

# The Alpha and the Omega

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.” –**Revelation 1:8**

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## Mary's Song

And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. –**Luke 1:46-47**

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## Trans-Sexual Oversees Macy's Female Fitting Rooms

Transvestites in the women's fitting rooms? It's an issue that has—and is—causing an uproar for Macy's. And the issue is not going away.

Indeed, tens of thousands of people have signed onto Liberty Counsel's open letter asking Macy's to change its policy that permits men dressing as women to use women's fitting rooms. Liberty Counsel has delivered the letter to Macy's. Now, the ball is in the retailer's court, even as new evidence rolls in about Macy's unbiblical practices.

For example, just last week it came to light that a mother and her daughter were subjected to trying on clothes in a Macy's women's dressing room supervised by a trans-sexual (man

presenting as a woman) at the Galleria Mall in Dallas. His job supervising the fitting rooms means that he escorts women and young girls to the dressing rooms, enters the dressing rooms to clean out the clothes, and even provides different sized items to women while they are trying on their clothes.

Other reports are coming in from women around the country indicating that at various Macy's stores men are routinely allowed to simply "hang out" in the women's dressing rooms. In these situations, the men were identifying as men. Mothers wanting to protect their young children have repeatedly asked store employees to tell the men to leave. In some situations employees refused to do so, claiming fear of a lawsuit.

"Macy's is forcing its morality, or in this case, immorality, on all of its female shoppers," says Mathew Staver, founder and Chairman of Liberty Counsel. "Just as a person who is five feet tall, but thinks of himself as six feet tall, doesn't change his height."

Liberty Counsel's open letter, signed onto by tens of thousands, states:

*As an American who recognizes the crucial importance of cultural boundaries and same gender guidelines to the welfare of any society, I am appalled by your corporate decision to allow LGBT people to use whatever changing facilities they choose in Macy's stores. This policy is both misguided and absurd. It creates an unnecessary threat to the comfort and safety of your customers and helps undermine the stability of our society! I am deeply concerned that pro-homosexual activism has brought your organization to enact such a poorly thought-out policy.*

*I applaud Natalie Johnson's resolve to stand up for what she knew to be right and deny a male access to women's facilities! Macy's policy, which allows men to use the women's dressing room and vice-versa, is fraught with*

*problems. This policy will cause significant issues and will alienate the majority of Macy's customers. I call on Macy's to do the right thing by reinstating Natalie Johnson and reversing this absurd policy.*

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# Happy Hanukkah! Merry Christmas!

✘ Christmas is not a biblical holiday, but let's use it to the glory of God. Hanukkah is a biblical holiday, and let's use it also to the glory of God.

Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus even though he was almost certainly not born on Christmas day (see below if interested in that story).

If today, during this season, much of the world is remembering the night of Jesus' birth, singing, "Joy to the world, the Lord is come!" then I will choose to join them, praying that tens of thousands around the world will suddenly realize who this "Emmanuel," this "God with us" man is, and will accept Him not only as the promised Messiah of Israel, but also their personal Redeemer and the Savior of all mankind!

Granted, it's quite confusing mixing Rudolph, Frosty and Santa in there, but let's peel back the games, and get to the

one who is Truth.

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# From Motorcycle Warlord to Godly Mentor: Al Aceves

My name is Alfonso Aceves, Big Al to my friends, and my life has been changed because of Christ.

I was committing crimes and selling drugs by the time I was 18. It was exciting to me then, and I wanted to do it. I had to do it. In fact, at the time, I was glad I did it, even if I came out hurt. Then, all of a sudden, the Vietnam War came.

After serving two tours in Vietnam as a member of the 101st Airborne Division, my time with the army was over. I thought to myself, What am I going to do? I was coming home on the plane, and I thought, Man, I'll go to college, try to change my life. But that didn't happen.

After several run-ins with the law, some friends and I started a motorcycle club called the Mongols. When we started the Mongols, there were 10 of us. Everywhere we went, somebody would test us, and we would fight. Little by little, we started growing more chapters, until I was getting famous for my fighting and all of the things I would do to people.

At the time, we thought we were living a dream. People were afraid of us. In time, my reputation grew, and I would do things for other people, like collect money for them. I'd do anything as long as someone would pay me to do it.

