

**Cornerstone United Methodist Church**  
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May 2004 Newsletter

**ABC's Latest 'Jesus' Special Denigrates Christianity,  
Groups Say**

By Jody Brown and Ed Vitagliano

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(AgapePress) - This likely comes as no surprise to most believers, but the mainstream media's presentation of Christianity is seldom offered in a positive light. The "left" or "liberal" view of the faith tends to be given more credibility and the "conservative" interpretation often gets short shrift. Interestingly, the ABC network -- which offered up another biased "Jesus" special on Monday night -- admits to such bias.

Television coverage of religious issues is up sharply compared to a year ago -- that according to a study from the Media Research Center, a conservative media watchdog. A study released on Monday finds the ABC, CBS and NBC evening newscasts did 303 stories on religion during the 12 months that ended March 1, compared with 121 stories during a one-year period in 1993.

The report finds the increase was due to Mel Gibson's box-office smash *The Passion of the Christ* and the 25th anniversary of Pope John Paul II's reign as well as coverage of sexual abuse within the Catholic Church, the struggle over a Ten Commandments monument in an Alabama courthouse and controversies over homosexual ministers.

Still, study author Tim Graham has complaints with the way many religious stories are reported. The group says the networks are often hostile to orthodox faiths and use mostly liberal religious scholars. He says believers "get excited" to see that religion is more in the news --

but that when secular biases appear in the reporting, they ask if it is really such a good thing.

Two pro-family groups are asking that exact question regarding ABC's Monday night broadcast of *Jesus and Paul -- The Word and the Witness*, a three-hour special hosted by Peter Jennings. According to the American Family Association, the program presented "expert" analysis from liberal theologians and carried an underlying worldview of distrust in scripture and Jesus' divinity.

"ABC-TV was unwilling to present a scriptural concept of Jesus, choosing to give a distorted view with the impression that the New Testament cannot be trusted," AFA says on its website. "Since (in their view) no reputable scholar trusts the New Testament, ABC elected to present modern day 'theologians' whom they portray as more knowledgeable and trustworthy to debunk the New Testament account."

Focus on the Family criticizes ABC for choosing Holy Week, the week leading up to Easter, to "attack the legitimacy of the literal interpretation of the Scriptures" and to try to "reduce the Word of God to myths." A spokesman for Focus says Jennings, who hosted a previous ABC special titled *The Search for Jesus*, was not successful in hiding his personal biases.

"Jennings repeatedly refers to 'the Jesus movement' as if it were just another political party or faction," Tom Neven says. "They also pit Paul against Jesus, as if the apostle taught things that contradicted Jesus, and some refer to Paul as 'the founder of Christianity.'"

American Family Association has contacted its supporters, asking them to voice their disapproval of ABC's biased reporting, labeling it as another example of the network's "disrespect for the Christian faith."

### **A Not-So-Shocking Revelation**

In a fairly stunning admission earlier this year, an ABC News column on its website stated that the U.S. media leans left on a number of critical political and cultural issues.

"The Note," which declares itself on the site to be from the "ABC News political unit," posted its thoughts in a February 9 column, admitting: "Like every other institution, the Washington and political press corps operate with a good number of biases and predilections."

What are those biases? "They include, but are not limited to, a near-universal shared sense that liberal political positions on social issues like gun control, homosexuality, abortion, and religion are the [accepted positions], while more conservative positions are 'conservative positions,'" the column said.

In late 2001, Bernard Goldberg, a 28-year veteran at CBS and a winner of six Emmy Awards during his career, criticized the news media in his best-selling book, *Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News*. Goldberg said that his experience at CBS demonstrated that the media is biased against conservatives and Christians.

## Acquire The Fire

Last month the youth went to Acquire The Fire in Greensboro. We stayed at Asbury UMC for the weekend. We had so much fun! There were some great guest speakers and a wonderful concert. There were four bands: Bleach, 7 Places, Grits and Radial Angels. They were great! Here are what a few people think:

Tim Harro- "The best part was Pastor Hill's speech on leprosy and how not to follow the crowd."

