck.

The Attack upon Biblical Inspiration

The Word of God has been assaulted from the very beginning of man's history until now. The attack began with Satan's lies to Eve (Ge. 3:1-5).

Following are recent examples of the attack upon God's Word:

Modernism or theological rationalism began in the 1800s in Germany and quickly spread to England and America and throughout the world. It was the application of the theory of evolution to the Bible. According to this view, the Bible was not given by God; it simply evolved as man's thinking about God evolved. Thus, the Bible is filled with errors and myths. They denied miracles such as the judgments on Egypt, crossing Red Sea, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Jonah, and the virgin birth.

I do not consider any man sound in the faith who questions even a jot or tittle of the infallible inspiration of Scripture. Such men--e.g., Erwin Nestle, Eugene Nida, Eugene Peterson, Bruce Metzger, J.B. Phillips, and C.S. Lewis--are frequently quoted by "evangelicals" today. We refuse to follow this example. We don't want any reader to think that such men are sound and possibly be influenced by them.

Modernists have especially attacked the first five books of the Bible. If the historicity and divine inspiration of the Pentateuch is questionable, the rest of the Bible automatically falls.

The JEDP Theory

The attack began with the first five books of the Bible.

The Bible teaches that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible under divine inspiration (Deut. 31:9). See also Exodus 24:4; Numbers 33:2. Jesus called the Pentateuch "the law of Moses" (Luke 24:44). Jesus quoted from every part of the Pentateuch and said Moses wrote it. He quoted Leviticus 13 (Matt. 8:4), Deuteronomy 24 (Matt. 19:7-8; Mark 10:3-6), Exodus 20:12 and 21:17 (Mark 7:10), and Numbers 21:7-9 (John 3:14).

But theological liberals invented a theory that the Pentateuch was written by an unknown group of men over a long period of time. "*This view believes that the Pentateuch represents the conflation of four different sources rather than the work of primarily one author*" (Theopedia). It is called the JEDP theory after the names of the supposed documents -- **J** (Jahwist or Jehovahist), **E** (Elohist), **P** (Priestly), **D** (Deuteronomy). It is called the *Documentary Theory*, because it claims that the Pentateuch was pieced together from various documents.

This theory was taught by Julius Wellhausen in his 1878 German work *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*. The view appeared

(continued inside)

in the Encyclopedia Britannica entry on “Israel” in 1881 and began to spread among English-speaking people.

Parts of the Pentateuch were supposedly written in the early part of Israel’s kingdom in the 10th century BC, other parts in the 8th century BC. The book of Deuteronomy was supposedly written in the 7th century BC by Jewish leaders during the reign of King Josiah. Finally, according to this theory, the Pentateuch was edited together in the 5th century BC, possibly by Ezra, to instruct Israel in the Babylonian Captivity and to unify them as a people.

According to the JEDP theory, the Pentateuch is a “pious fraud,” because the unknown men who wrote it allegedly had good intentions, even though what they were writing was not true. They wrote it, we are told, to teach Israel about God and to support revival efforts. But the book of Exodus claims that Moses wrote it (Exodus 17:4; 24:4; 34:27-28), and if he did not write it, the book is a blatant lie.

The JEDP theory has undergone continual modification as its various fundamental points have been disproved and as new theories have been proposed. The one original JEDP theory has been gradually replaced by a bewildering number of competing theories.

Regardless of what particular theory they hold, most theologians today believe that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses (or primarily by Moses) in the 15th century BC under divine inspiration, but that it was written by multiple authors over a long period of time and edited into its final form in the time of the Persian Empire.

An example of the modernistic approach to the Old Testament is found in a commentary by CHARLES F. KRAFT (Genesis: Beginnings of the Biblical Drama, The Methodist Church, 1964).

“Clearly, then, the Book of Genesis is a remarkable combination of ancient folklore, tradition, custom, myth” (Charles Kraft, Genesis, pp. 11, 12).

“... it [the Genesis creation account] is the sublime statement of religious faith hammered out over the centuries of Israel’s history” (Kraft, Genesis, p. 27).

“Above all, it is of the utmost importance that we see in the story not merely primeval history about the first man and the first woman which our current knowledge of geology, anthropology, and biology will not allow us to accept. ... not primarily two individuals, Adam and Eve, but, as their names imply, ‘the man’ and ‘the woman,’ that is, every man and every woman” (Kraft, Genesis, p. 54).

