

The Baptist CHALLENGE

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Getting To Know Your Pastor

By Joe C. Hocking, Ph.D.

Scripture: “*And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. And be at peace among yourselves*” (1 Thess. 5:12-13).

INTRODUCTION

1. This is the first letter Paul wrote to the church of the Thessalonians, and these words are part of the final admonition to that church. In the larger sense, it is the will of God for all church members in any age. These words express what God would have all members of His churches to do concerning their attitude and behavior toward the man of God.

This study was given to me by the Lord while on my knees in prayer and in preparation to present to the men of the church and in defense of my office, the

week prior to the meeting.

The Lord has used this study among several of my pastor brethren across the land, and it became a chapter in the book **The Pastor**, published by the Challenge Press of Little Rock, Arkansas.

I have used it in my church because of the need that exists in our church for a good understanding regarding the office of pastor and that each member may know what the Bible says regarding the pastoral office and the member’s responsibility toward him. (Satan will do his best to create misunderstanding about your pastor, and will seek to mislead you if you allow him to do so.)

2. I have asked the Lord to help me present this study in love while at the same time, to help me not to shun my responsibility to preach what God says about the sacred office of the pastor. I ask your prayers and your most

earnest attention and consideration of what thus saith the Lord.

I. The Office of Pastor.

1. The pastor of the church must be God-called. A man does not decide to become a preacher; rather, he is chosen by the Lord to preach the gospel. As Paul wrote to Timothy these words: “And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry” (1 Tim. 1:12). Note the word, “*putting*.” God *puts* men into the ministry. Also, Paul shared his call with the Ephesian church: “Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power” (Eph. 3:7). Preachers are anointed of God.

2. The pastor of the church is placed over the church as the earthly shepherd of the flock by the

Holy Spirit. The church, also led by the Holy Spirit, extends a call, asking the preacher to consider serving as their pastor and leader. The preacher then either accepts or rejects the church’s call to be their pastor. The church at Antioch is an example: “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabus and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.” Notice who does the calling.

II. Responsibilities of the Pastor to the Church.

1. The pastor is honored by his divine calling and anointing to preach the Word of God; the whole counsel of God. The charge to the pastor is recorded in the following scriptures: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for

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“Good Morning America” Practices Censorship

By Cal Thomas

Some word manipulators and media managers are trying to redefine the word “censor.” When the word is used, the image they want you to see is of a “backwoods” minister objecting to the content of *The Wizard of Oz*, or of an uneducated homemaker writing letters complaining that certain programming is hazardous to her children's health.

But censorship is not a one-way street. The networks practice it, too, if you define “censor” as the dictionary does: “An official who examines materials for objectionable matter.” What the networks consider objectionable is not the sex and violence they constantly pump into our homes. What they object to, and therefore censor, is something that is anything but objectionable to millions of Americans: the Bible.

I was recently given a rare and, I'm sure, unintended peek into the network mindset in an incident involving ABC's morning TV program “Good Morning America.”

A GMA producer called me after reading a column I had written on the “domestic partnership” law passed by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, which allows unmarried homosexual and heterosexual couples to receive many of the benefits married people enjoy. In that column I had quoted several Supreme Court cases affirming the traditional male-female marriage as the norm. I also

said that the relationship was not a recent invention but had biblical roots, and I quoted a verse from Genesis, Chapter 2: “A man shall leave his mother and father and cleave unto his wife.”

The GMA producer, Sue Hester, asked me to be on the show the following morning. I agreed. Another ABC staff person called to conduct a “pre-interview” in which my views on the subject were noted so that the GMA co-hosts, Charlie Gibson and Joan Lunden, would know what to expect.

As I was preparing to leave for New York, Hester called to say that I had been canceled and someone else chosen.

“Why?: I asked.

In what must have been an unguarded moment, Hester gave me this response: “The producer wasn't comfortable with your quotation from the Bible (in the newspaper column). She was concerned that you might quote some Bible verses.”

Outraged, and aware that GMA has no problem with “comedians” like Howie Mandell using sexual double entendres on the air, I asked for the name of the producer who made the decision.

“Rickie Gaffney,” said Hester.

After I tried repeatedly to reach Gaffney, she finally called me.

“Before I tell you what you were quoted as saying, I would like you to tell me why I was yanked from the program,” I questioned.

“We were looking for a certain kind of mix,” said Gaffney. Asked to explain, she responded, “I don't think that's worth elaborating on, quite frankly.”

I then asked her whether she had any concern over my quoting Bible verses on the air, as Hester had indicated.

“That was her interpretation,” she said.

“You mean you never expressed any concern about me quoting from the Bible?”

In an answer reminiscent of those given by defendants at trials and congressional hearings, Gaffney said, “I don't recall.”

If this were an isolated incident, it might be dismissed as an aberration, but it wasn't.

Last year, five minutes before I appeared as a guest on ABC's Nightline, executive producer Rick Kaplan said to me, “Nice to have you on the show again, Cal. By the way, please don't use any Bible verses tonight.” The show was on the scandals in TV evangelism, and a more appropriate forum for quoting the Bible as proof that some had strayed from its standards could hardly be found.

It is disturbing that the Bible, which is read by the president and vice president of the United States and millions of other Americans, is considered taboo on the ABC network, or at least is perceived as taboo by some network executives.

Maybe they should be reminded that, the last time I looked, the airwaves still belonged to the public. □

Is America An "Anti-Christian" Nation?

From the Journal of the American Family Association

Listed below are many of the examples of anti-Christian bias and discrimination which have been reported in the **AFA Journal** through the last few years. These are only the tip of the iceberg. They do not even include the continuous anti-Christian stereotyping on television.

1. Motion Picture Association of America gave the Billy Graham movie "The Prodigal" a PG rating. The reason, according to MPAA: "Pre-teenage children should not be exposed to Christianity without their parents' consent."

2. Sports and Health Clubs, Inc., based in St. Louis Park, Minnesota, was ordered to pay damages to 10 complainants because of the company's policy which allowed only Christians to hold management positions.

3. Thomas Nelson Publishers tried to buy time from NBC to advertise their book, **The Bible**. NBC refused to sell the ad time because they considered it a religious ad. When Thomas Nelson made public NBC's refusal, the network decided to sell ad time.

4. In Seminole County, Florida, an eight-year-old girl was prohibited from distributing among her friends small greeting cards which included a sticker of Jesus, and a 13-year-old girl had her poster of the Nativity scene removed from the classroom because of its religious content.

5. A reporter in Mon-tana

was demoted by Associated Press after he granted an interview in a Christian newspaper, **The Montana Christian**. His superior felt that his Christian views might influence his writing.

6. The ACLU sued a fire station in Cos Cob, Connecticut, for hanging a crucifix on their building as part of a Christmas decoration. No public funds were involved.

7. A Christian businessman in Virginia was sued by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith because he used Christian symbols (a fish and a cross) in advertising his business.

8. A couple in California were denied the right to adopt a young girl because the judge said they were "too religious." Neither the judge nor the case worker had visited their home and had asked no questions concerning their religious beliefs.

9. A study of public school textbooks funded by the National Institute of Education found that religion is censored from public school textbooks and they are biased against religion.

10. A federal court ruled that the seal of Bernalillo County, New Mexico, was illegal. The seal consisted of a mountain range, grazing sheep and a cross suspended in the sky.

