

Eye on the World

Sept. 23, 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 September 23, 2017.

Compiled by Dave Haver

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).



Looking back 10 days ago, here is an article by Pam Wright titled "8.1 Earthquake Off Mexico's Coast Kills at Least 90" that was posted at google.com on Sept. 10, 2017.

At least 90 people have died after a massive earthquake hit off the southwestern coast of Mexico late Thursday [Sept. 7].

Chiapas Gov. Manuel Velasco said the 8.1 magnitude quake was the strongest on record in state history, topping a magnitude 7.9 quake in 1902. Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto said the quake was the strongest earthquake Mexico has experienced in 100 years.

The magnitude-8.1 earthquake struck off the coast of Mexico's Chiapas state, triggering tsunami alerts. The U.S. Geological Survey said the earthquake's epicenter was 54 miles southwest of Pijijiapan, Mexico, not far from Guatemala. It had a depth of more than 40 miles.

According to the Associated Press, Juchitan, in the state of Oaxaca, was the worst-hit city, with several fatalities there. About half of the city hall collapsed in a pile of rubble and homes were flattened by the quake.

Tsunami waves of 2 to 3 feet were observed early Friday morning at Acapulco, Huatulco, and Salina Cruz, Mexico, according to the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

The quake was felt in Mexico City, sending residents to the streets out of fears that buildings would collapse. Residents in Guatemala City also reported feeling the temblor.



An article by Julia Jacobo and Morgan Winsor titled “More Than 200 Dead After Magnitude-7.1 Earthquake Strikes Mexico” was posted at abcnews.com on Sept. 20, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

At least 230 people, including 21 schoolchildren, are dead after a magnitude 7.1 earthquake rocked central Mexico on Tuesday afternoon, hitting on the 32nd anniversary of the biggest quake to strike the country’s capital.

Rescuers worked tirelessly on Wednesday night as reports surfaced of at least one girl — and possibly other children — who have been located alive beneath the rubble of the Enrique Rebsamen school.

Yesterday’s earthquake was centered about 75 miles southeast of Mexico City and caused extensive damage, leveling at least 44 buildings, including homes, schools and office buildings, according to Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto, who did a flyover of the city Tuesday afternoon.

Among the dead are at least 25 people—21 students and four teachers—at a collapsed primary school in the south of the capital. So far, 11 people have been rescued, but two students and one teacher remain missing, according to Education Minister Aurelio Nuno.

In Mexico City alone, 52 people have been rescued from damaged buildings, according to city officials.

Rescuers continued to comb through the wreckage, looking for survivors Wednesday, pausing to listen for voices. Relatives told The Associated Press they received WhatsApp messages from two girls inside.

“Children are often the most vulnerable in emergencies such as this, and we are particularly concerned because schools across the region were in session and filled with students,” said Jorge Vidal, the director of operations at Save the Children in Mexico.

Hanna Monsivais, the programs coordinator for Save the Children in Mexico, said she has been out on the streets in Mexico City with hundreds of other people trying to help their neighbors. But entire streets have been cordoned off, and numerous buildings are still too dangerous to enter because of damage.

“Volunteers are bringing water, food, clothes and face masks so that they can help the official authorities move all the debris and rocks, because there are still people trapped under buildings,” she said.

She added, "Every once in a while, authorities ask for silence so they can hear the people who are still trapped. It's amazing what people are doing for others, but some people are clearly still in complete shock."

Many areas were still without power today, and communications remained limited, Monsivais said.



An article by Erin Brodwin titled "A 6.1-Magnitude Has Struck Japan 175 Miles From the Fukushima Nuclear Plant" was posted at businessinsider.com on Sept. 20. Following is the article.

Less than 24 hours after a 7.1-magnitude earthquake pummeled Mexico City, another tremor has occurred off the east coast of Japan.

The 6.1-magnitude quake struck roughly 175 miles east of the shuttered Fukushima nuclear plant at roughly 2:30 a.m. local time, according to the US Geological Survey. Its hypocenter—the underwater locus of the quake—happened at a depth of about 6 miles.

Like Mexico, Japan is located in what is considered an active earthquake region.

The country is influenced by the slipping and sliding of several of Earth's tectonic plates, including the North America plate, Pacific plate, Philippine Sea plate, and Eurasia plate. Whenever these pieces of crust grind or butt up against one another, earthquakes happen.

Over the past century, Japan has been struck by nine severe earthquakes, each of which killed more than 1,000 people.

Part of the problem is the country's high population density, which can make even shallow temblors a serious risk.

In 1995, an earthquake along the Japan Median Tectonic Line near Kobe led to more than 5,000 deaths.

More recently, the magnitude 9 Tohoku earthquake in 2011 killed more than 20,000 people after it triggered a tsunami that generated powerful waves up to 133 feet tall. That earthquake occurred just 43 miles east of inhabited land and its underwater hypocenter was close to three times as deep.