The account of Genesis does not contradict any proven fact of science. To the contrary, it fits every established “fact.” Genesis one, for example, says God created the animals and plants to reproduce “after their kind.” That is precisely what we observe in the world. The genetic barriers between the species is a specific fact.

Kraft questions the historicity of Adam and Eve, claiming the biblical account is probably a religious myth that depicts general truths of some sort. Adam and Eve are mentioned 35 times in 12 books of the Bible (Gen. 2-5; Deut. 32:8; I Chron. 1:1; Job 31:33; Matt. 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-7; Luke 3:38; Rom. 5:12, 14; I Cor. 15:22, 45; II Cor. 11:3; I Tim. 2:13-14; Jude 1:14). Luke 3:38 says that Jesus came from Adam. If there was no Adam, the entire Bible is a lie.

Charles Kraft is only one of thousands and thousands of biblical scholars who deny the infallibility of Holy Scripture.

Liberalism Has Spread into Evangelicalism

Beginning in the 1940s, there was a widespread rejection of the Bible’s teaching on separation from error. New Evangelicals represented a new generation of old-time fundamentalists. They did not like separation and contending for the faith and other “negative” aspects of old-time Christianity. They wanted a positive Christianity. As a result of the breakdown of separation, the corruption of liberalism has spread everywhere.

Harold Ockenga, a prominent evangelical leader, stated the position of New Evangelicalism:

“Neo-evangelicalism was born in 1948 in connection with a convocation address which I gave in the Civic Auditorium in Pasadena. While reaffirming the theological view of Fundamentalism, this address repudiated its ecclesiology and its social theory. The ringing call for **A REPUDIATION OF SEPARATISM** and the summons to social involvement received a hearty response from many Evangelicals. It differed from Fundamentalism in its repudiation of separatism and its **DETERMINATION TO ENGAGE ITSELF IN THE THEOLOGICAL DIALOGUE OF THE DAY**. It had a new emphasis upon the application of the gospel to the sociological, political, and economic areas of life” (Ockenga, foreword to Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible*).

The New Evangelical leaven spread rapidly. New Evangelical philosophy was adopted by such well-known Christian leaders as Billy Graham, Bill Bright, John R.W. Stott, Luis Palau, Leighton Ford, Charles Stanley, Bill Hybels, Warren Wiersbe, Chuck Colson, Charles Swindoll, and a host of others.

New Evangelicalism was popularized through pleasant personalities and broadcast through powerful print, radio, and television media. Christianity Today was founded in 1956 to voice the new philosophy.

Through publishing houses such as InterVarsity Press, Zondervan, Tyndale House Publishers, Moody Press, and Thomas Nelson--to name a few--New Evangelical philosophy was broadcast across the world. New Evangelicalism became the working principle of organizations such as the National Association of Evangelicals, National Religious Broadcasters, Youth for Christ, Campus Crusade for Christ, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, World Vision, Operation Mobilization, the Evangelical Foreign Mission Association, etc. It was spread through prominent educational institutions such as Fuller

Theological Seminary, Wheaton College, Gordon-Conwell, BIOLA, and Moody Bible Institute. Countless conferences have been organized to promote New Evangelicalism.

Two of the largest and most influential were Amsterdam ‘83 and Amsterdam ‘86 which were sponsored by Billy Graham Ministries and were attended by thousands of preachers from across the world.

In 1984, Francis Schaeffer published *The Great Evangelical Disaster*. The book’s title describes the thesis. The cover jacket says, “*In this explosive new book Dr. Francis Schaeffer exposes the rise of compromise and accommodation, and the tragic consequences of this, within the evangelical church.*” The issue that Schaeffer called “the watershed of evangelicalism” is the inspiration and authority of the Bible. He testified, “*Within evangelicalism there are a growing number who are modifying their views on the inerrancy of the Bible so that the full authority of Scripture is completely undercut*” (*The Great Evangelical Disaster*, p. 44).

Consider an example of the theological modernism that has permeated evangelicalism:

Bruce Metzger, who is frequently cited as an “evangelical” scholar, was one of the most renowned textual critics of the 20th century. Metzger was one of the editors of the United Bible Societies Greek New Testament. Consider some examples of how Metzger cast doubt on the Bible’s divine inspiration:

He called the Pentateuch “*a matrix of myth, legend, and history*” and says it “*took shape over a long period of time*” (Introduction to the Old Testament, New Oxford Annotated Bible).

