

Dead Men

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. **–Philippians 2:12-13**

Are You Ready for God?

Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard.” **–Luke 1:11-13**

Media Watchdog Calls for Investigation Into Triple-X Domain

News that the .XXX Domain is going live today caused Morality in Media to call for an investigation of ICM Registry, the company behind the .XXX domain, for possible violations of federal laws prohibiting distribution of hard-core obscene Internet pornography.

“Title 18 United States Code Sections 1462 and 1465 prohibit distribution of hard-core, obscene Internet pornography. Yet, isn’t that the purpose of the .XXX domain?” asks Patrick A.

Trueman, president of Morality in Media and former chief of the U.S. Department of Justice Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Criminal Division in Washington, D.C.

Trueman says Title 18 U. S. C. Section 2 prohibits aiding and abetting a federal crime and Title 18 U. S.C. 371 prohibits a conspiracy to commit a federal crime. As he sees it, U. S. Attorney General Eric Holder should review the activities of ICM Registry in relation to these federal criminal laws immediately.

“The establishment of a .XXX Domain will increase not decrease the spread of Internet pornography,” says Trueman. “In fact, ICM has indicated that it has nearly one million ‘expressions of interest’ for new .XXX sites. Yet not one porn company has announced plans to close its .com site to relocate to the .XXX domain. Porn on the Internet my double due to the .XXX Domain.”

Will Attorney General Holder stand by and watch this pandemic of harm continue to spiral when he has laws at his disposal that can be enforced against this destructive material? That’s what Trueman wants to know—and he’s taking this opportunity to urge him to vigorously enforce federal obscenity laws against major online commercial distributors of hard-core adult pornography and those who aid and abet its distribution.

“If Attorney General Holder won’t investigate ICM Registry now, we will press the next attorney general to do so,” says Trueman. “This issue will never go away for ICM Registry or for Internet pornographers who attempt to hide their criminal activities behind the .XXX Domain.”

Superhero to Host Christian Film Awards

Movieguide: The Family Guide to Movies and Entertainment will set a milestone next year when a superhero hosts its 20th anniversary celebration honoring family-friendly and inspirational entertainment.

The Movieguide Faith & Values Awards Gala and Report to the Entertainment Industry honoring family-friendly movies and television programs and spiritually uplifting entertainment has announced actor Dean Cain as the official host of the 20th Annual Awards show. The event will be held Friday, Feb. 10, at the Universal Studios Hilton Hotel in Hollywood.

“Dean Cain has one of the most faith-filled and blessed careers in the entertainment industry, so we are delighted that he will host,” says publisher and Gala founder Dr. Ted Baehr.

Cain is most notably known as Superman, which he played for four seasons in the TV series, *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*.

His other TV credits include *Beverly Hills 90210*, *Las Vegas*, *Smallville* and the made-for-television movie *The Perfect Husband: The Laci Peterson Story*. He was host of the syndicated series *Ripley's Believe It or Not*, which his production company also produced. He has also been a presenter in the past for the Movieguide Awards Gala.

Red carpet and VIP Reception will begin at 4:00 p.m. and dinner at 6:00 p.m. The theme for this year's event will be From Hollywood to Eternity. The star-studded gala takes place just prior to the annual Oscar Ceremony. Last year's gala was taped and then later telecast on The Hallmark Movie Channel.

“Other awards shows just honor the most critically acclaimed movies and television programs,” says Baehr. “The Annual Faith & Values Awards Gala also honors those movies and television program that increase man’s love and understanding of God and that promote the Good, the True and the Beautiful.”

Among the prestigious prizes and awards handed out that evening will be the \$100,000 Epiphany Prizes () for Inspiring Movies & TV, the \$50,000 Kairos Prizes () for Spiritually Uplifting Screenplays by First-Time and Beginning Screenwriters, the Best 10 Movies for Families, the Faith & Freedom Awards for Positive American Values, the Grace Awards for Most Inspiring Performances in Movies & TV, and the Best 10 Movies for Mature Audiences, from teenagers to adults.

During the gala, Baehr presents highlights of Movieguide’s comprehensive analysis of the major movies released in theaters to show entertainment industry leaders attending what kinds of movies make the most money at the box office and on home video.

