

Top of the Week: Pro Football Legend Jim Kelly Boldly Expresses His Faith Through Baptism

Following are snippets of the top stories posted over the past week on . We encourage you to visit the links to read the stories in full.

Pro Football Legend Jim Kelly Boldly Expresses His Faith Through Baptism

In a powerful display of his unwavering faith, Pro Football Hall of Fame quarterback Jim Kelly made headlines this summer as he took a bold step, getting baptized.

This significant moment was shared with the world through a video and photos posted on Instagram by Jim's wife, Jill. The imagery captured Kelly in a red shirt bearing the words, "God's real." In a poignant exchange during the baptism, he was asked a simple yet profound question while immersed in the water, "Do you love Jesus?" To which he emphatically responded, "Yes I do!"

Jill, in the caption of her post, expressed her deep belief, saying, "Jim's t-shirt says, 'God's Real.' He is! I have witnessed God at work in this man's life for over 30 years...and I can tell you that God isn't just REAL, He is faithful, trustworthy, kind, loving, compassionate, powerful, gracious, GOOD, merciful, forgiving...and so so much MORE. He is immeasurably MORE than we can imagine! He is EVERYTHING!"

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Christian UFC Fighter Holds Bible High While Calling Out Satan in the Octagon

In a heart-pounding showdown at UFC Vegas 79, Christian fighter Bryce “Thug Nasty” Mitchell displayed not only his remarkable skills but also his unwavering faith and compassion. The co-headlining Men’s Featherweight bout pitted Mitchell against the formidable Dan Ige, and their encounter left spectators in awe.

Mitchell’s journey to this victorious moment was marked by a setback—a career-first loss in December. However, he returned to the Octagon with newfound determination and a resolute spirit. After three grueling rounds of grappling, Mitchell, on the verge of his 29th birthday, clinched the victory by unanimous decision.

Bryce Mitchell doing Bryce Mitchell his inner Braveheart, holding his Bible in the air while screaming “FREEDOM!!!” #UFCVegas79

– InsideFighting (@InsideFighting_) September 24, 2023

How to Identify and Separate False Prophets

As the days grow spiritually darker across the world, as they must for the return of Jesus Christ to take place, false prophets and teachers are laying claim to deceived souls at a record pace.

With the power of social media at their fingertips, millions are being lulled into a false sense of spiritual community with a figure that is leading them down death’s path.

Recently, Pastor Greg Locke of Global Vision Bible Church in Mount Juliet, Tennessee, shared a passionately personal story of having to unhitch himself, and the church, from a friend

who has been deceived by one of these false prophets.

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Jonathan Cahn's Prophetic Message Resonating 3 Years After 'The Return'

Three years have passed since Rabbi Jonathan Cahn's powerful prophetic message resounded on the National Mall during "The Return: National and Global Day of Prayer and Repentance." The message he delivered on Sept. 26, 2020, drawing correlations between ancient Scripture and present circumstances, still reverberates.

As the event commenced with the resounding of trumpets and shofars, echoing the biblical solemn assembly described in Joel 2:15, Cahn, the author of the No. 1 bestseller "The Josiah Manifesto," urged the assembled crowd to reflect on the grievous sins of our nation and the world. He emphasized how, similar to the people of ancient Israel, we have strayed from God, replacing Him with idols such as prosperity, comfort and immorality.

"We too have become our own gods," Cahn lamented.

Guidelines for Ministering Deliverance, Part 1

Praying for deliverance is something that must be done with encouragement, acceptance and love.

To deliver someone, demons must be driven away and access doors closed to prevent the return of the evil spirits. Access doors can be opened by hurts, sins and unforgiveness and will remain open if these feelings are not dealt with in a hopeful, loving way.

The Person Is The Priority

When we minister deliverance, we are ministering to a person,

not a demon. As you minister, counsel the person in order to bring forth the truth. Minister quietly, avoiding flamboyant demonstrations of warfare. Satan loves to make a scene and will try to humiliate and torment in the midst of deliverance. We want to rob him of every opportunity to do so. Bottari teaches: "Deliverance is not about shouting! It is focused on discovering what it is that is giving the enemy authority to remain in a person's life."

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Apostasy in the Church? What to Look Out For

Is America experiencing apostasy in the church? And if so, how can we be sure of the signs of what we're seeing?

