

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

- Week of October 22, 2023 -

Sunday School	30
Sunday Morning Service	46
Sunday Evening Service	28
Wednesday Eve., 10/25/23 Service	18

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

- Week of October 22, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	\$ 826.04
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 10/22/23:	\$ 826.04

- Week of October 15, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	\$ 1,462.44
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 10/15/23:	\$ 1,462.44

- Week of October 8, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	\$ 927.29
Porch Restoration Fund	\$ 116.22
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 10/08/23:	\$ 1,043.51

- Week of October 1, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	\$ 2,783.05
Love Offering	\$ 33.68
Porch Restoration Fund	\$ 135.64
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 10/01/23:	\$ 2,952.37

- Week of September 24, 2023 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	\$ 718.57
Children's Sunday School Missionary Fund	\$ 2.00
Foundation Repair Fund	\$ 106.51
Steeple Repair Fund	\$ 250.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 09/24/23:	\$ 1,077.08

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



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 of the 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
Kim Phillips; Shirley White/LeAnna White; Berdena Bergman/Debra Carlton; Daniel Avery/GiGi Avery; & Todd W. White	Teachers
Larry & Mary Byars	Outreach
LeAnna White	Custodian
GinaMarie Shufelt	Flowers
Seth White	Sound/Video

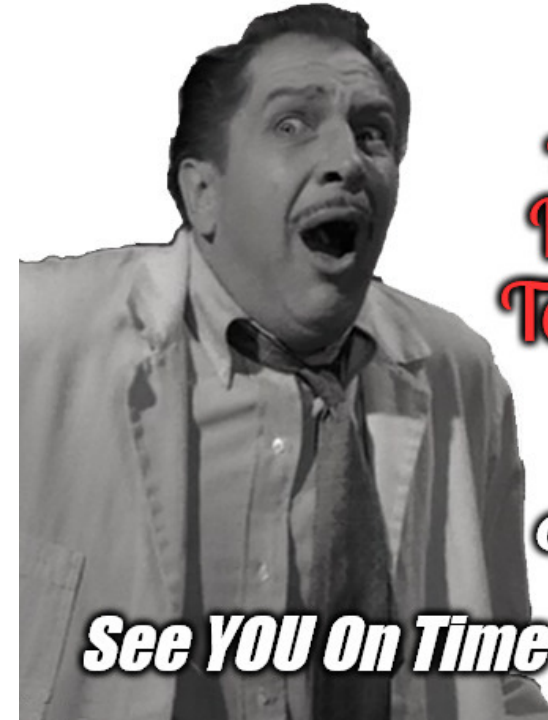
LISTEN TO -



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REMINDER

ATTENTION ALL CHURCH MEMBERS!



Avoid The Horror Of Arriving At Church An Hour Early And Having To Attend Sunday School!

Set Your Clocks BACK 1 Hour Before You Go To Bed Saturday Night!

See YOU On Time In Church Next Sunday!



Beware of Video Games

by Evangelist David W. Cloud
originally published 10/6/2016. Enlarged 10/25/23

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:15-17).

"Some studies suggest that gaming is absolutely taking over the minds of children all together."

"Virtual life becomes more appealing than real life."

A father approached me at a Bible conference and said that his teenage daughter begs him every day to allow her to use his
(continued inside)

smartphone to play a video game, because “she needs to relax.” I told him that there are far better and safer options for “relaxing” than video games. The dangers are multitudinous as we document in this report: addiction, the slippery slope of being drawn into less innocent games, using smartphone time to access any number of dangerous platforms, such as Snapchat or TikTok, and being drawn into the toxic world of teenage social media.

The first commercially successful video game was *Space Invaders*, which appeared in 1978. By 1982, Space Invaders was the biggest money making entertainment product in the U.S. It was only available in gaming arcades and was sold in little chunks of time that cost 25 cents, ***but it earned more than \$2 billion!*** Soon, video games were earning \$5 billion a year. In the early 1980s, the first personal video gaming consoles appeared. By 1982, Atari was the fastest growing company in America.

The most popular video games for 2020 were Minecraft (users can create their own virtual reality worlds; it has sold 180 million copies since 2011 and has 112 million monthly active players), Fortnite (online shooter game, 125 million players per year), GTA Grand Theft Auto V (hyper-violent game that includes auto theft, reckless driving, gang wars, and murder), Rainbow Six Siege (shooter game), Super Smash Bros (fighting game), Red Dead Redemption II (western-style violent game), Overwatch (multiplayer shooter game), Rocket League (vehicular soccer game), League of Legends (multiplayer online battle game “inspired by World of Warcraft”), PayerUnknown’s Battlegrounds (violent war game in which 100 players battle to the death), Counter-Strike Global Offensive (terrorist, counter-terrorist), Call of Duty (special forces missions), Legend of Zelda (occultic action-adventure), Spider-Man (super powers), Elder Scrolls (violent occultic action-adventure, dragons, super powers).

Grand Theft Auto (GTA) has made billions of dollars. Grand Theft Auto V has made more than any movie in history.

Many of the most popular YouTube channels are video game oriented. The top YouTube celebrity is Felix Kjellberg (PewDiePie), a gamer with 102 million subscribers. The most popular YouTube channels also include gamers JuegaGerman (37 million), El Rubius (36 million), Fernanfloo (34 million), Evan Fong (23 million), Markiplier (20 million), Jacksepticeye (19 million), DanTDM (19 million), PopularMMOs (14 million), Captain Sparklez (10 million), The Game Theorists (10 million), H2ODelirious (10 million), I Am Wildcat (6 million), Game Grumps (4.5 million).

Some gamers have become millionaires via their YouTube channels. The number of social media followers is called social currency, but it can be converted to real currency if it is large enough. Businesses will pay social media stars to advertise and review their products. Since 2012, PewDiePie has made about \$90 million through the social currency of his YouTube gaming channel. All he does is video record himself playing games with a running commentary.

In 2019, some of the top YouTube earners other than PewDiePie were Dan Middleton (\$18.5 million per year), Mark Fischbach (\$17.5 million), Evan Fong (\$17 million), Luis

Alvarado (\$16 million), Sean McLaughlin (\$23 million), Alastair Aiken (\$7 million), JuegaGerman (\$6 million), Guillermo Diaz (\$5 million), Samuel de Luque (\$4 million).

Just like the video games themselves, most gaming channels are filled with filthy language, blasphemy, immodesty, the occult, and violence.

