

“[The Bereans] . . . searched the scriptures daily,

[to see] whether those things were so.” —Acts 17:11

Do We Have a Prayer?

T. A. McMahon

DO WE have a prayer? There are a lot of ways we can consider that question. As examples, we’ve probably all heard someone say, “You don’t have a prayer” when the odds of what is hoped for are overwhelmingly against it. There are last-resort appeals, sometimes referred to as “foxhole prayers,” in which a soldier cries out to God to save him from the enemy overrunning his position. There are “a deal with the devil” invocations. Some prayers also take on the form of incantations that supposedly can manipulate the powers of the universe by being spoken. Within Christendom, prayer too often has become an attempt to manipulate God. Positive confession, which is basically commanding God to act, is a favored technique among growing numbers of Christians. Throughout the years, TBC’s articles and books have dealt with the many abuses of prayer. Our objective in this article is to focus on *biblical prayer*—primarily, what does the Bible say about it, and *are we* as believers *conforming* to its teachings?

From our beginning here at The Berean Call, prayer has never been theoretical or theologically academic. In fact, we never begin our workday without first spending time together, as a staff, in prayer. Our Thursday morning staff meetings are dedicated to intercessory prayer for others who call, write, or email us with their prayer requests. We wanted to establish that right up front in this article because, as we look at what the Scriptures declare about prayer, we’ll be referring back to our prayer time as a testimony to the truth of God’s Word.

“In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Philippians 4:6). First and foremost, prayer is a believer’s *personal* communication with God. In nearly all religions and belief systems, prayer is usually memorized and ritualistic, lacking any personal interactive qualities. Biblical Christianity is the exception because a true Christian, one who is born again by the Spirit of God, begins his or her life in Christ in a very personal way: with a personal, intimate relationship with Jesus. Rote, mechanical, or ritualistic prayer impersonalizes what should be very personal communication between the believer and the Lord. Yet one of the latest trends within Christendom that claims to promote the personal and experiential practice of contemplative prayer teaches repetitive praying (*Lectio Divina*), e.g., saying a word or phrase over and over again, sometimes hundreds of times. That is not only impersonal but it’s *nonsensical* communication. In spite of that, an influential evangelical leader within the Emerging Church Movement claims that he prays to Jesus each morning by repeating His name hundreds of times. More importantly, this practice is unbiblical: “But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they

shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them” (Matthew 6:7-8). All the teachings on prayer throughout the Scriptures clearly reveal its *personal* aspects.

Although the popular question, “What would Jesus do?” seems to have morphed into somewhat of a marketing scheme (e.g., the bracelet and ball cap emblem “WWJD?”), it could motivate us to check out what Jesus actually *did*. Prayer is definitely something He did, and He did it continually. The Son was ever in communication with the Father. In spite of the fact that He was daily being sought by the crowds, He nevertheless made time to get away to pray: “And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone” (Matthew 14:23). If that was important to the perfect, sinless God/Man, it should speak volumes to our own less-than-perfect hearts that are vulnerable to sin and terribly needy. *We* need to do it. Scripture tells us further that He “continued all night in prayer” (Luke 6:12) and that He referred to the Temple as “the house of prayer” (Luke 19:46). Our Lord prayed for Peter that he might be protected from Satan: “But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not...” (Luke 22:31-32). He told His disciples to “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation” (Matthew 26:41), to love their enemies and to “pray for them which despitefully use you” (Luke 6:27-28). Jesus gave His disciples a pattern for prayer (Luke 11:1-4), and for believers and new

believers He declared: “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word” (John 17:20).

Sometimes we forget (if we once knew) that Jesus not only exhorts us to pray, but He has prayed for us, and He *continues to pray for us*. He prays for our protection and effectiveness in the world: “I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil” (John 17:15). “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he [Jesus] ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25). “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (Romans 8:34).

