

# Senator: Pope Francis 'Spoke to Our Humanity'

For about an hour, the deeply divided lawmakers of the U.S. Congress closed ranks Thursday behind Pope Francis, the powerful and popular leader of the world's Catholics.

Once the first papal speech before Congress was over, however, they retreated to their respective partisan corners, and offered up different interpretations of the pontiff's message.

If Democrats and Republicans could agree on one point, it was that they were moved by his compassion, manifested in his calls to help the most vulnerable and the poor.

"He spoke to our sense of humanity," said Democratic Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy, the longest serving Catholic in Congress. "It wasn't a Catholic or non-Catholic speech. It was a 'remember who you are as people, act like that.' So I liked it."

The Republican Speaker of the House, John Boehner, a devout Catholic, cried at several junctures as he flanked Francis.

Tom Rooney, a Republican representative from Florida, said the pope's message had extra meaning for him as a Catholic. "It was a very special day," he said. "Boehner was tearing up before he even started speaking, so it was like, 'OK, here we go.'"

But there was some public grumbling in Republican ranks.

Representative Bill Flores, chairman of the Republican Study Committee, the largest conservative grouping in the House of Representatives, balked at Francis' wading into politics, such as his call for better treatment of immigrants.

“He said do unto others the way others would do to you,” Flores said. “And I don’t think other countries would like it if we crashed their borders and invaded their countries.”

Texas Republican Senator Ted Cruz, a 2016 White House hopeful, took a swipe not at the pope, but at Democrats, when it came to the papal defense of Catholic teachings on family and abortion.

“It was striking and heartbreaking to see so many congressional Democrats sitting, stone-faced, arms crossed, when the pope urged us all to defend human life,” Cruz said.

#### ‘PRINCIPLES, NOT SPECIFIC POLICIES’

On his first visit to the United States, Francis was expected to express views that would be more favorable to Democrats than Republicans.

On Wednesday, he publicly praised President Barack Obama at the White House for his initiatives to reduce air pollution as part of the pope’s push to fight climate change, which the pontiff says disproportionately affects the poor.

Republicans have rejected broad legislation to reduce carbon emissions and a few did so again on Thursday after the speech.

“We can shut down carbon, you go back to the Stone Age, all live in poverty and the world is far worse,” said Republican Senator Bill Cassidy of Louisiana.

But several Republicans, like Representative Paul Ryan, chairman of the powerful Ways and Means Committee in the House and a Catholic, said Francis was “talking principles, not specific policies” on immigration and climate.

“He wasn’t trying to settle a debate. He was trying to open up a dialogue,” Ryan told Reuters. “And that’s what pastors do, and I thought he did it very appropriately.”

Karen Bass, a Democratic representative from California, said the message behind the issues he raised—immigration, poverty and the environment—was that “it’s our responsibility.”

Several lawmakers held out hope that the pope could teach Congress to work better, especially as it faced a government shutdown if it cannot agree on legislation to fund the government by next week.

“Can we put aside some of the nonsense that often goes on here and try to solve the country’s problems and get things done?” asked said Representative Martha McSally, a freshman Republican from Arizona.

Rooney of Florida was skeptical, but mused “Hey, hope springs eternal.”

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## **What Protestant Pastors Think About Pope’s Theology**

Pope Francis is boosting the reputation of the Catholic Church among Protestant pastors in America.

Nearly 4 in 10 say the pope, known for his humility and concern for the poor, has had a positive impact on their opinions of the Catholic Church, LifeWay Research finds. Almost two-thirds view Pope Francis as a genuine Christian and “brother in Christ.”

However, half of Protestant pastors say they do not value Pope Francis’ opinion on matters of theology.

## Changing Views

Lifeway Research asked 1,000 Protestant pastors in America about their views in a phone survey from Sept. 8-21, 2015, shortly before the pontiff's visit to the United States this week.

Pope Francis, who in March 2013 became the first non-European and first Jesuit priest to be named pope, has been outspoken on such issues as welcoming immigrants, shunning materialism and protecting the environment.

For 43 percent of Protestant pastors, Pope Francis has not changed their views of the Catholic Church. However, half say the current pope has affected their opinions—and almost three times as many cite a positive impact (37 percent) as a negative one (14 percent).

“Our sample itself—Protestant pastors—is named after the Protestant Reformation, so they are particularly interesting to survey,” said Ed Stetzer, executive director of Lifeway Research. “And the survey says that this pope does, indeed, have a ‘Francis effect,’ even on a group of people named for protesting the very faith the pope leads.”

Ninety percent of Protestant pastors agree Catholics can be “born-again Christians,” but they are less certain whether Pope Francis is their “brother in Christ.” Sixty-three percent believe he is a genuine Christian, while 22 percent disagree, and 16 percent are unsure.

Evangelical pastors report more skepticism about Pope Francis than their mainline Protestant counterparts. While 80 percent of mainline Protestant pastors believe the pope is a true Christian, only 58 percent of evangelical pastors agree.