Baehr is chairman of the Christian Film & Television Commission ministry and publisher of the Commission’s family guide to movies, Movieguide.

For more information about Movieguide, please visit its website, .

Macy’s Fires Worker for Transvestite Uprou

When a young transvestite wanted to try on clothes in the ladies dressing room at Macy’s, the clerk did what most people

would do: She told him the dressing room was for females only. And that got her fired.

That clerk is named Natalie Johnson. She refused to violate her religious beliefs by permitting a young man dressed as a woman from entering the ladies dressing room. As Johnson tells it, she saw the young man walk out of the women's fitting room and politely told him that he could not go back in.

When the cross-dresser claimed he was a female, Johnson said although he was wearing make up and girl's clothing he was clearly male. The cross-dresser and his five friends started to argue, complete with expletives, that Macy's is LGBT-friendly.

Johnson's response: Macy's is also non-discriminatory toward religion, and that it would go against her religious beliefs to lie that he was a woman or compromise with homosexuality.

That's when the group demanded to speak with a manager.

When the Macy's manager confronted Johnson, she explained she could not allow a male to change in a female's fitting room. Johnson's boss referred her to Macy's LGBT policy which allows "transgender" people to change in any dressing room they want.

However, Johnson pointed out that the same policy also protects against religious discrimination and, in this case, it protects her right to her beliefs that were being violated. The manager demanded that she comply with the LGBT policies or lose her job. Johnson refused to go against her sincerely held religious beliefs and was terminated from her job.

"Macy's policy which allows men to use the women's dressing room is fraught with problems," says Mathew Staver, founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel. "This policy will cause significant problems and will alienate the majority of Macy's customers. Macy's has essentially opened women's dressing

rooms to every man. The LGBT agenda has become the theater of the absurd.”

Pressing Needs

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.
–Hebrews 4:16

God Loves to Surprise Us

They told him, “Joseph is still alive! In fact, he is ruler of all Egypt.” Jacob was stunned; he did not believe them.
–Genesis 45:26

GOP Contenders Vie for Herman Cain’s Supporters

“I’m suspending my presidential campaign because of the continued distractions and the continued hurt caused on me and my family,” Herman Cain said Dec. 3.

Cain’s announcement set off a mad scramble for his supporters and staff.

Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Minn., a Tea Party favorite like Cain, says she's already seeing the impact of the Georgia businessman's departure.

"A lot of Herman Cain supporters have been calling our office, and they've been coming over to our side," she told CNN's "State of the Union."

However, with just over four weeks to go until the Iowa caucuses, it's former House Speaker Newt Gingrich who has emerged as the Republican front-runner. The latest polls show 25 percent of Iowans say they'll vote for him.

He's followed by Rep. Ron Paul, R-Texas, and former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney. Still, there remains a large bloc of undecided voters.

"What we are hearing is, 60 to 70 percent of the people in Iowa are still undecided," GOP presidential candidate Rick Santorum told ABC's *This Week*.

Meanwhile, Romney continues to be viewed with suspicion by many conservatives, who say he has changed his stance on abortion and health care.

There is also a sense that the GOP front-runner position could change yet again.

"We have had the flavors of the month up and down so far in this campaign," Paul noted.

"Look, I was supposedly dead in June-July," Gingrich said. "I am apparently not, so I'm not going to say any of my friends can't suddenly surprise us."

With another debate scheduled for next Saturday, many of the GOP candidates face a week of heavy campaigning in Iowa.

"This 2012 election is really going to be an election which presents a choice to the American people about what kind of

America we are going to have,” Romney said at Sunday’s Fox News GOP presidential forum.

“Boy, it’s been a while and a woolly ride in this primary, and I suspect that’s going to stay the same,” Texas Gov. Rick Perry remarked.

The Birth of Christ

✘ It has been said that the New Testament is concealed in the Old Testament and the Old Testament is revealed in the New Testament. This is certainly true of the birth of the Messiah, which we celebrate this month. One need only turn to the pages of the Old Testament to discover where, when, how and why Jesus of Nazareth was born.

Where would the Messiah be born? When Herod the Great sought to find the Messiah, he asked the Jewish religious leadership to discover where He would be born. They, of course, had the answer immediately: Bethlehem.