Stephanie Irizarry- "The clips of The Passion of the Christ were really moving but the concert was my favorite."

Daniel Todd- "It was rad!"

Erica Kocher- "It was wicked awesome!"

We all loved it and would like to thank our chaperones Mike Wiggs, Sharon Secord, Bryan & Chrystin Hahn and Dan Irizarry. Also, thank you to everyone who donated and made the trip possible!

-Alex Wiggs

## Youth Softball

POINT Man, Men's Group is planning to start a summer fellowship softball program (SFSP). The SFSP is for the young and the young at heart. There will be two teams for each appropriate age category. The SFSP is twice a month during June-September. The first game is

June 5 at 1:30pm and 3:00pm. SFSP schedule and team roster will be announced no later than May 23.

Group A- FOR THE YOUNG:

ages 7—12 (co-ed)

Group B- FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART:

ages 13—? (co-ed)

If you are interested in participating in this fellowship program, simply sign up at the information table!

## **Cornerstone Praise Team**

Cornerstone Praise Team is looking for new members for both services. Do you enjoy praising the Lord on Sunday morning? Have people ever told you that you have a nice voice? Do you play keyboard/piano, electric or acoustic guitar? We also need both high and medium range female singers and a strong male singer. Don't leave your musical gift hidden behind a shower curtain or in a dusty instrument case!

To serve on the praise team, commitment to the church in the form of membership is required. We rehearse once weekly on Wednesday night for the early service and Thursday night for the second service. Spending this time together, we do get to know each other well. We pray for each others needs and for the church like a small group, even though there is no topical study.

If you would like to explore the possibility of joining the praise team for either service, talk to Dwight Harro, or e-mail him at 3pines-harro@msn.com. If you don't have a recording of you in the shower, make a list of your favorite songs, or bring your favorite worship CD! Then he can meet with you to hear you play or sing. Or he can set up a time for you to come and play along with us or grab a microphone at one of our rehearsals to sing along.

-Dwight Harro

A college professor, an avowed Atheist, was teaching his class. He shocked several of his students when he flatly stated he was going to prove there is no God. Addressing the ceiling he shouted: "God, if you are real, then I want you to knock me off this platform. I'll give you 15 minutes!"

The lecture room fell silent. You could have heard a pin fall. Ten minutes went by. Again he taunted God, saying, "Here I am, God. I'm still waiting."

His count-down got down to the last couple of minutes when a Marine just released from active duty and newly registered in the class walked up to the professor, hit him full force in the face, and sent him over from his lofty platform. The professor was out cold!

At first the students were shocked and babbled in confusion. The young Marine took a seat in the front row and sat silent. The class fell silent...waiting. Eventually, the professor came to, shaken. He looked at the young Marine in the front row.

When the professor regained his senses and could speak he asked: "What's the matter with you? Why did you do that?"

"God was busy. He sent me."

## **Notes from the Council**

### **Tithes, Offerings and Gifts**

Cornerstone UMC practices what is known as Storehouse giving. This means that undesignated money given goes into a general fund. The general fund is used to meet the monthly financial obligations of the church. These include paying the power bill and funding ministries such as children's church. The word tithe actually means tenth, that is we why we give 10% of our incomes. This was first seen in Genesis 14. There are many times that there are special needs within our church such as missions. When we designate our tithe for specific things, the church is obligated to use funds for the area that they are designated for. This depletes the general fund and can cause us not to be able to meet our obligations. Special gifts and offerings are above our 10%. The council encourages you to only designate offerings and gifts over the 10% tithe. We need to give our best to God not because he needs it but because He deserves it.

### **Be careful turning into the church!!**

There is a new subdivision across the street from the church. Traffic turning left into the church can encounter oncoming traffic turning left

into the subdivision. This is an accident waiting to happen. Please be aware and careful!!