As of 4:45 p.m. ET, there have been no reports of damage or tsunami warnings from USGS or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.



An article titled "Hurricane Maria: Puerto Rico May Be Months Without Power" was posted at bbc.com on Sept. 21, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

Hurricane Maria has knocked out power across the island of Puerto Rico, home to 3.5m people, officials have said.

Flash flood warnings cover the entire island, which continues to be lashed by heavy rain in the storm's wake.

Meanwhile more pictures are emerging of widespread destruction on the small island of Dominica, hit on Monday.

Maria, now a category three storm, has been lashing the Dominican Republic further west and heading towards the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The island's Governor Ricardo Rossello described the hurricane as "the most devastating storm in a century" and said that Maria had hit the island's electricity grid so badly that it could take months to restore power.

The storm is being blamed for at least 10 deaths across the Caribbean. In Puerto Rico one man died after being struck by a board he had used to cover his windows.

The authorities have warned people to move to higher ground amid "catastrophic" flooding, and with up to 30in (76cm) more rain predicted by Saturday.

Images shared on social media show roofs being stripped away as winds as strong as 140mph (225km/h) whipped trees and power lines in Puerto Rico's capital city, San Juan.

The storm has cut a swathe through the Caribbean on its north-westerly trajectory, hitting Dominica on Monday night.

At least 15 people are dead and 20 others are missing on Dominica after Hurricane Maria, the Caribbean island's prime minister has said.

Hours before reaching Puerto Rico, Maria barrelled through the St Croix in the US Virgin Islands as a category five storm, sustaining winds of up to 175mph (281km/h).

The French territory of Guadeloupe suffered flooding on Monday and one person was killed by a falling tree and another died on the seafront. At least two others were missing after their ship sank near Desirade, the easternmost island in the archipelago.



An article by Jeff Farrell titled "China 'Will Not Accept North Korea As Nuclear Weapons State', Ambassador Warns" was posted at independent.co.uk on Sept. 16, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

China has warned that it will never accept North Korea as a nuclear weapons state, Beijing's ambassador to the US warned, just hours after Kim Jong-un said his country was on course to achieve that "final goal."

Speaking at a Chinese embassy event in Washington DC, Cui Tiankai also called on Donald Trump's administration to stop sabre-rattling against the secretive communist state.

Instead the US should "resume dialogue and negotiation" over the stand-off, he said.

"Honestly, I think the United States should be doing much more than now, so that there's real effective international cooperation on this issue," he told reporters.

"They should refrain from issuing more threats. They should do more to find effective ways to resume dialogue and negotiation," he said, while adding that China would never accept North Korea as a nuclear weapons state.

His comments came within days of North Korea firing another ballistic missile over Japan that landed in the Pacific Ocean.

It came despite threats by US President Donald Trump that the communist state would feel the "fire and fury" of his armed forces unless it halted its nuclear weapons programme.



An article by Ian Johnston titled "US Policy Is 'Not to Defend Canada' From an Attack by North Korea" was posted at independent.co.uk on Sept. 16, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

It is official US policy not to protect Canada in the event of a missile attack by North Korea or any other country, a leading general has warned.

It has long been assumed that Washington would defend its northern neighbour.

However, General Pierre St-Amand, the highest-ranking Canadian officer in the North American Aerospace Defense Command (Norad), dismissed the idea during a parliamentary committee meeting in Ottawa.

"The extent of the US policy is not to defend Canada. That's the fact I can bring to the table," he said.

This statement surprised many in Canada, with public broadcaster CBC saying it had "demolished a long-held political assumption" that the US would intervene.

Norad is a joint US and Canadian organisation "charged with . . . the detection, validation and warning of attack against North America whether by aircraft, missiles, or space vehicles, through mutual support arrangements with other commands."

However, General St-Amand suggested the official policy might not necessarily be the one carried out in the event of an attack.

A decision would be made “in the heat of the moment” by the Trump administration and US military commanders, he said.



An article by Katie Morley titled “British Supermarket Offers ‘Finger Vein’ Payment in Worldwide First” was posted at telegraph.co.uk on Sept. 20, 2017. Following is the article.

A UK supermarket has become the first in the world to let shoppers pay for groceries using just the veins in their fingertips.

Customers at the Costcutter store, at Brunel University in London, can now pay using their unique vein pattern to identify themselves.

The firm behind the technology, Sthaler, has said it is in “serious talks” with other major UK supermarkets to adopt hi-tech finger vein scanners at pay points across thousands of stores.

It works by using infrared to scan people’s finger veins and then links this unique biometric map to their bank cards. Customers’ bank details are then stored with payment provider Worldpay, in the same way you can store your card details when shopping online. Shoppers can then turn up to the supermarket with nothing on them but their own hands and use it to make payments in just three seconds.

It comes as previous studies have found fingerprint recognition, used widely on mobile phones, is vulnerable to being hacked and can be copied even from finger smears left on phone screens.

