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BeaconOU

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John 12:46 "I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness."

"The Gospel According to The Simpsons- The Spiritual Life of the World's Most Animated Family", BOOK REVIEW

By Brian Jensen

Almost everyone has heard of a little television program called *The Simpsons*. In 1986, a poorly drawn short segment was created for the now defunct *The Tracy Ullman Show*. The Simpsons were born and garnered massive attention. In 1990 the show debuted on the Fox network and quickly became their highest-rated program, turning a struggling new station into one of the major networks.

Simpson's pandemonium ensued and fourteen years later, *The Simpsons* is still one of the highest rated shows on television. It has become the longest running animated primetime series in the history of television and is well on its way to being the longest running primetime television show ever. An average of 14.4 million people tune into the show each Sunday night. Another 4 million people watch syndicated reruns each week making it one of the most watched programs on television.

Over the years *The Simpsons* has not only garnered devout fans, but also devout opponents of the show. Their own tagline "The family that puts the fun in dysfunctional" has made many parents detest the show. George Bush Sr. once denounced it and Barbara Bush called it dumb. Christians of

many denominations, from Catholics to Charismatics, have protested the show and even taken legal actions against the yellow family.

But the real question is, "Is the show really that godless?"

Author Mark I. Pinsky would have you believe that wasn't so.

The Gospel According to The Simpsons – The Spiritual Life of the World's Most Animated Family delves into the way the family treats God, Jesus, Jehovah, Ganesha, and almost any religion that the writers might wish to dwell on.

In fact, *The Simpsons* might just be one of the most (dare we say it?) religious shows on television this side of TBN. In fact, almost 30% of all episodes include religious themes. But are these religious themes relevant?

Christian Magazine *The Door* said, "There is more spiritual wisdom in one episode of *The Simpsons* than there is in an entire season of *Touched by an Angel*." Another Christian magazine *Prism* stated, "The *Simpsons* is the most pro-family, God-preoccupied, home-based program on television. Statistically speaking, there is more prayer on *The Simpsons* than on any sitcom in broadcast history."

But what makes the Simpsons unique from a spiritual standpoint is that not only does the Simpsons family pray – but every time they do, God answers their prayers.

In the episode "Bart Gets an F", Bart has done so poorly in class that his teacher has no choice but to hold him back a year if he does not pass his next exam. Bart tries to study, but just

"We're proud of you boy," Homer tells the lad. Bart responds, "Thanks Dad, but part of this D- belongs to God."

It may sound like a joke, but it shows the basic essence of Mark 11:24 "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours" (NIV)

The Simpsons writers specifically try to show various types of

a demolition team that is smashing his house down. Homer screams, "It's the rapture! Quick, get Bart out of the house before God comes."

Marge, however, is a more devout Christian. She attends church and has a sincere belief in God. She makes her family attend church because she knows the essence of a Godly upbringing. In "Homer the Heretic", Homer starts his own religion. When he decides to stop going to church and asks his wife to join him, Marge says, "Homer, don't make me choose between my man and my God because you just can't win." Homer's response "There you go again, always taking someone else's side. Flanders, the water department, God..."

Lisa is the experimental Christian, still struggling in her faith and even dabbling with other religions. In "Bart Gets an F", Lisa explains her views. "I don't know who or what God is exactly. All I know is, he's a force more powerful than Mom and Dad put together."

Then there's Ned Flanders. Ned is kind of nerdy, but he truly is a Christian. This Oral Roberts University graduate is ridiculed and made fun of. But to his credit he is the sincerest form of Christian seen on television today. No matter how poorly Homer treats him; Ned al-



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can't seem to focus. The night before the big exam Bart gets on his knees and asks God to somehow give him one more day to study. Miraculously a blizzard hits Springfield and closes the school for a day. With an extra day of study Bart is able to barely pass his test with a D-

Christians through the different characters.

Homer is the type of Christian who goes to church each Sunday and believes that if you are a good person, you'll somehow get in through the pearly gates.

In the episode "Sideshow Bob Roberts", Homer is awakened by

■ Please see...Simpsons Cont. on p8

EVEN



ODD

What About Gays Need to Change?

It's not what you think!

by Tim Wilkins

I am aware the question in this article's title presupposes a change of some sort is necessary. My presupposition is grounded in the authority of God's Word. Secondary to that—I am a Christian and a former homosexual.

Having now used that inadequate and puzzling term



former *homosexual*, let me try to decipher the lingo and properly answer the question.

Moving the Fridge

A story will help. A man glances out his home window and sees his neighbor. The neighbor has his pick-up truck backed to his side door, both the storm and main doors are propped open and a refrigerator blocks the doorway. Obviously the fridge is being moved and help is needed, so the friendly onlooker rushes to help his red-faced neighbor.

