

CHURCH EXTORTION NOW REPLACES THE GOLDEN RULE

Back in 2012 I moved up to Oregon to marry my now wife and to get out of California. California is the home and/or the starting place of every nutcase idea that comes to this country, and I'm not ruling out Christian corruption. Some might argue that the Bible Belt might beat out California where Christian corruption and the twisting of scripture is concerned, so I'll concede and say that they give each other a good run for the money.

When I moved Oregon, I moved to the Eugene area, which is just a California type compound located out of that state. I've seen things done in this city that even people in California would not dare try. The city council here is just like the politburo in the old Soviet Union. They ramrod through laws and regulations on a regular basis without the consideration of the majority of voters in the city. Of course, city hall is located downtown, so when issues do come up the liberals, hippies, homosexuals and every miscreant you can think of flood the city hall chambers and voice their opinions. Politics are politics no matter where you go, and I guess that goes for Church corruption too. Thinking that moving to Oregon, where life is simpler and people are more down to earth would make churches any better was yet another lesson that I had to learn.

If you've read last year's Bai-Ya-Mim you know that I addressed a local pastor that thought that using a campaign of "Church Sucks," to get the heathen into church was a good idea. It caused an uproar even among the unchurched who saw it as tacky. Then there is the movement to bring many churches together through praise and worship, which is not a bad thing, but when it is built upon the foundation of the "Tabernacle of David" heresy and pastors involved agree to set aside some crucial doctrine to get along, then it becomes a problem. Oh, and there was the employer that I had when I first moved here that told me that it was okay for me to wear my Kippah at work and put me through hell because he is a Replacement Theologian; that was a lot of fun.

However, what I read last night, and what has been reported on two television stations as well as the local newspaper, really got my ire up. For editorial purposes, I'm going to post their article and then make comments about it. Here is the article:

Eugene church offers to scrap cell tower for \$750,000

Crossfire World Outreach pastor tells neighbors opposed to the project that they can pay to make it go away.

By Edward Russo

The Register-Guard

JAN. 14, 2015

Crossfire World Outreach Ministries on Tuesday made an unusual, public offer to opponents of a proposed cell tower at its south Eugene church: Pay big bucks and the tower proposal will disappear.

Nearby residents are upset over Crossfire's plan to lease land next to its church at West Amazon Drive and Fox Hollow Road to AT&T. The firm wants to build a 75-foot cellphone tower disguised as an evergreen tree on the site.

But Pastor Aaron Taylor on Tuesday said Crossfire would drop plans to rent land for the tower if opponents paid it \$750,000. That is half the value Crossfire would receive from the lease deal over the long term, he said.

Otherwise, opponents can buy the entire church and its 2-acre parcel for about \$2 million, Taylor said. The wood-frame, 7,200-square-foot church building is 55 years old.

If Crossfire sells the church, it would find another one to buy in south Eugene, Taylor said.

"I'm just saying if (opponents) believe" that cell phone towers are harmful, "I'm giving them options," he said.

The church's offer was published Tuesday in a three-quarter-page advertisement in The Register-Guard that responded to a Jan. 6 ad from tower opponents, also published in the newspaper.

South Eugene resident and tower opponent William Collinge said he didn't know if opponents would consider accepting the church's offers.

Opponents will meet today to discuss it, he said. "I don't know if it's completely ridiculous or if people will think of it as extortion," Collinge said.

Opponents worry that radio frequency emissions from the tower would threaten human health as well as wildlife in the nearby Amazon Creek corridor, and that the tower would depress property values.

Taylor and leaders of Crossfire, a Springfield-based nondenominational church, say concerns about tower emissions are overblown.

The Federal Communications Commission, which regulates tower emissions, has determined the towers are safe, they said.

In their ad, Crossfire church leaders said the hypocrisy of opponents is “amazing.”

Only two or three opponents that church leaders have spoken to “refrain from using cellphones,” the ad said.

Most tower opponents politely disagree with church leaders about the tower, but a few “have threatened to teach us a lesson by coming to our personal homes and churches to inflict violence,” the ad said.

