

Halloween Now Targeted by the Politically Correct Camp

Halloween, which has become a controversial subject between many Christians as to whether or not it should be observed, is now being targeted by some in the politically correct camp.

But the debate isn't centered around whether we should or shouldn't observe the annual Oct. 31 tradition. Instead, it is focused on the types of costumes some vendors are selling to the public.

One in particular that has stirred outrage is Party City's version of a brick wall, which some on social media have apparently connected to President Donald Trump's war on illegal immigration.

The *New York Daily News* featured a tweet in a story on Oct. 8 that read, "If cultural appropriation on Halloween isn't for you, here's a directly racist costume straight from @PartyCity.

Spirit Halloween has also produced an adult border patrol costumes, which have also drawn the ire of the politically correct and calling for a boycott of the company. One man tweeted about these costumes, "Please don't shop at @SpiritHalloween this year. This border patrol costume is offensive in every way and normalizes racism.

The *Washington Times* also reported that a mother of a 5-year-old girl became upset about a costume depicting the Scandinavian Queen Elsa from *Frozen* because of "the power/privilege carried by Whiteness, and about Whiteness and standards of beauty," and the "cultural appropriation" of the Polynesian Disney character Moana.

Some schools, the *Washington Times* reports, are doing away

with their Halloween dress-up days. Boyden Elementary School in Walpole, Massachusetts, canceled its school's annual costume parade because, as Principal Brendan Dearborn explains, "The parade is not inclusive of all the students, and it's our goal to ensure [that] all students' individual differences are respected. Instead, the school will observe a "black and orange" spirit day.

All of this after many cities have expressed their disdain for Columbus Day and the cultural disrespect they believe it embodies. Many cities in America now observe Indigenous People's Day instead. {eoa}

Stone Fragment Falls From Church, Killing Tourist

A Spanish man was killed on Thursday when a falling fragment of stone struck him in Florence's Basilica of the Holy Cross, ambulance services said.

The church where Renaissance master Michelangelo is buried has been closed by police, a spokesman for the national fire rescue service said.

The square piece of stone, which was about 15 cm in diameter, fell from a height of around 20 meters (65 feet), said a superintendent for Florence's artistic heritage.

It had supported a beam in the right transept of the basilica, the main Franciscan church in Florence and one of the city's most visited tourist sites.

Alongside Michelangelo, it contains the tombs of other famous

Italian historical figures including scientist Galileo Galilei and philosopher and writer Niccolò Machiavelli.

Looking after thousands of years' worth of art and architecture is a perennial headache in Italy, where efforts are also hampered by scanty state funding and bureaucratic hold-ups.

In 2012, Florence's 14th-century, 85-meter-high bell tower, which stands next to the cathedral, was cordoned off after a piece of marble fell off it.

There have also been collapses at the ancient Roman site of Pompeii.

Irene Sanesi, the president of the Opera di Santa Croce, the body which runs the church, said she was "distraught" over the incident and offered her condolences to the victim's family.

She told Reuters that maintenance and restoration of the church had been "carried out constantly" in recent years with the help of Italy's civil protection agency.

"That is why we are truly stunned and astonished by what has happened," she said, adding that she did not know when the church would be reopened. {eoa}

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Pastor Used Bribes in the Form of Church Donations to

Help Take Over Local Credit Union

A Florida software engineer was sentenced to 16 months in prison on Friday after being found guilty of scheming to help an illegal bitcoin exchange avoid having banks and regulators look into its activities.

Yuri Lebedev was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Alison Nathan in Manhattan, according to Nicholas Biase, a spokesman for federal prosecutors.

The bitcoin exchange involved in the case, , was linked to an investigation of a data breach at JPMorgan Chase & Co, revealed in 2014, that exposed more than 83 million accounts.

“We are dismayed that Mr. Lebedev has been sentenced to prison,” Lebedev’s lawyer, Eric Creizman, said in an email. Federal sentencing guidelines called for up to 97 months.

