



A MUCH NEEDED CHALLENGE!

August 2017

C. H. Spurgeon said, *"The devil has seldom done a cleverer thing than hinting to the Church that part of their mission is to provide entertainment for the people, with a view to winning them. Providing amusement for the people is nowhere spoken of in the Scriptures as a function of the Church. The need is Biblical doctrine, so understood and felt that it sets men afire."* We seldom see someone really on fire for God these days. I am afraid that if many believers saw such a one, they would declare that he was a fanatic. The truth is that most Christians are pretty comfortable and they don't want anyone to wake them up spiritually or challenge them to a holy walk with God. I am reminded of a radio personality many years ago who always came on the air saying, "Is everybody happy?" I think it is pretty obvious that with few exceptions, God's people are interested in being happy, not holy. Not only do we have to get up programs which are amusing, but if you want a hearing from a good many, you had better sprinkle your sermon with plenty of jokes and witty sayings. Now, I know all this will be viewed as very negative and a little morbid! But I think it must grieve the heart of God to hear jokes on serious Biblical subjects; even on the Bible itself. A.W. Tozer said in his earlier days Christians believed that the amusements of this world were not for believers; *"So, it was understood that when you got converted and got filled with the Spirit you gave up the world's amusements. Then, there was a slow change, and in the name of fundamental Christianity, one by one, we met those amusements at the door and sprinkled them with holy water... We must have a new reformation. There must come a violent break with that irresponsible, amusement-mad, paganized, pseudo-religion which passes today for the faith of Christ and which is being spread all over the world by unspiritual men..."* I read a couple of years ago of a faithful Russian pastor who had been in the underground church. He said the West (America) must stop sending them such spiritually weak and superficial men for we are spoiling their people and the truth for which many of their brethren have died. While it will bring the wrath of some upon you, what we need to do is to tell the carnal babies which predominate in our churches (and pulpits), that it is time to grow up. A word for Pastors; did you ever stop to think that while you are supplying sweetened pabulum for all the babies, that you are stunting the growth of those who may have a little maturity and desire for spiritual things? Here's a question for you: "What are you trying to accomplish with the people of God? Was your call to the ministry a call to keep everybody happy; entertain believers until Jesus comes? Were you called to be an entertainer or a holy man of God; like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Paul? Do you think God is pleased with shallow, carnal ministries which cater to the old nature of believers?" We have lost the concept of the majesty and holiness of God. Vance Havner said we ought to view God and the things of God with awe: *"But what you see in the average fundamental church today is not awe, it is just awful."* Tozer said, *"We do not have the art of worship and we are not producing saints."* Without a doubt, it is time for a revival, but I wonder if anyone knows what that is all about. **"If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways..."** To the Laodicean Church Jesus said, **"Repent!"**

NEWS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

AMERICA'S MORAL INSANITY CONTINUES

APACE (Friday Church News Notes, July 21, 2017, fbns@wayoflife.org, - Last week, 23 Republicans joined all of the Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives to defeat an amendment that would have ended Barack Obama's policy of funding "gender-reassignment" surgery for soldiers. The amendment was offered by Rep. Vicky Hartzler (R, Mo.), who said during debate on the bill, "Military members undergoing transition surgery are non-deployable for up to 267 days. Similarly, regular hormone treatments renders individuals non-deployable into the future. It makes no sense to create soldiers who are unable to fight and win our nation's wars and unfair to non-transitioning individuals who must leave their families and deploy in their place" ("House rejects attempt to ban transgender surgery for troops," AP, Jul. 13, 2017). Republican Rep. Duncan Hunter of California, a Marine veteran, said, "Figure out whether you're man or a woman before you join. U.S. taxpayers shouldn't have to foot the bill." This is a moral issue as well as a military readiness issue, and the fact that the Republicans can't pass something as common-sense and widely supported as this is evidence that the nation is under God's curse for its wickedness. (According to a Rasmussen poll, only 23% of Americans believe that opening the military to transgenders is right.) "As for my people, children *are* their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause *thee* to err, and destroy the way of thy paths" (Isaiah 3:12).

U.S. PRESIDENT BEMOANS AMERICA'S PRIDE AND FORGETFULNESS OF GOD, 1863

(Friday Church News Notes, July 28, 2017, "It is the duty of nations, as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with the assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Holy Scriptures, and proven by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord. We know that by his divine law nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world. May we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of a national reformation as a whole people? We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown, but we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand that preserved

us in peace and multiplied, enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined in the deceitfulness of our hearts that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated by our own unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God who made us" (Abraham Lincoln).

