



THE GOSPEL TRUMPET®

"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet." Isaiah 58:1



A
PATH PAVED
by
IMMORALITY

PAGE 6

Editorial

The 2024 Olympics in France recently opened with an abominable, blasphemous parody of the Lord's supper by drag queens—an absolutely shocking display of brazen wickedness!

How did we get here? This could never have happened overnight. It happened one sin at a time—a steady, incremental succession over decades, each step paving the way for the next, for such is the nature of sin. Daring and naughty at the onset, now boringly normal to the desensitized masses.

Fornication and adultery have long been woven into the fabric of society. An incessant deluge in media, promoting sexualization in dress and in conduct, has pushed societal boundaries all the way to sexual deviations. Now many stand aghast that we are facing pedophilia, and the mutilation of minors in the name of “gender affirmation” —and a drag queen parody at the Olympics.

Sin has done its work, and many sinners have helped pave this road to societal destruction. And with our convenient, addictive, technological devices, sin is just a click away. Pornography and all manner of sexual uncleanness is at one's very fingertips.

All this crept in while people slept, only to awaken in a different world—a world they did not want for their children.

The rain poured down on the Olympic crowd that night. It is only by the amazing mercy of God that fire did not rain upon them. He has done it before. Remember Sodom.

But God is not mocked, and the fiery cup of His wrath is about to overflow upon this sin-laden world.

We need the power of God in our lives to prevail against the powers of darkness in our day. Our only hope is in Him, dear people. It is time for nations to repent and call upon God—and perhaps it should start from the church pews!

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ARMAGEDDON NEWS

REPORTED BY BRO. DANIEL EICHELBERGER



Our readers will have noticed a hiatus from the News in the last few issues of our beloved periodical. From a reporter's point of view, a break from the keyboard and from the smoke and fog of war is always a welcome prospect, and quite necessary when the constant barrage and thunder of bombardment fairly rattles one's very brain and soul. We would have the readership assured that, despite our absence from the printed page, Armageddon has raged on, and we returned to our desk quite inundated with field reports exposing nearly every outrage known to mankind. From these, we have selected a few. And so, we present the news!

On the Road to Enlightenment?

Pakistan's National Assembly has passed a resolution condemning lynchings in the majority Muslim country, the *Arab News* has reported. Impetus for the resolution was created in part by the recent lynching of a tourist in the Swat Valley of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and elsewhere. The man, vaguely accused of "desecrating the Holy Qu'ran," was pulled by a mob from the local police station, tortured and set ablaze.

"The House believes that the right to life is the most cherished right as enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan." A statement from the resolution, which passed unanimously, reads: "Every person is to be dealt with in accordance with the law and not otherwise." An enlightened point of view, surely.

But before our readers rejoice at this apparent repudiation of barbaric injustice, we do well to remind them that "the

law" mentioned in the resolution itself allows for the taking of one's life for merely insulting Islam or the prophet Mohammed. Only they have a right to live who do not offend Muslim sensibilities. Blasphemy laws still rule in Pakistan.

There is a difference in the minds of the good people of the National Assembly, however, between a person being executed by a mob on the streets or by the mob of the legal system. One mustn't rob Caesar of his right to pronounce sentence.

Touch Not the Transgender Idol or Else!

When Dr. Eithan Haim saw with his own eyes what was happening at Texas Children's Hospital (TCH) last year, he felt he had to do something to expose it. The 34-year-old surgical resident noticed that TCH continued to clandestinely offer gender-affirming care to minors, contrary to Governor Greg Abbott's order banning such care and the hospital's own public statements that they were in compliance with the order. So, Dr. Haim accessed medical records and leaked evidence showing the hospital's violations to journalist Christopher Rufo at *City Journal*. Rufo published the story, and now the doctor is facing a four-count indictment from the US Department of Justice and a potential sentence of 10 years for violating US medical privacy laws. At least, that is the pretense for the lawsuit.

Rufo maintains that personal information was redacted from the data Dr. Haim leaked to him, but any unauthorized accessing and releasing of a patient's medical records is a violation of medical

privacy laws. A legal defense fund set up for Dr. Haim had reached over \$865,000 of its \$1 million goal by the time of writing.

