

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

- Week of November 28, 2021 -

Sunday Morning Service -----	32
Sunday Evening Service -----	23
Wed. Evening Service, 12/01/21 -----	17

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

- Week of November 28, 2021 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,392.25
Love Offering -----	\$ 100.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 11/28/21:	\$ 1,492.25

- Week of November 21, 2021 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,747.00
Love Offering, Dr. Ray Meier -----	\$ 350.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 11/21/21:	\$ 2,097.00

- Week of November 14, 2021 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,185.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 11/14/21:	\$ 1,185.00

- Week of November 7, 2021 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,315.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 11/07/21:	\$ 1,315.00

- Week of October 31, 2021 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 4,542.04
Love Offering -----	\$ 50.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 10/31/21:	\$ 4,592.04

- Week of October 24, 2021 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 820.04
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 10/24/21:	\$ 820.04

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed to operate the church EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

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



THANK YOU For Your Continued Faithfulness In Giving!

During the early part this 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
Lois Mae Floyd -----	Pianist/ Organist
Mickie Shatwell -----	Evening Pianist
Derek Quinnelly -----	Greeter
Larry Byars -----	S.S. Teacher
Larry & Mary Byars, Chris Vance, Derek Quinnelly, and Harrison White -----	Outreach
Bertha Segebarr -----	Custodian
Shirley & Brenda White -----	Flowers
Seth White -----	Sound/Video

REMINDER



Dr. John R. Rice
1895-1980

Should A Christian Observe Christmas?

by the late Dr. John R. Rice

"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks"
(Romans 14:5 -6).

I love the Christmas season. I find great joy in preaching on the Christmas themes of the angels, the shepherds, the manger, the virgin birth, and the wise men. I get a great thrill when I hear Christmas carols. I love the gathering together of loved ones, the giving of gifts. And I rejoice to be remembered by those I love.

Perhaps my own feeling is colored by the fact that for many years I have been away from home most of the year, but at the Christmas season I can be with my family.

How sad that many do not enjoy Christmas! Even some devoted Christians feel sour and are cantankerous and full of objections about the season. To you I would say in the words of Scripture—if you regard the day, regard it unto the Lord. And if you do not regard the day, then be sure you act Christian about it. Let nobody judge or criticize others for an honest, worshipful, spiritual and loving attitude about Christmas.

SOME OBJECTIONS ABOUT CHRISTMAS ANSWERED -

1. "December 25 Is Not Really Christ's Birthday"

The Bible does not tell us exactly when Christ was born, and there are no other trustworthy sources from which we can learn the time. Therefore, some think it wrong to observe Christmas.

I know a little girl who was born on February 29 - leap year. Now, is it wrong for her to observe her birthday on February 28 when there is no leap year? In other words, is it wrong for her or others to observe her birthday anytime except leap year? The precise date—February 29—is not the important factor, but that another year has gone by and the little girl has grown a year older; and that fact should be recognized by loved ones.

Would you say it is wrong to observe Thanksgiving on a certain Thursday in November since not all our blessings have come on that day? Or would it be wrong to set a more convenient day if all agreed on a national day of thanksgiving? Whatever the day, it is still right to have a time when we publicly thank God and as a nation officially express our gratitude to the Father of Mercies for all His bounty, for all His goodness and for all His blessings. The important thing is not the day of the calendar on which we do it, but the fact that we give praise to the One who loadeth us with benefits.

Although many scholars do not believe that Jesus was born on December 25, it could still be the date on which the angels announced His birth. We love the dear Lord Jesus. We want everyone to remember His birth. We want to teach our children about the Babe in the manger, about the wise men from the East who came to worship Him, about the angel's announcement to Mary, about the angel chorus that told the shepherds of His birth. And December 25 is as good a day for that as any other day. It is not wrong to remember the birth of Christ on a day which is as close as we can come to His birthday.