Taylor on Tuesday said two opponents, whom he would not name, sent him threatening messages by email.

“One, in particular, said, ‘If you put a cell tower next to my house and try to kill me with radio frequency (waves), I’m going to come to your house and do the same,’” he said. “I get their rationale, but this is ridiculous.”

Collinge, a scientific reviewer for the National Institutes of Health, said he “abhors the threats and hateful messages” that people have sent Taylor.

Like many Americans, Taylor and other Crossfire church leaders have been led to believe that cell tower emissions are safe, mainly because of outdated FCC standards, Collinge said.

The FCC regulations were written with the help of telecommunication firms, which are reluctant to have them changed, he said.

The rules are faulty because they are based on the thermal, or temperature, effects of the emissions, Collinge said.

However, more recent research is focusing on how electromagnetic radiation damages human tissue, DNA and chromosomes, Collinge said.

Studies in European countries indicate that people who live near cell towers run greater chances of developing cancer than other people, he said.

“They are good people,” Collinge said of Taylor and other church leaders. “But there is a knowledge gap. And it’s not their fault. It’s our society because of the political system and the power we have given corporations.”

In 2013, Taylor told The Register-Guard that his church would only collect “several hundred dollars a month” from its AT&T tower deal.

But on Tuesday he said the deal has the potential to generate \$1.5 million or more for the church over 25 years, or a minimum of \$5,000 a month.

Taylor said the total includes projected rent increases, the value of building additions that AT&T would make to the church, and potential lease agreements with other companies that would put transmission equipment on the tower.

Under Eugene city code, cell towers are allowed on residentially zoned property, which includes the church site, if the spires meet conditions on height, screening, noise, lighting and other factors.

Tower proposals are subject to public hearings, and residents can raise objections and fight the structures in court.

AT&T last year submitted a tower application to city officials, who have approval authority.

The firm is under a deadline to revise its application by Friday. A public hearing on the request before a city hearings official has yet to be scheduled.

The Jan. 6 newspaper ad from opponents was signed by 215 people, who asked the church to withdraw the tower application.

“While land use processes are available to all citizens to oppose locations of cell towers, we would like to believe that, as neighbors, we should appeal to you on moral grounds,” the ad stated. “Even if you reject the science and the precautionary actions now being taken in other countries, you can still change course out of respect and love for your neighbors in Eugene.” [Source: <http://registerguard.com/rg/news/local/32649138-75/church-makes-public-offer-to-tower-opponents.html.csp>]

First, we should probably look at where the church is located. It is located in a nicer neighborhood of what you would call middle to upper middle-class people. It is at the base of

what is known as the South Eugene Hills. The “Hills” are where the rich and very rich live. The church is located in a neighborhood where people move to get away from downtown Eugene and some of the crazier aspects of the city. The people who live there are the ones who just want to come home from a long day’s work to sit and relax with their families. Think of the Ward and June Cleaver type, but with a 21st Century flair. It should probably also be noted that it is in the South Hills that the majority of Jewish people live. That might figure in later in this editorial.

The community where the church is located is one where people like their view and they are quite clear that they don’t want that view disturbed. They’ve paid a lot of money to live where they do, and they deserve to have aesthetics that they desire. If you have ever lived near a church you know that on certain days there is more vehicle traffic in your neighborhood and it is noisier because of the people and especially the worship. From what I have gathered, the neighborhood had no problem with the church itself and they all coexisted peacefully. Sure, there are always a couple of malcontents, but that is everywhere and in most situations.

When you live in a neighborhood you tend to bounce things off of your neighbors before you do them, that is, if you like them and you respect their right to maintain their property values. For instance, painting a house plum purple in a neighborhood where all of the other houses are earth-tones would tend to make buying one of the other houses less desirable. I’ve lived in apartments where one neighbor liked to talk on his citizen’s band radio. The problem however was that when he did, his radio bled into the speakers in my television, stereo system and even my computer speakers. Yes, he had a right to pursue his hobby, but not at the expense of every other tenant.

