

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

- Week of October 1, 2023 -

Sunday School	34
Sunday Morning Service	29
Sunday Evening Service	27
Wednesday Eve., 10/04/23 Service	24

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

- Week of October 1, 2023 -

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

- Week of September 24, 2023 -

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

- Week of September 17, 2023 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	\$ 1,275.30
Children's Sunday School	\$ 2.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 09/17/23:	\$ 1,277.30

- Week of September 10, 2023 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	\$ 1,369.32
Love Offering, Daniel Charland	\$ 650.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 09/10/23:	\$ 2,019.32

- Week of September 3, 2023 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	\$ 2,040.32
Children's Sunday School	\$ 5.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 09/03/23:	\$ 2,045.32

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



FRONT PORCH RESTORATION FUND -

Amount Received, Week of 10/05/23:	\$ 135.64
TOTAL RECEIVED, THUSFAR:	\$ 962.79

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WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

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



THANK YOU For Your Continued Faithfulness In Giving!

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

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

WE HAVE 3 WAYS YOU CAN GIVE:

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

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

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

Church Directory

Todd W. White	Pastor
Debra Carlton, Mickie Shatwell, Lois Mae Floyd	Pianists
Derek Quinnelly	Greeter
Kim Phillips; Shirley White/LeAnna White; Berdena Bergman/Debra Carlton; Daniel Avery/GiGi Avery; & Todd W. White	Teachers
Larry & Mary Byars	Outreach
LeAnna White	Custodian
GinaMarie Shufelt	Flowers
Seth White	Sound/Video

SOUTH HEIGHTS BAPTIST'S WEEKLY  
REMINDER

Volume XXIX October 8, 2023 Number 40



The Shroud of Turin Mystery

Solved From the Bible

In recent years there has been an increase of interest in the Shroud of Turin - a piece of cloth about 14 feet long by 3.5 feet wide that is alleged to be Christ's burial cloth. Kept in the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist in Turin, Italy, since the 14th century, it appears to bear the impression of a naked, wounded, long-haired man. The shroud has been the object of veneration, speculation, and research.

In September 2023, the AI (artificial intelligence) company Midjourney released a life-like image based on a computer analysis of the shroud. "It shows a man with long hair, a beard, and mustache staring straight ahead." In other words, the man is *alive*, not dead, which is very strange if this is indeed a burial shroud!

The known history of the shroud only goes back to the 14th century, and it was condemned even by Catholic authorities as a hoax. The following is from the Wikipedia article on the Turin shroud:

"In 1389, the image was denounced as a fraud by Bishop Pierre D'Arcis in a letter to the Avignon Antipope Clement VII, mentioning that the image had previously been denounced by his predecessor Henri de Poitiers, who had been concerned that no such image was mentioned in scripture. Bishop D'Arcis continued, 'Eventually, after diligent inquiry and examination, he discovered how the said cloth had been cunningly painted, the truth being attested by the artist who had painted it, to wit, that it was a work of human skill and not miraculously wrought or bestowed.' The artist is not named in the letter. ... The letter provides an accurate description of the cloth: 'upon which by a clever sleight of hand was depicted the twofold image of one man, that is to say, the back and the front, he falsely declaring and pretending that this was the actual shroud in which our Saviour Jesus Christ was enfolded in the tomb, and upon which the whole likeness of the Saviour had remained thus impressed together with the wounds which He bore.'"

In spite of its shady history, many Catholics and Protestants consider it authentic.

The May, 1980 issue of *The North India Churchman*, official publication of the Protestant Church of North India, contained a positive evaluation of the Turin shroud.

It is not only liberal Protestants who are giving credibility to the Turin shroud. In 1983 Gary Habermas, a professor at Liberty Baptist College (now Liberty University), co-authored a book which, according to an advertisement in *Charisma* magazine, reached this conclusion: "*The Shroud is almost certainly authentic. Through its revelation about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, it helps build faith in an unbelieving age.*"

Habermas would have us believe that a bogus Catholic relic can actually build faith in an unbelieving generation. This is an amazing conclusion for a supposed fundamentalist to reach. In a second book, and in interviews, Habermas showed less certainty, but he still leaves room for the possibility that the shroud is authentic.

