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Promoting Biblical Values in Today's World
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Where Are You? A Watchman's Word at the End of the Wall

SEPTEMBER 10, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Dear Christian:

I have spent the better part of a year measuring other people's walls. Seven denominations, plumb line in hand, laying the Word of God against what men built and reporting how far each had leaned. If you have followed ***Measured and Found Wanting*** to its end, you have watched seven houses that once stood, sag, and give way.

B[illegible] not write those seven studies so you could shake your head at other people's churches. I w[illegible]em so that, at the last, I could turn the line around — and hand it to you.

So set the seven aside for a moment. This final word is not about them. It is about you, and it is about the person sitting next to you on Sunday.

One Hand, Seven Doors

Look at how they fell, all seven at once, and you will see one hand at seven doors.

The Methodists deleted the words. The Lutherans divided the conscience. The United Church of Christ said God was still speaking something new. The Disciples moved the Spirit out of the Book and into the room. The American Baptists kept the teaching and simply refused to enforce it.

Five different keys. One locked door. And behind every one of them, the oldest question ever asked of a human being, hissed in a garden while the fruit still hung on the branch: *Did God actually say?*

That is the whole of it. Every task force, every study commission, every carefully worded resolution was Eden held again in committee. Not one of those bodies stood up and declared that God was a liar. They only wondered, politely and at length, whether He had really said what He plainly said. And wondering was enough.

They Did Not Storm the Doors

Here is what I need you to see, because it is the thing that should make every one of us afraid for our own soul.

Those denominations were not captured by wicked men who hated God and stormed the sanctuary with torches. They were led, vote by gentle vote, by people who believed they were being kind. They voted for welcome. They voted for unity. They voted to stop the arguing and love one another. And they called it faithfulness, right up until the lampstand was gone.

The drift did not announce itself. That is its nature. A ship does not feel the current that carries it off course; it feels only the pleasant motion of the water. A sheep does not decide to be lost. It simply keeps its head down, cropping one more sweet tuft of grass and then the next, until it lifts its eyes and the flock is nowhere in sight and the light is failing.

Most of the people who carried those churches over the edge never knew they were voting against the Word of God. They thought they were voting for love. And that, dear reader, is exactly why this is a word for you, and not merely a report about them.

Where Are You?

Because you vote too.

Not in an assembly. No minutes are kept. But every day you cast a secret ballot with your attention, your money, your silence, the things you laugh at and the things you refuse to say. We each walk a private path, and most of the time we could not tell you exactly where we stand or how we came to be standing there. We are working our own devices, and we do not feel the current.

So the watchman's question, the one God gave Ezekiel to cry from the wall, comes now to you by name. Where are you? Not where is your denomination. Not where is the culture. Where are *you* — tonight, in the quiet, with no one keeping score?

Are you tethered to the Rock, or have you been grazing your way, one sweet tuft at a time, toward a fence line you never meant to cross?

The Word Was Made Flesh — and You Cannot Edit a Person

Understand what every one of those seven mechanisms was finally trying to do. They were all, in the end, ways of editing the Word.

But the Word is not only ink. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God… And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory* (John 1:1, 14). The Word you are asked to bend or soften or set aside for the sake of kindness is not a clause. He is a Person. He is Christ — our Savior, our King, the Lamb who was slain and the Lion who is coming. You cannot amend Him in committee. You cannot vote Him into a variety of understandings. You can only bow, or turn away.

Do not compromise on Him. Not one inch. Everything the enemy has ever offered the church, in every generation, has been the same trade: a little less of Christ in exchange for a little more peace. It is always a lie, and the peace never comes.

The Door Is Open, but the Lamps Are Drying

Now hear the mercy, because there is always mercy while there is still time.

Every one of those seven houses can still repent. The door is not shut. Christ told the deadest church in Revelation — the one with a name that it was alive — to wake up and strengthen what remained. He did not write to bury them. He wrote to raise them. And He says the same to you tonight: whatever has drifted can be brought home.

But do not mistake an open door for endless time. Ten virgins waited for the Bridegroom, and five let their lamps burn low, and when the cry came at midnight there was no oil left to buy and no time left to buy it (Matthew 25:1–13). The door was open — and then it was not. Oil is not

borrowed at the last moment. It is kept in the vessel, day by unremarkable day, by the one who stays awake.

Come to the Mercy Seat

But hear the mercy inside the warning, for this is the whole difference between the five who were shut out and the five who went in. The oil was never sold at any market, and it cannot be bought at midnight for any price — but it has never once run dry at the Mercy Seat. There, above the ark, between the cherubim, is where God met His people and forgave them, and there the oil is not rationed. It is poured out in abundance on everyone who comes seeking Him and His kingdom. *Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need* (Hebrews 4:16). Come to the Mercy Seat and let Him fill the vessel. He has more than enough, and He has never turned away one soul that came for it.

Is there oil in your lamp? Or have you been running on the memory of a fire you have not tended in years?

Go Get the One

And now the commission, which is the reason I turned the plumb line toward you at all.

If you are right with God tonight — if your lamp is trimmed and burning — then this warning was never meant to frighten you. It was meant to send you. Because somewhere in your own congregation, in the pew ahead of you or across the aisle, sits someone who has strayed and does not know it. She is working her own devices. He is untethered and cannot feel it. They are not villains. They are the one sheep that slipped the fold while everyone was singing.

The Lord left the ninety-nine and went out into the dark after the one (Matthew 18:12–14). That is the heart of the Shepherd, and He has made it the mission of the sheep who are found. *Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness* (Galatians 6:1). Not with a pointing finger. Not from across a room. You go and you pull alongside, one soul to one soul, and you admonish and correct and exhort, gently, until you have brought them back.

And be watchful, because I will tell you plainly what the seven denominations learned too late: there are wolves in every congregation, and they do not come snarling. *Fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock* (Acts 20:29). They wear wool. They sing the hymns. They serve on the committee. The watchman does not stay awake because danger is far off on the horizon; he stays awake because it is already inside, and it looks exactly like a sheep.

None of Us Stands Alone

There is one last thing, and it is the thing the whole series was quietly built to say.

You cannot do any of this by yourself. The Christian who believes he can hold the line alone — just me and my Bible and my private conviction — is the Christian most certain to drift, because there is no one beside him to say, *brother, you have wandered.* Every one of those seven denominations began as a gathering of believers who meant to stand together, and every one of them fell when standing together came to matter more than standing on the Rock. But the answer to a bad togetherness is not no togetherness. It is the right one.

Though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him. A threefold cord is not quickly broken (Ecclesiastes 4:12). *Let us not neglect to meet together, as is the habit of some, but let us encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near* (Hebrews 10:25). We are not built to stand as scattered individuals, each guarding his own patch of ground. We are built to gather on one foundation — and there is only one that holds. The house on the rock stood when the rain fell and the floods came and the winds beat against it, because it was founded on the rock (Matthew 7:24–25). Every other foundation, however sincere, however kind, however lovingly voted in, is sand.

Find the Rock, and Hold One Another There

So here is my word to you, watchman to reader, at the end of a long year of measuring walls. Find the Rock. Stand on it. Gather with others who stand on it, and hold one another there. And then look to your left and your right in your own sanctuary, find the one who is quietly grazing toward the fence, and go — gently, humbly, and quickly — and bring them home before the light is gone.

I cannot make you do it. No argument can. The Holy Spirit alone moves a soul from hearing to obeying, and it is to Him I commend you now. He is faithful. He who began a good work in you will complete it. And the same God who is grieved over seven fallen houses is more than able to keep you standing, and to use you to keep another standing too.

Stay awake. Keep your lamp full. Go get the one.

— A watchman on the wall

The Series

- **Introduction: The Church and the Christian Church**
- **United Church of Christ · and its decline**
- **Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) · and its decline**

- **American Baptist Churches USA**
- Full series index: ***Measured and Found Wanting***

American Baptists: The Church That Said the Right Thing

SEPTEMBER 5, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

A Name That You Are Alive — and the Wall They Would Not Build

A plumb line measures a wall. But what does it measure when a builder draws the true line himself, in his own hand, and then sets down the tool and walks away without ever laying it against the stones? The line is right. The wall leans anyway. And no one can say a rule was broken, because the rule was never enforced.

This is the seventh and final denomination examined in ***Measured and Found Wanting***, the Virginia Christian Alliance series laying God's Word against the record of the mainline churches. We have walked the **Episcopal Church**, the **Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**, the **United Methodist Church**, the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**, the **United Church of Christ**, and the **Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**. Six bodies that voted to change what they had received. The American Baptist Churches USA is the seventh, and it is unlike all six — because it never voted to change anything at all.

Three things govern what follows:

- In 1992 the American Baptist Churches USA declared that the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. That declaration has never been reversed. It stands today.
- In the same identity statement that affirms the teaching, the denomination also declares that it accepts no confession or creed as binding. The paper unbinds itself.
- The conservative churches that left did not leave because the teaching fell. They left because the denomination would not enforce a teaching it still held.

The Church That Said the Right Thing

We must begin by giving this denomination its due, because it earned something none of the other six did. It said the right thing, plainly, and it never took the words back.

In October 1992 the General Board of the American Baptist Churches adopted, by mail vote, a one-sentence resolution: *We affirm that the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching.* That is not ambiguous. It is not hedged. It is the historic position of the Christian church, stated in a single line, and it passed.

Thirteen years later, in November 2005, the denomination went further than the mainline was going. It amended its identity statement, "We Are American Baptists," to add that its churches submit to the teaching of Scripture that God's design for sexual intimacy places it within the context of marriage between one man and one woman.

Read where they filed that sentence. It appears under the heading "A Biblical People," directly after the clauses affirming the centrality of Scripture and the study of God's inspired Word. They did not classify the marriage teaching as a social concern or a cultural preference. They filed it under biblical fidelity, where it belongs.

So the wall was drawn true. On this issue, at the level of what the denomination officially confesses, the American Baptists were right where the other six were wrong. We say that without reservation, because it is the necessary starting point for understanding what went wrong anyway.

The Sentence That Unbuilt the Wall

The same document that affirms the marriage teaching contains, four paragraphs above it, this:

> Although Baptists have produced numerous confessions to express our common understandings of Christian faith, we hold the Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, as our final authority. We accept no humanly devised confession or creed as binding.

Read the two statements together, because they sit in the same adopted text. On one page: the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Biblical teaching. On another page: we accept no humanly devised confession or creed as binding.

The statement declares the teaching, and in the same breath declares that statements like it bind no one.

This is the whole of what happened to the American Baptists, and it happened in a single document, on purpose. We do not have to reconstruct a paper-versus-practice split from outside evidence. The paper performs the split itself. It draws the line and, on the facing page, announces that no line is binding.

Eight months after the 1992 resolution, the same General Board had already supplied the solvent. In June 1993 it adopted a second resolution declaring that there exists a variety of understandings throughout the denomination on issues of human sexuality, and urging members to seek unity and avoid divisiveness. Not a reversal — the 1992 statement was left standing. A dissolving agent, poured over the teaching, leaving the words intact while draining them of force.

Soul Liberty, Turned Against Itself

Every denomination in this series found a device to license the drift. The Methodists deleted their language. The Lutherans divided conscience. The United Church of Christ appealed to a still-speaking God. The Disciples relocated the Spirit's voice into the gathered congregation. The American Baptists reached for something older and more honorable than any of these — and that is what makes their case the most sobering of the seven.

They reached for soul liberty.

Soul liberty is a genuine Baptist treasure. It is the conviction that God alone is Lord of the conscience, that no bishop or synod or state may stand between a believer and God, that the local congregation is autonomous under Christ. Baptists shed blood for this principle. It is not a modern invention or a convenient dodge. It is one of the truest things the Baptist tradition has ever taught.

And it was turned into the instrument that made the 1992 teaching unenforceable. If God alone is sovereign over the individual conscience, the argument ran, and if each local church determines

God's calling for its own community, then no national body may compel a congregation to hold the teaching, however clearly the teaching is stated. The denomination could affirm. It could not require.

Where the Argument Fails

Here is the steel of it, and we will not blunt it: they were right about liberty. Scripture does teach that the conscience answers to God. The error was not in prizing freedom. The error was in what they let freedom license.

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. — Galatians 5:13, ESV

Paul grants the freedom in the same sentence that guards it. Christian liberty is real, and it is freedom *from* sin unto obedience — never freedom to name the sin good. Peter says it more sharply still: live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil (1 Peter 2:16). And Jude warns of those who pervert the grace of God into sensuality. The freedom is holy. What the American Baptists permitted it to shelter was not.

The American Baptist Wall That Was Never Enforced

A teaching that binds no one is a teaching a region may ignore, and regions did.

The denomination's structure gave each region authority over its own churches, and the regions went opposite directions. Some moved to discipline. In 1996 the American Baptist Churches of the West dismissed four congregations for affiliating with the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists; in 1999 the General Board denied the appeals of four California churches. But other regions welcomed and affirmed openly, and the national body did not stop them, because under soul liberty it had built itself no mechanism to.

Then, in 2002, it built the opposite mechanism. New standing rules provided that a church dismissed by its own region could ask to remain in the denomination and had eighteen months to find another region willing to take it. A congregation at odds with its region's discipline could simply transfer to a friendlier one and stay. The escape hatch was written into the rules.

And the enforcement step — the one that would have given the teaching teeth — was deliberately not taken. When the 2005 identity statement added the marriage language, its proponents had originally sought to amend the Common Criteria that define a Cooperating Church, which would have made the teaching a genuine condition of membership. That amendment required ratification by the regions. It was never pursued. The stronger language went into the identity statement, which describes American Baptists, and never into the criteria, which qualify them.

They wrote the true line in their own hand. They set down the tool. They never laid it against the stones.

The Departures Ran Both Ways

In every other denomination in this series, the conservatives left because the body abandoned the teaching. Here, the largest conservative departure happened because the body would not enforce a teaching it still officially held.

In the spring of 2006, the American Baptist Churches of the Pacific Southwest — a region of roughly three hundred churches across Southern California, Arizona, Nevada, and Hawaii — voted to withdraw from the denomination. The delegate vote recommending withdrawal was 1,125 to 209. The regional board affirmed it unanimously on May 11. Their stated reason was the national leadership's failure to implement the 1992 resolution. The region renamed itself Transformation Ministries.

Honesty requires precision about what followed, because the clean version overstates it. The region withdrew as an entity, but its congregations then chose individually. By the account of the region that remained, of some two hundred eighty churches, roughly a hundred conservative ones left with the new body while the rest reorganized and stayed. So a substantial bloc departed — not the whole three hundred. We write it that way because the smaller true number is still the largest single exit in the denomination's modern history, and because a reader who checks will find the qualification and trust everything else.

Medley's Paradox

And the bleeding runs both directions at once. The same denomination dismissed the four California churches for being too affirming and lost the Pacific Southwest for being too permissive. It bled from both ends while the paper held, untouched, in the middle. The general secretary at the time, A. Roy Medley, told delegates he remained traditional on sexuality and did not wish to be separated from those who differed in Christian conscience. When the Pacific Southwest left, he said God's heart is broken when brothers and sisters in Christ divide over matters of scriptural interpretation.

Hear what that sentence does. It reframes a departure over the authority of Scripture as a tragedy of *interpretation* — as though the only thing at stake were a difference of reading, rather than whether the church would keep what it had confessed. That is the paradox spoken aloud by the man at the top: he would hold the teaching and hold the people who rejected it, and call the result unity.

What Scripture Says to Sardis

There is a church in the book of Revelation that received the exact word the American Baptists need to hear, and it is worth reading slowly.

And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: "The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent." — Revelation 3:1–3, ESV

A Name That You Are Alive

Christ does not accuse Sardis of heresy. He does not say they have denied the faith or rewritten the creed. Their confession is intact. Their reputation is for life. And He tells them they are dead.

The charge against Sardis is not that its teaching was false. It is that its works were not complete — that the life had drained out of a body whose paper was still orthodox. And the remedy is precise: *remember what you received. Keep it.* Not adopt something new. Not draft a better statement. Keep the thing already delivered — which is exactly what a denomination fails to do when it affirms a teaching and declines to live by it.

A confession you will not enforce is a confession you have half-abandoned already. You have kept the words and surrendered the substance. That is the sin of Sardis, and it is a quieter sin than the one the other six committed, which is precisely why it is more dangerous. The church that rewrites its doctrine at least knows it has changed. The church that keeps its doctrine and empties it of force can tell itself, for a very long time, that nothing is wrong.

The Cost Was Not Collapse

Here the American Baptists differ from every denomination we have examined, and the difference is instructive.

They did not collapse. Measured from its 1982 peak of roughly 1,637,000 members, the denomination declined to about 1,308,000 by 2010 — a loss near twenty percent over twenty-eight years. By the standards of this series that is remarkably mild. The Disciples of Christ lost more than half their people; the United Church of Christ lost two-thirds from its height. The American Baptists lost a fifth.

We could not build a collapse story here if we wanted to, and we will not pretend to. The numbers refuse it.

But that is the finding, not an obstacle to it. The denomination that kept its teaching on paper and would not enforce it did not empty out the way the ones that abandoned their teaching did. Its membership is, by the measures available, the most traditional of any mainline body — in the 2014 Pew survey, only about fifteen percent strongly favored redefining marriage, the most conservative figure among the seven. The people in the pews never wanted the drift. That is precisely why the fight was over enforcement and not over the teaching itself, and precisely why the losses stayed modest. The body held together because most of it agreed with the confession it would not defend.

So the cost here is not attendance. It is integrity. A church can keep its numbers and lose the thing the numbers were meant to serve. You may keep a full building and a true confession and still be told, by the One who holds the seven stars, that you have a name that you are alive, and are dead.

A Word to Those Still Inside

Some who read this are American Baptists who believe every word of the 1992 resolution and have watched their denomination decline to stand behind it. You have seen churches in your own region ordain and affirm what your confession calls incompatible with Scripture, and you have seen the national body call the resulting division a matter of interpretation.

Scripture speaks to you, and its first word is not "leave." Its first word is the word to Sardis: *strengthen what remains.* There is a great deal that remains among the American Baptists — a true confession, a traditional people, congregations that have never wavered. The call to Sardis was not first to flee but to wake.

Yet Scripture also names a limit. Where a church will not keep what it received, and the drift hardens past strengthening, the Word is plain:

Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you. — 2 Corinthians 6:17, ESV

That summons is a grief, and we do not issue it lightly. But we set it beside the word to Sardis, because for this denomination both are true at once: strengthen what remains, and if it cannot be strengthened, come out. Which of the two applies is a matter for prayer and for the leading of the Spirit in each congregation, and it is not ours to decide from outside.

The Door Is Still Open

We have brought no charge here that the American Baptist Churches USA has not published over its own name. The teaching is theirs. The unbinding sentence is theirs, in the same document. The refusal to enforce is written into their own rules, and the record of who left, and why, sits in their own annual reports.

And we close this denomination, and this series, the way we have closed every study in it — not on the argument, but on the only thing that has ever raised a dead church. Sardis was told it was dead. It was also told to wake. The One who wrote that letter did not write it to bury the church but to raise it, and He has not yet removed the lampstand from its place.

What is affirmed on paper can be kept in practice. A denomination that would enforce what it confesses would not need a new statement; it would need only to mean the one it has. There is no confession so long neglected that repentance cannot breathe life back into it. The words are still true. The God who breathed them is still able to make a people keep them.

No report has ever converted a soul. No argument, however sound, has raised the dead. The Holy Spirit alone draws a church back to obedience — and He speaks through the Word already delivered, the Word this denomination still, on paper, confesses. We have laid out the record because we are commanded to watch and to warn. Now we ask Him to wake what is sleeping, in that denomination, and in our own.

This concludes the denominational studies in "Measured and Found Wanting." A closing reflection on the whole series will follow.