2. "Christmas Means Only 'Christ's Mass' - a Catholic Holiday"

We are told that the name of Christmas comes from "Christ's Mass," that it was instituted by Catholics and therefore good
(continued inside)

LISTEN TO -



ABIDINGRADIO.COM



CHURCH INSURANCE FUND

Monthly Premium, Due 12/05/21-----	\$ 537.92
Amount Received For Dec. -----	\$ 0.00

AMOUNT STILL NEEDED FOR DEC., 2021: ----\$ 537.92

Thank You For Your Faithful Help With This Need!

Baptists ought not to observe it.

That objection seems a little foolish. Nearly all the names we have, we inherited from the heathen. Many cities, towns, counties and rivers in America have Indian names. But when we see the Susquehanna River or read of Shawnee, Oklahoma or Comanche, Texas, we are not thinking about the Indians. And the names have no connotation of heathendom. Names mean what they mean, no matter what the origin.

Sometimes Seventh-day Adventists make much of the fact that the name of our day “Sunday” comes from the worship of the sun. I reply that their “Saturday” is named from the god Saturn. But no one has reference to the sun when he uses the word “Sunday” or when he worships on Sunday; and no one has any reference to the god Saturn when he works or serves on Saturday.

So it seems foolish to make an artificial distinction when none exists in the minds of people who observe Christmas.

January was named for the Roman god Janus. Are Christians, therefore, wrong to call the month by that name? To every sensible person, Christmas means simply Christmas, not some kind of mass. Catholics may observe it with a mass, but Protestants do not. It will be good to keep these things in mind.

3. “Christmas Was a Former Heathen Holiday”

It is true that before the birth of Christ, December 25 was a pagan holiday. The Encyclopedia Britannica says this date was a “Mithraic feast day” to celebrate the unconquered Son of Philocalus.

Evidently many new converts were tempted to keep the pagan feast celebrated on December 25. Possibly it was to counteract this pagan influence that Christian leaders decided to observe this day as “Christmas”, which means “Christ-sent,” hoping this would help new converts resist the temptation of partaking in the pagan feast. (Following the same reasoning, many churches have a special banquet and program for high school seniors on the night of the annual senior prom.)

At any rate, the celebration of Christmas is definitely not a continuation of a pagan custom. It is a unique Christian holiday to counteract the influence of a pagan holiday. Pagans did something on every day, and we cannot do away with all the days they used, whether for worship or for ceremonies about sowing or reaping or about the solstices or the new moons. We have the same sun heathens worshiped, and we benefit from its rising and setting, but we do not have the heathen ceremonies about that.

In 1936, I held a blessed revival campaign in the Binghamton Theatre in Binghamton, New York, sponsored by eight churches. The fact that in this theatre people had seen lewd movies or burlesque shows or legitimate theatre productions did not change the fact that now the building was used for the glory of God and souls were saved.

I myself am under new management too. Once the Devil lived within; now Jesus Christ does. So if heathens used December 25 for idolatry, why should Christians not use it now

to honor Jesus Christ and His birth? Whatever day we set aside to honor Christ, it will be a day somebody else has used for bad purposes.

But now all the days belong to Christ and none to heathen gods. No Christian should be grieved if we think about the birth of Christ on December 25. Is that a worse sin than working to make money on that day? Why should anybody object if we sing Christmas carols, have a happy celebration with a feast and go over the Bible story of His birth and teach it to our children on Christmas Day? We would not honor God more by having less Scripture, less singing, less of the spirit of giving and less manifestation of love for others. All the days belong to Christ, and December 25 should be used to honor Him too.

4. “Christmas Trees and Decorations Are an Abomination”

Many people believe Jeremiah 10:1–4 is talking about Christmas trees and that therefore it is a sin to put one up. Notice verses 3 and 4:

“For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.”

This is a description of an idol made of wood and covered with silver and gold. Notice that God tells Israel not to be afraid of these idols because **“they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good”** (vs. 5).