I’ve gone to quite a few churches during my years as a believer in Yeshua. Some of these churches were directly next to homes. All of those churches were very attentive to the desires of their neighbors. All of those churches knew that they had to coexist within the neighborhood. In our current age, and with the auspices of the NAR movement where the church is victorious and conquering and will take this world for Yeshua (militantly) there seems to have a loss of some of the essence of Love that we’re commanded to show toward one another and our neighbors.

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. Matthew 7:12

And:

Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Matthew 22:35-40

Another thing that is often forgotten or swept aside in the mad rush to set one's own foundation to build a congregation is the fact that we're ambassadors. People are constantly looking at us to see how we reflect Yeshua and Aveinu:

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

This scripture correlates with the two above. Since we are to love our neighbors as we love ourselves (and as we love Yahweh), and you should give to people what you, yourself would like to get back then being a good ambassador is showing lovingkindness, mercy and grace to our neighbors and anyone that is looking at us to see what the King in Yahweh's Kingdom is like. Since we're "new creatures," then we shouldn't act like the old creatures that we once were.

I spent the formative years of my life living in Bergen County, New Jersey. I grew up in one of the trashier towns there and many of my schoolmates had relatives in the mob. One of the tactics that the Mafia used to instill fear into a neighborhood and/or individual was called extortion. Extortion is defined as:

Extortion: the practice of obtaining something, especially money, through force or threats.

The mob was quite adept at extortion and could come up with imaginative ways of getting money out of just about anyone. For instance, two rough looking guys would come into a business and say that it would be a shame if the business would burn down some night, but for a fee every month they would ensure that the store would never burn down. Of course, this was a

threat that if the business owner didn't pay the extortion, he would lose his business to a fire. If you crossed the mob, you would either get a call that the fire department was at your business, or the two men would come in the next day and say that the fee for your fire protection had just doubled. If the mob wanted to extort money out of a Protestant Church, they might do something like tell the pastor that if he didn't pay them each month the mob would buy the building next door and open up a brothel next to the church, or the mob would convince the pastor's wife that he was having an affair, or something of the like.

So, when I read the story about the church agreeing to put up the cell phone tower without asking the neighbors what they thought it really bothered me. The church didn't consider how putting up such a tower might kill the resale value of the neighbors' property. Nor did they consider ALL of the evidence on how dangerous microwaves are when people are in close proximity to cell towers. They never thought of how ugly the tower would look. I don't care how much ATT would make it look like a pine tree, they can be picked out quite easily from their surroundings. What the church did think about was all of the money they could make by leasing the land to ATT. I think that inconsiderate and self-serving are two terms that could describe what the church did. They put money over their neighbors, and that is a gigantic no-no when it comes to Yeshua's whole plan for being a witness to our neighbors and loving them.

The article says that the church has pretty well set their collective minds on going ahead with the tower construction. They have (in a wonderful extortioner manner) offered to stop the construction if the neighbors will pay protection money in the amount of \$750,000 dollars. They've even offered to sell the whole property to the neighbors for a cool 2 million dollars:

EUGENE, Ore. (AP) – The pastor of a Eugene church is offering a deal to neighbors who oppose his plan to lease part of the property for a 75-foot cellphone tower.

He'll drop plans for the tower in return for \$750,000.

Pastor Aaron Taylor of Crossfire World Outreach Ministries says that's half of what Crossfire would receive over a long-term lease. He also says opponents could buy the entire 2-acre church site for \$2 million, so the church could relocate.

One of the opponents, William Collinge, tells The Register-Guard they'll discuss the offer but he doesn't know if it's ridiculous or people will think it's extortion.
[Source: <http://koin.com/2015/01/14/eugene-church-wants-750k-to-drop-cell-tower-plan/>]

All of these actions and attitudes are a clear-cut example of what the Emergent Church and Dominionist church theology is all about. This theology teaches that the Church will take the world by storm, instituting itself into every aspect of the world; the financial world, the political world, the social world, etc. Their ultimate aim is to change the world so radically that the world will be near perfect for Yeshua when He returns; the church giving back to Yeshua a world taken back for Him. This is a far different story than the one presented in the Bible, where the church is all but eliminated from Earth upon Yeshua's return; so bad that Yeshua said that if time were not shortened, no flesh would remain. Many Emergent Church adherents are anti-Semitic and believe that the Church replaces Israel both spiritually and physically. They state that Yahweh has written off the Jewish people forever for their rejection of His Son. This church operates under a tweaked and perverted gospel, and the primary foundation for their controversies always seems to be money.