Lebedev was convicted in March along with Trevon Gross, a New Jersey pastor.

Prosecutors charged that Lebedev helped arrange bribes to Gross, including \$150,000 in donations to his church. In exchange, they said, Gross helped the operator of , Anthony Murgio, take over a small credit union Gross ran from his church.

Murgio used the credit union to evade scrutiny of banks wary of processing payments involving the virtual currency, prosecutors said. Lebedev was accused of working for through a front called “Collectables Club.”

Gross is scheduled to be sentenced later this month. Murgio pleaded guilty in January, and was sentenced to 5 1/2 years in prison in June.

The trial followed a probe rooted in the JPMorgan data breach, which led to charges against nine people.

Gross, Lebedev and Murgio were not accused of hacking, but prosecutors said was owned by an Israeli, Gary Shalom, who was behind the JPMorgan hack.

Prosecutors have said that Shalom, together with Maryland-born Joshua Samuel Aaron, orchestrated cyber attacks that resulted in the theft of information from more than 100 million people.

Prosecutors said they carried out the hacks to further other schemes with another Israeli, Ziv Orenstein, including pumping up stock prices with promotional emails. {eoa}

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Nashville Church Shooter Says He Heard Voices, Had Visions Before Attack

The man who confessed to opening fire outside a Nashville-area church allegedly told police he had voices in his head and visions leading up to the attack.

Emanuel K. Samson, the suspect in the Burnette Chapel Church of Christ shooting Sept. 24 allegedly “made some comments about visions and voices” during an interview with police after the shooting, according to testimony in court Monday, *The Tennessean* reports. Samson allegedly confessed to having a specific vision of the church he admitted to attacking.

Samson is accused of murdering one and wounding seven others during his rampage.

The church body continues to be affected by the tragedy.

“Just as all of you have, we have thought about why this horrible act occurred, but we just do not know,” according to the church Facebook page. “We are not going to speculate or guess on what the motive was, and we encourage all of you not to either. We will share with you the relevant, accurate facts as we learn them. ... In light of all of this, we are focused on continuing to join together under God each week for worship and prayer, as staying strong in His service will be what helps all those affected by this tragedy survive the hardship. Thank you. Now let’s come together and worship.”

Samson’s preliminary hearing was occurred Monday. The 25-year-old suspect faces a criminal homicide charge in the death, with other charges expected to mount as the investigation continues.

Judge Allegra Walker ruled there was enough evidence to send the case to the grand jury.

Take a Knee Before You Go

I once read a quote that said, “We can’t do more than pray before we have prayed, but we can do more than pray after we have prayed.”

Prayer is the weapon of choice for effective leaders.

Prayer must precede the steps of a leader. But after prayer, action becomes our mandate.

Prayer is necessary but not sufficient. Likewise, action is necessary but not sufficient.

We see a powerful demonstration of prayer followed by action in the book of Nehemiah.

In chapter 1, Nehemiah prays the leader's prayer: "Hear the prayer of Your servant, which I now pray before You, day and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against You. Both my father's house and I have sinned" (v. 6).

We know that after offering a prayer from his heart as a leader, Nehemiah set out to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem. Prayers for the wall to be rebuilt were surely offered by others who didn't build.

But Nehemiah prayed and then took action. It was his love for the Lord—and His love for his fellow Israelites—that propelled him to prayer and action.

In 2 Thessalonians, we read that Paul first asked the brothers to pray for him and to pray that the Word would "quickly spread and be glorified" (2 Thess. 3:1).

After prayer he told them all to get to work: "For when we were with you, we commanded you that if any will not work, neither shall he eat" (2 Thess. 3:10). Prayer wasn't going to fill their bellies.

It almost seems facile to exhort a leader to pray before taking action. Yet I'm often reminded to pray a specific prayer prior to engaging in a very specific effort.

Without prayer I act on my own. I tacitly declare my independence.

But I dare not lead from a position of independence. Without Christ, I am nothing.