ISRAEL LOVES YOGA (Friday Church News Notes, July 28, 2017, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, [866-295-4143](tel:866-295-4143)) - Israel's current state of spiritual blindness is evident in a thousand ways, including the popularity of yoga. It is taught in kindergartens and used by the Israel Defense Forces. A report entitled "Om in the land of shalom," *Israel21c*, March 26, 2017, observes, "Preschool yoga, prenatal yoga, workplace yoga, yoga for soldiers... yoga in its many forms has found its way into virtually every area of Israeli life. Even government ministries and the Jerusalem prosecutor's office offer weekly yoga sessions to workers." Israel is one of the few countries with a yoga training program for soldiers. There is even an Otiyot Hayyot (Living Letters) Yoga that unites Hinduism and Kabbalah. It is based on meditation on the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Founder Yehudit Goldfarb says, "The simple movement patterns promote relaxation, integration and renewed vitality as they reveal spiritual light and life force within each letter." In truth, this is combining the darkness of Hinduism with darkness of Kabbalah. It is not surprising that yoga and Kabbalah can so easily be merged, since both are mystical paths to a pantheistic god. "Yoga" means "union" and refers to the union of man with the universe through meditation. The goal is to enter *Samadhi (self-collectedness)*: "a state of deep concentration that results in a blissful, ecstatic union with the ultimate reality" ("Yoga," *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*). The Kabbalah concept of god is very similar. In Kabbalah, the personal God of Scripture is replaced with *Ein Sof*, an impersonal omnipotent energy and infinite wisdom, "the divine infinity." As with yoga, the goal of Kabbalah is to be united with the pantheistic *Ein Sof* through mystical practices. Kabbalah's focus on enlightenment and spiritual power through the letters of Scripture is blind mysticism. The life and power of Scripture is not in the letters or in any allegorical meaning found in the letters; it is in the words and in the literal meaning of the words and in the gospel of Jesus Christ that those words reveal. Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, practiced yoga standing on his head. In front of his desert cottage, which is a museum today, statue (*to p. 3*)

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(cont'd) of Ben-Gurion in a yoga position. His living room in the Negev featured a statue of Buddha and a small Buddhist shrine, and his office in his house in Tel Aviv featured multiple Buddha statues. He rejected Scripture and "envisioned a new type of Jew, 'emancipated from religion,' whose Judaism would be expressed by a national framework" (Motti Friedman, "The Making of the State," The Jewish Agency for Israel, July 1998).

D.L.MOODY SAID: "If you have so much business to attend to that you have no time to pray, you have more business on hand than God intended you to have." What does God think of all the time you have for TV, computer games, the newspaper, magazines, sports, yet you do not have time to read His Word and pray every day? God's Word says, "Ye have not, because ye ask not..." You'll never be a spiritual Christian nor accomplish anything for God, without serious daily Bible reading and prayer! Dr. A.J. Gordon said: "The greatest thing anyone can do for God is to pray. It is not the only thing, but it is the chief thing. The great people of the earth are the people who pray. I do not mean those who talk about prayer, nor those who say they believe in prayer. I mean people who take the time to pray. They do not have the time. It must be taken from something else. This something else is important, very important and pressing, but still less important and pressing than prayer." "Lord, teach us to pray." To be spiritual, you must have priorities! We talk about this all the time. You cannot have spiritual power by putting God second or third,! Remember the man at the end of chapter nine of the Gospel of Luke who said he would follow the Lord but let him first bury his father. Jesus said, "Let the dead bury their dead but go thou and preach the Gospel of the kingdom." I think the problem of many believers is this problem, of priorities. Almighty God is not going to take anything but first place,

SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT!

The man who walks with God, *always* knows where he is going!

One way in which a Christian shows what he is by what he does with what he has.

People don't miss Church because they live too far from the building, but because they live too far from God.

I'd give the world to be as happy as you are said one to a Christian. The reply: "That's what it cost me."

The men who have moved the world have been men whom the world could not move.

When someone asked Wm. Booth the secret of his happiness, he replied: "I never say NO to the Lord."

CORNERSTONE NEWS

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**"THERE IS A FRIEND THAT STICKETH
CLOSER THAN A BROTHER." Prov. 18:24**

HOW DO YOU GIVE?

The Corinthian believers had a number of serious problems but giving was not one of them. The reason for their generosity is found in II Corinthians 8:5: **“...But first gave their own selves to the Lord.”** Someone has observed that the Bible refers to giving about 1520 times! In the New Testament approximately one verse in eight refers to Christian stewardship in one way or another. Someone has defined giving as “the unselfish outpouring of oneself...the voluntary bestowing of one’s own possessions, expecting nothing in return.” Indeed, no gift, no helping hand, no charitable accomplishment can fulfill its divine purpose except it glow with a spirit of Christlikeness --- which is to give oneself with the gift! Paul commended the Macedonian Christians because in their giving, they were motivated by the fact that they had first given themselves to the Lord. Once we give our body and soul to the Lord in total surrender our possessions come trailing along without any difficulty. **“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”** ~Romans 12:1,2. If we are not fully surrendered to the Lord, giving will be a difficult job instead of a joy. The Word says, **“God loveth a cheerful giver.”** ~II Corinthian 9:7. I am afraid that we do not have many “cheerful givers.” What about you, my dear reader?

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WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

In John 9 you have a man born blind whom Jesus healed. The scribes and Pharisees, the enemies of Christ said, We know that God spake unto Moses, As for this fellow, we know not whence He is.” Like many people, things they know just aren’t so. I meet this kind of person every once in a while. They know that the Bible is full of errors; that doing the best you can is all that is necessary to get to heaven, etc. The most important thing with these people is they didn’t know where Jesus came from. They were well educated but they said they didn’t know where Jesus came from nor did they know how to be saved - how one is saved. Then, there was the poor blind man whom Jesus healed. There was a lot he didn’t understand, and he couldn’t explain the miracle. But as they continued to harass him **HE SAID, “ONE THING I KNOW, that whereas I was blind, now I see.”** Though he couldn’t understand it all, he knew the one thing that made all difference. Not only could he see physically but he could see spiritually. When Jesus revealed to him that He was the Christ and Saviour he said, “Lord I believe:” and he worshipped Him. Many folks today are just like the Pharisees and scribes: They have religion but they do not have Christ and salvation. What about you my friend, do you know Jesus Christ as the Son of God and your Saviour from sin? You can know the most important thing in the world if you will trust Jesus Christ as your Saviour! Do it now!