

# Eye on the World

## May 20, 2017

This compilation of material for “Eye on the World” is presented as a service to the Churches of God. The views stated in the material are those of the writers or sources quoted by the writers, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the members of the Church of God Big Sandy. The following articles were posted at churchofgodbigandy.com for the weekend of May 20, 2017.

**Compiled by Dave Havir**

**Luke 21:34-36**—“But take heed to yourselves, lest your souls be weighed down with self-indulgence, and drunkenness, or the anxieties of this life, and that day come on you suddenly, like a falling trap; for it will come on all dwellers on the face of the whole earth. But beware of slumbering; and every moment pray that you may be fully strengthened to escape from all these coming evils, and to take your stand in the presence of the Son of Man” (Weymouth New Testament).



“Eye on the World” comment: Due to the travel schedule of the production staff, this edition was prepared on Thursday, May 11 and therefore it will not have the latest news articles.



An article by Elizabeth Roberts titled “Mexico Was Second Deadliest Country in 2016” was posted at cnn.com on May 9, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

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It was the second deadliest conflict in the world last year, but it hardly registered in the international headlines.

As Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan dominated the news agenda, Mexico’s drug wars claimed 23,000 lives during 2016—second only to Syria, where 50,000 people died as a result of the civil war.

- Syria—50,000
- Mexico—23,000
- Iraq—17,000

- Afghanistan—16,000

- Yemen—7,000

"This is all the more surprising, considering that the conflict deaths [in Mexico] are nearly all attributable to small arms," said John Chipman, chief executive and director-general of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), which issued its annual survey of armed conflict on Tuesday.

"The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan claimed 17,000 and 16,000 lives respectively in 2016, although in lethality they were surpassed by conflicts in Mexico and Central America, which have received much less attention from the media and the international community," said Anastasia Voronkova, the editor of the survey.

In comparison, there were 17,000 conflict deaths in Mexico in 2015 and 15,000 in 2014 according to the IISS.

### **Rising death toll**

Voronkova said the number of homicides rose in 22 of Mexico's 32 states during 2016 and the rivalries between cartels increased in violence.

"It is noteworthy that the largest rises in fatalities were registered in states that were key battlegrounds for control between competing, increasingly fragmented cartels," she said.

"The violence grew worse as the cartels expanded the territorial reach of their campaigns, seeking to 'cleanse' areas of rivals in their efforts to secure a monopoly on drug-trafficking routes and other criminal assets."

Rivalries between the cartels wreak havoc on the lives of civilians who have nothing to do with narcotics. Bystanders, people who refused to join cartels, migrants, journalists and government officials have all been killed.

### **Not on news agenda**

Jacob Parakilas, assistant head of the US and the Americas Programme at London-based think tank Chatham House, said part of the reason for the relative lack of attention paid to Mexico in the international media is "it's not a war in the political sense of the word. The participants largely don't have a political objective.

They're not trying to create a breakaway state. It doesn't come with the same visuals. There are no air strikes.

"Also this has been going on since the beginning of the modern drug trade in the Americas. It's not news in that sense. And Mexico is one of the most dangerous countries in the world to be a journalist. They are intentionally targeted in Mexico, which puts a dampener on the ability to report on this."

Damaso Lopez Nunez, a high-ranking leader of Mexico's Sinaloa drug cartel, was arrested on May 2 in Mexico City and could face charges in the US, authorities said.

His arrest follows January's extradition of Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, who is accused of running the Sinaloa cartel—one of the world's largest drug-trafficking organizations.

He awaits trial in New York on 17 counts accusing him of running a criminal enterprise responsible for importing and distributing massive amounts of narcotics and conspiring to murder rivals.

### **World conflict deaths fall**

The number of conflict fatalities globally edged down last year, from 167,000 to 157,000, according to the IISS.

This was the second successive annual drop—180,000 people were killed in 2014.

The number of deaths in Syria fell from 55,000 in 2015. But there were 1,000 more deaths in Afghanistan last year than 2015 and 4,000 more in Iraq.

Voronkova from the IISS said: "Civilians caught amid conflict arguably suffered more than in the preceding years. Between January and August, 900,000 people were internally displaced in Syria alone."

The internal displacement figures were 234,000 for Iraq and 260,000 for Afghanistan.



An article by Michael W. Chapman titled "Rev. Graham: MTV Can't Change God's Design—He Made Us 'Male and Female' " was posted at cnsnews.com on May 9, 2017. Following is the article.