He called the flood of Noah’s day “*a heightened version of local inundations, e.g. in the Tigris-Euphrates basin*” (Metzger and May, New Oxford Annotated Bible).

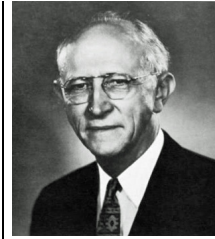
He called the book of Job an “*ancient folktale*” (Metzger and May, New Oxford Annotated Bible).

He said Isaiah was written by two or more men. “*Only chs. 1-39 can be assigned to Isaiah’s time; it is generally accepted that chs. 40-66 come from the time of Cyrus of Persia (539 B.C.) and later.*”

He said Daniel was written after the events he described and was not divine prophecy. “*Most scholars hold that [Daniel] was compiled during the persecutions (168-165 B.C.) of the Jewish people by Antiochus Epiphanes*” (Reader’s Digest Condensed Bible, edited by Bruce Metzger).

He called the book of Jonah a “*popular legend*” (Metzger and May, New Oxford Annotated Bible).

Today’s evangelicals are polluted with the theological modernism from which they have refused to separate. A little leaven has indeed leavened the whole lump. Being “thoroughly evangelical” is no evidence that an individual accepts the Bible as the infallible Word of God.



Gathering With Christ

by Dr. Vance Havner
1901 - 1986

“Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me” (Mathew 11:6).

We are familiar with the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount. We are also acquainted with other beatitudes of our Lord, such as “***Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing*”;** “***Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.*”**

But here is a little beatitude, short and sandwiched between longer verses, so that we are in danger of passing it up altogether:”***Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me*”**

John the Baptist was in prison. That rugged, ascetic Elijah of the New Testament, prophet of the outdoors, was certainly out of place in a damp, dark dungeon. No wonder he had the blues. One day his feelings hit a record low and he sent a delegation to Jesus to ask, “Art thou he that should come or do we look for another?” Now, that was a serious doubt for John the Baptist. The very thing he had preached like a living exclamation point had become a question mark to the preacher himself. It was not the first or last time that a preacher’s affirmation has become, in a dungeon, a preacher’s interrogation. It reminds us of another prophet of the dungeon, Jeremiah, who cried to God from the depths, “Wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar and as waters that fail?”

But our Lord did not reprimand John the Baptist. It is noteworthy that two of the strongest characters in the Bible had something akin to a nervous breakdown. Elijah, in the Old Testament, collapsed under the juniper, and God had to feed and rest him. More than one Christian, exhausted, with nerves on edge, has imagined that he is the last survivor of the saints. And usually he needs not reproof but rest. Then here is John the Baptist of the camel’s hair vestments and victuals of locusts and wild honey, who could reprove kings and call religious people sons of snakes; here is John the Baptist down in the dumps even as you and I! It is one thing to stand on Jordan and give it, another thing to stay in jail and take it!

But what did Jesus do? Did he bitterly reprove the troubled prophet? Did He say, “I’m ashamed of you, disappointed in you. What will people think?” He did nothing of the sort. He did not even send John a tract on “How To Be Happy In Jail!” On the contrary, on the day that John the Baptist made his poorest remark about Jesus, Jesus said the best thing about John the Baptist: “***Among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist!*”** For Jesus knew his frame and remembered that he was dust.

John had preached a victorious Messiah with fan in hand, purging His floor, gathering His wheat into the garner but burning the chaff with unquenchable fire. And here was Jesus, not carrying on that way at all but meek and lowly, going about

doing good. And John couldn't figure it out. The devil got in his doubts as in Eden. John began wondering and then worrying, for one begets the other.

Our Lord's answer to John's question is simple. The blind are seeing, the deaf are hearing, the lame are walking, the lepers are being cleansed and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. In other words, "I am running on schedule and carrying out my program as planned. It may not be as you expected but do not be upset by it."

This is a day of dungeons, and many saints are in the clutches of Giant Despair. There is comfort here for us. If a husky Lion Heart like John the Baptist could faint, "*Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.*" Your temptation is common unto man and there is a way of escape.