Video Games and Addiction

While there are video games that are relatively innocent and might be used in wise and godly moderation, these are not the most popular ones, and even with these there is always the danger that video gaming will become an addictive waster of life’s fleeting hours.

“Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied” (Proverbs 27:20).

There is also the ever-present danger of getting drawn into truly wicked games. A former gamer says, “Visiting families, I’ve seen ‘innocent’ children’s games having advertisements for violent games that showed texts like ‘kill’ or ‘headshot,’ including the bloody graphics. Other advertisements contained gambling, women with very few clothes on, and so on. I’ve yet to see the first video game on a smartphone/tablet that doesn’t have such advertising.”

The following note is from a reader who saw a warning about addiction to video games in our weekly publication, Friday Church News Notes:

“I am writing with a heavy heart. Your Church Notes on the video and computer games is true. I see video games and movies have taken over the children’s lives in my church. Our preacher preaches against it all and sets the best example. As a matter of fact, when we travel, we haven’t found a better church than ours. I just have seen so much TV and video games creep into homes and then it gets uncontrollable. The moms say they allow this because they don’t want to let their children out into the world and they don’t want them to be bored. *[Note from Brother Cloud: How unreasonable it is to bring the world into the home in the name of keeping kids out of the world!]* The sad thing is that it overtakes their lives and I am observing that when the children are getting into their teens and even 18, 19, 20, 21, etc., they are even deeper into the video games. Yes, 21-year-olds spending every free second playing X Box, Play Station, Nintendo, etc. These same young people, when it comes to the church services, don’t sing the hymns, sit on the back pew, and don’t seem to care much about the things of God. They get up several times during the preaching service to get a drink of water. It’s so sad.”

A young person sent the following testimony:

“I am writing to tell you how much I appreciate your ministry. I am a homeschooled student and I have used your articles numerous times for researching various subjects and issues. I am especially glad, however, that you warn people about video games and their destructive influence and overall effect on the players. Unfortunately, many people I know have been sucked into the video game world and are consequently wasting their lives. Even if a video game has nothing obviously unbiblical it still has that

destructive influence. I know of several people at my church who play video games. What I can’t understand is why they can’t spend their time in a more profitable way. If they need excitement or entertainment they could just read some good books, but then video game playing and reading don’t really go hand in hand. Video games are too unrealistically violent and exciting and draw them away [from reality]. Earlier this month a friend told me how her two brothers spent the whole day with lots of other boys playing video games together. She said they all sat completely mesmerized while staring at their computer screens. Communication was achieved by instant messaging rather than actual speaking. It is very sad. Countless people are wasting their lives pursuing this vain employment. I pray with all my heart they will realize their error and seek the Lord. I am truly grateful for comments on this topic.”

These testimonies were written in the 1990s, and the situation has gotten a great deal worse since then.

Video games are so addictive that thousands of husbands and wives have been virtually abandoned for make-believe games played in cyberspace. In other words, they have been abandoned for nothing, for a figment of the imagination, for pixels on a screen, for less than soap bubbles.

An article on MSNBC.com was titled *“Game Widows Grieve Lost Spouses.”* Consider an excerpt:

“Though their spouses and partners haven’t gone to the great beyond, these particular widows and widowers say their loved ones have gone someplace that’s almost as distant and unreachable. Some have left this world for the ‘World of Warcraft,’ others have forsaken this life for ‘Second Life’ and still others have been taken away by ‘EverQuest,’ ‘Final Fantasy XI’ and ‘Dark Age of Camelot.’ ... As the ranks of those playing video games in general--and massively multiplayer online games in particular--continue to grow, so grow the ranks of those who refer to themselves as ‘game widows.’ They are the husbands, wives, girlfriends and boyfriends of gamers whose playing habits have consumed their lives. The bereaved say their mates have suffered a kind of digital death that has left only the shell of the person they loved behind. And like a real death, it has left the people who remain heartbroken, scared and angry.”

Video games were addictive from their inception. A Washington Post reporter assigned to try Space Invaders in 1980 said, *“I dropped in a quarter and saw 55 rectangles waving little arms and dropping laser bombs on earth, which is at the bottom of the screen. I fired back with my three laser bases, which got bombed out in about 30 seconds. ... I was still pounding on the FIRE button at the end of the game. End of quarter. Start of addiction.”* That report stated, *“It’s like drugs. They’ll tell you: ‘I got a \$4-a-day habit.”* In 1981, Dr. Robert Millman told *The New York Times* that video games were like “sniffing glue” and were “a seductive world.”

Video games are designed to be addictive. The developers and markers are in the business for money. They are not innocent promoters of entertainment. They will steal your time, your heart, your holiness.

In some Asian countries, gaming addiction is considered a major public health problem. In South Korea, the average child between the ages of 10-18 spends more than 20 hours a week playing video games online. The government has implemented a curfew at cyber cafes for those under 18 and set up treatment programs. The China internet giant Tencent set daily limits on the time that users can play the addictive game King of Glory.

A large percentage of the most popular video games in 2023 are violent, fantasy role playing games: ***Minecraft*** (most popular video game of all time, the adventure and survival modes are violent fantasy role playing modes), ***Player Unknown Battlegrounds*** (up to 100 players parachute onto an island and battle to the death), ***Call of Duty: Warzone, Super Smash Brothers, Rainbow Sixth Siege, Red Dead Redemption II, Spider Man, Grand Theft Auto V*** (kill people, kill and torture animals), ***Call of Duty: Black Ops, The Legend of Zelda, Super Mario Odyssey, Overwatch, Pokemon, Diablo*** (choose from 7 characters: Barbarian, Demon Hunter, Necromancer, Monk, Witch Doctor, Wizard), ***Nikke: Goddess of Victory, Game of Thrones: Winter Is Coming, Counter-Strike: Global Offensive.***

The most addictive and dangerous are the **MMORPG** (*massively multiplayer online role-playing games*). Nothing takes over young people’s hearts and minds more than these. In multiplayer online games, the gamer interacts with other players. He builds a fantasy life. The multi-player online video games are so addictive that they are likened to drugs. **EverQuest** is called “never rest” and “ever crack,” **World of Warcraft** is called World of War Crack, **Halo 3** is called Halodiction.