For Further Study

- **"American Baptist Churches USA: Responses/Actions Pertaining to Homosexuality"** — the denomination's own chronology of every resolution and action from 1987 forward, including the 1992 resolution and the 2005 identity-statement amendment.
- **"We Are American Baptists"** — the American Baptist Identity Statement adopted by the General Board in November 2005, containing both the marriage clause and the declaration that no confession or creed is binding.
- **American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., group profile**, Association of Religion Data Archives — the membership series (from the National Council of Churches' *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches*) and the 2014 Pew survey data cited above.
- Religion News Service and Baptist News Global, May 2006 — reporting on the withdrawal of the American Baptist Churches of the Pacific Southwest and its reorganization as Transformation Ministries.
- Prior installments: **series introduction** · **United Church of Christ** · **Disciples of Christ, Part One** · **Disciples of Christ, Part Two**

The Disciples of Christ Decline: What the Discernment Cost

SEPTEMBER 3, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

The Verdict of Scripture and the Churches That Stopped Reporting

A ledger is a patient thing. But a ledger requires that someone write in it. When four congregations in ten stop filing a report at all, the question is no longer what the numbers say. The question is whether the house still knows who lives in it.

In our **first installment on the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)** we laid out the record: a study document in 1977, a resolution refused in 1987, a discernment process that replaced decision, and a vote in 2013 that no one rose to oppose. That was the receipt. This is the reckoning. The Disciples of Christ decline is not a charge we bring against them. It is a condition they describe in their own published reports.

Three things govern what follows:

- The founder of this movement wrote that Christians are bound by the Divine word, and it alone, and not by any human interpretation of it. The body he founded resolved that the

question could not be settled by debate and vote.
- A denomination of nearly two million at its height now reports a median of forty people in worship on a Sunday morning.
- Four in ten of their congregations no longer file a report with their own denomination.

The Case at Its Strongest

We will not answer a caricature. The committee that produced the method deserves its best hearing first, and we give it without irony.

Fourteen people met over several years, in five cities. They opened with worship. They studied Scripture. They listened to one another's stories. They celebrated the Lord's Supper at the end of every meeting. The committee's own report describes sincere respect among them in the face of serious differences, and a genuine appreciation developed between people who disagreed profoundly.

Their objection to settling the matter by vote was pastoral, and it was not foolish. A vote produces winners and losers. The winners feel they have accomplished something; the losers feel their church has rejected them. Anyone who has sat through a congregational business meeting knows the wound that can leave. These were people trying to spare their church that wound.

And they were not stacking the room in the obvious way. The report discloses that three of its fourteen members identified themselves as conservative, seeing homosexuality as a sin in violation of Scripture. It records that the committee sought out meetings with constituencies expected to disagree.

That is the case, and it is a real one. People who loved their church, prayed together, broke bread together, and wanted no one driven out.

Why That Case Cannot Stand

Because listening is not the problem, and never was. The question is what you listen *to*.

Scripture commands discernment. It never leaves it without an external standard.

To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn. — Isaiah 8:20, ESV

Isaiah wrote that to a people being urged to consult mediums and spiritists — to seek guidance from voices in the room rather than from what God had said. His answer is a fixed point. Measure

the voices against the word. Anything that will not speak according to it has no light in it at all, however sincere the speaker.

The New Testament commends exactly one congregation for its method of testing a teaching, and it was not for listening to each other.

Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. — Acts 17:11, ESV

The Bereans were not weighing Paul against their own experience. They were weighing Paul — an apostle — against the text. That is what discernment looks like when it has a standard.

Strip out the fixed point and what remains is not discernment. It is consensus. And consensus follows whoever is most patient.

The Founder Testifies Against the House

This movement began with a rule about Scripture, spoken aloud in a Pennsylvania farmhouse in 1809 before the Christian Association of Washington was formed. Thomas Campbell proposed it, and those assembled adopted it: *Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.*

That same year Campbell published the *Declaration and Address*, the founding document of the Stone-Campbell movement. He wrote that all lie under an equal obligation to be bound by the Divine word, and it alone — and not by any human interpretation of it. He wrote that nothing ought to be inculcated upon Christians as articles of faith but what is expressly taught and enjoined upon them in the word of God.

Bound by it. And it alone.

Now set that beside the denomination's Identity Statement, adopted in 2009: that they hold the centrality of scripture, recognizing that each person has the freedom and the responsibility to study God's Word within the community of the Church.

Read the two together slowly, because the distance between them is the whole story. Campbell said *bound*. The Identity Statement says *central*. A thing may be central to a conversation and still not govern its conclusion. The sun is central to a room at noon; it does not tell anyone in the room what to do.

The founder's word was an authority. The successor's word is a value.

What the Word Actually Says

Since the founder bound this church to Scripture alone, let Scripture speak on the matter their assemblies could not settle.

When the Pharisees came to test Christ on marriage, He did not consult the room. He went to the beginning: that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said that a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate (Matthew 19:4–6).

Every element is there and none of it is negotiable. Grounded in creation. Male and female by design. One flesh — the joining of the two halves of humanity, not of any two persons who love each other. And joined by God, which means it was never ours to define and is therefore not ours to redefine.

Paul's letter to Corinth names the conduct plainly, listing among those who will not inherit the kingdom the sexually immoral, the idolater, the adulterer, the greedy, the drunkard, the reviler, and the man who practices homosexuality. And then, immediately, the sentence an affirming church can never say:

And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. — 1 Corinthians 6:11, ESV

Paul writes to people who *were* these things and are no longer. He does not tell them the list was a cultural artifact. He tells them they were washed. A church that declares the sin no sin has not shown mercy. It has quietly withdrawn the offer of cleansing, because nothing is offered to a man assured he is not dirty.

The Membership That Was

Now the cost. We measure it carefully, from two separate sources, because no single one runs the whole distance — and we will tell you plainly where each begins and ends.

The first is **the membership series** compiled from the National Council of Churches' *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches*, the standard record of American denominational statistics across the twentieth century. It counts inclusive membership, and it runs through 2010.

By that series the denomination reached its height in 1957, at 1,943,599 members — nearly two million souls.

One caution belongs here, and we state it so no one can accuse us of inflating the fall. In 1968 the movement formally reorganized, and a large body of congregations — the independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ — declined to enter the restructured denomination. Their departure removed more than four hundred thousand from the rolls in two years. That was not decline. It was separation, and we will not count a separation as decay.

So we measure from after it. In 1970, the first settled year of the denomination as it has existed ever since, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) reported 1,424,479 members. By 2010 that number was 639,551.

That is the measurable core of the Disciples of Christ decline: a loss of 784,928 — fifty-five percent — in forty years. And every one of them was genuinely theirs. The decade markers fall like a staircase: 1.42 million in 1970, 1.18 million in 1980, 1.04 million in 1990, 820,000 in 2000, 640,000 in 2010. Not one decade reversed the direction. Not one even slowed it.

The Congregations That Are

The Yearbook series ends in 2010, and the denomination's current reporting uses a different measure, so we do not splice them into a single line. Instead we turn to what the Disciples themselves publish today, freely, on their own website.

From the congregations that **filed reports for 2023**, the median number of participants was sixty-six. The median worship attendance was forty. Half of all Disciples congregations gather forty people or fewer on a Sunday morning.

Nearly two-thirds report average attendance of fifty or fewer. Congregations that welcome more than a hundred fifty in worship are five percent of the whole. Their own analyst draws the conclusion in his own words: the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is primarily a fellowship of smaller congregations.

Sit with the number rather than the percentage. Forty people. A movement that once counted near two million, that planted churches across the American frontier, that founded colleges and seminaries and helped charter the World Council of Churches — and the typical congregation is now forty souls in a building built for three hundred.

And remember what that median is drawn from. It counts only the congregations that still report.

The Disciples of Christ Decline Nobody Can Count

Here is the finding, and it is worse than any membership figure would have been. The sharpest evidence of the Disciples of Christ decline is not a number they published. It is the reports that never arrived.

When the reporting period closed in March 2024, the denomination's **Congregation Directory** listed 2,887 congregations. Of those, 1,647 filed a yearbook report — fifty-seven percent. And 2,032 showed any connection at all to the wider church, whether by reporting or by giving — seventy percent.

Four in ten of their own congregations file nothing. Three in ten show no measurable connection to the denomination whatsoever.

This is not decline. Decline is a body getting smaller. This is a body that has partly lost the ability to see itself.

And consider where it lands. Of all the mainline denominations, this one made unity its polar star — the movement for wholeness, the church whose founding grievance was the scandal of division. It cannot account for a third of its own house.

Any membership figure it publishes is therefore an estimate. It has to be. You cannot count what does not report.

The Second Witness

Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established. — Deuteronomy 19:15, ESV

Scripture does not let a charge rest on one voice, and this one does not have to.

In 1985, congregations and individuals within the denomination formed Disciple Renewal, concerned that the body was drifting on the lordship of Christ and the authority of the Bible. From that effort came the Disciple Heritage Fellowship, founded by three congregations in Illinois and Texas. It exists today, based in Decatur, Illinois, and held its national conference this past April.

Its stated convictions, in its own words: the authority and reliability of Scripture, and that Jesus is the only means to salvation. It describes itself as a voluntary fellowship rather than a denomination.

And the denomination's own 2001 committee report confirms this witness from the other side. Two committee members met with that group's executive board in the summer of 2000, and the report records that they were very clear in their opposition.

So the objection to the drift behind the Disciples of Christ decline was made, in an organized way, thirteen years before the vote. It was heard. It was recorded. And in 2013 nothing was filed.

The Sentence That Should Stop Us

One more thing from that fellowship's own account, and we print it without comment for a moment.

Roughly twenty percent of the churches in its network have remained inside the Disciples. Many are open about the connection. Many, in its words, fly under the radar, fearing repercussions from denominational and regional structures.

Now the comment. This is a denomination whose supreme value is unity, whose watchword is no more lines, whose 2007 counterparts elsewhere passed resolutions welcoming the traditional and the orthodox. And congregations inside it keep their convictions quiet because they are afraid.

That is what a church without a fixed standard produces. Not freedom — the standard did not disappear, it merely became unwritten. And an unwritten standard cannot be appealed to, argued with, or amended. It can only be violated.

A Word to Those Still Inside

Some who read this are in one of those congregations. You did not vote for any of it. You have watched the sanctuary thin, and you have learned which opinions are safe to say aloud in your own church.

Scripture speaks to you directly.

Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you. — 2 Corinthians 6:17, ESV

Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues. — Revelation 18:4, ESV

We do not issue that summons lightly. Leaving a church is a grief, and there are graves in that churchyard with your family's name on them. We know what we are asking.

But notice what God calls the people He calls out. *My people.* It is not a rejection. It is the tenderness of a Father who will not leave His children inside a house that is coming down.

The Door Is Still Open

We have brought no charge about the Disciples of Christ decline that the denomination has not published over its own name. The method is in its committee's report. The numbers are on its own website. The founder's words are in the document its Historical Society preserves.

And we do not write as men who enjoy this. There are believers in those forty-member congregations who love the Lord Jesus Christ and have kept the faith through everything. Our grief is for them.

What has been done can be undone. Thomas Campbell's rule is still true, and it is still theirs: where the Scriptures speak, we speak. A church that returned to it would be received. There is no assembly action so old and no statistic so grim that repentance is out of reach. The lampstand is still in Christ's hand, and He has not yet removed it.

And we say now what we say at the close of every one of these studies, because it is the only thing that has ever changed a soul. No report has converted anyone. No argument, however sound, has raised the dead. The Holy Spirit alone draws a man to God — and He speaks through the Word He Himself breathed out, not through the consensus of a room. We lay out the record because we are commanded to watch and to warn. Then we ask Him to open eyes, in that denomination, and in our own.

Next in this series: the American Baptist Churches USA — the last of the seven, and the one that never formally reversed its teaching at all.

For Further Study

- **"A Fellowship of Smaller Congregations,"** Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), July 17, 2024 — the median congregation size and attendance figures cited above, from the denomination's own ALEX database.
- **Membership series, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**, compiled by the Association of Religion Data Archives from the National Council of Churches' *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches* — the 1957 peak and the 1970–2010 figures cited above.
- **"Listed, Reported, and Connected Congregations,"** Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) — the 2,887 listed, 1,647 reporting, and 2,032 connected figures.
- **The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)** — the denomination's governing document, revised July 2025.
- **Thomas Campbell, *Declaration and Address of the Christian Association of Washington* (1809)** — preserved by the Disciples of Christ Historical Society.
- **Disciple Heritage Fellowship** — the continuing fellowship's own account of its founding and convictions.
- Part One of this study: **The Disciples of Christ Resolution That No One Opposed**
- Prior installments: **series introduction** · **United Church of Christ, Part One** · **United Church of Christ, Part Two**

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Virginia Christian Alliance.

We welcome thoughtful and respectful dialogue from all viewpoints. Comments must remain civil, relevant, and free of profanity, personal attacks, or mockery of Christian faith. Disagreement is allowed—disrespect is not.

The Disciples of Christ Resolution That No One Opposed

AUGUST 24, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

The Receipts and the Redline That Was Never Drawn

A plumb line needs a wall. Hang it beside a house with no walls and it still hangs true — it simply has nothing to touch. That is not the line's failure. It is the builder's, and it is the harder verdict, because a leaning wall can be shored up. A house that was never framed has nothing to shore.

This is the sixth denomination examined in ***Measured and Found Wanting***, the Virginia Christian Alliance series that lays God's Word against the published record of the mainline churches. We have walked the **Episcopal Church**, the **Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**, the **United Methodist Church**, the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**, and the **United Church of Christ**. We come now to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and the Disciples of Christ resolution at the center of this study is unlike any vote we have yet examined — because when it came to the floor, no one rose against it.

Three things govern what follows:

- In 2013 the General Assembly adopted a resolution affirming that sexual orientation and gender identity are no grounds for exclusion from fellowship or service. No tally was recorded. No competing resolution was filed.
- Twenty-six years earlier, one congregation had asked the church to say what the Bible says. The Assembly declined to adopt it, and allotted twelve minutes to the question.
- Between those two dates the denomination adopted a method: that the question could not be settled by debate and vote at all, but by listening to one another to discern the Spirit.

First, the Concession — and We Make It in Their Words

A reader could dismiss this entire article in one sentence, so we will make that sentence ourselves before he does.

The Disciples of Christ resolution adopted in 2013 binds nobody. It is what the denomination calls a Sense-of-the-Assembly resolution. Following its adoption, the denomination's own communication stated that the General Assembly speaks only for the people gathered for the event, that it speaks *to* congregations, regions, and general ministries rather than *for* them, that the resolution does not constitute a stance on an issue for the entire denomination, and that it is not a policy change.

Every word of that is true. No ordination standard was amended. No liturgy was authorized. No congregation was compelled to do anything at all. A Disciples congregation that rejected the resolution on the day it passed stood in exactly the same relation to its denomination the following morning.

So what is there to measure?

Why the Concession Becomes the Charge

This movement was born insisting on precisely that freedom. Its watchword was *no creed but Christ* — no human document standing between a believer and Scripture, no confession binding a congregation's conscience. It was a noble instinct, and it was aimed at a real abuse.

But a principle meant to keep Scripture supreme can end by leaving nothing fixed enough to appeal to. In the Episcopal Church a canon had to be struck. In the Presbyterian Church a constitutional standard had to be amended and ratified by presbyteries. In the **ELCA** a two-thirds threshold had to be removed before the vote could carry. Each of those bodies had a wall, and the record of the falling is the record of the wall coming down.

The Disciples had no wall. There was nothing to strike, nothing to amend, nothing to ratify. And here is the part that should trouble a reader most: because no rule was broken, no alarm sounded.

The Episcopal Church tore something. The Disciples did not have to.

That is not a lighter charge. A house that cannot be measured cannot be corrected.

The Road Began in 1977

Nothing about the 2013 Disciples of Christ resolution was sudden. The denomination's own Historical Society dates the beginning to 1977, and describes the four decades that followed as significant progress. We take them at their word about the sequence; we differ only about whether it was progress.

In 1977 four resolutions on homosexuality came before the General Assembly. One of them, a study document, concluded that God's grace does not exclude persons of differing lifestyles or sexual preferences, and that homosexuals may be included in the fellowship and membership of the community of faith, where their gifts of ministry are to be welcomed.

Then this, recorded by the Society itself: the committee acknowledged that the issue would require time, education, and meditation before broad acceptance and adaptation could be reached within the church.

Read that again. In 1977 a committee wrote down that the church was not yet ready to accept its conclusion — and treated the church's unreadiness as a scheduling problem. Not as evidence that the conclusion might be wrong. As a delay.

Two years later a task force reported that it was not convinced ordaining persons engaged in homosexual practices aligned with God's will, and left ordination standards to the regions. That was the high-water mark of resistance, and it was already a retreat: the question was not answered but distributed.

1987: They Were Asked Once, Plainly

In October 1987 the General Assembly met in Louisville. Before it came **a resolution** submitted by the General Board of a single congregation — First Christian Church of Lake Worth, Florida.

It said that Scripture is the guide to Christian life-style, and quoted Paul that we are not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation. It said the church seeks to follow the teachings of the Bible and to call sin what the Bible calls sin. It cited Leviticus 18:22, Romans 1:26–27, and 1 Corinthians 6:9–10.

It asked the Assembly to state two things: that homosexuality is one of the sins listed in the Bible, and that it is an unacceptable life-style for Christians.

And then it asked a third thing, which is almost never mentioned when this resolution is described. It asked that all sinners be treated in the manner and spirit in which Jesus counseled the woman caught in adultery — quoting John 8:11 directly: *Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again.*

Both halves of Christ's sentence. No condemnation, and no permission. That is the balance this entire series has argued for, and it was sitting in the document the Assembly was asked to adopt.

The General Board recommended that the Assembly not adopt it. Debate time allotted: twelve minutes. It was not adopted.

The Part We Will Not Hide

Honesty costs something here, and we will pay it.

The archived document prints the arguments made for and against the resolution during the General Board's consideration that July. Two of the five arguments listed in favor are indefensible. One asserted that a cure for homosexuality exists and has simply not been found. The other said that if such a cure had been found, society would not now be dealing with AIDS.

That is not a biblical argument. It is cruelty wearing Scripture's clothing, and it stands in the denomination's own record under the heading of arguments *for* the resolution. Any reader can open the same file we have linked and find it in ninety seconds.

So we say it plainly: the resolution's text was sound, and the case made for it on that floor was in part disgraceful. A true thing was argued badly by some who supported it, and that gave the Assembly an easy reason to refuse a thing that was true.

The objections raised against it deserve an answer too, not a sneer. The strongest was this: why select one sin from Scripture, when there is no resolution on greed? It is a fair question, and it has an answer. No one in 1987 was proposing that the church bless greed. A church addresses the sin its own moment is pressing it to approve.

Another objection said that homosexuals are persons God created, loves, and redeems, and are to be included in the fellowship to love and be loved. We affirm every word of it. So, in its third resolve, did the resolution.

Discernment Replaces Decision

After 1987 the shape of the thing changed. The road to the Disciples of Christ resolution of 2013 runs through this stretch, and along it the question was no longer answered. It was processed.

In 1991 the Assembly called for deliberate and intensive research rather than a simple yes-or-no vote. In 1997, meeting in Denver, it **committed the church** to a process of discernment — reflection, research, and prayer in the next biennium and beyond. In 1998 a Discernment Committee was appointed. It met for years, in five cities, and reported to the General Assembly at Kansas City in 2001.

That report is the hinge of this arc, and it states the method in its own words:

> The committee is convinced that the issue cannot be resolved by debates and votes. It believes that God is calling the church to a different way of facing issues, and that is listening to each other as a way of discerning what the Holy Spirit is doing in our midst.

Weigh what that sentence does. It does not answer the question. It relocates the authority that would answer it — out of the text, and into the room. The Spirit is no longer heard chiefly in what God has said, but in what the gathered are saying to one another.

And notice what the formula forecloses. A question that cannot be resolved by debate and vote cannot be resolved *against* the new position either. The door swings one way.

A Process That Assumes No Outcome

The committee designed a seven-stage process of worship, Bible study, shared stories, and the Lord's Supper. The report says the process assumes no specific outcome, but provides a means for listening to the Holy Spirit at work in the Christian community.

Set that beside the next thing the report announces: a workshop at the Assembly on the use of the process, with emphasis on how to deal with difficult passages of scripture.

A process that assumes no outcome, arriving with instruction on managing the passages that resist it. We will let the reader weigh that himself.