John's trouble, like most trouble, did not come singly, it was twofold. There was depression and there was doubt. Dungeons bring depression and depression brings doubt. Are you in a dungeon? Not behind visible lock and key perhaps, but while "stone walls do not a prison make nor iron bars a cage," it is also true that other things than prison walls do a prison make and other than iron bars may form a cage. Is your trouble financial? Maybe your blood pressure is up and your bank account down. Maybe you are physically ill but you keep going and everyone thinks because you are walking you are well! Maybe you have lost a loved one and a shroud of melancholy hangs heavy on your soul. Perhaps you dread to see night fall and search for rest as men seek for hidden treasure. Dungeons bring depression and from depression it is easy to move into doubt, even doubt about Jesus. Then we are upset and offended and we need to learn the Forgotten Beatitude.

It is nothing new to be offended in Jesus. More people have been offended in Him than in any character in history. Away with this milk-and-water preaching about Jesus! He has caused more offense than any other person who ever lived. He is either a sanctuary or a stumbling stone (Isaiah 8:14). He was an offense to His own nation and still is (Romans 9:33). He offended the Pharisees (Matthew 15:12). He offended the people of His own home town (Matthew 13:54-58). He offended superficial disciples (John 6). His cross is an offense (1 Cor. 1:23). And even true disciples may be offended in Him (Matthew 26:31-35). Sound believers sometimes get into a dungeon and pout with the Lord and say, "*It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts.*"

Don't you look pious, for we all have done it! We have murmured that we pray and do not receive. We gave our tithe and now we are in adversity. We were faithful to the Lord's house and landed in a hospital. We prayed for our children and they became worldlings. We craved joy and peace but we are despondent. Across the street is an ungodly family that has suffered no loss, while our dearest was taken. "There is no use in praying. It reads very lovely in the devotional books but I seem

unable to make it work." We were in distress, and the Lord "abode where he was" and when He did appear we grumbled like Martha when she said, "...had you been here my brother would not have died."

All such grumbling means that we have not learned the Forgotten Beatitude. Anybody can believe during fair weather. There is a deeper experience and a higher state which not many reach, a state in which, no matter what happens, we are never offended in the Lord, a state in which, whether it makes sense to us or not, we still believe Romans 8:28. Habakkuk started his book pouting and ended it praising. And blessed is the man who can say: "Though I don't get what I want: though I may sow much and reap little; though others get the plums and I get the sack, I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in the God of my salvation."

When Thomas asked for visible evidence of the risen Lord, he was asking for a smaller blessing than he already had, the privilege of believing without seeing, for "blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." God wants us to trust Him, no matter what He does. There is a heavenly carelessness that leaves it all with Jesus and doesn't become upset when He does things contrary to what we expected. And there will be plenty of things that just don't make sense. John the Baptist must have wondered, "If Jesus can raise the dead, why can't He get me out of jail?" The little boy who couldn't understand why God put so many vitamins in spinach and didn't put them all in ice cream was already beginning to see that things just don't work out as we'd like for them to. There is much that is baffling, but if we can't understand it, by grace we can stand under it, we can see to it that we are not offended, and that is better than understanding it! Some things we are to know (Matthew 13:11) and some things we are not to know (Acts 1:7), and we would be happier if we spent the time we waste on trying to fathom the unknowable in learning the knowable.

God did not explain suffering to Job. He gave him revelation, which was better than explanation. Better than having all our questions answered is to say, "The Lord knows what He is doing and I will not be offended."

In this dark hour of world distress not a few believers are in the dumps. Jesus seems not to be carrying on as expected. The world is not being converted. Has Christ failed? He isn't transforming the social order. Is He the One or shall we look for another? Many have been mistaught and have misunderstood His mission, His motive, His message, His method. It is true that He is not converting the world. He didn't say He would. But He has not failed, He is running on schedule. Blind eyes are opening to the Light of the world. Deaf ears are hearing His voice. Lame souls are taking up their beds and walking. Lepers, like Naaman of old, are dipping in Jordan and coming up with flesh like that of a little child. The dead in trespasses and sins are awaking to Christ, their Life and Light, and to the poor the Gospel is still begin preached. Christ is carrying on as intended. He has never missed an appointment. He may seem slow but He is never late.

We need not be offended because He is not converting the world. He didn't promise to, but He did promise to return in clouds of glory and reign until all enemies are put under His feet. Let us therefore take our stand on His Word and hide it in our hearts, for "great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."

NEWS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS

☐ ***FASHION REVOLUTIONARY MARY QUANT DEAD AT AGE 93*** - Before men were wearing dresses, women were wearing pants, and the female pioneers of this phenomenon knew that they were creating a revolution that would eventually destroy biblical morality in western culture.

