

Pastor's Letter 11-22-2019

*It contains every American military nuclear strategy
Some say it makes the President the most powerful man of all
It goes everywhere the President goes
It contains all of the nuclear codes
It can trigger a regional or global nuclear war*

What are we talking about?

... the infamous “nuclear football.”

The phrase was coined by Robert McNamara, former Secretary of Defense. The nuclear football is a heavily guarded, heavily protected, advanced, state-of-the-art, portable computer. It goes wherever the President goes in order to be on hand in case of the most dire of emergencies should he deem it necessary to launch nuclear tipped missiles.



As you can see, the computer always goes with the President, and it generally is carried by high ranking military personnel. In the picture above, it followed President Obama. Before that, you can see that it followed President Reagan. It has followed every President since JFK .

One hiccup that the government had with it was when President Clinton somehow lost some of the nuclear codes needed to operate it. After a mad scramble, computer geeks developed new codes to quickly restore the nuclear football to its original potential. And then there was a scare when President Ford's staff got to Paris and realized that the device was left behind. Of all presidents, perhaps President Carter was the grimmest when it came to accepting the fact that this doomsday weapon would shadow him through all of his White House years.

What is significant here is that for its security, America trusts in a machine instead of God because it doesn't know or understand God . . . nor does it want to. Human nature prefers to trust in what it can see regardless of its inherent flaws.

What would be an impressive display of belief in the nation's motto "In God We Trust" is for the government to carry a Bible for the President everywhere he goes in place of the nuclear football; and whenever a crisis would arise, the President and his cabinet would study the Bible's directive on the given matter and deal with it from God's perspective. In a sense, God imposed this governing strategy on the monarchs of Ancient Israel by requiring every king to write out the law of Moses by hand.

"And it shall be when he sits upon the throne as king, he must copy for himself this body of instruction on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. He must always keep that copy with him and read it daily as long as he lives. This way he will learn to fear the Lord his God by obeying all the terms of these instructions and decrees.

This regular reading will prevent him from becoming proud and acting as if he is above his fellow citizens. It will also prevent him from turning away from these commands in the smallest way. And it will insure that he and his descendants will reign for many generations in Israel."
(Deuteronomy 17: 18-20) NLT

In a sense, the Bible was to be like the nuclear football in the fact that it was to never leave the king but be the means by which he would govern to act in the best interests and security of his people.

What Would You Rather Trust In...?

The nuclear football ...



...or... GOD

The "Nuclear Football" under President Clinton

One day, we may literally have to decide.

Gordon and Holly Hannaway



Continuing the bios of our array of speakers, this week we feature Gordon Hannaway of Tampa, FL. Gordon grew up outside of Philadelphia and attended college where he met and married Holly, during their senior year. After completing his master's degree, he began work on his Ph.D. at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville where Holly also received her master's. While still in school,

they began attending church and moved eventually to Atlanta; Jackson, Mississippi; and then, with their three children, to Tampa. While in Tampa they were ordained as deacon and deaconess. Later Gordon was ordained as an elder. They currently help me by sending out emails such as this.

Gordon's career has been in group insurance with intermediate and large corporations including Beall's, Wendy's, Longboat Key and Gold Cup Coffee. In addition to church involvement, both he and Holly share a keen interest in gardening, reading and interacting with their Colorado, Indiana, and Florida grandchildren.

Local Brethren to Pray For

Ray King continues in hospice care. He appreciates and has been very glad for the prayerful support of the Ocala brethren. Also Shari, Sherrie and Dora would appreciate your continued prayers for their recoveries. And we ask you also to pray for other developing situations.

International Brethren to Pray For

For example we have 22 people on the island of Dominica that want to become part of United Church of God. Stan Braumuller from the Ocala church will fly there to meet with them on Dec 7. The news from Angola is very good but needs our sustained prayers. As you recall, the Angolan government threatened to shut down all religions because they were "too small" to be registered with the local

government. That included us at roughly 6,000 members. However the Angolan government has gradually changed its views and is seriously considering allowing us to continue to function as a church.

Our deacon from Haiti miraculously was able to fly to the Cincinnati Pastoral Development Program where he has been for 10 days. The situation in Haiti continues to be chaotic. When our man rode to the airport, he had to pay a “toll” or bribery money to be allowed to ride down various residential streets to the airport and barely had any money left once he reached his destination.

I have explored the feasibility of purchasing radio time in the Tallahassee area and also ask for your prayers. Unless the Lord is active in this venture I could waste time, labor and money in vain. Life is too short to do that. This past week I went to a different radio station closer to home in Dade City where I recorded several demo programs of 30 minutes. I also needed to record fresh material for WKDW in Port Charlotte. WKDW is in an hour long format (actually 54 minutes plus intro and conclusion.)

We are adding 2 additional prisoners to our list of very serious inmates in the Florida system. They want visits and literature on every subject.

BANNED From Prison by Satan?

What an ironic question! But maybe true... A monkey wrench that has arisen is that suddenly I am not allowed to visit in the Florida prisons. For 2 weeks now I have repeatedly called the “powers that be” for an explanation and to find out what I can do to regain access. I get no answers from anyone. Probably Satan is disturbed by our prison ministry. We have 7 who are baptized, 2 that have waited a long time and want very much to be baptized, plus 2 fairly new people who are devouring church literature and want visits/Bible Studies plus another who knows much about the Bible and will be released in April and may attend church. I have logged in 140 individual visits and my wife and son perhaps 100 each. We write and regularly receive letters from almost all of these men and others on a consistent basis.

We have found a half-way house in Ocala that may take two of our inmates next spring which would allay their anxieties about re-entrance into society.

One added benefit with having a vibrant prison ministry is knowing that it has a favorable impact on caring relatives who write and visit them. Eventually all hear about their connection to the UCG. Since I need clearance to see all of these scattered people, I ask for your prayers.

I also ask for your prayers that we will have visitors come to Nov 30th Bible presentation in Ocala on “Why Were You Born?” We will mail invitations this week in a 25-mile radius.

This Sabbath

Lonnie Mooneyham will be in Tallahassee, Bill Lofthus will be in Ft. Myers, Gordon Hannaway will be in Ocala, and I will be in Vero Beach. As always, I wish everyone a wonderful Sabbath!

BV

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President Reagan's football

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