The report also discloses its own composition, and we print it because they did. Fourteen members. Seven men and seven women. Two lesbians and one gay man. And three members who identified themselves as conservative on the issue, seeing homosexuality as a sin in violation of Scripture. Three of fourteen, charged with building the process by which an entire denomination would decide.

One more disclosure belongs here, and it complicates the picture in a way that honesty requires. The committee records that it attempted to meet with representatives of the denomination's African-American and Hispanic churches in the Northeast Region and was unsuccessful; that it

was likewise unsuccessful at the National Convocation and at a Black Ministers' Retreat; and that the Hispanic Assembly, which two members did meet, had taken a strong stand against homosexuality.

A process built on listening records that several constituencies would not be listened to, and that one of them had already decided. We do not know their reasons and will not guess at them.

What Scripture Says About a Church That Listens to Itself

The method adopted in 2001 is not new, and Scripture named it long before any committee met.

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. — 2 Timothy 4:3–4, ESV

Paul's warning is not about a church that stops listening. It is about a church that listens to the wrong voice. Notice the mechanism he describes: the drift is not announced, and it is not forced. The people gather teachers who suit them. The turning away from truth and the wandering into myth happen in the same motion as the listening.

Scripture is not opposed to discernment. It commands it. But biblical discernment always has an external standard: *to the teaching and to the testimony*, Isaiah says, and if they do not speak according to this word, there is no dawn in them. The Bereans were commended not for listening to one another but for searching the Scriptures daily to see whether the things Paul told them were so.

A discernment with no fixed text to check against is not discernment. It is consensus, and consensus follows whoever is most patient.

The Disciples of Christ Resolution No One Opposed

The Disciples of Christ resolution reached the floor in Orlando in July 2013. The General Assembly adopted **GA-1327**, calling the church to affirm the faith, baptism, and spiritual gifts of all Christians regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, and declaring that neither is grounds for exclusion from fellowship or service.

The Assembly archive records it as adopted. No vote count appears. Press accounts describe it as passing overwhelmingly, and we cite that as reporting, not as record.

The complete business docket for that Assembly lists twenty-one items. Wage theft. Drone warfare. Torture. Incarceration. Parental leave. A change of regional boundaries in South Idaho.

Nothing defending marriage. Nothing on the authority of Scripture. Nothing asking the Assembly to wait, to study further, or to reconsider. Not submitted and defeated — never submitted at all.

In every other denomination in this series, somebody stood up. A bishop's amendment lost 432 to 566. A resolution titled *Marriage is Between One Man and One Woman* was brought and killed. Here, no one.

Why the Chair Was Empty

The reason is in the record, and it is the saddest sentence in this study.

It had already been tried. In 1987 one congregation asked, and was refused in twelve minutes. Between that refusal and 2013 the denomination lost the greater part of its membership — a collapse we will document in the second half of this study. The congregations that would have filed such a resolution had, in large numbers, already gone.

By the time the vote came, there was no one left to draw the line.

That is what makes this denomination's story different from the five before it. Elsewhere we have watched a wall come down. Here we watch a room slowly empty until the question could be settled by the people who remained.

And Still the Line Hangs Straight

We have brought no charge against the Disciples of Christ resolution that the denomination has not published over its own name. The trajectory is recorded by its own Historical Society. The refused resolution sits on its own server. The method is stated in its own committee's report. The docket is its own.

We take no pleasure in it. There are believers in those congregations who love the Lord Jesus Christ, who were never asked and never consented, and who have watched their churches thin out around them. Our grief is for them, and our warning is for the house, not for the sheep inside it.

The second installment hangs the plumb line against what was built here — the verdict of Scripture, and the cost, which in this denomination is steeper than in any of the five before it.

And we say now what we say at the close of every one of these studies, because it is the only thing that has ever changed a soul. No docket has converted anyone. No argument, however sound, has raised the dead. The Holy Spirit alone draws a man to God — and He does it through the Word He Himself breathed out, not through the consensus of a room. We lay out the record because we are commanded to watch and to warn. Then we ask Him to open eyes, in that denomination, and in our own.

Next in this series: "Weighed and Found Wanting: The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)" — the verdict of Scripture, and a decline steeper than any of the six before it.

For Further Study

- **Resolution No. 8727, "Resolution Concerning the Bible's Teaching on Homosexuality,"** 1987 General Assembly, Louisville — the full text, the submitting congregation, and the pro and con statements recorded by the General Board. Note that this resolution does not appear on the denomination's index of 1987 resolutions, which lists only those approved or accepted.
- **Resolution GA-1327, "Becoming a People of Grace and Welcome to All,"** adopted by the 2013 General Assembly, Orlando.
- **Resolution No. 9719, "A Call for Reflection on the Participation of Gay and Lesbian Persons in the Life of the Church,"** 1997 General Assembly, Denver.
- Report No. 0112, "Presentation and Report from the Discernment Committee on the Participation of Gay and Lesbian Persons in the Life of the Church," received by the 2001 General Assembly, Kansas City. Year Book pages 246–247.
- **Disciples of Christ Historical Society, "Pride Month Reflections on General Assembly Resolutions,"** June 20, 2024 — the denomination's own account of the forty-year sequence.
- Prior installments: **series introduction** · **United Church of Christ, Part One** · **United Church of Christ, Part Two** · **ELCA, Part Four**

Trevor Loudon Warns: Communism Is No Longer Hiding in America

AUGUST 19, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: UNITED PATRIOTS UPRISING WITH GARY BINFORD

By Jeff Bayard

There was a time when many Americans thought the word *communism* was too strong, and communism in America was not a threat.

Even conservatives often avoided it. Christians avoided it. Political commentators avoided it. It sounded too harsh, too old-fashioned, or too extreme.

Trevor Loudon does not avoid it.

In this episode of ***United Patriots Uprising with Gary Binford***, Loudon argues that communism and democratic socialism are no longer hiding in the shadows. They are becoming visible, vocal, organized, and increasingly comfortable inside American politics.

Please watch or listen to the full interview. It is worth your time, even if you listen while driving, walking, or working around the house.

Trevor Loudon Delves Into Confronting And Defeating The Visible/Vocal Rise of Communism In America
https://youtube.com/watch?v=nDBKLONoHxk

This Is Not Just Politics

This is not merely Republican versus Democrat.

This is about worldview.

Communism is not only an economic theory. It is a rival view of God, man, property, family, work, and government.

The Bible begins with God. Communism begins with man and material power. The Bible teaches that man is made in the image of God. Communism reduces man to a piece of the collective.

That is why Christians must pay attention.

Colossians 2:8 warns us:

> "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." — Colossians 2:8 KJV

Communism is one of those vain philosophies. It promises justice, but it removes God. It promises equality, but it centralizes power. It promises freedom from oppression, but history shows it produces a new ruling class.

The Socialist Movement Is Not Hiding

This is the clearest warning sign.

The **Democratic Socialists of America** is not hiding what it is. DSA describes itself as the largest socialist organization in the United States, with more than 100,000 members and chapters in all 50 states. DSA also says it is not a political party, but a political and activist organization. Its own electoral arm says DSA organizes in elections to "win and wield power."
That matters.

Socialists do not need to create a new national Socialist Party if they can win Democratic primaries and use the Democratic ballot line.

That is the point many Americans miss.

The socialist movement can grow inside the existing political structure. It can organize. It can endorse candidates. It can win local races. It can win primaries. Then it can claim the machinery

of an old party while pushing a very different worldview.

This is not theory anymore.

DSA's own July 2026 newsletter celebrated an all-time high of 120,000 members and described its program as a step toward "a democratic socialist future beyond capitalism."

Christians should not shrug at that phrase.

"Beyond capitalism" does not mean a small tax change. It means a different system.

Democratic Socialism Is Close Enough to Warn Us

Democratic socialism is not the same thing as Soviet communism in every detail.

It claims to seek power through elections, not through armed revolution. It uses words like democracy, workers, fairness, justice, and affordability.

But Christians should ask a deeper question:

Where does final authority rest?

Does it rest with God, the family, the church, private conscience, private property, local communities, and constitutional limits?

Or does it keep moving upward into the hands of the state?

That is where democratic socialism and communism begin to rhyme.

Both move power away from the individual, the family, and the local community. Both treat the state as the great manager of life. Both are hostile to a biblical view of private property and ordered liberty.

Marx and Engels wrote in *The Communist Manifesto*:

> "The theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property."

That is not compatible with a biblical worldview that recognizes stewardship, labor, inheritance, family responsibility, and the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal."

When the State Promises to Feed You

New York City gives us a current example.

Mayor Zohran Mamdani has advanced a plan for five municipal grocery stores, one in each borough. The city says the stores will offer a 30 percent discount on a core basket of groceries.

That may sound compassionate.

Food is expensive. Families are hurting. Christians should care about that.

But we should also ask what this reveals.

When prices rise, the socialist instinct is not first to remove burdens, reduce regulation, strengthen families, encourage local enterprise, or ask why the market is strained.

The socialist instinct is to make government the provider.

And when government becomes the provider, it does not stop at providing. It begins to rule.

First groceries. Then rent. Then wages. Then schools. Then speech. Then conscience.

The state that feeds you soon believes it owns you.

History Has Already Warned Us

We do not have to guess where this road leads.

The 20th century already told us.

When communist movements gained power, they did not produce paradise. They produced secret police, prison camps, forced labor, seized property, broken families, famine, and mass graves.

The promise was equality.

The fruit was control.

The Soviet Union used state power to seize farms and control agriculture. Millions suffered under forced collectivization and famine. China's Great Leap Forward brought catastrophic death. Cambodia's Khmer Rouge gave the world the killing fields.

Not every socialist proposal is a death camp. We should be honest about that.

But every movement that keeps moving power upward into the state should be judged by where that road has led before.

When the state becomes ultimate, people become expendable.

That is why Genesis 1:27 matters:

> "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." — Genesis 1:27 KJV

Man is not property of the state.

Man belongs to God.

Trevor Loudon Says Get in the Game

In the interview, Trevor Loudon is not merely warning. He is calling people to act.

He says the most critical thing American patriots can do right now is get involved in the midterm elections. He mentions door knocking, phone banking, giving time, donating money, and helping hold the House and Senate.

That is practical.

Christians often say, "God is in control." That is true.

But God's sovereignty is not an excuse for laziness.

David still had to pick up the stone. Gideon still had to go to battle. Nehemiah still had to build the wall with a sword nearby.

So what should we do?

- Register and vote.
- Help one good candidate.
- Knock doors or make calls.
- Speak clearly in your church and family.

- Pray, then act.

This is not a game anymore.

Christians Cannot Sit This Out

The rise of open socialism in American politics should shake Christians awake.

We are not called to panic. We are not called to hate. We are not called to slander.

But we are called to watch.

We are called to tell the truth.

We are called to protect our families, churches, communities, and constitutional republic from anti-God ideologies that have destroyed nations before.

Paul wrote:

> "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." — 1 Corinthians 16:13 KJV

That is the call.

Watch.

Stand.

Be strong.

Communism is not dead. Socialism is not harmless. And Christians who understand biblical truth should not pretend that a movement "beyond capitalism" is just another policy debate.

God rules over nations. He raises up kings and removes them. But He also calls His people to courage.

The hour requires Christian citizens who know the truth, speak the truth, and get in the fight before the state becomes the master.

Resources

- **Democratic Socialists of America: DSA Official Website**
- **DSA July 2026 Newsletter: NPC Newsletter — July 2026**
- **DSA Electoral Work: DSA National Electoral Commission**
- **The Communist Manifesto: Marxists Internet Archive — Chapter II**
- **Marx on Religion: A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right**

Find Gary Binford Online

- **YouTube Channel: @garybinford1969**
- **Podcast Archive: *United Patriots Uprising***
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- **X (Twitter): @TrevorLoudon1**
- **Facebook: Trevor Loudon**

The United Church of Christ Decline: What the Vote Cost

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CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
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The Verdict of Scripture and the Ledger They Kept

A ledger is a patient thing. It does not argue with the entry. It does not care what was intended, or how the vote was framed, or who meant well. It records what came in and what went out, and it waits for someone to read the bottom line.

In our **first installment on the United Church of Christ** we laid out the record of July 4, 2005 — the thirty-three years of preparation, the clause claiming a still-speaking God, the redline refused, and Luther quoted from the floor by a man trying to stop it. That was the receipt. This is the reckoning. The United Church of Christ decline is not a prediction we are making. It is a column of figures the denomination publishes about itself every year.

Three things govern what follows:

- They were warned on the floor, by one of their own ministers, that this would cost them churches, income, members, and morale. He asked for two more years. He was refused.

- The teaching rolls emptied before the membership rolls did. Enrollment in Christian education began falling two years before membership did, and has since collapsed by more than ninety percent.
- The warrant they claimed was Scripture — more light still breaking forth from God's holy word. So Scripture is where this must be answered.
- Asked two years later to reaffirm marriage on the Word of God, the General Synod voted 633 to 135 not to discuss it.

The Case at Its Strongest

We will not answer a caricature. Before we bring the Word to bear, we owe the people on that floor the strongest version of what they believed they were doing, and we will state it without irony. Every speaker quoted below is named in **the minutes of that General Synod**.

The chair of the committee that brought the resolution told the Synod her committee was persuaded this was the moment for the United Church of Christ to make a statement of prophetic witness. She also reported that the committee's day of deliberation had been so quiet and so respectful — punctuated by prayer, by biblical reflection, and by song — that the assembled press corps drifted away by afternoon looking for controversy and finding none.

That is not a mob. That is a body of people who believed they were obeying God, and who prayed before they did it.

Two women rose to speak first in the debate. They recalled a service of covenant held eighteen years earlier in a Unitarian Universalist building, because no congregation of their own denomination had been available to them, and a legal marriage a year before the Synod in the presence of two hundred fifty family and friends. An Illinois delegate urged defeat of a softening amendment because he had celebrated many covenants and wanted his gay son to have access to marriage itself. A minister in Virginia Beach called the resolution an affirmation of mutual respect and a positive, progressive, courageous step.

These are not cynics. They are people who love people, and who concluded that love required this.

They Stated the Method Themselves

We do not have to infer what happened to Scripture in that decision. The **background and theological foundations adopted with the resolution** say it outright.

The document declares that the message of the Gospel is the lens through which the whole of Scripture is to be interpreted. Then it draws the conclusion:

> Indeed, it is not possible to rely exclusively on scripture for understanding marriage today.

The sentences that follow explain what that means in practice. Biblical texts that forbid divorce, encourage celibacy, or require wives to be subject to their husbands are described as not authoritative, being expressions of the cultural norms of the ancient Middle East. Scripture, the document concludes, commends no single marriage model at all.

That is the whole argument of this series, written by the body itself. We did not deduce it. They published it. Scripture is not the standard against which the question is settled; the Gospel-as-lens decides which portions of Scripture still bind, and the portions that do not survive the filter are reclassified as ancient culture.

Why That Case Cannot Stand

We answer it with the only authority either side claimed that day.

The resolution grounded itself in a God still speaking, and in more light still breaking forth from God's holy word. Set that beside what the Word says of itself.

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. — 2 Timothy 3:16–17, ESV

Complete. Equipped for every good work. Paul does not describe a deposit awaiting supplement. He describes a sufficiency. A church that must have more light than the God-breathed Scripture supplies has not found a gap in the Scripture; it has developed an appetite the Scripture will not feed.

And the Word anticipates precisely this move.

But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. — Galatians 1:8, ESV

Note how far Paul is willing to go. Not a false teacher — an angel. Not a stranger — himself. The apostle places even his own future self under the judgment of what has already been delivered. The test is never the credentials of the speaker, nor his sincerity, nor the beauty of his motive. The test is whether the new word agrees with the given word.

New light that contradicts delivered light is not light.

What the Lord Himself Said About Marriage

The delegates that day treated marriage as a question still open. Christ did not.

When the Pharisees came to test him on marriage, he did not appeal to custom, to pastoral experience, or to the direction the culture was moving. He went to the beginning.

He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." — Matthew 19:4–6, ESV

Every element of the definition is there, spoken by the Lord of the church. It is grounded in creation, not in convention. It is male and female, by design and not by accident. It is one flesh, a union of the two halves of humanity and not of any two persons who love each other. And it is joined by God — which means it is not ours to redefine, because it was never ours to define.

Marriage is not a human institution the church supervises. It is a divine institution the church receives. A denomination may vote on many things. It cannot vote on this, any more than a synod may vote on the boiling point of water.

The Plain Witness and the Way Out

Scripture is not ambiguous about the conduct in question. Paul's letter to the Romans names it directly, describing men and women alike exchanging what is natural for what is contrary to nature (Romans 1:26–27). The letter to Corinth is more pointed still, listing among those who will not inherit the kingdom the sexually immoral, the idolaters, the adulterers, the greedy, the drunkard, the reviler, and the man who practices homosexuality.

And then, in the very next breath, comes the sentence that the affirming church can never say:

And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. — 1 Corinthians 6:11, ESV

Read that as good news, because that is what it is. Paul is writing to people who *were* these things and are no longer. He does not tell them the list was mistaken. He does not tell them the Corinthian church had received more light. He tells them they were washed.

This is the cruelty hidden inside the kindness of 2005. A church that declares the sin to be no sin has not liberated anyone. It has quietly withdrawn the offer of cleansing, because nothing is offered to a man who has been assured he is not dirty. The greedy man and the drunkard and the

reviler in that same list are told they may be washed. Only one category of sinner has been told, by that denomination, that he has nothing to be washed from.

That is not compassion. It is the withholding of the only thing that would help.

The Warning They Were Given

They did not lack for counsel. A minister from the Indiana-Kentucky Conference rose during the debate and asked the Synod to weigh the ethical implications against what the action would cost the denomination. **The minutes** record him naming it plainly: churches, income, members, morale.

He asked for two additional years — time for the members to catch up, to think, to study, and to pray. He said there would be long-term implications for the church if the Synod acted then.

He was not claiming prophecy. He was a pastor doing arithmetic, and the arithmetic was correct. What follows is the United Church of Christ decline he described in advance, before a single vote was cast.

Here is what makes this harder rather than easier. A delegate from Michigan moved to insert into the resolution itself an acknowledgment of the pain and struggle its passage would engender within the gathered church. That amendment carried. The words stand in the enacted text to this day.

They wrote the cost into the document, and then they adopted the document. This was not done in ignorance. It was done with the invoice attached.

The United Church of Christ Decline in Numbers

We take **the denomination's own annual statistics**, and we take them carefully, because a number used dishonestly proves nothing at all.

We do not measure from 1960. **The denomination's own footnote** explains that the drop in the early sixties reflects roughly a thousand Congregational Christian churches that declined to enter the 1957 merger — and those churches are not evidence of decay. They are the second witness, and we will come to them. Counting a faithful refusal as though it were a loss would be a lie in our favor, and we will not tell one.

So we measure from the true high-water mark. The United Church of Christ as it actually existed peaked in 1965, at 2,071,391 members in 6,952 congregations.

By 2023 it reported 683,936 members in 4,485 congregations.

That is 1,387,455 members gone — sixty-seven percent. For every ten who sat in those pews at the peak, three remain. The average congregation has been cut in half, from roughly 298 members to roughly 152.

Honesty requires one more thing. Most of that fall came before 2005; by the year of the vote they had already lost forty percent. The United Church of Christ decline did not begin with this resolution. But the vote did not arrest it either. And the table records that in 2005 the denomination's net congregational loss was 117, more than double the 54 of the year before. We do not claim the table proves the vote caused those departures; it does not, and we will not say it does. We note only what the record shows, and that the Southern Conference departures documented in our first installment happened in those same months.

The Teaching Rolls Emptied First

There is a third column in that table, and it is the one that should stop the reader cold.

The United Church of Christ reports its enrollment in Christian education each year — the column it now labels faith formation, and once called church school enrollment. It counts everyone being taught, young and old alike. In 1963 that number stood at 1,209,102. In 2023 it stood at 111,636.

A collapse of more than ninety percent. Fewer than one in nine remains. It is the sharpest single measure of the United Church of Christ decline, and the least discussed.

Two qualifications, so that no one can say we shaped the figure. The 1963 high is the peak of the denomination's own post-merger series; the raw table shows a larger number in 1957, but those years combine the two predecessor bodies and are not comparable. And this column counts adults as well as children, so it is not a measure of the nursery alone.