Radiocarbon tests by three separate laboratories in 1988 dated the shroud to the 13th or 14th century, but this has stopped neither the adulation nor the speculation.

Another twist is the theory that the samples tested in 1988 were from a portion of the cloth that was repaired during the Middle

(continued inside)

Ages and thus not properly representative of the rest of original cloth. This theory appeared in *National Geographic* in April 2004.

The Roman Catholic Church has always shown interest in relics such as this shroud, and multitudes of Catholics have made pagan-like pilgrimages to offer devotion to some dead relic.

This apostate and carnal interest in religious relics is increasing rapidly among non-Catholic Christian groups as well, as can be witnessed in the fresh popularity of images, pictures of Jesus and Mary, crucifixes, and other religious paraphernalia.

Consistent with our desire to help Christians evaluate such things in light of the Word of God, we offer the following article.

# THE SHROUD OF TURIN MYSTERY SOLVED FROM THE BIBLE

by David J. Cosma

Could the Turin shroud be the actual burial cloth of Jesus Christ? Does it provide concrete proof that Christ rose from the dead? Does the Bible shed any light on the mystery surrounding the controversial shroud? Just what are the facts?

Webster defines a shroud as a “burial garment, or something that covers.” The word appears only once in the King James 1611 Bible (Ezek. 31:3). In this verse it is not referring to a burial garment, but rather to the shade created by the branches of a tree.

For centuries the *Shroud of Turin* has been the subject of much debate and no little controversy. In recent months it has received immense, worldwide publicity. The publicity stems from permission granted by the Roman Catholic Church allowing prominent scientists to experiment with the Shroud in an attempt to determine if it is a cunningly devised forgery or an actual burial garment with a human likeness appearing on it.

The Shroud itself is a piece of cloth 14 feet 3 inches by 3 feet 7 inches.

It is known to have been in the Royal Chapel of the Roman Catholic Turin (Italy) Cathedral since the 14th century. The Shroud has been kept rolled up in a silver canister stored above an altar and has been removed for public view only two or three times every century.

The Shroud shows an image of a bearded, long-haired male, who shows evidence of having been crucified. It should be noted that the image is extremely difficult to detect with the naked eye, but becomes surprisingly more visible in a photograph.

## ARGUMENTS FOR THE SHROUD’S AUTHENTICITY

Many convincing arguments have been given in favor of the Shroud’s authenticity. Let’s briefly consider several of the strongest, most convincing arguments which seem to indicate the Shroud did cover the body of Christ.

### Like a Negative

The light and dark areas on the burial garment are reversed,

like a photographic negative. If the human likeness on the Shroud had been forged, then the question must be asked, “How did the forger, living centuries ago, know how to reverse the shades, since he never could have seen a photographic negative?”

### Dust from the Dead Sea Area

Swiss criminologist Dr. Max Frei, in his 1974 study of the cloth, found dust on its fibers. His analysis concluded that the dust could very well have come from the Dead Sea area, providing evidence that the Shroud could have been near Jerusalem where Christ was crucified.

### Blood Stains

The image on the Shroud shows heavy blood flow around the top of the head. This has led some to point out the cruel treatment received by Christ when they placed a crown of thorns on His head. (Since Jesus had been politically accused of being the King of the Jews, the Romans mockingly placed a crown of thorns on His head. Matt. 27:29.)

### Facial Injuries

The man’s image shows an injury to the right eye. This, too, parallels an injury received by Christ. We read in Luke 22:64 that **“when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face...”**

### Possible Scourging

The image also shows heavy bleeding from the back, possibly from a scourging, and heavy blood flow from the area of the wrists and feet. (These wounds correspond to similar wounds inflicted on Christ. Consider Matt. 27:26, 35.)

### No Paint

The Shroud had been supposed by many for centuries to be a fraud altogether. Incidentally, centuries ago the first to speak out against the Shroud was a Roman Catholic priest. Many believed the image to have been cunningly and skillfully painted.

