

Minister's Heretical 'Sparkle Creed' Sparks Controversy and Criticism

A Lutheran minister has sparked controversy and captured public attention with a recitation of a heretical "Sparkle Creed" during a recent church service.

Anna Helgen, co-pastor at Edina Community Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, led the congregation in the recitation, which has drawn criticism for its departure from biblical teachings.

In this creed, Helgen proclaimed her belief in a nonbinary God, assigning plural pronouns to the divine. Such a portrayal deviates from the biblical understanding of God's nature and character. The Scriptures clearly refer to God in masculine terms and emphasize the unity and oneness of the divine being (John 1:18, 1 Cor. 8:6).

Helgen's creed also depicts Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as having two fathers and donning a fabulous tunic.

These assertions deviate from the orthodox Christian understanding of Jesus as the only begotten Son of God, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. Scripture affirms Jesus' unique relationship with God the Father, not a shared fatherhood with two individuals (Matt. 26:39, John 1:14). Furthermore, there is no biblical basis for the assertion of a fabulous tunic worn by Jesus; this notion appears to be a product of personal imagination rather than scriptural truth.

Full video here:

– Matt Lamb (@MattLamb22) June 29, 2023

The Sparkle Creed also includes a reference to the rainbow spirit, which is presented as shattering the image of one white light and refracting it into a diverse rainbow.

While diversity is a characteristic of creation, this creed overlooks the biblical significance of the rainbow as a sign of God's covenant with Noah and all humankind. It is concerning that this creed seems to suggest that diversity alone should supersede the importance of God's covenantal promises.

The creed continues with a portrayal of the church as a congregation of everyday saints, rooted in mud and captivated by wonder. While it is true that believers are called to be holy and set apart for God's purposes, the use of language in this creed seems to downplay the unique role of Christ as the Savior and mediator between God and humanity.

The emphasis on creativity and resilience must not overshadow the centrality of Jesus Christ and His redemptive work.

The creed continues with the mantra "love is love is love is love," which reduces the biblical concept of love to a mere repetition of words. The Bible teaches that love is a multifaceted concept, encompassing sacrificial love, selflessness and obedience to God's commandments. It is important to understand and adhere to the biblical principles of love, rather than reducing it to a simplistic slogan (1 John 4:16).

Following Helgen's prayer for various causes, another pastor named Jeff Sartain offered a prayer that further departed from biblical teachings.

But wait, there's more.

– Matt Lamb (@MattLamb22) June 29, 2023

Sartain's prayer portrayed Jesus as living among marginalized groups, specifically mentioning Black trans women and babies born into the care of lesbian women. While it is essential to show compassion and care for all individuals, this portrayal seems to equate personal experiences and identities with the divine presence of Christ.

The Bible affirms that Jesus is present with believers through the Holy Spirit, but it does not endorse the idea that Jesus manifests Himself exclusively in specific social contexts or identities.

The Sparkle Creed and the prayers offered at the ECLC service are reflective of the church's liberal stance, which prioritizes progressive values over adherence to biblical teachings. The church's self-proclaimed mission to make a difference in the world should not come at the expense of compromising the fundamental truths of the Christian faith.

For faithful believers, it is vital to critically examine teachings and practices that deviate from biblical teachings. The apostle Paul admonishes the church in Galatia to "Examine all things. Firmly hold onto what is good" (1 Thess. 5:21). When confronted with teachings that contradict the Word of God, it is a Christian's responsibility to lovingly correct and guide those who have been led astray, following the example set by the apostles in the early church.

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The Coming World Religion

Karl Marx was right when he called religion the opiate of the masses. He discovered the truth that man is incurably driven

to worship something, somewhere. If humans do not bow before the holy and true God, then they will devise their own method, their own system, their own god, and they will worship their own creation.

While the coming world religious system in some ways resembles Christianity, John calls it "Babylon the Great"—a monstrous, ecumenical combination of everything that people consider "spiritual." And the world will buy into it—hook, line and sinker.

Mostly sinker.

Whenever God's people turned from the true and living God, or when any group of people worshiped anything other than God, the Bible consistently labeled it as harlotry.