The most popular MMORPG for 2021 include **World of Warcraft** (12 million subscribers), **Call of Duty: Modern Warfare, Everquest, Guild Wars 2, Star Wars: The Old Republic, The Elder Scrolls, RuneScape, and League of Legends.**

The Internet is filled with the sad and frightful testimonies of people who have ruined their lives with online role-playing games. Consider one example:

“Well long story long now ending shortly is I became lvl 50 pretty fast on the server. In fact I was the 5th over all and the first half elf. I was awesome. I had the sword that sparkled and all my cool gear... I would roll up into town and newbs everywhere would just be in awe. I ruled the world, or this virtual one anyway. Meanwhile my real life had fallen apart. I had lost my job and was in debt with creditors calling ringing my phone off the wall not even to mention I was fat as could be weighing over 400lbs. I could not deal with my real life. I hated any time that took away from my Everquest time. I was ruler in that world. Then one day my power was shut off. Omg. I was so depressed. Not only was my online world now shutoff but now I had to confront my life that I had neglected for the last 2 years. It looked pretty hopeless so I decided to move out of my apartment that was driving me more into debt and possibly go live with my parents” (shoemoney.com/2008).

Even in remote places like Nepal, gaming competition is becoming popular. A report on Nepali gamers in the *Kathmandu*

Post (Aug. 29, 2015) was entitled “*By Their Bootstraps.*” Gaming started in Nepal in internet cafes in 2010. The 2015 Colors E-sports Carnival at the Civil Mall had 500 participants competing at Defense of the Ancients (DOTA), a multi-online battle game.

A young man in our church didn’t start growing spiritually until he gave up online multi-player video gaming. He attended church faithfully for about a year and seemed to love the Bible teaching, but he wasn’t making any real progress in his spiritual life. We didn’t know about his video gaming addiction. Once he gave it up, he made great strides. He left his secular education to join our Bible college.

A former gamer in the Netherlands describes the way that the gaming companies create addictions:

“First off, you need to know that at the fundamental background of all MMO’s, video games (whether PC or console), and smartphone games are the statistics. They keep track of what level peoples’ characters are, what items they collected, what items they buy, how long it takes them to get said items, and the list goes on and on. They use the statistics for targeted advertising, bringing out more items that sell well, and above all they use it to know when to release new content.

“If you release content too early, people can’t play it. If you release it too late, people quit and play another game. Unfortunately, video game makers are masters at this and know exactly when to release new content. Usually the timing is just before the majority of players finish the old content.

“For the ‘hardcore’ players like me, they use ‘grinding’ which is just another word for ‘running the treadmill.’ They need special content to keep players like me hooked because we finish game content too fast. The game makers give you group based content called instances or raids in which you have to take down powerful bosses. This requires a lot of coordination and tactics and isn’t easy. Defeating a boss means you can get your character special armour such as chest, legs, boots, gloves, helmet and cloak or swords, axes, bows, ingame currency, and the list goes on. To get all the items you have to play for months and then of course new content comes and the whole ‘grinding’ starts all over again and again and again and again.

“Nowadays almost all games whether on PC, console, or smartphone have the aforementioned addictive components and then some. Their goal, of course, is to make as much money as possible.

There are differences between each game but here’s how they do it:

1. Early in the game they don’t bother you much. You get free coins, rubies, diamonds or whatever ingame currency they use to give you a head start. It’s just enough to keep you playing for a while but not too much. The goal is to get you ‘hooked.’

2. Once they have you ‘hooked’ they start throwing up ‘roadblocks.’ There generally are three ways to get past those ‘roadblocks.’ One, you have to ‘grind’ or start “running the treadmill” and you get it for ‘free.’ They hope it gets too tedious for you to do, cave in and buy some ingame currency. Two, you

buy ingame currency to buy yourself past the ‘roadblock.’ Three, you have to watch an advertisement which of course makes the game maker money. The goal of course is to keep you ‘hooked.’

3. They sell you treasure chests which if you open have items in it. Sometimes you get them for free but most times you don’t and you have to open them with ingame currency. Most times you get basic items but occasionally you get rare items and you have an infinitesimal small chance on getting extremely rare items. The last category is basically the ‘jackpot’ and are the most coveted items. The goal is to make you keep buying treasure chests to get the aforementioned jackpot.

“Playing video games will cause you to waste more and more time playing your game and spend less and less time on Bible reading, Bible study, prayer, going to church, or you’ll just end up pretending and secretly play during the sermon. No Christian man, woman or child is above sin and thereby is not above becoming addicted to video games. You need to know that game makers STUDY YOU! They study human psychology! They know what makes humans tick and they know how to get you addicted. I’ve been addicted to games and I know this to be true” (“Testimony of a Video Gamer,” www.wayoflife.org).

Video Games and Moral Relativism

Another warning that we would give about video games is that many of them are programmed with relativistic moral choices.

These choices include such things as decisions as whether to kill a person or to save him, to help terrorists or to resist them, to break the law or to obey it. Many games allow the player to take on both good and bad personas.

We are told that “unstructured, open-ended play gives gamers a great deal of choice about how to behave in video games” (“*Real Moral Choices in Virtual Game Worlds,*” *The Guardian*, Aug. 16, 2007).

The games promote moral relativism or situational ethics, the idea that morality changes according to the circumstances. Examples of these games are **System Shock** and **BioShock**, produced by Irrational Games. Ken Levine, president of the company, says cutting-edge gaming programmers are constructing “moral playgrounds,” which are places in which people “can explore different philosophies, principles and personalities.”

The situation ethics is also seen in such games as **Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion**. The characters in this game are “all entirely lacking in principle.” You can “murder someone’s family and steal from their shop and then give them a load of cash and they would treat you as a long-lost friend.”

From a biblical perspective, this is dangerous for at least two reasons.

First, man’s fallen heart, which is naturally attracted to sin and rebellion, can be fed and enflamed.

“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” (Romans 6:16).

“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own

lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James. 1:14-15).

When a young person is allowed to live in a make-believe video world in which he can choose to commit evil without any real-life consequences, he is feeding and enflaming his old nature and is becoming a slave in the process.

Second, there is the danger of demonic deception and control. He is “*that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world” (Rev. 12:9).* He is “*the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2).* He is the ruler “*of the darkness of this world” (Eph. 6:12).* He walks about seeking whom he may devour (I Peter 5:8). He blinds the minds of them which believe not (II Corinthians 4:4). He must be actively fought with “*the whole armor of God” (Eph. 6:11-19).*

The human imagination is a major spiritual and moral battleground. If used in a wise and godly way, the imagination can produce spiritual growth. The believer finds the will of God by “*renewing the mind” (Romans 12:2)* and by “*casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (II Corinthians 10:5).*

If abused, though, the imagination can descend into increasingly dark territory. Romans 1:21 associates vain imaginations with a darkening of the heart, and vain imaginings is an accurate description of most video games. The Bible warns that those who do not “retain God in their knowledge” are given over to a reprobate mind (Romans 1:28), because anything that takes the place of God in man’s heart and life is an idol, and God hates idols (Ex. 20:3). I would strongly suspect that most young people who become immersed in video games are not retaining God in their knowledge during that endeavor, to say the least.

