

NEWSBYTES

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“Let us be alert to the season in which we are living. It is the season of the Blessed Hope, calling for us to cut our ties with the world and build ourselves on this One who will soon appear. He is our hope—a Blessed Hope enabling us to rise above our times and fix our gaze upon Him.” Tozer

To Mock The Promise Of His Coming Is To Mock The Lord Himself

By Hal Lindsey





Signs of the end of the age continue to increase in number and intensity. The Bible presents many such signs, including this surprising one in 2 Peter 3:3-4. “Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.’”

It’s surprising because these people should know better. They are the ones who have heard about the coming of the Lord for years. They know something about the Bible. Many of them are, or at least represent themselves as, believers. They often belong to, or even lead, churches. Yet they choose to mock. And what is the object of their mockery? The Lord Himself.

“Where is the promise of His coming?” they ask. We find “the promise of His coming” in the Lord’s own words. The fulfillment of His promise depends on His truthfulness and His faithfulness. That’s why to mock His promise is to mock the Lord Himself. Jesus said it plainly. He said it often and in many different ways. In John 14:3, He put it like this. “I will come again.”

What’s plainer than that? I...WILL...COME...AGAIN!

Can you imagine looking into His face and mocking that which He promised? Yet one prominent Christian leader explained why he stopped preaching on Bible prophecy. He said young people “don’t want to hear that.”

Are we now supposed to ignore major portions of the Bible because of what one demographic or another “wants” to hear? Should the whims of “itching ears” rule our pulpits? Jesus chided the religious leaders of His day for not understanding the signs of the time (Matthew 16:14). What does Jesus now think of leaders who refuse to preach major portions of His message because young people “don’t want to hear that”?

Hebrews 9:28 says that Jesus will appear a second time “to those who eagerly await Him.” “Eagerly await” is the English translation of the Greek word *apekdechomai*. It means to look-for with joyous expectation. This passage uses the phrase “those who eagerly await Him” like a synonym for “the followers of Christ.” It’s not saying that we earn salvation by having the correct attitude about the

Second Coming. But it does point to the fact that eagerly awaiting His return is the normal, healthy posture of those who follow Jesus.

Yet individual churches and whole denominations now eschew any mention of the Lord's return. Many churches that once joyously taught the Second Coming, now treat it like a bad smell. Ironically, they have turned away from the teaching of Christ's return at a time when signs of that return are flooding the world. Contemporary events serve as vivid evidence of the Bible's reliability and accuracy. Yet many of those who say they preach the Bible refuse to let people know what's really going on.

Marketing experts should not choose our sermon topics. We must preach what Acts 20:27 refers to as "the whole counsel of God," and we must do so consistently.

The course of world events is again proving that the message God gave in the Bible is completely reliable. If we trust God, we will trust His word. When we trust His word, we are trusting Him.



Business As Usual: The American police state will continue to spread its wings whether the government is shut down or not

Author and veteran constitutional attorney John Whitehead is one of my heroes. Why? Because, unlike many commentators, essayists, journalists, etc., Whitehead doesn't pull his punches. He's a realist who gives the whole truth about America, not just bits and pieces of truth interspersed with nuggets of false hope about a coming human messiah.

Whitehead understands that one man or woman, even if well-intentioned, isn't going to turn America around. Not in four years. Not in eight years.

Most of what we see and hear in the media about what is going on in Washington is mere theater meant to keep the masses divided and distracted. Whitehead gives us a strong dose of realism in the article below. While reading it, keep in mind that at the same time the regime in Washington is opening the borders to create more crime and chaos, which it then uses to justify its continued building of an American police state, it is also working around the clock to think up new ways to harass and disarm law-abiding American gun owners. Their ultimate goal is a police state ruling over a disarmed population.

Once again, the police state is up to its old tricks, stoking tensions over whether or not the government is forced to shut down, even partially, due to a default on the national debt.

Yet, while these political games dominate news headlines, send the stock market into a nosedive, and put federal employees at risk of having to work without pay, nothing about these high-handed theatrics will diminish the immediate and very real dangers of the American Police State with its roadside strip searches, government surveillance, biometric databases, citizens being treated like terrorists, imprisonments for criticizing the government, national ID cards, SWAT team raids, censorship, forcible blood draws and DNA extractions, private prisons, weaponized drones, red light cameras, tasers, active shooter drills, police misconduct and government corruption.

Default or not, war will continue. Drone killings will continue. Surveillance will continue. Censorship and persecution of anyone who criticizes the government will continue. The government's efforts to label dissidents as extremists and terrorists will continue.

Police shootings will continue. Highway robbery meted out by government officials will continue. Corrupt government will continue. Profit-driven prisons will continue. And the militarization of the police will continue.

(Note what's happening at U.S. airports starting this month... more facial recognition scanning. Did they ask us?)

Indeed, take a look at the programs and policies that will not be affected by a government default on its debt leading to a possible shutdown, and you'll get a clearer sense of the government's priorities, which have little to do with serving taxpayers and everything to do with amassing money, power and control.