“The fact that some pastors don’t see the pope as their ‘brother in Christ’ seems strange to many outside Protestantism and evangelicalism, I imagine,” Stetzer said.

“However, the forerunners of most Protestant pastors—from Luther, to Wesley, to Spurgeon, to many others—certainly did not see the pope as their ‘brother in Christ.’

“Within a few centuries, the pope has gone from anti-Christ to ‘brother in Christ’ for a lot of Protestants.”

Protestant pastors are divided on whether they value Pope Francis’ opinion on theological issues. More than 4 in 10 (42 percent) say they value the pope’s opinion, but 50 percent say they do not. Mainline pastors (57 percent) are more likely than evangelical pastors (36 percent) to say they value Pope Francis’ opinion.

Mainline pastors are also more likely to say Pope Francis has influenced their opinion of the Catholic Church, with 50 percent saying the impact has been positive and 9 percent saying it has been negative. In contrast, 30 percent of evangelical pastors say Pope Francis has boosted their opinion of Catholicism, while 15 percent say their opinion has declined.

Favorable views of Pope Francis are most pronounced among highly educated Protestant pastors and those in the Northeast, the survey finds.

Fifty-one percent of Protestant pastors in the Northeast say Pope Francis improves their opinion of the Catholic Church, compared to 38 percent in the Midwest, 34 percent in the South, and 31 percent in the West. Most Northeastern pastors (53 percent) also say they value the pope’s opinions on theological matters, a view shared by fewer than half of pastors in the Midwest (45 percent), South (39 percent), and West (38 percent).

More than two-thirds of Protestant pastors with a master’s degree or doctorate (69 percent) view Pope Francis as a genuine Christian and brother in Christ, compared to 42 percent of those with a bachelor’s degree or no college

degree.

Those with a master's degree or higher are also significantly more likely to say they value Pope Francis' opinions on theological matters (49 percent) and the pope improves their opinion of the Catholic Church (43 percent). Among those with less formal education, 22 percent value the pope's theological opinion and 18 percent say he has a positive impact on their view of Catholicism.

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## **Pope Francis to Address Atrocities Committed in the 'Name of God and Religion'**

Pope Francis goes to the United Nations on Friday to address global leaders on the need to help refugees fleeing wars and plea for greater attention to the world's poor and downtrodden.

The pope arrived in New York on Thursday night from Washington after urging Congress to help heal many of the nation's divisive wounds such as the current heated political battle over immigration.

A brass band from a Catholic high school greeted his plane with the classic tune "New York, New York," and the pope accepted flowers from the crowd of about 200 at the airport.

Apart from addressing the General Assembly, he will also lead an inter-religious prayer service at the site where al Qaeda militants brought down the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001, killing nearly 3,000 people.

He will also visit a Catholic elementary school in Harlem whose students are mostly immigrants or refugees, parade through Central Park, and say Mass in New York's famed Madison Square Garden.

Two years into his papacy, Francis has won the admiration of many in the United States, with liberals captivated by his focus on meeting the needs of the poor and addressing the excesses of capitalism, while some conservatives have expressed dismay that he has given less emphasis to the Roman Catholic Church's longstanding opposition to abortion and gay marriage.

The 78-year-old leader of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics offered a hint of the issues he would address at the UN's 70th anniversary in a wide-ranging speech to Congress on Thursday.

"Our world is increasingly a place of violent conflict, hatred and brutal atrocities, committed even in the name of God and of religion," Francis said. "Our world is facing a refugee crisis of a magnitude not seen since the Second World War. This presents us with great challenges and many hard decisions."

Hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing years of fighting in the Middle East have attempted to cross into Europe this year, raising tensions within the European Union as member states argue about their obligations to harbor newcomers.

The pope early this month called on every European parish to take in a refugee family, a move that could provide shelter for tens of thousands of families.

#### 'POPELOCK' IN THE BIG CITY

The pope's arrival in New York on Thursday resulted in a heavier security presence throughout midtown Manhattan at a time when police are normally out in force for the United Nations General Assembly, which brings dozens of world leaders

to the city.

The New York Police Department warned that it expected to set up some 37 miles (60 km) of barriers along roadways during Francis' visit. He is the third pope to visit New York City in the last 20 years.

The city's transit agency urged commuters not to drive into Manhattan on Friday and one company advertised \$95 cross-town helicopter rides for people hoping to escape the resulting gridlock.

Juanita Jara, a 58-year-old nanny, said she would be among the crowd at the Madison Square Garden Mass and that she hoped Francis would continue his message of support for immigrants a day after he urged Congress to avoid an attitude of "hostility" to newcomers.

"I am a citizen, but a lot of people suffer separation from the family. I, for a long time, suffered that," said Jara, who emigrated from Paraguay a quarter-century ago. "I hope he pushes that."