"Need a hand with that refrigerator, Fred?" asks Steven as he throws himself into the task. "Sure do! This thing weighs more than I thought!" Fred and Steven throw their muscular arms around the appliance. With sweat rolling down their faces, they grunt and strain as the fridge moves a quarter of an inch then stops. They reposition their arms. The fridge barely sways even though both men are winded. After wrestling with the stubborn refrigerator for a



full ten minutes, Steven gasps "Fred, I don't believe we're ever going to get this thing in the house." "In the house!" exclaims Fred, "I trying to get it in the truck!"

The point is apparent—without a clear and focused understating of what direction the homosexual needs to go, he will progress no further than the refrigerator.

What Needs to Change?

An illustration will help. Imagine a very thin lady seated at a dinner table. She fidgets with her food, spoons it from one side of her plate to the other, eats little if anything, then excuses herself from the table.

"How can a visibly gaunt woman eat so little or not at all?" we ask. Our observation could lead us to two premises—either she dislikes food or she is not hungry. If we accept the first premise—that she dislikes food—our sympathetic approach might include a variety of recommendations.

We inquire about the type of food she does like—maybe fast food, Mexican or Chinese. If not perhaps the immaculate look of a seven-course meal appeals to her appetite.

Perchance she prefers her food prepared a certain way—broiled versus fried, rare versus well done. If none of these recommendations help, she could have sitophobia—a fear of food.

Let's now assume the second premise—that she is not hungry. If this suspicion is true she may be suffering from a malfunctioning metabolism. We make a doctor's appointment for her. The physician suspects a thyroid condition and orders blood work. And it's possible she has hypogeusia—a diminished sense of taste.

But as persistent as we've been, all approaches make little difference in this lady's eating habits, or lack thereof. She eats very little and infrequently! Our methods have been genuine, compassionate, and justifiable. We have devoted considerable time in our

quest to correct the dilemma, but to no avail.

The Puzzle Comes Together

However, if we learn this woman is anorexic, our approach changes dramatically and immediately. We realize our initial assumptions and strategies are ludicrous and laughable because they do not bear on the primary issue—a distorted self image. When this self-starved lady looks in the mirror she sees an obese lady looking back and no amount of persuasion will convince her otherwise.



When this primary issue is addressed, her food intake as well as the frequency of her eating increases. But take note—her increased eating is a *byproduct* of confronting the main issue—a distorted self-image. And I use the term image not only from a clinical perspective but a biblical one. Genesis 1:26-27 reads "And God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness'...So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Emphasis added)

Now the Analogy

How does this illustration apply to the homosexual condition? Just as it is absurd for the anorexic's family and friends to focus on trying to make her eat, so it is absurd for churches to try and make the homosexual heterosexual.

Society in general and churches in particular mistakenly believe freedom from homosexuality is marrying, having 2.3 children and a dog in the back yard. A 2001 secular study on the possibility of change shows the depth of this ingrained 'doctrine'. Dr Robert Spitzer, a Columbia University professor interviewed men and women who said they used to be homosexual; I was one of many he questioned. As beneficial as his study was and as much as I appreciate the vis-

ibility it gave to change, his study measured heterosexual function of the former homosexual—again missing the real issue.

"But" you ask, "don't homosexuals need to become heterosexuals?" No! Scripture never states nor implies all people must be heterosexual; it does say explicitly, however, that we are to avoid all forms of sexual immorality, which includes homosexuality. With that in mind have we not at times given the impression that homosexuals must "convert" to heterosexuality? Jesus did not say "Go and make [heterosexuals]"; He said "go and make disciples."

"But" you ask, "isn't heterosexuality the opposite of homosexuality?" No! The opposite of homosexuality is holiness!

As I wrote earlier, the term *former homosexual* is inadequate if not inappropriate. We mistakenly think a person who has found freedom from same-sex attractions is now *heterosexual*. The former homosexual man or woman may now experience heterosexual feelings, but heterosexuality should never be his nor the churches' goal. Heterosexuality is in many cases, but not all, a *byproduct* of the homosexual's dealing with the primary issues—a distorted self-image and faulty thinking—both of which Satan uses to "gain control."

The church will do well to remember that singleness is not a sin, immorality is. What all this means is that most of churches' advice to the homosexual misses the mark entirely!

Advice Well-Meant, but Wrong

Telling an adult gay son "you just need to date more; you haven't met the right girl" is senseless. Suggesting your lesbian friend "marry, settle down and everything will work out" is imprudent. Many gay men and women have married, thinking marriage will "heal" them and in most cases the consequences have been disastrous.