As a matter of fact, the Christmas tree has a distinctive Christian origin. In the eighth century an English missionary named Boniface went to Germany to preach Christ. The Germans, at that time, were heathen and worshiped idols. One of their objects of worship was the oak tree. But Boniface told them God was more like the evergreen tree which did not lose its leaves and appear to be dead in the winter.

So gradually, as people were converted to Christ, the evergreen tree became a symbol of the eternal God in whom they had learned to trust. Eventually the evergreen tree was used for decoration at the Christmas feast. Because God had shown His love to us through the gift of His Son, it became customary for Christians to give gifts to those whom they loved at Christmastime.

The decorations on a Christmas tree could not possibly be called heathen nor have any idolatrous significance. Who thinks that heathens worshiped their gods with paper chains? that popcorn on a string is a form of idolatry? that electric lights on it for the joy of little children to brighten the home are sinful?

I love Christmas and its decorations, which are but an expression of joy in my heart as I think how God became man, how the Creator became a Babe, how **“though he was rich, yet for [our] sakes he became poor, that [we] through his poverty might be rich”** (II Cor. 8:9).

It is sad that the world as a whole does leave Christ out of

Christmas. But for those of us who love the Lord, it can be a blessed time of fun and feasting and fellowship.

5. “There Is Too Much Revelry During the Christmas Holidays”

It is true that many do not honor Jesus Christ at Christmas. Some drink more liquor during Christmastime than at any other time. That is a sin. Many business people think of Christmas only as a time to make money. In this they are wrong. Sometimes even Christians lie about Santa Claus and deceive little children with a heathen legend when they could tell about the dear Lord Jesus. That is wicked. Deceit is the poorest possible way to honor the birth of our Lord.

I do not believe in having a Santa Claus at Sunday school or in the church service. Certainly to deceive little ones with a lie is a sin. No Christian ought to condone it. The truth is so much better than a lie. We should tell them how the dear Lord came into the world to save sinners.

Yes, people often dishonor God at Christmas. I am sorry they do. I hope you will not grieve God by such a sin. But we should not turn Christmas over to Satan and wicked people because some misuse the Christmas season.

Should we abandon Sunday because it is often misused?

On the Lord’s Day there is more drinking, more revelry, than on any other day of the week. Should Christians, therefore, count the Lord’s Day the Devil’s day and give it up? Certainly not.

A great many teach that baptism is essential to salvation. They give more honor to the water than to the blood. That is wrong. But should we, therefore, disobey Jesus Christ about baptism because some others have overstressed baptism and made it a false doctrine?

The second coming has been a greatly abused and perverted doctrine with many. False cults have greatly perverted the doctrine of Christ’s coming. People set dates. They speculate on signs. Should the rest of us Bible Christians, then, ignore the clear Bible doctrine of Christ’s imminent return because the doctrine has been abused? Certainly not.

Nor should we ignore the Bible doctrine of the fullness of the Spirit just because many associate it with talking in tongues and with sinless perfection.

Just so - we would be very foolish to turn Christmas over to Satan and worldlings. If the world has a Christmas of revelry, let us make it a day of love and a time of honoring Christ. Let us make much of the Christmas story, of Christmas carols and Christmas love and fellowship.

Do other people make giving gifts a mere form? Well, it does not need to be so for Christians. We can give gifts that really express our love. We can make gifts the response of an honest heart. We can send greetings with Scripture verses and with holy admonitions.

Is it wrong to have a day of rejoicing? Is it wrong to feast

and to send portions to others? No indeed.

When, under Nehemiah, the remnant of Israel had gone back to the Land of Promise from the captivity in Babylon and the Law was read and explained, the people wept. It was not a time for weeping, but a time for rejoicing. The wall of Jerusalem had been rebuilt, the gates had been hung, the city had been restored as the city of God, and the worship had begun.

Let us listen to the plain commands of the Lord in such a case, as given in Nehemiah 8:9,10:

“And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

And we are glad to learn in verse 12:

“And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.”