But Sthaler, the firm behind the technology, claims vein technology is the most secure biometric identification method as it cannot be copied or stolen.

Shaler said dozens of students were already using the system and it expected 3,000 students out of 13,000 to have signed up by November.

Finger print payments are already used widely at cash points in Poland, Turkey and Japan.

Vein scanners are also used as a way of accessing high-security UK police buildings and authorising internal trading at least one major British investment bank.

The firm is also in discussions with nightclubs, gyms about using the technology to verify membership and even Premier League football clubs to check people have the right access to VIP hospitality areas.

The technology uses an infrared light to create a detailed map of the vein pattern in your finger. It requires the person to be alive, meaning in the unlikely event a criminal hacks off someone’s finger, it would not work. Sthaler said it take just

one minute to sign up to the system initially and, after that, it takes just seconds to place your finger in a scanner each time you reach the supermarket checkout.

Simon Binns, commercial director of Sthaler, told the Daily Telegraph: 'This makes payments so much easier for customers.

"They don't need to carry cash or cards. They don't need to remember a pin number. You just bring yourself. This is the safest form of biometrics. There are no known incidences where this security has been breached.

"When you put your finger in the scanner it checks you are alive, it checks for a pulse, it checks for haemoglobin. 'Your vein pattern is secure because it is kept on a database in an encrypted form, as binary numbers. No card details are stored with the retailer or ourselves, it is held with Worldpay, in the same way it is when you buy online."

Nick Telford-Reed, director of technology innovation at Worldpay UK, said: "In our view, finger vein technology has a number of advantages over fingerprint. This deployment of Fingopay in Costcutter branches demonstrates how consumers increasingly want to see their payment methods secure and simple."



An article by Jeremy Ross titled "Hispanic Population Surges in Chicago, New Census Data Shows" was posted at cbschicago.com on Sept. 15, 2017. Following is the article.

The face of Chicago is changing.

New census statistics show the Hispanic population grew by 17,000 in a one-year period. For the first time, Hispanics are the second-largest ethnic group in the city.

Meanwhile, the African-American population is shrinking, with 42,000 moving out.

In Little Village, it's not hard to spot the influence and heritage. At Dulcelandia, a candy store, sales and the number of customers have increased since the business opened in 1995.

This would seem to reflect new U.S. Census data showing the Hispanic population in Chicago jumping from 786,000 to 803,000 between 2015 and 2016.

This means about 30 percent of the Windy City's population is now of Hispanic or Latino descent.

"It represents an increase in our purchasing power so that helps to better the economic conditions of the area," says Eduardo Rodriguez of Dulcelandia.

Subtracted from Chicago's numbers—more than 42,000 African Americans, who left the city.

Shari Runner of the Chicago Urban League says this trend began about a decade ago. She thinks lack of economic opportunity and crime and high taxes are pushing African Americans out of Chicago.



An article by Jazmine Ulloa titled "California Lawmakers Approve Landmark 'Sanctuary State' Bill to Expand Protections for Immigrants" was posted at latimes.com on Sept. 16, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

California lawmakers on Saturday passed a "sanctuary state" bill to protect immigrants without legal residency in the U.S., part of a broader push by Democrats to counter expanded deportation orders under the Trump administration.

The legislation by Sen. Kevin de León (D-Los Angeles), the most far-reaching of its kind in the country, would limit state and local law enforcement communication with federal immigration authorities, and prevent officers from questioning and holding people on immigration violations.

After passionate debate in both houses of the Legislature, staunch opposition from Republican sheriffs and threats from Trump administration officials against sanctuary cities, Senate Bill 54 was approved Saturday [Sept. 16] with a 27-11 vote along party lines. But the bill sent to Gov. Jerry Brown drastically scaled back the version first introduced, the result of tough negotiations between Brown and De León in the final weeks of the legislative session.

The decision came hours after a federal judge in Chicago blocked the Trump administration's move to withhold Justice Department grant funds to discourage so-called sanctuary city policies.

On the Senate floor minutes before 2 a.m. on Saturday, De León said the changes were reasonable, and reflected a powerful compromise between law enforcement officials and advocates.



An editorial by Michelle Malkin titled "Show Biz Meltdown: Bombs Away!" was posted at townhall.com on Sept. 20, 2017. Following is the article.

The numbers don't lie. Across the entertainment industry, viewers and fans are tuning out. It's no coincidence ratings are cratering as unhinged celebrities crank up their anti-Trump and anti-American antics.

Pro tip, Tinseltownies: Swapping your jazz hands for middle fingers and waving resistance fists at your customer base is bad for business. Let us count the waning ways.

Emmy emetics. Who wanted to see smirking Stephen Colbert lead a cast of Botoxed starlets and men in hot pants, handing out TV industry awards to diamond-draped elites hoisting up their gilt statues as emblems of victory on behalf of the hegemonically oppressed?