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Commenting on MTV selecting Emma Watson for its "best actor" award, which is being touted as a victory for "gender-neutral" advocates, Christian leader Franklin Graham said, "genders are part of God's design" and no matter how much MTV tries to erase gender, it cannot change the fact that God made us "male and female."

The MTV Movie & TV Awards were held Sunday, May 7. Two male actors in the pro-homosexual movie *Moonlight* received the "Best Kiss" award from MTV. Emma Watson received the "Best Actor" award for her role in *Beauty and the Beast*, which in this Disney version contained a gay subplot.

In introducing Watson, fellow actor Asia Kate Dillon said, "It's so cool to be here presenting the first acting award ever that celebrates performance free of any gender distinctions." Dillon later said, "The fact that MTV has the first non-gendered acting award in history is a victory, especially at a time when we've seen so many losses."

In a May 8 post on Facebook, Rev. Franklin Graham said, “I read where MTV had the first gender-neutral awards last night. Why do some people want to totally delete gender from existence, as if it’s a bad thing?”

“Genders are a part of God’s design,” said Graham. “He created us male and female (Genesis 5:2).”

“No matter how much MTV or others want to change or redefine it, they’re never going to change the fact that God made us male and female,” said the reverend.

Franklin Graham, 64, is the son of world-renowned pastor Billy Graham. Franklin Graham oversees the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) and the international Christian aid group Samaritan’s Purse. He regularly preaches in the United States and overseas.



An editorial by John Stossel titled “Improved Health Bill” was posted at townhall.com on May 10, 2017. Following is the article.

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The House repealed Obamacare!

OK, they didn’t really—but they passed a bill that repeals some bad parts of it, like the individual mandate tax, medicine cabinet tax, flexible spending account tax and health savings account withdrawal tax. Good.

Now the Senate will create its own bill and ask the Congressional Budget Office if the House bill will save money.

But Obamacare was so bad, I fear these changes are just Band-Aids on a collapsing system. Instead, the Senate should pass my seven-point plan.

1. Repeal Obamacare, all of it.

With premiums soaring and insurers pulling out of Obamacare, let’s start from scratch with something better.

2. Repeal all regulations and tax breaks that encourage people to buy group insurance instead of paying for health care directly.

Insurance is sometimes needed, but insurance is a terrible, bureaucratic way to pay for things. If we pay our own bills, competition will explode and prices will drop.

3. Abolish Medicare.

This won’t happen, I know. We old people love Medicare; it makes so much health care seem free. We are also more likely to vote, and math-challenged activists from groups like AARP convince old people that no cuts are needed.

But that's a lie. Medicare and Social Security are unsustainable. They will bankrupt America. Then few of us will get help we desperately need.

Since politicians won't touch these "entitlements," we'll have to keep them for those already in the system. But phase out everyone younger! Liberate people to shop around, so we can all benefit from price competition and new treatments.

#### 4. Abolish Medicaid.

Why force poor people into one government-run bureaucracy? Ideally, private charity will take care of those who cannot pay for themselves. If you don't believe that will happen, give the poor money or vouchers and let them decide which things to spend it on.

The poor have a wide range of preferences just like the rest of us. We give people food stamps—but we didn't create a single food-provision bureaucracy. Medicaid's one-size-fits-all rules help the poor less than they help bureaucrats and crony businesses connected to government.

#### 5. Don't punish private spending.

If an employer buys your health care, it's tax-free, but the feds take a huge cut. End that, so that individuals buy their own insurance. Pushing them into group plans is not fair. It also distorts the economy by locking people to their jobs. Moving toward individual Health Savings Accounts would be a step in the right direction.

Better still, end rules that restrict private care. Instead of celebrating those who try to provide health services, government wraps them in red tape. Set them free to do good works.

#### 6. End government subsidies for hospitals.

Hospital prices skyrocketed once the government started subsidizing them and dictating how they must operate.

No matter how much business hospital owners and managers lose because of unhappy (or dead) customers, they'll remain stagnant as long as they can keep sucking up government money and as long as government rules make their decisions for them.

#### 7. End government subsidies for scientific research.

People think we need government for "basic research," but they're wrong. The profit motive isn't perfect, but when the market funds research, you get more innovation—like faster mapping of the human genome.

