



# FRIDAY CHURCH NEWS NOTES



## 2013 SUPERBOWL

Playing sports is not wrong in itself, generally speaking, and there can be benefits, but there are also plenty of spiritual dangers. And when it comes to professional sports, it is one of the chief gods of this present sin-crazed world system and the fact that many pastors and church members in professed Bible-believing churches are nearly as crazy for professional sports as the unsaved is evidence of deep spiritual compromise. People go absolutely nutty about professional soccer, basketball, baseball, American football, Australian football, tennis, Tiddlywinks, you name it! They invest their money, their time, and their emotions into these vanities, though they have zero eternal value. They talk about their "team," even though they don't play on the team. They get excited when "their team" wins and discouraged when "their team" loses, when in reality "their team" doesn't know them and probably would barely give them the time of day. Beyond the silly emotional vanity--the very weirdness of getting excited about something that has nothing to do with one's actual life--there is the fact that the world of professional sports is laden down with wickedness. Take the halftime show and

commercials for America's great idol called the Superbowl. The 2013 halftime performance by Beyonce has been described as "pushing x-rated." One of the commercials was a Mercedes advertisement that depicted a young man contemplating selling his soul to the devil for the pleasures he could expect from owning a sleek automobile. Appropriately, it was set to the Rolling Stone's wicked song "Sympathy for the Devil." Any professing Christian who invites such spiritual garbage into his personal life or home needs either salvation or spiritual revival. Pastors who are playing with this stuff need to repent or get out of the ministry. Few see it in this light, because those who keep up with professional sports month in and month out become desensitized to the wickedness that is inherently associated with it. Association with evil ruins spiritual mindedness, as the Word of God warns: "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Corinthians 15:33). For more on this, see "A Warning about Professional Sports" and "Beware of an Unwholesome Addiction to Sports" at [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org). There is an efficient search engine.

## TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH'S CHARISMATIC "GUEST WORSHIP LEADER"

The following is excerpted from "Prominent Independent Baptist Church Invites Worship Leader from Charismatic-Pentecostal Based Church," The Fundamentalist Digest, February-March 2013: "Under the leadership of its pastor, Dr. Tom Messer, Trinity Baptist Church [TBC] Jacksonville, FL, a well-known independent Baptist Church, has been rapidly moving in the last few years in a New-Evangelical, pro-Charismatic and CCM rock music direction. TBC recently participated in the national New-Evangelical 'Back to Church' [BTC] Sunday in Sept. 2012. On the BTC Sunday, TBC featured as the 'Guest Worship Leader' Regi Stone, the 'worship leader' at the Christ Church, Nashville, TN. According to its official website, Christ Church unashamedly identifies its 'roots' as being 'in the Pentecostal/ Charismatic renewal.' ... Christ Church is ecumenically slanted. The church has as one of its goals 'to encourage outreach and involvement with other congregations in an effort to mend denominational divisiveness and serve Nashville as the unified body of Christ.' That TBC has completely sold out to the contemporizing worldly religious rock craze is evidenced by the fact TBC's official church calendar notes that 'Sandy Patti & Friends' was scheduled for a concert on Jan. 27, 2013."



*Regi Stone*

### PENTECOSTAL WOMAN WINS LAWSUIT AGAINST COMPANY THAT FIRED HER FOR WEARING A SKIRT

Ashanti McShan has won a lawsuit against Burger King for terminating her job when she wore a skirt to work and refused to change into pants. When interviewed for the job, she explained that her religious convictions did not allow her to wear pants and she was assured that this would not be a problem, but when she showed up for work in a skirt she was fired. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission issued a lawsuit in federal court in behalf of McShan and Burger King has agreed to pay her \$25,000 and provide training to managers in the Texas franchise to advise them of the prohibitions of federal anti-discrimination laws with special emphasis on religious discrimination (“Pentecostal Woman Fired,” CharismaNews, Jan. 25, 2013).



### RICHARD DAWKINS LOSES DEBATE AGAINST ROWAN WILLIAMS



The following is excerpted from “Richard Dawkins Loses Debate,” *Christian Post*, Feb. 3, 2013: “The former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr.