### Created by Immense Energy?

If the Shroud of Turin is to be accepted as genuine, then how did the image appear on the cloth? It has been theorized that “immense energy generated at the resurrection of Christ could have produced the markings.”

## PROOF THAT THE SHROUD WAS NOT THE LORD’S

Regardless of how convincing the arguments might be in favor of the Shroud belonging to Christ, there are some important facts which have been overlooked by most. There is clear PROOF that the Shroud could not be that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, let’s look carefully into the pages of God’s Word and prove that the Shroud of Turin - although possibly a genuine burial garment - could **not** be that of Jesus Christ.

### Marred Man

The image on the Shroud shows clearly the image of a man who had been *slightly* marred. However, the Scriptures teach that Jesus Christ was **“marred more than any man” (Isaiah 52:14)**. The image seen on the Shroud certainly *doesn’t* look like a man

who had been “marred more than any man.”

### Bones

In Psalm 22 we find a prophecy about Christ which teaches that the Messiah would have ALL of His **“bones ... out of joint” (Psa. 22:14)**. The image found on the Shroud is certainly not that of a man with every bone out of joint.

### Wrong Wrapping

The Shroud of Turin required that the one piece garment was draped over the naked body of a man; covering the front of the body, curving around the top of the head and then draping down the back. But is this the manner in which the body of Christ was wrapped? According to the biblical accounts, **NO!**

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John all record the wrapping of Jesus’ body after His horrible death. They all mention that Joseph, who was of Arimathaea, begged that Pilate might give him the dead body of the Lord Jesus Christ to bury in his own tomb. The permission was granted; the body was wrapped in a clean linen cloth and placed in a tomb. BUT WAIT! John’s record provides some vital truth that the others were not led to include in their accounts. Carefully read the entire passage as written by the Apostle John:

**“And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews’ preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand” (John 19:38-42).**

Did you notice that Jesus’ body was wrapped like a mummy, and packed with about a hundred pounds of spices **BEFORE HE WAS PLACED IN THE TOMB?**

A careful reading of John 20:1-7 will reveal that Jesus’ head was wrapped **separately** with a cloth called “the napkin” in verse 7.

These clear passages alone provide sufficient proof that the Shroud of Turin could not possibly be that of Christ. We saw that the theory of how the image was made on the garment required that the image was not made until His resurrection from the dead. That would have been three days and three nights after His body was wound up. (John 19:40 and Matt. 12:40)

A carefully wrapped body, packed with pounds of spices and then draped with a shroud could not have made the type of impression seen on the Shroud of Turin. The Shroud shows the image of a naked man rather than the image of a man wound up in spice-packed cloths.

### Long Hair

The Shroud shows the image of a man with long, shoulder-length hair. Regardless of the famous painting of an artist’s conception of Jesus Christ, the Bible indicates that He did **NOT** have long hair.

The Apostle Paul, who saw Jesus Christ, wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, **“If a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him” (I Cor. 11:14)**. See also Ezekiel 44:20.

Some may argue that Jesus was a Nazarite and Nazarites were not permitted to cut their hair (Judges 13:5-7 and Numbers 6); therefore, Christ had long hair. It should be quickly noted here that Jesus was **OF** Nazareth, and was therefore a Nazarene. The Scriptures nowhere speak of Jesus taking the Nazarite vow. If Jesus had taken such a vow, He certainly would have violated it when He touched the dead body of the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:54). This was strictly forbidden for Nazarites in Numbers 6:6.

The individual pictured on the Shroud shows a man with long hair, proving it could not be the image of the Jesus Christ of the Bible.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Regardless of the Bible facts presented, there will be multitudes who will still believe the shroud bears an image of Jesus Christ. Many will believe it holds strange powers. Some will even superstitiously worship and adore it as an icon or image. The Catholic Digest has run several ads for the purchase of a \$9.95 “faithfully rendered ... reproduced, ready for framing, 11 X 14 inch” drawing of the Shroud. A religious “club” showed a “documentary special unveiling the ‘secrets’ of the ‘mysterious’ Shroud of Turin.” Numerous articles in the newspapers and magazines have appeared regularly about the Shroud, putting more fuel to the fire of those who insist it belonged to Jesus.