Now set the two columns side by side and watch the order in which the losses arrive. Enrollment peaked in 1963 and fell in 1964 and again in 1965 — while total membership was still climbing. The teaching rolls turned down two full years before the membership rolls did.

Why That Sequence Matters

That sequence is the diagnosis. Membership decline is a body shrinking. This is a body that stopped handing anything on. People do not stop showing up to be taught because the schedule changed; they stop because they have quietly concluded there is nothing there they must have. Formation collapses first, because formation is where conviction is either transmitted or isn't. The pews empty last.

Moses commanded Israel to teach the words of God diligently to their children, speaking of them sitting in the house and walking by the way, lying down and rising up. A church whose teaching

rolls have fallen by ninety percent has not merely lost a program. It has stopped believing it has anything to hand on.

Two Years Later, They Were Asked Again

In June 2007 the Twenty-sixth General Synod met in Hartford. Three resolutions came before it asking the denomination to revisit what it had done.

The first was titled "A Reaffirmation of Marriage Based on the Word of God." Committee Three recommended that the Synod take no action on it. Debate was closed, the recommendation was adopted, and a division of the house was called. The result stands in **the minutes**: 633 in favor of taking no action, 135 opposed, 10 abstaining.

Eighty-one percent voted not to discuss whether marriage should be reaffirmed on the Word of God.

A second resolution, "A Reaffirmation of the Historic and Ecumenical Christian Perspective on Marriage," was given no action as well. So was a third, "Returning to Unity and Diversity in the United Church of Christ." Three requests, three refusals, one meeting.

One detail from the committee's report should be read slowly. The chair told the Synod that no proponents of the first resolution were present during the committee's work — and that one of the proponents had since left the denomination. The people who asked the church to reaffirm marriage on the Word of God were already gone before their own resolution reached the floor.

What Fairness Requires Us to Add

That same Synod did something else, and we would be shading the record if we left it out.

The delegates **adopted a resolution** titled "Reaffirming our Commitment to Covenantal Relationships," which states the desire that the denomination continue to reflect theological diversity including members and churches who consider themselves evangelical, conservative, orthodox, or traditional — and which advocates fair representation of all points of view in every setting of the church.

And when the second marriage resolution came to the floor, a representative of Faithful and Welcoming Churches, an organization of traditionalist congregations within the denomination, rose to support the committee's no-action recommendation. He said that as a conservative member of the United Church of Christ he felt more welcomed at that General Synod than he ever had.

So both things are true. The body declined to reaffirm marriage on the Word of God, and in the same session it voted to welcome those who still held that view. We report both because both happened.

But notice what the arrangement actually offers. You may stay. You may be heard. You may hold your conviction and be called a valued part of the family. What you may not do is ask the church to say that your conviction is true. That is the bargain, and it is precisely what the numbers in this article measure.

The Second Witness

Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established. — Deuteronomy 19:15, ESV

Scripture does not permit a charge to rest on one voice, and this one does not have to.

When the merger was announced in the 1950s, roughly a thousand Congregational Christian churches declined to enter it and said why at the time. They did not walk out of the house; they refused to walk in. Two bodies formed out of that refusal before the United Church of Christ existed — the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference and the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. Both still stand.

Then, in 1998, a third body organized at New Braunfels, Texas — the Evangelical Association of Reformed and Congregational Christian Churches — founded with the participation of congregations rooted in the United Church of Christ and troubled by its direction. That was seven years before the vote. The unease was already organizing itself before the headline act.

These bodies are small. They have never been fashionable. They have not been invited to write the story of American Protestantism. And they are still there, holding what was handed to them, while the body that voted has lost two-thirds of its people.

They are, in effect, the control group. The United Church of Christ decline is visible precisely because there are houses beside it that did not move. Faithfulness is not measured by size. But when the same charge is brought by the ones who refused to enter, the ones who walked out, and the denomination's own annual ledger, the testimony is established.

A Word to Those Still Inside

Some who read this are still in those pews. You did not vote for any of it. You have watched your congregation thin out, watched the children's classrooms go quiet, and been told that your conscience is honored — while the Word to which your conscience was to be captive was declared unfinished.

Scripture speaks to you directly, and it does not speak in ambiguity.

Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you. — 2 Corinthians 6:17, ESV

Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues. — Revelation 18:4, ESV

We do not issue that summons lightly, and we do not issue it with any pleasure. Leaving a church is a grief. There are graves in that churchyard with your family's name on them. We know what we are asking.

But notice what God calls the people He is calling out. *My people.* The command is not a rejection of them. It is the tenderness of a Father who will not leave His own children inside a house that is coming down.

The Door Is Still Open

We have brought no charge here that the United Church of Christ has not published over its own name. The floor record is theirs. The warning was spoken by their own minister. The numbers are printed in their own annual report.

And still we do not write this as men who enjoy it. There are believers in that denomination who love the Lord Jesus Christ, who serve faithfully in small congregations, who had no part in what was done in Atlanta. Our grief is for them, and our warning is for the house, not for the sheep inside it.

What has been done can be undone. The Word that was declared still-speaking has in fact already spoken, plainly and finally, and it says the same thing today it said in 2005. A synod that reversed itself would be received. There is no vote so old, and no statistic so grim, that repentance is out of reach. The lampstand is still in Christ's hand, and He has not yet removed it.

We say now what we say at the end of every one of these studies, because it is the only thing that has ever changed anyone. No ledger has ever converted a soul. No argument, however sound, has raised the dead. The Holy Spirit alone draws a man to God — and the God who emptied a tomb can fill a sanctuary. We lay out the record because we are commanded to watch and to warn. Then we ask Him to open eyes, in that denomination, and in our own.

Next in this series: the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the American Baptist Churches USA — the last two of the Seven Sisters, and the two that did not follow the same playbook.

For Further Study

- *United Church of Christ Summary Statistics 2023* — the denomination's own year-by-year reporting of congregations, membership, and Christian education enrollment, including the footnote on the 1957 merger.
- *Minutes of the Twenty-fifth General Synod of the United Church of Christ*, Atlanta, Georgia, July 1–5, 2005 — the floor debate, the warning from the Indiana-Kentucky Conference, and the amendment acknowledging the pain the resolution would cause.
- **"Resolution in Support of Equal Marriage Rights for All for General Synod 25,"** Action 05-GS-26, adopted July 4, 2005 — the enacted text. Note that the version posted on the denomination's server is missing text from one clause; the complete resolution, together with the background and theological foundations adopted with it, is **archived here**.
- *Minutes of the Twenty-sixth General Synod of the United Church of Christ*, Hartford, Connecticut, June 22–26, 2007 — actions 07-GS-27, 07-GS-30, and 07-GS-34, and the recorded division of the house.
- Part One of this study: **The United Church of Christ Marriage Vote That Disunited the Church**
- Prior installments in this series: **series introduction** · **ELCA Part One** · **ELCA Part Two** · **ELCA Part Three** · **ELCA Part Four**

The United Church of Christ Marriage Vote That Disunited the Church

AUGUST 13, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
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A plumb line does not argue. It hangs from a fixed point and it waits. Every wall in the world is free to lean; the line simply reports how far. And when a builder tells you he never claimed to be building a wall at all, the line does not move. It hangs there still, and the leaning is measured all the same.

This is the fifth denomination examined in ***Measured and Found Wanting***, the Virginia Christian Alliance series that lays God's Word against the record of the mainline churches. We have walked the **Episcopal Church**, the **Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**, the **United Methodist Church**, and most recently the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**. We come now to the United Church of Christ (UCC), and we come to it differently, because this house was built differently. The United Church of Christ marriage vote is the earliest of the mainline surrenders we have examined, and the strangest, because the body that cast it claimed no authority to bind anyone by it.

Three things govern what follows:

- On July 4, 2005, the United Church of Christ became the first mainline Protestant denomination in the United States to endorse the redefinition of marriage — by a resolution

that binds no congregation and changes no standard.
- The warrant it claimed was not conscience. It was continuing revelation: a *Still Speaking God*, and *yet more light and truth* still breaking forth from God's holy word.
- Martin Luther was quoted from the floor against the vote. They recorded it in their own minutes. Then they voted.

The Concession We Make First

We will not build an argument on a misunderstanding, so we state the strongest objection to this article before we make our case, and we state it in the denomination's own words.

On the Saturday morning of that General Synod, before any of this came to the floor, the Moderator gave the delegates a review of polity. The minutes record what he told them. The United Church of Christ speaks *to* its local churches and not *for* them. It is not a denomination that dictates policies, procedures, or beliefs. Article Nine of its Constitution provides that no power vested in the General Synod shall invade the autonomy of Conferences, Associations, or Local Churches.

That is true, and it is not a technicality. The resolution adopted three days later amended no ordination standard. It authorized no liturgy. It struck no words from a book of order. It bound no one at all. A United Church of Christ congregation that rejected the action on July 5 was in exactly the same standing on July 6 as it had been on July 3.

So the reader may fairly ask what there is to measure. If the body never claimed authority over doctrine, how can it be charged with abandoning it?

Why the Concession Becomes the Charge

Here is our answer, and it is the finding of this article. The house with the least binding authority drifted with the least resistance. In the Episcopal Church a canon had to be struck. In the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) a constitutional standard had to be amended and ratified by presbyteries. In the ELCA a two-thirds threshold had to be removed before the vote could carry. Each of those bodies had a wall, and the record of the falling is the record of the wall coming down.

The United Church of Christ had no wall. There was nothing to strike, nothing to amend, nothing to ratify. There was only a vote, and the vote was taken. That is not a lighter charge than the others. It is a heavier one.

The Long Road to the United Church of Christ Marriage Vote

Nothing in the United Church of Christ marriage vote happened that had not been thirty-three years in preparation. The pattern will be familiar to readers of this series, because it is the same hand played at the next door.

In June of 1972, at a congregation in San Carlos, California, an association of the Northern California/Nevada Conference ordained the first openly homosexual man to the ministry of any mainline Protestant denomination in America. He founded a denominational caucus the same year.

In 1975 the Tenth General Synod pronounced that all persons are entitled to full civil liberties and equal protection under the law without discrimination related to sexual preference. Two years later the Eleventh General Synod went further, urging that the states legislatively recognize that traditional marriage is not the only stable living unit entitled to legal protection. That is 1977 — a full generation before the vote, and already the object was marriage itself.

In 1985 the Fifteenth General Synod called congregations to declare themselves Open and Affirming. In 1993 the Nineteenth called the church to greater leadership in ending discrimination against homosexuals. In April of 2004 the Executive Council called the church to action and dialogue on marriage — the study phase, arriving on schedule.

We know each of these dates because the 2005 resolution recites them. The body kept its own receipts and stapled them to the front of the document. Task force, study, statement, vote. The reader who has followed this series has seen this sequence four times already.

The Words They Adopted

The resolution behind the United Church of Christ marriage vote states its own theological warrant. It is worth reading slowly, because the mechanism is not hidden in a footnote. It is a clause in the preamble:

> WHEREAS we proclaim ourselves to be listening to the voice of a Still Speaking God at that at all times in human history there is always yet more light and truth to break forth from God's holy word

The garbled construction in the middle is in the enacted text as printed. We reproduce it as it stands rather than repair it, because it is theirs.

Read the claim. Scripture is not the settled standard against which the question is decided. Scripture is a source from which more is still breaking forth — and the more that breaks forth is permitted to arrive at a conclusion the delivered text does not permit. The word of God becomes a quarry rather than a foundation.

Readers of the **ELCA installment** will recognize the function immediately, though not the form. The ELCA licensed its departure by dividing conscience — by declaring that faithful people, reading the same Scripture, could reach opposite conclusions and both be honored. The United Church of Christ licensed its departure by asserting that the Scripture itself was not finished speaking.

Two different keys. The same locked door, opened.

The Redline That Was Refused

There was a wall available on the day of the United Church of Christ marriage vote. Someone offered to build it, and the body declined.

A separate resolution had been submitted to the same Synod, titled *Marriage is Between One Man and One Woman*. It went to the same committee. That committee recommended its defeat. It came to the floor on the evening of July 4, an amendment was offered and defeated, the question was called, and the resolution was defeated. The minutes record no tally and name no sponsor.

Two other exits were offered and closed. A delegate from New Hampshire moved to retitle the main resolution in support of equal rights for all in covenanted relationships, and to replace the language of marriage with the language of covenant throughout. He agreed with the theology, he said; he wanted the statement to stay bold while leaving the word alone. The amendment was defeated. A delegate from Pennsylvania moved to postpone the vote to the next General Synod — two years to study, to catch up, to pray. A further motion sought merely to postpone until the following morning. Both were defeated.

And then this. A delegate from Michigan moved to insert into the resolution an acknowledgment of the pain and struggle its passage would engender within the gathered church. That amendment carried. The words stand in the enacted text to this day.

They wrote the cost into the document. Then they adopted the document.

Luther at the Microphone

The minutes of the Twenty-fifth General Synod record that a delegate from the Massachusetts Conference, speaking for the denomination's own Human Sexuality Task Force, told the body that the resolution was put forward with no biblical warrant. He then quoted Martin Luther: that our

conscience should be held captive to the word of God. He granted them their Still Speaking God. And he answered that the word of God is still the same.

Stop on that. In our **final ELCA installment** we showed the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America citing Luther's confession at Worms in an endnote to its own social statement — the founder's words enlisted to license the departure from the founder's principle. Here the same confession is spoken aloud from the floor, in the opposite direction, by a man trying to stop the thing.

Same reformer. Same sentence about a conscience captive to the word of God. Two denominations, four years apart, in different rooms. Both heard it. Both voted anyway.

Luther's point was never that conscience is sovereign. It was that conscience is bound — captive, chained, unable to move — because the word of God has already spoken. A conscience captive to a word that is still speaking is a conscience captive to nothing at all.

The Cost They Were Told, in Advance, by Their Own

A minister from the Indiana-Kentucky Conference rose during the debate and asked the Synod to weigh the ethical implications against what it would cost the denomination. The minutes record him naming it: churches, income, members, morale. He expressed hope that the Synod would allow two additional years for the members to catch up, to think, to study, and to pray. He said there would be long-term implications for the church if action were taken then.

He was not a prophet. He was a pastor doing arithmetic. But the arithmetic was correct, and we will lay his warning beside the denomination's own membership tables in the second half of this study.

Scripture had already settled the matter he was raising.

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. — 2 Timothy 3:16–17, ESV

Complete. Equipped for every good work. Not a partial deposit awaiting supplement, not a first installment on a revelation still in progress. Paul's word to Timothy is that the man who has this has enough. A church that requires more light than the God-breathed Scripture supplies has not discovered a deficiency in the Scripture. It has developed an appetite the Scripture will not feed.

Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. — Jude 3, ESV

Once for all delivered. Jude wrote that sentence to a church already learning how convenient a still-unfolding faith could be. New light that contradicts delivered light is not light.

It Reached Virginia

The United Church of Christ marriage vote is not a story from somewhere else. The Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ covers eastern Virginia and all of North Carolina, and the vote landed there within weeks.

Suffolk Christian Church, a congregation one hundred forty-five years old, agreed by more than a two-thirds majority in the fall of 2005 to leave the denomination. Its minister told the Associated Press that the marriage vote had not been the congregation's only disagreement with the national body — but that for many of his people, it was the straw that broke the camel's back. In the Berkley section of Norfolk, New Hope Congregational Church voted to withdraw; its minister said he could not go along in support of something he did not believe Scripture sanctions. A pastor emeritus of congregations in Norfolk and Suffolk predicted that others would follow, and observed that this is Bible country.

The conference administrator put a number on it. As many as twenty-five congregations had left since the vote. Six new congregations had formed in the same period, leaving the conference with roughly two hundred thirty. We print both halves of that figure, because both halves are true and because a reader who found the second one on his own would rightly distrust everything else we told him.

Not every Virginia voice went the same way, and honesty requires that we say so. A minister in Virginia Beach welcomed the resolution, calling it an affirmation of mutual respect and a positive, progressive, courageous step. That is the case at its strongest, made by a neighbor rather than a stranger. We will answer it directly in the second installment. We will not pretend it was never made.

The Same Amendment, Twenty-One Years Later

One more line from that record deserves the attention of every Virginian reading this. The resolution urged congregations to work against legislation restricting marriage, including constitutional amendments — and in 2005 Virginia had exactly such a campaign underway, bound for the ballot that fall. A denomination meeting in Atlanta asked Virginia churches to fight a Virginia marriage amendment. Twenty-one years later this Commonwealth faces **an amendment on the November ballot** that would undo the one they lost. The enemy does not retire. He returns to the same door with the same hand.

And Still the Line Hangs Straight

We have brought no charge against the United Church of Christ marriage vote that the denomination did not enter into its own record and publish over its own name. The trajectory is recited in its own resolution. The mechanism is a clause in its own preamble. The refusals are in its own minutes. The Virginia departures were reported while they happened.

We take no pleasure in the accounting. There are believers in those pews who love the Lord Jesus Christ and who never voted for any of this — who were told their conscience mattered and then discovered that the word to which conscience was to be captive had been declared unfinished. Our grief is for them.

The second installment hangs the plumb line against what was built here, and sets the warning that was spoken on that floor beside the numbers the denomination has published every year since. The verdict there is Scripture's, not ours.

And we say now what we have said at the end of every one of these studies, because it is the only thing that has ever moved a soul. No column of figures has converted anyone. No argument, however sound, has ever raised the dead. The Holy Spirit alone draws a man to God. We lay out the record because we are commanded to watch and to warn — and then we ask the One who alone gives sight to open eyes, in that denomination and in our own hearts.

Next in series: "Weighed and Found Wanting: The United Church of Christ" — the verdict of Scripture, the warning they were given, and the cost that came.

For Further Study

- ***Minutes of the Twenty-fifth General Synod of the United Church of Christ***, Atlanta, Georgia, July 1–5, 2005 — the floor record, the committee actions, and the defeated resolutions cited above.
- **"Resolution in Support of Equal Marriage Rights for All for General Synod 25,"** Action 05-GS-26, adopted July 4, 2005 — the enacted text, including the Still Speaking clause.
- ***United Church of Christ Summary Statistics 2023*** — the denomination's own annual reporting of congregations, membership, and Christian education enrollment.
- Associated Press, **"Virginia church leaves United Church of Christ,"** January 12, 2006, drawing on reporting by *The Virginian-Pilot*, Norfolk — the Suffolk congregation's departure and the Southern Conference figures.
- *The Virginian-Pilot*, Norfolk, reporting of January 2006 on the Southern Conference departures — the source of the statements by the ministers in Norfolk and Virginia Beach and by the pastor emeritus quoted above. The newspaper's original pages are no longer

accessible; the relevant passages are preserved at length in **Albert Mohler's contemporaneous commentary**, which quotes the reporting directly.
- Prior installments in this series: **series introduction** · **ELCA Part One** · **ELCA Part Two** · **ELCA Part Three** · **ELCA Part Four**

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Virginia Christian Alliance.

We welcome thoughtful and respectful dialogue from all viewpoints. Comments must remain civil, relevant, and free of profanity, personal attacks, or mockery of Christian faith. Disagreement is allowed—disrespect is not.

Weighed and Found Wanting: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

AUGUST 11, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Luther said his conscience was captive to the words of God. In 2009 this church said its conscience was free to conclude otherwise — and called that his legacy.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part Four: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three:

- The doctrine that held the ELCA together in 2009 — "bound conscience," the promise that both convictions could live in one church — is now under formal reconsideration by the church that built it.
- The 2022 Churchwide Assembly authorized two reconsiderations of the 2009 social statement. The first ELCA reconsideration was completed in 2025. The second, aimed at bound conscience itself, is underway now and goes to the 2028 Assembly.
- A second witness stands outside the walls: the bodies formed by those who left after 2009, still holding what the ELCA set aside.

The Hinge, Stated Plainly

There is one sentence at the center of this arc, and every reader who takes nothing else should take this.

At Worms in 1521, Martin Luther refused to recant. The ELCA's own social statement quotes his reason in its endnotes: *"Unless I am persuaded by the testimony of Scripture and by clear reason … I am conquered by the Scripture passages I have adduced and my conscience is captive to the words of God."* Conquered by Scripture. Captive to the words of God. Luther's conscience was not liberated by his convictions; it was taken prisoner by a text he could not argue his way around.