For example, at one point in Israel's history, God asked Jeremiah, "Have you seen what backsliding Israel has done? She has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there played the harlot" (Jer. 3:6). The wayward people of Israel made it a habit to visit groves of false worship, where out of tree trunks they would carve statues to worship. And so God said, just a few verses later, "So it came to pass, through her casual harlotry, that she defiled the land and committed adultery with stones and trees" (v. 9).

The entire book of Hosea is built upon this metaphor of an unfaithful wife who plays the harlot. Just as Hosea repeatedly tried to reach his wayward wife, so God tried again and again to draw His people back to Himself; and yet Israel was consistently unfaithful to Him. She played the harlot by following after other gods.

I find it interesting that Jesus would choose to use the metaphor of a woman for His church. As the British novelist Mary Elizabeth Braddon asked in the late 1800s, "How are our churches beautified, our sick tended, our poor fed, our children taught and cared for and civilized?"

“Women are the church’s strong rock. As they were the last at the foot of the cross, so they have become first at the altar.”

So here in the book of Revelation 17, we have a deeply unfaithful woman whom an angel calls “the great harlot.” She represents a religious system that claims to be joined to God but, like a prostitute, is unfaithful to God. Her sin is spiritual fornication, the sin of turning from God and refusing to remain spiritually faithful to Him.

In Genesis 10, a man by the name of Nimrod is mentioned (vv. 8-9). He is four generations removed from Noah; his grandfather was Ham, the wicked son of Noah. After the Flood, God told Noah’s family to multiply and cover the face of the earth. But some of Noah’s descendants, including Nimrod, thought they had a better plan. When they came to a plain in the land of Shinar, they said to one another, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth” (Gen. 11:4). Notice their rebellion: Whereas God had told them to “fill the earth” (Gen. 9:1), they decided to stick together in their city, “lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.” They acted in direct disobedience to a clear, divine command.

These people, led by Nimrod, conceived their city in open rebellion against God. Their whole philosophy was built on the idea of exalting themselves and degrading God. We could say it was the first human city built on the philosophy of secular humanism. They called it Babel, which later became Babylon.

And they didn’t stop with philosophy. They also decided to create a new religious system. They said, “Let us tower whose top is in the heavens.” They recognized their spiritual need, but they sought to fill it with do-it-yourself religion. The tower they decided to build probably took the form of a

ziggurat, a stepped platform with a shrine at the very top. Normally a priest officiated at the shrine, using the signs of the zodiac to try to predict the future for his people.

History tells us that Nimrod had a wife named Semiramis. Before her marriage, she had a son named Tammuz, whom she claimed was not fathered by a man, but rather was conceived when a sunbeam from heaven shone on her belly. And so, she said, she conceived Tammuz, whom she and others declared to be the savior of the world—a virgin-born savior who would overturn the curse of Genesis 3.

There's an ancient story that says one day, Tammuz was gored by a wild boar while playing in a field. He died. For 40 days, Semiramis wept over her son's death. Then he suddenly rose from the dead. So we see that, even way back in the early days of Genesis, Satan was busily creating a false religion. He cleverly concocted a counterfeit faith about a virgin-born savior of the world who died and rose again. As people scattered over the face of the earth (after God put an end to their experiment at Babel), Semiramis and Tammuz began to be worshiped as mother and child. In fact, she later came to be known as "the queen of heaven."

Many ancient cultures worshiped this mother-son pair. In Nineveh, she was called Ishtar. In Phoenicia, they called her Ashtoreth and her son, Baal. In Egypt, she carried the name Isis, while her son was known as Osiris. Later, in Greece, she was called Aphrodite, while he was called Aras. In Rome, her name became Venus, and her son, Cupid. The cult finally ended in Rome, according to Alexander Haslett in his classic work *The Two Babylons*. The cult died out with the empire; but remember, that empire will be revived during the Tribulation.

Why is Mystery Babylon called the mother of harlots? John gives it this name because it has spawned a host of other false religious systems throughout history. That system will reach its peak during the Tribulation. No doubt the final

version will incorporate some elements of the church–Christianity in a perverted and apostate form. Paul the apostle wrote, “The Spirit expressly says in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons” (1 Tim. 4:1).