Some, hopefully not Christians, suggest a gay man "find a woman who can make you a man." While I've never heard a Christian give such advice, I did have a twenty-seven year old gay man share the following with me. He said he was fifteen when his "Christian" father

struggle. To 'help' his son the father bought him a subscription to *Playboy* magazine. That's equivalent to serving roast duck to the anorexic.

God does not heal one form of immorality with another form of immorality! How effective is a machine gun against a tidal wave? "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." (Eph 6:12) One married struggler told me his well-meaning pastor recommended he have more sex with his wife. Although the Bible does command conjugal rights (I Cor. 7:3-4), the pastor's advice bypassed the real issue.

Another pastor prayed with an unusually handsome and struggling man, then told him "I've got a really nice girl in the church I want you to meet."

A Christian friend who knows my testimony, met my wife Lisa and said "I can see why you left homosexuality; your wife is beautiful." While he is correct that Lisa is beautiful

his statement, like so many, represents a global ignorance on the subject. If attractive women were the remedy for male homosexuality, there would be no gay men.

Many gay men ask me how to cultivate a romantic/sexual attraction to women. I tell them that is not the issue; the issue is a distorted/broken image. (I have often thought how devious our adversary is. He not only confuses men and women regarding their sexual identity, he also confuses them and the church as to what healing really is, thus compounding the problem.)

■ Please see... **Gay Change continued p.7**

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Letters to the Editor



Our web-site is looking great. You can find us at www.ou.edu/beaconou. All of the past issues of the BeaconOU are there plus some information about future events we plan to have on campus. Letters to the Editor is my favorite section of every newspaper that I read. We love to hear from our readers. Remember, all letters to the Editor may be reprinted in a latter editon of the BeaconOU unless specific request is made by the sender not to publish their letter. You may notice the "God's Infallible Word" section. If you think that there are contradictions in the Bible or have questions about it, send them to us. Due to little space, we will respond to other sent letters in next editon. Let your opinion be heard. We are currently looking for people to help with funding, distribution, and advertising. Send your letters to beaconou@ou.edu Rick Thomas, Editor.

Dear Editor,

I am a fellow believer in Jesus that simply wants to respond with the other side of the abortion issue. My motive has no mixture of pride or arrogance, but solely love. Please don't take this as an attack, but as a concerned response to abortion.

A few weekends ago, I got the opportunity to cheer on OU as they thumped UCLA. While on campus, the front page of a newspaper article grabbed my attention; it happened to be the BeaconOU. I read through the front page, which discussed why a Christian would want to be a Republican and why a Christian would want to be a Democrat. Both articles had some great points; however, one "side note" by Vicki Murphy needed to be addressed. Midway through her article on why a Christian would want to be a Democrat she dove into the topic of abortion. Vicki's basic reasoning for being pro-choice was: 1) pro-choice doesn't mean pro-abortion and 2) when abortion was illegal it

didn't prevent women from ending pregnancies. Within this point Vicki pointed out that many women died each year in "back alley" abortions performed illegally in the US. I quote, "If one truly believes that abortion is a sin, then does it make sense as a Christian to be unmoved by the thought of women dying in sin? Or is the Christian view to want those women to live for the chance to repent of their sins and come to the Lord? Jesus didn't preach a gospel of revenge, but of forgiveness." 3) the danger of giving the choice over to the government. She claims by giving the government this choice in family planning, we are one step closer to them one day being able to make abortion mandatory after the first child (in the case our country becomes overpopulated). Vicki's last point: 4) She believes in One God and one faith, but banning abortion would take away a person's dignity and free will.

■ Please see...Letters continued on p4

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Growing Spiritually

Do you have a desire to know more about God, grow in your relationship with Christ, or learn more about what Christians believe? The Bible is the primary source to turn to. Here are some favorite internet links of mine that may help in your personal studies. I may not agree with the full content of the web-sites, but they had some awesome free resources that I believe would benefit everyone. I know that you will be amazed by the content of www.christiananswers.com which has more resources than I could ever list and they include a lot of videos on-line.

www.icr.org, www.ou.edu/css, and www.drduino.com include a lot of evolution and creation research.

www.biblegateway.com is a searchable Bible on-line with a concordance and many translations available.

www.crossministry.org is a ministry that reaches out to those struggling with temptations of homosexuality.

www.cbn.com is a Christian news web-site.

www.ag.org is the Assemblies of God web-site which includes articles on current issues in society and the church.

www.livingwaters.com includes Kirk Cameron and Ray Comfort, ministry stuff, videos, and audio links.

www.wallbuilders.com and www.presidentialprayerteam.org has some great stuff about America's Godly heritage.

www.higherpraise.com has early church writings for free on-line. You can get a free CD with church reformers writings at this ministry's website: www.FreeBibleSoftware.com or by calling 1-866-66-BIBLE.

www.ou.edu/beaconou has all of the past editions of the BeaconOU on-line, information about future events, and web links to other campus ministries. May Truth Increase!!!