The pope is also expected to repeat his plea for governments to take action to stem climate change, a call he made most prominently in "Laudato Si" the first papal encyclical dedicated to the environment, which was published in July.

That document has proven controversial in U.S. politics. Republicans, who in recent decades have embraced popes for their public opposition to abortion and gay marriage, criticizing the paper.

The pope will conclude his U.S. visit on Sunday with an open-air Mass in Philadelphia for 1.5 million people.

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# The Ignorance on the Subject of Tongues is Mind-Boggling

I've included a few of the many public comments from my last blog, Why Do So many Pentecostals and Charismatics Not Speak in Tongues Anymore, to expose the blatant ignorance there still exists in the church and among professing believers today on the subject of tongues.

1. I began the article by mentioning three pioneers of the faith who said that tongues was the making of their ministries, but that mention was met with great irreverence by one individual.

*"John G Lake was a known fake healer who was also a financial huckster. His inability to heal led to [the] death of a girl named Hannah Anderson, and almost crippled another girl who had a fractured thigh.*

*"Oral Roberts: His shameful attempts to get rich off of his "ministry" are well known. Anyone remember him saying God would kill him if people didn't send him 8 million dollars?"*

*"Kenneth Hagin: Spread the Word of Faith heresy and plagiarized Kenyon.*

*"If these people are examples of what comes from speaking in tongues, I think I'll stick with regular English, thanks."*

What can I say? Such disregard and disdain for some of God's choice servants will utterly corrupt any life. It is difficult for me to understand such professing Christians. This is eerily equivalent to the Pharisees and religious leaders calling Jesus a devil and attributing His works to demons

(Matt. 12:24).

2.

*“Tongues? You think it is the be all and end all. But really, it’s just laziness. God doesn’t want mindless drones – otherwise he wouldn’t have given us free will. I mean really – do you honestly believe that God (Who knows everything) would require some random person to babble things they don’t understand in order to save someone? Next time you pray – don’t take the easy way out. Actually talk to your Father.”*

Wow! Just half a Scripture refutes this person’s statements: “For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God...” (1 Cor. 14:2a).

3.

*“Paul said in the Bible that tongues was one of the least of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Yes, I believe some have that gift, but does one have to have it to be more spiritual than those that do have it, or does one have to have that gift to be saved? No, the Bible does not say that.”*

This person missed the entire point of the article. He chose to fixate his thoughts and words on traditions instead of rightly dividing the word of God.

This person makes three errors in his brief statements. First of all, the devotional exercise of praying privately in other tongues is never called a gift in Scripture. The gift is the Holy Spirit, also called the promise of the Father, or the baptism in the Holy Spirit, which is available to every person in every generation (Acts 2:39).

The word gift is never associated with tongues until 1 Cor. 12 when it is called divers kinds of tongues. It is the public ministry gift of tongues that needs to be interpreted for the

edification of the hearers.

Second, the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues is for personal edification which should add to our spirituality in the sense that it makes us more effective witnesses. How many Christians can you name who do not speak in tongues but move in the gifts of the Holy Spirit? Not many. Why? Because they've not received the baptism in the Holy Spirit that Jesus sent.

Third, the gift of the Holy Spirit with tongues is separate from salvation. They are two distinct experiences so we should not confuse the two. Jesus spoke of salvation as a "well of water" (John 4:14), and the baptism in the Holy Spirit as "rivers of living water" (John 7:38). Simple. If these individuals would stop trying to interpret Scripture through their traditionally colored glasses and listen, instead of speak, they would learn something. The problem with many of them is they've been religiously brainwashed instead of New Testament taught.

4. This next person makes the same mistake while adding another statement that increases his confusion:

*"Speaking in tongues is not the only gift of the Holy Spirit. There are many others that are just as important if not more. I would think there would be a practical application of speaking in another language for guests who may not understand the local language quite as well."*

Once again, tongues, as in diverse kinds of tongues, is a gift, which is confused with the simple gift of the baptism in the Spirit with tongues for personal edification. This mix-up is the most common error among those who do not believe this experience is for every Christian.

Second, he confuses the sign at Pentecost, when the tongues they spoke were actual languages the nations at Jerusalem

understood, with the private use of tongues for personal edification. There are different purposes and uses of tongues. Actually, there are at least four uses or purposes of tongues.

1. They are for personal edification (1 Cor. 14:4).
2. They are a gift for public use with interpretation (1 Cor. 14:27).
3. They are a means of prayer and intercession (Rom 8:26-28).
4. They are a sign to the unbeliever when understood in their own language (Acts 2:7-12).

5.

*“Paul said tongues was the least, not the first, yet some people think tongues is the first and a must-have to be holy. I don’t agree, but it is one of the gifts, not a have-to-have, to be right with God and holy.”*

This individual is another who confuses the simple gift of tongues for edification with the public gift that needs an interpretation. But he goes a step further and confuses tongues with holiness. Tongues is not a prerequisite for holiness.