In light of the Bible’s warnings about the possibility of enslavement to the old nature and demonic deception in the imagination, the moral relativism in video games is a recipe for spiritual disaster.

Video Games and Violence

Many video games are very violent.

One of the most popular is **Grand Theft Auto**. Players assume the role of lawless, destructive criminals who kill innocent bystanders, policemen, and military personnel, “while dealing with only temporary consequences.” It has been called a cop-killing training machine. Some of the versions require the player to torture people in brutal ways to advance to new levels. Sexual elements include hiring and killing prostitutes (by means of the player’s choice of fist, machete, bat, or gun). “Grand Theft Auto is a world governed by the laws of depravity. See a car you like? Steal it. Someone you don’t like? Stomp her. A cop in your way? Blow him away. There are police at every turn, and endless opportunities to take them down. It is 360 degrees of murder and mayhem” (“*Can a Video Game Lead to Murder?*” 60 Minutes, June 17, 2005).

Real life murders have been committed by people who were obsessive players of Grand Theft Auto and have even admitted to being inspired by the game.

“I’ve played games which contain extreme violence and taking the name of the Lord in vain. GTA [Grand Theft Auto] is such a game. It uses the name of the Lord in vain almost continually and allows you to engage in adulterous acts and murder by picking up a whore, going somewhere quiet, picking an item from the price list (I won’t mention it here because it’s too wicked). After you finish, you kill her and get the money back. Yes the game rewards you for doing that. The end result was that I started using the name of the Lord in vain, using foul language I won’t mention here, and entertaining thoughts about violence. Video games that use the name of the Lord in vain, use violence, sorcery and such aren’t innocent and are a great spiritual danger” (“Testimony of a Video Gamer,” www.wayoflife.org).

Video Games and the Occult

A great many of the video games delve into the occult. Many are deeply influenced by the old Dungeons and Dragons role-playing game.

Occultic video games include **Diablo**, **Dragon Quest**, **World of Warcraft**, **EverQuest**, **Ultima**, **Wizardry**, **Tabook**, **Xenogears**, **Baldur’s Gate**, **Icewind Dale 2**, **Lineage 2**, **H1Z1**, **Final Fantasy**, **Star Fox**, **Silent Hill**, **DmC Devil May Cry**, **Dante’s Inferno**, **Legend of Zelda**, **Deus Ex**, **E.V.O.: Search for Eden**, **Spore**, **Assassin’s Creed**, **BioShock Infinite**, **Shin Megami Tensei** (fearing a high school boy who is a human/demon hybrid).

Some of the occultic concepts in these games are wizards (“good” or “bad”), sorcerers, Tarot, druids, spells (conjuring, alteration), reincarnation, demons, goddesses (e.g., Lillith, Gaia), Canaanite gods (e.g., Baal), Norse gods (e.g., Odin), Hindu gods (e.g., Shiva), Greek gods (e.g., Zeus), elves, super powers, unicorns, centaurs, monsters, summons, aeons, time travel, evolution, under worlds, parallel worlds (dimensions, planes, spheres).

The book ***Game Magic: A Designer’s Guide to Magic Systems in Theory and Practice*** by Jeff Howard instructs video game programers in “how to construct magic systems.” It is “a magical recipe book.” It “gives you an in-depth understanding of the history and structure of magic to make your games richer and deeper.” It “shows ow to set up … spell components.” The author has studied the works of the sodomite pedophile Satanism Aleister Crowley as part of his research.

The following is excerpted from “*Escaping Reality: The Danger of Role-playing Games,*” March 22, 2005.

“Growing up in an independent Baptist church, we were occasionally warned about the dangers of the occult. Every three to five years, someone whose interest had been piqued would offer a Sunday School lesson or sermon about witchcraft, sorcery, magic, Satanism, and the occult. These lessons would focus on the fantastic, nearly unbelievable activities performed by devotees of these black arts. After being rightly warned to stay far away from

anything even remotely occultic, we might hear a few brief thoughts about Dungeon’s and Dragons (D&D). Those warnings focused on the pagan/Satanic material that game authors such as Gary Gygax (of D&D fame) used as source material for creating their pretend magic systems and fictional fantasy worlds. That seemed to be the extent of the warnings I received about role-playing games (RPGs).

“As a Jr. High student, my inquisitive mind discovered board-games, strategy war-games, and simulations. My mind was captivated by the prospect of sophisticated make-believe with quasi-realistic representations of the choices a General, WWII squad leader, or stock investor might make. These games, especially the war simulations, began consuming an increasing amount of my time as they often required 40-80 page 8.5x11 inch rule-books and hundreds of small cardboard counters to represent everything from flamethrowers to tanks to individual officers on a battlefield. However, like any lazy North-American child, I quickly tired of misplaying these games because I’d forgotten rule 3.4.2.3 (no kidding) about the correct way to game, for example, the bullet penetration of a .30cal German light machine gun. I think I forgot to count the correct distance for the bullets to penetrate and roll on a chart to see if the units behind the target were injured. That might have changed the entire course of the battle, but it happened five turns ago, and I only just discovered it while looking up rule 7.5.10 about flamethrower operations.

“No doubt, you’re already worn-out just reading my recollection! You might be wondering what that has to do with role-playing. The summer before I entered High School, I discovered RPGs. While similar to war-games and simulations in having large rulebooks, the role-playing rules taught the players how to tell an interactive story. The story focused on a character controlled by the player. Each player makes every decision his respective character faces as the story unfolds. The rulebooks provided fictional background material and a combat system to game man-to-man (or beast, as the case may be) combat using a variety of weapons. In general, the rules were far less complex than war-games and the immersive escapist aspects of the story far more intense, precisely because it wasn’t being interrupted by obscure rules.