**Our church building is also our church home.**

Please clean up after using the building. Dirty dishes are being left in the kitchen, toys aren't being returned to their places in the nursery and trash is often left in the sanctuary and in the central meeting room. There are several outside groups that use our church for their activities. We are a great church and we want those that visit us to see that.

-Jennifer Crews

## **Relay for Life**

We are planning to have a bake sale at the track to gain more donations, so any additional desserts that you'd like to make or bring will all go towards that. And whatever is left over, I'll eat!!!

We're also going to have hamburgers and hotdogs for the team, however we're going to SELL THE HOTDOGS for people at the track for donations as well.

We also have the idea to have the Praise Team and band come out and play for everyone at the track. THIS IDEA IS STILL IN THE WORKS AND HAS NOT BEEN APPROVED YET...but we're workin it!!!

Registration is over, but you can always collect donations for the cause and join us at the track

Friday 14 MAY 04 at 6pm until 9:30am Saturday morning.

I would like ALL DONATIONS turned into me no later than 9 MAY 04 AT THE END OF 2nd SERVICE.

Anyone who would like to volunteer their efforts/support please call me and let me know your ideas or questions.  
home: 867-6490

email me at: [stischer@hotmail.com](mailto:stischer@hotmail.com)

Thank you Cornerstone Team for your support and dedication to this great cause we are sponsoring!!!

Godspeed,

Steve Tischer

Tell the people you love that you love them at every opportunity.

**AND ALWAYS REMEMBER:**

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.

## **Refiner's Fire**

Malachi 3:3: "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."

This verse puzzled some women in a Bible study and they wondered what this statement meant about the character and nature of God. One of the women offered to find out the process of refining silver and get back to the group at their next Bible Study.

That week, the woman called a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work. She didn't mention anything about the reason for her interest beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver. As she watched the silversmith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest as to burn away all the impurities.

The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot then she thought again about the verse that says: "He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver."

She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined. He answered yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep

his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed.

The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silversmith, "How do you know when the silver is fully refined?" He smiled at her and answered, "Oh, that's easy -when I see my image in it."

If today you are feeling the heat of the fire, remember that God has His eye on you and will keep watching you until He sees His image in you.

God grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
Courage to change the things I can,  
and the Wisdom to know the difference.

## **WOULD YOU LIKE A DOUGHNUT?**

There was a certain professor of theology named Dr. Christianson, a studious man who taught at a small college in the western U.S. Dr. Christianson taught the survey course in Christianity, which was a requirement of every freshman regardless of major.

Although Dr. Christianson tried to communicate the essence of the gospel in his class, he found that most of his students looked upon the course as nothing but required drudgery. Despite his efforts, most students refused to take the gospel seriously.

One year Dr. Christianson had a special student named Steve. Steve was only a freshman, but was studying with the intent of going on to seminary for the ministry. Steve was popular, smart, and athletic. Although only a freshman, Steve was the starting center on the football team, and was the best student in the professor's class.

One day Dr. Christianson asked Steve to stay after class so he could talk with him. "How many push-ups can you do?"

Steve said, "I do two hundred every night."

"Two hundred! That's pretty good, Steve." Dr. Christianson said. "Do you think you could do 300?"

Steve replied, "I don't know... I've never done 300 at a time."

"Do you think you could?" again asked Dr. Christianson.

"Well, I can try," said Steve.

"Can you do 300 in sets of ten? I have a class project in mind and I need you to do about 300 pushups in sets of ten for this to work. Can you do it? I need you to tell me you can," said the professor.

Steve said, "Well, I think I can. . . . yeah, I can do it."

Dr. Christianson said, "Good! I need you to do this on Friday. Let me explain what I have in mind..."

Friday came and Steve got to class early and sat in the front of the room. When class started, the professor pulled out a big box of donuts. They were the extra fancy big kind, with cream centers and frosting swirls. Everyone was excited it was Friday, the last class of the day, and they were going to get an early start on the weekend with a party in Dr. Christianson's class.

Dr. Christianson went to the first girl in the first row and asked, "Cynthia, do you want to have one of these donuts?"

