

New Bethel Christian Life Commission Report – April 2010

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Quote of Day

“Man is not dwarfed by the Milky Way. He refuses to be cowed by all the vastness around.... Now, why is this?... It is the light of Christ has shed upon human character and human value—the worth of the individual.... Man is the diamond point on the golden pen of the universe. Christ’s lordship is seen in His power to exalt personality to the supreme place against the universe even vaster than ours. Only Christ does this. Modern pantheism quenches personality. Unless there is a divine person behind all things, then our human personality is no more than a bubble on the bosom of the stream of time—an iridescent emptiness which gleams a moment in the sunlight and then vanishes forever.”

Edgar Y. Mullins, Past President, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
The Life in Christ (NY: Fleming H. Revel, 1917; 245p.), 11.

Clash on Gays in the Military

Michael Foust, Baptist Press, “Gates, Joint Chiefs clash on gays in military,”
Southern Baptist Texas (3-15-2010), as edited and condensed by M.G. Maness

Defense Secretary Robert Gates released last month guidelines for a 10-month review of the military’s policy prohibiting homosexuals from serving openly. This came a month after he appeared before a U.S. Senate committee before which he said, he backed President Obama’s goal of overturning the so-called “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen said he would also like the policy reversed, something only Congress can do. But none of the representatives of the four Armed Forces branches on the Joint Chiefs staff sided with Gates or Mullen.... Supporting the currently policy, Marine Corps Commandant General James T. Conway said, “My personal opinion is that unless we can strip away the emotion, the agendas and the politics and ask, ‘Do we somehow enhance the war-fighting capabilities of the United States Marine Corp by allowing homosexuals to openly serve?’ then we haven’t addressed it from the correct perspective.”

Google’s Moon Shot – the quest for the universal library

Jeffrey Toobin, *The New Yorker* (2-5-2007), 30-35.

“Every workday, a truck pulls up to the Cecil H. Green Library, on the campus of Stanford University, and collects at least a thousand books, which are taken to an undisclosed location and scanned, page by page, into an enormous database being created by Google. The company is also retrieving books from libraries at other leading universities, including Harvard and Oxford, as well as the New York Public Library. At the University of Michigan, Google’s original partner in Google Book Search, tens of thousands of books are processed each week on the company’s custom-made scanning equipment.” That is the first paragraph if a detailed article on Google mission and even legal challenges to its corporate philosophy: “to organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful.”

That is the was the first paragraph of that detailed article. Several are doing similar projects: Amazon.com has digitized “hundreds of thousands” of its books it sells; Carnegie Mellon’s Universal Library project’s has scanned “nearly a million”; and a consortium called Open Content Alliance that includes Microsoft, Yahoo, and several libraries. But *no* one compares to Google’s current size, consumption of scanned books, and ease of availability.

This is not just a moon shot, it is a revolution in free knowledge. This is a new Eighth Wonder of the world: see www.GoogleBooks.com.

The Tyranny of Taxing “Sin”

Patrick Fleenor, *The Christian Science Monitor* (5-17-2009), 26.

Edited and condensed by M.G. Maness

In New York, Democratic Gov. David Paterson wants a sin tax on non-diet sodas. West Virginia Delegate Margaret Stagers supports a junk food tax. It’s not love of scolding, but love of money. “They wasn’t to spend more, and they’ll take whoever’s money is easiest to take.” So, to “dispel the notion that their sin taxes

go to far, the nanny staters rely on a clever sleight of hand: instead of pitching the tax as a punishment for sin, they claim they're merely compensating society for costs imposed by habits." Not that supported by science, still, the media repeats; yes, smoking costs \$100 billion. Yet, other studies show that the majority of the those costs are born by the smokers themselves. What to do? Perhaps society should rely on broad-based levies of income, like sales and property taxes. "What a shame if the Statute of Liberty no longer held up a torch of liberty but instead a ruler to whack citizens across the knuckles when they reach for a treat."

Green Tea, Black Coffee

Andrew Weil, M.D., *TIME* (9-25-2006), 106.

Edited and condensed by M.G. Maness

A growing body of research suggests their both good for you. Green tea's high level of polyphenols with strong antioxidants fight cancer and protect the heart. Though short on definitive proof, a report in the second week of September's 2006 *Journal of American Medical Association* by a team of Japanese researchers linked green-tea consumption with decreased mortality, including heart disease, the result of tracking 40,530 adults ranging between 40-79 years of age for 11 years: those who drank five or more cups of green tea a day had "significantly lower mortality rates than those who drank less than one cup a day." And not surprisingly the Japanese have better-quality green (like gyokuro or matcha) tea than do most North Americans.¹

The Japanese have found that brown seaweed contains fucoxanthin that "may promote weight loss"—at least it did in obese rats and mice by targeting a protein that increased the rate of fat burned. Yet, Weil said, "You would have to eat a great deal of it to make any difference."

Coffee—more complicated. The literature has given it both gold stars and black marks. It contains antioxidants, though less studied than green tea, but "Evidence for health benefits of coffee is growing." In the August 2006 *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* a group from Finland studied 676 healthy men born from 1900 to 1920 for ten years and concluded: the "men who consumed coffee had significantly less cognitive impairment than those who didn't." What a discovery! Best of all, "Three cups a day seemed to provide maximum protection."

Now that is exactly what I wanted to hear ... on the coffee ...

America by the Numbers

BGCT Texas Christian Life Commission, www.christianlifecommission.org & www.bgct.org, 888-332-5870 — **Baptist Joint Committee**, Washington, DC — www.bjcpc.org — **SBC Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission**, www.erc.com — **Jim McReynolds**, Representative, Texas House District 12 — Capitol: 512-463-0490; District: 936-634-9786
Texas Legislature www.capitol.state.tx.us - Who represents you: www.capitol.state.tx.us/fyi/fyi.htm

Kay Bailey Hutchinson, US Senator — <http://hutchinson.senate.gov/> 713-653-3456

John Cornyn, US Senator — <http://cornyn.senate.gov/> Tel: 713-572-3337 — **Kevin Brady**, U.S. Rep. Dist. 8 — 202-225-4901

www.Senate.gov www.House.gov
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¹ See JapaneseGreenTeaOnline.com or InPursuitOfTea.com.