Consider Mary Quant, the revolutionary British fashion designer of the Beatles era, who died on April 13 in England at age 93. In 2019, the Victoria & Albert Museum in London had a major exhibit on Quant, inventor of the mini-skirt, the micro-mini, and hot pants. Mary understood that fashion is a language. The exhibit was a clothing exhibit, but the focus was revolution, liberation from biblical sexual mores, and breaking down the barriers between the sexes (unisex, androgyny). There was no attempt to hide this. Quant put women in men's attire: pants, ties, suit jackets, and short hair. **Mary Quant knew that trousers on women is not an issue merely of comfort and freedom of movement.**

Following are some quotes from the exhibition signage: "using fashion to question hierarchies and gender rules," "a rebellious approach to established gender norms," "mocking religion," "an independent style," "self-expression," "freedom." "The miniskirt became an international symbol of women's liberation." "[Quant's] provocative styles reflected increasingly relaxed attitudes in society towards sexuality in all its forms, reinforced legally by the decriminalisation of homosexuality in 1967."

Observe that this clothing exhibit directly connects unisex fashion with homosexual rights. "Asked by the Guardian newspaper in 1967 if her clothes could be considered 'vulgar' because they were so revealing, Quant replied that she loved vulgarity and embraced it. **'Good taste is death, vulgarity is life,' she said, adding that the provocative poses of her models reflected the new sexual openness of the times, which was fueled by the development of the birth control pill**" ("Mary Quant," Los Angeles Times, Apr. 13, 2023).

The 1960s was a major changing of the times. Mary helped create the ME culture, the "lovers of their own selves" generation prophesied in II Timothy 3:2. The music, the fashion, the entertainment, the commerce, it all broadcasts the ancient Satanic lie, "It's your life; live as you please!" Mary Quant was smarter than those professing Christians who think that pants on women is a non-issue. It was a major issue in the 1960s, and it is a major issue today.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them"

(*Genesis 1:27*). The masculinization of women is just as evil as the feminization of men. Woe be unto pastors who are silent in the face of this revolution!

☐ ***TEXAS SENATE PASSES LEGISLATION REQUIRING PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO DISPLAY TEN COMMANDMENTS IN CLASSROOMS*** - As we witness a cultural shift in our society, it is essential to preserve the values and morals that have shaped the foundation of our nation. The recent passing a controversial bill by the Texas Senate represents a positive step in the direction of restoring the call to national morality in the United States.

The Texas Senate has recently passed a bill, S.B. No. 1515, which will require public elementary and secondary schools in the state to display the Ten Commandments in each classroom. The bill, authored by Senator King and co-authors, mandates that a durable poster or framed copy of the Ten Commandments be displayed in a conspicuous place within each classroom.

The poster or framed copy must meet specific requirements outlined in the bill, including being at least 16 inches wide and 20 inches tall, with the text of the Ten Commandments in a size and typeface legible to a person with average vision from any location in the classroom. The text must be presented without any additional content.

Schools that do not already have the required posters or framed copies in each classroom must accept any offer of a privately donated copy meeting the requirements, without additional content. If a school has posters or framed copies that do not meet the requirements, they may replace them using public funds or by accepting private donations.

Public schools must also offer any extra posters or framed copies of the Ten Commandments in their possession as a donation to another public elementary or secondary school.

The bill will apply beginning with the 2023-2024 school year. It will take effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If it does not receive the necessary vote, the bill will take effect on September 1, 2023.

One of the most progressive school districts in the nation lies in the heart of Texas, the Austin Independent School District (AISD). AISD is known for its promotion of sexual immorality, inviting drag queens to interact with children and holding gay pride marches on school property. The taxpayer-funded school district has been under fire over the years from conservatives for a number of sexually-related problems.

In 2019, Blackshear Fine Arts Academy hosted a drag queen story hour that featured a drag queen by the name of Ms. Kitty Litter who was convicted of male prostitution in 1996. Another elementary school librarian in Austin who is known for hosting drag queens was also caught posting explicit photos of himself at gay events. It will be interesting to see how the school would reconcile such lewd behavior with the new requirement to display the Ten Commandments.