The fruit of holiness is the fruit of the Spirit and every born-again believer has the Spirit within them so that they can produce the fruit of holiness in their lives. The Corinthians were enriched in the gifts (1 Cor. 1:4-7), but Paul said they were yet carnal because there were strife and divisions among them (1 Cor. 3:1-3). This proves that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is not primarily to produce holiness in our lives, but power (Acts 1:8).

6.

*“Tongues are not to be turned on and off by people but given utterance by the Holy Spirit.”*

This next individual seems to imply that speaking in tongues is controlled by the Holy Spirit. This may be true for the public gift of divers tongues that requires an interpretation, but it is not true for the private use of tongues, which a believer receives when he is baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Paul said he could pray or even sing in tongues at will (1 Cor. 14:15).

7. This next person seems to be quite sure of his position and even acts as the expert teacher who wants to give me a Bible lesson.:

*“Bert, your article on tongues is based on cheerleading without a shred of authentication. You rely on stories instead of the Word. I pray in tongues. I have for 40 years. When it wants to come up, I go with (it).”*

We’ve already covered this. He believes you need to wait for a spirit of ecstasy before you can speak in tongues.

*“But I do not ascribe miracles to tongues that are not found in Scripture. When you make tongues a cure-all, you are way out of bounds, encouraging us to live in la-la land.”*

A thorough study of Romans 8:26-28 in the Greek will shed much light on how praying with groanings, which includes tongues, is indeed connected to miracles of healing and salvation and even spiritual growth and gives birth to such.

*“Consider this: for all the praying in tongues that Pentecostals and Charismatics (PCs) have done over the eons, it has not stopped America from sliding into the muck of immorality and godlessness. America as a nation has gone to*

*hell in a hand-basket while PCs prayed in tongues, believing it is a cure-all for all of our problems. The Church has seen a great falling away from the Word while we prayed in tongues. You must stick with Scripture, Bert, when you speak of the benefits of tongues, or you're teaching error."*

I concur with the reverse of what this person is stating—that the very reason America is in bad shape is because the church has done too much mental praying in English and not enough spiritual praying in other tongues.

*"Please consider this: when you make tongues the answer for everything, you become part of why so many leave tongues alone. Tongues were given to spread the Gospel to those speaking foreign languages. They were meant to awe those who heard it, as they knew those speaking didn't know their language. It was a sign given by God to them to persuade them to believe in Jesus, but PCs have made [tongues into] getting people healed. That's nonsense.*

The nonsense here is that this Christian takes the preposterous position that tongues is for preaching in other languages, but we have already seen that this is only one use or purpose of tongues and is subject to the will of the Spirit. The main use of tongues is for personal edification and prayer.

*"You have no scripture for that. You're teaching us to live by what we think, not by the Word. The only reason I pray in tongues is because it sometimes wants to come up, if I don't know how to pray, so I let it fly, but since I cannot know what I am saying, I cannot put faith in my tongues to fix the problems at hand. It is the prayer of faith in Jesus that saves the sick, and tongues cannot be prayed in faith, believing for healing, as you know not what you say. Stick with scripture, Bert, so those who read you will not live by illusions and fantasies."*

What else can be said? This individual is all muddled up and tangled up in seeing tongues from only one angle. I never said that tongues will fix all our problems, but it will sure fix many of our problems because you will be dealing with life's issues from a place of personal edification and revelation. Speaking in tongues does not give you faith for everything, but it stimulates the faith you already have from the Word (Jude 19-20). My advice to this commentator is that he needs to learn the Scriptures.

8.

*“Tongues were given as a ministry tool but we made it a private prayer language and changed it from a true language to praying in English syllables, calling it a language of the heart. Where do we find scripture for that?”*

The same error keeps being repeated. Can you see that? Several of these believers are not distinguishing the difference between the private and public use of tongues. It is a ministry tool and it is also a private prayer language.

“For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. For no one understands him, although in the spirit, he speaks mysteries” (1 Cor. 14:2).

These many comments to my last *Charisma* blog revealed again to me that ministers need to teach more on the topic of tongues so that believers can exercise their faith in their personal use of it. There is too much confusion in this area. We need the light of the Scriptures to bring clarity and understanding.

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# Why Do Christians Compete With One Another for Position?

When I lived in Malaysia, I was given the opportunity to go to a conference in Bangkok, Thailand. While there we rode a tuk tuk, which is a Thai taxi, down to the plaza where they were selling anything and everything you could think of. With the Thai Baht being 36 to 1 against the U.S. dollar, we felt like millionaires in that place with our minimal money. While there, I found a T-shirt that I liked and it said 'SAME SAME' on the front and 'BUT DIFFERENT' on the back.

Little did I know how true these words were in so many areas of life. As I was blessed to travel to a variety of international cities, like Bali, Indonesia; Singapore; Phuket, Thailand; and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, I came to realize that all cities, cultures and even people are same same, but different.