At the time of the end, this religious harlot will have established a worldwide reign. In Revelation 17:1, the phrase “who sits on many waters” refers to all the people of the earth. This meaning becomes especially clear in verse 15, when an angel tells John, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues.”

We live in an age when the lines of truth are becoming increasingly blurred. It’s become fashionable to refuse to take a dogmatic stand about anything, especially Jesus Christ. And so, people everywhere are drifting from the truth.

I want to exhort you to cling to the truth at all costs.

The world is fast coming to a point of abandoning the truth. Don’t go along with the crowd—stand up for the truth! It might cost you everything. But one day, if you stand fast, you’re going to hear some beautiful words from Jesus’ own lips: “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

This article originally appeared on ALL ISRAEL NEWS, and is reposted with permission.

Pastor Skip Skip Heitzig *is the American founder and senior pastor of Calvary Church, a Calvary Chapel fellowship located in Albuquerque, New Mexico.*

Conservative Commentator Todd Starnes Permanently Banned from YouTube

Conservative commentator and radio talk show host Todd Starnes says YouTube has permanently shut down his account.

In a recent blog post, Starnes explains that he had posted a video of a recent gay pride parade in Seattle. He criticized the event because it featured naked male cyclists “exposing themselves in front of children”.

“Within minutes – my entire YouTube account was terminated. It was the last straw,” he wrote. “YouTube accused me of severe and repeated violations of their community guidelines.”

Starnes provided a message from the media platform that stated: “It’s our job to make sure that YouTube is a safe place for all. If we think a channel severely violates our policies, we take it down to protect other users on the platform – but if you believe we’ve made the wrong call, you can appeal this decision.”

He says he appealed the decision but was denied without explanation.

“YouTube has made a business decision – which is their right,” he explained.

Starnes believes it wasn’t the LGBT parade post that was the biggest problem. He contends YouTube considers his most flagrant violation to be a video he posted of former President Donald Trump. He says the media platform labeled Trump’s remarks misinformation.

And it reportedly wasn’t the first time YouTube had pulled Starnes’ content.

In April, the platform banned a video of Trump reacting to a decision to indict him over the alleged falsification of business records.

“Clearly, they no longer want conservatives to be a part of their community. Or Trump supporters. Or anyone who believes it’s wrong for men to parade around naked in public. Or anyone who holds a view that might offend the progressive fascists who run YouTube these days,” Starnes wrote.

“Honestly, maybe it’s best I got removed from YouTube. I have no interest in being a part of such an intolerant and perverted community,” he added.

CBN News reached out to YouTube for an explanation on why Starnes was canceled, but we did not receive a reply at the time of publication.

To read the full article, visit our content partners at CBN News.

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Ignite Your Life: Walking Out Your Faith, Conquering Fear with Pastor Jack Hibbs and Barry Meguiar

In an age when we’re bombarded with negative news stories on a 24/7 basis, Pastor Jack Hibbs and Barry Meguiar want people to

know they have nothing to fear, because God is greater than fear of the enemy.

Discussing a multitude of subjects such as the success Meguiar and his company enjoyed, to his new book *Ignite Your Life*, the two tackled an area far too many Christians yield to the devil: fear.

The Bible assures believers that God holds ultimate authority, triumphing over all forms of evil. Through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, who conquered Satan through His Resurrection, Christians find solace and confidence.

Guided by the indwelling Holy Spirit, believers receive empowerment and divine protection. Scripture underscores that Satan's power is limited and defeated, overshadowed by God's sovereignty. Furthermore, the Word affirms the constant presence of God, offering unwavering guidance, strength and security.

Here are eight ways Hibbs and Meguiar encourage believers to overcome fear that the devil may send their way:

- 1. Living in alignment with God's purpose is the solution to conquer fear in daily life.** "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28).
- 2. Understanding the Bible as a whole is a necessity for believers, and not simply cherry-picking verses.** "All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- 3. The subtlety of Satan's manipulation of Scripture is a great need for careful interpretation.** "And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of

light" (2 Cor. 11:14).