In 2009 in Minneapolis, this church invoked that same word — conscience — and made it mean the opposite. It resolved that faithful Lutherans, reading the same Scripture, may reach contradictory conclusions about what God has said, and that the church would hold both as valid. Luther's conscience was bound to the Word against the church. The ELCA's was declared free to conclude otherwise, and Scripture became one voice in the room rather than the voice that binds.

That is the hinge. **Part Three** built the case for it slowly and answered the strongest form of the counterargument. Here we simply state it, because what follows is the weighing, and the scales need a fixed point to hang from.

The Writing on the Wall

Belshazzar held a feast and drank from vessels taken out of the house of God, and while he drank a hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall. The king's face changed. His counselors could not read it. Daniel could: *"Tekel, you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting"* (Daniel 5:27, ESV).

The word matters. *Weighed.* Not slandered, not opposed, not out-argued. Set on a scale against a standard and found light. Belshazzar's offense was not ignorance — Daniel says plainly that he knew what had happened to Nebuchadnezzar before him and *"you have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this"* (Daniel 5:22, ESV). The vessels he drank from had been consecrated for one use and were being used for another. That was the whole indictment: holy things repurposed by a man who knew better.

We do not write this to pronounce a sentence on any person. God alone weighs a soul. But a church body publishes its acts, records its votes, and asks the world to receive them as the teaching of Christ's church. Those acts can be set on the scale. That is what this series has done at four denominations now, and what we do here a final time with the ELCA — not against the sincerity of her people, but against the line.

The ELCA Reconsideration Since 2009

Sixteen years of record are now available, and they do not show a church that settled.

In 2022, the Churchwide Assembly authorized two reconsiderations of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*. The first was editorial — updating the statement's language in light of changed civil law and public acceptance of same-gender marriage. That work was completed at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in Phoenix, where edits to Section IV were amended and adopted by a two-thirds vote, 724 to 46.

Compare that number to **2009**. The social statement passed 676 to 338 — exactly two-thirds, not one vote to spare. Sixteen years later the amendments cleared 724 to 46. In 2009 the church was split down the middle and knew it. By 2025 the opposition had thinned to under six percent of the assembly. Something happened in between, and it was not persuasion. Those who held the historic position largely stopped being in the room.

The second ELCA reconsideration is the one that matters, and it is underway now. Its subject, in the ELCA's own words, is **"a fresh consideration of the church's current concept of the four positions of bound conscience."** The task force seated in 2024 has begun the work; a draft goes out for churchwide review in 2027 and to the 2028 Churchwide Assembly for a vote. As we write, the task force has a study circulating through congregations, titled *Conscience and Conversation*, gathering feedback from across the church.

The Compromise That Could Not Hold

Read that carefully, because it is the ending this arc was always moving toward.

The doctrine of bound conscience was the load-bearing beam of the 2009 settlement. It was what allowed the ELCA to change its ministry policy and still tell traditionalists they had a home. Four positions, all honored, none coerced. That promise is the reason many who disagreed stayed.

Sixteen years later, the ELCA reconsideration process is asking whether to keep it.

The ELCA is careful to say that the authorization sets an ELCA reconsideration in motion and does not determine the outcome, and that is fair; we make no prediction here. But the direction of the pressure is on the record. At the 2025 Assembly, the Southwest California Synod memorialized the church to "clarify that bound conscience can only apply to individual clergy who decide not to perform a marriage rite and not to ELCA churches" — that is, to shrink the shelter to a single act by a single pastor and remove it from congregations altogether. The same memorial asked for pastoral care materials for people in "polyamorous, non-monogamous" relationships. The Assembly declined some requests and referred that one to the Conference of Bishops to develop.

This is what happens to a compromise that suspends the authority of Scripture rather than submitting to it. It does not hold still. Having no fixed point, it drifts toward whoever pushes hardest, and the ones who pushed hardest in 2009 are still pushing. *"A double-minded man"* is *"unstable in all his ways"* (James 1:8, ESV). What is true of a man is true of a house built the same way.

The Second Witness

Scripture does not convict on one testimony. *"Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established"* (Deuteronomy 19:15, ESV). The first witness in this case is the ELCA's own record — its minutes, its votes, its published statements. The second witness walked out.

After 2009, congregations and pastors who could not accept the change left. Many joined Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, a body already in existence that received hundreds of departing ELCA congregations; others formed the North American Lutheran Church in 2010. They did not leave to invent something. They left to keep something — the same confessions, the same Scriptures, the same teaching on marriage the ELCA had held until that August. Their existence is testimony that the 2009 change was not an inevitable development of Lutheran doctrine but a departure that faithful Lutherans could recognize and refuse.

The same pattern has appeared at every wall this series has measured: the Anglican Church in North America out of the Episcopal collapse, ECO out of the Presbyterian one, the Global Methodist Church out of the United Methodist. Different centuries, different polities, one story. When a body sets the plumb line aside, the plumb line does not disappear. It walks out the door in the hands of those who still believe it.

Luther Against the House

There is a particular weight to this verdict that the other three arcs did not carry, and it belongs to Luther.

Every denomination in this series has a founder who would not recognize what the institution has become. But the ELCA did not merely depart from Luther. It cited him. It put his words in its endnotes and built the departure on his name, and the words it printed are the very words that condemn the construction. *Conquered by the Scripture passages I have adduced.* A man conquered by a text does not then declare the text open to contradictory readings and call the result freedom.

Luther's entire life turned on the conviction that Scripture stands over the church and not under it — that councils and popes had erred and could err again, and that the only sure ground was the

Word itself. That is *sola scriptura*, and it is not a footnote to Lutheranism. It is the hinge on which the whole Reformation swung. A church that keeps his name and reverses his rule has not extended him. It has spent his inheritance and kept his signature.

"To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn" (Isaiah 8:20, ESV).

A Word to Those Still Inside

This is written for the person in an ELCA pew who has read this far and feels something between grief and anger. You did not vote for this. Many of you fought it, and some of you have spent sixteen years hoping the promise of 2009 would be honored. It is now under reconsideration.

Scripture speaks to your situation without softening it. *"Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord"* (2 Corinthians 6:17, ESV). *"Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins"* (Revelation 18:4, ESV). We do not say those verses lightly, and we do not say them for you; that discernment belongs to you, your family, and the Lord you answer to. But we would be false witnesses if we told you the question is not being asked.

What we can say plainly is that faithfulness is not loneliness. The confessions you hold are held by others. The Scriptures you believe are believed in congregations near you. If the day comes when you must choose between the house and the Word that built it, you will not be walking out into nothing. Others went first and are still standing.

The Only Door

The scales have been read. Four denominations, four arcs, one pattern — and at each one the same finding: not a church that never knew, but a church that knew and voted otherwise. *Weighed in the balances and found wanting.*

But Belshazzar's story is not the last word Scripture speaks on the matter, and it must not be the last word here. Nineveh was weighed too, and warned, and given forty days — and Nineveh repented, and God relented. The prophet who carried that message was furious about the mercy. He had wanted the sentence carried out. God had wanted the city.

That is our position exactly. We have no appetite for a verdict against the ELCA. We would trade every word of this series for one Churchwide Assembly that opened the Book and submitted to it. Institutions have repented before. Councils have been reversed. A church that changed its teaching by a vote can change it back by a vote, and the God who raises the dead is not troubled by parliamentary procedure.

No argument on this page will accomplish that. Only the Holy Spirit convicts, and only He gives a heart the courage Luther had — to stand before every authority that demands you yield and say that your conscience is captive to the words of God, and that you neither can nor desire to recant. That courage is not a Lutheran heirloom. It is a gift, still given.

The door out of a verdict like this has one name. Luther found it before he found anything else, when he read that the righteous shall live by faith and the whole world turned over. It has not moved. It is open still.

This concludes the ELCA arc of Measured and Found Wanting.

For Further Study

- **ELCA Reconsiderations of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*** — the church's own page on both reconsiderations, including Reconsideration #2
- ***Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*** — the social statement as amended in 2025
- **2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Minutes** (cdn.elca.org)
- **Measured and Found Wanting — series hub**
- **Part One: The Receipts Condemn the ELCA**
- **Part Two: The Redline Runs Through the ELCA**
- **Part Three: The Verdict of Scripture on the ELCA**

Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

The Verdict of Scripture on the ELCA

AUGUST 10, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

They did not abandon Luther. They quoted him — and reversed the one thing he would not move.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part Three: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three:

- The ELCA did not defend its 2009 change by setting Scripture aside. It defended it by appealing to the Reformation — to Luther's own doctrine of the bound conscience.
- That argument, given its full strength, is the strongest case any of the seven mainline bodies has offered. It deserves an honest hearing before it is answered.
- It fails at a single point, and the point is Luther's own, quoted in the statement's own endnotes: his conscience was captive *to the words of God*. Theirs was declared free to conclude otherwise.

The Case for the Change, at Full Strength

The **receipts** are entered and the **redline** is drawn. What remains is the question those two parts could not answer: whether the church was right. An argument is worth answering only in its best form. The ELCA's is not the shallow claim that Scripture is outdated, nor a shrug that the culture has moved on. It is a theological argument built from the Reformation's own timber, and it was made on the Assembly floor by serious men.

Dr. Timothy J. Wengert, a Luther scholar and member of the task force, explained the doctrine of "bound conscience" to the Assembly. Respect for the bound conscience of one's neighbor, he said, is one of the great legacies of the early Lutheran reformers. He grounded it in two moments from Luther's own life: Luther begging his accusers to show him from Scripture and clear reason where he was wrong, and Luther standing before Cardinal Cajetan at Augsburg, appealing that his superior not violate his conscience by dismissing what he held to be central to the faith. Wengert drew the conclusion plainly. Christians who hold opposing convictions on a moral question, each from their own reading of Scripture, reason, and tradition, must recognize and respect the bound conscience of the neighbor who disagrees.

R. Guy Erwin, a lay voting member who would later become the ELCA's first openly gay bishop, put the case in its sharpest form. Speaking against an amendment that would have restored the older teaching of the ELCA's predecessor churches, he argued that Luther "overturned centuries of powerful Christian tradition that saw all sexuality as wrong by insisting that clergy have the right to marry, by refusing to value celibacy or even sexual abstinence in itself as a purer or more Christian life." He concluded: "Luther was the greatest sexual revolutionary in Christian history, and we carry forward his legacy even now."

Put those together and the case is formidable. The Reformation was born when one man refused to let an institution bind his conscience. Luther broke a thousand years of settled tradition on celibacy and clerical marriage. To demand now that every Lutheran hold one view on a contested question — to bind the conscience of the dissenter — is to play Rome, not Wittenberg. The ELCA was not abandoning its heritage. It was extending it.

The Argument Answered by Its Own Witnesses

Take the argument seriously enough to follow it where it leads, and it comes apart in the hands of the men who made it.

Bishop Richard H. Graham made the sharpest version of the historical claim. Arguing against restoring the church's older teaching, he cited the *Confutatio* — the Roman Catholic reply to the Augsburg Confession — which had warned that permitting pastors to marry would divide the church and plunge Christian people into chaos. "If our forebears had been deterred by those

arguments," Graham said, "none of us would be here." He warned the Assembly not to betray its Reformation heritage.

The comparison has real force, and it fails on direction. When the Reformers permitted clerical marriage, they were not overturning Scripture; they were recovering it against a tradition that had gone beyond it. Rome forbade what the apostle plainly permitted — an overseer is to be "the husband of one wife" (1 Timothy 3:2, ESV) — and Paul had named the prohibition of marriage as a mark of departure from the faith (1 Timothy 4:1–3). The Reformers moved *toward* the text and away from the accumulated tradition. In 2009, the ELCA moved away from the text, and **said so in its own minutes**: its new conclusion "differs from the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions." Both are changes. They are not the same kind of change. One returns to the plumb line. The other departs from it and records the departure.

The same reversal runs through the conscience argument itself, and here Wengert's own illustration answers him. Consider the passage the doctrine of bound conscience actually rests on. Paul protects the tender conscience in matters of food and holy days — *"One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind"* (Romans 14:5, ESV). But the same apostle who wrote that chapter also wrote, of matters he did not treat as open, that the sexually immoral will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9–10). Romans 14 shelters conscience in things indifferent. It was never a license to move a settled moral question into the category of things indifferent. The 2009 statement did precisely that, and the reclassification — not the compassion — is where it broke.

The Hinge

Here is the whole matter in two sentences, and everything in this arc turns on them.

At Worms, Luther refused to recant and gave his reason. The 2009 social statement quotes it in its own endnotes: *"Unless I am persuaded by the testimony of Scripture and by clear reason … I am conquered by the Scripture passages I have adduced and my conscience is captive to the words of God. I neither can nor desire to recant anything, when to do so against conscience would be neither safe nor wholesome."* Conquered by Scripture. Captive to the words of God. Not liberated from Scripture by conscience, but bound to Scripture against every authority that told him to yield — pope, emperor, council, and the weight of a thousand years.

At Minneapolis, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America invoked that same word, conscience, and bound it to something else entirely. It resolved that faithful people, reading the same Scripture, may reach opposite conclusions about what God has said, and that the church would hold both as valid. Luther's conscience was captive to the Word against the church. The ELCA's conscience was declared captive to itself, and Scripture became one voice in the room rather than the voice that binds.

That is not an extension of Luther. It is Luther inverted. He said his conscience was captive; the captor was the text. The statement that quotes him in its endnotes declares consciences free to reach opposite conclusions about what that text says — and calls the result his legacy.

What Luther Actually Required

The ELCA's own witness named Luther's standard without meeting it. Wengert told the Assembly that Luther begged his accusers to show him from Scripture and clear reason where he had erred. That is exactly right — it is Luther's own phrase, preserved in the social statement's endnotes — and it is the test the ELCA never submitted to.

For Luther, that phrase was not a debating posture; it was a rule of authority. He would not be moved by councils, by custom, or by the sincerity of those who disagreed. He would be moved by the text or not at all. So put the 2009 action to Luther's test. Where in the 2009 record does the Assembly show, from Scripture and clear reason, that the historic reading of Genesis, of Christ's words in Matthew 19 and Mark 10, of Romans 1, was wrong? It does not. It does something else. It states that faithful people disagree, and it declines to adjudicate. That is not a scriptural argument answered; it is a scriptural argument set aside.

Isaiah gives the standard in a single line: *"To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn"* (Isaiah 8:20, ESV). And Paul told Timothy what a church looks like when the standard goes: a time would come when people *"will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions"* (2 Timothy 4:3, ESV). The mark is not that the church stops speaking of Scripture. It is that Scripture stops binding what the church says.

What Scripture Actually Says About the Question

The historic reading is not a tradition the church inherited and might revise. It is Christ's own exegesis of Genesis, given in answer to a direct question.

Asked about marriage, Jesus did not appeal to custom or to the consensus of teachers. He went to the beginning: *"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate"* (Matthew 19:4–6, ESV). He grounded the definition of marriage in the creation of male and female — not in the culture of first-century Judea, not in the pastoral needs of the moment, but in what God made and what God said. This is the very passage **Bishop Mauney's amendment cited**, and the very passage the 2009 Assembly declined to affirm as its teaching.

Paul says the same thing in a different key, treating the created order as legible and its abandonment as consequential (Romans 1:26–27). And he says something that must be said alongside it, because it is the reason any of this is written: after listing the sins that bar the kingdom, including sexual sin of every kind, he adds, *"And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God"* (1 Corinthians 6:11, ESV). *Such were some of you.* The apostle does not describe a class of people beyond reach. He describes the church — people who were what they were, and were washed. That is not a lesser mercy than the one the ELCA sought to extend. It is a far greater one, because it does not require the Word to be bent in order to be kind.

The Only Door

The verdict of Scripture on the ELCA's 2009 action is not that its people were unkind, or that its theologians were unlearned, or that its intentions were cruel. Wengert knew his Luther. Erwin knew his history. The verdict is narrower and heavier than that: the church took the word Luther used to bind himself to the text and used it to unbind itself from the text, and then called the result his legacy.

We do not write this to win. No argument on a page has ever raised the dead, and no reader was ever converted by a well-turned paragraph. Only the Holy Spirit convicts, and only the Holy Spirit gives a heart the strange courage to say the thing Luther said and mean it. That is what we ask for the ELCA and for every reader who has stood in one of her pews — not that they lose an argument, but that conscience be made captive again to the words of God.

The door out of a verdict like this has one name. Luther found it before he found anything else, when he read that the righteous shall live by faith and the whole world turned over. It is still there. It has not moved. Nothing in 2009 or since has touched it.

Next in the series: Part Four — Weighed and Found Wanting, where the scales are read, the second witness is called, and the record since 2009 is set beside the line.

For Further Study

- ***Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*** (ELCA, 2009) — the social statement and its "bound conscience" framework
- **2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Minutes**, Plenary Sessions Two and Five (cdn.elca.org)
- **Measured and Found Wanting — series hub**
- **Part One: The Receipts Condemn the ELCA**
- **Part Two: The Redline Runs Through the ELCA**

Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

The Redline Runs Through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

AUGUST 5, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

They did not delete the old teaching. They kept it on the page — and voted to strip it of its authority.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part Two: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three:

- On the Assembly floor, a Virginia bishop moved to have the church affirm marriage as a "normative, lifelong covenant between a man and a woman." It was defeated, 432–566.
- Moments later, the same Assembly adopted language admitting that its new position "differs from the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions" — and adopted it anyway, 677–276.
- The record shows a church that did not act in ignorance of Scripture's teaching. It named that teaching, refused to affirm it, and departed from it with its eyes open.

What a Redline Is

In the first part of this arc, we read the receipts: the votes, the stripped threshold, the record of what the ELCA did in August 2009. Here we do something narrower and, in its way, more revealing. We lay the old teaching beside the new and mark, line by line, exactly what changed. This is the redline — the editor's mark that shows a deletion, a substitution, a word struck and a word added in its place.

Most institutional drift hides in summary. It is described afterward in gentle language — "the church grew," "our understanding developed," "we came to a fuller view." The redline resists that softening because it works from the actual text. It does not ask what the change felt like or how it was later explained. It asks what words were on the page before, what words are on the page now, and who struck which. In the ELCA's case, the church preserved the whole proceeding in its own minutes, down to the strikethrough. We need invent nothing. We need only read what was crossed out.

The Amendment That Was Refused

On Friday, August 21, 2009, in the fifth plenary session, the Assembly worked through thirteen proposed amendments to the social statement. The most consequential was offered by the Rev. James F. Mauney, bishop of the Virginia Synod. It asked the church to state plainly that "the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions have taught and recognized marriage as a *normative, lifelong* covenant between a man and a woman, reflecting Mark 10:6–9." It went on to connect marriage to the blessing of children — the joy and responsibility of raising them in the faith.

This was not novel doctrine. It was the plain, historic Christian reading of Scripture, offered by a bishop who wanted the church's own statement to say it out loud. The debate that followed sharpened it further: a second bishop moved to change "have taught and recognized" to the present tense — "teach and recognize" — so the statement would affirm this not as a museum piece but as the church's living teaching. That refinement carried, 627–356. The amendment, now strengthened, went to a final vote.

It was defeated, 432 to 566. By a margin of 134 votes, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America declined to affirm, as its own teaching, that marriage is a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman. The historic reading of Scripture was placed before the house, debated, sharpened, and voted down.

The Amendment That Passed

What the Assembly refused to affirm in Amendment A3, it was willing to acknowledge in a different form moments later. A further amendment, offered by the Rev. Kurt F. Kusserow, bishop of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, reworked a later passage of the statement. Where the draft had read "It must be noted that some" people conclude that marriage may describe same-gender relationships, Kusserow struck that phrase and substituted a fuller admission: "*Recognizing that this conclusion differs from the historic Christian tradition and the Lutheran Confessions*, some people, though not all… conclude that marriage" applies to same-gender couples as well.