One of the challenges Christians around the world face is competition in the body of the Christ. People are competing for pulpits, positions and people. We measure success by the size of our church, the title we carry, the amount of money in our bank account or the places we have been and experiences we have had.

Whether in one of the large churches in Nigeria or small house churches in China, believers are battling the same voices that seek to put them in competition with one another, rather than in complimenting each other. It is same same, but different in the church just like in the world. But this should not be, as believers in Jesus Christ, we are to be the light of the world, not the echo of the darkness.

Mark 10:45 says, "For the Son of Man did not come to be

served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

Every human being that is called by the name of Jesus Christ is the same, we have the same calling, we carry the same value, we are all called to be servants, but we are different in our function. There is only one calling for a believer and that is to be a servant, but there are a variety of functions that this calling operates out of. In the kingdom of God, there is no hierarchy, no competition, because we are all servants of the Most High God and each other.

Jesus' calling was to be a servant, but His function was to heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out demons, and die for the sins of the world. Even though His function changed throughout His life from carpenter's assistant to Rabbi, His calling as a servant never did. That is why John 13 says that Jesus, knowing who He was, took a towel and began to wash His disciple's feet. He knew He was called to be a servant, so whatever function He did had no relevance to His value.

Every person has the same value in the eyes of God, He values us as servants, sons, daughters, and no one has more value than another to God, so where does the challenge arise? The challenge comes because we as people place differing values on differing functions.

We have been taught that the function of apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher, evangelist, president, pope or CEO has more value than that of dishwasher, domestic engineer, street sweeper, or janitor. We decide what functions have what value and so we jockey for position, we speak of promotions, and we have an identity crisis when our function changes, because we see value in function. But God only places value on calling, the calling to be a servant.

If you think about it, every function is just a different way of being a servant. We could end the battle of pride, envy,

jealousy and jockeying for position if we realized we all have the same calling, the same value, but different functions and responsibilities.

Galatians 5:25-26 (VOICE) says, “Now since we have chosen to walk with the Spirit, let’s keep in perfect sync with God’s Spirit. This will happen when we set aside our self-interests and work together to create true community instead of a culture consumed by provocation, pride and envy.”

We are the same same, but different.

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## **Hillary’s Private Server Gave This ‘Opportunity’ to Foreign Spies**

It would present an “opportunity” for spy agencies if the foreign minister of Russia or Iran were to use a private email

server for official business, the chief of the U.S. National Security Agency said on Thursday.

The comments by Admiral Mike Rogers were in response to questions during a U.S. Senate hearing about former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's use of a private server for email.

"From a foreign intelligence perspective, that represents opportunity," Rogers told senators.

The server has become an issue in Clinton's campaign for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination. She has apologized for her use of the equipment.

During a hearing on the NSA, Republican Senator Tom Cotton asked Rogers a series of questions related to Clinton's use of a private email server at her home for communications as secretary of state.

Rogers said he did not want to be dragged into the issue, but Cotton said he wanted the NSA director's "professional opinion."

Cotton asked whether Rogers considered the communications of top advisers to the president, even those that are unclassified, a top priority for foreign spy agencies.

"Yes," Rogers responded.

(Reporting by Patricia Zengerle; Editing by Andrew Hay)

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# Are Republicans Giving Up Defunding Planned Parenthood to Avoid a Shutdown?

Republican leaders in the U.S. Congress on Thursday began advancing bills urgently needed to avoid federal agency shutdowns on Oct. 1 while navigating conservatives' demands to punish Planned Parenthood over an abortion controversy.

The Senate defeated Republican efforts to use a funding extension bill to cut off money to Planned Parenthood, clearing the way for a version without that provision that extends all previous funding through Dec. 11.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky has set the first procedural vote on that measure for Monday, two days before the federal fiscal year ends on Sept. 30.

House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner, meanwhile, laid out similar options in a closed-door meeting with Republican conservatives, who oppose any spending bill allowing federal funds to go to Planned Parenthood amid allegations that it improperly sold tissue harvested from aborted fetuses.

The group has denied any wrongdoing.

Lawmakers leaving the meeting declined to say whether Boehner would defy their demands and hold a vote on a "clean" funding bill.

House Republican leadership aides said that the Ohio congressman is considering alternatives, including a separate Planned Parenthood defunding bill using special procedures to ease passage through both chambers of Congress. President Barack Obama would likely veto it.

While no final decisions were made, Representative Steve

Scalise of Louisiana, a member of the House Republican leadership, told reporters: "We're going to keep attacking this [abortion] on many fronts."

He said possibilities included bills for a moratorium on Planned Parenthood funds and effectively banning late-term abortions. House Republicans will discuss the plans again on Friday morning.

Before Thursday's Senate vote, the White House warned that Obama would veto legislation to continue funding the government if it strips away federal money for Planned Parenthood, setting up the showdown with anti-abortion advocates.