The sad truth is that the National Institutes of Health has become like every other bureaucracy. Most grants go to researchers like my older brother, Tom. He's brilliant, but he's 75.

NIH's risk-averse grant evaluators feel safer giving money to applicants with long track records. B4TheVolumeSung people. Mark Zuckerberg was 19 when

he started Facebook. Apple's Steve Jobs was 21. Google's Larry Page and Sergey Brin were 22.

People assume the NIH research brings us most new treatments and drugs, but that's not true either. To quote my brother from this winter's issue of National Affairs, "Three separate analyses concluded that 85 percent of the drugs approved by the FDA since 1988 arose solely from research and development performed within . . . industry."

We are safer if we free the market.



An article by Matthew Hutson titled "Why Liberals Aren't As Tolerant As They Think" was posted at politico.com on May 9, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

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In March, students at Middlebury College disrupted a lecture by the conservative political scientist Charles Murray because they disagreed with some of his writings.

Last month, the University of California, Berkeley, canceled a lecture by the conservative commentator Ann Coulter due to concerns for her safety—just two months after uninviting the conservative writer Milo Yiannopoulos due to violent protests. Media outlets on the right have played up the incidents as evidence of rising close-mindedness on the left.

For years, it's conservatives who have been branded as intolerant, often for good reason. But conservatives will tell you that liberals demonstrate their own intolerance, using the strictures of political correctness as a weapon of oppression. That became a familiar theme during the 2016 campaign.

After the election, Sean McElwee, a policy analyst at the progressive group Demos Action, reported that Donald Trump had received his strongest support among Americans who felt that whites and Christians faced "a great deal" of discrimination. Spencer Greenberg, a mathematician who runs a website for improving decision-making, found that the biggest predictor of voting for Trump after party affiliation was the rejection of political correctness—Trump's voters felt silenced.

So who's right? Are conservatives more prejudiced than liberals, or vice versa?

Research over the years has shown that in industrialized nations, social conservatives and religious fundamentalists possess psychological traits, such as the valuing of conformity and the desire for certainty, that tend to predispose people toward prejudice.

Meanwhile, liberals and the nonreligious tend to be more open to new experiences, a trait associated with lower prejudice. So one might expect that, whatever each group's own ideology, conservatives and Christians should be inherently more discriminatory on the whole.

But more recent psychological research, some of it presented in January at the annual meeting of the Society of Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP), shows that it's not so simple.

■ These findings confirm that conservatives, liberals, the religious and the nonreligious are each prejudiced against those with opposing views.

■ But surprisingly, each group is about equally prejudiced. While liberals might like to think of themselves as more open-minded, they are no more tolerant of people unlike them than their conservative counterparts are.

Political understanding might finally stand a chance if we could first put aside the argument over who has that bigger problem. The truth is that we all do.



An editorial by Walter Williams titled "What Do Leftists Celebrate?" was posted at [jewishworldreview.com](http://jewishworldreview.com) on May 10, 2017. Following is the article.

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May Day celebrations were held all across the fruited plain, with leftist radicals and unionists worshipping the ideals of communism. Communism is an ideology calling for government control over our lives. It was created by Karl Marx, who—along with his collaborator, Friedrich Engels—wrote a pamphlet called "Manifesto of the Communist Party."

In 1867, Marx wrote the first volume of *Das Kapital*. The second and third volumes were published posthumously, edited by Engels. Few people who call themselves Marxists have ever even bothered to read *Das Kapital*. If one did read it, he would see that people who call themselves Marxists have little in common with Marx.

For those who see Marx as their hero, there are a few historical tidbits they might find interesting. Nathaniel Weyl, himself a former communist, dug them up for his 1979 book, "Karl Marx: Racist."

For example, Marx didn't think much of Mexicans. When the United States annexed California after the Mexican War, Marx sarcastically asked, "Is it a misfortune that magnificent California was seized from the lazy Mexicans who did not know what to do with it?"

Engels shared Marx's contempt for Mexicans, explaining: "In America we have witnessed the conquest of Mexico and have rejoiced at it. It is to the interest of its own development that Mexico will be placed under the tutelage of the United States."

Marx had a racial vision that might be interesting to his modern-day black supporters. In a letter to Engels, in reference to his socialist political competitor Ferdinand Lassalle, Marx wrote: "It is now completely clear to me that



he, as is proved by his cranial formation and his hair, descends from the Negroes who had joined Moses' exodus from Egypt, assuming that his mother or grandmother on the paternal side had not interbred with a n\*gger.