Divine Healing on Display at World-Renowned Medical Conference

Many Christian doctors from around the world came together and presented, and shared, various divine healing cases, that had occurred by the power of God, at the 114th World Christian Doctors Network (WCDN) Conference in the historic city of St. Petersburg in Russia, which is a predominately Russian Orthodox Church country.

This has a great significance in view of Russia's anti-terrorism laws, which restrict Christians from evangelizing outside of their churches. For example, the Yarovaya Law is in effect to restrict the practices of religious minorities, such as evangelism or the importation of foreign religious literature so that the Russian government gives priority to the Russian Orthodox Church.

The 14th International Christian Medical Conference, held on the 20th and 21st days of October and hosted by WCDN, was attended by approximately 500 medical doctors and professionals from 13 countries including Russia, Korea, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, Spain and Belarus.

In this unique conference, six divine healing cases were presented, and four special lectures were given on "God the Healer" by Dr. Gilbert Chae from Korea, President of WCDN; on "Muan Sweet Water" by Dr. David Eu from Singapore; on "Heaven" by Dr. Vitaliy Fishberg from the U.S.; and through DVD presentation on the "Great Flood of Noah."

Through these four lectures, many people in attendance came to

understand the original cause of diseases, attested to the authenticity of the flood in Noah's time through the DVD presentation on Noah's great flood and the introduction of "Maun Sweet Water," and became filled with the hope for heaven and the assurance of the existence of the spiritual realm by the speech on heaven.

The six divine healing cases presented at this conference were concerning the healing of arthritis, acute appendicitis, pulmonary tuberculosis, complex fractures, blindness and strabismus that had occurred by the prayer of Rev. Dr. Jaerock Lee, Founder and Board Chairperson of WCDN and Senior Pastor of Manmin Central Church.

In particular, a healing case of blindness whereby a blind person opened his eyes amazed many medical doctors because it is the same miracle that the Lord Jesus performed.

"The case presentations of the Korean doctors were very inspirational, and especially the performance of the Korean team was of very high quality and spirituality," said Dr. Andre Gasiorowski, the president of Helping Hands Coalition and one of the organizers of the 2018 WCDN conference in Poland. He also said he would do everything in his power to make the next conference a success.

WCDN—is headquartered in Seoul, Korea, and was organized to attest to the spiritual power of divine healing with medical data. Through the ministry of WCDN, many Christian medical doctors from around the world actively share their opinions and perform their ministries in enthusiastic collaboration.

This international Christian medical conference began in Seoul, Korea in 2004, and since then, it has been held in many countries every year. The 15th International Christian Medical Conference will be held in Poland and is again being hosted by WCDN. {eoa}

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Church Forbids Grave Marker Mentioning 'Rapist Priests'

A Catholic diocese in Michigan forbade a grave marker mentioning a deceased woman's support for "priest rapist victims," sparking outrage from the woman's son.

The Catholic Diocese of Joliet told Jack Ruhl that it will not allow the proposed grave marker for his mother, Marguerite Ridgeway, in one of its cemeteries because mention of the alleged rapist priests qualifies as "explicit language," according to Crux Now.

Maureen Harton, an attorney for the diocese, suggested in a letter to Ruhl that he consider using alternate inscriptions, but Ruhl demanded that the diocese not dishonor his mother by continuing to delay the installation of the grave marker as is, according to the *Chicago Tribune*.

"I don't understand why this marker is controversial in the least," Ruhl said, according to the *Chicago Tribune*. "It states 'She Supported Priest Rapist Victims.' Doesn't the diocese of Joliet also support priest rapist victims?"

Harton stated in her letter to Ruhl that the issue, as the diocese saw it, was not one of the subject of the inscription but of the wording.

"This is not a subject that we at the diocese of Joliet shy away from; it is a sad chapter in our history that we think about daily," Harton said, according to the *Chicago Tribune*. "Our concern must be with the many people who visit Assumption Cemetery with the expectation that their quiet time with their loved ones will be peaceful, tranquil and free of stress and

anxiety.”