4. **Wholehearted love for God and embracing His plan are essential prerequisites for cultivating fearlessness.** "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength" (Deut. 6:5).
5. **The focal point of faith is God Himself, not the mere accumulation of faith.** "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He exists and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6).
6. **Resilience in the face of adversity showcases a person's reliance on God.** "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all" (Ps. 34:19).
7. **Unyielding faith and unwavering trust in God's ultimate purpose are sources of enduring joy and profound peace.** "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You" (Isa. 26:3).
8. **A scriptural foundation is essential to live fearlessly and find freedom in God's guidance.** "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Ps. 119:105).

"When you share your faith, your faith explodes along with your prayer life and Bible study. Everything in your life takes on purpose and meaning, and God makes everything in your life work for good," Meguiar says.

"Sharing your faith is everything. I doubt you've ever heard this before, but it's from God's mouth to your ears: Sharing your faith opens the door for you to know God."

James Lasher *is Staff Writer for Charisma Media.*

From Experiment to Global Movement: BibleProject Reshaping Bible Engagement

An animation studio from Portland, Oregon, is making a significant impact for the Gospel by presenting the Bible in a fresh and captivating way.

Two longtime friends, Tim Mackie and Jon Collins, pondered ways to encourage more people to read and comprehend the Bible during their college days. This led to their brainchild, BibleProject, an experiment that began with just two online videos in 2014, shared among their circle of friends.

In less than a decade, BibleProject has grown exponentially, creating over 180 videos, 350 podcast episodes and garnering over 620 million views across 200 countries. With a global subscriber base of over 5 million, the project even offers seminary-level classes, reaching people from all walks of life.

The project's Chief Global Focus and Strategic Relationships Officer, Michael McDonald, reflects on the unforeseen success, stating that their humble endeavor stemmed from a desire to help themselves and their friends engage with the Bible.

As the audience embraced the videos and expressed their desire for more, individuals contributed funds, big and small, allowing the project to expand its reach.

Collins, equipped with his creative talents, and Mackie, armed with his expertise in Hebrew Bible and Jewish studies, combined forces to give birth to BibleProject. Their collaborative efforts involve detailed workflows, including illustrations, animations, writing, storyboarding and

meticulous attention to ensure every line and wording resonates with the intended message.

BibleProject strives to assist those who may only view the Bible as a collection of inspirational quotes to understand how God's Word points to Jesus as the living, breathing Word. It fearlessly tackles the challenging and perplexing passages that many Christians tend to avoid, seeking to provide clarity and understanding.

The impact of BibleProject extends beyond age and cultural boundaries. Testimonies pour in from a range of individuals, from children as young as 10, to octogenarians. They express newfound engagement with the Scriptures, with some older readers marveling at how their perspective on the Bible has been transformed at this stage of their lives.

BibleProject's influence extends internationally, transcending language barriers. Videos are available in 56 languages, making an impact even in the Muslim world. McDonald shares stories of individuals in Tunisia, who, despite being Muslim, stumble upon the Arabic videos, leading them to appreciate the Scriptures and gain fresh insights about Jesus.

What began as a simple experiment aimed at helping a small circle of friends has blossomed into a worldwide movement, enlightening and deepening millions of people's understanding of the Bible.

Collins believes that God is at work, emphasizing the importance of the Bible in people's lives. BibleProject's unique contribution lies in presenting the Bible through the lens of biblical wisdom and recognizing how it all points to Jesus.

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Montagnard Christians at Risk after Anti-Government Violence

Vietnam's ethnic Christians are bracing for potential repercussions as investigations into recent anti-governmental violence unfold.

In the early hours of June 11, armed groups, dressed in camouflage, targeted Ea Tieu and Ea Ktur communes in Kuin District, Dak Lak Province, resulting in the tragic deaths of four policemen, two government officials and three bystanders.

The focus of recent violent episodes has turned toward the ethnic minority tribes, collectively known as Montagnards or "mountain people," as possible perpetrators of the violence. These tribes constitute 80% of Vietnam's 2 million evangelical population, raising concerns regarding any potential involvement of Montagnard Christians in this incident.

The Ministry of Public Security has identified those arrested as "young people who harbored delusion and extreme attitudes and had been incited by ringleaders via the internet."