While The Ten Commandments are part of God’s law and are not the gospel—the law has no power to save—they do serve and has historically served as a moral compass for generations of Americans. Acknowledging God’s law has helped shape our nation’s character and provided a foundation for our legal system while abandoning them has only had a detrimental effect. By displaying the Ten Commandments in public schools, we point these students to the highest authority in the universe while emphasizing the importance of moral values and reminding students of the ethical principles that have made our society strong and resilient.

Furthermore, this legislation encourages students to develop a sense of personal responsibility and respect for others, which are vital components of a thriving society. In an era marked by increasing secularism and moral relativism, the presence of the Ten Commandments in classrooms serves as a beacon of light that can help guide our nation back to its moral roots. Any of these left-wing self-described progressive Christians arguing that removing God’s word, be it law or grace, from the presence of any sector of society is a good thing, is a self-deceived idolater who only deserves to be ignored.

❑ **US HOUSE PASSES BILL TO PROTECT GIRLS, BLOCK TRANS ATHLETES FROM WOMEN’S SPORTS** - The Republican-controlled House of Representatives passed legislation on Thursday to protect the rights of female athletes, blocking transgender athletes from competing in women’s sports.

House members voted along party lines to pass the “Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act.” The measure would amend Title IX to recognize a person’s sex as the one given at birth. It would also threaten funding to any federally funded school or college that allows a transgender athlete to compete on a women’s or girl’s team.

Republicans say it’s about fairness and protecting women and girls from unfair competition with biological males.

“They (women and girls) strived for excellence and they achieved it and they learn the value of teamwork and hard work,” said House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) following the bill’s passage. “But because they were forced to compete against biological men, they lost out on opportunities that they deserved.”

“This is about being there for all of America’s children, including transgender children, who just want to be able to live, and to belong and to make friends,” said House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY). “That’s something that all Americans, I believe, all decent, kindhearted Americans fundamentally support.”

It all comes as at least 20 states have imposed similar protections for girls, blocking trans athletes from competitions at the Kindergarten through high school or collegiate levels.

Polling shows most Americans agree. The Washington Post and University of Maryland found last year that 55 percent of Americans oppose allowing transgender athletes to compete in women’s high school sports, and 58 percent oppose it at the

collegiate and professional levels.

ESPN’s Samantha Ponder tweeted: “This would take away so many opportunities for biological women and girls in sports. It is a shame that we are needing to fight for the integrity of Title IX in 2023 and the reason it was needed in the first place.”

And Sage Steele, also of ESPN, tweeted: “This is heartbreaking, maddening, and really difficult to watch. I keep thinking I’m going to wake up and be relieved that this was all just a ridiculous, comical, nonsensical dream....”

The GOP bill is not expected to pass the Democrat-controlled U.S. Senate, and the Biden administration is moving ahead with a plan to do the opposite of what House Republicans are trying to do.

❑ **RON HAMILTON, MUSICIAN KNOWN FOR ‘PATCH THE PIRATE,’ DIES AT 72** - Ron Hamilton, a Christian singer, musician, voice actor and performer best known for his “Patch the Pirate” character of Christian children’s entertainment fame, has died after a battle with dementia. He was 72 years old.

The Patch the Pirate Facebook page confirmed his death in a statement Wednesday evening, which as of Thursday afternoon has garnered over 7,100 shares, 13,000 reactions and more than 1,300 comments. “Ron (Patch) Hamilton has taken his final breath on this Earth. He is now in the presence of his Savior,” stated the official Facebook page.

Ronald Allen Hamilton was born in Indiana in 1950. He graduated from Bob Jones University with a bachelor of arts in church music and a master’s degree in church music composition. Hamilton married Shelly Garlock in 1975, with the two having five children together. All would eventually do voice work for Hamilton’s program, “Patch the Pirate Adventures.”

In 1978, Hamilton was diagnosed with cancer and had to have his left eye removed. He reportedly developed his beloved character “Patch the Pirate” in response to this loss. “Many people would see the loss of my eye and the need for wearing a patch as a great trial,” Hamilton later recounted. “But I see it as one of the greatest blessings of my life. It reminds me that God teaches us the greatest lessons in the deepest valleys.”

For years, the Hamilton family oversaw Majesty Music, which was originally founded in 1973 by Hamilton’s father-in-law, Dr. Frank Garlock, and known as Musical Ministries. The Greenville, South Carolina, company oversees the writing and selling of sacred music for both children and adults, as well as other resources. Ron and Shelly would oversee the company from the 1970s until 2018, when they transitioned leadership over to their son-in-law, Adam Morgan, and his wife, Megan.