Having Jesus pray to the Father for us is as good as it gets regarding intercessory prayer. I certainly don’t know how that works, but I do know that it was important enough for the Holy Spirit to tell us this through God’s Word. Furthermore, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit we are given instructions regarding *how we are* to function in prayer. The Scriptures make it abundantly clear that prayer is not an incidental issue for a believer in Christ. Prayer is more often than not accompanied by the words “without ceasing” or similar expressions. The Apostle Paul, who used those terms more than any New Testament writer, presented his own life as a pattern and example of how believers should live their lives in Christ (Philippians 3:17; 1 Thessalonians 2:10), and his emphasis on prayer underscores all that he did. To the Ephesians he wrote that “[I] “cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my

FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE OVER
THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ARE
OPEN UNTO THEIR PRAYERS: BUT THE
FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THEM
THAT DO EVIL.

—1 Peter 3:12

prayers” (1:16). To the Colossians he wrote, “We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you” (1:3) and “For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding” (v. 9). And to the Thessalonians he said that “Night and day [he was] praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith” (1 Thessalonians 3:10).

Paul wrote that, “Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do” (Philippians 4:9). He was such an outstanding believer that we may lose sight of the fact that he was no different from those of us who are believers. He was a sinner saved by grace, as all believers are. His life was lived by God’s grace, which is available to every believer. So what was his “secret” for spiritual success? No secret at all: Prayer! He not only prayed continually for others, he continually asked others to pray for him. “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me *in your prayers to God for me*; That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints” (Romans 15:30-31). “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And *for me*, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak” (Ephesians 6:18-20). “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; withal *praying also for us*, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds” (Colossians 4:2-3).

Paul had no problem with asking others to pray for him, but believers are sometimes reluctant to ask. The primary excuse, especially as it’s related to family members, is “I don’t want to worry them.” Although there are exceptions, too often it is a “lame excuse” or worse. By our own self-consciousness, we deprive others of the opportunity to petition the Lord for His grace and mercy on our behalf. Moreover, it eliminates the opportunity for our fellow believers to see God’s intervention, and without a knowledge of one’s situation that needs prayer, the encouragement that could come from a praise report may be lost. There are other excuses for not asking for prayer, yet they nearly always involve some form of pride, some form of what others may be thinking about us. Even, “it’s too small a deal to bring before God or to ask others to do so,” which translates “I can handle this myself.” Seriously? When “self” enters the picture nothing good can come of it.

Those of the “God helps those who help themselves” groups (Benjamin Franklin’s *Poor Richard’s Almanac* gospel and the Positive Confession confessors’ mantra) tell us that deferring to God’s will is a “copout” that undermines our “faith” in ourselves. Aside from the fact that our faith in ourselves *needs* to be “undermined,” what biblical Christian would ever think that God’s will—what He desires for us—would not be the absolute best that we could conform to and receive? Jesus certainly encouraged that by asking, “Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” (Matthew 7:9-11). Didn’t Jesus, at perhaps the most difficult point in His life, pray to God the Father, saying, “Father, *if thou be willing*, remove this cup from me: nevertheless *not my will, but thine, be done*?” (Luke 22:42). Was that a “copout”?

CONFESS YOUR FAULTS ONE TO ANOTHER, AND PRAY ONE FOR ANOTHER, THAT YE MAY BE HEALED. THE EFFECTUAL FERVENT PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN AVAILETH MUCH.

—James 5:16

Prayer is sort of a mystery in the sense that God knows what we need before we ask, and He knew what we would ask for. Some would question, “Why then pray to God if He knows all that?” Well, He knows; we don’t. How would we know if God were intervening in our lives if we had no prayerful communication with Him? If there are no requests, then there can be no confidence that God is doing things for us.

Another aspect of prayer is what may involve our prayers *never reaching* the throne of God. Hebrews 4:16 exhorts us to “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” What blocks our prayers? “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts”; “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; *that your prayers be not hindered*” (James 4:2-3; 1 Peter 3:7). Walking in disobedience to the instructions given in God’s Word stops any request cold: “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and

his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil” (1 Peter 3:12).