11. The ACLU stopped the Cold Spring, Minnesota, school district teacher workshops from opening their meetings with prayer.

12. Following a suit by the ACLU, the Ten Commandments, were removed from school room walls in Kentucky.

13. The Jewish Federation of Hawaii brought a complaint about a lighted cross at Camp Smith, Hawaii.

14. The ACLU opposed Congressman Henry Hyde's efforts to end taxpayer funding of abortion. The ACLU said Hyde's efforts were illegal because Hyde is a Catholic.

15. The California Fair Employment and Housing Commission voted to repeal legislation that permitted religious organizations the freedom to hire only those who share their beliefs.

16. Led by the ACLU, suits to stop prayers before ball games have increased across the country.

17. In 1986, there were 2,000 suits against houses of worship, clergy and religious groups, according to Edward E. Carr, an attorney with Alexander & Alexander.

18. The ACLU threatened to sue the Carter County, Tennessee, school system unless officials stopped the once-a-month character lessons.

19. Federal Judge Charles Richey ruled that religious organizations can no longer receive funds for programs that promote sexual abstinence among teenagers and adoption as an alternative to abortion. However, he allowed non-religious groups to continue receiving grants.

20. Three members of the Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship's Campaign '87 were arrested for preaching and handing out tracts at a shopping mall in Atlanta.

21. In Tennessee, churches were told they would have to register as political action committees if they participated in referenda on moral issues.

22. KHOU-TV station in Houston refused to air a regularly scheduled worship service from Second Baptist Church because the pastor planned to preach on gambling and horse racing.

23. A Moss Bluff, Louisiana, high school valedictorian who was a Christian was refused the traditional right to address her graduating class because her speech contained religious content.

24. Wellesley, Massachusetts High School banned the singing of "O Come All Ye Faithful" and "Silent Night" and replaced them with "Let It Snow" and "Sleigh Ride."

25. A childcare bill being proposed by Congress would prohibit any use of church-related facilities for daycare unless all "religious symbols and artifacts are covered or have been removed from such classroom or space."

26. Religious invocations were banned in public high school graduating exercises following a suit by the ACLU.

27. A federal judge in

(See **ANTI** on page 7)

Questions Raised About Rights of Christian Students

An Atlanta, GA high school has become the latest focus of an ongoing nationwide controversy related to protecting the civil rights of students while maintaining separation of church and state in public schools.

A 17-year-old senior at DeKalb County's Henderson High School was suspended just before the Thanksgiving holidays on charges of disobeying orders from school officials. He had been caught passing a handwritten note to a fellow student in the school hallway, informing sophomore Matt Hinton of the time and place for their next Fellowship of Christian Athletes meeting.

School officials later said a mistake had been made and agreed to rescind the suspension of the senior. He and his family have requested that his name be kept out of the press at this time.

But the issue is not settled, since Henderson High Principal Bobby Jordan reportedly told a parent that students could not bring Bibles to school or wear religious T-shirts, buttons, or other symbols of their faith.

The conflict at Henderson High has been developing. The Fellowship of Christian Athletes has been barred from meeting after school on the campus

and was told it must drop the word "Christian" from its name to participate in any school activities.

In October, FCA members, including the student who later was suspended, distributed flyers at school advertising an FCA meeting. They were told that was in violation of school rules and warned not to do it again.

Bill Hinton, Matt's father, reported that Jordan had disallowed possession of religious materials. But Andy Olson, a spokesperson for DeKalb County schools, said that was not the policy of the DeKalb County School Board.

"There is absolutely no basis for preventing any student from possessing and reading religious literature on his own time," Olson said. The apparent discrepancy between board policy and the principal's directive demonstrates the confusion of the case.

A lawyer for the DeKalb County School Board stated in writing that when the note addressed to Hinton was intercepted by the school's assistant principal, he thought it "was an attempt to repeat activity which (the student) had already been told was inappropriate during school hours."

Hinton received a written reprimand that said, "Any further occurrence of

Building A Pastor

We have heard of building a church but what about building a pastor? It is true. You can build a pastor, or you can tear him

possession of Christian material could lead to a suspension of some type."

Hinton's father reported he had been to see Jordan and asked for clarification of what was meant by "possession of Christian material."

"Would he get in trouble for bringing his Bible to school?" the father asked. "That's right," the principal responded.

The DeKalb County School Board has no written policy regarding the possession of religious materials or student religious groups meeting on school campuses. Individual principals have the authority to set policies within their own schools and some may be under pressure from parents opposed to any form of religious expression within the schools.

Several families in Briarlake Baptist Church, where both students involved in the incident are members, are working through attorney Jay Sekulow to pressure the DeKalb County School Board to draft a fair policy that spells out the rights of students regarding their religious faith. — Copied from the *Baptist Trumpet*.

down. A great pastor will build his church, and a great church will build her pastor. A church is as responsible for what she does for her pastor as is the pastor for what he does for his church. How can we, as members, help make our pastor's ministry more effective?

1. — **Build his spiritual power** by praying for him. When you pray for your pastor, you pray for your church, your community, your family.

2. — **Build his reputation** by speaking well of him. He will have weak and strong points. His influence will depend on which of them you stress.

3. **Build his leadership** by cooperating with him. For every great leader there must be some great followers. Read Hebrews 13:7, 17.

4. — **Build his pulpit power** by hearing him. Full pews challenge a man to prepare and deliver great sermons. Empty pews discourage him.

5. — **But the greatest thing** you can do for your pastor is to follow the Christ he preaches and obey God's Word! □

The only state that permits a woman to work more than eight hours a day is the state of matrimony.

From The Harvest Fields

“Our Distant Neighbor”

By John Robert Starr

[The following article appeared December 31, 1989 in the *Arkansas Democrat* on the editorial page written by John Robert Starr concerning his recent trip to Mexico. We thought it would be of interest to those who are interested in the support of our mission work in Mexico.]

* * *

QUERETARO, Mexico — One of the books written for Americans about Mexico is called “Our Distant Neighbor.”

No title was ever more appropriate.

Mexico is one of two countries that border on the United States, but unlike Canada, which is almost a twin to our country, Mexico is a different world.

Have no doubt about it. Mexico is a Third World country in almost every sense of the word.

Most Americans know Mexico from visiting either the tourist traps in border cities like Tijuana, Juarez, Nuevo Laredo and Matamoros or the plush

beach resorts of the Yucatan peninsula and Acapulco.

Away from these and away from a few large and prosperous cities, Mexico is a land of unspeakable poverty. By comparison, the poorest sections of the United States are Gardens of Eden.

The real Mexico is a parched and hostile but stunningly beautiful land that is deeply mired in the 19th century.

This “distant neighbor” has more of the feel of a foreign country than any of the dozen or so countries and principalities we have visited in Europe. The differences hit home in the Mexican customs office at the border. All the instructions are in Spanish. In a West European port of entry, many instructions appear in at least five languages (English, French, German, Italian and Spanish) and sometimes a sixth — Japanese.

In Europe, almost everyone along the tourist trails speaks some English.

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General George Washington Wanted Bible Baptism

By Dr. David M. Gardner

[The following is an editorial by Dr. David M. Gardner which appeared in the *Texas Baptist Standard* on February 14, 1946 when Dr. Gardner was its editor.]

* * *

We are indebted to our friend, Dr. Charles William Koller, president of the Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, Chicago, for the facts concerning the baptism of Gen. George Washington.