Those who know the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour and know the truth of the Scriptures will not be turned aside by the claims of the superstitious.

Jeane Dixon, the well known Roman Catholic psychic, believed Jesus wanted this image of Himself preserved “as a message to our times,” and “as a guidance during the grave period of dangers which mankind will face near the year 2000, including the danger of nuclear holocaust.” (Note that Deuteronomy 18:10-13 forbids psychic practices such as those of Jeane Dixon.)

Without hesitation we can state that the Lord Jesus Christ DID NOT preserve the Shroud of Turin for a message to our times or to guide mankind from future dangers (Matt. 12:38-40). Those who would follow this line of thinking are weak in their faith in God’s written Word and rob God of adoration which belongs to Him alone. Those today who believe in the bodily resurrection of the Son of God do not need any external “proof” of His rising from the dead. Jesus told Thomas, **“Blessed are they that have NOT SEEN, and yet have believed” (John 20:29)**.

The believer’s guide for the future must be the Word of God and not some decaying cloth used to fill the coffers of a religious organization. Psalm 119:105 says the Word of God is the

believer’s lamp and light, while II Peter 2:3 warns of those who **“through covetousness shall ... with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.”**

The Shroud of Turin is a modern day “serpent of brass” which deserves the same fate as the one which the Israelites worshiped. **“He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan [made of brass]” (II Kings 18:4).**

Friend, do not allow yourself to be taken in by the strange, superstitious fables devised by Satan. Put your faith and trust only in the unchanging Word of God and in the Saviour Jesus Christ. **“It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man” (Psalm 118:8).** **“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. 10:13).**

**NEWS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS**  
☛ **OXFORD GROUP RANKING CHURCHES ACCORDING TO SUPPORT FOR HOMOSEXUAL AGENDA** - The following is excerpted from **“They’re Ranking Churches Now,” PJMedia, Sept. 27, 2023:**

“This probably shouldn’t come as a surprise to us, but a group at Oxford University in the UK has begun rating churches in the area based on their capitulation to the heresy of the LGBTQ movement. ‘The Oxford Safe Churches project, run by a coalition of LGBTQ+ organisations and Churches in Oxford, have published their first faith report, titled Attitudes to Queer Christians in Oxford Churches,’ reports the Oxford Student news website. ‘The report, published on Friday 22 September, uses a ‘traffic light’ system to rank the LGBTQ+ inclusivity of churches in Oxford.’ Needless to say, the red light means that a church preaches sound doctrine about gender, sex, and marriage, while a green light represents a church that affirms and celebrates open sin. Furthermore, churches receive a numerical score on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 and 2 corresponding to red lights, 3 equating to an amber (or yellow) light, and 4 and 5 representing green. ... The only reason there’s this debate about LGBTQ+-affirming churches is that the Rainbow Mafia demands acquiescence and will take nothing less. These days, we can’t simply love gay people for who they are; we must celebrate their lifestyles if we are to be in good standing with the Pride Mob. ... Stand firm. Don’t yield to the pressure to ‘affirm’ the LGBTQ agenda. Know the truth from scripture and be confident in the knowledge that we know how the war ends. Forget ‘the right side of history.’ What’s most important is being on the right side of eternity.”

☛ **CANADA GENDER WARS AND TAXPAYER FUNDED TRANS SURGERIES** - The following is excerpted from **“In Canada, the gender wars are now a national issue,” UnHerd, Sept. 21, 2023:**

