

RELIGION

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--Luke 14:23

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Religion and Crime Examined by NIHR

In the war against crime, a newly published study in a leading criminology journal suggests a unique weapon - participation in religious activities. According to the researchers, the greater an individual's involvement in religious activities, the lower their chances of being involved in a wide range of crimes.

In order to examine the relationship between religious involvement and criminal behavior, the researchers surveyed over 550 adults living in a Mid-Western urban area and asked how many times during the past 12 months they had committed any one of a variety of criminal acts. Each respondent's level of religious commitment was also measured using various questions dealing with religious denomination, religious beliefs, religious values, and religious activities.

When the relationship between religious commitment and criminal behavior was statistically analyzed, only one aspect of religiosity - religious behavior - was found to have a significant relationship to lower levels of criminal behavior. In other words, simply holding religious beliefs or values was not found to be as important in deterring crime as was regular participation in religious activities such as attending religious services, listening to religious broadcasts, or reading religious materials.

Why might religious behaviors provide such a strong deterrent to participation in crime? First, due to their frequent attendance at religious services and activities, the religiously active may be more frequently exposed to moral messages against

crime and other types of immoral behaviors than the less religious. Secondly, frequent participation in religious events introduces the religiously active to a community of believers who reinforce religious teachings and behaviors, thus decreasing an individual's tendency to fall into criminal behavior. The researchers commented on this occurrence, stating that "continual reinforcement of religious moral values and policing of behavior are more likely when one is embedded in such a community of fellow believers."

Evans, D.T., Cullen F.T., Dunaway R.G., and Burton V.S., Jr. (1995). "Religion and Crime Reexamined: The Impact of Religion, Secular Controls, and Social Ecology on Adult Criminality." *Criminology* 33(2): 195-217.

Mayor's Prayer Breakfast

Members of the political, pastoral and business communities under the executive leadership of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International have combined efforts to sponsor the 11th Annual Mayors' Prayer Breakfast of Washington County. The Breakfast will be held on May 1, 1996 at the Greenwood Inn, near Expressway route 217 at 10700 SW Allen Blvd, Beaverton.

The breakfast honors all mayors and other chief executives of municipalities in Washington County and serves as a nondenominational, public

prayer forum for all of the citizens within the metropolitan area.

This year's theme centers around the Scripture text (Isaiah 6:8), "Here Am I, Send Me." Two widely-acclaimed speakers are scheduled to make presentations and give testimonies. Featured speaker will be Mr. Mel Renfro. He is a humanitarian and founder of Bridges Ministries operating in North and Northeast Portland and is an Inductee into the Professional Football Hall of Fame.

Adrianna Carr, co-host on NightLight program, will present her

personal testimony and Christian witness. In addition, the Joyful Heart duet, noted for their music ministry, will provide special music. Mr. Rob Drake, Mayor of Beaverton, is the principal host representing all of the chief executives of municipalities located in Washington County.

The public is invited to participate. This two-hour event will begin shortly after 7:00am and close at 9:15am sharp. Tickets, which are \$15.00 including a delicious breakfast, are available from the Registrar (777-6116) at 5215 SE 70th Avenue Portland, 97206.

ALTERNATIVES Defining The Age (Times), Article 2

BY M. ISAACS

Despite the global trend to resist the knowledge and wisdom of God; the followers of "The Way" which is Jesus, the Christ, the Anointed One of God, his Father, knowing full well that it will lead to a taking away of possessions, with no nest or hole or home in which to lay their heads (St Luke 9:57), continue to praise His Holy Name and seek his wisdom; for they have no fear of anything Jesus has already overcome. The dead in Christ are not mourned, but rejoiced over; for they already have their reward. Thus, the followers of Christ heed not the dead, nor even adult children, nor father, nor mother; but they heed the calling of Christ and preach the kingdom of God. (St Luke 9:61). These true followers of Christ, without fear, face the signs of the end of time with patience, peace and love. For having put their hands to the plough, they will not look back. Shored up with faith and covered by grace, they suffer all things, even death; for they know and are fully

persuaded that the end is eternal life. (St Luke 9:62).

Many shall preach a doctrine of demons, teaching access to God by other means than Jesus Christ. This teaching being another ploy of the evil one to gain access to many minds and hearts through a "new age" without Jesus, the Christ. Jesus said, "I am that bread of life. (St John 6:51). Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life". (St John 6:47). "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world".

We are assailed with Gay rights; a feminine spirit pervades the earth; and it brings home to us the power of demon spirits in this land--when sanctions are given for males to marry males.

The abomination of it is a stench in the nostrils of God, as in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. (Genesis 18:20; Genesis 19: 3-11). The Lord,

our God will gather others also unto that spawn of satan, that anti-christ, whose time is high; whose watchmen are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand; they all look to their own way, everyone for this gain, from his quarter. "Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine and we will fill ourselves with strong drink." (Isaiah 56: 8-12).

"But draw near hither, Ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore. Against whom do you sport yourselves? Against whom make ye a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue? Are ye not children of sin, a seed of falsehood, inflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree, slaying the children in the valleys under the cliffs of the rocks? Should I (God) receive comfort in these? The righteous are perishing and no man cares; and merciful men are taken away, but no one knows or considers that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come." Isaiah 57:1-6).

Eight Local Congregations Hold A Liberal Religious Tent Revival

Visitors to Portland's historic Pioneer Courthouse Square on April 26, 27, and 28 may be surprised to find the plaza under a huge, festive tent. They will quickly realize that a religious revival is in progress, but an unusual sort -- a liberal religious revival. Eight local Unitarian Universalist congregations are joining forces to publicly celebrate their faith and proclaim their liberating message to the world, in Unitarian Universalists on the Square: A Liberal Religious Revival! They will be joined by religious cohorts from around the Northwest.

This free public event will feature lively music, lay witnessing, inspired preaching, and of course, energetic singing. Because they are widely known for affirming

diverse religious paths and being reluctant to evangelize, this kind of public outreach is a radical departure for Unitarian Universalists.

"Contemporary America desperately needs a nondogmatic yet spiritually nourishing way of religious life such as ours. It feeds the soul, stimulates the conscience, and provides genuine community without demanding a narrow conformity," said Rev. Mark Bell, of the Michael Servetus Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Vancouver, Washington. "So many people leave their first experience with us saying, 'If only I had known earlier that religion could be like this!' We are reaching out to those people

now."

Friday evening and Saturday will highlight liberal evangelist Rev. Tony Larsen of Racine, Wisconsin and singer/songwriter Jim Scott (formerly of The Paul Winter Consort). The weekend will culminate on Sunday morning in what could be history's largest gathering of Unitarian Universalists west of the Mississippi.

Rev. Marilyn Sewell, of Portland's First Unitarian Church, will address, "What Makes Us Different." And Rev. Mark Bell will preach on, "Live Your Faith, Find Our Voice." A combined choir from the eight participating congregations will perform.

Children are welcome at all times during the Revival, with special activities for them on Saturday from 11:00am to 6:00pm.

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