According to the records of the First Baptist Church of New York City, John Gano, was the first pastor of the church, had served as chaplain through the war period. When the war was over and the peace treaty had been signed, Gen. Washington was with his troops in camp at Newburg on the Hudson. Chaplain Gano was preaching and expounding the truths of the gospel to the soldiers. Gen. Washington heard him — and though he was a member of the Episcopal Church, and had been sprinkled in

infancy — began to search the Scriptures, and was convinced that he had never been baptized. He approached the chaplain, John Gano, and requested baptism “as taught and practiced in the Scriptures.” According to the records of the First Baptist Church, New York, Gen. Washington was baptized in the Hudson River in the presence of only 42 witnesses. It is only fair to say, however, that he did not sever his relations with the Episcopal church.

Dr. Koller recites the facts of the baptism of the first President of the United States by the first pastor of the First Baptist Church of New York, and makes the following observations:

Example of the Ethiopian

“The baptism was Scriptural. Such was the baptism of Jesus, who came to the River Jordan to be baptized and, after His baptism, ‘went up straightway out of the water’ (Mt. 3:16). Such

(See **WASH** on page 12)

The Influence of the Bible

By M. L. Moser, Sr.

Few people can read the Bible without feeling the impact of the Bible upon their lives. It is different from every other book in the world in the influence that it wields. Individuals, communities, and nations have been influenced by the Bible. Wherever the Bible has gone the lives of men and women have been elevated, and rights and privileges, unknown in lands without the Bible, have been granted. The Bible is a book that liberates and frees. Not just religious liberty but all liberties. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." The greatest liberties known to man are vouchsafed to the citizens in a land where the Bible is known and loved.

I wish you could have an uncolored map of the world before you at the present time and that you could shade that map in accordance with the knowledge of the Bible. You would find that the portions of the world where the Bible has not gone are the very portions of the world where there is the least liberty, where poverty and ignorance and tyranny exist. There would be some portions black as night. *No Bible*, no light, no liberty. Other portions would be

shadowed, the Bible, to a limited extent, read and revered; other portions would be white, because they would be the nations where there is the most liberty, the most freedom, and of course, the greatest knowledge of the Bible. The impact of the Bible upon a nation is beyond measure. Only as missionaries have carried the Word of God to these dark lands have they emerged out of their darkness into the light. God give us more Bible missionaries at this present time.

May we make one comparison — North and South America. What a difference between the development of the two sections of the world. From the American border southward through Mexico, the Latin Americas, the countries of South America, we find countries that have not developed in the past as Canada and the United States have developed. Why? One man well said that the difference lies in just one letter of one word. The men and women who settled North America were men and women who came seeking God. Believing the Bible to be the infallible Word of God, they came to the shores of North America seeking the right, the privilege of worshipping God according to their own conscience, in the light of an open Bible. Material prosperity was secondary. They came seeking spiritual liberty.

They came seeking God.

On the other hand, those who went to Central America and South America did not go seeking God. They went with armies, with weapons of warfare, seeking gold. Seeking to extend the boundaries of empires. Their main objective was the accumulation of wealth. They enslaved the people of their new found lands, they robbed them of their possessions, they sought by every means at their command to enrich themselves and the empire they represented. Their ideas still dominate the countries south of the border, and it is only recently under the impact of missionaries with their Bibles that there has been any growth, any development in these countries. Even now religious liberty, as we know religious liberty, is unknown in these countries.

Do you see the difference? It is in one letter. Men seeking God and other men seeking gold. One came with a Bible — the other, while having certain religious forms and ceremonies, came with the sword seeking gold. We see in this one thing alone — the influence of the Bible.

America became a great nation in times past because its principles were founded on the Book. The Supreme Court at one time ruled, "*This is a Christian nation.*" Under the influence of the Bible there

was woven into the fabric of American civilization a moral background, a stamina, that gave to America its present position in the world. God could afford to bless America because of the things that America believed and practiced. The Bible was the foundation of the American home. It was in every class room of our public school system. It was the backbone of everything that we called American. Courts were opened with prayer and a reading of the Bible. Men took office with a Bible under their hand and with an oath of fidelity to the trust committed to their care by the people upon their lips. Every pulpit, while differing to some extent as to what the Bible taught, at least believed the Bible to be the inspired Word of God. What infidelity there was, was confined to a very small minority, and all of this minority outside the churches.

Today America is beginning a downward side. Unless there comes a mighty revival of faith in the old Book, our liberties and our privileges will be of the past. Germany at one time was the greatest Christian nation in the world. The influence of the book was felt in every avenue of her life. Then the dark cold of infidelity began to make its appearance. First in her Bible schools, then in her pulpits, then in her pews,

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ANTI . . .

(Continued from page 3)

Nebraska ruled that students cannot meet on school campuses for a Bible club meeting, even on their own time and without adult intervention. Chess clubs, scuba clubs, even young communist clubs can meet, but not Bible clubs.

28. A teacher in Carbondale, Illinois, was fired because he often quoted the Bible. The teacher was told that he would be rehired to finish the year, but was told that he must not refer to God or paraphrase the Bible in class.

29. A study done by the Williamsburg Charter Survey showed that university academics hold a bias against Christianity. Thirty-four percent said that evangelicals threaten democracy. 57% said it was not good for Congress to start with prayer, 65% said schools should teach only evolution, 55% said that secular humanism has had a good impact on this country, and 79% didn't care when the words "Jesus Christ" were used as profanity.

30. A Fort Lauderdale, Florida, high school teacher was reprimanded because he showed a film on the theory of creation in a biology class.

31. The ACLU and the Anti-Defamation League complained to the Washington Human Rights Commission that Moon & Moon Realty of Centralia, Washington, was using a fish on their letterhead and advertisements. The fish is a Christian symbol.

32. Christian singer Kenny Marks' song "The Party's Over," which portrays the downside of teenage pregnancy, was rejected by

MTV, VH-1 and Nickelodeon because they are "not in the business of promoting social issues." However MTV and VH-1 aired *Rock Against Drugs* anti-drug spots and videos which dealt with apartheid, world hunger and nuclear war.

33. State officials in Pennsylvania said that clusters of crosses that have been erected by a private organization must be taken down because they are considered forms of advertising that violate zoning laws.

34. The ACLU criticized Alabama Governor Guy Hunt because he attended a meeting opposing *The Last Temptation of Christ*. The ACLU said that it was a serious impropriety for the governor to ask people to pray.

35. Madonna released and MTV aired a video showing her having sex with a person representing Christ.

36. Andres Serrano was given \$15,000 tax money as first prize for his work of art, a photograph of a crucifix of Christ submerged in Serrano's own urine.

37. In Denver, a federal judge ordered a teacher to remove two books, *The Bible In Pictures* and *The Story of Jesus*, from his classroom library.

38. CBS in Chicago banned a paid spot by Cardinal Bernardin which said, "At the beginning of Lent we hear again the prophets of Israel who challenge us to be just, to show compassion for the poor, to extend a loving hand to the stranger and the alien." CBS said the spot could not be aired because Cardinal Bernardin was a Catholic and Catholics take

controversial positions on abortion and birth control.

39. ABC refused to allow columnist Cal Thomas to appear on *Good Morning America* because he often quotes the Bible.

40. A government report blamed Christians in general and Catholics and Baptists in particular for causing suicide among teenage homosexuals. The report said churches should change their attitude toward homosexuals.