How did they know this? Because the prophet Micah had recorded this revelation hundreds of years earlier. “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times” (Micah 5:2, NIV).

There are two interesting points to this prophecy. First, the word Bethlehem is formed from two Hebrew words, bait (“house”) and lechem (“bread”). It is no coincidence that Yeshua, the Bread of Life, was born in the town known as “house of bread.”

Second, this verse has the fascinating statement, “Whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.” This prophecy reveals the amazing paradox that the Messiah would be born, yet He already would have existed! Only Yeshua, who John reveals was in the beginning with God and is Himself God (see John 1:1) could have fulfilled this.

When would the Messiah be born? To answer this, we have to turn to Daniel 9 (for further study on this chapter, I recommend Daniel’s Prophecy of the 70 Weeks by Alva J. McClain, Zondervan). “The Anointed One will be cut off but not for Himself. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary” (see v. 26).

This clearly states the “Anointed One” (Mashiah, Messiah) would be “cut off,” or killed, and that after this the city and the sanctuary would be destroyed.

Daniel 9:26 foretells that the Messiah would die before the city of Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed. It wasn’t until A.D. 70—after Yeshua’s

crucifixion—that the Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem and the temple.

How would the Messiah be born? One of the great signs of Messiah's birth was that He would be born of a virgin. This concept comes from the Old Testament and ancient Jewish expectation. As Isaiah 7:14 promised us: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."

Those who argue against the virgin birth point out that the Hebrew word used here, *almah*, and translated "virgin" simply denotes a woman of marriageable age and not a virgin. Two things should be mentioned in response to this.

First, in the Septuagint—the translation of the Old Testament into Greek in 250 Jewish scholars chose to use the Greek word *parthanos* (the clear Greek word for "virgin") when they translated this passage.

Second, the origin of the virgin birth actually dates back to Genesis. Here, the Lord gives us His first promise to redeem mankind and informs Satan that at some point in time "the seed of the woman would crush his head" (see Gen. 3:15). He says "seed of the woman"—a strange phrase because "seed" is usually referring to the man.

Why would the Messiah be born? Again, the Old Testament has the answer. "He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities, the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed" (Is. 53:5)

Yeshua was actually born to die. He came to this earth, set an example for us of how to live, and then gave His life as an atonement for us.

What is most important about Christmas? That we remember the "reason for the season." This is a celebration of the Son of God. The incarnation of God Himself into human form has transformed time itself and has begun the process of redemption for all mankind.

Jonathan

Bernis is president of Jewish Voice Ministries International and has worked on the forefront of world evangelism since 1984, taking the good news of Israel's Messiah worldwide and to the Jewish people. He is the founding rabbi of Congregation Shema Yisrael in Rochester, N.Y., where he served as senior Messianic rabbi from 1984 to 1993. He also founded and pastored the Messianic Center of St. Petersburg, Russia, where he lived and ministered from 1993 to 1996.

What Mystical Longing Calls Us Home for Christmas?

✘ I write this aboard a jet airliner speeding south from one of the nation's greatest northern cities. I am heading home for Christmas.

How eager I am to see the face of my wife, embrace my now-grown children who are gathering at the old homestead, grab my little grandchildren and swing them high as they squeal:
"PaPa's home."

How eager I am to sit quietly with my dear friends, my extended family, to embrace and whisper "I love you" in the ears of those as committed to me as they are to their own blood relatives. We will embrace, take off our shoes, sit in front of a fire (sipping egg nog), and feel "at home" in each other's presence.

Home for Christmas! My oldest son will be driving through the night after finishing his work in the nation's capital—joining his family in Florida. Our youngest daughter will fight the mobs which throng the airports, winging in from college in middle-America.

In all of our efforts
to get home for Christmas, we touch others—desperate, happy,
lonely,
cheerful—thronging crowded terminals, all trying to make that
mystical
deadline.

What is it on this day
that so drives us to be among loved ones?

Busy businessmen forget
about buying and selling, creating and convincing, to lounge
around the house
with the family. Things like trade agreements, real estate
deals, marketing and
sales—all take a back seat to important things like carving
the turkey and
opening inane but precious gifts under a tree.