Rowan Williams, defeated prominent atheist professor, Richard Dawkins, in a debate at the University of Cambridge in England on Thursday night, as a vote taken at the conclusion of the debate ruled that religion does have a place in the 21st century. The debate motion that ‘religion has no place in the 21st Century’ was well-defeated at the event held in front of an audience of about 800 people, mostly students, at the Cambridge Union Society’s chambers, according to the U.K.’s *Independent* newspaper. Dawkins lost the debate by 324 votes to 136, as he failed to convince the house that religion has no place. ... The Union--the largest society at the University of Cambridge--has a long and distinguished history of hosting leading state and international political figures in its chamber, from presidents to prime ministers and Oscar winners to Olympic legends. It has formerly hosted Sir Winston Churchill, Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama.”

### CYRUS CYLINDER TO GO ON TOUR IN U.S.

The Cyrus Cylinder, one of the many wonderful archaeological artifacts that provide background information on Bible times, is scheduled to be displayed at five museums in the U.S. this year in New York City, Washington D.C., Houston, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Cyrus (576-530 BC), who is mentioned 23 times in Scripture, was the Persian king who conquered the Babylonian Empire and issued a proclamation ordering the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple (Ezra 1:1-4). Cyrus was called by name in prophecy before he was born (Isaiah 44:28 and 45:1). It was once thought by skeptics that the Bible’s record of Cyrus’ release of the Jews and his granting of religious liberty was mythical, since it did not fit into the pattern that was typical for pagan kings of that era, but the Cyrus Cylinder confirmed that this was in accordance with his standing practice. The Cylinder, which is owned by the British Museum, is inscribed with text in the Akkadian language stating that Cyrus had the policy of restoring captives to their lands and assisting them in rebuilding their temples. The Cylinder was found in the ruins of the temple of Marduk in Babylon in 1879. It reads: “I returned to [these] sacred

cities on the other side of the Tigris the sanctuaries of which have been in ruins for a long time, the images which [used] to live therein and established for them permanent sanctuaries. I [also] gathered all their [former] inhabitants and returned their habitations.” An Unshakeable Faith: A Christian Apologetics Course is accompanied by 20 PowerPoint presentations featuring more than 2,200 slides, and the presentation on Medo-Persia has a photo of the Cyrus Cylinder that we took at the British Museum and a discussion of the importance of this object.



## COOL PASTOR SAYS JESUS WOULD TELL LESBIAN ENTERTAINER THAT “HOMOSEXUALITY NOT MY IDEAL”



Ed Young, pastor of the multi-campus Fellowship Church in Texas, a Southern Baptist congregation, described recently in a sermon what he thinks Jesus would say to entertainer Ellen DeGeneres, a lesbian who is “married” to her partner and who has been hugely influential in popularizing the homosexual rights agenda to this generation. Young said that if Christ were to sit down for an interview with DeGeneres he would say, “Ellen, I love your heart. I love you where you are, but I love you too much to allow you to stay the same. You are awesome, but live under my authority; live by my word.” Young said that Jesus would “applaud her comedy, he would applaud her life-being” and that Jesus “accepts Ellen” (“Ed Young: Jesus Would Tell Ellen DeGeneres,” Christian Post, Feb. 4, 2013). Young also believes that Jesus would reprove Christians who are “mean and ill-spirited toward the gay community.” This sermon was one in a series of “What Would Jesus Say To...” various famous people living today. The one featuring DeGeneres was accompanied by

advertising artwork at the church’s web site depicting the lesbian entertainer seated at Jesus’ right hand at the Last Supper. Ed Young’s “Jesus” is not the Jesus of the Bible, for the Jesus of the Bible never said anything remotely like this, but Young himself is described in 2 Timothy 4:3-4. He is one of the preachers who is willing to scratch the ears of this apostate generation: a generation that has rejected God’s Word and is itching for something contemporary, a generation that wants a cool type of Christianity that is quiet on repentance and takes the fire out of hell. As compensation, Young lives in a \$1.5 million mansion and flies in a private jet (“Prominent Grapevine Pastor Linked to Luxury,” WFAA-TV, Dallas-Fort Worth, Feb. 5, 2010). We don’t need to vainly speculate about what Jesus might say to a lost sinner. He would say exactly what is recorded in Scripture, as follows: “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. ... He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (Luke 13:3; John 3:36). Young speaks much about love and compassion, but if he had real love for sinners he would warn them of eternal destruction and demand that they repent and flee to Christ for safety before it is too late. As for those “mean and ill-spirited” Christians Young refers to, I don’t know who they might be, but it is an act of great compassion to preach the gospel to sinners, and the gospel begins with the bad news that God is holy and hates sin and every individual is a lost sinner destined for eternal punishment apart from salvation through the blood of Christ. In the Epistle to the Church at Rome, Paul spent nearly three chapters on this “negative” theme before he even mentioned the grace of God in Christ, because unless a sinner understands the holiness and justice of God, he will never understand the grace of God.