41. A Presbyterian woman in Los Angeles was fined \$954 for refusing to rent her apartment to an unmarried couple, and ordered to rent her apartment to the couple. She was also ordered to post a notice on all her units saying that it is illegal to deny leases because of marital status, to ask about marital status, and to make any statement indicating that she prefers to rent to married couples only.

42. MCA/Universal released *The Last Temptation of Christ*, a movie which depicts Jesus as being a lunatic who calls Himself a sinner, a liar, an adulterer and bigamist and says He died for His sins only. Sidney Sheinberg, president of Universal Studios, told a group of Universal executives: "Christians will not stop us from distributing this film." Despite the fact that only about 140 theaters of the approximately 14,000 in the country showed the film, Time, Inc. aired the movie on the Cinamax cable channel.

43. A Methodist lady in Florida was told she would have to remove a small heart-shaped "God bless this house" sign from her door. Other condo owners had mezuzahs, which are also meant to bless a home, on

their doors. A member of the condo board said "She is not supposed to put anything strange on her door. She can put up other signs if she wants, maybe other religious signs." Sidney Jacobs, president of the condo board, said Mrs. Walter Reiter's sign is "offensive."

44. A new book published by Harper & Row presents a feminist view of the life of Christ. The book has Joseph killing himself as a sacrifice for his people, has Jesus marrying Magdalene and their having a daughter. Magdalene then marries Judas who is identified as the twin of Jesus. Judas betrays Jesus after Jesus asks him to do so to fulfill the prophecy.

45. Production on a new movie about Christ, called *Jesus The Man*, continues. The movie is being produced by Mel Brooks' partner, Paul Verhoeven. Verhoeven has cut a scene from the script in which Jesus is shown masturbating, but Verhoeven has left in a scene in which Jesus has sex and refuses to allow a scene concerning the resurrection. *The Return of Jesus Christ*, being produced by Jorgen Thorsen of Sweden, will begin in December. The Swedish government is funding 50% of the \$1.1 million for the movie. It will show Jesus returning in many forms, one of them being a political terrorist.

46. Leaders of the American Jewish committee in their national meeting last summer released a pamphlet titled "The Transformation of Jewish Politics," in which the AJC said American Jews must defend themselves against "two major hostile pressures

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World News Roundup

1990 Challenge Press Catalog Ready. The 1990 catalog listing Challenge Press books is now available. Though we do not "sell" the catalogs, postage alone for mailing the catalog is \$1.00. For those who would like a complete listing of Challenge Press books, we will be happy to mail you a free catalog on request. Postage would be appreciated.

New Age Invades the Classroom. The New-age Movement is an occultic and pantheistic network of mystical humanism. Some say New Agers have an agenda

of death for Christians: "Those who cannot be enlightened will not be permitted to dwell in this world. They will be sent to some equally appropriate place to work their way to understanding (4/89 FJ). New Age thought is infiltrating each facet of our society, including public schools. Thousands of children spend classroom time meditating, participating in yoga classes and guided fantasies, experimenting with ESP and psychic phenomena, and analyzing their dreams (10/89 Concerned Women). Parents need to find out what is being forced upon their vulnerable children in dangerous New

Age classroom experimentation. -- CC.

Humanism Worse Than Communism? Communists now apparently think the best way to win converts to atheism is to teach humanism in schools and grant more religious freedom for churches. Last July Soviet atheists acknowledged in a Moscow symposium of the Int'l Humanist & Ethical Union and the Soviet Institute for Scientific Atheism that 70 years of militant atheism have been self-defeating in swaying believers from their faith. Paradoxically, under communism in Poland "the church" has grown strong, while under "freedom" in Western Europe the church has grown weaker with only 3% in some countries attending church (12/89 Baptist Bulletin). Meanwhile the Communist-controlled Federal assembly in Czechoslovakia voted (11/89) "to end the Communist monopoly on power" and rewrote an article of the Czech constitution to make "humanism," not Marxism-Leninism, the guiding principle in schools and universities (11/30 Wall Street Journal). Atheistic humanism pervades U.S. public schools. And Lutheran Professor Dr. Lee Snook, a universalist and unitarian who denies the deity of Christ, says all professors in the mainline non-fundamentalist seminaries and university divinity schools today accept the "evolutionary view of reality" rather than the creationist view (9/23 Christian News). — CC

"Fundamentalist Journal" Folds. The December issue of Dr. Jerry Falwell's Fundamentalist Journal said "This is our final issue ..." Falwell shut down another periodical earlier this year when Moral Majority was dis-banded. In 1989 500 jobs have been eliminated at the Old-Time Gospel Hour, and related Falwell enterprises (11/18 World). The FJ did not make money, cost about \$750,000 a year to produce, and had about 70,000 paid and unpaid subscribers. Sothern Baptists and other new evangelicals were often featured in this "Fundamentalist" journal. — CC

Memo To New Age Watchers: Keep An Eye On This Case. It involves new car dealer Steve Hiatt of Puyallup, Wash., member of a Nazarene church. Nearly six years ago, as senior manager of a dealership in nearby Tacoma, he persuaded the owners to enlist Seattle-based Pacific Institute (PI) to provide motivation training for the company's staff. The firm sent him and his wife (as required by PI) to a \$20,000 five-day small-group seminar in Oklahoma City in January 1984 for grooming as a "facilitator" to help train staff back home. But he walked out after 3 1/2 days, saying the course, "New Age Thinking to Increase Dealer Profitability," conflicted with his beliefs as a born-again Christian. "I was a

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Gods of the New Age

This film is must viewing for those interested in understanding today's mushrooming New Age philosophy, popularly nicknamed "Shirley MacLaine's mysticism for the masses." With explosive facts, it explains why 60 million Americans have been led to Eastern mysticism's "embrace that smothers," exchanging the certain hope of salvation for the hopeless cycle of reincarnation; why yoga, meditation, psychological therapy and self-help are turning millions to a pagan worldview; how the west is being intentionally evangelized by eastern mystics and New Age visionaries.

One author has said, "A gripping and accurate exposé of an incredible deception that is reshaping the western world. This is one film that everyone -- Christian and non-Christian -- must see!"

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new believer at the time, and I had never heard of New Age religion before," he told NIRR. The dealership fired him. Hiatt complained to government employment officials, contending he'd been pink-slipped for refusing to compromise his religious beliefs. The case was referred to a state human rights commission, where it languished for years. Hiatt, meanwhile, bought his own dealership and made it a success. But he and lawyer Tom Jacobs, a member of the Christian Legal Society, were convinced that a major constitutional point was at stake, and just before the statute of limitations expired in 1987, they filed suit in county court in Tacoma. The Tacoma company said it had fired Hiatt for unauthorized absences and other work-related reasons, charges that did not stand up in court. But the judge bypassed those issues and last month issued a summary judgment, ruling in effect that the seminar was more a sales course than a religious presentation and that some actions related to religious belief can be grounds for dismissal. Hiatt, who is seeking only attorney's fees and court costs, immediately appealed to the state supreme court. Jacobs said his client "brought this suit to get a precedent so other people won't have to go through these 'New Ages' programs." Pacific Institute, meanwhile, has dropped "New Age" from its program descriptions, substituting instead "Investment in Excellence," and removed certain books from its

reading list. President Lou Tice insists he is a Catholic and PI is not religious. Hiatt and other critics, however, maintain that New Age religion is still at the heart of its program. PI got some unwanted publicity recently when the name of Tice's wife turned up on the payroll of former U.S. House Speaker Jim Wright, ousted on ethics charges. And last month, a Glasgow daily disclosed that the Scottish government is spending about \$700,000 for PI training, a disclosure that has some church people up in arms.