In addition to this, FBI agents recently visited, intimidated, and threatened Vanessa Sivadge, a Texas nurse who separately blew the whistle on the harm being done to children in the TCH's transgender clinic. It appears the Biden administration is moving the muscle of its legal and law enforcement arms to strike down any who would dare touch its sacred idol of transgenderism.

Cheap Lots in Heaven for Sale!

Do you suffer from fear that there is not a home in heaven for you? Does doubt taint your celestial prospects and hopes? Then fear and doubt no longer, because a church in Mexico has a solution. The Iglesia del Final de los Tiempos recently announced the selling of real estate plots in heaven. It's the perfect way of guaranteeing a spot within the pearly gates!

"Would you like to rest eternally with the prophets of the Old Testament?" the church inquires in a June Facebook post. "How wonderful would it be to greet the Prophets Moses, Samuel, or Saul when you see them from the window of your home! Iglesia del Final de los Tiempos – Sede Apostólica and Prophet Andrés de la Barra can make your eternal dream a reality."

This program, also known as the "Heavenly Urbanization of the Hebrews" was the result of an apparent conversation that Pastor de la Barra had with God in 2017, or so we have been informed.

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1 Thess. 5:23, Act 15:8-9

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John 17:21, Matt. 16:18

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This definite, radical, anti-sectarian holiness paper is published in the name of the Lord for the edification of the church of God. Its mission is to point souls to full salvation through Christ and to expose the errors of spiritual Babylon (false religion). We desire this paper to be used as a sharp instrument in the hands of the Lord, breaking the spiritual silence in this time of restoration.

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With prices starting at the low, low, low, very low, hugely discounted price of only \$100 per square meter and promises that it will be near the throne of God Himself, we think all readers will agree this is literally quite a steal. When one thinks about it, they are practically giving the heavenly turf (and a few other things) away.

The church conveniently accepts most major credit cards and even Google and Apple Pay.

And thus we return to the stench of rotting carcasses and the foul odors and stink of the wickedness of this world! 🗑️

The Order of Nature

Though all of God's children are equally precious,
We're not all created the same;
Some greater, some smaller, some shorter, some taller
With nothing but nature to blame.

As nature gives dominance to lions and tigers
Who govern the creature's domain;
So God, in concern for man's health and survival,
Has chosen the prophet to reign.

The Protestant pattern of thinking has taught us
That we can be king if we try,
But glowing success will be only encountered
Where God-given aptitudes lie.

Whatever you are, whether sparrow or lion,
Be happy and bring who you are.
You'll find your oppression-free place in Mt. Zion
Where you glow as bright as a star.

Embrace the unchangeable order of nature,
Let rivalry come to an end.
Engage with the gifting that flows from your being,
For that is where real joy begins.

— Bro. James Bontrager



THE BEAUTY OF INCONVENIENCE

SIS. EDEL NEUFELD

MANKIND HAS BEEN ON THE QUEST for a faster, more convenient way since the dawn of time. We have a natural abhorrence to anything laborious or inconvenient. The plethora of creative life hacks that we have come up with are evidence of our constant search for ease and convenience. Throughout history, many inventions are rooted in this desire to improve our existence in some way.

Perhaps no other invention has made our lives more convenient than the combination of the internet and screened devices such as the smartphone. Today, the world's libraries of knowledge and information are contained in our pocket. We are able to work from the comfort of our living room couches. We conduct business, do our banking, enjoy recreation, go shopping, and even socialize with our loved ones—all just by looking at a screen that fits in the palm of our hand.

Due to the rapid technological advances, life has changed more dramatically in the last few decades than in the span of centuries preceding. And while changes used to be more localized or limited to specific demographics, the current changes largely transcend these and instead, have reached into the farthest cor-

ners of the world.

No one can deny that these advances have made our lives remarkably more convenient. Who doesn't enjoy browsing through an unending list of options, purchasing our favorites with a few swift movements of our fingers, and have the items arrive at our very doorstep the next day? How many of us would prefer to go back to snail mail instead of being able to be in constant and instant communication with loved ones?