“Yesterday, Canadians turned out by the thousands in cities

and towns across the country for the 1 Million March 4 Children--the most visible pushback to date against what many Canadians see as indoctrination into a radical set of new beliefs about sex and gender being pushed on their children in schools and healthcare settings. Now, it seems as though Canada’s long and uncomfortable silence on gender is breaking down quickly. ... In the province of Ontario, over 200,000 people are on the waiting list for surgeries--and that includes patients waiting on life-saving procedures. The last few years have also heralded the dystopian rise of Maid, Canada’s Medical Assistance in Dying programme, which has seen a surge of applications from patients with unmet needs for healthcare and social services. But even as basic needs go unmet, provincial healthcare systems have expanded access to bespoke cosmetic interventions for those seeking to transition. All provinces and territories now cover mastectomies and genital surgeries. Provinces and territories that cover genital surgery but lack clinics to perform these surgeries may cover travel expenses for patients who wish to seek care elsewhere. The Yukon covers the widest range of ‘gender-affirming’ interventions, including laser-hair removal, facial-feminisation surgery, vocal surgery, and chest contouring.”

☛  
- Eric Johnson, mayor of Dallas, Texas, announced his departure from the Democratic Party in a Wall Street Journal op-ed entitled “America’s Cities Need Republicans, and I’m Becoming One.” Johnson wrote, “I have been mayor of Dallas for more than four years. During that time, my priority has been to make the city safer, stronger and more vibrant. That meant saying no to those who wanted to defund the police. It meant fighting for lower taxes and a friendlier business climate. And it meant investing in family friendly infrastructure such as better parks and trails. That approach is working. Alone among America’s 10 most populous cities, Dallas has brought violent crime down in every major category, including murder, year-over-year for the past two years. In a recent Gallup poll asking Americans to rate the safety of major cities, Dallas came out on top. We have also reduced our property tax rate every year since I took office, signaling to investors that Dallas intends to remain the nation’s most pro-business city.

... After these wins for the people of Dallas--and after securing 98.7% of the vote in my re-election campaign this year--I have no intention of changing my approach to my job. But today I am changing my party affiliation. ... The future of America’s great urban centers depends on the willingness of the nation’s mayors to champion law and order and practice fiscal conservatism. Our cities desperately need the genuine commitment to these principles (as opposed to the inconsistent, poll-driven commitment of many Democrats) that has long been a defining characteristic of the GOP. In other words, American cities need Republicans—and Republicans need American cities.

... Unfortunately, many of our cities are in disarray. Mayors and other local elected officials have failed to make public safety a priority or to exercise fiscal restraint. Most of these local leaders are proud Democrats who view cities as laboratories for liberalism

rather than as havens for opportunity and free enterprise. ... with my change in party affiliation, I recognize that the number of Republican mayors leading the nation’s 10 largest cities has increased from zero to one. This is hardly a red wave. But it is clear that the nation and its cities have reached a time for choosing. And the overwhelming majority of Americans who call our cities home deserve to have real choices--not ‘progressive’ echo chambers--at city hall” (Wall Street Journal, Sept. 22, 2023). In February, Johnson posted a Fox News Digital article on social media “outlining how Austin police officers are retiring in droves due to low morale resulting from defunding and encouraged those officers to move to Dallas and work there” (Fox News, Sept. 22, 2023).

**GOOD CHURCHES RUINED BY BAD ASSOCIATIONS**  
by Evangelist David W. Cloud

After studying the emerging church for many years, including attending one of the largest emerging church conferences with media credentials, reading a few dozen of their books, and interviewing some prominent emerging leaders, and at the same time observing what is happening among fundamental Baptists, in 2011 I issued a warning that most independent Baptist churches will be well down the contemporary/emerging path within a generation.

I am more convinced of this with each passing year. **“Why Most Independent Baptist Churches Will Be Emerging within 20 Years”** is a free eBook available at the Way of Life web site. In the 2017 edition of this book I listed the following reasons for my prediction:

- Lukewarmness, unholiness, worldliness
- Biblical shallowness
- Lack of prayer
- Maligning warning and reproof
- Unquestioning loyalty to man
- Following the crowd
- Pragmatism and big-mindedness
- Ignorance about important issues
- Soft separatism
- Lack of serious discipleship
- Carelessness about music
- Quick prayerism

More recently, I have realized that a church doesn’t have to be guilty of all of these things to be a candidate for becoming emerging. All it has to do is to be guilty of two of them:

**SOFT SEPARATISM**, because soft separatism builds bridges to the wrong churches and the wrong preachers that act as conduits for other areas of compromise to enter the congregation, and the **REJECTION OF WARNING AND REPROOF** in regard to fundamental Baptist heroes, which makes it impossible to fully and properly educate about and separate a church from the compromise that is spreading so quickly among fundamental Baptists. (A pastor that is unwilling to listen to warnings and reproof about his heroes and unwilling to let his congregation entertain such warnings is guilty of giving unquestioning loyalty

to man, so these matters are intimately associated.)