Left-wing NCC Still Left-wing. Expressing "dismay" at the U.S. invasion of Panama, the National Council of Churches on December 20 called on President Bush to order American troops to cease fire and "withdraw immediately from areas of Panamanian sovereignty." A letter signed by Hamilton cited violations of "certain basic norms of international behavior" and dismissed Bush's rationale for the action as "insufficient." This continues the left-wing policy of the NCC as nearly 100% of the time they oppose the best interests of the United States. It should be declared an "Un-American" organization as it wonce was under their previous name, The Federal Council of Churches.

Church Sued For Photocopying Music. The Orthodox Church in America, its Midwest regional unit, and four of its congregations in Minneapolis have been sued.

Composer Kenneth Stromberg of that city alleges his copyrighted musical compositions were photocopied and distributed for use in the congregations without his permission. He is seeking \$10,000 in damages and the transfer of any profits from the works. A word to the wise should be sufficient.

Lesbian Couple Pastor Lutheran Church. The 120-member St. Francis Lutheran Church in San Francisco called a lesbian couple to become associate pastors, defying a denominational ban on the ordination of practicing homosexuals. They are Ruth Frost, 41, and Phyllis Zillhart, 32, of Misseapolis. And San Francisco's First United Lutheran Church voted to hire homosexual Jeff Johnson as assistant pastor. Regional officials of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, said they would start proceedings that could lead to the expulsion of St. Francis and First United from the ELCA if the three accept the calls.

Missionaries From Third World Countries. The number of missionaries sent from Third World countries has increased 248% since 1980, according to a survey published by World Vision's MARC. India and Burma lead in Asia (the Burma Baptist Convention alone lists 1,440 missionaries). Nigeria and Zaire have fielded the most in Africa, with Zimbabwe showing dramatic increases. Brazil leads in Latin America with 2,040 missionaries;

second is Mexico, with 224. Larry Pate, author of the study, **From Every People** estimates that within 10 years missionaries from developing countries will out number all others, 16,000 to 11,000.

Grape Juice Now Approved For Mass. The Vatican ruled that alcoholic priests seeking to break their addiction may celebrate mass with non-fermented grape juice instead of wine in response to a request from a group of Italian priests.

Disney: Even Hollywood's Best Is Bad. Some Christians used to say, "We only go to Disney movies." For years Walt Disney Productions had a squeaky clean reputation with many parents. But in 1985, it was accused of promoting secular humanism (11/4/85 Chr. News). In 1986, Disney's first R-rated movie premiered (1/13/86 USN7WR). In 1987, Disney released a documentary for high schools that gave dangerous and erroneous "facts" on AIDS, and said it is not caused by a lifestyle but by a virus (2/2/88 CN). In 1989, Disney disclosed that it is getting into the pop (rock) music business, where songs are sometimes violent and often sexually explicit (12/11 USN&WR). But, "to keep the Disney name pure," (!) the recordings will be under the name of Holywood Records, just as its racy adult movies are put out as from Touchstone Pictures. This is deception. The Disney name is not pure but perverted. "Nothing good comes out of

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How To Choose A Church

By John A. Kohler III

Billy Graham, Robert Schuller, and other renowned radio and television preachers often advise their listeners and viewers to "attend the church of your choice this Sunday." On the surface, this sounds like good and helpful advice, but is it really? Should not Messrs. Graham, Schuller, and other mass media preachers instead advise their listeners and viewers to "attend a church of God's choice every Sunday" (and, for that matter, every time the doors are open)? Should they not warn their listeners and viewers that "the church of your choice" may not be "a church of God's choice?" Such a warning is vital in this Laodicean age of apostasy, as "the church of your choice" may well turn out to be one that stands in direct opposition to "a church of God's choice." The following guidelines should prove helpful in finding "a church of God's choice."

1. "A church of God's choice" is one that believes that the Bible is the verbally-inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God. "The church of your choice" may not hold Scripture in such high regard.

2. "A church of God's choice" is one that believes that the Bible is the one, objective, final authority for

determining what to believe, what not to believe, how to live, and how not to live. "The church of your choice" may not be willing to submit to the authority of God's Word in this way.

3. "A church of God's choice" is one that consistently interprets the Bible according to literal, grammatical, historical hermeneutical principles. "The church of your choice" may not be one that interprets the Bible correctly.

4. "A church of God's choice" is one that believes in the Jesus of the Bible, completely accepting what the Bible teaches about His eternal deity, virgin birth, sinless life, substitutionary blood atonement, bodily resurrection, and visible, personal second coming. "The church of your choice" may not believe in the true Jesus.

5. "A church of God's choice" is one that teaches the true way of salvation and practices the true way of baptism. It is one that teaches salvation by grace alone through repentance and faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ alone and practices believer's baptism by immersion. "The church of your choice" may be in error on these two key points.

6. "A church of God's choice" is one that "earnestly contends for the

faith which was once delivered unto the saints" while maintaining ecclesiastical separation from such apostate ecumenical organizations as the Baptist World Alliance, the National Council of Churches, and the World Council of Churches. "The church of your choice" may not hold to the historic Christian faith and may be involved in compromise and liberalism.

7. "A church of God's choice" is one that seeks genuine Christian unity with other Christians and churches on the basis of a return to all of the truths of God's Word. It is one that emphasizes unity based on truth rather than unity at the expense of truth. "The church of your choice" may not care about truth at all.

In short, "a church of God's choice" is one that believes God's every word and seeks to obey God's every command.

Attend a church of God's choice this Sunday and every time the doors are open! □

ANTI . . .

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— the threat of anti-Semitic prejudice and discrimination and the incorporation into American public life of Christian symbols, practices and values."

47. Ted Turner tells a group of broadcasters that "Christianity is a religion for losers" and says the Ten

Commandments are out of date.

48. Steward Copeland, founder of the rock music group The Police, has written an opera "Holy Blood and Crescent Moon." He depicts Jesus as having been married and having a family.

49. U.S. Senator Howard M. Metzenbaum (D-Ohio), told a Jewish audience at the Wise Center in Cincinnati, "Do not let the forces of evil take over and make this a Christian America."

50. The ACLU called CLear-TV members a group of "religious fundamentalists" and vowed to boycott any TV advertiser which withdraws ads from any program which contains material offensive to the values and concerns of CLear-TV. The ACLU threw their support behind the Mennen Company and Clorox Corporation for sponsoring sex, violence, profanity and anti-Christian bigotry on television. The ACLU announced a "boycott" and urged their members to go out of their way to buy Mennen and Clorox products. □

MOSER . . .

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and finally, into the fabric of her civilization. Just so long as Germany remained true to the Bible did she preserve for her citizens the great liberties and great ad-

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MOSER . . .

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vancements she enjoyed. With the outbreak of infidelity, when there was a lessening of Bible reading — when people began to lose their faith in the integrity of the Bible — Germany began to fall. Liberties were lost. Military machines, dictators, came upon the scene and Germany ceased to be the great Bible loving, the great liberty loving nation of the world. Where the Bible is loved, where the Bible is believed, where the Bible is studied, there and there alone do you find liberty. Patrick Henry is quoted as saying, “Give me liberty or give me death.” May I say to you when we lose our grip on the eternal verities of the Word, we lose our liberties, and, as in many countries, our lives.

