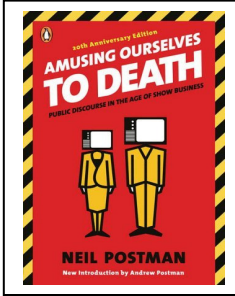


# Cliff's Notes

February, 2009; vol. 3, num. 5; [www.GBFSV.org](http://www.GBFSV.org)

GBF is 2 and a half years old. February was another good month at GBF. We averaged 115 folks each Sunday, we had 7 first-time visitors, a baby shower and more people in the process of membership. Our web-site had a lot of hits with 105 sermon downloads in 30 days. We are now in John 11, Friday night Bible study continues studying the “one-anothers” & discipleship continues.

In 1985 renowned social critic, Neil Postman, wrote, ‘Amusing Ourselves to Death.’ With pin-point accuracy, he properly diagnosed what makes our culture most vulnerable to implosion and widespread dissolution in the present day...a gross, unhealthy infatuation with entertainment and amusement at every level, in all spheres of life. About the state of American culture in 1985 he wrote, “Our politics, religion, news, athletics, education and commerce have been transformed into congenial adjuncts of show business, largely without protest or even much popular notice. The result is that we are a people on the verge of amusing ourselves to death” (p. 3). Postman makes no claim of being a Christian, but his assessment rings true more than most Christians realize or care to admit. But he was dead on. Our “religion,” or the American church, has been transformed in the last generation by the pursuit of spiritualized glitz, greed and entertainment. Christianity is supposed to be about “truth” or “reality.” Jesus commanded us to “know the truth.” Paul commands Christians to protect their minds by first meditating on “things that are true” (Philippians 4). But unfortunately the church today is preoccupied with fun, entertainment, amusement and imaginative **non-reality**. The proof? Just look at how the preponderance of popular books being sold, read, studied & touted today in churches everywhere are “fiction” or “quasi-fiction” books. ‘Fiction’—that which is not true, not real, make believe. But it seems that many Christians can’t discern between fiction & reality. Recent examples include *The DaVinci Code*, *90 Minutes in Heaven* and *The Shack*. Unwittingly, many professing Christians are actually reading books like these, believing the events are true & even efficacious for daily living. Rather, books like these are nothing more than 3<sup>rd</sup> rate fiction that blur the line between reality and wishful thinking. There’s a place for creativity and imagination. But there’s no place in the Christian world view for making truth foggy in the name of fun.



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## Tyranny & Matrimony

On November 4, 2008, 7,001,084 California residents voted for Proposition 8, which defines marriage as between one man and one woman. Every country, society, religion and government all throughout history has endorsed this definition of marriage. Now, in early March, 4 judges on the State Supreme Court can overrule the will of 7 million California voters, the clear precedent of 6,000 years of human history and God’s very decree issued from heaven of what constitutes a true marriage. On March 5<sup>th</sup> opponents of Prop 8 believe that’s what will happen. If Gavin Newsom, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jerry Brown get their way, then Prop 8 will be overturned. Justices *Ronald George*, *Joyce Kennard*, *Kathryn Werdegar*, and *Carlos Mareno* all ruled against traditional/biblical marriage in May 2008 by overturning Prop 22, which California voters passed in 2000. Will they do the same again? Regardless, God’s Word still stands despite the defiance of a few rebels: marriage is an institution created by God (Mark 10:7), between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24-25), for life (Matthew 19:6), as a living metaphor depicting Christ’s marriage to His Church (Ephesians 5:32), and those who tamper with it face God’s wrath (Hebrews 13:4; Psalm 2).



Mareno



Kennard



Werdegar



George

## Around the World

- \*James Dobson, 72, resigned as board chair of Focus on the Family to facilitate the planned transition of leadership; he’ll continue the radio show
- \*Brian Sussman, award winning meteorologist, Christian, and popular radio talk show host has a book forthcoming called “Global Whining, A Denier’s Handbook”; to be released by WordServe Literary Group, Ltd.
- \*George Beverly Shea turned 100 this month; he continues an active ministry of music with the Billy Graham Association
- \*This month the North Dakota House of Representatives voted 51-41 in favor of a bill that defines a fetus as a “person” deserving full rights as such
- \*This month the Montana Senate voted 26-24 supporting the truth that personhood begins at conception
- \*The Supreme Court ruled in favor of religious free speech (9-0) in an important case argued by Jay Sekulow for Pleasant Grove City, Utah