Ridgeway died in 2015 after many years of lending emotional support to victims of abuse from church clergy, one of whom is Rhul’s wife, Diane Ruhl.

Ridgeway grew up a devout Catholic but stopped going to Mass and donating money when more and more victims came forward to share their stories. Despite her falling-out with the Catholic church, Ridgeway requested a Catholic burial service and that her body be interred at Assumption Cemetery in Wheaton.

Rhul continues to fight back against the diocese over the inscription for his mother’s grave marker and insists that the word “rapist” be included. {eoa}

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Reinhard Bonnke Breaks Down the Call to Burn

Fireproof. It is a word that produces images of safety and security, but spiritually it is a destination to ordinary. Though natural dwelling places are desired to remain fireproof, the one dwelling place that is not to be found in this state is the temple of the Holy Spirit: you. The body of Christ is desired by God to show proof of fire rather than fireproofing. You were designed to turn the world upside down with God’s untameable fire. “Christians may look tame, but so does an electric cable—until you touch it.”

While reading this statement and the pages following in

Reinhard Bonnke's latest book, *"Holy Spirit: Are we Flammable or Fireproof?"*, one can sense the fire of God burning in one's belly, responding to words testifying of the Spirit of God. Anyone intimately acquainted with the Holy Spirit will recognize the nature of their best friend on the pages of this book and sense His presence. You are God's electric cable, the conduit for His fire and His glory, and you are made to come alive in response to His power found within. The world is powerless, but you are called to be, as Bonnke so eloquently states, "the grid system for transmitting the power of God."

God's children were never meant to be tame. When we surrender to Jesus Christ, we welcome the Holy Spirit to abide in us, and He is anything but tame. The Holy Spirit leads us on rescue missions in the world, fanning the flame of the fiery dove. Bonnke shares the secrets of his life and ministry in this book regarding the Holy Spirit so that you can show proof of fire rather than flame resistance. The Holy Spirit wants to send you on fiery exploits. Bonnke's nuggets of wisdom, found in fire points he has constructed within the pages of this book, allow you to receive knowledge in moments that has spanned decades.

Two thousand years ago on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit crowned each of the one hundred and twenty with fire, and they were never the same. Their baptism of fire on that day brought forth "God and man rejoicing together as one in the charismatic language," the first preached message, and 3,000 salvations. These were not asbestos Christians, as Reinhard Bonnke likes to call those who seem fireproof to the touch of the Holy Spirit. Every one of those in the upper room that day was found flammable for the kingdom of God. You and I are to be no different. The fire of God knows no boundaries. It knows no limitations. How He introduced Himself 2,000 years ago is how He wants to invade your being today. The Holy Spirit wants you to be the burning bush through which He speaks and releases His power.

Maybe you have tamed the flame upon your life. You have contained it, keeping it safe. No one is getting burned, including you. But you are not called to be safe. You are called to partner gloriously with a God who is an all-consuming fire. You are called to burn with the fire of the Holy Spirit, a fire that is passionate for the things of heaven and dangerous to the things of hell. Bonnke reminds us that there is no amen to finalize the Book of Acts. What the Holy Spirit kindled with the early apostles, He desires to continue today through each one of us. We are still the Acts church. We are His earthen vessels, crafted to dispense His presence, His glory. We are to pour Him out, and when we do, we demonstrate that we have "bathed in liquid fire."

This book has one destination. It is designed to set the temple of the Holy Spirit on fire, and that temple is you. Reinhard Bonnke's desire for this book is God's desire, and that is for you to know the Holy Spirit and to burn without apology and with intention. Your passion will be kindled and intensified as you read from Bonnke's perspective. You will be fueled to stir God's passion for souls, for the impossible and for the extraordinary. You will know Him and demonstrate His indwelling as you yield to the instruction presented. Jesus desires for people to see Him in your eyes. The Holy Spirit is a person, and He longs to commune and to cohabit with you. Bonnke says, "We are to live in the reality of His constant presence."