In another news article from 2014, this same church with the same pastor came into the limelight when they protested a proposed ban on fireworks sales:

Potential Fireworks Ban Concerns Church

by *Sarah Hurwitz*

Published January 27, 2014

EUGENE, Ore. — A local church is ready to speak out about fireworks at a Eugene City Council work session Monday night.

Crossfire Ministries sells fireworks during the Fourth of July holiday.

Their pastor, Aaron Taylor says the church would have to shut down a number of its outreach programs if fireworks were banned.

He says each year the church brings in more than \$300,000 from firework sales alone, which helps keep homeless programs, camps for kids and feeding programs afloat.

Monday night's council discussion is centered around safety, stemming from a fire ignited by fireworks, which destroyed a home on Lakeview Drive this summer.

Pastor Taylor says people just need to be smart when using fireworks.

“Most of the fireworks caused fires or injuries are from illegal fireworks. Period. Now are some? Yes. But there are also people driving cars, and get in accidents and we don’t ban cars,” said Taylor.

*Pastor Taylor says this is a matter of taking away too many rights and he and a group of people from the church plan to be at the work session to voice their opinions.
[Source: <http://www.kezi.com/potential-fireworks-ban-concerns-church/>]*

I can sort of see how the NAR Dominionists can say that they want to infiltrate government and financial institutions, they act just like them already. How many times have we heard from government that if the House or the Senate doesn’t act, the government will shut down and entitlement programs will suffer? The church’s pastor made the same appeal, if we don’t get the money, the poor and the children will suffer. Churches and nonprofit organizations have existed for decades on the premise of donations without all of the gimmicks. Organizations like Teen Challenge, Good Will and St. Vincent de Paul have been around forever it seems, because they exist to serve the poor. Almost every large city has some sort of Mission that caters to the homeless and brings them the Gospel of Yeshua, again without gimmicks.

Can anyone else see the evil that this particular church and its pastor are putting out. In essence, he’s said that he’s going to go ahead with the cell tower and he doesn’t care if it fries peoples’ insides with microwaves. He doesn’t care that the property values of the neighbors will drop. Where is the love, where is the caring, where is the neighborly kindness and respect that Yeshua demands we show toward our neighbors; it sure seems to be lacking from Crossfire Church in South Eugene. Where is the concern that even the supposed “safe and sane” fireworks can burn down houses and burn people? You see, the thing is that this Pastor Aaron cares more about the people he can influence with the work that He is doing, and if he happens to step on the hands of others who are holding onto the rungs of the ladder that he’s climbing, well, that’s just too bad. It is all part of the “We’re Christians, so we’re better and more important than you” mentality that is so prevalent in the Church. Gone are the notions that the Church is the servant to those in the neighborhood, a place of safety and love. Oh, you’ll get that safety and love if you pay the right price and kowtow to their notions of what Holiness is.

One thing is for sure, and I’ve seen it hundreds of times; the prideful are brought low and humbled. But I also know that there are many wolves out there that pretend to be sheep, and the ignorant fall for their line of dreck every time. However, just as Yeshua told us, a bad tree cannot produce good fruit and a good tree cannot produce bad fruit, therefore you will know them by their fruit. As far as I can tell, the actions of Crossfire Church and its congregation are those of a

prickly pear cactus claiming that it is bearing apples. In closing, those that named the church probably did the wise and prudent a favor because most people that get caught up in a crossfire, usually don't survive except by miracle. I truly hope and pray that this so called "church" comes under severe correction from Yeshua, the man that they are misrepresenting and that those caught in the cross-hairs of Crossfire will overcome and prosper.