“I discovered the ‘Middle Earth Role-Playing’ Game (MERP) by Iron Crown Enterprises (I.C.E.). In Jr. High I found and read **Tolkien’s** famous ***Lord of the Rings*** saga set in his imaginary world of Middle Earth. While some aspects of the story were beyond my adolescent attention-span, my imagination enjoyed the idea of elves, dwarves, humans and hobbits using good magic to fight orcs, trolls, and their evil allies. Over the next 10 years I would read the complete trilogy three times, the introductory volume called ***The Hobbit*** some five or six times, and in attempts to re-read the trilogy I re-read ***The Fellowship of the Ring*** over 10 times. I also read some of Tolkien’s other works that laid more background material for his mythology, such as the Silmarillion. We bought piles of rules manuals and source books for the games that expanded the story from the original premises and read all of these many times.

“Notice three reasons I was attracted to role-playing. One, the game I found allowed me to pretend to be a character in a fictional story I had already come to enjoy. Two, the game I found was set in a fictional world already declared ‘safe’ by my Dad and Mom and peers. Sure, I’d seen D&D on the shelves before, but I wasn’t the slightest bit interested. I knew THAT was wrong. But, Tolkien’s stories were just harmless fantasy, right? *Besides, it’s just a game, isn’t it?* Three, the game I found was better than just reading a story or watching TV, because it involved telling your own story and making choices to discover how the story was going to turn out.

“***O CHRISTIAN, BEWARE!*** It took 10 years to pull that sinful hook out of my flesh. My deceitful, self-pleasing, worldly-affectionate heart led me to help the world, flesh and devil hook me good. I’m still a weaker man today for having given my heart to role-playing games. Please let me warn you about the three key dangers role-playing games pose to the born-again Christian.”

VIOLENCE

“Whether fantasy (meaning quasi-medieval with sorcery thrown in), science-fiction, horror, or historical, role-playing games most often promote and glorify violence. Regardless of what simulation-like elements the game play may contain, at their core these games are about killing or defeating one’s opponents in order to gain wealth, possessions, and ‘experience.’ The player then uses these gains to better equip and train his character to provide better capabilities for killing or defeating more powerful opponents.

WITCHCRAFT

“While this aspect of role-playing games was addressed during my formative years, I foolishly believed there could be ‘good’ magic instead of ‘bad’ magic. Nearly every RPG involves ‘magic’ whereby the rules attempt to game the imagined effects of magical incantations and abilities. Science-fiction or ‘horror’ RPGs will imagine the existence of ESP, telepathy, and other ‘psionic (psi) powers’ with basically the same effect.

“The player’s character uses spells and magic items in fantasy gaming (psi-powers and non-existent technology devices in Sci-Fi gaming) as a shortcut to defeat opponents beyond the character’s ability. From here on, I’ll usually refer to fantasy role-playing, but you can fill in the terms for the other genres as I did for Sci-Fi in the previous sentence.

“Magic in these games is considered a good thing, much sought after to gain advantage such as: Spells, potions, amulets, wands, staves, rods, scrolls, runes (cryptic magical writing), bracelets, rings, necklaces, magic weapons, magic armor, and magic clothing. As a young Christian, I knew magic was bad, but we so enjoyed the game effects of the magical spells and items, that our games invariably involved a lot of them. We wouldn’t game actual spiritual realities like demons or Hell, but we reveled in magic swords and spells, and we thought we could do “good” with them.

“What a curse!

Anti-God Worldview

“While the witchcraft aspects of most fantasy RPGs occasionally gets attention from our biblicist pulpits, this last aspect is often ignored. An entire sermon could be preached here against using fiction, TV, movies, lust, as well as games to escape from thinking about reality and Spiritual truths.

“It is just as anti-God to ignore Him, as to curse or attack Him.

“With regard to role-playing games, God, Christ, salvation from sin, the gospel, heaven, and hell are either mocked by these games or twisted and warped beyond Scriptural recognition. The players are fed ideas, attitudes, and philosophies about religious and Spiritual truths from a very pagan perspective.

“***Most born-again souls that get caught up in role-playing games probably have never thought this point through.*** But, what you’re really telling God when you play any game that glorifies what God opposes or ignores His existence is – ‘Thanks for creating the World, dying for my Sins, saving my soul, sealing me with your Spirit, and preserving your Word for my instruction; but, I’d rather spend my time pretending to explore an imaginary world whose authors rebel against Your existence by not including You. I know You understand that I need to have my fun.’

“What true believer would ever want to say this to God’s face, verbally? But, how many are telling God this by their actions?

“According to Psalm 10:4, one of the behaviors of the wicked is his refusal to constantly consider God. ***‘The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.’***

“The most dangerous aspect of role-playing games is not their sinful content (though that is dangerous), but the temptation the player faces to meditate on the game, imagine future scenarios for the game, and calculate how to game various real-world situations. In other words, these games have great ability to keep one’s mind continually distracted from spiritual truths and reality even when one isn’t wasting time playing them.

“I don’t want to share the humbling details of the games I’ve gone back to for a short season, or the unwise, sinful purchases I’ve made. For me, giving up the pencil and paper role-playing game was far easier than abandoning ungodly, worldly computer games which are just as sinful as the games I’ve described, because they contain many of the same elements. Over the course of my adolescence, I foolishly spent months and years forming these sinful habits and affections. They didn’t just disappear when I decided I wanted them to go away. Beware the dangerous hooks of sin! (*‘Escaping Reality: The Danger of Role-Playing Games,’* March 22, 2005).”

(I am sad to report that some time after writing this, the author left the ministry and went back to his video gaming addiction, but this adds an even louder warning about the dangers he exposed and the “hooks” that such gaming set into the users.)

Even many of the more innocent-appearing video games are deeply associated with the occult.

Consider the current [at the time of the original writing - 2016]

craze, **Pokémon Go**. Pokémon promotes the search for occultic power. The cards are called “energy cards.” Players engage in “pretend” occultic warfare. There is nothing innocent about Pokémon. It is a clever attempt at demonic mind-control. Almost overnight it became the most popular mobile game in American history, increasing the stock market value of part owner Nintendo more than 50%. “Pokémon Go, the newest iteration of the nearly 20-year-old Pokémon franchise, engages players in an ‘augmented reality’ where they try to find and capture Pokémons hidden throughout the real world. *The Australian Business Review* has suggested that it may be a ‘watershed moment’ in the development of virtual reality” (“Pokémon Go craze drawing gamers to church,” Baptist Press News, July 15, 2016). The game “uses the mobile phone’s camera to create the perception that the Pokémon characters are actually in front of the players.” It is so engaging and addictive that people have crashed their automobiles and walked into dangerous situations. Two men recently fell off a cliff near San Diego while engaged in the game.