One of the key tenets of the Christian life is following Jesus whole-heartedly as the way and the truth and the life. However, many today who consider themselves Christians believe this stance is a harmful one and that because God loves, there are no repercussions of sin. However, this is contradictory to the Word of God which states: "Those who I love, I rebuke and discipline," (Rev. 3:19).

One example of this type of apostasy in the church that has gone viral is the example of Cathedral of Hope. In this "church," the rainbow colors were paraded as drag queen nuns read their own creed.

On their website, a statement about sexuality and faith can be found, which reads: "Cathedral of Hope is an Open and

Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. We practice extravagant welcome, and many lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender folk have found their spiritual home here.”

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The problem with this statement isn't that people are welcome into the church. It is the job of the church to provide for the broken, the sick and the lost. The problem is that the sin is not only welcomed, but celebrated. The point of coming to Christ isn't to be affirmed in our sins, but to allow Him to transform us.

That's why Ephesians 4:20-24 tells us that we need to take off the former way of life and be renewed in our mind. To live a godly life, we must stay focused on the One who can completely transform us: Jesus.

Instead of focusing on the transformative life in Christ, Cathedral of Hope is sharing that sin is the best way of life, and that there is nothing greater than what the world has to offer. However, Gender Dysphoria, fear, confusion and anxiety are issues many people struggle with. As Christians, it's not our job to affirm people in brokenness and leave them without hope when we have discovered the ultimate hope in our Savior, Jesus Christ.

So, how can we tell if a church is really a place where the Lord's Word is proclaimed?

The first thing to do is to look at what the church believes. Are there scriptural references that align with sound doctrine? Are the messages more appealing to the flesh, or do they bring conviction and clarity through the Holy Spirit?

The second thing to ask is if the gospel is the main focus of the church. Does the church uphold the name of Jesus Christ as

Lord, or do they get offended when He is proclaimed as the only path to heaven? Doctrinally sound churches will behold Christ with the utmost respect and esteem Him as the One most holy. Others will not.

Revelation 3:14-16 reads: "The Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of creation of God, says these things: I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spit you out of My mouth."

Do not find yourself caught up in a church full of lukewarm believers. The last thing anyone wants to do is find themselves being spit out by God. If you're unsure of a church you've been attending or want to attend, do the research you can, ask questions and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit through God's Word and prayer. Just because the world around us is falling for the hypocrisy doesn't mean that we have to. Instead, we can stand firmly and boldly for the gospel in all circumstances. {eoa}

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Abby Trivett is a marketing copywriter and coordinator for Charisma Media.

Is David Pakman Right About America Trending More to the

Left?

In a recent interview with long-time conservative radio host Dennis Prager, David Pakman, the popular, left-wing podcaster and TV host, asked Prager about the state of the nation. From Pakman's perspective, we are in the midst of "a 30, 40-year trend of moving to the left culturally."

This prompted him to ask Prager, "Do you feel as though this is a lost cause and the country has clearly gone in a different direction?" Was there anything, Pakman wondered, that might buck this trend and turn the tide?

Prager, never one to pull punches, answered plainly, "There's no question we're moving to the left culturally. The first thing people have to do is recognize reality."

"You may or may not be happy with it," Prager observed, "but you cannot deny reality."

Yes, in many ways, America has not just moved left in recent decades. It has lurched and even jumped left, much of this the outgrowth of the counterculture revolution of the 1960s.

Just think of the subtitle to Christopher Rufo's new book "America's Cultural Revolution: How the Radical Left Conquered Everything." "Everything" is quite a big word.

Or think of the Democratic Party of Bill Clinton compared to the Democratic Party today.

Or of the makeup of university faculty from the 1960s until our day.

Or of the dramatic shift in attitudes concerning LGBT issues and people from just 1990 until today.

There's no question we have moved far to the left in many ways.

As Pakman pointed out, based on representative polling data, “Record support for same sex marriage today. Record number of people saying I’m moving away from religion. Highest in the Roe v Wade era of the country says abortion should be legal in most cases. Sixty percent says we haven’t gone far enough on making trans-people feel welcome.”

So, is the case closed? Not so fast. There are actually numerous signs pointing in the opposite direction. A new, conservative-based, counterculture revolution is on the rise.

Let’s consider some other polling and/or anecdotal data. (The question is not whether you believe what is happening is good or bad. The question is whether these things are really happening.)

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A June 2023 article states that, “Although the LGBT community can count on a lot of public and political sympathy, support for this minority group seems to be declining.”