For weeks, many Republicans have vowed to punish the organization following the release of secretly taped videos in which Planned Parenthood officials discussed harvesting tissue from aborted fetuses for medical research. The group receives over \$500 million in government funds annually for non-abortion activities.

Republican aides also said lawmakers were considering ramping up congressional investigations of Planned Parenthood.

The effort to defund Planned Parenthood is also being waged in states. On Thursday, the Republican-led Wisconsin Assembly approved a bill banning the state from using federal family planning money from going to Planned Parenthood and other organizations that perform abortions.

The bill needs state Senate approval and Governor Scott Walker's signature before becoming law.

(Reporting by Richard Cowan, Susan Cornwell, Susan Heavey and Brendan O'Brien in Milwaukee.; Editing by Doina Chiacu and Jonathan Oatis)

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# **There Are Indications That a Major Financial Event in Germany Could Be Imminent**

Is something about to happen in Germany that will shake the entire world? According to disturbing new intel that I have received, a major financial event in Germany could be imminent.

Now when I say imminent, I do not mean to suggest that it will happen tomorrow. But I do believe that we have entered a season of time when another “Lehman Brothers moment” may occur. Most observers tend to regard Germany as the strong hub that is holding the rest of Europe together economically, but the truth is that serious trouble is brewing under the surface.

As I write this, the German DAX stock index is down close to 20 percent from the all-time high that was set back in April, and there are lots of signs of turmoil at Germany’s largest bank. There are very few banks in the world that are more prestigious or more influential than Deutsche Bank, and it has been making headlines for all of the wrong reasons recently.

Just like we saw with Lehman Brothers, banks that are “too big to fail” don’t suddenly collapse overnight. The truth is that there are always warning signs in advance if you look closely enough.

In early 2014, shares of Deutsche Bank were trading above 50 dollars a share. Since that time, they have fallen by more than 40 percent, and they are now trading below 29 dollars a share.

It is common knowledge that the corporate culture at Deutsche Bank is deeply corrupt, and the bank has been exceedingly reckless in recent years.

If you are exceedingly reckless and you win all the time, that is OK. Unfortunately for Deutsche Bank, they have increasingly been on the losing end of things.

Prior to the “sudden collapse” of Lehman Brothers on Sept. 15, 2008, there had been media reports of mass layoffs at the firm. To give you just a couple of examples, CNBC reported on this on March 10, 2008, and the *New York Times* reported on this on August 28, 2008.

When big banks start getting into serious trouble, this is what they do. They start getting rid of staff. That is why the massive job cuts that Deutsche Bank just announced are so troubling:

*Deutsche Bank aims to cut roughly 23,000 jobs, or about one quarter of total staff, through layoffs mainly in technology activities and by spinning off its PostBank division, financial sources said on Monday.*

*That would bring the group's workforce down to around 75,000 full-time positions under a reorganization being finalised by new Chief Executive John Cryan, who took control of Germany's biggest bank in July with the promise to cut costs.*

*Cryan presented preliminary details of the plan to members of the supervisory board at the weekend. A spokesman for the bank declined comment.*

Deutsche Bank has also been facing mounting legal troubles. The following is a brief excerpt from a recent Zero Hedge article:

*The bank, which has paid out more than \$9 billion over the past three years alone to settle legacy litigation, has*

***become something of a poster child for corrupt corporate culture.***

*In April, Deutsche settled rate rigging charges with the DoJ for \$2.5 billion (or about \$25,474 per employee) and subsequently paid \$55 million to the SEC (an agency that's been run by former Deutsche Bank employees and their close associates for years) in connection with allegations it deliberately mismarked its crisis-era LSS book to the tune of at least \$5 billion.*

*But it was out of the frying pan and into the fire so to speak, because early last month, the DoJ announced it would seek to extract a fresh round of MBS-related settlements from banks that knowingly packaged and sold shoddy CDOs in the lead up to the crisis. JP Morgan, Bank of America, and Citi settled MBS probes when the DoJ was operating under the incomparable (and we mean that in a derisive way) Eric Holder but now, emboldened by her pyrrhic victory over Wall Street's FX manipulators, new Attorney General Loretta Lynch is set to go after Barclays PLC, Credit Suisse Group AG, Deutsche Bank AG, HSBC Holdings PLC, Royal Bank of Scotland Group PLC, UBS AG and Wells Fargo & Co.*

Of course the legal troubles are just the tip of the iceberg of what has been going on over at Deutsche Bank over the past couple of years. The following is a pretty good timeline of some of the major events that have hit Deutsche Bank since the beginning of last year. It comes from a *NotQuant* article that was published back in June entitled "Is Deutsche Bank the next Lehman?":

- **In April of 2014**, Deutsche Bank was forced to raise an additional 1.5 Billion of Tier 1 capital to support its capital structure. *Why?*
- **1 month later** in May of 2014, the scramble for liquidity continued as DB announced the selling of 8 billion euros

worth of stock—at up to a 30 percent discount. *Why again?* It was a move which raised eyebrows across the financial media. The calm outward image of Deutsche Bank did not seem to reflect their rushed efforts to raise liquidity. Something was decidedly rotten behind the curtain.