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By ANNE GEARAN,
Associated Press Writer

On the Net: Intercollegiate Studies Institute: <http://www.isi.org>

BeaconOU Editor's note: If you are interested in the beliefs of the founding father's, go to www.wallbuilders.com and www.presidentialprayerteam.org

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Letters to the Editor Continued from pg. 3

I would quickly like to address each of these points.

1) *Pro-choice doesn't equal pro-abortion.*

This reasoning doesn't make complete sense to me. Pro-choice means you support the "right" of a woman to take the life of her unborn child. Either directly or indirectly (however you choose to see it) you are supporting abortion. I can't imagine a person taking this stance on other issues. People aren't pro-choice for murder, and people aren't pro-choice for robbery. You mentioned that **families** make the decision...that's interesting considering the fact that young ladies have abortions daily without their mothers or fathers knowing about it.

2) *It didn't prevent women from having abortions.*

Our laws against drugs don't keep all people from doing drugs. Our laws against speeding don't keep all people from speeding. Our laws against murder don't keep all

people from murdering. Neither would a law against abortion keep all people from having abortions. Just because some people choose to disobey a law doesn't mean that a law shouldn't be in place. Laws are based (or should be) on what is right, not on what is easy, not if people will obey it or not. I suppose that we could legalize heroin. Addicts could then get clean needles to possibly stop the spread of diseases. It might save lives. It's funny to me that you focus solely on the women. Never one time did you mention the child (with a heart beat, with brain waves) who is violently murdered, in some procedures literally torn from limb to limb. Never one time did you mention the psychological after affects abortions have on women. I personally have a friend who was forced into an abortion (against her will) by her parents, who can barely function in society almost 8 years later because of it. Never did you mention the link between abortion and higher rates

of breast cancer. Never one time did you mention the ladies who still die from abortions, namely the young girl in California who recently chose to have an abortion and died. Sadly enough, her dad never even knew she was pregnant. As a Christian, I am moved by women needlessly dying in "back alley" abortions. I am equally moved by innocent babies being murdered. I don't support revenge. I support both parties living.

3) *It is one step closer to the government mandating one child.*

It seems to me the more logical conclusion would be the very opposite. We are closer as a country to a one-child limit (performing abortions on subsequent children) with abortion being legal. It would be much more difficult to move from a law banning abortion to a law mandating it than it would be to go from a law permitting abortion to a law mandating abortion.

4) *People have the right to argue and to persuade people that their view of abortion is correct, but to make that decision for them takes away their dignity and free will. In a nation where abortion is legal, everyone can honor their own beliefs by making their own choices based on their own beliefs.*

Why don't we let people murder? Some people believe that it's perfectly fine. Are we taking away their dignity and free will? Of course not. Instead we are granting dignity and a right to live to those they would murder. This is interesting that you are using this argument...the right of the woman. The right of the woman who made a bad decision, who was mature and responsible enough to have intercourse with a guy and then became pregnant. In this case she has exercised her right. So let's now make sure that everyone involved has the opportunity to exercise their right. What about the rights of the speechless

baby they chose to create? When do we get to hear from the child, the byproduct of their rights? When do we get to hear from the only one who is truly innocent in the situation? Sadly enough, we don't. That is why we must speak for them. Place yourself in a mother's womb who wanted to abort you, wouldn't you want a chance to breathe, to experience a sunset, to someday get married. Of course you would. Nevertheless, one out of three pregnancies end in abortion; over **40 million speechless babies** have been murdered over the last 30 plus years due to abortion, in what has become the American Holocaust.

My prayer is that God would reveal to all (myself included) the value of his life.

God Bless, Rodney Hobbs
Editor's response: Thank you for writing. Unfortunately, I was not able to contact Vicki Murphy for a response. Hopefully, it will be in the next edition.



The Witch Who Found Christ

By David Kithcart

The 700 Club

CBN.com – To Sherry Barnett, wicked things were cute, the concept of death inviting. But her growing obsession with the occult brewed serious side effects. She felt her very life being sucked out of her.

Barnett: “In kindergarten, during art time, I made — out of Play-Doh — a little coffin with a little body in it. And I explained to the teacher that this was a vampire.”

Just listen to Sherry Barnett for a while, and it won’t be long before you’ll detect a consistent theme running through her conversation.