Official media refrained from magnifying the Christian connection, despite the government's historical labeling of certain ethnic minority churches expressing political grievances as "groups posing as religions." These Christian groups face hurdles in obtaining recognition as legitimate religious entities.

A Facebook video, potentially government propaganda,

implicates Montagnard Christian youth in the attacks. The video, employing aerial footage, showcases well-known church buildings affiliated with the Evangelical Church of Vietnam South (ECVN-S) and the Christian Mission Church (CMC), both legally recognized by the government. The footage portrays police raids on church offices, creating an impression of illicit activities associated with the churches, rather than the raids themselves.

While condemnation of the anti-governmental violence is warranted, it is crucial to acknowledge the deep-seated grievances faced by marginalized Montagnard Christians, particularly concerning land disputes where they consistently find themselves at a disadvantage. Recent tensions have arisen between the government and Montagnard coffee plantation owners due to the confiscation of agricultural land for infrastructure development.

Ethnic minorities in the region have long endured severe limitations on freedom of speech, assembly and religion. Although overt persecution of Christians has somewhat diminished in recent times, it still persists.

In response to the June 11 attack, the government has swiftly deployed overwhelming military and security forces, as it has done in previous similar incidents. While there have been reports of violence spreading and parts of the Central Highlands being under lockdown, these claims have not been independently confirmed.

As of June 20, Radio Free Asia reported over 70 arrests in connection with the violence. Regardless of their involvement, these individuals will undoubtedly face severe consequences.

In December 2022, the United States State Department placed Vietnam on the Special Watch List of religious freedom violators. Since then, the country has embarked on an extensive campaign to address this classification, as a

significant reason for the sanction was Vietnam's strict religious freedom restrictions on independent Montagnard churches seeking more autonomy.

The pastoral challenges resulting from the Montagnard situation and the June 11 attack are immense. Christian leaders are seeking prayers for guidance in biblically shepherding their flocks, as they navigate life under an oppressive government that perpetuates injustice (Prov. 16:12). Furthermore, they desire Christians to demonstrate compassion toward victims' families and actively promote peace within society (Matt. 5:9). They seek prayer for Vietnam's rulers to recognize that pursuing justice and fairness toward marginalized minorities will alleviate discontent and contribute to the well-being of all citizens.

Although Vietnam has made improvements in recent years in terms of Christian persecution, ethnic minority Evangelicals, such as the Montagnards, remain vulnerable.

Let us unite in prayer for their protection, invoking God's strength and favor upon them (Ps. 91:11-12).

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AG Missionaries Changing Lives, Equipping Native Americans in the Gospel

Native American men and women mentored by U.S. missionaries, John and Gay Davis, are stepping into ministry roles, driven by their passion for sharing the gospel.

One remarkable story involves Samuel*, a Lakota Native American who attended Gay's gospel course. Recognizing the receptiveness of his people, Samuel eagerly absorbed the teachings and committed to reteaching the lessons to his Bible study group. His words to Gay, "My people need what you have but they will not listen to you. But they will listen to me," encapsulate the powerful impact of Native American leaders within their communities.

Davis affirms, "We are in a spiritually vibrant location. The church is alive, and revival is happening."

However, Native American Christ-followers remain a minority, with only a handful pursuing ministry.

Since 2013, the Davises have dedicated themselves to Lumbee River Christian College in North Carolina. The college plays a vital role in providing education to local Native Americans, offering programs in Christian education, pastoral ministry and missions ministry.

The Davises contribute to this mission by teaching various ministerial training courses and conducting seminars at neighboring churches. Beyond academics, they invest in students' lives, with John serving as the vice president of Student Life and Gay overseeing the school's cafeteria while directing the Assessment department.

John explains the unique journey of Native American students, saying, "They come to God around age 30 after the Lord delivers them. Then, around age 40, they feel God's calling and join the college. Our hope is to raise up Native American men and women who will continue this work when we retire."

Sakoneseriosta Brent Maracle, chief of Native American Fellowship, Assemblies of God, emphasizes the need for discipleship once Native Americans realize that embracing Jesus doesn't require forsaking their cultural identity. He states, "Each person needs to navigate the Word of God to find

what is pleasing and holy to Jesus and what activities are no longer necessary because He gives us all we need for life and godliness.”

