

Sunday broadcast WKDW 97-5 FM , 10-11 AM  
Cybercast from Vero Beach, 2 PM  
Weekly Bible Study via Zoom, 7:30 PM

## *Pastor's Letter – August 21, 2020*

# Wanted – Dead or Alive

## Perpetrators of FAKE NEWS, 1899

Al Stevens  
John Lewis  
Hal Wilshire  
Jack Tournay

One Hundred Dollars Paid for Information Leading to the  
Arrest of 4 very bad liars who fanned the flames of war!!



...Well, maybe the \$100 reward is also fake news but what was not fake was the anger that China displayed when its people heard via fake news that had been generated by newspapers in Denver, that American engineers were coming – supposedly at the request of the government of China – to destroy their beloved Great Wall and replace it with a new highway.

It all began in a Denver tavern at the old Oxford Hotel during the dog days of summer when it seemed that there was no news to report. Four Denver, Colorado, reporters, each from a different Denver newspaper, lamented the fact that current local community life seemed to be “dead”. They all groaned that with nothing newsworthy to report on they felt an urgency to come up with something new ...even if they all had to invent and carry the same false story.

At first they thought of creating a story about a new industry moving into the Denver area but no...that would not work because people instantly could prove that story to be false. Then the four considered writing a fictitious romance story but no...local residents could quickly disprove it. By now it was getting late and their bosses would be expecting a significant story since they had not yet returned to their offices. As they drank their beer together, they theorized that if they fabricated a tall tale in a far-away country, no one would take the time to verify if the story were true. Eventually they all agreed to claim that a team of American engineers had just spent the night in Denver en route to San Francisco where they would secretly embark for China with equipment to tear down and replace the great wall of China.

### Old Wall Must Go



So the four men wrote the story and headlined it “Old Wall Must Go” explaining that the Chinese government had to replace the very popular wall with more modern technology. At this point one of the four reporters dropped out of the project but the other three went full steam ahead and printed what they had created.

At first it seemed that nothing would come of the false narrative but then the story gained traction when the New York newspapers and the Chicago Tribune caught wind of it and published it as fact. Soon newspapers in Europe and elsewhere began reporting this story as well.

Since there had already been tense fighting between China and European countries and the United States in the Boxer Rebellion, this newspaper incident only served to throw a ton of gasoline on an already-raging fire. Now the Chinese

were angry about American plans to tear down the Great Wall and became more determined than ever to smash the on-going “foreign devils” which they claimed outrageously influenced their country. Therefore *more* fighting ensued between China and the nations vying for control of China which included Japan, Russia, the United States, England, France, Austria, Germany and Italy. As international tensions began to boil over, the coalition sent an army to attack and successfully capture the Chinese capital, Peking.



Coalition of 8 Nations Capture Peking and the Forbidden City  
Fake News From Denver Being Partially Responsible

This episode serves as a rank case of reckless behavior where too many people scattered caution to the wind and the gullible accepted rumor as fact, and ran with the story. I am reminded of a statement from Winston Churchill who observed that

***“A lie can get half way around the world before truth  
has a chance to get its pants on”***

## Trouble in Israel

In Joshua 22, the 12 tribes of Israel came narrowly close to starting civil war by jumping to wrong conclusions. As the Bible states, Moses granted permission for the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh to dwell on the east side of the Jordan River after helping Israel conquer Canaan. That is exactly what happened and everyone seemed content.

*However...!!* the word got out that Reuben, Gad and Manasseh were building something huge..something significant!! ..an altar !!!!! And rumor had it that it was a pagan altar!! But how did they know it was pagan? ...Why the Denver Post and Rocky Mountain News said it was! (..well..maybe not..) but as their brothers figured, these matters didn't look good. Imagine! ...Reuben, Gad and Manasseh building a pagan shrine so soon after Israel conquered the Canaanites! Why the rest of Israel was swept up with righteous indignation.

But how did they know for sure? Had anyone talked with these 3 tribes? Was there any corroboration that the altar was pagan? Did it make sense that these 3 tribes would valiantly fight with the rest of Israel only to go pagan just a few weeks later? Did anyone first seek God to get His perspective *before spreading* this report? According to Joshua 22:12 "So the whole community of Israel gathered at Shiloh and prepared to go to war against them." (NLT)

Fortunately Reuben, Gad and Manasseh were able to successfully explain to everyone that they were still loyal to the true God and their altar was merely a token of their gratitude to God for blessing Israel. Fortunately there was no fighting. But it is sobering that there was a blind rush to judgment that could have ended catastrophically...which **is** exactly what happened to Christ. There were many false reports about Christ in the final days of His life. The rush to unrighteous judgment with Christ led to His premature death.

We live in an age of increasing deception. (Revelation 12:9, II Thessalonians 2:7-11, & Matthew 24:23-26) and false accusation (II Timothy 3:3) The end time is laden with deceit. Not every rumor is true and not every accuser is innocent. Part of being spiritually mature is to not speak before hearing a matter ( Proverbs 18:13) lest that person shame him or herself. In today's politics, and perhaps today's businesses, there have never been so many people that would be shamed if truth was no so frequently buried. We may not be able to solve society's deficiencies here but we must resolve that we will always be honest with God and our fellowman.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Jan Surratt requests our prayers for her leg operation that had to be postponed until next Wednesday.

Marcia Winne would appreciate our prayers for her remaining doctor visits.

Also for health needs previously mentioned, Roy & Sharri Swindle, Sherrie Eakin, Court Greenfield and Dodie Foster would appreciate our continued prayers.

## SERVICES

### TALLAHASSEE

Our next service and a pot luck meal in Tallahassee is September 5 at the Days Inn on Monroe Ave (US 27) at 2:30 PM. We give our thanks to Larry Taylor who came over recently to speak to our Tallahassee brethren.

### VERO BEACH

Vero Beach will webcast tomorrow at 2 PM. Anyone who is at home is welcome to tune in to watch. We plan to be there.

### FORT MYERS

Fort Myers will meet at 1:30 PM at the Baymont Wyndham just off exit 135 on I-75. Jeff Lockhart and his family will be there with Jeff giving the sermon. We look forward to having Rowena Gouthro back with us soon.

### OCALA

Next week, I want to continue the Speakers' workshop in Ocala. After this, we will have a few more of these opportunities next year. Everyone is welcome to stay for any of the workshops. We will draw input from both men and women to put several messages together as we analyze what we can do to make these messages as interesting as possible.

Note that while we will have a pot luck meal next week in Ocala, we will not have one in September as we draw closer to the Feast.

It is my intent after the Feast to invite our BT readership to Ocala's 3<sup>rd</sup> public seminar within the past year.

The Council of Elders completed their August meeting and minutes of the meetings indicate that there is good stability with the church and church income is doing well with a record number of donors emerging that identify with the UCG.

Best wishes to all, by

Good News..

The Great Wall  
Of China Survived the Fake News  
From Denver



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