

Charisma News Service

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CHAPLAINS' CLASS-ACTION SUIT EXPANDS

Four Pentecostals and charismatics have joined a class-action lawsuit charging the U.S. Navy with discrimination against evangelical chaplains. Motions to add 25 new plaintiffs—expanding the list to 42—were filed recently in federal court. Five lawsuits involving 53 current or former chaplains have been lodged against the Navy in the last three years. Although the Navy refuses to comment on pending litigation, attorney Art Schulcz predicted the class-action suit would succeed “because we’re right.”

LEFT BEHIND SERIES FUELS INTEREST IN THE APOCALYPSE

Fears over terrorism and a best-selling end-times series are “fueling new interest in a real doomsday,” according to Time. The cover story in the July 1 issue of the magazine says that since Sept. 11, “many people are starting to read the Left Behind tomorrow’s newspapers.” The lengthy report, “The Bible and the Apocalypse,” notes that only about half the readers of the Left Behind series are evangelical Christians. According to a Time/CNN poll, more than one-third of Americans say they are paying more attention to how the news might relate to the end of the world and have talked about what the Bible has to say on the subject. Fifty-nine percent say they believe the events in Revelation are going to come true, and almost one-fourth think the Bible predicted the Sept. 11 attack.

ATHEISTS RECEPTIVE TO CHRISTIAN TELEVISION, RADIO

A recent Barna Research Group study reported that a “surprisingly large

proportion” of atheists, agnostics and non-Christians “intentionally absorb information from the Christian media.” George Barna said more than one-fourth listened to Christian radio, one-fourth watched Christian television, and one-seventh read a Christian book. The nationwide survey of 1,007 adults also discovered that 6 in 10 adults (63 percent) attended a church service during the last month, while 2 of 3 adults (67 percent) were exposed to Christian radio, television or books in the last month.

TRANSLATORS DENY TNIV ENDORSEMENT

A group of leading Bible translation organizations have distanced themselves from claims that they support Today’s New International Version (TNIV), the controversial new gender-neutral edition of the Bible. The International Bible Society (IBS) and publisher Zondervan said in late June that the Forum of Bible Agencies (FBA) issued a statement “supporting the TNIV’s adherence to established translation standards.” But a statement issued June 24 by Christian public relations firm A. Larry Ross Communications said the FBA had “neither approved nor disapproved” the TNIV. IBS spokesman Larry Lincoln said: “We never made any assertion that the Forum endorsed or supported anything. We simply quoted their statement.”

Fred Price Celebrates 25 Years on Television

In April, pastor Frederick K.C. Price’s Ever Increasing Faith (EIF) began celebrating its 25th year in TV ministry. Debuting in 1978, the broadcast was the first to feature an African American minister. “I never dreamed in a thousand years that EIF would have made the impact that it has made,” Price said. “But based on our mail response, the impact has been outstanding. I believe that EIF has and is accomplishing the task that was assigned to it.”

Criminal Charges Dropped Against John Jacobs

A misdemeanor assault and battery charge against Power Team founder John Jacobs for allegedly assaulting Jeff Audas, a former employee who directs Team Impact, a Christian strength ministry made up primarily of Jacobs' former staff, has been dropped. Jacobs' lawyer said the prosecutor's office dismissed the charge based largely on Audas' willingness to sign an affidavit of nonprosecution. Audas said he felt it was time to move on. Jacobs said Audas feared a civil suit for damages.

Veggie Tales Creators Make 'Real Movie'

Jonah: A VeggieTales Movie is set for release this October, marking the vegetables-turned-cultural icons' first big-screen venture. Besides Bob, Larry and other familiar characters, the film will feature a big fish and worm from the biblical story, which ends up being Jonah's friend, Assist News Service reported. Jonah's sidekick, Khalil, which means friendly in Arabic, is part worm, caterpillar and rug salesman.