Barnett: “Halloween was to me as a child what Christmas was probably to other children. I thought it was a cool thing. You know, wicked things were cute, and I didn’t see any harm in it. When the going got rough, I could always rely on suicide because that was a way of escaping. I liked the idea of just being dead, not existing anymore.”

Barnett says that there was nothing unusual about her home life. So what is it that makes a person’s obsession in life, death?

Barnett: “My childhood was the perfect childhood. I had perfect parents. We did not have the Lord in our home, but I had everything a child could want. The fascination for the occult began back when I was five, and it started with simple things like little childhood storybooks about witches and ghosts. And that just grew.”

As she grew older, Barnett’s childhood obsession with vampires increased.

Barnett: “It just grew into a lifestyle for me. I mean, as opposed to somebody else just, watching a vampire movie and saying, ‘Oh, you know, that was cool,’ I took it to heart. I made it my life.”

Indulgence in drugs, alcohol and sex were also becoming a lifestyle for Barnett. And her fascination with the occult brought with it a price. When she slept, her dreams became nightmares that were hard to distinguish from reality.

Barnett: “Sometimes I could even almost hear something coming down the hallway. I could feel it, like something was coming into my room. And it got so bad that I couldn’t move. I couldn’t wake up. And I just always remember that every time I’d struggle, I’d hear the same voice telling me, ‘You know, Barnett, don’t struggle. The more you fight, the worse it’s going to get for you.’

Barnett’s drug and alcohol use escalated as she tried to suppress the dreams, but the result was depression and worse nightmares.

Barnett: “I would feel this heavy presence on me, pushing me down, trying to suck all the life out of me. And then I would hear this screaming. It would start real quiet, and the scream would get louder and louder and louder to the point where it was just deafening to my ears. And I would wake up screaming myself. I remember this one night that I was just so depressed, I wanted to die. But that night, I thought, ‘Well, I’m going to give myself one more chance, and I’m going to pray to the devil.’ I wanted to pray to Satan himself.

‘I’m going to pray to Satan and I’m going to ask him to come and help me. I’m going to

“When the going got rough, I could always rely on suicide because that was a way of escaping.”

give my life to him. I’m going to give my soul to him. And maybe, he’ll help me out of this.’ And so I drew a pentagram on the floor, I got the candle, put it in the circle with me and I prayed to the devil. And I just gave him my soul that night. Nothing happened. I cried and cried and cried, and still nothing happened. And I thought, ‘Well, that’s not going to work.’”

And nothing else was working for Barnett. Even marriage and a baby could not drive the depression away. When a co-worker gave her husband, Rick, a Bible, Barnett took an interest in it.

Barnett: “I sat down and read a little bit of it, and then I started thinking about it. And that’s really what started me thinking about God. And when I started reading that Bible, it was like something started asking me, ‘Well, Sherry, where is your hope?’

“I just grew up thinking that God was out there, but he wasn’t for me. He was for priests, he was for pastors, he was for other people, but not for me.”

■ Please see...Cont. on p7

For Some Halloween is the Holiest Night of the Year

By Richard N. Ostling

Associated Press Religion Reporter

Article is online at cbn.com

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Upcoming Events For Campus Ministries

Jacob's Ladder Bible Study

"The Gospel according to Moses."

A Messianic Bible Study in the Book of Genesis. Jacob's Ladder Bible Study meets on Thursday nights from 7:00 to 8:30. at 1311 Jenkins Ave. on the corner of Lindsey and Jenkins under Padthai.

CRU Tuesday's Nights at 9:00pm at Common Ground (Main St. & University) Info. 473-1387. www.oucru.com shawn.mcgrath@uscm.org.

SoonersForChrist

Thursday at 7PM
Worship Service
1001 Elm Ave.
(405) 321-4474
www.soonersforchrist.org

LifeStream

Thursdays 9p.m. at Journey Church the old Buy for Less building on 12th and Alameda St. Brad Baker- College Pastor Brad@journeyonline.tv 217-8700 www.oulifestream.com

R.U.F. Reformed University Fellowship

Wednesday Nights, 9:15 Dale Hall Tower Lounge, 9th floor Teaching on Song of Solomon: Dating, Sex and Marriage this semester. Doug www.ouruf.org

Wesley Foundation:

Vespers - Tuesday 8:00 p.m.
Frosh Fellowship Sundays 6:30pm wesley@wesleyou.org www.wesleyou.org
Rev. Brad Humphrey 321-6266

OU Christian Faculty and Staff

will co-host a speaker's series throughout the school year that is open to the public at 4:30 PM in the Conoco Room, basement of Bizzell. Tues, Nov 11 Mike Strauss, Scientific Evidence of the Existence of God. Thurs, Dec 4 Ken Stephenson, Knockin' on Heaven's Door: Icons of Eternity in Rock Music.