We could even argue with a lot of merit that these technological advances have not only made our lives more convenient, but have improved and enriched them in many different ways. Surely the ability to spread the gospel to every nation, in any

Clinical research correlates screen tech with psychiatric disorders like ADHD, addiction, anxiety, depression, increased aggression and even psychosis.

language, has been made exponentially easier by the internet. The access to unlimited information and knowledge has enabled us to learn, attempt, and accomplish things we couldn't have dreamed of

before. Through these technologies, we have access to innumerable opportunities to do good and improve the lives of our fellow man.

But with all its benefits, these technologies have also acquainted humanity with unsurpassed opportunities for evil. The damage these technologies have brought with them is becoming more and more evident. And with younger and younger children having access to the internet on their personal devices, these effects are becoming both more pronounced and irreversible.

A growing number of experts are sounding the alarm. Nicholas Kardaras raises several poignant and alarming concerns in his book *Glow Kids: How Screen Addiction is Hijacking Our Kids*. He writes, "An ever-increasing amount of clinical research correlates screen tech with psychiatric disorders like ADHD, addiction, anxiety, depression, increased aggression and even psychosis. Perhaps most shocking of all, recent brain-imaging studies conclusively show that excessive screen exposure can neurologically damage a young person's developing brain in the same way that cocaine addiction can."

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A PATH PAVED by IMMORALITY

BRO. ADDISON EVERETT

“We have to stand up against the aggressive LGBT agenda!” said the Modern Christian.

“We can’t allow the queers to impose their lifestyle on us!” protested the boisterous Street Preacher.

And yet again the forceful remonstrator of the Most Pious and Busy Evangelical, “Society will be destroyed if we allow drag queens to sexualize our children!”

Indeed, yes, but let us look a little closer at our religious protagonists.

Modern Christian is very active with visitors on Sunday mornings, the only time he has “church,” through the Coffee Social Ministry he’s been involved with since he married his new wife, the Barista. Modern Christian has suffered mild persecution from his parishioner peers due to having unpopular and dated positions in one or more controversial church issues. Contrary to nearly all the assembly, Modern Christian believes that homosexuality is wrong. He doesn’t like the church’s recent decision to allow LGBT members as

clergy. After privately confronting the Senior Associate Secondary Adult Youth Ministry Pastor, and receiving nothing more than polite resistance, Modern Christian has become vocal about his convictions on his personal FaceGram page.

His predicament is further complicated by his wife’s recent involvement in the church’s Tolerance Committee. She doesn’t fully agree with Modern, but feels he will relinquish his positions once the social pressure has time to run its course.

Now Street Preacher attends a much smaller church in the country but loves to frequent the city streets with his message. He knows that Christians live in the power of God and should eschew fornication. He often quotes Romans 1

While we valiantly hold our positions, let us not forget that our moral fabric has been getting torn long before “LGBT” was an acronym. The road to transsexualism has been thoroughly paved with heterosexual indecency.

while preaching about the bestial lusts of homosexuals and doesn’t shy away from the more explicit, if questionable, appellations when referring to them.

Street Preacher has faithfully preached and protested against the pervasive attempts of the degenerates to “cram their beliefs down our throats.” He has reproved and rebuked those passers-by who, by appearance to him, may not adhere to their societal responsibility to condemn these heinous sins and made quite sure everyone knows he does.

Our third and final protagonist, Most Pious and Busy Evangelical, is no rare specimen of Christendom. Many faithful brothers and sisters there are who share his values. He is upstanding in every apparent way and stays involved in church programs, especially outreach. Busy Evangelical is a real family man and spends lots of quality time with his wife and children.

On family nights they all sit lovingly together and watch videos on their several phones. His two daughters have boyfriends that are closer to them than Father knows, but he isn’t too concerned because they are societally acceptable, perfectly normal, heterosexual relationships. Evangelical was very adamant not to allow his daugh-

ters to attend Drag Queen Story Hour at the library when they were younger. And while he lacked the same vigilance while they were satisfying their curiosities in the Romance section for months, he is solidly proud that his girls are dating boys.

Here we have it—three Christians standing against the encroaching agenda of the LGBTQ± community. But is there more? Let us look a little closer still.