From 1981 until 2015, the Hamilton family released a “Patch the Pirate” adventure recording every year, with singalong music and Christian themes for a young audience. In May 2013, the Hamiltons suffered a great tragedy when their eldest son, Jonathan, died by suicide, following years of mental health issues. “We are thankful that he is now with our Savior. He will

be greatly missed. We are hurting but also rejoicing in the Lord that Jonathan is safe in the arms of Jesus,” stated Ron and Shelly at the time.

In 2017, it was reported by the Independent Mail that Ron Hamilton was diagnosed with early-onset of dementia.

❑ **CHURCH CANCELS \$3 MILLION IN MEDICAL DEBT OF 3,355 FAMILIES TO DEMONSTRATE CHRIST’S LOVE** - A North Carolina church has helped cancel more than \$3 million of medical debt for 3,355 area families, saying it was driven by the words of Christ about love and forgiveness.

Trinity Moravian Church in Winston-Salem, N.C., purchased nearly \$3.3 million of outstanding medical debt and then held a debt-burning ceremony using a list representing the debtors, according to the Independent Tribune, a local newspaper.

“It’s a perfect real-world parable for what God does for us,” John Jackman, the church’s pastor, told the Independent Tribune.

The congregation raised \$15,047 as part of its Debt Jubilee Project and then worked with RIP Medical Debt, a nonprofit organization that helps cancel medical debt. RIP Medical Debt purchases medical debt in bundles, “millions of dollars at a time at a fraction of the original cost,” according to its website. Thanks to RIP Medical Debt’s mission, Trinity Moravian was able to cancel more than \$3 million in medical debt with the \$15,047 in donations. The organization then sent letters to 3,355 families on behalf of the church, telling them their debt had been forgiven, the Independent Tribune reported.

“A stay in the hospital can send a family into poverty or bankruptcy,” Jackman said.

He added, “We’re setting people free from the slavery of medical debt.”

Trinity Moravian Church canceled the debt of families in three counties: Davidson, Davie and Yadkin.

The average medical debt forgiven was about \$1,000, the church said on its Facebook page.

“When poor families cannot afford to pay their medical debts, after initial collection attempts, the debts are often sold off to third party debt collectors for a penny on the dollar or less in a practice called factoring,” the church explained. “The third party collector then has the legal right to demand the entire amount. Some use very aggressive tactics. This is where our Debt Jubilee Project, working with RIP Medical Debt, can intervene and purchase the debts – but we forgive them rather than collecting.”

BONEY CHRISTIANS

We need more people with the right kind of bones in our churches. There are at least five different types around most churches:

WISHBONE PEOPLE who hope for, long for, wish for great things to be done by the church but are not willing to do anything.

FUNNYBONE PEOPLE who laugh, grin and giggle and

twinkle their eyes as if work were a joke.

JAWBONE PEOPLE who are long on the talk but short on the work.

BACKBONE PEOPLE who never say die and are always willing to work.

KNEEBONE PEOPLE who kneel in prayers for the church.

- Clyde McCormick

FESS UP!

The church’s new pastor asks nine-year-old Johnny after Bible class who broke down the walls of Jericho. Johnny replied that he did not know, but it was not him.

The pastor surprised by this lack of basic Bible knowledge went to the Sunday School director and related what happened. The Director replied that he knew Johnny and his whole family very well and can vouch for them, if Johnny said that he did not do it, he is satisfied that it is the truth. This shocked the new pastor and he went to the Deacon Chairman and related the whole story.

The Chairman, after listening to the pastor’s whole story replied: “Pastor, you need to understand we value the harmony of our church’s fellowship and do not want any trouble. Just forget about who knocked down the walls. We will get three bids, have the walls repaired and keep the harmony of our church.”

LEFT-HANDED

Little Bobby was spending the weekend with his grandmother after a particularly trying week in kindergarten.

His grandmother decided to take him to the park on Saturday morning. It had been snowing all night and everything was beautiful.

His grandmother remarked, “Doesn’t it look like an artist painted this scenery? Did you know God painted this just for you?”

Bobby said, “Yes, God did it and he did it left-handed.”

This confused his grandmother a bit, and she asked him “What makes you say God did this with his left hand?”

“Well,” said Bobby, “we learned at Sunday School last week that Jesus sits on God’s right hand.”