Dave Hunt, my best friend in the Lord (who is now with the Lord), had a wonderful sense of humor, and it was often self-deprecating. He would say (tongue-in-cheek), “People avoid my speaking engagements by the thousands.” Congregations would laugh, knowing that was hardly the case for their gifted speaker. But here is something that is not laughable:

Christians avoid *prayer meetings* by the thousands...and more. Not convinced? Have your church schedule a weekly prayer meeting and do a head count after the second or third week. Although we praise the Lord for the exceptions, the initial enthusiasm (which may be an overstatement) goes away in a short time.

The most grievous part of such a development is what those who avoid prayer meetings and those who bail out on them are *missing*. As just one example, we refer back to TBC’s daily staff prayer time. First of all, we all know one another, love each other, and care about what is going on in each one’s life. Therefore we pray five days a week or more for each other’s needs and requests. That continuity enables us to hear many of the details of how God has answered our prayers, which is a tremendous encouragement and confidence builder in our Lord as He confirms the teachings of His Word. That’s an abundance of prayer requests and praise reports. It also reinforces the fellowship we are to have as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Prayer is neither a suggestion nor a “pray when you feel like it” option for biblical Christians. In his first letter to Timothy, the Apostle Paul tells him to urge the believers in Ephesus to pray for others: “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men” (1 Timothy 2:1). Everything a believer does, in the sense of “whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God”; “whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus”; “And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men” (1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17, 23), needs to start with prayer and be sustained by prayer. Again, our prayer must be a continual, personal communication with the Lord seeking His help in all that we do.

Do we have a prayer? Absolutely. And it’s our *prayer* that prayer will be our primary modus operandi—our continual way of going about what we do—for the year ahead, all for the glory of God and that His grace and mercy will be abundantly manifest in our lives.

TBC

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Submit your own questions to: PO Box 7019 • Bend, OR 97708
or e-mail: editorial@thebereanall.org

QUESTION: God is holy and dwells apart from man in a holy place. How, then, can the Holy Spirit indwell the human heart? My heart is not pure; I am a believer and serve the Lord Jesus Christ, but I am still a sinner. I am not holy. Only God is.

RESPONSE: Certainly God is holy, but according to Jesus, “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and *make our abode* with him” (Jn 14:23). Jesus, as our great High Priest, was “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens” (Heb 7:26), yet God “was made flesh, and *dwelt among us*” (John 1:14). God dwells among men. He says so.

You ask how the Holy Spirit may indwell a human heart. When Jesus began preparing His apostles prior to His death on the Cross and subsequent departure from them, He said, “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever” (Jn 14:16). Where will He abide? According to 2 Corinthians 1:22, God “hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit *in our hearts*.” That is His promise to every believer.

Our Lord came and lived in the “midst of a crooked and perverse nation” (Phil 2:15) and did so without sin (Heb 4:15; 1 Pt 2:22). Remember, He was “holy, harmless, undefiled...” (Heb 7:26), yet that same Jesus in Revelation 3:20 said clearly that “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” Paul preached to the unsaved men on Mars Hill and told them plainly, “He be not far from every one of us” (Acts 17:27).

You say your heart is not pure, yet Scripture promises, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor 5:17). There is a solution for the believer who sins: “If we confess *our* sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 Jn 1:9). If you are “a believer,” do you believe that we are holy, cleansed, and made perfect in God’s sight? Does He “cleanse us from all unrighteousness?”

Yes, there is a struggle, as old habits die hard. But remember the promise of Scripture: “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son” (Romans 8:29). Ephesians 2:10 tells us, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (See also Rom 12:1-2; 1 Pt 1:13-16)

John explained that “if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 Jn 1:7).

Paul encouraged the Corinthians, “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again” (2 Cor 5:14-15).

The Holy Spirit indwells the human heart because of the finished work of Christ, not by our merit. It is He who “purifies” our hearts. Ephesians 2:13 tells us, “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” And it is *only* through His blood that this is possible.