I can think of several pretty strong churches pastored by men who are not guilty of most of the previous things. They are not careless about music in the services, at least for the moment. (Yet because of the influence of weaker fundamental Baptist preachers with whom they are associated, contemporary worship and contemporary Southern Gospel music is spreading through their congregations.) They don’t practice quick prayerism (although they usually emphasize “going to heaven when you die” too much in their soul-winning presentations). They believe in the necessity of repentance for salvation and aren’t hasty to proclaim people saved when there is no evidence. Their goal is true conversions rather than mere numbers of professions. (Though, again, because of their non-critical association with men who are guilty of these things, some of their church members practice the heresy of Quick Prayerism.) They are trying to disciple the people and educate them biblically. The pulpit ministry is not shallow. These pastors aren’t proud men and they urge the people to prove their teaching by God’s Word. There are many solid, biblical things in place in these churches. They have high moral standards and the preaching gets down to where the people live. They have a zeal for evangelism and a vision of world evangelism.

For the moment, these churches are capable of building healthy Christian lives and homes and discipling young people.

**But My Warning Is about the Future.** My warning is not about big errors but about a “little leaven.” It is about how that certain “little leavens” that fundamental Baptist churches are commonly guilty of, that stem from popular tradition, will eventually leaven the whole lump.

The problem with many otherwise good fundamental Baptist churches is their associations. The problem lies in the matter of with whom the pastors of these churches associate, who they invite in to speak, whose books they recommend, what schools they promote, what conferences they attend, and who they refuse to warn about.

If a church is not guilty of the areas of compromise that we document in the book *Why Most Independent Baptist Churches Will Be Emerging*, yet, if that church affiliates with men who are guilty of these things, that church will be corrupted by its affiliation just as assuredly as if it were guilty.

Those who don’t narrow their associations significantly in these days will go down the drain together, the good with the bad, because there is a rapidly growing number of fundamental Baptist preachers who are not men of keen spiritual discernment and who are committed to a path of compromise (though, typically, they deny this accusation).

The Word of God warns, **“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (I Corinthians 15:33).**

In light of the widespread compromise and rapid change that is evident throughout fundamental Baptist churches, it is time for a come out from among them movement much more than an “independent Baptist friends” movement.

The emerging church hasn’t targeted strong preachers. They



have targeted their children and their grandchildren. They have targeted the next generation.

The question is whether or not we are allowing bridges to be built to the wrong things, bridges that the next generation will cross.

Our young people will not only be influenced by us; they will be influenced by those with whom we associate.

By the way, where did we get the idea that no warnings should be given in regard to “good” men and churches? That is one of the unscriptural traditions that fundamental Baptists have inherited from their forefathers.

☛ Jesus reproved the good church at Ephesus, for the very reason that He loved it and wanted to see it prosper and not be destroyed.

☛ Paul reproved the good preacher Peter because he loved Christ and the truth and didn’t want to see hypocrisy destroy the work of God.

☛ The prophet Jehu reproved the good king Jehoshaphat for his compromise because God commanded him to do so and the prophet feared God more than man.

Take a man like Shelton Smith of *The Sword of the Lord*. He spoke in September 2012 at Tom Neal’s church in Florida, and Neal is the greatest Jack Hyles worshiper alive. Neal published a paper (*Independent Baptist Contender*) devoted to “perpetuating and protecting the principles and philosophies of Dr. Jack Hyles.” In a letter he wrote to explain his absence from the 2001 Pastor’s School at First Baptist Church of Hammond - after Hyles’ death in February of that year - Neal said:

*“It has been said of me, and I consider it a great compliment, that Tom Neal is all about Jack Hyles. My agenda was to please him. ... every success I have, I owe to Pastor’s School and Dr. Hyles. ... It is my desire that Jesus and Bro. Hyles be proud of me” (March 29, 2001).*

The November-December 2002 issue of Neal’s *Independent Baptist Contender* mentioned Hyles at least 95 times by name and featured an article entitled “*The Mind of Dr. Jack Hyles.*”

Whereas true Christians and Biblicists seek the mind of Christ, cultists seek the mind of their human leader.

