

AMERICANS NOW SEE HOMOSEXUALITY AS "MORALLY ACCEPTABLE"

According to a recent Gallup poll, 52 percent of Americans now view homosexuality (gay or lesbian) as morally acceptable. The numbers have been making slight gains since first being asked nine years ago on surveys of different behavior and social practices. The new poll marks the first time a majority of Americans condone homosexuality. The poll also determined that those who view homosexuality as "morally wrong" is at an all time low of 43 percent.

In spite of gaining a slight majority in accepting same-sex relationships, 53 percent of Americans still say that they oppose legalization of homosexual marriages. Forty-four percent of those polled said they favor legalizing same-sex marriages. In 1996, when the question of homosexual marriage first was asked by Gallup, 68 percent of Americans opposed it, compared to just 27 percent who favored it.

The poll also indicated that 60 percent of Democrats and independents view homosexuality as acceptable, in contrast to 35 percent of Republicans. The numbers were based upon telephone interviews with 1,029 adults and is said to have a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percent.

According to apologist Ron Rhodes, it is often claimed that 10 percent of the population is homosexual. However, Rhodes notes that figure as being inflated and based upon the faulty and outdated methodology of sex researcher Alfred Kinsey, and which has been debunked by numerous scientific polls. He says that in reality, only 1 to 2 percent of the population is homosexual.

—MKG

HAGGARD LAUNCHES NEW CHURCH

Ted Haggard is finding himself on a fast track back into the pastorate. In May, the disgraced pastor incorporated the name "St. James Church," and then a few days later he made an official announcement that he was beginning a new church. The first church service, held in a barn next to his Colorado Springs, Colo., home, drew about 160 people. The church is an outgrowth of prayer meetings started last November and hosted in his home.

Within six weeks of the inaugural service, Haggard's attendance had increased to 230 people. The growth has caused him to move the church from his barn into rented facilities in his city's Pikes Peak Center for Performing Arts. The first worship service at the Center was held July 25.

According to *The Denver Post*, "Haggard is taking a weekly salary of \$300." Excess funds from the worship service offerings are going to a variety of other mission and ministry endeavors, including water-well drilling in Africa and medical assistance in Mexico. Haggard told the newspaper that his return to ministry has revived him and his wife, Gayle. "We're more happy than we've ever been. We are supremely satisfied in every dimension of our lives right now," the *Post* reported.

In November 2006, it was disclosed that Haggard had a relationship with a male prostitute and had made purchases of illicit drugs. The revelations led to his resignation as pastor of New Life Church in Colorado Springs, being excommunicated by the church, and a subsequent move from the state. He returned to Colorado in June 2008. Haggard founded New Life Church about 25 years ago and grew the congregation to about 14,000 members, making it the largest in Colorado.

—MKG

SCHULLER ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

After 55 years in the pulpit, the Rev. Robert H. Schuller, 83, is giving up his position as the lead pastor of the Crystal Cathedral. Schuller founded the Southern California, 10,000-member megachurch, building it from humble beginnings. In the mid-1950s, Schuller reached the unchurched and casual-minded culture when he began holding Sunday worship services at a drive-in theater in an Orange County suburb. His weekly sermons made their way to television airwaves in 1970 with the popular *Hour of Power* broadcast, which he hosted for more than three decades.

Built upon a message of positive and possibility thinking, Schuller's life and ministry has been less than positive during the past few years. In October 2008, Schuller removed his son, following a decade of grooming him as host of the *Hour of Power* broadcast, resulting from a family rift that made headlines announcing, "Schuller's TV empire crumbling" and "Televangelism

(continues on page 23)

life is hard. It is often easier to tolerate what is familiar than to try to build a new life with new constructs. The fear will be directly related to the number of hours, days, weeks, months, and even years of commitment to things that were false. Endless hours must now be channeled into a new way of living and thinking.

New social structures must be built and new friends acquired. It's hard work! Many things will have to be "put off" so new biblical thoughts and ways can be "put on." Some are not willing to face that. It has been observed that "some would rather stay in hell because they know the names of the streets."

Error and deception bring heavy consequences and a high price. Deception sets up traceable mechanisms that can be examined. The way out is going to have to be biblical and based on solid truth. The truth can set us free. Nothing short of renouncing the error, repenting of certain behaviors (especially leading others astray), and heartfelt commitment to new obedience to Scripture will do.

The new support system must consist of a healthy biblical church and mature believers. This also must involve the warnings to others about the false system no matter how embarrassing or difficult. Energizer bunnies need to be dismantled and given new life in Christ. God is the only one who can give us a "new heart" and give us by His grace a life motivated by truth and truth alone.

—GRF

empire in chaos over family split." The church described the discord as a "lack of shared vision" for the ministry. The younger Schuller held the host position for less than three years.

The church also has experienced serious financial difficulties. Revenue fell 27 percent between 2008 and 2009. Failure to meet its obligations to more than 100 vendors who were owed millions of dollars for work and supplies for the church's pageants also forced the church to cancel its Easter pageant this year. Schuller's church also has sold buildings and 170 acres of land it owned in Orange County, laid off employees, and cut back on the number of television stations airing its *Hour of Power* broadcast.

In June 2009, Schuller turned the leadership of the church over to his eldest daughter, Sheila Schuller Coleman. She will now become the sole lead pastor of the Crystal Cathedral, a role she shared with her father for thirteen months.

Although Schuller officially resigned, he will not be leaving the church entirely. The *Orange County Register* reported that he will assume the newly created position of chairman of the church's consistory, which is said to be the church's board of directors.

—MKG

PERSONAL FREEDOM OUTREACH — STATEMENT OF BELIEF

- I. THE BIBLE AS THE DIVINELY INSPIRED, INERRANT WORD OF GOD: IT IS IN ITS ENTIRETY THE SOLE AUTHORITY FOR ALL MATTERS OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF AND PRACTICE.
- II. THE ONE TRUE GOD. IN THE ONE TRUE GOD THERE EXIST THREE PERSONS, BEING: THE FATHER, THE SON JESUS CHRIST, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.
- III. JESUS CHRIST: HIS DEITY, HUMANITY, VIRGIN BIRTH, SINLESSNESS, DEATH AND BODILY RESURRECTION; WHO WILL PERSONALLY AND VISIBLY RETURN AGAIN TO EARTH.
- IV. THE PERSONALITY AND DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
- V. THE EXISTENCE AND PERSONALITY OF SATAN, HIS TOTAL OPPOSITION TO GOD, AND HIS POWER OVER THE UNREGENERATE.
- VI. THE COMPLETE AND TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF ALL MEN WHICH MAKES THEM HOPELESSLY LOST WITHOUT THE NEW BIRTH OBTAINABLE THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.
- VII. THE FINAL ESTATE OF MAN: FOR THE SAVED, EVERLASTING LIFE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD AND FOR THE UNSAVED, EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT BECAUSE OF THEIR UNBELIEF.
- VIII. THE GOSPEL BY WHICH WE ARE SAVED BEING SUMMED IN THE DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.
- IX. THE CHURCH BEING THE BODY OF CHRIST, UNITED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, CONSISTING OF THOSE WHO HAVE RECEIVED JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOR. A LOCAL CHURCH IS AN ORGANIZED ASSEMBLY OF BELIEVERS UNITED FOR THE PURPOSE OF CARRYING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST.
- X. THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST BEING TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO ALL MEN, BAPTIZING AND DISCIPLING THOSE WHO HAVE BELIEVED.