Not as many as the boob-tube titans had hoped!

- The show's overall viewership of 11.4 million tied an all-time low; the key ratings demographic of 18-49 adults sunk 10 percent lower than last year's historic low.

- Most of America had better things to do than watch a privileged cabal of left-wing, coastal one-percenters preening indulgently about their progressivism.

- Conservative actor James Wood had the response of the night to the Emmy ego-thon, noting that "the stunning lack of political diversity in Hollywood is interesting, when you consider their consumer base is so evenly divided."

Oscars' abyss. Earlier this year, the Academy Awards show earned the second-lowest viewership ratings in its history. Program host Jimmy Kimmel and other celebs turned their stage and red carpet into Trump-bashing soapboxes for anti-cop rants, open borders pleas and Quran promotion.

Box office beatdown. Hollywood's summer movie season launched more duds than North Korea's Rocket Man. By Labor Day weekend, revenue plunged "nearly 16 percent over last year, the steepest decline in modern times," according to the Hollywood Reporter, adding that "attendance also plummeted, and is almost assured of hitting a 25-year low in terms of the number of tickets sold, according to Box Office Mojo." Variety dubbed it "the worst the movie industry has seen in more than a decade."

I don't want my MTV. The network that used to broadcast music videos now has a hard time attracting eyeballs to its marquee Video Music Awards. Go figure. Its 10th annual awards show was "the least-watched one in its history," marking the "fourth year in a row that the network has seen a decline in the crown jewel of its annual calendar," according to the Associated Press.

Al Gore's man-made disaster. Among the summer's hottest messes? Environmental scare-monger Al Gore's climate change sequel to "An Inconvenient Truth." The original green Chicken Little flick raked in nearly \$50 million in 2006. The follow-up this summer, in release for a measly six weeks, scraped up less than \$3.5 million in domestic receipts. Paramount tried to prop up the film with trailer endorsements from Bono, Randy Jackson, Pharrell Williams, Adam Levine and Shailene Woodley. But their Hollywood helium couldn't lift Gore's cinematic lead balloon.

Rolling Stone's tombstone. The iconic pop culture and music magazine rolled itself into oblivion after publishing its infamous "Rape on Campus" hoax article in 2014. Legal costs are approaching \$5 million; this week, a third defamation suit by University of Virginia fraternity members moved forward. Over the weekend, owner Jann Wenner announced that his majority stake in the rag is now for sale. Maybe magazine cover boys and lefty multimillionaires Justin Trudeau, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama can pitch in?

NFL = No fans left. The football field is now a minefield of social justice causes, where National Football League officials countenance Black Power salutes, but ban pro-police decals on helmets after cop ambushes. A recent J.D. Power survey found that national anthem protests by players were the top reason fans stopped watching games. Viewership at the start of the 2017 regular season was down 13 percent for the NFL and NBC from last year's opener. Gridiron fans are switching the channel and they're staying out of the stadiums, too. The Rams and Chargers barely filled half their stadiums. The USC-Texas game boasted higher attendance numbers than those two teams' games combined.

NFL brass blame hurricanes. But from the boob tube to the big screen to the glossies to the Big Leagues, the fault lies not with Mother Nature or the entertainment industry's consumers — but with the fatally self-absorbed, politically toxified stars themselves.



An editorial by Brent Bozell titled "An Overwrought Hatefest at the Emmy Awards" was posted at townhall.com on Sept. 22, 2017. Following is the article.

The latest telecast of the Emmy Awards on CBS drew the second-lowest audience ever, just 11.4 million, and that is no surprise. This show could not have been more predictable, quickly devolving into a boorish hourslong festival of Trump bashing and Hillary mourning.

Awards shows used to be blockbusters for TV. But in the Age of Trump, they're becoming screaming political spectacles, like the infamous funeral/pep rally for Sen. Paul Wellstone in 2002. The red-state audience knows it's going to be a leftist hootenanny attack on conservatives all night long. Why put up with it? So they don't bother.

Naturally, the Hollywood crowd gave out Emmy awards like candy to "Saturday Night Live" for its sneering satire of Donald Trump's presidential campaign. And Kate McKinnon thanked Hillary Clinton for her alleged "grace and grit."

Jane Fonda recalled her film "9 to 5," saying, "Back in 1980 in that movie, we refused to be controlled by a sexist, egotistical, lying, hypocritical bigot." Her co-star Lily Tomlin picked up the attack, saying, "And in 2017, we still refuse to be controlled by a sexist, egotistical, lying, hypocritical bigot."

Got it.

Picking up the Emmy for best actor in a comedy series for the FX show "Atlanta," Donald Glover announced: "I want to thank Trump for making black people No. 1 on the most oppressed list. He's the reason I'm probably up here."

