

News Briefs

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PASTORS ACCUSED OF SPYING FOR ISRAEL

A Canadian pastor accused by Lebanon of spying for Israel claims the charges against him are "trumped up." Bruce Balfour, 52, field director of Cedars of Lebanon, a ministry that planned to help replenish the cedars of Lebanon in the mountains of the country's northern region, has been in custody since he was arrested July 10, when he arrived in Beirut, Agence France-Presse (AFP) reported. The trial of Balfour and Grant Livingstone, 81, another Canadian pastor also accused of spying for Israel, was recently postponed at the request of the prosecution, who asked for more time to summon witnesses, AFP reported.

SLAIN ATHLETE HAD 'FOUND JESUS'

The Baylor University basketball player whose roommate allegedly shot him to death was memorialized Aug. 5 at a San Jose, Calif., charismatic church, where he became a Christian. Jubilee Christian Center (JCC) pastor Dick Bernal said 21-year-old Patrick Dennehy accepted Christ at JCC last year, the Associated Press reported. "I won't try to deify the man," Bernal said of Dennehy, who was kicked off the University of New Mexico team for his temper. "But people were really impressed with Patrick's new lease on life since he found Jesus." Carlton Dotson, Dennehy's roommate and former teammate, was arrested and charged with murder July 21, after reportedly telling authorities he shot Dennehy when Dennehy

tried to shoot him.

PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES HAVE MORE BORN-AGAIN EVANGELIZERS

Christians who attend full gospel churches share the good news more than those in mainline congregations. In a survey exploring the evangelistic engagement of 4,265 adults, Barna Research Group (BRG) found that 67 percent of those in an Assemblies of God (AG) church were born again and had evangelized in the last year, as had 51 percent of those who regularly attend a nondenominational congregation. Released in August, the study also found

that 50 percent of the people in Pentecostal churches outside the AG were born-again evangelizers. The rates were lower for adults connected to Baptist (40 percent), Presbyterian (31 percent), Lutheran (24 percent), Methodist (21 percent), Episcopal (13 percent) and Catholic (10 percent) churches.

JIM BAKKER LAWSUIT NETS SMALL SUM

A 16-year-old class-action lawsuit against Praise the Lord (PTL) founder Jim Bakker netted \$ for each of the 165,000 plaintiffs. Their lawyers were to get \$2.5 million of the \$3.7 million settlement, The Asheville (N.C.) Citizen-Times reported. The plaintiffs gave \$1,000 each for four-day vacation stays at a PTL resort that was never built near Charlotte, N.C. Settlement checks were to be issued within a month of the July order. Char Graham, Bakker's business manager and mother-in-law, said Bakker had no comment "because he doesn't have all the facts on it. He hasn't been included in any of that."

Black Pastor Launches 'Pay to Pray' Campaign

A Shreveport, La., pastor decided to pay white people to attend services through the month of August to increase the

diversity at his Greenwood Acres Full Gospel Baptist Church. Bishop Fred Caldwell paid \$5 per hour for Sunday services and \$10 an hour for midweek services in a campaign that gained worldwide media attention. "This is about the Lord drawing attention to the fact that the church is segregated," he said. By mid-August about 80 whites had visited, and Caldwell had paid \$500 of his own money, though he said most refused the payments.

Pastor Javier Vásquez Dies

Javier Vásquez, head of the Methodist Pentecostal Church of Chile, which is affiliated with the International Pentecostal Holiness Church (IPHC), died of liver failure July 25. He was 86. The IPHC said Vásquez was pastor for nearly 40 years of the Evangelical Cathedral (Jotabeche Church) in Santiago, which is one of the largest Pentecostal churches in the world. Vásquez is survived by his second wife, Olga Hansen; four children; 16 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

Businessmen's Group Names Executive Director

In July, Business Men's Fellowship International (BMFI), a network of charismatic businessmen, named Chuck Evans the first full-time executive director of its U.S. group. Evans, 36, is a partner in a real-estate development firm and former associate pastor. Founded in 1995, BMFI has nearly 1,400 U.S. members, and operates in Brazil (the largest network, with 38,740 members), Europe and Asia.