LUNCH- For Faculty and Staff only, every other Monday, 12:00 pm, Alma Wilson Rm., OMU and prayer in the weeks between the discussion meetings. Info. kstephenson@ou.edu. www.ou.edu/faculty/organizations/ouchrfas/

Intelligent Design Evolution Awareness I.D.E.A.

October 29, 2003 Dr. Jeff Harwell Wednesday 7PM for more info. check web-site or e-mail ideclub@ou.edu www.ou.edu/css

Chi Alpha XA

Tuesday night, XAlive 8:00-9:30P.M. at Rome XII above Papa John's in Stubbeman Village Mall. Come check out our new office on the third floor of the Union/ Conoco Leadership Wing Praise God! He has increased our meeting space. We now have the other side of Rome XII and some major renovation has taken place. Come check it out! Greg & Susan Tiffany OU XA Campus Pastors office - OMU / Conoco Leadership Wing **OU Outreach Center - Rome XII / Stubbeman Village Mall** phone: (405) 325-1377 e-mail: OUXA@aol.com www.ou.edu/student/xa

International Student Fellowship- ISF

Meets on Monday nights at 7:30 PM at Rome XII / Stubbeman Village Mall call Wayne, 413-3713 <http://www.ou.edu/student/isf>

Baptist Student Union

Thursday night Vespers 7PM at 435 W. Boyd (405) 321-2810 mailbox@oubsu.org www.oubsu.org

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By **SMW**,

In the past I was always either turned off or intimidated by 'religious' people. It seemed they were always trying to force me into something, always trying to 'save' me. The first thing that comes to mind is, me as a child sitting there in the 'big church' service during Vacation Bible School. At the end of the short sermon, as all the kids were fidgeting, they would have the traditional time to come to the front and accept Jesus as your savior. I dreaded that part. I would reluctantly look down the pew at the old woman who was our teacher. She seemed to have it in for me for some reason, or maybe it just seemed that way. She would sit there and stare at me with a serious look while pointing to the front. It was like a reoccurring nightmare, everyday till the end of the week.

It saddens me when I think of all the kids out there that are being pressured by the church or by certain people. That's not what it's all about.

Come on in, the water is fine

Accepting Jesus is the single most important decision you will ever make in your life. It shouldn't be pressured or forced. The person should be taught the Word of God and counseled with. This also presents a stereotype of what 'people of God' are like.

I'm living proof you don't have to be a stuffy, fuddy duddy to be a person of God. And it's a shame that people out there who have not grown up in the church or in a Christian home, have that perception and are afraid to try the water. My message to them is, come on in, the water's fine. And God doesn't care about your past transgressions; your sins are washed away when you do accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

People of God are not weird; they are not perfect, but they are people of all races, nationalities and backgrounds. They are just people who have confessed their sins and asked Jesus to come into their hearts. After this happens,

your life will have more meaning. There is nothing more pleasurable than being filled with the Holy Spirit.

I still have to work, I still have to mow the yard, and I still have to feed the cat. I still look the same, I still dress the same, I still have bad days sometimes, arguments, headaches, etc.. But, the difference is I have a friend with me. A Friend who comforts and gives me strength, who is always with me, who makes me feel good. It's awesome to realize that you can have a personal relationship with the Creator of the universe! And you will eventually spend eternity with Him.

Read the Bible, study the Bible, and absorb the Bible. This is God's Word. Go ahead and pray to Him, don't be afraid. Ask for forgiveness; ask for strength, ask for Him.

And when you're ready, come on in, the water's fine.

God's Infallible Word?

If you feel that there are contradictions in the Bible, send them to us at beaconou@ou.edu and we will address them. www.ou.edu/beaconou

In our last two editions, we made this offer to anyone truly interested. If you have something that you would like to ask us about the Bible, we will keep your name anonymous. True Christians claim the Word of God to be infallible. There are many people who have been stumped by accusations of contradictions being in the Bible. **2 Peter 3:15**

“And consider that the long-suffering of our Lord [His slowness in avenging wrongs and judging the world] is salvation (that which is conducive to the soul’s safety), even as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the spiritual insight given him, **16** Speaking of this as he does in all of his letters. There are some