Surveillance will continue unabated. On any given day, whether you're walking through a store, driving your car, checking email, or talking to friends and family on the phone, you can be sure that some government agency, whether the NSA or some other entity, is listening in and tracking your behavior. Police have been outfitted with a litany of surveillance gear, from license plate readers and cell phone tracking devices to biometric data recorders. Technology now makes it possible for the police to scan passersby in order to detect the contents of their pockets, purses, briefcases, etc. Full-body scanners, which perform virtual strip-searches of Americans traveling by plane, have gone mobile, with roving police vans that peer into vehicles and buildings alike—including homes. Coupled with the nation's growing network of real-time surveillance cameras and facial recognition software, soon there really will be nowhere to run and nowhere to hide.

Global spying will continue unabated. The NSA's massive surveillance network, what the *Washington Post* refers to as a \$500 billion "espionage empire," will continue to span the globe and target every single person on the planet who uses a phone or a computer. The NSA's Echelon program intercepts and analyzes virtually every phone call, fax and email message sent anywhere in the world. In addition to carrying out domestic surveillance on peaceful political groups such as Amnesty International, Greenpeace and several religious groups, Echelon has also been a keystone to the government's attempts at political and corporate espionage.

Egregious searches will continue unabated. Under the pretext of protecting the nation's infrastructure (roads, mass transit systems, water and power supplies, telecommunications systems and so on) against criminal or terrorist attacks, Transportation Security Administration (TSA) task forces (comprised of federal air marshals, surface transportation security inspectors, transportation security officers, behavior detection officers and explosive detection canine teams) will continue to do random security sweeps of nexuses of transportation, including ports, railway and bus stations, airports, ferries and subways. Sweep tactics include the use of x-ray technology, pat-downs and drug-sniffing dogs, among other things.

The undermining of the Constitution will continue unabated. America's so-called war on terror, which it has relentlessly pursued since 9/11, has chipped away at our freedoms, unraveled our Constitution and transformed our nation into a battlefield, thanks in large part to such subversive legislation as the USA Patriot Act and National Defense Authorization Act. These laws—which completely circumvent the rule of law and the constitutional rights of American citizens, re-orienting our legal landscape in such a way as to ensure that martial law, rather than the rule of law, our U.S. Constitution, becomes the map by which we navigate life in the United States—will continue to be enforced.

Militarized policing will continue unabated. Thanks to federal grant programs allowing the Pentagon to transfer surplus military supplies and weapons to local law enforcement agencies without charge, police forces will continue to be transformed from peace officers into heavily armed extensions of the military, complete with jackboots, helmets, shields, batons, pepper-spray, stun guns, assault rifles, body armor, miniature tanks and weaponized drones. Having been given the green light to probe, poke, pinch, taser, search, seize, strip and generally manhandle anyone they see fit in almost any circumstance, all with the general blessing of the courts, America's law enforcement officials, no longer mere servants of the people entrusted with keeping the peace, will continue to keep the masses corralled, under control, and treated like suspects and enemies rather than citizens.

SWAT team raids will continue unabated. With more than 80,000 SWAT team raids carried out every year on unsuspecting Americans for relatively routine police matters and federal agencies laying claim to their own law enforcement divisions, the incidence of botched raids and related casualties will continue to rise. Nationwide, SWAT teams will continue to be employed to address an astonishingly trivial array of criminal activity or mere community nuisances including angry dogs, domestic disputes, improper paperwork filed by an orchid farmer, and misdemeanor marijuana possession.

Overcriminalization will continue unabated. The government bureaucracy will continue to churn out laws, statutes, codes and regulations that reinforce its powers and value systems and those of the police state and its corporate allies, rendering the rest of us petty criminals. The average American now unknowingly commits three felonies a day, thanks to this overabundance of vague laws that render otherwise innocent activity illegal. Consequently, small farmers who dare to make unpasteurized goat cheese and share it with members of their community will continue to have their farms raided.

The shadow government— a.k.a. the Deep State, a.k.a. the police state, a.k.a. the military industrial complex, a.k.a. the surveillance state complex—will continue unabated. This corporatized, militarized, entrenched bureaucracy that is fully operational and staffed by unelected officials will continue to call the shots in Washington, D.C., *no matter who sits in the White House or controls Congress*. By “government,” I’m not referring to the highly partisan, two-party bureaucracy of the Republicans and Democrats. Rather, I’m referring to “government” with a capital “G,” the entrenched Deep State that is **unaffected by elections**, unaltered by populist movements, and has set itself beyond the reach of the law.

These issues are not going away.

As I make clear in my book *Battlefield America: The War on the American People* and in its fictional counterpart *The Erik Blair Diaries*, they are the backbone of an increasingly aggressive authoritarian government, formed by an unholy alliance between the mega-corporations with little concern for the Constitution and elected officials and bureaucrats incapable or unwilling to represent the best interests of their constituents.

Whether or not the government runs out of borrowed money, it will remain business as usual in terms of the police state’s unceasing pursuit of greater powers and control.