Based on polling data from 30 mostly Western countries, the article noted that, “People are generally more positive about gay couples raising children, but similar patterns can be discerned there too. . . . Over the past two years, support for this practice received significantly less support in countries such as the United States, the Netherlands and Sweden.”

On December 29, 2022, NBC News ran this ominous headline: “2021 was supposed to be the ‘worst year’ for LGBTQ rights—then came 2022. Even with the enactment of a historic same-sex marriage bill, advocates describe a harrowing year for LGBTQ Americans.”

And on June 6, 2023, CNN announced, “Human Rights Campaign

declares a national state of emergency for LGBTQ+ people.”

Certainly, for David Pakman and many other Americans, this is terrible news, yet another sign of homophobic, transphobic bigotry.

I am simply pointing out that there *is* a serious pushback against LGBTQ activism (or, “rights,” depending on one’s perspective), with much of it a reaction to radical trans activism.

Just think of the Budweiser and Target boycotts. Even non-Christian voices like Joe Rogan were saying, “This is a bridge too far.”

It’s the same with the celebration of drag and drag queens. Many Americans who said yes to “love is love” and who affirmed same-sex couples said, “We didn’t sign up for this.”

That’s why it was no surprise to read in June of last year that, “Americans overwhelmingly oppose transgender athletes in female sports, poll shows. Two-thirds of Americans say transgender girls ‘have a competitive advantage’ over biological girls in youth sports.”

As for the issue of abortion, while opinion polls certainly matter, and while voting trends in the 2022 elections would point to a rise in pro-choice sentiments, Ramesh Ponnuru, in a June 2023 op-ed for the Washington Post, said this: “The torrent of stories about setbacks for pro-lifers has made it oddly easy to lose sight of the most basic point about abortion policy over the last year: The pro-life side is making huge gains. The Supreme Court no longer claims that our most fundamental law requires that the killing of unborn children be treated as a nonevent. In 23 states, legislators have banned abortion after six weeks or earlier; two more have banned it after 12 weeks. (Some of these bans are tied up in court.) In those places that have enacted new laws protecting abortion access, on the other hand, abortion had not been

restricted before; they have for the most part ratified the status quo.”

Is this not major news?

Another factor, largely the result of parents becoming more aware of school curricula during COVID, is that there is a pushback against the leftwing indoctrination of children in the public school system.

Already in June 2021, Yahoo News reported that, “Parents across the country are fighting back against pervasive leftist ideology in schools—with such frequency that opposition to certain aspects of public education is becoming a national movement.”

More broadly, Forbes noted on June 8, 2023, “As hot-button social issues like abortion and transgender rights dominate politics, more Americans—and the highest percentage since 2012—are identifying as socially conservative, according to a Gallup poll released Thursday, marking a shift from a time when Americans were about as likely to say they were socially liberal as conservative.”

Again, there is no denying that America has, in large measure, been leaning further to the left in recent decades. But, as I wrote back in June, “The Cultural Tide Is Continuing to Turn, Just as Predicted.” And with more and more reports of fresh spiritual outpouring across the nation, from college campuses to local churches, the prospect of major spiritual renewal and revival is becoming more real by the day.

Let us seize the moment and turn the tide. {eo}

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The Gospel Coalition's Fight Against Bible Illiteracy and False Teachings

In a world overflowing with information, The Gospel Coalition's new initiative, The Carson Center for Theological Renewal, goes to war against biblical illiteracy and the need to preserve the true teachings of the Bible amidst modern cultural shifts.

Named in honor of TGC co-founder Don Carson, this initiative underscores the importance of holding fast to God's Word in its purest form and passing on a profound understanding of Scripture to future generations.

Collin Hansen, the editor-in-chief of The Gospel Coalition, highlights the pressing need to address biblical illiteracy, not only in Western countries but also in the thriving churches around the world. He recognizes that spiritual revival hinges on a return to the unaltered and divinely-inspired teachings of the Bible. Despite the easy access to the Bible through the internet, many popular resources for studying God's Word are either inadequate or promote false teachings.

The Carson Center's mission is crystal clear: to equip leaders of Bible studies and discussion groups with the tools they need to tackle tough questions while staying true to the Scriptures. They offer resources such as theological journals, academic books and free materials that empower individuals to delve deeply into the Bible, regardless of their formal training.