QUESTION: Our local paper published an op-ed piece trying to support the idea that the Bible doesn’t recognize that a baby is a living being until it is born and takes its first breath. They make the following points: “In Genesis 2:7, God ‘breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and it was then that the man became a living being.’ Although the man was fully formed by God, he

was not a living being until after taking his first breath.” And, “In Job 33:4, it states: ‘The spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.’” Also, “Ezekiel 37:5-6, ‘Thus says the Lord God to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live....’”

Finally [the article stated], “Most people don’t know (or want to know) that the Bible contains an abortion ritual. In Numbers 5:11-31, it involves forcing a woman accused of adultery to drink ‘bitter water’ designed to cause a miscarriage. ‘Her belly will swell, and her thigh will rot’It can be said with absolute certainty that ancient scripture does not consider a zygote or a fetus even to be alive, because it has not yet drawn breath.”

RESPONSE: If “taking a breath,” i.e., ingesting oxygen into one’s system, is the criteria for when life begins, then the fetus clearly qualifies as a living being. There is no doubt that the fetus in the womb is ingesting oxygen (and other essential elements) through the blood circulating in its body, filtered from the mother’s blood system. Indeed, the writer’s citation of Ezekiel 37:5-6 undermines the premise they advance. In truth, the Lord has caused “breath to enter into you [even a fetus], and ye shall live.” Clearly that process begins in the womb. We must consider these things carefully and thus avoid the confused opinions generated by political positions. A similar idea is expressed in Job 33:4b: “The...breath of the Almighty hath given me life.”

In Jeremiah 1:5, the Lord clearly says, “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” That takes us back to before conception, where, in His foreknowledge, God recognized the existence and ministry of Jeremiah, and it was then that God “ordained” him “a prophet.” And, it was the Lord who “formed” him (not “it”) in the womb (See also Ps 139:13-16).

It is important to read the text in context and discern what the words are saying. Numbers 5:11-31 has nothing to do with miscarriage. Nothing is said about the woman being pregnant. If the unsupported assumption that the statement, “Her belly will swell,” refers to pregnancy, then what about “her thigh will rot?” The “swelling” of the belly is not with pregnancy but is rather a symptom of the physical breakdown of her body as a result of the curse if guilty. Rather than “abortion,” the end result of the curse is infertility, and if not guilty, she is promised conception: “And if the woman be not defiled, but be clean; then she shall be free, and shall conceive seed” (Num 5:28).

The author is imposing his/her interpretation onto the scriptures rather than drawing out the real meaning. Such assumptions result in a misinterpretation of Scripture, leaving no leg on which to stand.

EDITOR’S NOTE:

The following is a clarification of a statement made by Paul Wilkinson in his article “Left Behind or Led Astray?—Exposed” (11/2015) that the documentary *Left Behind or Led Astray?* was endorsed by Ray Comfort of Living Waters Ministry:

Although the inclusion of the quote by Comfort in the trailer promoting the post-trib documentary *Left Behind or Led Astray?* left viewers with the distinct impression that Ray was endorsing the movie, Living Waters Ministry responded to our inquiry by stating that “the impression received from the trailer is understandable in context, however, Ray was only endorsing Joe’s ministry in general. He has not seen the video nor did he give any endorsement of it.”

LETTERS

To connect with TBC, write: PO Box 7019 • Bend, OR 97708
or e-mail: editorial@thebereanall.org

Hello,

I just wanted to say how much I appreciate David James's discernment (from God) about the potentially false prophet in Cahn. I'd noticed that his date for a stock market disaster has come and gone, but I realize that only God can hold our fragile economy together for His purposes. I know God uses the evil one's plans to fit into His purposes; there's not a thought anyone thinks that He does not know altogether! How can we not put our trust "toward" such a God as ours! PC (email)

TBC,

I used to look forward to every issue and read them in one sitting, as well as keep them for reference. It's no longer the case. It's bookstore advertisement of the same old books and the same old complaining articles. What's happened here? Where's the content? The *BC* has lost its wind since the Hunts have died. Too bad. SI (OR)