If Israelites would honor God by having a day of joy and feasting and of sending portions to others because the wall was rebuilt, the gates were set up, and the worship was established, then we today do well to have a day to rejoice over the birth of the Saviour and to send portions to one another and to make merry with spiritual joy.

I feel nearer to God at Christmas than at any other time. I seem to love the Word of God more at Christmas, when we read and quote it again and again. I like the time as a good excuse to get into people’s hearts and win them to Christ. And many have been saved because I brought a Christmas message or urged sinners to accept God’s great Christmas Gift.

Let us have, then, a happy Christmas and make Christ supreme on this day which we remember in honor of His birth!

6. “Is It Proper to Give Gifts to Others on Christ’s Birthday?”

Certainly Christ should be first. But then He wants and deserves first place on every other day also! Giving should honor Christ, and certainly we should give ourselves and all we have to Him. But giving gifts to others is also a proper way to honor the Lord, according to Bible example and teaching.

At the feast of Purim, a feast to the Lord celebrating the great deliverance God gave the Jews in answer to the prayers of Mordecai and Esther and other devout Jews when wicked Haman planned to exterminate them, Jews were taught **“that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor”** (Esther 9:22).

Again, when the Jewish remnant who returned from the captivity began to mourn on a holy day as they met to hear the

reading of the Law, they were instructed, **“Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord” (Neh. 8:10)**. So they returned home for feasting and sending gifts.

So giving gifts, if it be done in the right spirit and motive, honors God on special days set apart for Him.

Remember that God does not need our material things except as He wants them for other people. So under some circumstances giving to others may be as pleasing to Him as giving to pastors and missionaries. We should take care to give in Jesus’ name, remembering specially the poor at Christmas. But the right kind of giving to others is certainly fitting on Christmas.

When the rich young ruler wanted to be perfect, he was instructed to give his property to the poor, not to Jesus (Matt. 19:21); when Zacchaeus was converted, he was led to say. **“The half of my goods I give to the poor” (Luke 19:8)**. That pleased Jesus very much.

Jesus said that He would reward everyone who gave a cup of cold water in His name. He also said, **“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matt. 25:40)**.

So giving to others must please Christ very much, if it is done in loving thought toward Him and in His name. Certainly we should give to missions, to the poor and also to loved ones and relatives at Christmas. But be sure your motives are right.

7. **“Should Christians Tell Their Children There Is a Santa Claus?”**

Certainly not! Lying and deceit are wicked. Lying on Christmas is as great a sin as lying on any other day. It is shameful that Sunday schools often choose to teach a lying fable at Christmastime instead of teaching the marvelous true Christmas stories about the Baby in the manger, the shepherds in the field, the angel’s announcement of a Saviour born, the heavenly chorus and the wise men from the East. The story of the virgin-born Saviour is sweeter than any lie or fable invented by heathen people and spread by non-Christians.

I remember the sad, sad day when I, five years old, found that my father and mother and kin people had deceived me about Santa Claus - or Saint Nicholas. I was ashamed. I had been victimized. Those I trusted more than anybody else on earth, devout Christians, had lied. I wondered if other things they said were not true either. So Christmas was something of a mockery to me for years until I began to learn the sweetness of a Christmas centered about the birth of Christ.

Lying is wicked, is plainly forbidden in the Bible and is certain to have bad results. And the lie about Santa Claus is especially hurtful in that it crowds out interest in Christ Himself. The Lord Jesus, in many so-called Christian homes, is crowded out by the old, fabled gentleman who is always seen on whiskey ads at this season of the year.

Parents should always tell the truth. My own children were

happier about Christmas than those children who have known Christmas as the celebration of a lie.

8. **“What About ‘Xmas?’”**

Many people distribute leaflets urging us to “keep Christ in Christmas.” In these tracts they sometimes attack the use of “Xmas” as an abbreviation of Christmas. X, they say, is a symbol for an unknown quantity, and this is a devious device of the Devil to remove the name of Christ from Christmas.