This is wickedness. It is heresy. It is idolatry. It is not biblical Christianity. It is cultish. If we should not separate from the Jack Hyles and the Jack Schaaps and the Tom Neals, we should not separate from anyone.

*(Since I first wrote this, Schaap landed in prison for committing adultery with a teenage girl and transporting her across state lines to facilitate his sin, but no one should have needed to wait until Schaap was in jail to know that he was someone to separate from.)*

Yet, Shelton Smith is part of this man-centered crowd. Instead of reproving them, he joins them. This is part of a wide-ranging, good-old boys, mutual back-scratching network, and men who care about the truth and care about the next generation and care about their churches need to come apart from it.

Preachers who continue to associate with this crowd are

building bridges whereby this influence will enter their churches and eventually leaven them, regardless of what else they do right in their personal ministries.

Every preacher who is not a warrior and is not an outspoken separatist is a compromiser.

***The Same Is True in Regard to the Music Issue.*** There are fundamental Baptist pastors who use only sacred music and who care about this issue, but they associate at a ministry level with men who are careless about music, men who are playing with the fire of contemporary worship music and who are justifying it, even while deceptively pretending that they are against CCM, men who are playing with contemporary Southern Gospel yet pretending they are against contemporary music. Such associations are compromise and they are going to hurt these pastors’ churches in the long run.

Consider the following real life example:

***“There are teens in our church considering college, and we had the West Coast Baptist College summer tour group in. My wife and I sampled their CDs, and ... it was [mostly] the modern style, as was their singing in church. Then we had a group from Grace Baptist College in Michigan. They were fully in line with worldly singing styles and ‘toned down’ CCM songs (some of them I can recognize by the emphasis on self and feelings). The pastor’s teaching and preaching is just WONDERFUL after many years of being in a Jack Hyles-type of cultic church that preached the pastor’s opinions and ‘how-to’ messages instead of the Scripture. But the music thing bothers me. Our own church music is almost entirely out of the hymnal and has had no hint of the CCM stuff. But, when nothing is said about these tour groups, I am afraid that it is just a matter of time.”***

This church is already on the path toward the emerging church for the simple reason that the pastor will not tear down bridges to compromise. There are families in his church who are being influenced by West Coast’s compromise, and it is the pastor’s fault.

Consider another example:

***“Recently a West Coast college trio sang at our large fundamental Baptist church. Our church promotes West Coast and defends it. Recently our pastor preached an uncomfortable message seemingly aimed at you [David Cloud] with only one or two Bible verses. He is normally an excellent expositor of the Word of God. The last time a West Coast group was in our church, some, I believe, wrong music was included. This time, it was straight CCM, loud, and the auditorium erupted in clapping.”***

All of the elements are in place for the spiritual downfall of this church.

First, the pastor gives unquestioning loyalty to Paul Chappell and West Coast (or some other man or institution), refusing to entertain godly reproof of what they are doing and attacking those who issue the reproof. Thus the church members are cut off from every source of information and education that could help them avoid the compromise that is permeating fundamental Baptist

churches.

Second, the pastor is not being careful about music but rather is justifying the “adaptation” of CCM. Thus, the people are being given a taste for pop syncopation sounds such as beat anticipation, which Pastor Graham West of Australia warned about. This will result in the congregation becoming addicted to the contemporary sound so that eventually they will not be satisfied by the “light” stuff. This is especially true for young people who are being influenced by this church’s compromise in music. Further, by allowing the use of “adapted” contemporary worship music, ***bridges are being built*** to that very, very dangerous world. We have documented this extensively in the video presentations “*Music’s Role in Great Changes among Fundamental Baptists,*” “*Bob Jones, Majesty Music, New Calvinism, and the Gettys,*” and “*CCM a Bridge to Dangerous Waters,*” which are part of the video series *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*, available for free viewing and download from [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).