Read the two votes together, because their nearness is the whole point. The Assembly would not say that Scripture and the Confessions *teach* marriage is between a man and a woman — that failed, 432–566. But it would say that its new, affirming conclusion *differs from* what Scripture and the Confessions teach — that passed, 677–276. The church declined to affirm the historic teaching as true, yet affirmed that it was departing from it. This is not the language of a body that misunderstood Scripture. It is the language of a body that understood Scripture clearly enough to name it, and walked away from it on purpose.

The Teaching That Was Replaced

To see the full depth of the redline, it helps to read what the ELCA's own predecessor churches had taught — because a third amendment, offered by the Rev. Michael E. Johnson of the Western North Dakota Synod, tried to restore exactly that language. It proposed to strike the statement's new framework and reinstate the words of *Sex, Marriage, and Family* (Lutheran Church in America, 1970) and *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior* (American Lutheran Church, 1980).

Those older statements had said it plainly: homosexual behavior "is viewed biblically as a departure from the heterosexual structure of God's creation," and the church "rejects the contention that homosexual behavior is simply another form of sexual behavior equally valid with the dominant male/female pattern." They paired that clarity with genuine pastoral care — naming the need for grace, fellowship, and justice for all, and refusing to rank this sin above idolatry, pride, or gossip. This was the teaching the ELCA inherited. Johnson's amendment asked the church to keep it. The committee had recommended against adoption, and the debate ran long before it was set aside — but its very presence in the record proves the point: the church knew precisely what it was replacing, and chose to replace it.

The Strongest Case for the Change

Honesty requires that the affirming side be given its best voice, not its weakest. On the floor, that voice belonged to R. Guy Erwin of the Southwest California Synod, who would soon become the ELCA's first openly gay bishop. He did not argue that the church was ignoring Luther. He argued

that it was *fulfilling* him. “Luther himself… overturned centuries of powerful Christian tradition,” Erwin said, “by insisting that clergy have the right to marry, by refusing to value celibacy… Luther was the greatest sexual revolutionary in Christian history, and we carry forward his legacy even now.”

This is the strongest form of the case, and it deserves to be heard at full strength: the ELCA was not abandoning its Reformation heritage but extending it — freeing another group to marry, as Luther freed the clergy. If that argument holds, the redline is not a departure at all but a continuation. Everything in this series turns on whether it holds. We will answer it fully in Part Three, where Scripture and Luther’s own words are allowed to speak. Here we note only what it concedes: even its ablest defender did not claim the historic reading was wrong about the text. He claimed the church was right to move beyond it. That is a redline by admission, not by dispute.

What the Line Reads

“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness” (Isaiah 5:20, ESV). The gravest turn is not open defiance of the Word. It is the renaming of a departure as a development, so that the wall may lean while everyone agrees it stands straight. The ELCA did not quite do that. In Amendment A4 it did something almost more sobering: it admitted the lean, recorded it in its own minutes, and adopted the leaning wall as its standard.

Scripture does not leave the historic teaching to inference. Jesus Himself, answering a question about marriage and divorce, returned to the beginning: *“Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?”* (Matthew 19:4–5, ESV). This is the very passage Bishop Mauney’s amendment cited — Mark’s parallel account — and it is the passage the Assembly declined to affirm as its teaching. The Word did not change between 1980 and 2009. Only the vote did.

The Only Door

The redline is not our editorializing. It is the ELCA’s own hand, its own strikethrough, preserved in its own record. We have not measured any person’s heart, which belongs to God alone. We have laid the old text beside the new and marked what was struck — and what was struck was the plain reading of Christ’s own words about marriage.

A redline can be read two ways: as the record of a fall, or as the map back. Every deletion marks a place where the old text still stands in the mind of God, waiting to be restored. No argument on this page can restore it; only the Holy Spirit convicts, and only the Holy Spirit rewrites a heart. We hold up the line not to condemn but to show the way back to what was crossed out — and to the one door that reopens it, whose name is repentance. It stood open in 2009. It stands open now.

Next in the series: Part Three — the Verdict of Scripture, where "bound conscience" is given its fullest hearing, and then answered from the Word it claims.

For Further Study

- ***Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*** (ELCA, 2009) — the social statement amended and adopted August 19, 2009
- **2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Minutes**, Plenary Session Five, pages 215–222 (cdn.elca.org)
- **Measured and Found Wanting — series hub**
- **Part One: The Receipts Condemn the ELCA**

Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

The Receipts Condemn the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

AUGUST 1, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: HOMOSEXUALITY, MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

They did not just vote. They lowered the bar so the vote could clear it — and wrote that down too.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part One: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three:

- On August 19, 2009, the ELCA's Churchwide Assembly adopted the social statement Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust by a vote of 676–338 — exactly the two-thirds required, with nothing to spare.
- Two days later, by a vote of 559–451, the Assembly opened the ministry roster to leaders in "publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships," ending the celibacy standard that had governed the church's rostered leaders.
- That second change passed by simple majority only because the Church Council had first stripped away the two-thirds threshold — over the recorded objection of fifteen of its own eighteen synods and a majority of its own bishops.

A Note on What This Measures

Before the receipts, a boundary. This arc measures the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America — the ELCA — and nothing wider. It is not a verdict on confessional Lutheranism. The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod are large, faithful bodies that held the historic teaching; they are not on trial here, and nothing said of the ELCA reaches them. When a wall falls, the plumb line measures the wall that fell. It does not sweep in the walls still standing beside it. We name this plainly at the outset because the name "Lutheran" is shared, and a shared name is not a shared verdict.

The ELCA is the largest Lutheran body in the United States, formed in 1988 from the merger of three predecessor churches. Its Churchwide Assembly, which it calls the "highest legislative authority" of the denomination, meets every two years. In August 2009 it met in Minneapolis to settle two linked questions: what the church would teach about human sexuality, and whether those in same-sex relationships could be ordained and rostered. Both were answered that week. Both are on the record. We begin with the record because this is not a rumor or an alarm about what a church might one day do. It is what this church did, by its own hand, and preserved in its own minutes.

The First Vote: A Statement Passed on the Dot

On Wednesday, August 19, the Assembly took up Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust, the denomination's tenth social statement. After a long day of debate and thirteen proposed amendments, the vote was called. It passed 676 to 338 — 66.67 percent, meeting the constitutionally required two-thirds threshold, in the words of one contemporary report, "on the dot." A single vote fewer in favor, or one more against, and it would have failed.

The statement did not declare a single teaching on marriage and sexuality. It did something more consequential: it named several contradictory convictions and held them as equally faithful positions a Lutheran might hold — a framework the statement calls "bound conscience." We will examine that framework closely in Part Three, where it deserves its fullest hearing before it is answered. For now, note only what the vote itself reveals. One amendment offered that day would have named marriage a "normative, lifelong covenant between a man and a woman." It drew real support. It did not draw enough. The Assembly declined to make the historic Christian reading the church's settled teaching, and instead seated it as one voice among several. That decision was reached by the narrowest margin the rules would honor.

The Second Vote: The Roster Opened

Two days later, on Friday, August 21, the Assembly turned to the "Report and Recommendation on Ministry Policies." By a vote of 559 to 451, it resolved to open the roster of ordained ministers,

associates in ministry, diaconal ministers, and deaconesses to persons living in “publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships.”

Until that afternoon, the ELCA’s governing standard for its leaders was a document titled Vision and Expectations. It required that rostered ministers who were not married abstain from sexual relations — a celibacy standard that, in practice, barred those in same-sex relationships from the roster. The August 21 vote set that standard aside. What had been prohibited was now permitted; what the church had required of its leaders, it required no longer. This was not a statement of opinion, as the social statement had been. It was a change to who may stand in the pulpit and administer the sacraments. The bar was 559 to 451 — roughly fifty-five percent. Hold that number. It matters because of what was done, before the Assembly ever gathered, to make fifty-five percent enough.

The Vote Before the Vote

Here is where the ELCA’s record diverges from the others in this series, and why it condemns the church in a particular way. The other bodies we have measured changed their teaching by the thresholds their own rules required. The ELCA changed a threshold so that a change could pass.

The ELCA Church Council’s own Legal and Constitutional Review Committee had recommended that any motion altering the church’s rostering standards require a two-thirds vote — the same supermajority demanded to adopt a social statement or amend the constitution. The Council rejected the counsel of its own committee, voting 19 to 10 to delete that requirement and to recommend rules under which the ministry-policy change would need only a simple majority.

The church saw what was happening and objected. Fifteen of eighteen responding synod councils asked the Council to restore the two-thirds standard; only three supported the simple-majority path. A two-thirds majority of the Conference of Bishops, meeting that March, recommended the same higher bar. Two synods — Pacifica and Virginia among them — sent formal memorials to the Assembly asking that the supermajority be written into the rules. The record shows a church whose own bishops, whose own committee, and whose own synods asked it not to lower the bar. It lowered the bar anyway.

The Floor Fought It, and Lost

The fight reached the Assembly floor in its opening plenary. Twice, delegates moved to restore the two-thirds requirement, and twice they were turned back. The first motion — requiring a supermajority for any question “originating from or relating to” the ministry-policies report — was defeated, 436 to 584. The second, offered by the Rev. Steven R. Frock of the Western Iowa Synod, reached further: a two-thirds bar for any resolution “likely to result in a change of the practice and/or policy of the ELCA.” Frock told the Assembly exactly what he intended — to “put

control over the policies and practices of this church back into the hands of the assembly, and take it out of the hands of a simple majority." The chair questioned whether the motion was even in order; before it could be voted on its merits, a motion to object to its consideration was sustained, 754 to 228. Frock's amendment died without a vote.

The rules were then adopted as originally printed, 861 to 137. The two-thirds requirement survived — but only for social statements and for changes requiring constitutional amendment. The Assembly's own secretary, David Swartling, stated plainly on the record that the ministry-policy resolutions fell under neither category. They would pass, if they passed, by simple majority. Two days later, they did — at fifty-five percent, a margin that would have failed under the standard the church's own bishops and synods had begged it to keep.

What the Plumb Line Reads

"Behold, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass by them" (Amos 7:8, ESV). The prophet was not shown the builders' intentions or the wall's long history. He was shown a line, and a wall, and asked to read the one against the other. A plumb line does not bend toward the wall to flatter it. It hangs where gravity holds it, and the wall is true or it is not.

Scripture warns against the very instinct the 2009 record documents — the arranging of an outcome before the question is honestly asked. "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death" (Proverbs 14:12, ESV). The Council did not stand in the Assembly and deny the Word of God aloud. It did something quieter and, in its way, graver: it smoothed the path to setting the Word aside, and did so over the written objection of fifteen of its own synods. And Paul's warning to Timothy names the pattern without needing a single word changed: a time would come when the church "will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions" (2 Timothy 4:3, ESV). The itch does not always arrive as open rebellion. Sometimes it arrives as a procedural motion in a morning session, mild and technical, carried before the real debate has begun.

The Only Door

The receipts are entered. They are not our accusation but the ELCA's own record, in its own hand, preserved in its own minutes. We have not measured any person's standing before God, which is God's alone to weigh. We have measured a wall — the published, recorded acts of an institution — against the line, and reported what the line reads.

No argument on a page has ever raised the dead or turned a heart. Only the Holy Spirit convicts, and only the Holy Spirit draws a sinner home. We do not write to win a debate but to hold up the

line and point to the one door that a record like this leaves open. That door has a name, and its name is repentance. It stood open for every body this series has measured, and it stands open still.

Next in the series: Part Two — the redline, where the historic teaching was kept on the page and quietly stripped of its authority.

For Further Study

For Further Study

- ***Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*** (ELCA, 2009) — the social statement adopted August 19, 2009
- **2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Minutes**, Plenary Sessions One and Two (cdn.elca.org)
- **Measured and Found Wanting — series hub**
- Part One on **the Episcopal Church**, the PC(USA), and the United Methodist Church

Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

The United Methodist Church Made Its Case. Now the Word Answers.

JULY 27, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: HOMOSEXUALITY, MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

The affirming case at its strongest — welcome, love, sacred worth — and the Scripture that answers it.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part Three: The United Methodist Church • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three

The United Methodist Church did not vote in a vacuum. It made a case — for welcome, for love, for the sacred worth of every person — and that case deserves its strongest hearing before Scripture answers it.

We grant what is true in it, and there is much: every person bears the image of God, the church's welcome had grown hollow, and Christ did eat with sinners. But the case leaves one word out — the word Christ never left out.

A gospel that keeps the welcome and cuts the call to repentance is not a wider gospel. It is half a gospel, and half a gospel cannot save.

We have read the receipts, and we have read the redline. We have seen what the United Methodist Church did in 2024, and the exact words it struck to do it. What remains is the deepest question, and the fairest one: why.

Because the church did not believe it was doing evil. It believed it was doing good — righting a wrong, opening a door, loving people it had failed to love. And a watchman who will not hear the strongest form of what he opposes is no watchman; he is only a man shouting.

So before the Word answers, we will let the case be made — not the caricature of it, but the best of it, in the church's own voice. Then we will lay it beside the one measure that outranks every General Conference that has ever met.

The Case They Made

Here is the argument, at full strength.

For decades the United Methodist Church greeted the world with three words: ***Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.*** And for decades, the affirming side says, those words were a lie the church told on itself — because the doors were not open. The Discipline barred them. A gay believer could hear "open doors" from the banner and read "not to be certified, ordained, or appointed" from the book in the same breath. The 2024 votes, on this telling, did not abandon the church's word. They finally made it true.

The case rests on love, and it rests on Scripture too. Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners. He touched the leper no one would touch. He let the sinful woman wash his feet while the religious men recoiled. The whole shape of his ministry was welcome to the excluded — and the church, for two thousand years, has been slow to follow him there. To keep a class of people from the table and the pulpit, the argument goes, is to side with the Pharisee against the Christ.

And it rests on worth. Every person is made in the image of God, of sacred and equal worth. To tell gay believers that their love made them "incompatible with Christian teaching" was, the affirming side says, to wound image-bearers in the name of God — and the wounds were not abstract. Families were divided. Young people left the faith, and some did not survive the leaving. Love does no wrong to a neighbor, Paul writes (Romans 13:10); and a teaching that harms, they conclude, cannot be the love of God.

That is the case. It is not a stupid case, and it is not made only by cynics. It is made by people who weep, who read their Bibles, who believe they are being kind. We will not pretend otherwise.

Where the Case Is Right

And on several points, it is right. We say so plainly, because truth is not partisan.

The church is right that every human being bears the image of God. Genesis settles it before any other question is asked: *"So God created man in his own image… male and female he created him"* (Genesis 1:27, ESV). The gay man and the gay woman are not lesser image-bearers. They are of the same infinite, God-stamped worth as the person writing these words and the person reading them. Any teaching that treated them as less than that was wrong, and the church was right to grieve it.

The church is right, too, that a hollow welcome is a real sin. A banner that says "open doors" over a bolted door is hypocrisy, and Christ reserved his hardest words for exactly that. And the church is right that Jesus welcomed sinners — scandalously, deliberately, to the fury of the respectable. He did.

Hold on to all of that, because none of it is what went wrong. What went wrong is a single omission — and it is the same omission every time.

The Word That Was Left Out

Jesus welcomed the woman they threw at his feet. The crowd wanted her stoned; he bent down and wrote in the dust and sent her accusers away one by one, until only he was left — the one man with the right to condemn her, choosing not to. *"Neither do I condemn you,"* he said. That is the welcome the affirming case remembers, and it is real.

But the sentence does not end there. *"Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more"* (John 8:11, ESV). The welcome and the command are one breath. He did not stone her, and he did not tell her she was fine. He received her, and he called her out of the very thing she was received in.

That is the word the United Methodist Church left out. It kept "neither do I condemn you" and struck "go, and sin no more." It kept the welcome and cut the summons. And a welcome that never calls anyone out of anything is not what Jesus offered the woman in the dust — it is only the crowd dispersing, with no one changed.

Paul says it without a blush. He lists the sins that keep a person from the kingdom — and homosexual practice is on the list, alongside greed, theft, drunkenness, and adultery, so that no reader can imagine one sin singled out. And then he says the most hopeful thing in the letter: *"And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified"* (1 Corinthians 6:11, ESV). *Such were some of you.* The gospel does not leave people where it finds

them. It washes them. The affirming case offers the washing to everyone except at the one point where it has decided the water is cruelty.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

Two Loves, One Name

Everything now turns on a single word: *love.* The church invokes it, and Scripture commands it, so where is the quarrel? Not in whether to love. In what love is.

The Bible's love is not the modern feeling that wants people comfortable. It is the fierce, self-giving will for another's true good — and true good is defined by God, not by the one being loved. *"Faithful are the wounds of a friend"* (Proverbs 27:6). A love that will not warn is not a higher love; it is a coward's love, or an indifferent one. The parent who watches a child walk toward the cliff and says nothing, so as not to upset him, does not love him more than the parent who cries out. He loves him less, or not at all.

This is why the "harm" argument, which is the strongest the affirming side has, finally fails. It is true that careless, loveless condemnation harms people, and the church should repent of every cruel word it ever spoke. But the deepest harm is not to wound a sinner's feelings. It is to confirm a soul in the very thing that separates it from God, and to do it smiling, in his name. *"Woe to those who call evil good and good evil"* (Isaiah 5:20). To rename a sin as sacred and hand a person a lifetime in it — and to call that love — is not the absence of harm. It is harm with a liturgy.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

When Experience Overrules the Word

How did a church that once knew all this come to forget it? Through a quiet reversal of authority.

Methodism has long spoken of four sources for its thinking — Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience. But these were never four equal judges. Wesley held Scripture as the final court, and the church's own doctrinal standards say so as plainly as words allow: *"United Methodists share with other Christians the conviction that Scripture is the primary source and criterion for Christian doctrine"* (**United Methodist Theological Guidelines: Scripture**). Primary. Criterion. The other three testify; Scripture rules.

What happened in 2024 was that a witness was promoted to judge. The lived experience of gay believers — real, sincere, often full of evident kindness — was set above the plain sense of the text, until experience was no longer testifying before the Word but overruling it. And the moment experience overrules Scripture, the plumb line has been taken down and the wall itself made the measure of true. A church can do that. But it can no longer claim the line while it does.

The Name They Kept, the Lord They Cut

Which brings us to the hardest thing this article must say, and we say it as warning, not as sentence — for the sentence is Christ's to give, not ours.

The United Methodist Church did all of this in the name of Jesus. Welcoming, in his name. Including, in his name. Loving, in his name. And that is precisely the situation Christ himself warned could exist — a great deal done in his name by those he does not know. *"On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not… do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you'"* (Matthew 7:22–23, ESV). The invoking of the name is not the knowing of the Lord. He said so.

A Church of the Culture

Scripture has a name for a faith that keeps the profession and drops the obedience. *"They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works"* (Titus 1:16, ESV). And another for a religion that keeps the shape and loses the substance: *"having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power"* (2 Timothy 3:5, ESV). This is the anatomy of a church that has become a church of the culture. It keeps the cross on the building and the name on the sign. It keeps the welcome, the language of grace, the vocabulary of love. What it quietly sets down is the Lordship — the right of Christ to define the very words the church still uses. It will say "Jesus" and mean whatever the age means. That is not knowing him. It is wearing him.

We do not say this to consign anyone to judgment; that door is not ours to shut, and we would not shut it if it were. We say it because a watchman who sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet has the blood on his own hands (Ezekiel 33:6). The trumpet note is simply this: to claim Christ is not to know Christ, and the test he named was never the claim. It was whether we do the will of his Father — which we cannot do while striking his words out of our book.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

The Door Christ Still Holds

So hear, at the end, the welcome that is real — because there is one, and it is better than the counterfeit.

The true Christ still stands at the true door, and his welcome is wider than the church's and narrower than the culture's at the same time. Wider, because there is no sin he will not forgive and no sinner he will turn away — not the greedy, not the proud, not the adulterer, not the practicing homosexual, not the person writing this and not the person reading it. Come as you are; he has never once refused it. And narrower, because he loves you far too much to leave you as you are.

Come as you are and *go and sin no more* are the same sentence in his mouth, and no church has the authority to cut it in half.

No argument on this page can open that door in a single heart. Reason does not raise the dead, and a well-made case has never once saved a soul. Only the Spirit who breathed out the Word can carry it past the ear and into the will. The Board's task is smaller: to hold the case up honestly, to grant what is true, and to lay the rest beside the line — and then to leave the door of repentance standing open for every Methodist who reads this, and for the church itself, if it will turn.