Modern Christian and his wife Barista are considering marriage counseling with the Secondary Adult Ministry Pastor, but Barista is unsure. This is because said marriage counseling didn't fully benefit Modern's last wife, whom he divorced after an entire year of counseling. This divorce seemed inevitable after Modern discovered Barista and months of deep conversation led to them falling in love. Modern did, however, feel moderately justified for falling "out of love" with his first wife because she didn't share his convictions about gay clergy and the incompatibility seemed, to him, unavoidable. And besides, the separation became mutually agreeable at some point.

Street Preacher continues to light up the streets, especially during his spiritual streaks when he isn't indulging in (strictly heterosexual) pornography. During these times of religious zeal, he delivers clear and dynamic addresses to the public, often focusing on sexual sin, which he considers the Achilles heel of society. The public's overwhelming lack of positive response he has attributed to the same spirit that crucified Jesus. He knows that a prophet is not without honor except in his own country, and if he would travel overseas, he would have at least one verifiable conversion, if not many. In spite of his debatable legacy of success, he stands by his conviction that the homosexual agenda is an aggressive

affront on our culture.

Now our third and final protagonist, Most Pious and Busy Evangelical, hasn't divorced his wife nor viewed pornography since a month before he professed religion. He lives a great life, by most accounts, and has a good report in the community. Evangelical speaks regularly at denominational conventions about the sexualization of children, primarily focusing on programming that glorifies "alternative lifestyles."

That which plagues Evangelical and his family is less obvious to the casual observer. What do you think, reader? Before finishing this satirical piece, take a moment to consider that for which this humble writer aims.

As Christians, we are most certainly appropriately concerned about the proliferation of sexual deviance in pop culture in all its forms. We are necessarily against the aggressive normalization of same-sex romance, especially towards our tender children. But while we valiantly hold our positions, let us not

Christians are still supposed to be shamefaced, modest, radical, separate from the world, sexually chaste, loyal to their spouses, pure before marriage, and plain and distinct in their appearance.

forget that our moral fabric has been getting torn long before "LGBT" was an acronym. The road to transsexualism has been thoroughly paved with heterosexual indecency. From the "slight" indiscretions of early film to the explicit pornographic nature of modern music, our culture has been assaulted with an intense and continual barrage of impropriety. We have been so inundated with immodesty and sexual perversion that our consciences have been verifiably hardened to that which was once viewed as "atrocious." We have accepted as "normal" things which would make a gentleman or lady blush. Indeed,

what has come to be "normal" is anything but.

Saints, gird up the loins of your mind! We are a peculiar people called to the glory of Almighty God! Let us not stand in judgment of others' sin while we justify the things that make room for those sins.

Christians are still supposed to be shamefaced, modest, radical, separate from the world, sexually chaste, loyal to their spouses, pure before marriage, and plain and distinct in their appearance. Let us not be the Modern Christian that flirts with sensuality while we pretend to stand against immorality. Let us not stand on the streets and condemn others of the things we ourselves commit in spirit. We ought not be Pious and Busy Evangelicals that fill our lives with religious services, claiming a moral high ground while we court the world under the guise of "relevancy." Christians are pure! Christians are plain! The church is the blockade that stops the spirit of the world, not a conduit for it.

A grave failing it would be if we beat our chests in condemnation of the darkened masses, while we drip with relish for the things that be of men. May God increase our appetites for spiritual things. May we crave the enlightenment of prophecy more than the validation we feel from it. I pray God fill our souls with a savor for the things of God, for deep spirituality and the spirit of devotion.

We may not be called to the times of E.M. Bounds or John Fletcher, but we are called to justify those before us with a sanctified experience and lives worthy of their deaths. Amen. 📖



GOD HATH MADE ME TO LAUGH

SIS. ELFIE TOVSTIGA

“GOD HATH MADE ME TO LAUGH, so that all that hear will laugh with me.”
Genesis 21:6.

These are the words of Sarah, Abraham’s wife, who had just experienced a most wonderful happening—the birth of Isaac, her son! His name actually means “laughter”! Expectedly, there would be much laughter in Sarah’s circle of friends, for laughter is a concerted and contagious practice. And who was making it happen? God!

There are several principles, concerning laughter, to be gleaned from this verse of Scripture: Firstly, laughter comes from God. This “inborn gift,” is soon revealed by an infant’s smile within the first weeks after birth, followed by an audible laugh within months. Indeed, “laughter is [our] birthright.”