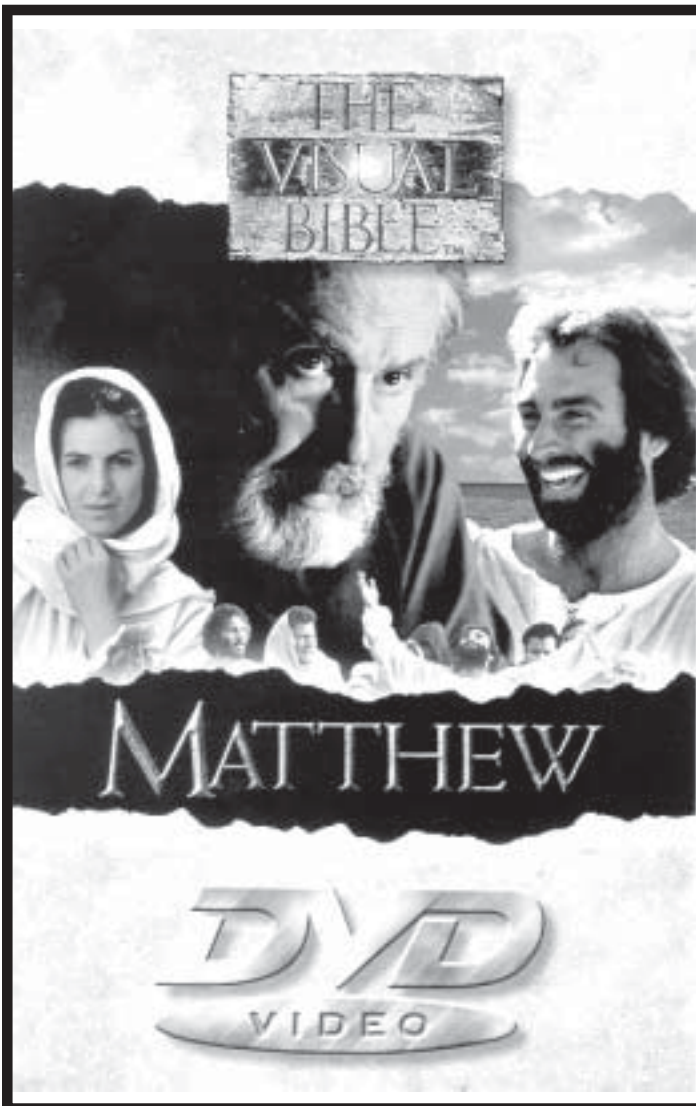
things in those [epistles of Paul] that are difficult to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist and misconstrue to their own utter destruction, just as [they distort and misinterpret] the rest of the Scriptures. **17** Let me warn you therefore, beloved, that knowing these things beforehand, you should be on your guard, lest you be carried

away by the error of lawless and wicked [persons and] fall from your own [present] firm condition [your own steadfastness of mind].” How will you know if what is being spoken about the Scripture is true or not? It is so important to study the Word of God for yourself. If all Christians and especially teachers would do what Paul commended Timothy

to do, the world would be a better place. **2 Timothy 2:15** “Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth”. www.biblegateway.com

Finally, A Visual Bible Study on Campus.

The Visual Bible is a word for word production of the Book of Matthew from the New International Version of the Bible. It is awesome to see the Scriptures come to life. Servant Life meets on Mondays from 6PM-7PM at Rome XII above Papa John's next to the dorms.



The Witch Who Found Christ cont. from pg. 5

Barnett says she was finally ready to believe that maybe God was for her.

Barnett: “I was in the kitchen doing my housework, and I just kind of like whispered to myself, ‘Well, God, if you can take away the love for drugs, I will give my life to you.’ And I just said, ‘God, I can’t do ‘it. I cannot do it.’ And I didn’t realize it at the time, but I was really talking to God. And God heard me.”

As she went to sleep that night, Barnett says that something unusual happened.

Barnett: “It was like a flash of lightning went through me. And then I just sat up in bed, I bolted up and I felt like I was sober — instantly sober.”

“And then all of a sudden I heard this voice tell me — it was a comforting voice. It wasn’t anything scary this time — a voice telling me, ‘Sherry, you’re going to stop this. You have to stop this. No more drugs; no more. You’re going to have to stop this.’ And right away, I just felt like I was sober, but I was scared. I was shaking. And I had this new type of feeling in me.”

“That little prayer that I rambled off in the kitchen — it wasn’t even anything real formal. It was pretty much just talk, you know. To me, I didn’t think that He was really listening to me. But He did. He delivered me. And that day was when I gave my life to the Lord. I said, ‘Lord, this is it. I’m going to be a Christian. I’m going to live my life for you.’ And I’ve never been the same.”

“There was no more blackness inside. There was no more having to run out and try to do something else to fill up that blackness — that darkness, that oppression that was inside of me. It was just — it was gone. It was gone. And I never think about death anymore.”

Barnett’s husband gave his life to Jesus Christ soon after Barnett. They’re now rearing their three children in a home where love, not fear, reigns.