Dignified college
professors, their cheeks ruddy and hair blowing in the wind,
race up and down
sidewalks, laughing and shouting as they hold on to small
children riding bikes
with training wheels.

Ranchers and dairymen
quickly finish morning chores so they can take off muddy boots
and join
laughing families at Christmas breakfasts.

Computer experts,
physicians, engineers—(all intellectuals, all degreed and
pedigreed) sit
cross-legged under trees, waist-deep in wrapping paper, turned
into little
children—at least for the day.

Gangsters, tax evaders,

liars, drunkards, adulterers, prostitutes, even members of the Mafia—all turn
aside on this day to kneel at altars and shed a tear in a
communion cup for a
baby in a manger.

Home for Christmas!

Broken-hearted parents sit and wait by the telephone,
anxiously scan the mail,
hoping memories of Christmas past will stir the heart of a
runaway child and
bring word of safety.

Runaway children, some
young, some very old, walk city sidewalks, huddle in lonely
motel rooms, sit and
stare in drab apartments on this, the loneliest day of the
year—yearning for
some power so they can hurdle the wall of pride and reach out
for home.

Soldiers in far-flung
military outposts, wet and cold, sweaty and sticky, stand
lonely watch around
olive drab vehicles or shiver in isolated guardhouses at the
gates—all dreaming
of home.

Airmen, cramped in the
cockpits of flying cannons high in the darkened and silent
skies on Christmas
Eve, look upward for a star, then down over tilted wings at
the winking lights
below Misty-eyed, they dream of the touch of a mother's hand,
the warmth of a
father's chuckle, the squeals of little ones, cookies, candles
and a choir
singing "Silent Night."

Home for Christmas? For
many it is but an impossible yearning.

In hospitals, while
suction machines whir and monitors beep, some fight for their
lives. Christmas
is but a card, a small wreath on a tray, or the gentle touch
of a nurse's hand
to say, "I am with you on this day."

In jails and prisons,
men and women, black and white, lie on rusting steel cots
facing concrete
walls, or stare upward at gray ceilings where peeling paint
covers faded
obscenities written by those who walked this angry path before
them. All,
strong and weak alike, finally bury their faces in the
mildewed canvas of a
lumpy pillow and cry away the day.

Home for Christmas! In
nursing homes, neglected and forgotten, the grand old people
of this world
reach out for a small group of strangers with cookies and
carols, vainly look
for comfort from an indifferent attendant bitter over a
rotation system that
forces her to work on a day when no person should work,
struggle to hear a
voice on radio or see a face on television—anyone who might
bring a message of
comfort and cheer.

The words echo from the
centuries: *God rest ye merry, gentlemen.*

God rest ye merry? How can there be any merriment if we are

not home
for Christmas?

Why all this homesickness? Why does a cup of cold water seem
so blessed
on this day when loneliness sweeps the world like an epidemic?

Why do the Salvation Army lassies take on an almost saintly
hue as
they ring their little bells? They, even if you do not, will
try to provide a
home for those not home for Christmas.

Could this homesickness be from God himself?

Is it possible that Jesus, lying in a bed of straw on
Christmas Day,
was homesick? Could it be the memory of heaven still lingered?
Were some of
those infant tears the same tears lonely men and women shed
today—tears in
memory of home?

This Christmas, missionaries will gather their families about
them in
heathen cities, will hang red and yellow decorations on banana
trees, will walk
through maddening Orient markets where the world roars by
without even knowing
the name of their baby. They are followers of Him—men on a
mission.

So He came, to bring heaven to earth, to make the kingdom He
had known
and establish it on this planet.

Because of Him, men and women in many sectors of earth no
longer throng
taverns, no longer blast their brains with ungodly sound, no

longer fill their
bodies with chemicals. Because of Him children do not run
away. Because of Him,
no matter where we find ourselves on this Christmas Day, we
will be home.

O tidings of comfort and joy!

Jamie Buckingham was
senior pastor of the 2,000-member Tabernacle Church in
Melbourne, Fla., a
nondenominational church he founded in 1967. The former editor
of *Ministry*
Today magazine, he wrote dozens of books, including
autobiographical works for
Nicky Cruz (*Run Baby Run*) and Pat Robertson (*Shout It From the*
Housetops). He
died in 1992.