Host Stephen Colbert even compared Trump to Walter White, the murderous drug kingpin at the center of "Breaking Bad." He joked: "I thought you people loved morally compromised antiheroes. You like Walter White. He's just Walter Much Whiter."

Hilarious.

There's another obvious reason awards shows have been slipping: who's nominated and who wins. Much like the Oscars, Emmy voters lurch toward excess, the egregiously sexy and violent and progressive/"transgressive" products. Popular shows are often rejected because, well, they're popular, which must mean they're not smart enough or they're just too formulaic and predictable.

Shows on the Big Four networks get slighted for cable networks and streaming services. Here are the top Emmy winners by network in 2017: 29 for HBO, 20 for Netflix, 15 for NBC and 10 for Hulu. By contrast, ABC won seven. Subtract NBC's nine awards for "Saturday Night Live," and it won only six. CBS got four.

The Emmy for best drama hasn't gone to a broadcast network since 2006, and in that span, voters have given four to "Mad Men" (AMC), two to "Breaking Bad" (AMC) and two to "Game of Thrones" (HBO). A top-rated show like CBS's "NCIS" doesn't get nominated for Emmys . . . unless you count "outstanding stunt coordination." But Logo's drag-queen show "RuPaul's Drag Race" won three Emmys in 2017.

There's also little suspense when the same liberal favorites win Emmys over and over. Julia Louis-Dreyfus won her sixth Emmy in a row for HBO's "Veep." Yawn. It doesn't matter that the ratings are tiny. Jon Stewart's "Daily Show" won for ten years in a row. Why tune in for that? And why don't the over-rewarded liberals have the decency to let someone else get an award? Why don't they redistribute Emmys?

Hollywood loves to be ahead of the people, "educating" them along the path to progress. But it gets remarkably upset when the people refuse to follow it. The people are supposed to bend their minds agreeably as the entertainment elite sculpts the "arc of justice." A few swift kicks at the morons from the eminentoes on the Emmy stage are expected to work their magic.



An editorial by Walter Williams titled "The Welfare State's Legacy" was posted at jewishworldreview.com on Sept. 20, 2017. Following is the article.

That the problems of today's black Americans are a result of a legacy of slavery, racial discrimination and poverty has achieved an axiomatic status, thought to be self-evident and beyond question.

This is what academics and the civil rights establishment have taught. But as with so much of what's claimed by leftists, there is little evidence to support it.

The No. 1 problem among blacks is the effects stemming from a very weak family structure. Children from fatherless homes are likelier to drop out of high school, die by suicide, have behavioral disorders, join gangs, commit crimes and end up in prison. They are also likelier to live in poverty-stricken households.

But is the weak black family a legacy of slavery?

In 1960, just 22 percent of black children were raised in single-parent families. Fifty years later, more than 70 percent of black children were raised in single-parent families. Here's my question: Was the increase in single-parent black families after 1960 a legacy of slavery, or might it be a legacy of the welfare state ushered in by the War on Poverty?

According to the 1938 Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, that year 11 percent of black children were born to unwed mothers. Today about 75 percent of black children are born to unwed mothers. Is that supposed to be a delayed response to the legacy of slavery? The bottom line is that the black family was stronger the first 100 years after slavery than during what will be the second 100 years.

At one time, almost all black families were poor, regardless of whether one or both parents were present. Today roughly 30 percent of blacks are poor. However, two-parent black families are rarely poor. Only 8 percent of black married-couple families live in poverty. Among black families in which both the husband and wife work full time, the poverty rate is under 5 percent. Poverty in black families headed by single women is 37 percent. The undeniable truth is that neither slavery nor Jim Crow nor the harshest racism has decimated the black family the way the welfare state has.

The black family structure is not the only retrogression suffered by blacks in the age of racial enlightenment. In every census from 1890 to 1954, blacks were either just as active as or more so than whites in the labor market. During that earlier period, black teen unemployment was roughly equal to or less than white teen unemployment. As early as 1900, the duration of black unemployment was 15 percent shorter than that of whites; today it's about 30 percent longer.

Would anyone suggest that during earlier periods, there was less racial discrimination?

What goes a long way toward an explanation of yesteryear and today are the various labor laws and regulations promoted by liberals and their union allies that cut off the bottom rungs of the economic ladder and encourage racial discrimination.

Labor unions have a long history of discrimination against blacks. Frederick Douglass wrote about this in his 1874 essay titled "The Folly, Tyranny, and Wickedness of Labor Unions," and Booker T. Washington did so in his 1913 essay titled "The Negro and the Labor Unions."

To the detriment of their constituents, most of today's black politicians give unquestioning support to labor laws pushed by unions and white liberal organizations.

Then there's education. Many black 12th-graders deal with scientific problems at the level of whites in the sixth grade. They write and do math about as well as white seventh- and eighth-graders. All of this means that an employer hiring or a college admitting the typical black high school graduate is in effect hiring or admitting an eighth-grader. Thus, one should not be surprised by the outcomes.