While I personally feel it best not to use the abbreviated word “Xmas,” it was not a deliberate attempt—at least at first—to “take Christ out of Christmas.” Actually, in the Greek language a large letter similar to an X stood for the letters CH, and thus for Christ. Originally, then, Xmas was Christmas.

Be that as it may, I am strongly in favor of putting “Christ back in Christmas,” and I never use the abbreviated “Xmas.” ■

NEWS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS

❑ **TALIBAN, KIM JONG-UN, NIGERIA TOP THREE CHRISTIAN PERSECUTORS OF 2021** - The following is excerpted from The Christian Post, Nov. 17, 2021:

“The religious freedom advocacy group International Christian Concern has named the **Taliban, Kim Jong un** and **Nigeria** as the top persecutors of Christians at its first **Persecutor of the Year Awards** event. ICC ranked **NIGERIA** as the worst country for religious freedom in 2021. Jeff King, who has served as ICC’s president since 2003, explained that the African nation has been engaged in ‘a 20-year war against Christians,’ which he labeled genocide. ‘There’s a one-sided war against Christians; there are two guerrilla forces or factions fighting Christians,’ he added. The report elaborated on the unsafe environment Christians face in Nigeria: ‘Nigeria is one of the deadliest places on Earth for Christians, as 50,000 to 70,000 have been killed since 2000. Nigeria is home to the infamous Islamic terrorist group Boko Haram, which has displaced millions of people and killed tens of thousands of others. Fulani militants killed more Christians in the past several years than Boko Haram and have displaced Christian farmers. ... There are 3-plus million Christians displaced, King asserted, adding: ‘Their homes have been stolen, their lands have been stolen, their farms have been stolen.’

... The group identified by ICC as the Persecutor of the Year was **THE TALIBAN**. ... Since the Taliban has retaken control of Afghanistan, he said, they have gone door-to-door asking, ‘Do you know where the Christians are?’ King warned that these and many other Christians will ‘be tortured and given a chance to turn back to Islam. If you don’t, you’re going to be tortured more to find out what other Christians you know and then you’re killed.’ In the past two weeks, King reported that the Taliban murdered a Christian who was found with a Bible on his phone.

... ICC selected **NORTH KOREAN DICTATOR KIM JONG UN** as its individual Persecutor of the Year. According to the report, ‘The Kims have created a religious system modeled on the faith (God/Father/Son) with Kim Jong Un playing the part of the

Son that is to be worshiped. Any threat to the Son and over-arching religious system is mercilessly crushed.’ ... King estimated that around 30,000 Christians in North Korea have been sent to prison camps, while more than a million have been killed.”

❑ **AMID GAY PREACHING SCANDAL, FORMER SBC PRESIDENT RESIGNS FROM SEMINARY POST** - former SBC President and Visiting Professor of Preaching at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary James Merritt has resigned from the seminary, after endorsing the preaching of his openly homosexual son, Jonathan. Earlier this year, Jonathan came publicly out of the closet - despite the fact that everyone already knew he was gay - and embraced his new proclaimed status as a “gay Christian man.”

Despite the fact that Jonathan is open about his sexuality, and has identified himself wholly with the LGBTQ movement, his father, James, endorsed him anyway, calling his preaching “faithful to the gospel.”

When pressed by conservatives in the SBC (there are still a handful of them), SEBTS President Danny Akin, another social gospel adherent, announced that Merritt had resigned citing his having become a “distraction” to the school.

James Merritt is still the pastor of a Southern Baptist Church.

❑ **DON’T FORGET: THE SALVATION ARMY IS PRO-CHOICE** - Despite being in the news recently for their recent anti-racism guide that is rife with critical race theory ideologies and which has resulted in them hemorrhaging money and funding, there is a larger reason why Christians ought **not** to support the Salvation Army: **the Salvation Army is a pro-choice organization**.