To live in that reality is to remain flammable. As you read this book, shake off any residual asbestos and refuse to be anything but flammable for God!

Why You Might Be Unknowingly Surrendering This Vital Position in Prayer

Like most people, I love the book of Daniel for many reasons, not the least of which it is only 12 chapters long. Yet, within those 12 chapters exists enough mystery, supernatural experience and foundational doctrine to spend an entire lifetime studying without completely mining its depths. Most believers are familiar with some of the events that take place within Daniel if only from the children's storybooks they read in Shabbat or Sunday school. The book contains the "Fiery Furnace," "The Handwriting on the Wall," "The King's Dream of the Statue of Four Kingdoms" and "The Den of Lions."

However, within the book, in the middle of these supernatural events is a key to why these events took place and the key to have the supernatural take place in your life when you are under spiritual attack.

As this amazing book begins, we are introduced to Daniel and three other Jewish men: Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, who had been taken as slaves to Babylon from Jerusalem. These four men are the key figures in each of the events mentioned above.

As the events unfold, we find these four faithful followers of G-D living among a pagan people under the authority of a pagan king. From the very outset of the book, we find the faith and commitment of these men being tested by those around them.

In Daniel 1:5-16, we find the four Israelites rejecting the king's delicacies and instead choosing to follow the dietary laws found in the Torah. Their faithfulness to G-D's commandments not only provided health and wellness, but as we read in verse 17, it appears that as a result of their faithfulness, G-D blessed them: "As for these four youths, God

gave them knowledge and skill in every *branch of* learning and wisdom. And Daniel had understanding in all *kinds of* visions and dreams.”

The next test comes in Chapter 3, when the king sets up a golden statue and commands everyone to bow down and worship the statue when music would play. The punishment for not worshipping was being cast into a fiery furnace. The response of Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah is found in Daniel 3:17-18: “If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But *even if He does not*, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up.”

In Daniel 3:28-29, we read that the result of this faithfulness was that instead of Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah worshipping the false golden statue, the king worships the G-D of Israel.

Then Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him. They have defied the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. Therefore I make a decree that every people, nation, and language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill, because there is no other God who can deliver in this way.”

The next test takes place in Daniel 6, and it is in the details of this test that we find a supernatural resource that Daniel understood. It was the key to his victories and will, if implemented, provide the key to your victories over the spiritual attacks of the adversary.

In Daniel 6:5-10, Daniel's adversaries have devised an attack against him. They have convinced the king to decree that for 30 days, nobody could pray to any other god or man than the king. Rebellion against this decree would result in the guilty being thrown into a den of lions.

In Daniel 6:10, we read both Daniel's response and the key to his victories.

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house. And his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled on his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously."

Daniel didn't simply pray as a result of the decree. His prayer wasn't a prayer of response or reaction to the actions of the king and those who had come against him. Daniel's prayer was a continuation of his committed prayer life. In other words, Daniel didn't change because of what the king did. Daniel refused to change because of what the king did. Daniel, even though he was a slave in a foreign country and was far away from Jerusalem and the Temple of G-D, remained consistent in his service to G-D. He knew that he could not participate in the Temple services and sacrificial system, so he stopped what he was doing at the time of the sacrifices and prayed. In other words, while he could not do everything, he did everything that he could to observe the commandments of G-D.

In other words, Daniel's prayers kept him in a spiritual connection with the sacrificial system that provided atonement. The deliverance over the enemy's attack came because of the faithfulness of these four men. They were able to be faithful because, through prayer, they kept in connection with the sacrificial system.

So what does this mean for us today? The truth is that the key

is exactly the same. We should be as consistent in our prayer life as Daniel was—for the same reasons. If we want to be victorious against our enemy's attacks, we have to remain connected to Yeshua as our perfect and complete sacrifice.