For it can turn. That is the burden of the last article. We have read the receipts, traced the redline, and heard the case answered by the Word. What remains is the weighing — to set the whole of it on the scales, and to speak, at last, the two words this series has been walking toward from the beginning: *repent*, and *come home*.

*Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV). The United Methodist Church's stated rationale for the 2024 changes is drawn from its own official materials, including **"Faith and Inclusion"** at umc.org. The affirmation of Scripture as "the primary source and criterion for Christian doctrine" is from the doctrinal standards of The United Methodist Church (Theological Guidelines: Scripture), © The United Methodist Publishing House.*

For Further Study

The Receipts Condemn the United Methodist Church — Part One: the dated record of the 2024 votes.

The Words the United Methodist Church Cut From Its Book — Part Two: the redline, old law beside new.

The Bible's Verdict on Same-Sex Marriage — the same question answered in the Episcopal arc: the third door, the first house.

The Verdict of Scripture in the PCUSA — the affirming case weighed in the Presbyterian arc: the third door, the second house.

The Church and the Christian Church — the series introduction and the plumb line.

Measured and Found Wanting — the full series.

The Words the United Methodist Church Cut From Its Book

JULY 22, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: HOMOSEXUALITY, MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Reading the Redline of the 2024 Book of Discipline

For years it was called dialogue, listening, a wider table. Then the church set its old page beside its new one — and the words it had cut stood exposed in its own hand. This is the redline.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part Two: The United Methodist Church • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three

Part One read the receipts from a distance. Here we open the book and set the old law beside the new — the exact words struck from the United Methodist Church's own Book of Discipline, and the words written in over them.

The verdict the church removed — "incompatible with Christian teaching" — was declared in its Social Principles, required for ordination, and punishable at church trial. In 2024 all three were

struck. The one mention that survives exists only to forbid the charge.

A church can cut a sentence from its own book. It cannot cut it from the mouth of Christ.

In Part One we stood back and read the tally — a list of dated votes, each one a step down. Here we come close, and open one of them up.

Because a church does not change its mind at the microphone. It changes it in the editing. And the United Methodist Church left the editing behind, in its own book, for anyone to read: the old page, and the new page written to replace it.

Set the two side by side and you do not have to be told what happened. You can see it. You can read exactly which words were removed, and exactly what was written in their place. That is what this article does. It reads the redline.

The Old Page and the New

Start with marriage, because the change there is the cleanest to see — and because marriage is not the church's word to begin with. It is God's. He built it in the garden, before there was a nation, a temple, or a law: *"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh"* (Genesis 2:24, ESV).

One man, one woman, one flesh. That is the wall, and it was hung by the hand of God. Every true sentence a church has ever written about marriage is only an echo of that one.

For decades the United Methodist Church's Social Principles carried that echo faithfully. The church affirmed "the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity *between a man and a woman*." And it did not stop at the church door. The same paragraph added, "We support laws in civil society that define marriage as *the union of one man and one woman*" (**2016 Book of Discipline, ¶161.C**).

Now read what stands in its place. In the 2020/2024 revision, marriage is "a sacred, lifelong covenant that brings two people of faith, an adult man and woman of consenting age, *or two adult persons of consenting age*, into union with one another" (**¶162.D**).

Look at what left the page. The words *between a man and a woman* — gone. The sentence supporting civil law that defined marriage as *one man and one woman* — gone entirely, not softened but deleted. In their place, a single new clause does all the work: *or two adult persons of consenting age.*

Here is the thing a church may not do, though the world does it every day. When the United Methodist Church struck "a man and a woman" from its page, it was not revising a policy of its

own making. Those words were never its own. They were Genesis 2:24, written into church law — God's definition, borrowed and preserved.

To cut them is not to update a denominational position; it is to take a knife to the Word of God and keep the book. And a church that edits God's Word to fit the age has not written a broader gospel. It has written another one — *"a different gospel… let him be accursed"* (Galatians 1:8, ESV). The man and the woman were not argued with. The page was replaced. But the sentence beneath the page was God's, and it does not come out.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

The Verdict They Buried

Start with the sentence at the center of it all. For fifty-two years the United Methodist Church's book carried one line above every other: *"The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching"* (**2016 Book of Discipline, ¶161.G**).

But a verdict is only as strong as its enforcement, and this one was enforced. It was written into the ordination standard, where it barred the door to ministry: *"self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve"* (¶304.3). And it was written into the church's trial law, where it became a punishable offense — the Discipline listed among the charges for which a minister could be tried *"practices declared by The United Methodist Church to be incompatible with Christian teachings,"* naming the self-avowed practicing homosexual and the officiant of same-sex unions (¶2702.1b).

So the conviction was not a sentiment the church happened to hold. It was law with teeth in three places: declared in the Social Principles, required at the door of ordination, and punishable at church trial.

In 2024, the teeth came out — all of them. The sentence was struck from the Social Principles. The bar was lifted from ordination. The offense was removed from the list of charges for which a minister may be tried. Not one location was missed. To empty a conviction from three separate corners of a law book is not something that happens by drift; drift is passive, and this was deliberate — the verdict hunted down in every place it lived and removed from each.

Scripture has an image for a man who takes a knife to the words he cannot bear to keep. When the scroll of God's word was read to King Jehoiakim, *"as Jehudi read three or four columns, the king would cut them off with a knife and throw them into the fire… Yet neither the king nor any of his servants… was afraid"* (Jeremiah 36:23–24, ESV). We do not call the United Methodist Church Jehoiakim; that is not ours to say. But the act has a shape, and the shape is the same — words that convict, cut away, without fear.

The One Line They Kept

And yet the phrase did not vanish completely. It survives in the 2024 book exactly once — and where it survives tells you everything.

It appears in the moratorium on church trials, ¶2701.6, which suspends any complaint that a minister is a "self-avowed practicing homosexual," or has performed a same-sex wedding, or has otherwise done what *"the 2016 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church stated is 'incompatible with Christian teaching.'"*

Read those words slowly, because the church chose them with care. The verdict is quoted, but held at arm's length — *the 2016 Book stated* — in the past tense, inside quotation marks, like a thing handled with gloves because the church no longer wishes to own it. The single surviving mention of the conviction exists for one purpose only: to forbid anyone from ever being charged under it again.

Follow that reversal to its end, because it is the whole story of this chapter in one turn. The sentence that for fifty-two years kept a practicing homosexual out of the pulpit now stands in the book for the opposite reason — to protect one in it. The words were not merely removed. They were turned to face the other way. A church buried its own conviction, and laid across the grave the stone of a moratorium, so that it could never rise to accuse again.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

What Replaced the Boundary

A redline is not only what was removed. It is also what was written in.

The old Human Sexuality paragraph had a boundary in it. After calling sexuality God's good gift, it drew the line plainly: sexual relations "are affirmed *only with the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage*" (¶161.G). That boundary is gone.

In its place, the revised paragraph calls sexuality "*a sacred gift*," describes it as "*shaped by a combination of nature and nurture*," and honors "*celibacy, marriage and singleness*" as parallel and equal paths (**¶162.C**). The language is warm. But read it for what it no longer contains: there is no boundary in it at all.

The same replacement happened in the ordination standards. The old rule required of every candidate "*fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness*" (¶304.2) — a single clear line running through a minister's whole life. The **revised rule** asks instead for "*faithful sexual intimacy expressed through fidelity, monogamy, commitment, mutual affection and respect*."

The words sound rigorous. But the old standard named what faithfulness required; the new one names only how faithfulness should feel. The boundary was not enforced more gently. It was removed, and a mood written in where a rule had been.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

The Wool, and the Verb

For years, the direction of all this was denied, or softened, or given gentler names. It was a season of dialogue. It was holy conferencing. It was making room. It was a bigger tent. It was the church still discerning, still on a journey, still listening to one another in love.

But a redline does not do euphemism. Set the old page beside the new, and every gentle word falls away. There is no "journey" on the page and no "conversation." There is a verb, and the verb is *cut* — and its companion, *replaced*.

Somebody located the sentence that confined marriage to a man and a woman, and removed it. Somebody found the verdict that stood in two paragraphs, and removed it from both. Somebody struck the boundary out of the ordination vow, and wrote a feeling in its place. That is not a mood settling over a denomination. That is editing. It has an author, and it has a hand.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

Watch the Committee, Not the Vote

Here is the part most people never see, and it is the part that matters most.

The floor vote that adopted the new Social Principles — **523 to 161, on May 2** — was the headline. But the real work was finished before that vote was ever called.

In the legislative committee, dozens of separate petitions on human sexuality, marriage, abortion, and divorce were gathered up and set aside in favor of a single replacement — a bundled omnibus, petition 20730 — and carried out of committee by a vote recorded again and again in the record as 46 to 13 (**Daily Christian Advocate**, 2024). By the time the measure reached the floor, the choosing was done. The plenary only ratified it.

This is why this series keeps insisting the headline is never the whole story. A church that changes its mind does the real work quietly, in rooms most members never enter, on documents most members never read. The vote is the funeral. The decision came earlier.

Scripture commends the opposite habit. *"Now the Bereans were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these*

things were so" (Acts 17:11, ESV). The Bereans did not wait for the final count and then react. They examined — tested the claim against the Word while it was still being made.

The Christian in the pew most needs to recover that wakefulness: to know that the grave decisions are made in committee, and to be awake in the room before the microphone is ever switched on.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

The Word They Could Not Strike

So set down the lesson of these two pages.

The United Methodist Church did not lose the man and the woman on the day it counted the ballots. It lost them earlier, in the committee that bundled the petitions and the editors who chose which words to remove — while most of its members assumed the wall was holding because no alarm had sounded. The vote was the funeral. The death came in the editing.

But hear the hope in it, because it is real, and it is the same hope Jeremiah was given. The words the church cut from its book were never the church's to unmake. *"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?"* (Matthew 19:4–5, ESV).

A church can draw a line through that sentence in its own Discipline. It cannot draw a line through the One who spoke it. The definition the United Methodist Church removed from ¶162.D still stands, unstruck, in the mouth of Christ. And God's own word to the man who took the knife to the scroll was not condemnation only, but a command that carried a promise: *"Take another scroll and write on it all the former words"* (Jeremiah 36:28, ESV).

No page of red ink ever saved a soul, and no argument ever raised the dead. Only the Spirit who breathed out the Word can do that. The Board's task is the smaller one: to hold the two pages up to the light, to read what was cut without flinching or gloating, and to leave the door of repentance standing open for everyone who helped cut it.

In the next article, we stop tracing what the church did and ask the older question — what does Scripture itself say, and does the church's case survive it?

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV). The old provisions are quoted from the 2016 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (¶161.C, ¶161.G, ¶304.2, ¶304.3, and the chargeable-offense list at ¶2702.1b); the revised Social Principles (¶162.C, ¶162.D), the revised ordination standard (¶304.2), and the moratorium on church trials (¶2701.6) are from the 2020/2024 Book of Discipline, © 2024 The United Methodist Publishing House.

The committee consolidation of petitions into petition 20730 is recorded in the Daily Christian Advocate of the 2024 General Conference.

For Further Study

The Receipts Condemn the United Methodist Church — Part One: the dated record of the 2024 votes, wall by wall.

How the Skin Came Off — the Episcopal Church's 2015 marriage canon, struck in its own hand: the same redline, the first door.

The Redline in the Book of Order — the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s constitution, edited the same way: the same redline, the second door.

The Church and the Christian Church — the series introduction and the plumb line.

Measured and Found Wanting — the full series.

The United Methodist Church: Weighed, and Found Wanting

JULY 19, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: HOMOSEXUALITY, MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

The Whole Slide, the Founder's Verdict, and a Word to Those Still Inside

A church does not fall in a day. It falls one vote at a time — and this church fell under the name of the man who would have wept to watch it.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part Four: The United Methodist Church • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three

For three articles we measured the United Methodist Church one wall at a time. Here we step back and see the whole building — and the whole decline — in one view: fifty-two years of a single, steady lean.

The scales testify with the record, and they agree. A quarter of the church's American congregations walked out in four years, the largest exodus in its history, from a denomination

already in decline for half a century. And a third witness rises — one the church cannot call an outsider, because his name is on the door.

The church has been shown the plumb line for fifty-two years and will not repent. To the faithful still inside, Scripture's word is plain: come out, and be separate. And to the church itself, the door of repentance still stands open — repent, and come home.

A church does not fall in a day. It falls one vote at a time, across so many years that no single vote ever looks like the fall — until you stand back and see them in a line, and watch the floor come up.

We have measured this church three times now: the receipts of its 2024 votes, the words it struck from its own book, and its case weighed against Scripture. Here we stop measuring single walls and step back to see the whole descent as one motion — and then we let three witnesses speak, and we say the two words this series has been walking toward from the beginning.

The Whole Slide, in One View

This did not begin in 2024. It began fifty-two years earlier, with a single sentence, and every step after it was called an act of faithfulness or an act of love. Here is the descent, in **the church's own dated record**.

1972 — The General Conference declares that the church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers it "incompatible with Christian teaching." The line is written.

1976 — The church bars its own funds from being used to "promote the acceptance of homosexuality." The line grows teeth.

1984 — Ordination is closed to "self-avowed practicing homosexuals." The line reaches the pulpit.

1996 — Clergy are forbidden to officiate, and churches to host, same-sex unions. The line reaches the altar.

2004 — These practices are named chargeable offenses, punishable at church trial. The line becomes law with a courtroom behind it.

2019 — A special General Conference, by a narrow margin, strengthens all of it — the Traditional Plan — and opens ¶2553, a temporary door for congregations that cannot abide the direction of travel.

2019–2023 — More than 7,600 congregations walk through that door and leave.

2024 — In three days, the church reverses every step above. The clergy ban falls. The "incompatible" sentence is struck and marriage redefined. The officiating ban is repealed, the penalties removed, a conscience clause added. And **the exit door is deleted**, so that none may follow the departed out the same way.

Set end to end, it is not a series of unrelated decisions. It is one motion, slowed down across half a century — a wall leaned a little further at every reading, each degree defended as progress, until the plumb line and the wall no longer touched. No single vote, taken alone, looked like apostasy. That is how a fall works. And it is not this house alone: this series has already measured two other communions down the very same slide, to the very same verdict. The enemy did not need a new plan. He walked the row, and knocked at each door with the same three knuckles.

The Tool on the Altar

There is an old command that explains this whole descent better than any modern word.

When God gave Israel the pattern for His altar, He said something strange: *"If you make me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stones, for if you wield your tool on it you profane it"* (Exodus 20:25, ESV). Leave the stone as I made it. The moment you take your chisel to it — to improve it, to smooth it, to make it more pleasing — you have not beautified my altar. You have defiled it. The tool is the profanation.

That is the sin beneath every vote in the slide above. The United Methodist Church took its tools to things God had already made and pronounced good — marriage, the ministry, the boundaries of the body, the words of Scripture itself. It did not believe it was profaning them. It believed it was dressing the stone: making the altar kinder, wider, more welcoming to the age. But God did not ask for a dressed altar. He asked for an undressed one, left the shape He gave it. Every stroke the church called compassion was a stroke of the tool on the stone. And a church that takes the chisel to what God has made does not hand Him a better altar. It hands Him one He will not receive.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

The Second Witness: The Scales

Scripture does not convict on a single voice. *"By the mouth of two or three witnesses shall a matter be established"* (Deuteronomy 19:15, ESV). The first witness in this case is the record — the votes, the redline, the case we have already read. The second witness is the arithmetic, and the two agree.

In four years, roughly a quarter of the United Methodist Church's American congregations left it. By **the most careful independent count**, 7,631 churches — about 25 percent — were approved to disaffiliate between 2019 and 2023, and they carried with them close to a quarter of the

denomination's United States membership. It was the largest exodus in the church's history, unprecedented in its fifty-five years. And it fell on a body that was not healthy to begin with — long the second-largest Protestant denomination in America, and one already in steady numerical decline for more than half a century.

We say plainly what we do not claim. We do not offer these numbers as proof that the 2024 votes caused the collapse, as though a church's life could be reduced to arithmetic. Drift and decline are the same account told twice — once in doctrine, once in membership — and we let them stand side by side without forcing a chain between them. But two witnesses that agree are not easily dismissed. A church that laid down the Word has, in its turn, been laid down. That is not our verdict to pronounce. It is only what the scales show.

"You have been weighed in the balances and found wanting." — Daniel 5:27 (ESV)

Those words were written on a wall by a hand that appeared while a king feasted from the vessels of God's temple, using holy things for common pleasure. The United Methodist Church is not Babylon, and we do not pronounce Belshazzar's doom upon it. But the image is near enough to sober us: a house entrusted with holy things, weighing them against the tastes of the age — and coming up light.

The Third Witness: The Man Whose Name It Bears

Two witnesses establish a matter. There is a third, and he is the most unanswerable of all — because the church cannot call him a hostile outsider. His name is on the sign over the door.

John Wesley called himself *homo unius libri* — a man of one book. He meant the Bible, and he meant it as the sole and final rule of faith, the plumb line above tradition, reason, and experience alike. And the burden of his whole ministry was not merely to welcome people, but to see them made holy — sanctification, real and inward, the actual transformation of a life. Wesley never once separated the welcome of Christ from the holiness Christ commands. To him, a gospel that received a sinner and left him unchanged was no gospel at all.

He even preached the exact diagnosis this series has reached — three centuries early. In his sermon "The Almost Christian," Wesley drew the portrait of a man who has every outward form of religion and none of its inward power: honest, moral, church-going, sincere, and lost. The almost Christian, he said, has the appearance of godliness; the altogether Christian has its life. And Wesley's word to the almost Christian was never comfort. It was alarm — awake, and press on to become altogether a Christian, before the form is all that is left.

An Almost Christian Church

Now lay the sermon beside the church that bears his name. It has kept every outward form — the cross on the building, the language of grace, the vocabulary of love, the very word "Methodist." What it has quietly set down is the power: Scripture as the one book, and holiness as the point. It has become, in its founder's own exact category, an almost Christian church. And the founder's verdict on the almost Christian was not that he was safe. It was that he must wake.

This is not John Wesley's church. That much we can prove, from his own words against theirs. And a church that has walked away from its founder's gospel has walked away from more than its founder — though whose it now is, and whom it now serves, is a judgment we leave where it belongs, in hands higher than ours.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

A Word to Those Still Inside

And so we say the hardest and most loving thing this series has yet spoken — and we say it not to the institution, which has stopped its ears, but to the faithful men and women still seated in its pews.

If you have stayed in the United Methodist Church hoping it would turn back — you have your answer now. It was shown the plumb line for fifty-two years and leaned further at every reading. When the moment came, it did not merely fail to hold the line; it reversed, in three days, what it had confessed for two generations — and then bolted the exit behind those who had left in good conscience. A church that will not repent when the measure is laid in its own hand has told you plainly what it is. And Scripture's counsel to the faithful in such a house is neither new nor unclear:

"Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord… Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins." — 2 Corinthians 6:17; Revelation 18:4 (ESV)

This is not abandonment. It is obedience, and it is rescue. To leave is not to stop loving the people in those pews; it is to refuse to lend your name, your presence, and your offering to what is now done there. And you need not leave into nothing. The faithful have already built the lifeboats. The Global Methodist Church — formed in 2022, and already home to several thousand American congregations — still ordains by the old standard, still calls marriage what God made it, still holds the Word above the book; and thousands of other churches have gone to other faithful communions or stand on their own. Walk to where the lampstand is still lit. Take your family to safe harbor. Do not go down with a ship whose officers have voted, in the daylight, to sail into the rocks.*

The Door That Is Still Open

We hold the door open even now, because God is able to do what no General Conference can — to grant even this church repentance, and to relight a lampstand gone dim.

Hear how He has spoken to a church like this before. To a nation whose very worship had become an offense to Him, God said, *"I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly"* (Isaiah 1:13) — and then, in the same breath, before the ink of the rebuke was dry: *"Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow"* (Isaiah 1:18). The God who cannot abide a corrupted assembly is the very God who offers, in the next sentence, to wash it white. That offer has never been withdrawn.