What does the Bible say about its influence?

First — Upon the lives of people. “Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed to the Word of God.” The Bible cleanses us of our sins by showing us, first, our sinful condition, then, the remedy for sin, which is the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. We also read: “Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee.”

The Jews were required to teach the Scriptures to their children. In Deut. 6:4-7 we read: “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one

Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou riseth up.” God’s people are to be a Bible loving people.

Now for the influence of the Book, all we have to do is to study the history of Israel. When Israel was true to the Book, when she taught the Book to her children, then Israel prospered. No enemy could come up against her. But when she turned away from the Word, she became weak: her social and financial fabric crumbled, enemies came up against her and defeated her. She paid tribute to heathen nations and even went into captivity. When under the heel of the oppressor, or in the land of her enemies, she turned again to the Book, God would deliver her, her enemies would be defeated, and Israel would again prosper under the Lord.

I am concerned about the problems that confront America today. Our moral fabric is crumbling, the social problems are becoming alarming, corruption is abroad in the land, unbelief is predominant in our churches, our schools.

Juvenile delinquency is out of hand. Drinking, gambling, cursing, law violation, is on every hand. Could all of this be because America is turning away from the Book? Remember where the Book is honored and loved, the health of the nation improves. Where the Bible is neglected, the nation deteriorates.

May God bring us back to the place where the Bible is read, believed, and loved in our homes, our schools, and our churches. □

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Hollywood.” Be warned. Be wise. Beware! — CC

The Dark Side of Moon.

Sun Myung Moon says he is Lord of the Second Advent who has come to finish the work Christ did not complete. He claims that Moses, Buddha, and Jesus have appeared/spoken to him. He has funded many prominent conservative groups in recent years, e.g., the Tim LaHayes, CAUSA, Christian Voice, and the American Freedom Coalition. His Unification Church owns the Washington Times. but if Moon is an anti-communist, as he claims, he is a strange one. He says “Marxist” Martin Luther King was the greatest American of this century. His stated purpose is “to unify the world” into a centralized world theocracy. In a full-page 11/29 USA Today ad, Moon, in his first interview in 13 years to a Soviet newspaper, congratulated Gorbachev calling him a man of great courage and conviction (12/11 Chr. News). Moon says he is willing to support Gorbachev’s program in any way he can, and said “... we

must learn to live together in brotherhood as part of one common family.” Moon is a deceiver, and dangerously deceives those conservatives who still have ties to him. — CC

Media Ignored Afghanistan. The communist Afghan puppet regime killed about 1.3 million people. That is more deaths than in the entire Iran-Iraq war and ten times more than the number killed in Lebanon since 1975 (1/90 Readers’ Digest). While these countries and South Africa with two or three people killed per day got near daily press coverage, the “big war” in Afghanistan was relatively ignored. We heard very little about the over 40,000 Afghan children who were brutally maimed by Soviet booby-trapped “toys.” True, the Afghan war was unusually perilous to over, with 40 to 120 mines per square mile, and the Soviets threatened that journalists traveling with the mujahideen “will be killed.” Only in April 1988 when the Soviets announced they were withdrawing did this war finally attract hundreds of journalists. Liberal churchmen were so busy with Liberation Theology and denouncing South Africa that they too largely ignored the brutal Afghan genocide. — CC

AWANA Has Switched To NKJV. AWANA is changing from the KJV Bible to the NKJV. Some independent Baptist churches have used the AWANA program for years, but most (if not all) will cease using their material since they are now using a false translation.

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WASH . . .

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was the baptism of the Ethiopian, who 'went down into the water,' and, after his baptism, 'came up out of the water' (Acts 8:38-39). 'Thus it becometh us ...' saith the Lord Jesus, in the very first recorded utterance of His public ministry (Mt. 3:15), establishing the fact and mode of baptism. Not less significant is the fact that the very last recorded utterance of His public ministry commanded the perpetuation of this sacred ordinance (Mt. 28:19). How characteristic of Washington, pondering the Scriptures, that he could not rest till he had followed the example of the Lord!

"The baptism was not beneath the dignity of the great general, who was not too proud to acknowledge his rightful Master. Among men he was an upstanding giant; before God, a kneeling child. In time of distress he kneels in the snow of Valley Forge; in time of victory, humbled with gratitude, he descends into the waters of the Hudson, like Jesus descending into Jordan, to acknowledge his Lord in baptism. Well may we thank God upon every remembrance of Him."

This is all most refreshing. We are especially glad that Dr. Charles W. Koller — even in a time of doctrinal laxity, when Baptist churches all

about him are renouncing the faith — makes a forthright pronouncement concerning scriptural baptism. Dr. Koller is a graduate of Baylor University, and also of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is a Baptist, knows why, and is not ashamed of it. □

MEXICO . . .

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In northern Mexico, where there are no tourist trails, hardly anyone speaks English. A minimum knowledge of Spanish is essential for survival.

Without a working knowledge of Spanish, the only way to enjoy Mexico is with someone who knows the territory.

John and Bonnie Culpepper, with whom we are making this trip, are fairly familiar with Mexico north of Ciudad Victoria, and John speaks Spanish fairly well. However, even they thought we should hire a guide for a circle tour south of Ciudad Victoria through San Luis Potosi, Mexico City and Tampico.

We engaged Francisco Amaro Gutierrez, a son of John's Mexican friend, Chico Rueda. Traveling suddenly got a lot easier. For example, when police in the village of Tula stopped John for driving the wrong way on a one-way street, Francisco persuaded the officer that he should not give the confused American driver a ticket.

When John got caught

for the same offense without a guide in Ciudad Victoria, it cost him a \$2 "tip" for the policeman to avoid the ticket.

"Tips" to public servants are a way of life in Mexico. John is familiar and comfortable with the system. I don't think I could ever get comfortable with the idea of bribing public officials, although at the border, right along with everybody else, I slipped a dollar to the fellow who filled out my tourist card.

John had explained that if he didn't get the dollar, he would find enough wrong with our papers to delay us for a couple of hours.

One reason for the "tip" system is that trainees for many public service jobs don't get paid for the first two or three years. The "tips" feed their families. In many cases, public service jobs that pay immediately must be bought. The going price for a teaching job, for example, is 3 million pesos (about \$1,200). That's for a job that usually doesn't pay enough for the teacher to buy a house or a car.

Having Francisco with us has had an added advantage. I can practice my high school Spanish on him.

In addition to bargaining for better rates in hotels and interpreting menus, guides explain the history and customs of the country with a flavor the guidebooks cannot match. After all, you can't ask a guidebook a question. □

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Mormonism's "God."

A Mormon lawyer in a letter in the 12/89 Evangel said: "... Please allow me to elaborate on some of our more esoteric beliefs, from the perspective of an active Mormon. Regarding the Godhead, we believe that God and Jesus have separate physical bodies of flesh and bones. We also believe that Jesus and Satan are brothers, and that we have a Mother in Heaven who is God's wife, quite possibly one of many polygamous wives. We believe God literally and physically fathered Jesus through Mary, one of His daughters. We also believe that Elohim is just one of many Gods (who together created the earth) and that we can all become God by accepting Christ and living the gospel ..." — CC

* * *

Baptists of Romania.