Daniel wouldn't even let the threat of a den of lions keep him from praying. Yet, it seems that in our lives, we, without even the threat of lions, willingly surrender the power of dedicated daily prayer connection simply because we are too busy to pray. Then we wonder why it seems we are losing the spiritual battles in our lives and continue to fail when tested. If we can learn to be consistent in our prayer life no matter what, we will find that at the end of every battle and test is victory, just as Daniel's consistent prayer life brought victory in Daniel 6, which ends with this proclamation of victory by the king:

I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel. "For He is the living God, enduring forever; His kingdom shall never be destroyed, and His dominion shall be forever. He delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian (Dan. 6:26-28).

{eoa}

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These 4 Behaviors Make Your Family Relationships Toxic

A half-hour drive northwest of Boston is a small town called Woburn. In the 1960s, water began to grow scarce there, so city officials decided to drill two new wells in the east side of town, which was predominantly industrial. They did so despite warnings that the water would be poor quality. Almost immediately, the residents of East Woburn complained that the water not only tasted bad but smelled bad as well. Tragically, the water was toxic resulting in a number of residents, mostly children, being diagnosed with leukemia. The issue led to multimillion-dollar lawsuits by the families against the companies: W.R. Grace, Beatrice Foods and Unifirst Corp. The suits gained national attention. Eventually, a bestselling book called *A Civil Action* was written and a movie was made with the same title.

The sad reality is that these families thought they were getting something healthful and were instead ingesting something toxic. When it comes to our families, particularly children, we are in a position of strong influence. Our loved ones look to us to provide a nurturing, healthy and life-giving environment. We have the opportunity to be like fresh water or its opposite. Knowing the unhealthy behaviors and attitudes that make relationships toxic is the first step to cleaning things up. Here are four behaviors that lead to a toxic family.

1. Stick with the status quo, even if it's bad.

One of my favorite movies is *Pay It Forward*. In it the main character, a middle-school boy named Trevor says these words. "I think people are too scared or something to think things can be different. I guess it's hard for people that get so used to things the way they are, even if they're bad, to

change—and they kind of give up. And when they do—everyone—they kind of lose.”

If things are consistently bad, something is wrong with the cycle, and it has to be changed. Too many families fall back into the same dysfunction because it has become comfortable. You can't change other people, but you can change how you respond to them. Be prepared, though. When you respond in a way that is outside of the norm, they will try hard to get you to fall back in line. If they get under your skin and you respond by being unfazed, they will get more extreme. Stay focused and continue to break the cycle.

2. Blame as much as possible.

The people who have the healthiest relationships, deepest maturity and are the most self-assured tend to be quick in accepting responsibility. Even when they are one percent wrong and the other person is 99 percent wrong, they will take responsibility for their one percent first. Then they address the other person's errors. At the same time, people who blame often experience stagnated growth and a graveyard of former relationships. Take the lead by modeling what it looks like to be a person who accepts responsibility for wrongdoing, no matter what percentage is yours to own.

3. Hold grudges and don't forgive—or at least be slow to do so.

It may feel good, even right at times, but, in the end, it's relational poison. Holding onto grudges and anger is like inviting a couple of wild animals to live in your house. They are there, waiting, hoping to cause you to overreact to something minimal and create lasting strife and damage. The reward is a lower quality of life and a lot of energy spent. Forgive and let it go.

4. As much as possible, stay away from direct communication.

This includes triangulating, being passive-aggressive and being silent on a problem that needs confronting. Triangulating is when person A has a problem with person B. However, instead of talking to person B directly about it, person A just goes to person C and badmouths person B. It's a good way to promote dissension and bitterness. Being passive-aggressive is a tactic of undermining while posturing a position of understanding. All it produces is frustration, distrust and isolation. Finally, when there are relational problems that go uncontested, it causes the rift to become wider. Bad feelings get deeper. Good communication solves a world of problems.

What are some other behaviors and attitudes that lead to toxic family relationships? {eoa}

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