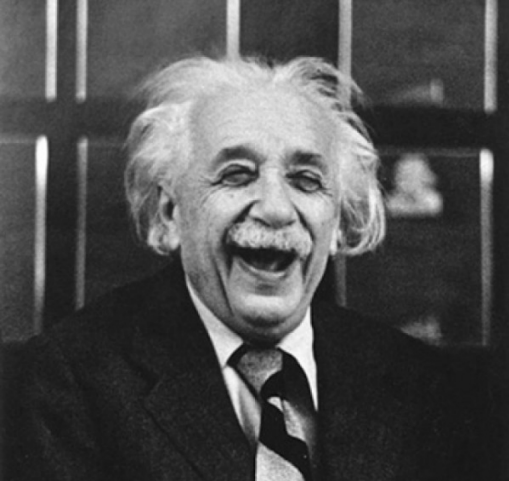
Secondly, God creates situations that make us laugh. He has a sense of humor. Why else would He have given a puppy that wagging tail or the raccoon that detective’s mask!¹ God is involved in our joys

and takes pleasure in our laughter.

Thirdly, it is worth noticing that God makes even older people laugh. While children’s laughter occurs spontaneously many times a day, laughter becomes less frequent in adulthood, when life’s burdens and trials prompt a more serious outlook. Enter: children, grandchildren, family, friends—what a difference they make, lifting the hearts of the elderly with laughter and possibly thereby adding a few more years to their life.²

Lastly, laughter possesses a power of attraction that “brings people together and strengthens relationships.” This is one good reason why we ought not to walk down the street, staring at our cell phone. Smiling at the people we meet can create opportunities to talk, laugh, and connect one with another. “Laughter is a universal connection,” explains Y. Smirnoff; “everybody laughs the same in every language.” It is “the closest distance between two people,” reflects Victory Borge. How beautiful!

But this is a grim and dismal world!



Why not laugh a little more? Studies show that fifteen minutes of laughter each day equals the benefit of two hours of sleep. Laughing can act as a natural pain killer, releasing a chemical ten times more powerful than the pain-relieving drug morphine.

How can we laugh when the powers of darkness are threatening us on every front! Truly, were it not for God on His eternal throne, we would have reason to despair. However, Psalm 2 encourages us that God is sitting in the heavens laughing in derision at the futile, preposterous moves of the kings of the earth, tiny worms that they are! And when God laughs, we laugh with Him—not at humanity’s untold suffering caused by the “vain imaginations” of the wicked, but in defiance against those who want our demise. So, let us laugh when we gather for joyous celebrations, when we visit around the dinner table, when we play with our children! “There’s an intimacy in laughter that nothing else can come close to” (Eric Mabius). What’s more, “true laughter...destroys any kind of system of dividing people” (John Cleese)! Ah, we can combat the corruptive agendas of the elite by the powerful slogan: “Be happy! It drives them crazy!”—but does us well! “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine,” said King Solomon. In truth, our circulatory system is benefited, our immune system is strengthened, our muscles become more relaxed, the negative effects of stress are counteracted,

calories are burned, our mood is heightened, good feelings are promoted—all by the positive effects of laughter.²

Have we not reason to rejoice, to laugh? Have we not been “delivered out of the hand of our enemies [to serve God] without fear in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life” (Luke 1:75)? Has not the Lord “filled our mouth with laughter” (Psa. 126:2) when He turned our captivity and brought us home to Zion, the “city of our solemnities” (Isa. 33:20)? Strong’s concordance notes that the term “solemnities” refers to “festivals or solemn feasts”; the Hebrew word for “feasts” indicates, among other things, “to move in a circle, by implication to be giddy; celebrate, dance, to reel to and fro.” In conjunction with these definitions, Apostle S. Hargrave concludes that, since Christ came to fulfill these Old Testament feasts, we now, as the church in the new dispensation can respond with merriment also.

To be sure, laughter belongs to God’s people. To reiterate again the words of Apostle Hargrave: why should the world be permitted to have its fun now, and we, the saints, are to wait until heaven? Nay, this great salvation was not given us to make us sad. Who would want to hop on our boat, if we all wear long faces! By the way, God gave us a smile to wear regularly, not just on picture day or on special occasions. After all, as someone said, “we are His work of art.” God’s art gallery, of all others, should spark the greatest attraction! May we prompt a beautiful reaping

of souls by our demonstration of Christ’s fullness of joy!