Baptists, probably the most oppressed worshipers under Nicolae Ceausescu, are professing their faith openly for the first time since the dictator's relentless persecution stifled them decades ago. "Numerous people from all walks of life, including many army officers and soldiers, have been coming here in the past few days to tell us how afraid they had been in the past to say they were believers," said the Rev. Ilie Tundrea of Bucharest's Bethany Baptist Church. As in other countries with rigid Communist regimes, believers were considered unreliable citizens, not allowed

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PASTOR . . .

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reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ..." (2 Tim. 3:16). Notice the purpose of preaching is for "doctrine," "reproof," "correction," and "instruction." From time to time, we *all* need these found kinds of preaching. "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:12). Notice that the pastor is *charged* with this three-fold responsibility of preaching: to "reprove," "rebuke," and "exhort."

In fulfilling his responsibility, the pastor will be honored by those members who have "ears to hear," and will be scorned by those who cannot accept the Word of God.

There will always be those in the church who will seek to silence the preacher, or to attack his ministry because they don't like what he preached.

2. The pastor is to *oversee the ministries of the church*. He is to *feed the flock* of God, including all age-groups in the membership, and to *guard and protect* God's sheep and lambs from the wolves. Paul tearfully reminded the preachers about what they could expect to encounter

in their ministries, when he said these words: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears? (Acts 20:28-31). "Overseer" is defined in the Webster's Collegiate Dictionary as, "*Superintendent, supervisor*." This responsibility of oversight cannot be delegated to any other member of the church — it is solely the pastor's job, given to him by the Lord.

The members of the church are under the *oversight* (supervision) of the pastor.

The apostle Peter reminded pastors of the responsibility of *oversight* when he wrote the following: "the elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by

constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (1 Pet. 5:1-3). Peter went on to encourage these *undershepherds* that their faithfulness to honor their calling will be rewarded by the *Chief Shepherd* at His appearance: "And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 5:4). Note that this crown is reserved only for faithful pastors.

When the pastor obeys this scripture and "takes the oversight" over the flock, he will meet with resistance. Some members have a problem in respecting *authority*.

Those who cannot accept pastoral authority over them sometimes go about trying to *create suspicion* about the pastor; questioning his leadership and spreading tales and half-truths about him.

Those who reject the God-given authority of the pastor, may seek to spread rumors and even lies about the pastor in an effort to destroy the pastor's *credibility*. Credibility is the most important asset a pastor has; the most valuable reputation in the ministry.

It is vital for the members of the church to remember the words of Paul to the church of the Thessalonians: "... and are over you in the Lord" (1

Thess. 5:12), remind them of who is "over" them, or to submit themselves to the pastor's oversight.

3. The pastor is to care for the *spiritual needs* of the flock (the church). This pastoral care includes counseling, hospital and sick calls, ministry to the dying and at funerals, pre-marital and marital counseling, family counseling, and weddings.

4. The pastor is to continuously *seek God's will* for the direction for the church; to prayerfully consider the needs of the church; to guide the church in the direction the Lord tells him to go; and to lead the church as a faithful *undershepherd*.

He is to *formulate plans* for various needed ministries in the church. The pastor is usually months and sometimes years ahead in the planning phase of the ministry.

When the time is right, the pastor *makes recommendations* to the church to set forth and *implement the plans* God has given him.

4. The pastor is to oversee the *administration* of the church; to preside over all business meetings; to call special business meetings as he deems necessary for the efficient operations of the church; to make pastoral recommendations to the church and to guide the affairs of the church. He is also re-

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sponsible to see that the will of the church is carried out as voted on by the majority.

5. The pastor is *accountable to God* for how he assumes his responsibilities, as found in the following scripture: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17).

Pastors will some day give account to God for their pastoral ministry. Church members must give *careful consideration* to the fact that their pastor is accountable to God, and understand that he is responsible above all, to God and God alone for his pastoral ministry.

III. Responsibilities of the Church Members to the Pastor.

1. Church members are to *pray for their pastor*, asking God to give him wisdom and strength to lead them and to give them the willingness to *follow his leadership*. Again, the apostle Paul taught this important lesson in his letter to the Hebrews: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: Whose faith follow, considering the end of their

conversation" (Heb. 13:7).

A church member who prays for their pastor is usually willing to *follow his leadership*. Members who *fail to pray for their pastor* will usually neither submit to his authority over them, nor heed his spoken word, nor follow wholeheartedly his leadership.

2. Church members are to have special regard for their pastor, recognizing him as a man of God and as their shepherd. This is taught in the scripture thusly, referring again to Paul's words: "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake" (1 Thess. 5:12-13). Note the key words in these verses, showing the church member's responsibility to their pastor: "*know them,*" "*over you in the Lord,*" "*admonish you,*" "*esteem them very highly,*" "*in love,*" "*for their work's sake.*"

"*Know them ...*" Knowing your pastor takes some effort on the part of the church member. Though his life is an open book, and his family lives in the proverbial "fish-bowl," usually to know your pastor is to *love and respect your pastor*. Beware of judging your pastor on *what others say about him!* Consider your pastor in light of *what you know; how he has ministered to*

you; his ministry as it is, in fact, not what it is reported to you via hearsay.

"*Over you in the Lord.*" Church members who fulfill their responsibility will accept the pastoral *oversight, gladly and willingly*. Remembering that God *has placed the pastor over them, and that he is only doing his job when he "takes the oversight."*

"*Admonish you ...*" Paul admonished the member to "*esteem them very highly.*" A church member who has high estimation of their pastor will have a tendency to pray for him; hear his preaching; and follow his leadership. Members who fail to esteem their pastor as the Bible teaches will always have a problem with their pastor.

"*In love ... for their work's sake.*" A high estimation and regard for the pastor is based upon the appeal for members to love their pastor ... and based upon the fact that the pastor's work is the work of God.

3. Church members are responsible to assure themselves a "*profitable membership*" by doing all within their power to help their pastor have a "*joyful*" ministry, as recorded in Paul's letter to the Hebrews: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give

account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17).

"*With joy ...*" Pastors will be able to do a better job for the Lord when church members help make their ministry a *joyful* one. Respect for his office and submission to his authority will go a long way in helping the pastor to enjoy his ministry to you.

"*Not with grief ...*" Members of the church should resist the satanic temptation to cause their pastor any grief. Satan is the author of some ungodly tactics, designed to cause the pastor grief. Any member who takes it upon himself/herself to cause the pastor hurt or grief is asking for God's hand of judgment, for as the scriptures teach ... "*touch not mine anointed.*"

4. Church members, especially the *men* of the church are to help their pastor in whatever ways they can, and to be *supportive* of his pastoral ministry. Read Exodus 17:8-13 and note how two men who held up Moses' hands when he grew tired were the reason God's people won the victory on the battlefield.

Church members who are faithful to "*hold up their pastor's hands*" will be honored by God and by the citizens of the Kingdom. Church members who fail to help the pastor

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in the battle for the Lord should be ashamed for not helping their pastor when he is engaged in warfare against the enemies of God.

5. Church members are responsible to see to it that their *pastor's needs, both his family needs and the expenses of his pastoral ministry* are adequately cared for. As found in the following scriptures: "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn ... he that ploweth should plow in hope ... even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:7-14). Concerning *how much support* to give the pastor, Paul wrote that he is worthy of *double support*. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of *double honour*, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the labourer is worthy of his reward" (1 Tim. 5:17-18).