Pastor David Brown, First Baptist Church of Oak Creek, Wisconsin, who made the effort to investigate Pokémon and apply the test of God’s Word to it in 1999, says, “The name Pokémon is derived from POCKEt MONster. ... One of the first things I did was to find out who produced the Trading Card Game. Here is an exact quote right from the Web page of the producer - ‘The Pokémon Trading Card Game is a new collectable Card Game that is made and distributed by Wizards of the Coast. The same company that made the best-selling game ... Magic: The Gathering.’ Wizards of the Coast also owns TSR, the producers of Dungeons & Dragons. When I discovered who owned the American Pokémon Trading Card Game rights, I knew it was not just an innocent card game for elementary school children. [The Pokémon rap mantra says]: ‘I will travel across the land/ Searching far and wide/ Each Pokémon to understand/ The power that’s inside/ Gotta catch them all.’ ... To be sure it is a game, but a game that does not glorify God! When God says something is wrong, it is wrong regardless of what form it is in. Not only that, but many of the kids who play this game are seduced into believing the principles that the game subtly teaches” (Dave Brown, *“The Problem with Pokémon”*).

In the official literature, the main characters of the game are described as headstrong, stubborn, quibbling, hormonal, having a fascination with and trying to “score” with the opposite sex, self-centered, vindictive, obnoxious, and prone to cross-dressing!

Pokémon promotes the search for occultic power. The cards are called “energy cards.” Players engage in “pretend” occultic warfare. Currently there are 729 species of Pokémon monsters, and 151 of them are sought by Pokémon Go players. Two of them are named Abra and Kadabra, long associated with magic. The Abra card promotes the ability to read minds. The Kadabra character has a pentagram on his forehead. What an incredibly dangerous, wicked influence for children! Nintendolife says there are poison types, psychic types, dark types, fairy types, dragon types, and ghost types.

There is nothing innocent about Pokémon. It is a clever attempt

at demonic mind-control.

God is very clear in His warnings about delving into any form of witchcraft. It is never an innocent, safe activity, and it cannot be “sanitized.”

“There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee” (Deut. 18:10-12).

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (II Cor. 6:14-18).

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11).

Video Games and Wasting Time

“How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man” (Prov. 6:9-11).

The average gamer spends eight hours per week playing video games. This equates to 416 hours per year. You could spend an hour a day in Bible study and read the Bible about 6 times (it takes about 70 hours to read the Bible). You could complete the course Mastering the English Bible, which has 11 textbooks totaling 3,000 pages and 242 video classes, ----

Some time back, a teen told me he wanted to learn to study the Bible on his phone, but when I asked to look at his phone I found that it was filled with games. I challenged him to get rid of them and to spend that time on Bible study and other profitable things. I told him that until he was willing to put aside wasteful things, he wouldn't make much progress in his spiritual life.

A Christian young lady that we know got convicted about how much time she was wasting on video games, and she sat down and analyzed her life. She discovered that she was spending three months a year on video games! She deleted the games from her iPad and is spending that time memorizing Scripture and other profitable things.

Young people who want to find God's will must learn to be careful about time. **“Redeeming the time, because the days are**

evil” (Ephesians 5:16).

Even the more innocent games use rock music as a background, thus addicting young people to the world's music with all of its inherent dangers. (See *What Every Christian Should Know about Rock Music*, available as a free eBook from www.wayoflife.org.)

To Redeem the Time,

We must Learn How to Set Priorities.

- **A major priority is Bible study and prayer.** The young person must not allow anything to interfere with his devotional life. Not only must he give time to it, but he must also give his attention to it. If something is crowding out the Word of God and making it impossible to meditate, that thing should be put out of one's life (Mark 4:19).

- **Another priority is to be faithful to the assemblies (Heb. 10:25).** As a new believer at age 23, I determined that I would never take a job that would keep me out of church, and the Lord always provided jobs that didn't interfere with the Lord's service.

- **Nothing must be allowed to hinder my Christian life and the will of God.** Multitudes of young people have backslidden and gotten out of God's will because of secular education and jobs, as we have already noted.

To redeem the time, we must learn to fill our lives with wholesome and eternally profitable things. God has filled even this fallen world with wonderful things for those who are wise enough to choose excellent above the empty. A few examples of profitable things are Bible study, evangelism, wholesome music, church ministries, good literature, educational documentaries, photography, learning new skills, creation science, geology, history, and physical exercise. The most profitable occupation is to seek the Lord. The creation is fascinating, but the Creator is far more so, and to try to enjoy God's creation without putting God first in your heart and life is idolatry. Above all, the wise young person will study about God.

Video Games and Spiritual Wounds

A young person might think that he can mess around with video games for a while and then leave them behind later when he gets more serious about life.

But messing around with sin always leaves scars. One father illustrated this to his sons by having them hammer some nails into a wooden door. Then he said, “Take them out.” While the nails could be removed, the holes remained. That is what happens to those who mess around with the world. It leaves wounds and scars even when repented of.

“It was a long time ago that I foolishly toyed around with these games and the damage in my life remains to this day” (“Testimony of a Video Gamer,” www.wayoflife.org).

“Over the course of my adolescence, I foolishly spent months and years forming these sinful habits and affections. They didn't just disappear when I decided I wanted them to go away. Beware the dangerous hooks of sin! (**“Escaping Reality: The Danger of Role-Playing Games”**, March 22, 2005). ■

NEWS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS

□ **ROMAN SWORDS IN A DEAD SEA CAVE** - Archaeologists have found four Roman swords in a Dead Sea cave high above Ein Gedi. Dating to the Bar Kokhba Revolt (AD 132-135), the swords are in excellent condition. “The blades have been preserved so well, they look like they could be picked up and used right now, even 2,000 years after they were forged,” geologist Boaz Langford of Hebrew University observed.

This is a fascinating window into the fulfillment of Bible prophecy in those times. It was a time of false christs. Jesus prophesied, **“For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many” (Matthew 24:5)**. Simon Bar Kosiba was one of the false christs. He was pronounced the Messiah by prominent Rabbi Akiva ben Yosef, a major contributor to the Talmud. Coins were minted depicting the silver trumpets with the hope that the trumpets would soon sound from a third temple. It was not to be, because Israel did not have God's blessing. It was a time of judgment on Israel and worldwide dispersal.