Hello,

As a former devout Roman Catholic who was marvelously saved by the gospel of Jesus Christ, and who was introduced to Calvinism by a pastor that I was really getting close to, I applaud your [December] article. My pastor friend gave me a book on Calvinism, thinking I would "buy" what it was selling; instead I wanted to throw up. "If God is like this," I thought, "What God is this?! Surely not the God that I came to trust through the knowl-

edge of His Word!" After reading Dave Hunt and other God-honoring authors, I came to see exactly why Calvinism is such a misapplication of the Word, and how it terribly impugns the loving nature of God. PS (email)

Dear Folks,

I want to thank you for carrying on Dave and Ruth Hunt's legacy. I do so appreciate all the great material you make available....I pray God continues to give you health and safety for all you do for the Lord.... CK (OR)

Dear Tom and Staff,

We have noticed over the past few months the conflict between TBC and ministries/teachers who support a non Pre-trib Rapture position. While...both sides state it is not a position that we should divide over, it seems to be escalating. Therefore, we have decided we would like to be removed from the *TBC* newsletter and any other correspondence. While we don't always agree with every position TBC holds, we have respect for the ministry and teachings. The infighting within the body of Christ is not sustainable and detracts from His glory. Rest assured, we are sending a similar letter to Moriel Ministries. M&CB (OR)

Dear T. A. McMahon,

I just watched your video on YouTube on *The Bible vs. The Bible according to Hollywood*. I just want to say thanks for giving this sermon. It has needed to be done for a long time....You would be surprised at how many "evangelical Christians" out there would argue the point of the ends justifying the means. I have conversations with friends about this very topic and they take offense....My wife and I left mainstream Christianity and the mega church that we attended many years ago. We actually started reading God's Word for ourselves and the Holy Spirit convicted us to leave. The real issue for us today is that we can't seem to find a church. We have tried and left so many.... BH (email)

TBC NOTES

Israel's Biblical Security

Israel is besieged by enemies all around. Iran would like to nuke them. Their neighbors want to drive Israel into the sea. Israel's complete annihilation is their enemy's objective. Terrorist acts against them are continual, from bombings to knifings. The UN condemns Israel at every turn, and the US seems to be turning on them as well.

Though all of that grieves those of us who love God's chosen people and compels us to pray for the nation, our confidence is in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose Word promises to keep Israel safe from their enemy's goal. The prophet Jeremiah writes of God's promise of security for Israel: "Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: *If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever*" (31:35-36). Restated simply, "If and when the sun and the moon and the stars cease to function, Israel will cease to exist." That is the security promised by the Creator of the universe.

Nevertheless, pray for the everyday protection of the Jewish people and that many would turn to Jesus their Messiah.

T. A. McMAHON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

T. A.'S SPEAKING SCHEDULE

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Jan 16-24 | South Africa
julie.e.leo@gmail.com |
| Feb 11-16 | Albania
geosturm01@aol.com |
| Apr 2-3 | Roseburg Christian Fellowship
Roseburg, OR – (541) 672-7222 |

For up-to-date schedule information visit: www.thebereanall.org/tom

STS 24/7 BROADCAST SCHEDULE

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Jan 8/15 | Arabbible.com |
| Jan 22 | Dave & Tom Classic
<i>Are You Seeking God?</i> |
| Jan 29 | Dave & Tom Classic
<i>If God Knows What You'll Pray For...Why Pray?</i> |

Listen to *Search the Scriptures 24/7* at -
www.thebereanall.org/radio (Schedule is subject to change.)

NEWSWATCH

News stories are selected for reader awareness and as an exercise
in discerning the times from a biblical perspective.

MUSLIM ORG: "ENOUGH IS ENOUGH" ON REFUGEES

EXPRESS.CO.UK, 12/2/15, "HEAD OF COUNTRY'S LARGEST MUSLIM ORGANISATION SAYS 'ENOUGH IS ENOUGH' ON REFUGEE INFLUX" [EXCERPTS]: There is a new call to limit the number of refugees pouring into Germany—from the head of the country's largest Muslim organisation.