"Now this union of Judaism and Germanism with a basic Negro substance must produce a peculiar product. The obtrusiveness of the fellow is also n\*gger-like."

Engels shared Marx's racial philosophy.

In 1887, Paul Lafargue, who was Marx's son-in-law, was a candidate for a council seat in a Paris district that contained a zoo. Engels claimed that Lafargue had "one-eighth or one-twelfth n\*gger blood."

In a letter to Lafargue's wife, Engels wrote, "Being in his quality as a n\*gger, a degree nearer to the rest of the animal kingdom than the rest of us, he is undoubtedly the most appropriate representative of that district."

Marx was also an anti-Semite, as seen in his essay titled "On the Jewish Question," which was published in 1844.

Marx asked: "What is the worldly religion of the Jew? Huckstering. What is his worldly GOD? Money . . . Money is the jealous god of Israel, in face of which no other god may exist. Money degrades all the gods of man—and turns them into commodities . . . The bill of exchange is the real god of the Jew. His god is only an illusory bill of exchange . . . The chimerical nationality of the Jew is the nationality of the merchant, of the man of money in general."

Despite the fact that in the 20th century alone communism was responsible for more than 100 million murders (<http://tinyurl.com/zafgs5p>), much of the support for communism and socialism is among intellectuals. The reason they do not condemn the barbarism of communism is understandable.

Dr. Richard Pipes explains: "Intellectuals, by the very nature of their professions, grant enormous attention to words and ideas. And they are attracted by socialist ideas. They find that the ideas of communism are praiseworthy and attractive; that, to them, is more important than the practice of communism. Now, Nazi ideals, on the other hand, were pure barbarism; nothing could be said in favor of them."

That means leftists around the world will continue to celebrate the ideas of communism.



An article by Sean Cockerham titled "President Kamala Harris? She's Making the First Moves" was posted at [mclatchydc.com](http://mclatchydc.com) on May 9, 2017. Following is the article.

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Now's the time prospective presidential candidates start taking the subtle but crucial behind-the-scenes steps that get them noticed by the political intelligentsia, and Sen. Kamala Harris is quietly following the script.

She's making speeches to key national constituencies. She's due for an appearance at a Washington think-tank panel full of chattering-class presidential favorites that the national media will be reporting and analyzing, probably for days. She's been fundraising for colleagues and making sure that she is forming relationships with key national reporters.

They're all boxes that prospective presidential candidates routinely check. It's a chance to ultimately convince insiders they've got the gravitas and the fundraising chops to be taken seriously.

The California Democrat, sworn into office four months ago, insists she's not thinking about a run for president. Her inner circle forcefully tries to tamp down 2020 speculation—after all, there is no upside to being seen as a new senator focused more on national political ambition than on California.

But the speculation is not going away, not with the absence of a clear Democratic presidential frontrunner and the party desperately in search and in need of a new generation of leadership.

"A lot of activists in the party would love to see a new leader step forward," said Roger Hickey," co-director of the progressive strategy group Campaign for America's Future.

Harris is being closely watched.

"Looking forward to see how she performs as a senator, I think that the sky is the limit for her," said Jaime Harrison, associate chairman and counselor of the Democratic National Committee.

So far, Harris has leaped into the political spotlight with a resume that screams potential presidential material. She's 52, a generation younger than better-known favorites such as Sens. Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts or former Vice President Joe Biden.

"From everything I've seen of her she'd be an attractive candidate, she could be a compelling candidate, and I think she'd have a lot of appeal for primary voters," said Bob Shrum, a senior adviser to the presidential campaigns of Al Gore and John Kerry.

A strong block of liberal Democrats, though, would eagerly embrace another Sanders run. And Shrum said Democrats would rally around a Biden presidential candidacy but, if the 74-year-old Biden doesn't run, and he has said that he will not, "there's a deep desire in the Democratic Party to move on to a new generation."

What every new presidential hopeful needs is an early defining moment.

President Barack Obama's was his 2004 keynote speech at the Democratic National Convention. Harris' was her energetic performance in a prominent speaking role at the Women's March on Washington, a rally that attracted world-wide attention and had an estimated crowd of a half a million people. She instantly became a favorite of liberals, and followed that with remarks at an immigration rally at the White House and a podcast with former top Obama adviser David Axlerod, the architect of Obama's out-of-nowhere 2008 campaign.