Through it all, I made countless enemies. And eventually, I became addicted to heroin.

Then I met and married Lorraine.

She had six kids, and I told her I would take care of the kids. I told her everything would be all right. But my addiction to heroin got worse. I needed money for drugs, so I started taking on bigger jobs.

Someone once asked if I could bomb a place, and I gave him a price. It was so bad that Lorraine was worried someone might call her one day and say that I was dead.

When the jobs and the money ran out, we needed a place to stay. A family took Lorraine, our kids and me into their home. But they had one stipulation: To stay with this family, we had to read a scripture every day. At the time, I didn't know what a scripture was, but I reluctantly agreed to do it.

As I began studying the Bible, my curiosity began to grow. One day a guy started talking to me about salvation. He asked: "You know, wouldn't you like to be saved? Wouldn't you like your sins to be forgiven?"

I looked at him, and told him: "Man, you don't know who you're talking to. Do you know what I mean? The things I've done."

And he told me, "No, God died on the cross for you."

So, I accepted the Lord. But I was still hooked. Turning my life around wasn't easy. I was eventually locked up for planning a bomb attack. When I got out of jail, Lorraine and the kids picked me up at the airport. It was a bit rough at first, but I told Lorraine that we were going to church. I didn't want to leave God.

I moved into a Christian men's home and kicked my drug habit. I was kicking heroin! God was so good that He gave me the strength to stay, because I wanted to run. When I started falling down on the ground, having convulsions, God was good. I stayed; I kicked it.

Death called on me a lot. People have tried to kill me; drugs tried to kill me. But God had a plan for my life.

Today I am a mentor for other men, of all ages, who want to find Christ and grow in God's plan for their lives. I attend The Rivers Edge (Etiwanda Foursquare Church) in Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., pastored by Gary Hornsby, and serve as program director at The Rivers Edge Ranch, a working ranch and transformation facility for men.

My friends say they hear compassion in my voice now, and that's a big change. It's all because of Jesus in my life! God has changed my life completely.

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## **Enlarging the Soul's Capacity**

For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. **—Hebrews 5:13, KJV**

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## **The Troubled King**

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. **—Matthew 2:3**

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# Francis Chan's 'Crazy Love' Tops Weekly Bestsellers

Francis Chan's 2008 title *Crazy Love* has topped this week's Top 20 General best-sellers list from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association (ECPA), tracking sales for the week ending Dec. 10, according to Pubtrack Christian data.

The Top 20 General best-sellers are:

1. *Crazy Love*, Francis Chan
2. *Jesus Calling*, Sarah Young
3. *Heaven Is for Real*, Todd Burpo
4. *The Power of a Praying Wife*, Stormie Omartian
5. *Nearing Home*, Billy Graham
6. *Heaven Is for Real for Kids*, Burpo
7. *Longing*, "Bailey Flanigan Series" No. 3, Karen Kingsbury
8. *Not a Fan*, Kyle Idleman
9. *Jesus Calling: Deluxe Edition*, Young
10. *Jesus Calling: Large Print Deluxe Edition*, Young
11. *Through My Eyes*, Tim Tebow, hardcover
12. *The Resolution for Men*, Stephen Kendrick, Alex Kendrick, Randy Alcorn
13. *Courageous*, Randy Alcorn, Alex Kendrick, Stephen Kendrick
14. *Jesus Calling: 365 Devotions for Kids*, Young
15. *Streams in the Desert*, Mrs. Charles E. Cowman, Jim Reimann

16. *Bonhoeffer*, Eric Metaxas
  17. *Every Day a Friday*, Joel Osteen
  18. *One Thousand Gifts*, Ann Voskamp
  19. *The One Year Uncommon Life Daily Challenge*, Tony Dungy, Nathan Whitaker
  20. *Through My Eyes*, Tim Tebow, softcover (Harper).
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## **Alabama School Removing 'Silent Night' from Christmas Program**

An Alabama school district is trying to remove the traditional Christmas carol "Silent Night" from a Christmas program at one of its schools. The Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) wrote a letter hoping to change the district's view. The letter explains that demands made by Americans United for Separation for Church and State (AU) for the removal of the song are baseless.