- **Fast forwarding to March of this year:** Deutsche Bank fails the banking industry's "stress tests" and is given a stern warning to shore up it's [sic] capital structure.
- **In April,** Deutsche Bank confirms its agreement to a joint settlement with the US and UK regarding the manipulation of LIBOR. The bank is saddled with a massive \$2.1 billion payment to the DOJ. (*Still, a small fraction of their winnings from the crime*).
- **In May,** one of Deutsche Bank's CEOs, Anshu Jain is given an enormous amount of *new authority* by the board of directors. We guess that this is a "crisis move." In times of crisis the power of the executive is often increased.
- **June 5:** Greece misses its payment to the IMF. The risk of default across all of its debt is now considered acute. This has massive implications for Deutsche Bank.
- **June 6/7:** (A Saturday/Sunday, and *immediately following* Greece's missed payment to the IMF) Deutsche Bank's two CEO's announce their surprise departure from the company. (Just one month after Jain is given his new expanded powers). Anshu Jain will step down first at the end of June. Jürgen Fitschen will step down next May.
- **June 9:** S&P lowers the rating of Deutsche Bank to BBB+ Just three notches above "junk". (Incidentally, BBB+ is even lower than Lehman's downgrade—which preceded its collapse by just 3 months)

Are you starting to get the picture? These are not signs of a healthy bank.

What makes things even worse is how recklessly Deutsche Bank has been behaving. At one point, it was estimated that Deutsche Bank had a staggering 75 trillion dollars worth of exposure to derivatives. Keep in mind that German GDP for an entire year is only about 4 trillion dollars. So when Deutsche Bank finally collapses, there won't be enough money in Europe (or anywhere else for that matter) to clean up the mess. This is a perfect example of why I am constantly hammering on the danger of these "weapons of financial mass destruction".

If Deutsche Bank were to totally collapse, it would be a financial disaster far worse than Lehman Brothers. It would literally take down the entire European financial system and cause global financial panic on a scale that none of us have ever seen before.

On a personal note, I apologize for not posting anything last week. I traveled to two very important conferences and was living out of a suitcase for about eight days.

There has been a bit of a lull in the action over the past couple of weeks, but I expect that to end very shortly. I believe that the rest of 2015 is going to be incredibly chaotic, and we are going to see some things happen that most people could not even conceive of right now.

In the days that are directly ahead, I encourage people to keep a close eye on both Germany and Japan.

Big things are about to happen, and millions are about to be totally shaken out of their complacency.

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# Chipping Away at America's Foundation

Frito-Lay, the snack food division owned by parent company PepsiCo, recently announced a partnership with the "It Gets Better" project, a 501(c)3 nonprofit LGBT advocacy group founded by anti-Christian bully Dan Savage.

How can a potato or corn chip give support to a political or cultural cause? Good question. As a symbolic act of solidarity with sexual anarchy, Frito-Lay will offer rainbow colored Doritos for a limited time, and will send the proceeds to It Gets Better.

Frito-Lay's announcement is not a shock. In June, they joined in with many other corporations in America and reveled in the pro-homosexual marriage edict handed down by the Supreme Court.

This Madison Avenue maneuvering by Frito-Lay to capitalize on and exalt homosexual acceptance in America fuels a rebellion against God's created order for life. Sexual sin, including the sin of homosexuality, seeks gratification in the denial of God's order. Sinful acts have rebellion against God for their root, but the fruit from that tree will never satisfy the soul. God equates rebellion with witchcraft, "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry" (1 Samuel 15:23).

Because virtue is a key component of freedom, Frito-Lay positions itself at the forefront of undermining liberty in America. The snack maker has become an apostle for anarchy. As one Bible scholar wrote, "Widespread, systemic violations of law brings on anarchy, both as its natural consequence and as its fitting punishment, and with anarchy comes an oppressive multiplicity of rulers and factions."

Dan Savage has a spiritual problem. And, like me, he needs Jesus Christ.

Take three minutes to watch Mr. Savage spew his rage at high schoolers in 2012. Then, take three minutes to pray for him.

Mr. Savage is the distinct outcome of a decadent, godless society ruined (and now ruled) by secularists. Like a rotten apple, Savage sours his realm with vice. Carcinogenic Secularism has reached every vestige and segment of society: government, the bureaucracy, the courts, public education, universities, media, and Hollywood. The Supreme Court's June edit legalizing homosexual marriage, *Obergefell v. Hodges*, was not "harmless triviality but rather that perversion of truth which makes good evil and evil good (Isaiah 5:20)."