Looking forward, The Carson Center plans to create a comprehensive digital collection to serve church leaders worldwide. Additionally, it aims to gather and share a wide range of biblical and theological materials while nurturing a select group of fellows who will create resources for the next generation of church teachers.

As the American Bible Society's "State of the Bible 2023" report reveals, young people's engagement with Scripture has steadily declined over the past three years. This concerning trend underscores the urgent need for comprehensive biblical education, particularly for the younger generation.

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Don Carson, in a 2019 interview with The Christian Post, emphasized the importance of instilling the fundamentals of faith through family devotions and prayer from a young age. He stressed the significance of exposing children to quality literature, teaching them the Bible through family devotions and living out a consistent faith as parents.

Furthermore, Carson highlighted the importance of demonstrating compassion for the less fortunate and involving children in missions. This hands-on approach helps young believers witness their parents' commitment to more than just a comfortable suburban lifestyle.

In addition to The Carson Center, The Gospel Coalition has launched the Keller Center for Cultural Apologetics, aimed at helping Christians adapt to a rapidly changing cultural landscape. Inspired by the late TGC co-founder Tim Keller, this initiative seeks to raise and support a new generation of evangelists and apologists who can effectively communicate the unchanging gospel in a dynamic world.

Younger individuals often leave Evangelical churches due to a

lack of guidance in navigating secular narratives and arguments. Tim Keller emphasized the center's role in providing apologetic training, not only for evangelism but also for the formation of strong faith. The hope is that, in the future, initiatives like the Keller Center will help reverse the trend of young people leaving the church, ensuring that more enter its doors than exit.

In a world where biblical truths are continually challenged and diluted, The Carson Center and The Keller Center stand as beacons of unwavering faith, committed to preserving the Word of God and nurturing the faith of generations to come.

Through sound teaching, deep biblical literacy and unswerving devotion to Scriptural truths, these initiatives pave the way for a stronger, more resilient church that can boldly proclaim the gospel in an ever-changing world. {eoa}

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James Lasher is Staff Writer for Charisma Media.

Larry Tomczak's Week in Review: Escaping the Great Falling Away

As pressures continue to intensify in these turbulent times, the Bible warns us that there is going to be a great falling away.

Have you noticed some family and friends who formally served the Lord Jesus with passion but now are deceived having

drifted away from the truth? It breaks my heart as I pray for them and try my best to help them turn around and get back on track.

“Now the Spirit clearly says that in the last times some will depart from the faith...” (1 Tim.4:1).

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“Do not let anyone deceive you in any way. For that day will not come unless a falling away comes first...” (2 Thess.2:3).

These deceived people then display an unhealthy interest in arguments that result in strife and division (1 Tim.6:3-5).

Are you prepared? Benefit from fresh motivation and watch this compelling video. Please share it with those whom you love.
{eoa}

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Country Legend Toby Keith Leans on Faith and Prayer Amid Cancer Battle

Toby Keith, the 62-year-old country icon, has not only made his mark in the music industry but has also become known for his unwavering faith.

His journey through a recent stomach cancer diagnosis in June

2022 sheds light on how he turned to his faith, prayer and the comfort of God's promises during challenging times.

Keith, the inaugural recipient of the Country Icon Award at the People's Choice Country Awards, opened up about his battle with cancer and the role of faith in his life.

"I lean on my faith and I just pray and lean into it," Keith shared with Fox News Digital. "You gotta' do what you gotta' do, and I don't know how people do it without faith ... that's what I did, it was my rock."

Before receiving his well-deserved award, a touching tribute was played in Keith's honor. Blake Shelton, presenting the Icon Award, expressed his affection for his fellow Oklahoman. The heartfelt moment between the two friends showed the depth of their connection.

Taking the stage, Keith couldn't help but add a touch of humor, remarking, "I bet y'all never thought you would see me in skinny jeans." But beyond the humor, Keith took a moment to express his gratitude. He thanked his family, his devoted fans and most importantly, he thanked God for granting him the strength to be present on that memorable Thursday night.

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Keith's journey with stomach cancer began in the fall of 2021 when he received the diagnosis. In June 2022, he shared the news with his fans, saying, "Last fall I was diagnosed with stomach cancer. I've spent the last 6 months receiving chemo, radiation and surgery. So far, so good. I need time to breathe, recover and relax."