From my “ok, whatever” file (insert honorary eye-roll here):

Rick Warren named first honorary chancellor at Spurgeon’s College

[MARK WINGFIELD](#) | MAY 16, 2023



Rick Warren may have retired as pastor at Saddleback Church but he isn’t done yet.

The man who is arguably the best-known Southern Baptist pastor in America has signed on to help lead a British university with ties to his great-

great-grandfather.

Spurgeon’s College announced May 15 that Warren has been installed as “honorary” chancellor of the London-based school named for the 19th century Baptist preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

The college, recently granted status as a university, currently enrolls about 600 students and employs 80 faculty and staff. It offers undergraduate degrees in theology and postgraduate courses in Christian thought and practice, digital theology, and biblical and theological studies.

Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892) was a British preacher and author who remains highly influential among conservative evangelicals today. He has been called the “Prince of Preachers,” and his sermons and commentaries are widely read still today.

Warren has a family connection to both Spurgeon and the college, which was founded in 1856. His great-great-grandfather studied at Spurgeon’s. He also was led to Christian faith, commissioned to Christian service and sent to America to plant churches by Spurgeon himself.

A century later, Warren also became a church planter, launching what would become the largest church in the Southern Baptist Convention — although the SBC has taken the first steps to expel Warren’s church over its ordination of women and allowing women to preach.

Last year, Warren retired as founding pastor at Saddleback Church, located in Orange County, Calif.

“I have a deep personal family connection over four generations to Charles Spurgeon and the ministry of the college he founded, and he is responsible for my family moving to America,” Warren said. “Further, my understanding of the meaning of ordination and conviction from Scripture on ministry leadership are identical to Charles Spurgeon’s published views. I am grateful to God and the college for this opportunity to give back to this community.”

Spurgeon’s College has been expanding its enrollment through an online learning community. A news release said Warren will offer guest lectures for those classes while also helping raise money for the school.

“The name of Spurgeon stands for a number of key values the church needs to recover today,” Warren said. “It represents strong Bible-based doctrine; passionate preaching; extensive church planting; winsome evangelism; a commitment to the ministry of every believer; and caring for the poor, the orphaned and the marginalized. I’d summarize Charles Spurgeon’s life and ministry with this slogan: ‘He made a Great Commitment to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission that produced a great church and a great college.’”

Warren becomes the school’s first-ever chancellor. The school’s vice chancellor and principal is Philip McCormack, a former chaplain in the British Army.

Spurgeon’s College describes itself as an evangelical school in membership with the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Evangelical Alliance and the Micah Network. “As a confessional college, it is committed to studying and understanding the gospel of Jesus Christ as witnessed to by the Scriptures and the challenges of the world in which this gospel is to be proclaimed.”

The college trains both women and men, preparing candidates for ordination to the Baptist ministry within the Baptist Union of Great Britain and beyond.

Headlines

Go to raptureready.com for full stories.

Very strong and shallow M7.7 earthquake hits southeast of Loyalty Islands, small tsunami produced

A very strong earthquake registered by the USGS as M7.7 hit southeast of Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia at 02:57 UTC on May 19, 2023. The agency is reporting a depth of 37.7 km (23.4 miles). EMSC is reporting M7.7 at a depth of 30 km (18.6 miles).

Drone video captures devastating scale of damage across northern Italy from deadly flooding

Rescue operations continue Friday after torrential rain wreaked mayhem in the northern regions of Italy this week, forcing thousands to leave their flooded homes.

60,000 Lbs. Explosive Ammonium Nitrate Missing from Train in California

Sixty thousand pounds of ammonium nitrate, used as a fertilizer but also in explosives, are missing from a rail shipment that was due to arrive in California from Wyoming.

U.S. Depression Rates Reach New Highs

The percentage of U.S. adults who report having been diagnosed with depression at some point in their lifetime has reached 29.0%, nearly 10 percentage points higher than in 2015. The percentage of Americans who currently have or are being treated for depression has also increased, to 17.8%, up about seven points over the same period. Both rates are the highest recorded by Gallup since it began measuring depression using the current form of data collection in 2015.

U.S. and its allies plan to provide Ukraine with F-16 fighter jets, official says

America and its allies plan to provide F-16s to Ukraine — although the fighter jets may not necessarily come directly from the United States — as part of a long-term effort to strengthen the country's security, a senior Biden administration official said Friday.

'Sad Day for Babies and Mums': FDA Panel Recommends Pfizer's RSV Vaccine for Pregnant Women

Advisers to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Thursday recommended, by a vote of 10 to 4, that the agency approve Pfizer's respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine for pregnant women, despite questions about the vaccine's safety.

'Patriot Act on Steroids': Bill to Ban TikTok Could Lead to 'Sweeping Surveillance and Censorship' in U.S., Critics Say

U.S. lawmakers are considering a bill that would grant the U.S. government vast new powers to surveil and censor U.S. citizens.

New York state Christian university fires 2 employees over pronouns in work emails

Two employees at a small Christian university in western New York have been fired over using their pronouns in work emails, according to reports.