America's only hope is a spiritual resurrection. What St. Augustine prayed in the 5<sup>th</sup> century should be on the lips of 21st century Christians today: "Revive thy Church, O Lord, beginning with me."

### **What Do We Do?**

We are asking each of the 100,000 American Renewal Project pastors to hold weekly prayer services—led by the senior pastor—asking God for mercy for what we have allowed to a once Christian nation.

As we begin to reestablish prayer in America, Christ's disciples may expect an increase in wickedness as we prepare to return our nation to a Biblically-based culture. Men and women of Issachar (1 Chronicles 12:32) must pick up the shield of faith, for nothing else can quench Satan's fiery darts.

Thankfully, we have an Advocate:

*"I called to the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and I was delivered from my enemies. The waves of death engulfed me, the currents of chaos overwhelmed me. In my distress I called*

*to the Lord; I cried out to my God. From his heavenly temple he heard my voice; he listened to my cry for help. The earth heaved and shook; the roots of the mountains trembled; they heaved because he was angry” (Psalm 18:3-4; 6-7).*

I close with the words of the late Bible teacher A.W. Pink as he explains those verses:

*David recalls pathetically the past experiences when, like an animal caught in the nets, those who hunted him so relentlessly were ready to close in upon and seize their prey. “In his distress,” he says, “I called upon the Lord and cried unto my God” (v. 4). Though it was but the call of one weak solitary voice, unheard on earth, it reached Heaven, and the answer shook all creation: “He heard my voice out of His the earth shook and trembled” (vv. 6, 7, etc.). One saint in his extremity put in motion the mighty powers of Omnipotence: overwhelming is the contrast between cause and effect. Wonderful as the greatness, equally marvelous is the swiftness of the answer: “Then the earth shook.”“*

We need a Gideon or Rahab the Harlot to stand.

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# Obama May Not Be the Antichrist but Is He the First Muslim President?

Jeb Bush boldly declared that President Barack Obama is a Christian. Mike Huckabee isn't convinced.

In fact, Huckabee went so far as to suggest that the president "pretends to be" a Christian.

"I'm less concerned about what faith a person has. I'm more concerned about the authenticity of their faith and how that plays out in their policies," the Republican presidential Candidate told NewsmaxTV.

"I'm also concerned about a guy that believes he's a Christian and pretends to be and then says he is but does things that makes it very difficult for people to practice their Christian faith," Huckabee said. "I'm disappointed if a person who says, 'I'm a Christian,' but you invite the pope into your home and then you invite a whole bunch of people who are at odds with the Catholic Church policy. There's something very unseemly about that."

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Huckabee is not the only one who questions Obama's Christianity. Twenty-nine percent of respondents in a CNN/ORC poll believe he is a Muslim, including 43 percent of Republicans. I'm surprised that number isn't higher, given he publicly spoke to ABC's George Stephanopoulos about his "Muslim faith."

If you type "is Obama a Muslim" into Google, you get over 126 million results. If you type "proof Obama is a Muslim" into

Google, you get 45.7 million results—that's a lot of "proof." There is plenty to cause one to question his profession of Christ. I don't have room to recount them all here, but here are a few:

In his address to the United Nations General Assembly on September 25, 2012, Obama said that, "The future must not belong to those who slander the prophet of Islam."

Obama in prepared remarks said, "The United States has been enriched by Muslim Americans. Many other Americans have Muslims in their families or have lived in a Muslim-majority country—I know, because I am one of them."

In prepared remarks in April 2012, Obama referred to Christ as "a" Son of God rather than as "the" only begotten Son of God: "And for me, and I'm sure for some of you, it's also a chance to remember the tremendous sacrifice that led up to that day, and all that Christ endured—not just as a Son of God, but as a human being."

The list of these types of statements—not to mention bowing to a Saudi king, the fact that his wife does not travel with him to Muslim nations because Sharia law demands Muslim women cover their heads, his love for the Muslim call to prayer and so on—seems to contradict the Christian faith. And that's putting it mildly.

There's not nearly as much evidence that he's a Christian. (In fact, some would argue that there is more evidence he's the antichrist.) Our president rarely goes to church. He makes policy decisions that fly in the face of Christ—including his pro-abortion, pro-gay stances. And he has seemingly done everything in his power to set the stage for the persecution of Christians in the United States.

So is President Obama a Christian or not? I cannot judge someone's heart but I can judge fruit. There is no fruit of a life surrendered to Christ and far more evidence that he

subscribes to the Prophet Mohammed's teachings. But even then, there are contradictions.

Think about it for a minute. Good Muslims don't smoke and drink, like Obama does. And Islam not only stands against homosexuality—Sharia law calls for gays to be stoned—yet Obama celebrated the Supreme Court's gay marriage ruling by shining a rainbow on the White House.

So is Obama the antichrist? Is our Commander-in-Chief a Christian? Is he the first Muslim president? The debate continues.