Moses had prophesied that the time would come when Israel would be **“scattered among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other” (Deut. 28:64)**. The scattering began with the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, but it was Rome that brought it to completion. The Emperor Hadrian sent 10 legions to deal with Israel. That was one-third of the Roman army. The Roman historian Cassius Dio said 580,000 Jewish men were killed in battle and countless others died of starvation, disease, and fire. Tens of thousands of Jews were sold as slaves and carried away to other nations. After the war, Hadrian determined to erase the name of Israel from the land. He renamed it Syria Palestina. He razed Jerusalem and built a Roman city over the ruins. He minted a coin depicting him driving a team of oxen to plow up Jerusalem, which was a dramatic fulfillment of **Jeremiah 26:18, “Zion shall be plowed like a field.”**

Moses had further prophesied that during the era of worldwide dispersal, Israel would have no might to resist her enemies (Deuteronomy 28:32). Israel would **“become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations” (Deut. 28:37); “among these nations shalt thou find no ease” and “thy life shall hang in doubt before thee” (Deut. 28:65, 66)**. This is a perfect description of the diaspora that followed the Bar Kokhba revolt. As century after weary century rolled along, there was no Jewish army. There was no Joshua or Gideon or David or Judah Maccabee to lead Israel against her enemies.

The same Scripture that was fulfilled in these amazing prophecies further prophesies the rest of Israel's history. She is back in the land to prepare for the Antichrist (Daniel 9:27). She is back in a spiritually dead condition in preparation for her repentance and conversion (Ezekiel 37:1-14). A remnant of Israel will be converted and receive Jesus as the Christ (Ezekiel 20:37-38; Zechariah 12:10 - 13:1), and converted Israel will be the chief nation in Christ's worldwide kingdom (Isaiah 2:1-5). Only then will Israel live in peace and war will cease from the earth.

□ **WORLD EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP JOINS HANDS WITH THE POPE IN ECUMENICAL PRAYER** - On September 30, Thomas Schirrmacher, secretary general of the *World Evangelical Fellowship*, joined hands with the pope in an ecumenical prayer venture at the Vatican. The 3,000 attendees of “Together - Gathering the People of God” included Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Pentecostals, and others. Participating leaders included Bartholomew I (Patriarch of Constantinople), Justin Welby (Archbishop of Canterbury), Anne Burghardt (Secretary General, Lutheran World Federation), Jong Chun Park (President, World Methodist Council), Elijah Brown (General Secretary, World Baptist Alliance), and William Wilson (President, Pentecostal World Fellowship). The gathering featured a Roman Catholic Mass which promotes the gross heresy that Christ is re-sacrificed on the Roman altar.

“Gathering the People of God” is a glimpse into the incipient “one world church.”

The Italian Evangelical Alliance (AEI) issued the following warning: “Once you pray publicly with the Pope, in St. Peter's square, in front of a Marian portrait, embracing the message of spiritual unity with liberals and orthodox leaders, your alleged distinction becomes secondary. Evangelical identity is absorbed into the ecumenical unity...” (“From Evangelical Unity to Ecumenical Unity: The Latest Tumble of the WEF,” *Evangelical Focus*, Oct. 3, 2023). The term “evangelical” means nothing. It encompasses an amazing variety of false gospels and heresies.

□ **EUROPE ENGULFED IN PRO-PALESTINIAN DEMONSTRATIONS** - The following is excerpted from *“All Corners of Europe,” The European Conservative*, Oct. 16, 2023:

“[T]he ethnoreligious tinderbox that Europe has become was on full display over the weekend as massive numbers of pro-Palestinian demonstrators flooded the streets of its major cities. Protesters demanded a halt to Israel's military operations in Gaza that came in reaction to the rampage last weekend by Islamist militant group Hamas. Across the continent and beyond—in Germany, Sweden, Poland, the UK, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and elsewhere—tens of thousands of livid, and sometimes violent protesters occupied squares and streets, in some cases in defiance of bans on demonstrations. ... This weekend's demonstrations come one week after Islamo-Leftists across the West celebrated after Hamas militants, in an unprecedented incursion out of Gaza, stormed communities in Israel ... As of Sunday, October 15th, some 1,400 people have been killed and more than 120 Israelis have been kidnapped since Hamas' initial onslaught, according to statements from Israel's Prime Minister's Office.”

□ **INTERVARSITY PRESS PROMOTING NEW AGE ENNEAGRAM** - The following is excerpted from *“InterVarsity Press Claims Success,” Lighthouse Trails*, Oct. 12, 2023:

“The InterVarsity Press news release announced the seven-year anniversary of the release of *The Road Back to You* by Ian Morgan Cron, a book about the Enneagram. ... The release goes on

to claim that because of that book, over a million people have been introduced to the Enneagram. The release's author says: 'So, today I am celebrating that 1 million people have found a way to better understand their own motivations and move toward becoming their truest self.' You see, contemplatives believe that we all have a 'true self,' which, they teach, is a good pure self, and through meditative practices, we can gain awareness of this true pure self. They believe this because they believe that within each person, there is divinity (God).



... In 2019, we published a booklet titled *The Enneagram - An Enlightening Tool or an Enticing Deception?* by Lois Putnam and the LT Editors. We believe it has more than ample evidence to show the erroneous and unbiblical nature of the Enneagram. And the real name behind the Enneagram is not Ian Morgan Cron but rather the Catholic mystic pantheist priest Richard Rohr ... [T]he Enneagram, a nine-pointed diagram [is] used to determine personality traits and character tendencies. While it may seem harmless and nothing more than a

useful tool, the Enneagram is a seducing lure to deception and an example of what the Bible refers to as 'the wiles of the devil.'

... After Rohr learned about the Enneagram in the 1970s, he shared his Enneagram teaching on ten tapes, later writing his now classic best-selling book, *Discovering the Enneagram: An Ancient Tool for a New Spiritual Journey* (now titled *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective*). In Rohr's book, he explains that the underlying premise behind the Enneagram is that each person has a 'true self' and a 'false self,' and with the help of the Enneagram, we can identify our true selves, and thus having identified it, we can now be spiritually transformed to live in that true self.

... When Rohr, who is an outspoken pantheist, says 'True Self in God,' he is referring to his belief that the true self is the God within every human being."

□ **GEORGIA SUPREME COURT RULES ABORTION BAN CONSTITUTIONAL** - The following is excerpted from "*Georgia Supreme Court*," *The Hill*, Oct. 24, 2023:

"Georgia's 'heartbeat' abortion ban is constitutional and will remain in place for now, the state Supreme Court ruled Tuesday. The 6-1 ruling rejected a lower court's reasoning that the six-week abortion ban was unconstitutional. ... The ruling means access to abortion in the state will continue to be restricted, and most abortions will remain illegal once a physician can detect fetal cardiac activity, which is usually around six weeks gestation, before many people know they are pregnant. The ruling was praised by anti-abortion groups, including Susan B. Anthony

(SBA) Pro-Life America.