“To everything there is a season...a time to weep, and a time to laugh” (Eccl. 3:1, 4). In all of life’s “ebbs and flows,” providentially allowed by God, let us not forget that God has made us to laugh. Jesus Himself, though called a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, testified of His joy and, no doubt, expressed it through laughter, for example, when taking the children into His arms or when eating and drinking in company with others. Neither did He expect His disciples to mourn while He, the Bridegroom was with them. And, is not Immanuel, God in the flesh through the church, primarily through His apostles and prophets with us, also? Even unto the end of the world will He remain with us! Surely, we too then, can exclaim, “God hath made me to laugh!” 📷

1] M. Lucado

2] helpguide.org/mental-health/laughter-is-the-best-medicine

Life with all its ever present troubles—
Its tears, its fears, its clouds that rumble,
Souls ill-treated and spirits humbled,
Certainly need a medicine.

If in the center of pain we then be jolly,
Dare we call the smiles silliness or folly
When a spirit revives within its body?
For laughter’s bursts thank Heaven then!

If Hyper-Pious-Brother-Sober comes—
No funny bone, no ticklish lean, umm...
What planet is that creature from?
They need to take some medicine.

—Bro. Jason Hargrave

Remote Amazon Tribe Gets Internet Access

EXCERPTS FROM A REPORT BY JAMES CORBETT

In June of 2023, the Marubo, a remote Amazon tribe of around 2,000 people, were supplied with Starlink antennae to connect to the internet.

This connection was immediately damaging to the community: "It changed the routine so much that it was detrimental. In the village, if you don't hunt, fish and plant, you don't eat." Instead, teenagers were spending their time on social media networks, watching soccer videos and chatting on Instagram. Young men, meanwhile, immediately gravitated toward pornography, a fact Enoque finds particularly disturbing. Some leaders said they had already observed more aggressive sexual behavior from young men.

As a result, internet use has been limited. The antennae are switched on only two hours in the morning, five hours in the evening, and all day on Sundays. This confirms what we already know: the internet can ruin a society in a matter of months.

"Everyone is so connected that sometimes they don't even talk to their own family," laments Alfredo Marubo, leader of one association of Marubo villages.

"Young people have gotten lazy because of the internet," complains Tsaina-ma Marubo, a 73-year-old tribal elder. Instead of learning the orally transmitted traditions of Marubo culture, the youth are only interested in "learning the ways of the white people."

The New York Post reported: "Remote Amazon tribe finally connects to inter-

net—only to wind up hooked on porn, social media!"

From its very inception, the internet was a creation of the military-industrial complex and the alphabet soup agencies that was always intended as a tool for tracking, surveilling and controlling any would-be opposition to the Silicon Valley overlords.

By their own admission, the pioneers of social media deliberately engineered their algorithms to exploit vulnerabilities in human psychology and make their platforms as addictive as humanly possible. These same social media mavens concede that social media is "ripping apart society." By and large, all the Big Tech CEOs

Pornography is a neurological weapon rewiring the brains of an entire generation of men in ways neurologically indistinguishable from severe drug addiction. Porn has actually been used as a weapon of demoralization.

raise their children tech-free or greatly restrict their children's screen time.

We know, as one of the earliest viral internet videos has it, "The Internet is For Porn," and that pornography is a neurological weapon rewiring the brains of an entire generation of men in ways neurologically indistinguishable from severe drug addiction. Porn has actually been used as a weapon of demoralization, as when the Israelis seized three Palestinian television stations and began "broadcast-

ing pornographic movies and programs in Hebrew." (And is it any wonder that Elon Musk has just tweaked Twitter's rules to formally allow adult content on the platform?)

The average American now spends 11 hours per day listening to, watching, reading or generally interacting with media. In some fundamental sense, humans are already some amalgamation of human and electronic media, some species of homo medias that no longer remembers what it is to live an authentic human experience in the natural world.

The internet is increasingly a vile and divisive place that is tearing society apart at the seams.

Perhaps it's appropriate to give the last word today to the Marubo.