Publicly, they claim to be pro-life, and because Christians make up a big part of their volunteer base one might be tempted to suppose that they must be against abortion in every form. But this is not the case at all.

In the Salvation Army’s Position Statements, we read that they allow for/ support abortion if “reliable diagnostic procedures” determine the child is *likely* not going to survive for very long after birth, or in cases of rape and incest.

This thought is reiterated by Dr. Aimee Patterson, a “Christian” Ethics Consultant at The Salvation Army Ethics Centre, who writes in The Salvationist that Prochoice vs Prolife debates tend to...

“...portray women either as liberated heroes of reproductive rights or wicked witches out to destroy anything that gets in their way. Both are metaphors of power. It is rare that this debate turns us toward women who consider abortion from a place of vulnerability. Some are pressured by their sexual partner, whether a boyfriend or a spouse. Others are financially insecure or unable to care for a child on their own. Still others fear they will be shamed and shunned by their family or social community. In many cases, the motivating factors behind abortion are multiple, interconnected and complex.

None of this means that abortion is morally good or even morally neutral. The intention behind abortion is not merely to end a pregnancy but to end a life. Even when abortion is morally permissible—for instance, when conception is the result of rape—it doesn’t tie things up neatly. It is a tragic act.”

No one ought to support the Salvation Army. There are better organizations to give to, ones that don’t compromise on basic Christian beliefs. More specifically, if you desire to give, give sacrificially to your local church, who ought to be engaged in works of mercy for those who need them.

❑ **CHRISTIAN SEMINARY HOLDS SEGREGATED ‘BLACKS ONLY’ ALUMNI REUNION** - Dallas Theological Seminary, apparently taking a page from playbook Saddleback Church, recently held an “African American Only Event.” The event, only for alumni who are of African-American descent, was billed as having been conceived “out of a desire to reconnect with other African American alumni in a relaxing environment...”

❑ **“WOKE” THEOLOGIAN SAYS BIBLICAL ADMONITION AGAINST NECROMANCY IS WHITE OPPRESSION** - Andre Henry (MA Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary) is a Los Angeles-based writer, musician, former editor of Relevant Magazine, and a self-proclaimed theologian stopped believing in God years ago.

In a conversation with fellow unbeliever Jo Luehmann, a self-described “Christian Atheist” who doesn’t believe in God but believes in Jesus, and, therefore, spends all her time deconstructing and decolonizing the faith, these two exceedingly ignorant souls cover a wide range of topics, with Henry explaining that the Christian prohibition on necromancy is basically white oppression.

Our story picks up with Luehmann revealing that she needed to “break up with” “white Jesus” in order to reconnect to her true self, and then Henry jumping in.

“I so relate to what you’re saying, including disconnecting from your ancestor. And I write about this in my new book where I talk about when I was in Jamaica last year, I was doing a lot of reconnecting with my extended family and hearing about where my mother’s bloodline began, between an enslaved woman and a slaveholder named (unintelligible)

“I couldn’t stop thinking about her- my first ancestor in Jamaica. And I kept thinking about how the version of Christianity that I received had like this very strong- you’re not supposed to commune with the dead, basically. It’s like when people talk about connecting with their ancestors and stuff like that, that’s something that was so foreign to me, because I was like, you know, they tell us not to do that basically. And for the first time, I really asked the question ‘why would it be so important for these oppressors to tell us not to connect with our ancestors.”

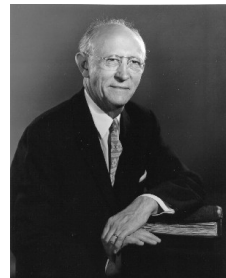
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"I don't believe in God. At all. But I believe in Christ, and to me Christ is just the embodiment of divinity in me, in you, in all of humanity. So for all intents and purposes, I'm a Christian atheist...I just tell people I'm a Christian to avoid all of the 'what do you mean?'"