... The ruling is not the end of the legal fight over the state's abortion ban. The case was remanded back to the trial court to rule on the remaining claims brought by the plaintiffs that the ban violates Georgians' rights to privacy and equal protection under the state constitution. The abortion ban in Georgia was one of a wave of 'trigger ban' laws across the country that took effect shortly after Roe was overturned. The law includes some exceptions for rape and incest, as long as a police report is filed, and allows for later abortions when the mother's life is at risk or a pregnancy is deemed 'medically futile.'"

□ **FROM UNISEX FASHION TO DRAG QUEENS** - The contemporary worship band Caedmon's Call was formed in 1993 with six founding members (Cliff Young, Danielle Glenn, Todd Bragg, Cari Harris, Doug Elmore, and Aaron Tate). Derek Webb joined early on and wrote many of the group's songs. Webb left in 2003 to pursue a solo career, and he has been on and off with the band since then (2007-2011, 2022). As with the vast majority of contemporary worship groups, there was always a unisex emphasis in Caedmon's Call (founded 1993). It is one of the many ways that they are conformed to the world in direct disobedience to God's Word (Romans 12:2). Some of the men wear earrings and long hair, while the female of the group wears pants. This unisex theme has been taken to its logical conclusion by Derek Webb, who now wears dresses, makeup, and wigs.

Unisex fashion is not innocent. Scripture says God made man "male and female" (Genesis 1:27), and this distinction is to be maintained in dress. "*The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God*" (Deut. 22:5). "*Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering*" (I Cor. 11:14-15).

Mary Quant and other fashion designers of the 1960s understood the revolutionary nature of unisex dress. In 2019, the Victoria & Albert Museum in London had a major exhibit on Quant, who put women in men's attire: pants, ties, suit jackets, and short hair. One display, entitled "*Boys Will Be Girls*," says that Quant "subverted menswear." Another display said, "Trousers are considered inappropriate for women [but] Quant wears them anywhere she wants." Mary Quant knew that trousers on women is not an issue merely of comfort and freedom of movement. There is a direct path from unisex fashion to the homosexual-transsexual movement.

In 2023, Derek Webb published the song "Boys Will Be Girls," which presents transsexualism as something Jesus would support. This is exactly how Victoria & Albert Museum described Mary Quant's fashion revolution. On Twitter, Oct. 13, 2023, Webb promoted the sale of a cup bearing an image of him in a dress (drag queen attire) and the slogan "but i say unto you, you're beautiful and free" from his song "God in Drag." Webb presumptuously uses the words of Jesus ("But I say unto you")

from the Gospels to claim Christ's support for homosexuality.

□ **NEW HOUSE SPEAKER MIKE JOHNSON DEFENDS CHRISTIAN FAITH: 'PICK UP A BIBLE...THAT'S MY WORLDVIEW'** - Newly elected House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) on Thursday defended his Christian faith, telling people to "pick up a Bible" to understand his personal worldview. The Speaker talked with Fox News host Sean Hannity on Thursday, October 26, 2023 and discussed his personal worldview after leftists became outraged over his personal view on marriage being between a man and a woman. CNN even attempted to make a villain of Johnson, asserting that he has a "history of harsh anti-gay language from his time as an attorney for a socially conservative legal group in the mid-2000s."

"I am a rule-of-law guy," Johnson told Hannity on Thursday. "I made a career defending the rule of law. I respect the rule of law. When the Supreme Court issued the Obergefell opinion, that became the law of the land."

Notably, Obergefell essentially legalized same-sex marriage nationwide.

"But I also genuinely love all people, regardless of their lifestyle choices," Johnson continued. "This is not about the people themselves. I am a Bible-believing Christian."

He then clarified his personal position on matters by telling people to look at the Bible:

"Someone asked me today in the media, they said, 'It's curious, people are curious. What does Mike Johnson think about any issue under the sun?' I said, 'Well, go pick up a Bible off your shelf and read it - that's my worldview.' That's what I believe, and so I make no apologies for it."

Johnson emphasized that this is his "personal worldview."

Johnson was sure to acknowledge God following his recent speakership victory, telling the Chamber that Divine Providence played a role in his next step.

"I want to tell all my colleagues here what I told the Republicans in that room last night; I don't believe there are any coincidences in a matter like this," he told the Chamber.

"I believe that Scripture, the Bible, is very clear that God is the one that raises up those in authority. He raised up each of you, all of us, and I believe that God has ordained and allowed each one of us to be brought here for this specific moment in this time," he continued.

"This is my belief. I believe that each one of us has a huge responsibility today to use the gifts that God has given us to serve the extraordinary people of this great country," Johnson continued.

Johnson became Speaker on Wednesday after unanimous consent from the GOP side - something that has not happened since 2011.

□ **TERRORISTS BLOCK CIVILIANS TRYING TO EVACUATE GAZA** - Israel's response to the Oct. 7 massacre of some 1,400 innocent civilians by the terrorists of Hamas, a brutal attack that reports now have confirmed was done by drugged-up radicals with written instructions to commit atrocities, will include

its military moves against Hamas assets in Gaza.

And to that end, it has warned civilians there to evacuate for their own safety.

But, now, a report confirms that Hamas itself is preventing that evacuation, meaning it is keeping civilians near its military bases that will be targeted in a coming ground advance by Israel Defense Forces.

A report from the Jewish News Syndicate explains from the IDF came audio evidence that Hamas "is forcibly preventing Palestinians from heeding Israeli orders to evacuate to the south of the Gaza Strip.

The report explained the recording from the IDF "features an officer in IDF Military Intelligence Directorate's Unit 504 and a Gazan civilian speaking about the latter's attempt to temporarily relocate from the northern part of the Strip."

Israel has stated its intention of destroying the Hamas terrorist organization, which has its assets located throughout Gaza, including in residential neighborhoods and adjacent to hospitals.

The report explains, "In the call, the IDF officer tells Muhammad that to 'ensure your personal safety, I'm asking you to urgently go towards Khan Younis' in the south."

The Gazan says, "All roads are blocked."

"When asked if Hamas is blocking the roads, he answers in the affirmative, saying that Hamas was preventing passage south through Salah al-Din Road, the main north-south highway running through the Gaza Strip," the report says.

And, the Gazan adds, "They are shooting at people." ■

LET THE NATIONS TAKE WARNING!