Barnett: “The Lord has brought so much hope into my life. I know who I am. I know why I’m here. And I have stability now. He’s faithful. He’s been faithful to me to this day. He hasn’t let me down at all.”

What About Gays Change cont. from pg. 2

By dealing with the primary issue, gay men begin to see themselves as masculine and lesbians begin to see themselves as feminine; the same-sex attractions diminish and in many cases opposite-sex attractions occur.

Not a Means to an End

During my own journey out of homosexuality I made a significant discovery--*Jesus Christ is not a means to an end.* He is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. I did not go

to Christ to get something else, namely heterosexuality. I went to Christ to get HIM!

When we learn this truth, we will witness prison doors falling off their hinges and chains disintegrating.

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, Unlocking the Mystery of Life, Countdown to Eternity, The Hope, The Messiah: Prophecy Fulfilled, and The Indestructible Book. On our web-site, you can click on the film titles to read reviews or watch film trailers, www.ou.edu/beaconou. We are seeking 15 faithful financial contributors that will commit to give \$10 per edition. There are eight editions printed per year. Thank you. www.ou.edu/beaconou

The Gospel According to the Simpsons cont. from pg. 1

ways turns the other cheek. He always tries to do good, even when others are unkind to him. He uses the Holy Spirit as his guide and wouldn't hurt a flea. He lives the life he believes and does not waver from his faith, even in times of adversity.

Ned Flanders is an example of Christianity that the writers of the show would like more people to adhere to. Al Jean, a writer and producer for the show said, “We don't mock Ned's faith. We actually think he's a guy with a lot of wonderful qualities. If people accuse us of being anti-Christian, we just ask whether they'd rather have Flanders as their neighbor or Homer.”

Because of Flanders portrayal, The Simpsons is able to deal with serious Christian subjects on a regular basis.

Christianity plays such an important role in the Flanders household. His doorbell chimes ring “Bringing in the Sheaves.” He attends church three times a

week. His family spends time together and prays before meals and bed. He tithes and gives back to the community by volunteering at hospitals, soup kitchens, homeless shelters and foster homes. He prays at sporting events so that the players will be safe. He embodies Matthew 19:19 “Love your neighbor as yourself.” (NIV)

However, opponents of the show take a look at Reverend Lovejoy and complain that he's a mockery of Christianity and its leaders. But the producers are quick to point out that they haven't made a mockery of Lovejoy. Instead they have shown a real human being who just happens to be a minister, struggling with life.

Reverend Lovejoy may be hypocritical at times, but he is never evil. He is a man who has a troubled marriage with a gossipy wife. He loves electric trains and loves to play football. He's the author of a book *Someone's in*

the Kitchen with Jesus.” He is, in essence, a human being trying to lead others to a life of perfection when he, himself, is not perfect.

So, the question is, is The Simpsons a relevant theological show, worthy of a book that is sold in the religious sections of major bookstores?

The book has done extremely well and has many churches across the country reevaluating its philosophy on The Simpsons. In fact, the First Presbyterian Church of Bonita Springs, Florida has begun a six-week Sunday school class based on The Simpsons. “This is a new learning experience for them,” Louis Thompson, parish associate for counseling ministry said of the dozen or so participants in the class. “It's not every day that a church tries to find God in a television series — an animated one at that.”

Years ago Thompson says he tried watching The Simpsons,

and “It just turned me off.” Then when he heard about the publication of Pinsky's “The Gospel According to the Simpsons” he picked it up and was pleasantly surprised. He figured, “If I missed that (the spiritual relevance), maybe some of our parishioners did.”

Even though the show never really discusses salvation in a traditional way, it is interesting to look at for the underlying meaning of the religious themes.

The show Thompson discussed during one particular Sunday class is “One Fish, Two Fish, Blow Fish, Blue Fish.” Lisa convinces the family to have dinner at a Sushi restaurant. Homer orders a blowfish and is accidentally poisoned. Finding out he only has 24 hours to live, Homer goes through the different stages of grief - denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance - within a 30-second period.

Thompson was able to take this episode and deal with people in his church who had lost loved ones and experienced the different stages of grief.

At the end of the episode, Homer says his farewells to the family and in his dying moments pulls out the “Good Book – on tape, as read by Larry King.” Homer turns to God in what he thought were his last moments showing once again the relevance God has in the show.

Obviously, The Simpsons is not meant to be a religious show; however, one cannot deny the spiritual impact it has by often making viewers think about God. Even Christ himself used parables to teach. The Simpsons may not be God's answer to reaching people, but it's nice to know that every Sunday, people who never step foot in a church may find themselves thinking about the Almighty because of one dysfunctional family.