"Ancient Jewish spirituality, which is what Christianity borrows from, is indigenous spirituality. And because it was stolen and because it was corrupted and appropriated by systems of oppression doesn't mean that I have to reject it."



Dr. Vance Havner
1901 - 1986

QUOTES FROM VANCE HAVNER

- ☛ "If you are a Christian, you are not a citizen of this world trying to get to heaven; you are a citizen of heaven making your way through this world."
- ☛ "A soft and sheltered Christianity, afraid to be lean and lone, unwilling to face the storms and brave the heights, will end up fat and foul in the

cages of conformity."

☛ "We are suffering today from a species of Christianity as dry as dust, as cold as ice, as pale as a corpse, and as dead as King Tut. We are suffering not from a lack of correct heads but of consumed hearts."

☛ "We are not going to move this world by criticism of it nor conformity to it, but by the combustion within it of lives ignited by the Spirit of God."

☛ "Let it never be forgotten that, although we may do nothing about the Word we hear, the Word will do something to us. The same sun melts ice and hardens clay, and the Word of God humbles or hardens the human heart."

☛ "It is better to wake up five hundred Christians than to convert five hundred sinners, for if five hundred Christians really wake up, they will win more than five hundred sinners."

☛ "Worry is like a rocking chair. It will give you something to do, but it won't get you anywhere."

☛ "The temple of truth has never suffered so much from woodpeckers on the outside as from termites within."

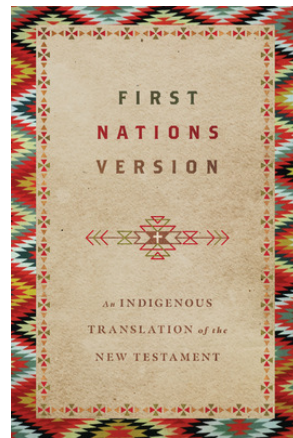
☛ "I believe in the Church and in loyalty to a local church. I am not in favour of that view of the invisible church that makes one invisible at church on Sunday morning."

☛ "It used to be called the Lord's Day, now it is the weekend and if we group all holidays on weekends the devil will have scored another move against Sunday worship."

☛ "Where are the marks of the cross in your life? Are there any points of identification with your Lord? Alas, too many Christians wear medals but carry no scars"

☛ "Junior bit the meter man, Junior kicked the cook; junior is anti-social now, according to the book. Junior smashed the clock and lamp; Junior hacked the tree. Destructive trends are treated in chapters two and three. Junior threw his milk at mom; Junior screamed for more. Notes on self-assertiveness are found in chapter four. Junior tossed his shoes and socks out into the rain; negation that, and normal. Disregard the stain. Junior got in Grandpop's room, tore up his fishing line. That's the inattention, see page 89. But, Grandpop seized the slipper and yanked Junior 'cross his knee, 'cause Grandpop hadn't read a book since 1893."

☛ "I don't believe God is going to fill anybody with the Holy Spirit until the purpose of their heart is to glorify Jesus and to glorify God."



"FIRST NATIONS VERSION" BIBLE TRANSLATION RELEASED: IS IT THE WORST EVER? A REVIEW

A new Bible translation has been released, the "First Nations Version" (FNV) and right away one thing is clear: this is an absolute trainwreck of a translation. This is because the FNV is **not** a word-for-word translation; rather, it is a thought-for-thought translation/dynamic equivalent translation, which means it's nothing more than a paraphrase, and not a particularly good one at that. It's another entry into the long line of GistBibles (I.E. it's more or less the gist of what the scriptures say). For this reason, it cannot be considered a translation in any way, shape or form.

Released in the last few days, it's selling too, either topping or being near the top of the charts for a few different categories on Amazon.