Cynthia said, "Yes." Dr. Christianson then turned to Steve and asked, "Steve, would you do ten pushups so Cynthia can have a donut?"

Steve said, "Sure," and jumped down from his desk to do a quick ten. Then Steve sat again at his desk. Dr. Christianson put a donut on Cynthia's desk.

Dr. Christianson then went to Joe, the next in line, and asked, "Joe, do you want a donut?" Joe said yes, so Dr. Christianson asked Steve to do ten pushups so that Joe could have a donut. Steve did ten, and Joe got a donut. And so it went down the first aisle. Steve did ten pushups for every person so that each could have a donut.

And down the second aisle, till Dr. Christianson came to Scott. Scott was on the basketball team, was in excellent condition, and also was very popular.

The professor asked, "Scott, do you want a donut?"

Scott's reply was, "Well, can I do my own pushups?"

Dr. Christianson said, "No, Steve has to do them."

Scott said, "Then I don't want one."

Dr. Christianson shrugged and turned to Steve and asked, "Steve, would you do ten pushups so that Scott can have a donut he doesn't want?" With perfect obedience, Steve started to do ten pushups.

Scott said, "Hey! I said I didn't want one!"

Dr. Christianson said, "Look, this is my classroom, my class, my desks, and these are my donuts. Just leave it on the desk if you don't want it." And he put a donut on Scott's desk. Now by this time, Steve had begun to slow down a bit. He stayed on the floor between sets because it took too much effort to get up and down. You could see a little perspiration coming out around his brow.

Dr. Christianson started down the third row. Now the students were beginning to get a little angry. Dr. Christian asked Jenny, "Jenny, do you want a donut?"

Sternly, Jenny said, "No!"

Then Dr. Christianson asked Steve, "Steve, would you do ten more pushups so Jenny can have a donut she doesn't want?" Steve did ten and Jenny got a donut.

By now a sense of uneasiness filled the room. Students were beginning to say no and there were all these uneaten donuts on the desks. Steve had to put forth a lot of extra effort to get these pushups done for each donut. There began to be a small pool of sweat on the floor beneath his face; his arms and brow were getting red because of the physical effort involved.

Dr. Christianson asked Robert, who was the most vocal unbeliever in the class, to watch Steve do each pushup to make sure he did the full ten pushups in a set because he couldn't bear to watch all of Steve's work for all those uneaten donuts. He sent Robert over to where Steve was so that he could count the set and watch Steve closely. Dr. Christianson started down the third row.

During the class, however, students from other classes had wandered in and sat down on the steps that ran along the sides of the room. When the professor saw this, he did a quick count and saw that there were now 34 students in the room. He started to worry if Steve could do it. Dr. Christianson went on to the next person, and the next, and the next.

Near the end of that row, Steve was really having a rough time. He was taking a lot more time to complete each set. Steve asked Dr. Christianson, "Do I have to touch my nose to the floor on each one?"

Dr. Christianson thought for a moment. "Well, they're your pushups. You are in charge now. You can do this any way you want."

And Dr. Christianson went on. A few moments later, Jason, a recent transfer student, came to the room and was about to come in when all the students started to yell, "No! Don't come in! Stay out!"

Jason didn't know what was going on. Steve picked up his head and said, "No, let him come."

Professor Christianson said, "You realize that if Jason comes in you will have to do ten pushups for him?"

Steve said, "Yes, let him come in. Give him a donut."

Dr. Christianson said, "Okay, Steve. I'll let you get Jason's out of the way right now. Jason, do you want a donut?"

Jason, new to the room, hardly knew what was going on. "Yes," he said, "give me a donut."

"Steve, will you do ten pushups so that Jason can have a donut?" Steve did ten pushups very slowly and with great effort. Jason was handed a donut and sat down.

Dr. Christianson finished the fourth row and started on the visitors sitting on the step. Steve's arms were shaking from the effort of each pushup. Sweat was dripping off his face and by this time there was no sound except his heavy breathing. There was not a dry eye in the room.