Throughout his career, Toby Keith has not only been a musical powerhouse but also a champion for families facing cancer diagnoses. In 2004, he co-founded Ally's House, a nonprofit

organization dedicated to helping Oklahoma children with cancer and their families. The nonprofit's name honors Allison Webb, the 2-year-old daughter of Scott Webb, an original band member of Keith's, and Webb's wife, Lisa. Tragically, Allison lost her life to kidney cancer before her 3rd birthday in 2003.

Toby Keith's battle with stomach cancer serves as a testament to the power of faith, prayer and the support of loved ones. In times of adversity, he found solace in his unwavering belief and the comforting promises of the Bible. As he continues his journey to recovery, Keith's resilience and faith serve as an inspiration to many facing their own trials and tribulations. {eoa}

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Tim Sheets Prophetic Dream: 'Bears' Are Going to Gasp Their Final Breath

Apostle Tim Sheets says that while God is shaking a number of things and people in this tumultuous world of ours, there is one comforting thought believers should take to heart: We ourselves do not need to be shaken because we are part of a kingdom that's not going to be shaken.

Sheets says he recently had a prophetic dream about the month of October "that we're now going to see God destroy the works of iniquity of the enemy."

"I was in a wilderness, a huge forest," Sheets says. "I heard a bear that was dying. I've hunted bear and I know what that

sounds like. But I heard a bear's death rattle. When a bear is dying, they will roar. It's a fierce kind of roar; it's their last gasp. I heard this, and I followed the sound and I go over and find a dead bear. I dreamed that for three weeks in a row three different times.

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"The prophetic word I'm getting is that in the month of October, there are things of hell—ideologies of Baal—works of iniquity that are going to breathe their last. In other words, they're on their last breath. They are gasping their last and I believe if we pray, things that are bears that are intimidating and coming in fierce against the people of God against our nation ... there are some ideologies, some political things that are on their last breath."

Sheets encouraged believers to get down on their knees, pray diligently and to get bold in their faith to help bring down strongholds that have severely weakened our nation.

"I'm going to declare that and ask you to pray along with me," he says. "I'm going to study that out more and do a sermon on that, but I feel like October is a time when God is going to bring things that are very fierce—deep, iniquitous roots, ideologies, doctrines—that are only their last legs. They are breathing their last if we will pray. I ask you to agree with me and pray—pray in the Holy Ghost if you don't know what to pray—but I'm going to pray these things:

"Lord, I believe we're moving into a time of great strategy for the body of Christ and we've got to hear from You. It is a time when we must rise up and boldly declare our faith; boldly speak what you say, even like this dream with the bears that are dead; to boldly stand and say there are ideologies that are breathing their last. In October, we declare an end to

you. They're going to die. They're going to go away in Jesus' name.

"We speak to those powers of darkness that have exhibited themselves in our nation and we say in October that they end in Jesus' name. Send power to bring them completely down in Jesus' name. ... We declare that October will be a month that sees the passing away of evil programs and strategies. God, we pray that there comes a supernatural release of power that comes against it to take it out, to remove the bears from the scene." {eoa}

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Shawn A. Akers is the online editor at Charisma Media.

College Quarterback Finding Success, Freedom in the Arms of Jesus

Those who have followed Quinn Ewers have seen quite an evolution from last season to this season.

The sophomore Texas Longhorns quarterback once known for his tousled mullet and unfocused persona has transformed into a clean-cut athlete honing his leadership skills—and it's paying off.

Though early in the season, Ewers already has nine touchdowns under his belt. And he's crediting much of his success—and the joy he's found on the gridiron—to his faith in Jesus.

When asked this week what has allowed him to enjoy the game more this season, the rising quarterback said, “Just listening to [God] more and not just focusing on my own ways.”

“God has told me that this game doesn’t define me as a human being, which allows me to play more freely,” he said. “I think really that’s just been the biggest thing for me. ... Just listening to Him more and not just focusing on my own ways and knowing that He has a plan for me and to pursue His truth and to continue to seek His truth.”

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Ewers continued, “I think that’s really been the biggest thing for me and there’s only one way to freedom, and that’s through Jesus Christ, so find Jesus and everything else will be free.”

This is not the first time Ewers has opened up about how his faith has transformed his outlook.

In early September, the 20-year-old athlete pointed to God as the source of his growth.

“God is so good,” he said. “I can’t say that enough—how much God has put me through. He’s made me so strong. I’m so proud of my team, our defense, we balled out. I’m fired up for the rest of the way.”

For the rest of this article, visit our content partners at Faithwire. {eoa}

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