The Davises diligently teach their students the importance of comprehending Scripture and extracting truth rather than solely relying on sermons.

In a poignant incident, during a revival service, Danny*, a student rescued from a life of violence and addiction, became distressed after hearing that reading anything other than the original King James Bible meant he couldn't be a Christian. Seeking guidance, he approached Gay the following morning, anxious about his salvation.

Gay transformed her English class into a lesson on Bible translation, providing Danny with multiple translations from the school's resources. She asked him, “Do you think we would give you these Bibles if they would prevent you from being a Christian?” Danny, relieved, shook his head and acknowledged that those translations wouldn't hinder his faith. Now actively involved in ministry, Danny speaks at various churches, utilizing different Bible versions to reach his audiences.

Despite challenges, the Holy Spirit's work is evident in the Davis' ministry. John affirms the presence of healings, prophecies, salvations and miracles. Yet, with the majority of Native Americans having limited exposure to Christianity, the task remains unfinished. John asserts, “They need all the training they can get. That is why we are here, doing our best to meet that need.”

*The names in this story were changed to protect the person's privacy.

James Lasher is Staff Writer for *Charisma Media*.

7 Miraculous Benefits of Praying in Tongues

In a world full of uncertainties and challenges, believers seek ways to strengthen their faith, connect with God on a deeper level and engage in effective prayer.

One practice that holds profound significance within Christian communities is praying in tongues.

Rooted in biblical teachings and embraced by many believers, this spiritual gift offers a range of benefits that enhance prayer lives and contribute to spiritual growth.

Isaiah Saldivar discusses seven spiritual benefits to praying in tongues:

Spirit-Led Prayer for Uncertain Times

Praying in tongues allows believers to engage in spirit-led prayer, even when they struggle to find the right words. According to Romans 8:26, the Holy Spirit intercedes on their behalf, aligning their prayers with God's perfect will. This supernatural language becomes a conduit for expressing the deepest needs and desires, enabling believers to seek guidance and strength during times of uncertainty.

Edification and Strengthening of Faith

First Corinthians 14:4 highlights that speaking in tongues edifies the individual believer. Similar to how physical exercise strengthens the body, praying in tongues serves as spiritual exercise. It builds up the inner self, fortifies faith and deepens the believer's spiritual connection,

creating a firm foundation for navigating life's challenges.

Deepening Intimacy with God

Praying in tongues fosters a profound and intimate relationship with God. As believers communicate with Him through this supernatural language, they experience a closeness that surpasses human understanding. Jude 1:20 encourages believers to build themselves up in their most holy faith and engage in prayer through the Holy Spirit, which includes the powerful practice of praying in tongues.

Empowering Spiritual Warfare

Drawing inspiration from Ephesians 6:18, praying in tongues becomes a potent weapon in the spiritual battles believers face. By engaging in strategic prayer under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, believers can intercede for others, counteract the schemes of the enemy and contribute to the spiritual well-being of both themselves and those around them.

"We are to pray in the spirit on all occasions," says Saldivar. "So when we pray in tongues we engage in strategic warfare and we can intercede, the Holy Spirit can come against those schemes of the enemy's in our life and other people's lives."

Receiving Divine Wisdom and Revelation

Praying in tongues opens the door to receiving divine wisdom and revelation. First Corinthians 2:10-11 teaches that the Holy Spirit searches the deep things of God, imparting insights and understanding that surpass human comprehension. Through this supernatural language, believers gain access to hidden truths and experience personal growth in their spiritual journeys.

Promoting Unity and Edifying Others

Praying in tongues promotes unity and edification within the

body of Christ. First Corinthians 14:26 emphasizes the importance of believers coming together, each bringing their unique spiritual gifts, including tongues and interpretation, for the purpose of building up the church and fostering spiritual growth among its members. This practice creates a sense of shared purpose and community within the faith.

Obedience to the Word of God

The Bible encourages believers not to despise or forbid speaking in tongues. By embracing and allowing this spiritual gift, believers demonstrate their obedience to the Word of God. This obedience deepens their connection with God, aligns them with His plans and opens doors to greater spiritual blessings and experiences.