"This upper limit would seem to be at the point of being reached," said Aiman Mazyek, chairman of the Central Council of Muslims (ZMD.).

The majority of the one million-plus asylum seekers expected to be in Germany by year's end are Muslims, mostly from war torn regions like Afghanistan and the middle east.

Only recently his organization rejected calls for an upper limit on refugee numbers, even though the number of Muslims in Germany has spiked by around 25 percent with thousands arriving on a daily basis.

The right-wing Alternative for Germany Party saw the statement as a victory for its own no-more-migrants policy, tweeting: "The ZMD goes public with the AfD's demand. Asylum needs boundaries!"

Bad weather and increased border controls on the Balkan route into Germany have seen a sharp decrease in refugees entering Germany in the past few days.

The new position by the ZMD mirrors that of Germany's highest Jewish authority, the Central Council of Jews. It recently called for an upper limit on refugees.

(<http://goo.gl/HVDvU2>)

NO INCREASE IN HOME ABORTIONS

WORLD MAG.COM, 11/17/15, "PRO-LIFERS DEBUNK TEXAS STUDY CLAIMING INCREASE IN AT-HOME ABORTIONS" [EXCERPTS]: The University of Texas published a study linking the state's abortion facility regulations to the number of women self-inducing abortions. But according to pro-lifers, the study was motivated by a pro-abortion agenda and is based on "egregious" errors.

Released by the Texas Policy Evaluation Project, the study came out just four days after the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear a challenge to Texas abortion facility regulations enacted in 2013.

According to the study, between 1.7 percent and 4.1 percent of Texas women, mostly Latinas, have self-induced abortions....The researchers used those numbers

to claim that if the Supreme Court doesn't overturn the new regulations, self-induced abortions will increase because more facilities will close.

But...Arina Grossu, director of the Center for Human Dignity at the Family Research Council [doubted] its credibility. The survey's definition of "self-induction" skews the results because it includes seeking information on self-induced abortions in addition to actually attempting to self-induce an abortion...

Neither does the study indicate any time frame for either action. "[A woman] could have had that self-abortion in a different state or in Mexico or before any of the Texas facilities closed. None of that is indicated," Grossu said. And failing to enforce abortion facility standards doesn't address the real problem behind self-induced abortions, said Anna Paprocki, staff counsel with Americans United for Life. "The way to address it is not to move substandard clinics into neighborhoods," she said. "It only exacerbates and perpetuates the problem."

(<http://goo.gl/dcVxRw>)

ROB BELL'S SUCCESSOR RESIGNS

MLIVE.COM, 11/30/15, "ROB BELL'S SUCCESSOR AT MARS HILL IS STEPPING DOWN" [EXCERPTS]: Rob Bell's successor at Mars Hill Bible Church is stepping down, with no clear plan for what to do next.

Kent Dobson...will leave his role as teaching pastor of the megachurch in the spring. There's no "secret reason" for his departure, he said, and it's not that Mars Hill isn't progressive enough for him.

"I have always been and I'm still drawn to the very edges of religion and faith and God," Dobson said. "I've said a few times that I don't even know if we know what we mean by God anymore. That's the edges of faith. That's the thing that pulls me. I'm not really drawn to the center. I'm not drawn to the orthodox or the mainstream or the status quo."

Dobson became teaching pastor of Mars Hill in 2012, shortly after founding pastor Rob Bell moved to California. Previously, he taught religion in schools, led tours to Israel and was featured on Biblical programs for the History Channel and the Discovery Channel.

(<http://goo.gl/zunKRk>)

THE BEREAN CALL

Founder: Dave Hunt
Executive Director: T. A. McMahon

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DONATIONS

The Berean Call (TBC) has always operated on the belief that God will provide as we seek His face, so we do not make appeals for financial help. Although the ministry operates primarily on donations, these are freewill and not solicited. Through the years, TBC has seen God "do exceeding abundantly above" all that was asked or thought.

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