Harris' rollout accelerates this month. She was the keynote speaker at last week's National Democratic Institute's Madeleine Albright luncheon, a prominent Washington event hosted by the nonprofit, nonpartisan group. She'll give the May 13 commencement speech at Howard University in Washington, her alma mater.

Days later she'll join a host of others floated as presidential wannabes, including Warren, Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey, Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand of New York in a speaking role at the Ideas Conference, a Washington gathering seen as the liberal equivalent of the Conservative Political Action Conference, a traditional testing ground of GOP presidential hopefuls.

Harris is building relationships in the party. She's done fundraising emails for fellow senators Warren, Gillibrand and Sherrod Brown of Ohio.

It's the sort of quiet bridge-building that ultimately paid off for Obama, Jimmy Carter, George W. Bush and many others years before they were elected.

The presidential buzz around Harris, though, is more a product of national Democrats than Californians. Though she won election last year with 61.6 percent of the vote, a recent Public Policy Institute of California poll found that 30 percent of Californians—including 20 percent of Democrats—don't know enough about Harris to say one way or the other what kind of job she is doing the Senate.

Interviews with nearly two dozen ardent Harris supporters in California showed most think it is too soon for her to run for president. Gary Peichoto, a Harris enthusiast who lives outside of Modesto, laughed when asked whether she should run in 2020.

"It's too early," Peichoto said. "I'd rather go with Elizabeth Warren."

Christine Wasserman, a social worker in Los Angeles, said she's been a fan ever since Harris as California's attorney general helped broker a settlement with the nation's five largest mortgage firms for improper foreclosure practices during the housing crisis. But president? Right after joining the Senate?

"Let's let her be a senator for awhile," Wasserman said.

Harris insisted she shares that sentiment. "I'm not thinking about that," she said when asked about the possibility of a presidential run.

"I'm four months into the Senate and we've got a lot of work to do," Harris said after an event in downtown Los Angeles. "I just got back from Iraq, from Baghdad, and from looking at one of the largest refugee camps in the world with 80,000 Syrian refugees. Those are the issues I will focus on."

It's customary in Washington to deny any interest in running for president before doing so (Obama did it. Warren, Booker, Biden and Gillibrand are all doing it, with Gillibrand saying she is "ruling it out" ). So Harris' reluctance won't stop the talk.

Bob Schoonover, president of the largest employee union in Los Angeles County, said in an interview that "I think she should consider" a run for president. Labor support like that of the Service Employees International Union, where Schoonover leads the more than 57,000 employees of Local 721, would be critical to a run.

Vito Chiesa, a registered Republican who chairs the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors in California, said he tried to get a meeting with Harris in Washington.

"She's in such demand," he said. "She's kind of a chosen one."

Harris is the charismatic daughter of immigrants from Jamaica and India. Obama called her brilliant and "by far the best looking attorney general in the country" (he later apologized for what was deemed a sexist remark). She seemingly has the ingredients to energize the Democratic base, and her next tasks if she runs are centered in two places: Washington and the rest of America.

At the Capitol, she needs to develop a reputation as someone to watch. Harris is making immigration her signature issue. She tried to convince Democrats to vote against Trump's nomination of John Kelly for homeland security secretary after he dodged her questioning on whether he'd use information that "Dreamers" voluntarily provided the government to deport them.

"Dreamers," who came to the U.S. illegally as children, identified themselves to the government in return for a promise from the Obama administration not to deport them. Just 10 of the 44 Senate Democrats and two independents joined Harris in voting against Kelly, which clearly rankles her.

"He was confirmed—and within days the Muslim ban dropped," Harris said, referring to the attempted ban on travelers from six Muslim-majority nations.

At the same time, Harris needs to get herself known in political circles outside Washington. Democratic strategists said Harris' outspoken opposition to Trump's immigration policies can resonate with the progressive base, and she'd now need to campaign for Democrats seeking election next year, notably in early primary states such as Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina.

The possibilities are there, said Dick Harpootlian, former South Carolina Democratic chairman. "I think she's articulate, I think she's a lawyer," he said. "I think that she's somebody who could galvanize a huge swath of progressives but she is untested on a national stage."



***Isaiah 55:6-11***—"Seek you the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. 'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,' says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."