This church is on the slippery slope of the compromise that always accompanies contemporary Christian music, and it has rejected the very voices of warning and education that could help it to turn around before it is too late. One of the wisest things this pastor could do would be to show the aforementioned video presentations to his congregation, but his unscriptural loyalty to a man will not allow this, since these presentations warn about what Paul Chappell is doing.

I predict that this church will be emerging within two decades, possibly sooner. Today it is a church where God’s people can attend and be fed and strengthened and disciplined and where they can find God’s will and raise their children for Christ. Such churches are rare today, but the seeds of destruction are being sown so that they will be far rarer in a few years.

Because of the compromise and the soft separation and the undue exaltation of man, because of the foolish bridges that are being built to the world of contemporary Christian music through the influence of one of the pastor’s fundamental Baptist heroes, the church will eventually not be a sound place to raise godly children who are separated from the world (and it will happen sooner than most people think).

This is why I will continue to lift a voice even though I have been ostracized by men who should be my best friends in the battle for truth.

***“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us” (II Thessalonians 3:6).***

***“The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe” (Proverbs 29:25).***



***BREAKING! ISRAEL IS AT WAR: THOUSANDS OF ROCKETS, BORDER INVASION, 40+ DEAD, 800+ WOUNDED***

“Israel is at war,” said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu after

Israelis woke up under attack by air, land, and sea on Saturday, the Sabbath.

Sirens blared as more than 2,000 rockets launched at Israel from the Gaza Strip attempted to pummel the Jewish state and Israelis ran for bomb shelters early on Saturday. By evening, Gaza terrorists had launched rockets around 3,000 at Israel. At the same time, a combined offensive including truckloads of dozens of armed terrorists infiltrated through the border into southern Israel by land, paragliders entered by air, and others by sea.

“Citizens of Israel, we are at war, not in an operation or in rounds, but at war. This morning, Hamas launched a murderous surprise attack against the State of Israel and its citizens. We have been in this since the early morning hours,” Netanyahu told his nation.

“I convened the heads of the security establishment and ordered – first of all – to clear out the communities that have been infiltrated by terrorists. This currently is being carried out,” he said. “At the same time, I have ordered an extensive mobilization of reserves and that we return fire of a magnitude that the enemy has not known. The enemy will pay an unprecedented price,” he added.

“We are at war and we will win it.”

At least 200 Israelis are reported dead and at least 1,000 wounded, some critically. Some areas were reported to have fallen under complete control of Hamas. By evening, the IDF was still fighting terrorists in 22 locations inside Israel.

From about 6:30 a.m., sirens blared first in southern Israel around the Gaza Strip and then in the Negev Desert, Tel Aviv area cities, and Jerusalem.

Many of the rockets were intercepted by Israel’s Iron Dome anti-rocket system. But there are reports of rockets having landed inside populated areas. Israel’s State-run public broadcaster KAN mentioned unconfirmed reports of Israeli soldiers kidnapped and taken into Gaza.

According to military spokesman, Lt. Col. Richard Hecht, Israel has launched Operation Swords of Iron.

Israel’s Defense Minister Yoav Gallant announced a “special security situation” in Israel’s home front within about 50 miles of the Gaza Strip enabling the IDF “to provide civilians with safety instructions and close relevant sites.”

“The Hamas [terrorist organization] has made a grave mistake this morning and launched a war against the State of Israel. IDF troops are fighting against the enemy at every location,” Gallant said.

“I call on all of Israel’s citizens to follow security instructions. The State of Israel will win this war,” he said.

The attack comes at the end of the biblical Sukkot holiday. Known as Simchat Torah, it’s the day Jewish people celebrate the Word of God.

It also comes one day after the 50th anniversary of the 1973 Yom Kippur War when Israel was taken off guard by a massive attack from an Arab coalition.