## REFORMED DENOMINATIONS AND ROME AGREE TO RECOGNIZE BAPTISMS

After seven years of discussion, Reformed denominations in America and the Roman Catholic Church have signed an agreement to recognize each other’s “sacraments of baptism.” The “Common Agreement” says, “Baptism establishes the bond of unity existing among all who are part of Christ’s body and is therefore the sacramental basis for our efforts to move towards visible unity.” In addition to the Roman Catholic Church, the signers represented the Christian Reformed Church in North America, the Presbyterian Church USA, the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ. Wes Granberg-Michaelson, general secretary emeritus



of the Reformed Church in America, called the signing a “significant step of healing and reconciliation” (“Major Baptism Agreement,” Christianity Today Leanings, Feb. 1, 2013). Indeed, this is another step toward the formation of a one-world church. The recognition of Rome’s “baptism” as legitimate demonstrates the complete apostasy of these “Protestant” denominations, since Rome states that baptism is the heart and soul of her gospel. The Vatican II Council’s official decrees stated, “By the sacrament of Baptism, whenever it is properly conferred in the way the Lord determined and received with the proper dispositions of soul, man

becomes truly incorporated into the crucified and glorified Christ and is reborn to a sharing of the divine life” (Decree on Ecumenism, chap. 3, II, 22, p. 427). This is a false gospel that falls under the curse of God, according to Galatians 1:8-9, because any gospel other than the one of grace alone preached by the apostle Paul is cursed. Paul

plainly stated that baptism is NOT the gospel. “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect” (1 Cor. 1:17). He summarized the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, where he said nothing about baptism.

## GREAT BLUE HERON

The Great Blue Heron is a large, majestic wading bird that lives near the shores of lakes and wetlands, both fresh and salt, over most of North and Central America and the Caribbean, with rare appearances elsewhere. Most of its feathers are various shades of gray-blue; its head is white with a plume of feathers that form black stripes over the eyes. The beak and feet are yellow. The name “great” comes from its size. It has a standing height of four feet and more, a wingspan of up to six feet, and weighs five to eight pounds. When hunting, it stands still waiting for prey to come within range or stalks with very slow, deliberate steps, stunning or killing its prey with a thrust of its long neck. Special neck vertebrae allow the bird to curl its neck into an “S” shape and to uncurl it with lightning fast speed. The Great Blue Heron also eats mice, insects, and other small creatures, swallowing its prey whole. The Great Blue Heron hunts alone but nests in colonies of from five to more than 100 pairs. The male and female work together to build, incubate, protect, and feed the young. The male brings the nesting materials and the female builds the nest. The female sits on the eggs at night, while the male sits on them during the day. After the chicks hatch, the female watches the nest at night, while the male guards it during the day. The Great Blue Heron was nearly hunted to extinction by the early 20th century because of the value of its beautiful plumage as a female hat accessory. A group of herons is called a battery, a pose, a rookery, or a scattering.



*photo by David Cloud*

**CONCLUSION:** The Friday Church News Notes is designed for use in churches and is published by Way of Life Literature’s Fundamental Baptist Information Service. Unless otherwise stated, the Notes are written by David Cloud. Of necessity we quote from a wide variety of sources, but this obviously does not imply an endorsement. We trust that our readers will not be discouraged. It is God’s will that we know the times (1 Ch. 12:32; Mat. 16:3) and that we be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. The News Notes remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the Lord’s coming. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ? “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Rom. 13:11-14). This material is sent only to those who personally subscribe to the Fundamental Baptist Information Service mailing list. To SUBSCRIBE, go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/wayoflife/subscribe.html>. TO UNSUBSCRIBE OR CHANGE ADDRESSES, go to the very bottom of any email received from us and click "Manage My Subscription." Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org).