The most damage done to black Americans is inflicted by those politicians, civil rights leaders and academics who assert that every problem confronting blacks is a result of a legacy of slavery and discrimination. That's a vision that guarantees perpetuity for the problems.



An editorial by Ben Shapiro titled "The End of the First Amendment" was posted at townhall.com on Sept. 20, 2017. Following is the article.

Last week, I visited the University of California, Berkeley.

The preparations for the visit were patently insane.

- First, the school charged the sponsor group, Young America's Foundation, a \$15,000 security fee.

- Then, the school blocked off the upper level of the auditorium, fearful that radicals from the violent far-left-leaning group Antifa would infiltrate the speech and begin hurling objects from the balcony onto the crowd below.

- Finally, the school ended up spending some \$600,000 on additional policing, including the creation of cement barriers and hiring of hundreds of armed police officers for a prospective riot.

All this so that I could deliver a speech about personal responsibility and individualism.

Good for Berkeley for doing its job. Bad for the students and outside agitators who made it necessary. Unfortunately, the bad actors are becoming more prominent and more popular.

At The University of Utah, we're already hearing rumors of unrest. And, according to an astonishing new survey from Brookings Institution, such idiocy is set to multiply.

- A full 44 percent of students said that the First Amendment does not protect "hate speech."

- A majority of students, 51 percent, said that they would be in favor of students shouting down a speaker "known for making offensive and hurtful statements."

- 19 percent of students said the use of violence against controversial speakers would be acceptable.

- This is full-scale fascism, and it's gaining ground.

Meanwhile, administrators are caving.

At Middlebury College, administrators have adopted a policy that explicitly states, "Only in cases of imminent and credible threat to the community that

cannot be mitigated by revisions to the event plan would the president and senior administration consider canceling the event.”

At DePaul University, I was pre-emptively banned from campus last year after students got violent with another speaker.

At the University of Wisconsin-Madison, police left students who decided to storm the stage while I was speaking to their own devices; administrators reportedly told the police not to remove the agitators and to cancel the event if they felt it necessary to do so.

At California State University, Los Angeles, administrators allegedly told police to stand down rather than fight near-rioters getting violent with those who would attend one of my speeches.

Both students and administrators should take a lesson from Berkeley.

First, administrators: Security is necessary for the free exercise of the First Amendment. Right now, there’s an expectation that police will be prevented from doing their jobs; that’s why groups like Antifa roam free. At Berkeley, they knew better: The police were armed with pepper spray and told to arrest anyone in a mask or with a barred weapon. The result was 1,000 protesters and no serious violence. That was after months of actual brutal violence in the streets of Berkeley. Other campuses must take note.

Second, students: Get a grip. I spoke at Berkeley without incident, and we actually had productive discussions with a number of students on the left. Everybody left with more information than they had coming in. Discussion never hurt anyone. But both the heckler’s veto and the fascistic worldview that fuels it do.



An article by Scott Adams titled “When to Trust the Experts (Climate and Otherwise)” was posted at dilbert.com on Sept. 11, 2017. Following is the article.

Our duo of hurricanes, Harvey and Irma, have elevated the perceived risks of climate change in a lot of people’s minds. Are these disasters, and the record heat in many places, a sign of climate warming already out of control?

The quick answer is maybe, but climate scientists will need a lot more data and probably a few more years to know whether we are seeing a blip or a trend. From a persuasion perspective, the fascinating thing to me is that the climate science “sides” have reversed because of the storms. And here I am only talking about non-scientists on social media.

Last winter I saw climate skeptics (or deniers in some cases) proclaiming climate change a hoax because it was cold outside. The scientists and pro-climate-change folks mocked those poor souls for not understanding the difference between anecdotal evidence and science. You can’t determine a long

term trend by looking out the window, say all scientists. And if you think you can, you're being a big dope who doesn't know the first thing about science.

If you don't understand that anecdotal data in isolation is generally useless to scientists, you don't understand anything about science. A year ago, that described a lot of climate skeptics who were looking out their windows, seeing snow, and declaring climate change a hoax.

But that was last year. This week the sides reversed. Now I keep seeing climate alarmists on social media looking at the hurricanes and declaring them strong evidence of climate change. They might be right. But if they are, it is by coincidence and not by science. Scientists say it is too early to tell. So now we have a bizarre situation in which the pro-science side is disagreeing with the scientists on their own side. That's what confirmation bias gets you. Both sides see anecdotal evidence as real. Both sides think they respect and understand the basics of science. Both sides are wrong.

Please excuse my generalities here. Obviously there are plenty of smart people on both sides who understand that anecdotal information is not confirmation of anything. But in terms of what I see on social media, the hurricanes have turned a lot of people on the pro-science side into believers in anecdotal evidence. Here's one example. Read from bottom up.