“We don’t forbid speaking in tongues,” explains Saldivar, “as we are speaking in tongues and praying in tongues we’re being obedient to the Word of God.”

By understanding and practicing the gift of praying in tongues within the context of biblical teachings, believers can tap into its transformative power. As they embrace the supernatural language of the Spirit, believers are equipped to navigate life’s challenges and experience the abundant blessings God has in store for them.

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4 Million People Nourished by Scripture with New App

YouVersion, the popular mobile Bible app, has unveiled a new

offline app called Bible App Lite, enabling millions of people to access the Word of God without an internet connection.

This app, specifically designed for users in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia, offers key features like audio Bibles, daily verses and prayers while keeping phone storage space minimal.

With over 4 million downloads since its launch, Bible App Lite has made a significant impact, ranking among the top 10 apps in the Google Play store across 17 African countries and securing the number one spot in Kenya, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, according to Christianity Today.

The creation of this offline app was made possible through a partnership between YouVersion and Biblica, a global Bible ministry. Mark Finzel, Biblica's vice president of digital innovation, emphasized the importance of this development, stating, "For much of the developing world, internet speeds and costs vary significantly. Always-on data is not a reality in these regions."

Africa, in particular, faces challenges in internet accessibility, according to the Alliance for Affordable Internet. However, YouVersion's Bible App Lite breaks down barriers, allowing Christians on the continent to have direct access to the Bible in their own language, without relying on an internet connection.

The reach of Bible App Lite extends beyond Africa. It has also been launched in countries like India, Nepal, Pakistan, Myanmar and Bangladesh, aiming to expand its impact globally.

Bobby Gruenewald, founder of YouVersion, expressed his vision for the app, stating, "Our desire is to reach every person, in every part of the world, with God's Word in their heart language. This new app enables us to reach tens of millions of new people that were difficult to reach with the media-rich

Bible App.”

As the Bible says in Psalm 119:105, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” With the offline capabilities of Bible App Lite, this light can now shine even in areas where internet access is limited, bringing hope, guidance and spiritual nourishment to countless individuals around the world.

James Lasher is Staff Writer for Charisma Media.

Christian Employees Rally Against Google’s ‘Pride and Drag Show’

Google recently removed a “Pride and Drag Show” from its list of company-promoted LGBTQ events in response to a petition signed by hundreds of Christian employees and other supporters.

The petition condemned the event as an assault on religious beliefs and sensitivities, according to reports.

The event, initially scheduled at the LGBTQ bar Beaux in San Francisco, stirred controversy among Christian employees who deemed it disrespectful to their faith.

The petition specifically criticized the performance of a drag queen known as “Peaches Christ,” describing it as “provocative and inflammatory,” as reported by CNBC.

Citing the artist’s work as a direct affront to Christian beliefs, the petition gained traction and prompted Google to

remove the event from its list of annually sponsored activities on the company's website.

Chris Pappas, a Google spokesperson, clarified that the event was removed due to a failure to follow the standard events process during its initial posting. Pappas confirmed that drag shows have been featured in Google's Pride celebrations for many years, including the most recent ones. However, the spokesperson did not indicate whether the petition influenced the decision to remove the public event from the promotion list.

In response to inquiries, Google did not immediately provide a comment to Fox News Digital.

Pappas mentioned that although the official team event would be shifted, the performance itself would proceed at the planned venue, open to the public and allowing employees to attend.

Google has a history of sponsoring various Pride events in San Francisco every June, which encompass drag shows and the annual Pride parade. Notably, the company faced another petition just four years ago from LGBTQ employees who demanded Google's withdrawal from the San Francisco Pride parade, arguing that the company had not done enough to protect its LGBTQ workforce.

Balancing the promotion of Pride materials with employee and customer sentiments has been a challenge for several companies across the United States. Instances where companies failed to strike this balance, such as Bud Light's promotion of transgenderism and Target's controversial satanic displays, have faced criticism and boycotts.

As Christians navigate their workplaces, it is important to remember biblical teachings that guide their actions and responses. In Romans 12:2, the apostle Paul advises believers, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the

renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

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