The very last students in the room were two young women, both popular cheerleaders. Dr. Christian went to Linda and asked, "Linda, do you want a donut?"

Linda said, very sadly, "No, thank you."

Professor Christianson quietly asked, "Steve, would you do ten pushups so Linda can have a donut she doesn't want?" Grunting from the effort, Steve did ten very slow pushups for Linda.

Then Dr. Christianson turned to the last girl, Susan. "Susan, do you want a donut?"

Susan, with tears flowing down her face, began to cry. "Dr. Christianson, why can't I help him?"

Dr. Christianson, with tears of his own, said, "No, Steve has to do it himself. I have given him this task and he is in charge of seeing that everyone has an opportunity for a donut whether they want it or not. When I decided to have a party this last day of class, I looked at my grade book. Steve is the only student with a perfect grade. Everyone else has failed a test, or skipped a class, or offered me inferior work. Steve told me that in football practice when a player messes up he must do pushups. I told Steve that none of you could come to my party unless he paid the price by doing your pushups. He and I made a deal for your sakes. Steve, would you do ten pushups so that Susan can have a donut?"

When Steve finished his last pushup, with the understanding that he had accomplished all that was required of him, having done 350 pushups, his arms buckled beneath him and he fell to the floor.

Dr. Christianson turned to the room and said, "And so it was, that our Savior, Jesus Christ, on the cross, prayed to the Father, 'Into Thy hands I commend my spirit.' With the understanding that he had done everything that was required of him, he yielded up his life. And like some of those in this room, many of us leave the gift on the desk, uneaten."

Two students helped Steve off the floor and into a seat, physically exhausted but wearing a thin smile. "Well done, good and faithful servant," said the professor. "Then he added, "Not all sermons are preached with words."

Turning to the class he said, "My wish is that you might understand all the riches of grace and mercy that have been given you through the sacrifice of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

God the Father spared not his only begotten Son, but gave him up for us all."

Greater love hath no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.~~ John 15:13.

A wife invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to their six-year-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?" "I wouldn't know what to say," the girl replied. "Just say what you

hear Mommy say," the wife answered. The daughter bowed her head and said, "Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"

## Cornerstone Calendar

Monday		Pastor's Day off
Tuesday	6:30pm	Daisy & Junior Girl Scouts
Wednesday	10:00am	Morning Discipleship w/ Pastor Ben
	Noon	Intercessory Prayer in Office
	6:30pm	Bible Study w/ Richard Upchurch
	6:30pm	Fruit of the Spirit Women's Group
	6:30pm	Discovery w/ Pastor Ben
	6:30pm	FW Friends Children's Time
	7:00pm	Early Service Praise Team Practice
Thursday	7:00pm	Late Service Praise Team Practice
	7:00pm	POINT Man Men's Group
	7:00pm	Cadette/Senior Girl Scouts
Friday	7:00pm	Fellowship at the Ban's
May 2 - June 6		VBS Registration between services in Fellowship Hall
May 9		Youth Conducted Services
May 11	7:00pm	VBS meeting
May 13	7:00pm	Cub Scout sign-up
May 14-15		ACS Relay for Life
May 16	6:30pm	Church Council Meeting (all are invited to attend)
June 7-12		Vacation Bible School
June 13		Senior High Pool Party

## VBS Registration

Hello everyone! Every Sunday through May until June 6 will be registration time for Vacation Bible School. I will be in the Fellowship Hall between 10:30-11:00 every Sunday to sign everyone up! The cost is \$7 per child (this covers the cost of shirt and decal). REGISTRATION FEE NEEDS TO BE PAID IN CASH! Although I will be registering until June 6, it will be helpful to have the majority

registered by May 23 so Embroidery Designs will have plenty of time to heat iron the decals on the shirts. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call me at 875-7415. If someone is unable to pay the registration fee, just let me know and I will be sure that the cost is discreetly covered.

Thank you in advance,

Julie Layton