6. Church members are to *protect their pastor and his family* from any member or non-member who would go about sowing seeds of *doubt and discord* among the membership of the church, thus, casting a shadow upon his ministry by accusing him of misdeeds. *It is a serious sin and extremely dan-*

gerous when anyone takes it upon themselves to attack the man who holds this sacred office, and equally as dangerous to remain in silence when others attempt to do so. The scriptures are very clear as to the sin of attacking the pastor of one of God's flock: "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." And again, the scriptures teach with this one found in 1 Timothy 5:19-20, that the one single sin that goes as an abomination before God is: "A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among the brethren" (Prov. 6:16-19).

7. Church members who refuse to live in harmony with the pastor, or who go about in efforts to hinder or destroy his ministry or his reputation should be *subject to the firm discipline of the church*, as taught by our Lord Jesus in this scripture: "But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Mt. 18:15-19).

Church members should never allow "leaven" to remain in the body — the church membership.

The church cannot continue to enjoy the blessing of God which allows members to cause trouble and who openly and publicly defame the pastor.

As the Bible says, there will always be those who despise government over them, particularly pastoral governing or pastoral authority: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities" (2 Pet. 2:9-10).

8. Church members are to consider the office of the pastor and always consult with the pastor first on any matter concerning the church.

Church members who resort to *church politics* in order to get "*their way*," are guilty of self-serving interests and are not putting the cause of Christ first.

On any matter involving the church, the pastor should always be consulted, remembering it is his responsibility to oversee the work of the church. The pastor cannot oversee things he knows nothing about.

When any member does not agree with the way the pastor is pastoring, he or she should *go to the pastor, and not to other members of the church to voice their displeasure or disagreement with the pastor's actions or leadership*. Much heartache and pain could be avoided if church members

will always practice discussing what is on their heart with the pastor, instead of discussing it with everyone but the pastor.

9. Church members are to accept the fact that there can be only *one leader* in the church, and that the *pastor is that leader*. A church cannot go forward for Christ which has a divided allegiance between two leaders in the church.

From time to time, members will *rise up in the church to wrest the leadership away from the pastor*. Every member should beware of any other member who seeks to gather a following after themselves.

It is wise to be on guard and *mark the person* who seeks to gain control over the membership, and who usually does so *deceitfully* and in the name of "*protecting the church from the pastor*."

When God is finished with a pastor in any given church, He will lead him to another church or into some other ministry. *Unless the pastor is found guilty of sin or to be unfit for the gospel ministry*, he deserves to have the respect and loyalty of every member.

If any church member, after serious counsel with the pastor, still cannot follow his leadership, that member should, in the spirit of Christian love, and for the cause of Christ and His

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church, quietly leave the church and seek another church where he or she can serve the Lord and follow the pastor of that church. If that same member persists in trying to destroy or disrupt the pastor's ministry and seeks to damage his integrity, that member should be dealt with in accordance with the Covenant of the church and church discipline as found in Matthew 18:15-19.

CONCLUSION

1. The pastor of the church should humbly serve the membership; assuming the oversight willingly and lovingly, while always keeping sight of the fact that he is God's servant, first and foremost, and that he will someday give account to God for his pastoral ministry.

2. Church members should make diligent effort to know their pastor, and do their best to help him carry out his duties to them and his work for the Lord, that he may have a joyful ministry and that the church may go forward for the Lord.

3. Above all: "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Eph. 3:21). □

WNR . . .

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to hold leading positions in an officially atheist system. No religion was encouraged, but Tundrea said "it was worse for us, because the authorities could not tolerate our evangelical activity." Ceausescu was overthrown Dec. 22, and the first

large Baptist gathering was held Dec. 31 in Oradea, northwestern Romania. About 10,000 worshipers packed a sports arena with the approval of the new authorities. In recent annual U.S. State Department reports on human rights, the Ceausescu regime ranked among the worst offenders. It was accused of running a police state with no freedom of expression, and religious tolerance only for such recognized faiths as the Romanian Orthodox or Jews. Baptist pastors were denied permission to preach and arrested for distributing Bibles. Romania has about 300,000 Baptists, up from 60,000 two decades ago. Most of the Baptists are in the western Transylvania region and in Bucharest. Under Ceausescu, who ruled Romania for 24 years, the Baptist Church was given special attention because its rapid growth was seen as a threat. "Securitate officers were present at every single service to record what was being preached and we were forbidden from baptizing," Tundrea said, referring to the Ceausescu's secret police. He said police cars always were parked outside the church and the telephones of leading Baptists were tapped.

* * *

Hymnal Omits Martial Aims. An 18-member committee has compiled a new hymnal for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that doesn't include the rousing "Battle Hymn of the Republic," or another popular old marching-beat number, "Onward Christian Soldiers." Both songs have rankled tastes of some church music specialists because of martial imagery, although Ms. Melva Costen said in a telephone interview that this was not the reason for their omission. "It had nothing to do with martial language," she said, but was simply to make room for new

songs. "We couldn't put in everything we had." However, the military analogies — something the New Testament writer Paul also uses — consistently have been cited in other church moves to drop the two hymns, such as in 1987 by a United Methodist hymnal committee. That panel had to back down under an avalanche of protests, and the two hymns stayed. But there was scant chance for ush reaction among Presbyterians, some complain, because of short notice for it and because decisions were mainly made in closed sessions, despite a church policy of open meetings. Much of the process was closed and there was little chance to participate in the decision-making.

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SBC Foreign Mission Board Appoints Ordained Women. A recent Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board appointment of an ordained woman proves that ordination does not preclude women from overseas Baptist work, board Chairman Mark Corts said. Background: trustees created controversy six months ago when they turned down an application from Greg and Katrina Pennington of Ardmore, Okla. Objections to the appointment came from a local Baptist association that earlier had removed from membership the church that ordained Ms. Pennington. The board's mid-December appointment to Japan of David and Patricia Lee of Dayton, Ohio, demonstrates that the trustees "honestly practice board policy that ordination neither qualifies nor disqualifies a missionary candidate and that ordination is a

local church matter," Corts said. Some 10 ordained women serve among a total of 1,890 female Southern Baptist missionaries, according to board statistics.

* * *

Concerned Women For America Sued by Atheist. Atheist Madalyn Murray O'Hair is suing Concerned Women for America and the National Legal Foundation for portraying her in a "false light" in order to raise money. In addition to naming CWA's Beverly LaHaye and NLF's Robert Skolrood, the suit cites the Gannett Corp. and USA Today. A June 17, 1988 USA Today story reported O'Hair was launching a campaign to have the word "God" removed from all U.S. currency. The story prompted Skolrood to place a full-page ad in the July 22, 1988 USA Today asking for funds to oppose O'Hair's campaign. LaHaye also cited the threat and solicited contributions from CWA supporters. The suit charges that the defendants "used Ms. O'Hair's public persona as a device to raise money," O'Hair attorney David Roth said. A recent LaHaye letter asking for money to fight the lawsuit generated complaints from Roth. CWA attorney Jordan Lorence told RNS that it's "absurd if they think it's somehow libelous to raise money to defend a lawsuit. That would amount to censorship." Skolrood, who said the NLF is not asking for funds to fight the lawsuit, indicated that donations from his USA Today ad "didn't come close to paying for a tenth: of the cost of the ad, RNS reported. □