And this brings me to my topic of the day: How do you know when to trust experts? My hypothesis is that people who have the most experience in the real world trust experts the least. To make that point, allow me to give you a brief tour of my experience with experts.

Nutrition

When I was a kid, scientists seemed to agree on what constituted good nutrition. They even put that knowledge into a handy visual aid involving a food pyramid, and provided it to every school. We now understand the science behind it to be bunk.

Fitness

I'm old enough to have observed fitness experts revising their advice countless times. I'm no longer sure if stretching is good or bad. And the exercise experts also had the nutrition stuff wrong, along with the rest of the world, for most of my lifetime.

Psychology

When I was a kid, Sigmund Freud was considered the leading expert on psychology even though he was dead. Now the experts in psychology considers Freud a fraud. His science wasn't science at all.

Finance

When I was young, I assumed experts could pick stocks better than a monkey with a dart board. It turns out I was wrong. Index funds with no experts whatsoever routinely outperform the expert stock-pickers.

I have a degree in economics and an MBA from UC Berkeley. I did financial projections for a living, first at a major bank and later at the local phone company. People considered me an expert in that narrow field. In a number of cases, I got to track how my projections compared to actual results. They were rarely close.

As an expert, I deserved no credibility whatsoever. And for a good reason. My projections required human judgment on lots of variables, so the output was little more than guessing and massaging the numbers to meet my boss's expectations.

Medical

Some of you know I lost my ability to speak for over three years because of a bizarre disorder called spasmodic dysphonia. The experts almost unanimously agreed that the source of the spasmodic dysphonia is in the brain, not the vocal cords. I ended up diagnosing myself correctly after my primary care doctor and his recommended specialists were totally stumped. (I figured it out using Google.)

Once I knew the problem, I found the one surgeon in the world who claimed he could fix my problem by rewiring the nerve pathways in my neck. The operation was a success, and I recovered from an "incurable" problem. Had I listened to 99% of the experts who said the problem was in my brain, I would not have considered an operation on my neck.

I could go on like this for hours, but I think you start to see my point. At my age, and given my type of experience, I have seen experts get the big stuff wrong lots of times, even when that seemed deeply unlikely.

That brings us to climate change. The experts are strongly aligned on one side. If you have neither the age nor the experience to know how often experts can be wrong, you probably assume the experts are credible. But if you have my type of experience, watching the fields of finance, diet, exercise, psychology, and medicine get the big stuff wrong, you start from a place of skepticism.

Ideally, we would look at the details in any given situation to make our final decisions on the credibility of experts because no two cases are alike. Unfortunately, we humans are not good at using facts and reason. We tend to use our biases and then rationalize them later.

So how do we know when to trust experts and when to be skeptical? Here are the red flags you should look for in order to know how much credibility to assign to the experts.

Money distortion

When the players have money on the line, the truth gets distorted. In climate science, money influences both sides of the debate. That's a red flag.

Complexity with assumptions

Whenever you see complexity, that is a red flag. Complexity is often used to deceive. And complexity invites human error. When you see complex models

that claim to predict the future, stay skeptical, especially when humans are making assumptions that influence the results.

The exceptions are planetary predictions and other straightforward physics. We can predict the future location of planets without any human assumptions. That is just math and physics. But in the fields of finance and climate science, to name just two, humans are influencing the models with assumptions. That is always a red flag. I am aware of no complex prediction model populated with human assumption-tweaking that is credible, in any field. Is climate science the first exception? Maybe. But it would be unusual in my experience.

The important fact left out

When people have the facts on their side, they are quick to point it out. When a key fact is glaringly omitted, that's a red flag.

In the world of climate science, most of you would not know the answer to this key question: Are the temperature measurements peer reviewed?

You probably assumed the temperature measurements are peer reviewed. Maybe some, or most, are. All I know for sure is that climate scientist Michael Mann says his temperature data is proprietary. He refused to release it to a Canadian court for that reason. Is that a common situation, that data measurements are "secret." I don't know. Neither do you. That's a red flag. It is conspicuous that you and I don't know the answer to that basic question. Because if the raw temperature data is not peer reviewed, is it really science?

To be perfectly clear here, I don't know the state of peer review for temperature measurements. But it is such a key question it raises a red flag as to why scientists aren't making sure we know the raw data is clean and widely reviewed.

Conflation of credibility

Whenever you see someone conflate a credible thing (such as the peer review system in science) with a less-credible thing (long term prediction models), that's a red flag. If you question the accuracy of climate models, someone will mention the gold standard of peer review, even though that doesn't address climate models that involve human assumptions. Conflation of credibility is a red flag.

My view on climate science is that different elements have different levels of earned credibility. Like this:

- **Basic Science:** The chemistry and physics of climate change seem solid. When you add CO₂ to an environment, expect some extra heat, all other things being equal.
- **Temperature Measurements:** The temperature measurements used by climate scientists might be solid.