Decades ago, the most respected Marubo shaman had visions of a handheld device that could connect with the entire world. "It would be for the good of the people," he said. "But in the end, it wouldn't be."

"In the end," he added, "there would be war."

His son sat on the log across from him, listening. "I think the internet will bring us much more benefit than harm," Enoque said, "at least for now."

Regardless, he added, going back was no longer an option. "The leaders have been clear," he said. "We can't live without the internet." 📱

<https://corbetteport.com/remote-amazon-tribe-gets-internet>

THE BEAUTY OF INCONVENIENCE

Continued from Page 5

When one understands how addiction physically shrinks the brain's frontal cortex—the part of the brain that regulates impulse control—it is alarming to think of the possible life-long impact this is having on children whose brains are still developing.

Study after study is showing that we are perpetually more depressed, anxious, suicidal, addicted, and lonely. The connection of this problem with technology and the internet is also becoming increasingly acknowledged. It is not surprising then to find that creators of these technologies are themselves cautious about their use. Steve Jobs, the creator of the iPad, did not allow his children to use it. “We don’t allow the iPad in the home. We think it’s too dangerous for them in effect,” he admitted. Similarly, Bill Gates upheld strict rules on the use of technology in his home.

These technologies, with social media and innumerable apps, have an uncanny way of deceiving us into believing we are living full lives, while robbing us of the very essence of what makes life beautiful and worthwhile. We feel as though we’ve seen the most breathtaking beach sunsets, while in reality we never left our cozy bed and never got to smell the ocean breeze or taste the salty water as the waves crash into us. We feel like we’ve shared a laugh with

someone simply by choosing a laughing emoji. We’re able to be

there for a struggling friend by merely copying and pasting a nice quote. And we get to feel like a real hero when we have a gift or flowers delivered to a loved one’s home. It’s easy to post curated and edited

photos of our lives on social media, and for a moment, we feel like our lives are flawless.

But in all our instant and convenient connection with people through social media and our phones, we are still left feeling the gaping longing for deep connection. We walk away from the emojis, the likes, and the comments, and are forced to acknowledge that, in reality, we are crushingly alone. We come out of the virtual daze the screens held us in, and face the reality that our lives are in fact rather messy, difficult, raw, and unsophisticated.

What we have forgotten is that no amount of laughing emojis can make up for the bond that is created out of joint, loud, and contagious laughter in person. While flowers that show up on our doorsteps are valuable, they lack the healing that can only come from the touch of a loved one, the feeling of someone physically wiping our tears away, and holding us close. And although watching others might make us feel as though we are able to join in their experiences from the convenience of our homes for free, no amount of watching others can replace the fulfillment and joy that comes from taking the time to create our own life’s experiences.

Indeed, to live these experiences is time-consuming, difficult, and laborious. And no one can deny that real relationships are messy and anything but easy or convenient. But what if the difficult and laborious aspects of life are exactly what make life worth living? And what if the raw, uncomfortable, and sacrificial as-

Brain-imaging studies conclusively show that excessive screen exposure can neurologically damage a young person’s developing brain in the same way that cocaine addiction can—it physically shrinks the brain’s frontal cortex.



WHEN WE HAND OUR CHILDREN phones, we steal their boredom from them.

As a result, we are raising a generation of writers who will never start writing, artists who will never start doodling, chefs who will never make a mess of the kitchen, athletes who will never kick a ball against a wall, musicians who will never pick up their aunt’s guitar and start strumming.

—Glennon Doyle—

pects needed to forge those deep connections with people are exactly what makes relationships worth fighting for?

In our perpetual search for convenience and ease, it is imperative to understand that easier does not always equate with better. There is a point where convenience and ease cease to be worth it. Considering the beauty, good, and well-being these technologies have robbed from us, it might be safe to say that we have passed that point.

Perhaps it’s time to take the smartphones, iPads, and laptops out of the hands of our children. Or rather, perhaps it’s time we put our own screens away and took the time to live so fully and vibrantly that our children would prefer to join us in experiencing life in all its beautifully inconvenient, raw, and unedited glory. 📱

BE NOT DECEIVED,

GOD

**IS NOT MOCKED:
FOR WHATSOEVER
A MAN SOWETH,
THAT SHALL HE ALSO REAP.**

G A L A T I O N S 6 : 7

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