- #1 in New Testament
- #2 in New Testament Meditations

#6 in Native American Studies (Books)

#10 in Bible Meditations

#52 in Textbooks

Much like Eugene Peterson's "The Message Bible" or the weird "Bethel Passion Bible", the FNV was crafted by one man, Terry M. Wildman. Wildman is ordained as a United Methodist pastor, is of Ojibwe and Yaqui heritage, and for years he pastored the Northport Indian United Methodist Church in Michigan. That church is a UMC congregation, which has become a thoroughly apostate denomination, as evidenced by their acceptance and embracing of the homosexual/lesbian agenda.

Wildman likewise has spent 20 years leading lead Rain Ministries, being one part of a "RainSong" duo that provides music and storytelling at Powwows, First Nations gatherings, churches and conferences. Along with being the director of the new paraphrase, he recently took on the role of Director of Spiritual Growth and Leadership Development for Native InterVarsity.

Not to say that he didn't have some help with the translation.

"Besides the members of our council, many other First Nations people have had input into this translation as reviewers, cultural consultants, and community feedback participants. All in all, the tribal heritages represented include, but are not limited to, Apache, Assiniboine, Blackfeet, Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Desert Cahuilla, Cayuga, Diné (Navajo), Hopi, Kalispel, Kiowa, Klickitat, Lakota, Mohawk, Métis, Miami, Muscogee, Nez Perce, Northern Cree, Odawa, Ojibwe, Pawnee, Plains Cree, Potawatomi, Tlingit, Tohono O'odham, Western Cree, Yankton Sioux, Spokane, Wasco, Yakama, and Yaqui. One council member said, "This sounds so Native that some people won't believe it's the Bible."

The book itself is in English but filled with American Indian religious language, jargon, and terminology. This is concerning, as he frequently takes all the words and phrases that might be used in indigenous religious ceremonies, and then does one-for-one exchanges of expressions that have a built-in, loaded meaning and connotation. Wildman explains why he chose to have it in English rather than in a different language:

"Ninety-five percent of Native people don't speak their language. Of the ones who do, very few can actually read it. This is because of missionary efforts: While they were translating the Bible into our Native languages, they were also taking these languages away from us."

He elaborates on some of the distinctives in an interview with the CICW:

"We also used words and concepts more relevant to a traditional Native worldview. 'Temple' became 'Sacred Lodge'; 'sin' became 'bad hearts' or 'broken ways,' depending on the context. 'Angel' became 'spirit-messenger,' 'apostle' became 'message bearer,' Jesus becomes 'Creator Sets Free' and 'Christ' became 'Chosen

One.' These are only a few examples of our attempt to connect to the traditional way Natives first spoke in English. More than one Native elder has said, 'You translate it into English the way we think it in our language.' A young Canadian Native told us that reading the FNV sounded like his grandpa telling stories at the breakfast table...

"We translated the word for 'church' as 'Sacred Family' because of the more relational picture it paints of the body of Christ, which is very culturally important to Native peoples. We changed 'bread' to 'frybread' in a few places where it seemed appropriate. It took a while to settle on how to translate 'kingdom of God' because of the EuroAmerican connotations of king and kingdom. The book *Spirit and Resistance* by American Indian theologian George E. Tinker helped us settle on translating 'kingdom of God' as 'Creator's Good Road.' "

He goes on to explain that along with 'prayers' being referred to as "sending his voice to the Great Spirit," they kept the same name for God that American Indians use within their own non-Christian beliefs, calling him "the Creator and Great Spirit."

Because there are so many Marys in the New Testament, they didn't want to use the name, but rather tweaked it to designate which Mary is being spoken about. Jesus' Mother became "Bitter Tears", Mary Magdalene becomes "Strong Tears" and Mary the sister of Martha becomes "Healing Tears." Wildman told Christian Post:

"We believe it's very important that the Gospel be kind of decolonized and told in a Native way, but being accurate to the meaning of the original language and understanding that it's a different culture..." ■

GIFTS OF THE MODERN WISE MEN



"Professing themselves to be wise,
they became fools" -Romans 1:22