"It's ridiculous that people have to think twice about whether it's okay to include 'Silent Night' in a Christmas program," says ADF senior counsel David Cortman. "An overwhelming majority of Americans agree that it's okay to celebrate Christmas in schools and in the public square, and they are right. There is nothing unconstitutional about inclusion of this song in the school's program, and that is supported by how the courts have consistently ruled."

AU sent a letter to Tuscumbia City Schools complaining about inclusion of "Silent Night" as one of nine songs in G.W.

Trenholm School's Christmas program. AU apparently claimed that inclusion of the song or any other religious song would be unconstitutional.

"The school should not succumb to pressure from the faulty legal demands of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, which spends its time threatening and intimidating school districts with disinformation to further its own constitutionally incorrect agenda," says ADF Litigation Staff Counsel Matt Sharp.

The ADF letter disputes AU's claims and points out several court cases that have upheld the inclusion of religious Christmas carols in school Christmas programs.

"Here, 'Silent Night' is but one of the nine other songs included in the Christmas program at G.W. Trenholm," the ADF letter explains. "Thus, as long as the inclusion of 'Silent Night' or any other religious Christmas song is based upon a secular reason—i.e. recognition of the religious heritage of Christmas—then the Constitution does not prohibit the inclusion of the religious song in the school's Christmas program."

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## **'Three Blind Saints' Premieres in Kansas City**

More than 800 people, Hollywood filmmakers, several film distributors as well as cast members from Hollywood attended the premiere of *Three Blind Saints* in Kansas City, Mo. The feature-length movie is Steve Gray's film debut. The founder and senior pastor of World Revival Church, Gray was the creator and producer of the Emmy-award winning *Steve & Kathy*

*Show.*

The cast is a mix of new actors and seasoned actors such as Barry Corbin (*Northern Exposure*, *The Closer*, *One Tree Hill*), Richard Speight Jr. (*Supernatural*, *Band of Brothers*), Stelio Savante (*Ugly Betty*, *The Office*), Irma P. Hall (*Ladykillers*, *Collateral*) and Victor Raider-Wexler (*King of Queens*). "I was looking to do a faith-based film," Hall says. "Brad [Wilson] called me and told me about *Three Blind Saints*, and I was in." Hall added that her first trip to Kansas City was during the filming of the movie.

*Three Blind Saints* is a tongue-in-cheek comedy drama about three wayward men forced to do community service at Rocky Road Community Church. Jamal (Elijah Rock), Frankie (Savante) and Pastor Sam (Speight) tell the judge that they got "saved" while in jail. The judge sentences them to help Rusty Pickens (Corbin) lead a small fledgling congregation. In one of the most memorable moments of the film, Pickens tells Pastor Sam that "God is a hot commodity."

Pickens plans to build a megaplex church with a sports bar and mall. Pastor Sam is thrown into a crisis because he's faking faith and can't help a woman (Audrey Matos) he cares for who has a child in the hospital. The film is refreshingly free of profanity and sexuality. "I wanted a film that was a bridge-builder," Gray says. "I didn't want viewers to feel like they were going to a church service while watching the movie. I wanted them to have fun and to be inspired to have an encounter with God."

Gray adds: "I've been an insider in religion as a pastor for a church. I have some exaggerated examples in the film of the crazy things people do to a new a pastor who has appointments all day with wacko people who say they are Christians. I hit it head-on, and everyone laughs at it."

Corbin says he's worked on low-budget and high-budget pictures

and that “this was a delightful experience. I had a good time.” The film was shot in 18 days in the Kansas City metro area with more than 200 volunteers who helped with set design, construction, as well as acting (as extras). Matos says she was amazed at the unity of everyone on the set: “I felt like I was among family.”

The 90-minute film was directed by John Eschenbaum and produced by Brad Wilson, an award-winning producer who has led Robert Duvall’s production company. The director of photography, Tal Lazar, has worked on TV shows and music videos in Israel. The film is pending distribution, and a limited theatrical release is planned. In the meantime, Gray is writing his second screenplay, tentatively titled *Something to Believe In*, which will be filmed in Israel.