But the way science has so far communicated this topic does not inspire confidence. I think you have to put a lower credibility on the temperature measurements than on the basic science, simply because of the way the topic is pre-

sented to the public. If the measurements are credible, why not tell us all about the peer review process that has validated them? And why would Michael Mann even have “proprietary” data? Isn’t everyone looking at the same stuff?

■ **Climate Models:** As soon as you hear that someone has a complicated prediction model, that’s red flag.

If you hear that the model involves human assumptions and “tweaking,” that’s a double red flag. If you hear there are dozens of different models, that’s a triple red flag. If you hear that the models that don’t conform to the pack are discarded, and you don’t know why, that is a quadruple red flag. And if you see people conflating climate projections with economic models to put some credibility on the latter, you have a quintuple red flag situation.

To be fair, none of the so-called flags I mentioned means the models are wrong. But they do mean you can’t put the same credibility on them as you would the basic science.

Economic models

Have you noticed that I seem to be the only person talking about economic models when it comes to climate change? That’s because there is a tendency to assume the economic decision is so obvious no study is needed.

That’s the sort of thinking that no economist would find credible. Moreover, economists don’t believe anyone can forecast the future with long term economic models. Science might tell us we have a big problem, but economists have to tell us when to start addressing it and how hard. That part is missing.

I have seen some economic guesses of how much damage would be caused by climate change. But I have not seen one that considered opportunity cost, or the benefit of waiting for better technology. No economist would respect a prediction that ignored those two enormous variables. And those variables are deeply unpredictable by their nature.

The one sided argument

When I see climate scientists in the media, they are never accompanied by skeptical scientists who can check their statements in real time. Likewise, articles by and about skeptics are usually presented without simultaneous debunking by the experts on the other side. Those are red flags.

Any presentation of one side without the simultaneous fact-checking by the other is useless and almost certainly designed for persuasion, not truth. The problem here is that both sides of the climate debate are 100% persuasive when viewed without the other in attendance. If you think your side is the smart side, check out the other side. They look just as smart, at least to non-scientists such as me.

I’ll summarize by reminding readers that I am not a scientist and I don’t have the tools to evaluate the credibility of climate scientists. If you think you do have that ability as a non-scientist, my guess is that you are younger than me or you have less experience of the type I described above.

When I present this sort of framing to climate change believers, they generally retreat to Pascal's Wager, which says in this case that we should treat any risk of catastrophe as if it is likely, so we aggressively address the risk and eliminate it. That makes sense in a world where resources are not constrained.

But our world is the opposite. Everything we do is at the expense of something else we wanted to do. And I am aware of no economic model that considers the opportunity cost of spending a trillion dollars for perhaps a half-degree temperature improvement.

Climate change isn't our only mortal threat. We have pandemics, terrorism, nuclear war, the singularity, asteroids, and probably a dozen more threats I don't even know.

If we could eliminate all of those threats and have money left over, I say let's do it. But if resources are limited (and they are), I need a strong argument to put a trillion dollars into any one of the risks.



An article by Ed Mazza titled "Christian 'Researcher' Claims the Rapture Starts on Saturday" was posted at huffingtonpost.com on Sept. 18, 2017. Following is the article.

There's yet another doomsday date approaching, with some claiming that the rapture will start on Saturday [Sept. 23].

That's when certain Christians will get sucked up into heaven while the Earth descends into a chaotic tribulation period for those who are left.

Several videos about the supposed coming cataclysm are going viral with similar claims, including the trippy clip above showing some kind of space queen giving birth in front of a seven-headed moon lizard.

But don't stock up on Jim Bakker's doomsday food buckets just yet. The entire basis for the prediction is bunk. The September rapture date came from a Christian researcher named David Meade who calculated it would occur 33 days after last month's eclipse, The Washington Post reported.

"Jesus lived for 33 years. The name Elohim, which is the name of God to the Jews, was mentioned 33 times [in the Bible]," Meade told the newspaper. "It's a very biblically significant, numerologically significant number. I'm talking astronomy. I'm talking the Bible and merging the two."

Meade believes global catastrophes will be caused by a secret planet called Nibiru passing the Earth on Saturday. The world won't end, "but the world as we know it is ending," he told the Post.

"Nibiru and other stories about wayward planets are an Internet hoax," the space agency said on its website a few years ago when similar doomsday predictions went viral. "There is no factual basis for these claims."

Even fellow Christians are calling out Meade and others over the latest doomsday predictions.

"Meade's views are not endorsed by Roman Catholic, Protestant or eastern Orthodox branches of Christianity," Fox News reported.

"Meade is a made-up leader in a made-up field, and should not be on the front page of anything, let alone Fox News," Ed Stetzer of Christianity Today wrote.

While the writers of the Bible have used numbers at times, Stetzer said there were no "secret numerical codes that require a profession called 'Christian numerology.' "

In other words, go ahead and make plans for Sunday.



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."