No Assembly Can Vote a Clean Heart

But hear also what it requires, because there is no other road to it. Restoration cannot happen without repentance. The prayer that heals a church is not "manage the decline" or "hold what remains." It is David's prayer after his gravest sin: *"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me"* (Psalm 51:10, ESV). A right spirit is the one thing the United Methodist Church most lacks, and the one thing it cannot vote itself. No assembly can legislate a clean heart. It can only repent, and receive one.

To the church at Sardis — alive in name and dead in fact — the risen Christ said, *"Wake up, and strengthen what remains"* (Revelation 3:2). That word still stands over this denomination. To the sleeping, it is a command to wake. To the faithful already awake, it is permission to go. And over both hangs a mercy with a clock on it: the lampstand can be removed (Revelation 2:5) — but it has not been removed yet. The door is still open. It will not stand open forever.

The Last Word

No argument on this page can carry a single soul through that door. Reason does not raise the dead, and no exodus, no statistic, no sermon has ever saved a church or a sinner. Only the Spirit who breathed out the Word can do that — take the truth past the ear and into the will, and give the clean heart no vote could ever grant. The Board's task was only ever the smaller one: to hold up the plumb line where every eye could see it, to read the record without gloating, and to leave the door of repentance standing open for every reader, every pulpit, and this whole church, if it will turn.

The wall has been measured. The garment has been counted, thread by thread. The scales have rendered their verdict — and it is still not the last word, because the last word has never belonged to the scales. No church has ever weighed heavy enough to save itself, and no vote of any assembly has ever tipped the balance back. But the God who set the plumb line still stands over

His house — and to every soul still within those walls, and to the church that bears the name of His servant Wesley, He says what He has always said to His own: *repent, come home, and live.*

This entry stands open, as the series does. The plumb line continues wherever a church takes the tool to the stone — and wherever one lays the tool down and returns.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV). The dated history of the church's actions is drawn from its own materials, including ***"Faith and Inclusion"*** *at umc.org. The disaffiliation figures — 7,631 churches, about 25 percent of U.S. congregations, representing roughly a quarter of U.S. membership — are from the* ***Lewis Center for Church Leadership's final report*** *(January 2024). Membership and standing are per United Methodist News and the denomination's own reporting; Global Methodist Church figures are per its transitional officers (2024). John Wesley's "The Almost Christian" (Sermon 2) and his self-description as "a man of one book" are from his published sermons.*

** A note on the worldwide church. This series measures the United Methodist Church as a denomination — its General Conference, its Book of Discipline, and the actions of its U.S. center, where its seminaries, agencies, and institutional power reside. The picture outside the United States is more layered. In the same 2024 season, the General Conference also passed* ***"regionalization"****, ratified in 2025, which divides the worldwide church into nine co-equal regions, each free to set its own rules on marriage and ordination. Large parts of the global church — notably the African conferences and the Philippines — retain biblical marriage and have kept the old standard in their own regions. This is a real and worthy distinction. But it does not undo the verdict: the denomination's institutional center has changed its confession, and to remain within the connection is to remain in shared structure and communion with a body that has, at its center, laid down the Word. The call of this article stands. The regional exception is a reason for the faithful in those regions to hold fast — and to watch the center with clear eyes.*

For Further Study

The Receipts Condemn the United Methodist Church — Part One: the dated record of the 2024 votes.

The Words the United Methodist Church Cut From Its Book — Part Two: the redline, old law beside new.

The United Methodist Church Made Its Case. Now the Word Answers. — Part Three: the affirming case, weighed by Scripture.

The Episcopal Church: Weighed, and Found Wanting — the first house, at the same scales.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): Weighed, and Found Wanting — the second house, at the same scales.

The Church and the Christian Church — the series introduction and the plumb line.

Measured and Found Wanting — the full series.

The Receipts Condemn the United Methodist Church

JULY 15, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: HOMOSEXUALITY, MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Three Days in Charlotte, and Fifty-Two Years Undone

In three days, a single conference reversed fifty-two years of the church's own teaching. The United Methodist Church did not drift into it. It voted, counted the ballots, and filed the record — and the record is now the evidence against it.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part One: The United Methodist Church • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three

The United Methodist Church did not fall quietly. Over three days in 2024 it voted to reverse its stance on same-sex marriage and gay clergy, recorded every tally, and published it — a dated public record anyone can pull tonight.

Read against God's three walls — marriage, our nature as male and female, and the sanctity of life — the 2024 record shows a church leaning hard away from true, in its own words.

We bring no charge the church has not already signed. We hold up the line, read the wall, and leave the door of repentance standing open.

This is the third door.

We have walked this row before. In earlier articles this series measured the **Episcopal Church** against the line and read its dated descent aloud, and then the **Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**, down the same slide to the same verdict. Different polity, different century of founding, different hymnals — and the same hand on the door.

The enemy is not creative. He does not need to be. He found a method that works, and he is simply walking the row, house to house, knocking with the same three knuckles: lower the Word from judge to witness, rename the change as compassion, then call the vote. What worked next door works here.

A Church That Kept the Minutes

Most churches that leave the faith leave no paper trail. They do not announce a departure; they simply stop believing what they once preached, one quiet heart at a time, until a generation looks up and finds the building full of strangers. There is rarely a document to point to — only an absence where conviction used to be.

The United Methodist Church spared us that difficulty. Its General Conference is a legislative body, and legislative bodies record their acts. So we do not have to characterize this church, or guess at its heart, or assemble a case from rumor. The case is already written, and the church wrote it. Our task is only to read it back — slowly, in order, against the line.

So we begin where this series always begins: with the plumb line. God hangs it; we do not. *"Behold, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel"* (Amos 7:8, ESV). The line is the Word of God, lowered from above, and it does only one thing — it shows true vertical.

It cannot be amended by resolution, voted down in committee, or struck from a book. The mason measures the wall against the line; he never adjusts the line to flatter the wall. And the walls we measure are not the church's but God's. He built three of them plumb and named them in the opening pages of Scripture. Against each one, the 2024 record speaks for itself.

Fifty-Two Years, Undone in Three Days

Understand first what was reversed, because the speed of it is part of the testimony.

For fifty-two years the United Methodist Church's own book had said one thing. In 1972 its General Conference declared that the church did not condone the practice of homosexuality and considered it *"incompatible with Christian teaching."* Whatever one thinks of the sentence, it was the church's settled word, written into its Discipline and defended at conference after conference for half a century.

This is not a body that never knew the biblical pattern. Within living memory, again and again, it voted to keep it.

Then, over three days in Charlotte — May 1, 2, and 3, 2024 — the 2024 General Conference took it all back. Not one wall, but the whole line of them. And it did so with a thoroughness that leaves nothing to interpret.

The most historic reversal of the week did not even arrive on the floor for debate. The removal of the ban on ordaining, in the church's old words, "self-avowed practicing homosexual" clergy — a ban that had stood since 1984 — was passed on the **consent calendar**, the bundle of items a conference approves together without individual discussion, by a vote of 692 to 51. Ninety-three percent. A forty-year standard, lifted in the batch of business considered too settled to argue about.

The changes took effect at the close of the conference; the remainder became fully effective on January 1, 2025. What follows is the record, wall by wall.

The First Wall: Same-Sex Marriage

God built the first wall before He built a nation, a temple, or a single law. He built it in a garden. *"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh"* (Genesis 2:24, ESV). One man, one woman, one flesh — the oldest institution on earth.

Christ Himself returned to this exact verse when He was asked about marriage, calling it the Creator's design *"from the beginning"* (Matthew 19:4–6). That is the wall. Here is the record beside it.

On May 2, 2024, by a vote of 523 to 161, the General Conference **adopted the final section of its Revised Social Principles** — the section that houses human sexuality and marriage. The new text carries no trace of the 1972 "incompatible with Christian teaching" language, and it redefines marriage itself.

The church's revised Social Principles now define marriage as a covenant that brings together *"two people of faith, an adult man and woman of consenting age, or two adult persons of consenting age"* (**2020/2024 Book of Discipline, ¶162.D**). Read that middle clause and then the last one. The

man and the woman are still permitted in the sentence — but only as one option among two. The wall was not argued with. It was made optional.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

The Second Wall: Male and Female

The second wall is older than marriage, because it is the thing marriage is built from. *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created him"* (Genesis 1:27, ESV). Male and female is not a cultural arrangement the church is free to update. It is the image of God, stamped on us at creation.

The 2024 record does not touch this wall once. It touches it again and again.

The clergy ban fell first — 692 to 51, on the consent calendar (May 1). Then, on May 3, the conference finished the work in a series of floor votes. It **repealed the prohibition** on clergy officiating at, and churches hosting, same-sex weddings, 447 to 233.

In the same session, delegates struck from church law the "chargeable offenses" that had made performing such a wedding, or being a practicing homosexual in ministry, a punishable act. They added a conscience clause providing that no member of the clergy could be compelled to perform, or forbidden from performing, such a marriage.

And by a vote of 544 to 121, they rewrote the standard of conduct required of clergy themselves. The old rule had asked for "fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness." In its place the delegates set a standard of "faithful sexual intimacy expressed through fidelity, monogamy, commitment, mutual affection and respect." The boundary was not enforced more gently. It was removed and replaced.

The section was not amended around its old conviction. The old conviction was removed, and a new frame built in its place.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

The Third Wall: The Sanctity of Life

The third wall guards the image-bearer himself, from the womb to the last breath. *"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb"* (Psalm 139:13, ESV). The life God knits, no one is free to unmake, and the body He gives is not raw material awaiting our improvement.

Here we will be careful, because honesty is the whole authority of this series. On this wall the church did not lean in 2024 — it had leaned already, long before. Its own 2016 book already granted "the legal option of abortion" in what it called tragic conflicts of life with life, and the revised Social Principles carried that same language forward, adding an affirmation of reproductive technologies alongside it.

So this is not a fresh cut. It is an old one, left standing. Where the marriage and male-and-female walls were reversed in a matter of days, the wall around the life of the image-bearer was simply never rebuilt. A church can bend a wall slowly enough that no single year bears the blame. That is its own kind of testimony.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

The Door That Closed Behind Them

One more act of the same conference belongs on the receipt, though its full weight waits for the final article.

By the time the 2024 General Conference met, more than **7,600 congregations** — most of them theologically conservative — had already left the denomination, using a temporary exit provision the church had opened in 2019. They saw where the vote was heading and walked before the door shut on its own terms; the provision expired at the end of 2023.

And so, having reversed the very standard those departing churches had held, the same conference **struck that lapsed exit** from its Book of Discipline entirely — 516 to 203 — and, in the same season, opened only a path back in, welcoming churches that wished to return.

The way out was not reopened. Only the way home. The church flung its doors wide to what it had once forbidden, and left standing no door but the one that led back inside. We will weigh that arithmetic in Part Four. For now it is simply the last line item on a very long receipt.

The Line Still Hangs

Set the whole record beside the plumb line of Amos — the weight on the cord that God said He would set *"in the midst of my people"* (Amos 7:8) — and notice what the line has done through every vote in this article. Nothing. It did not move on May 1, or May 2, or May 3. It cannot be amended by a two-thirds majority or struck from a Discipline. The conference passed motion after motion; the line simply hung there, straight and silent, measuring.

That stillness is both the judgment and the mercy. The judgment, because the wall is shown bent against a standard that will not flatter it. The mercy, because a line that never moves is a line a church can always be rebuilt against.

And churches have been rebuilt against it. When this vote came, thousands did not drift with it — they left to hold the old confession, many at the cost of their buildings and their place, and some have gathered into new communions that still ordain by the old standard and still call marriage what God made it. The drift was never a fate. It was always a choice — which means another choice is always open.

We take no pleasure in this. There is no joy in measuring a church and finding it bent. These were congregations where the gospel was once preached and the lost were once saved, and to read this record is to grieve, not to gloat. We measure the institution and its published acts, never the eternal standing of any soul who sat in its pews or cast a vote in good conscience. But a good intention laid against a true line is still measured by the line. The kindest thing we can do is refuse to lie about where it falls.

No page of dates has ever turned a heart, and no list of receipts ever saved a soul. Only the Spirit who breathed out the Word can do that. The Board's task is the smaller one: to hold up the plumb line where every eye can see it, to read the record without flinching or gloating, and to leave the door of repentance standing open for every reader, every pulpit, and every church still able to walk back through it.

The line is hung — by God, not by us. In the next article, we stop reading the receipts at a distance and open one of them up: the exact words struck from the church's own book, and the words written in over the wound.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV). Vote counts and dates are drawn from the official record of the 2024 General Conference of The United Methodist Church as reported by United Methodist News (UM News). Quoted provisions are from the Social Principles of the 2020/2024 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, © 2024 The United Methodist Publishing House.

For Further Study

The Church and the Christian Church — the series introduction, where the plumb line is laid down before any wall is measured.

The Receipts Condemn the Episcopal Church — Part One of the first arc: the same hand, the first door.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at the Plumb Line — Part One of the second arc: the same hand, the second door.

Measured and Found Wanting — the full series.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): Weighed, and Found Wanting

JULY 9, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNCATEGORIZED
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The Whole Slide, the Verdict of the Scales, and a Word to Those Still Inside

A church does not fall in a day. It falls one vote at a time — and this year the last thread it had left to cut was the body of a child.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part Four: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three

- For four articles we have measured one wall at a time. Here we step back and see the whole building — sixty years of the same lean, in one view: the Romans Road, walked backward, downward, into death.

- In 2026 the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) endorsed gender-affirming care for “all individuals,” minors included by its own committee’s comment. It is the deepest cut yet — a form of child sacrifice, falling on those who cannot consent.
- The doctrine and the numbers testify together — a church of just over a million now, most of them past fifty-six, and emptying by the year. The church has been shown the plumb line for sixty years and will not repent. To the faithful still inside, Scripture’s word is plain: come out, and be separate.

There is a moment when a long fall finally reaches the ground, and you can hear it land.

On the twenty-ninth of June, 2026, the 227th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) **declared, by a vote of 441 to 30**, that the church supports access to “medically necessary, evidence-based gender-affirming healthcare” for all individuals. The measure had first read “all individuals, including minors.” The committee struck those two words — and then, in its own recorded comment, explained that it removed “including minors” only because the phrase might be “misused to cause more harm to transgender minors,” affirming that “all individuals” was understood to include the young all the same. The words were softened. The meaning was placed on the record, in the church’s own hand.

Read the timing, because it is the sharpest fact in this account. The church did not take this step in the confusion of an unsettled question. It took it in 2026 — after the Supreme Court, in United States v. Skrmetti, upheld a state’s authority to protect minors from these procedures, after the United Kingdom had halted the routine use of puberty blockers for children, after a major federal health review found the risks significant and some of the harms irreversible, and after more than two dozen states had moved to protect minors from them. Among those states was Georgia, home to the very presbytery that brought the measure. The culture itself had begun to turn back. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) stepped forward to meet it — and chose the side even the culture was leaving.

We will not use the language the headlines use. We do not need it. We will say only what the record says, because the record is heavier than any adjective: a church that bears the name of Christ voted, all but unanimously, to endorse the medical alteration of children’s bodies against the shape God gave them — and could not find thirty voices in five hundred to rise and speak against it.

This series has already set the record before this church’s own door — **the vote that opened it**, **the words struck from its Book of Order to make room**, and **its case weighed against the Word**. Here we step back from the single votes and see the whole slide as one motion.

The Whole Slide, in One View

This did not begin in 2026, and it did not begin with children. It began, as these things always do, with a single thread pulled loose and called an act of love. Here is the whole descent, in the church's own dated record:

- **1978** — The church affirms civil rights for all, but withholds ordination from those in unrepentant same-sex practice. The line still holds.
- **1997** — The church strengthens the line, writing the "fidelity and chastity" standard into its constitution by name. This is a church that, within living memory, voted for the biblical pattern.
- **2010** — The General Assembly declares it has "no consensus in the interpretation of Scripture" on same-sex practice, and appeals to "freedom of conscience." Scripture is moved from the bench to the witness stand.
- **2011** — The presbyteries strike the fidelity-and-chastity standard from the Book of Order. The requirement is gone.
- **2014–15** — The church redefines marriage in its own constitution to "two people, traditionally a man and a woman." The wall is marked optional.
- **2018** — The Assembly affirms and celebrates "all gender identities" and apologizes for having once held the historic view.
- **2024** — The presbyteries ratify the addition of "gender identity" and "sexual orientation" to the church's Foundations as protected categories — and make non-discrimination on those grounds a test for ordination.
- **2026** — The Assembly endorses gender-affirming medical procedures for "all individuals," minors included by its own comment. The redefinition reaches the body of the child.

Set end to end, it is not a series of unrelated decisions. It is one motion, slowed down — a single garment unpicked thread by thread across sixty years, each pull justified as compassion, until the pattern God wove was gone and a new one stitched in its place. No one of these votes, taken alone, looked like apostasy. That is how a fall works. It is only when you stand back and see them in a line that you see the floor rushing up. And it is not this house alone: this series has already measured **another communion** down the same slide, to the same verdict.

The Romans Road, Walked Backward

Paul, in his letter to the Romans, lays out a road that climbs. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). The wages of that sin is death (Romans 6:23). But God shows His love, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). Confess with your mouth, believe in your heart, repent, and be saved (Romans 10:9; Acts 3:19). The church has spent two thousand years calling sinners up that road — up out of the pit and into life.

But there is another road in the same letter, and it runs the other way. Before Paul climbs, he descends, and he traces the exact steps by which a people falls. They knew God, he writes, but did not honor Him as God (Romans 1:21). Claiming to be wise, they became fools (Romans 1:22). They exchanged the truth about God for a lie (Romans 1:25). And so God gave them up — given over, at the last, to the dishonoring of their own bodies (Romans 1:24). Then Paul names the lowest rung, the final stair before the ground: they not only do such things, but give approval to those who practice them (Romans 1:32).

Read the dates again with that descent in hand, and you are not looking at random decline. You are watching a church walk the Romans Road in reverse. The truth exchanged for a lie in 2010, when Scripture lost its seat. Wisdom traded for folly as each vote renamed the exchange progress. The body itself dishonored, in the redefinition of marriage and the blessing of altered flesh. And in 2026, the last rung reached — not merely doing, but approving, by a vote of 441 to 30. Approval is the bottom stair. There is no lower one. The next step is the floor.

The Second Witness: What the Scales Say

Scripture does not convict on doctrine alone. By the mouth of two or three witnesses, it says, shall a matter be established (Deuteronomy 19:15). In this account the first witness is the record we have just read. The second witness is the arithmetic — and the two agree.

By its own report, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is now home to just over one million members — 1,019,003, by the church's own count. The decline has run for decades and steepened in the very years it was cutting the threads. And by its own reckoning, sixty percent of those who remain are fifty-six or older. This is not a body being persecuted from without. It is a body emptying from within, at the rate of a small town every year.

We say plainly what we do not claim: we do not offer these numbers as proof that the votes caused the decline, as though the story could be reduced to arithmetic. Decline and drift are the same account told twice — once in doctrine, once in membership — and we let them stand side by side without forcing a chain between them. But two witnesses that agree are not easily dismissed. A church that laid down the Word has been laid down in its turn. That is not our verdict to pronounce. It is simply what the scales show.

> *"You have been weighed in the balances and found wanting."* — Daniel 5:27 (ESV)

The words were written on a wall by a hand that appeared while a king feasted on the vessels of the temple, using holy things for common pleasure. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is not Babylon, and we do not pronounce Belshazzar's doom upon it. But the image is exact enough to

sober us: a house entrusted with holy things, weighing them against the tastes of the age — and coming up light.

The Youngest Thread

Return, before we close, to the children, because that is where this year's vote finally landed, and we must not hurry past it.

Every prior cut in this series fell on adults who could choose — officers seeking ordination, couples seeking a rite. The 2026 measure reaches those who cannot. A child in confusion about his body is not a theological abstraction; he is a boy or a girl whom God knit together in a mother's womb, fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:13–14), and pronounced very good (Genesis 1:31). A child lives by his feelings, and God gave him parents to be the guardrails his feelings cannot supply. To bless the chemical and surgical alteration of that body — to call it healthcare, and to lament by name the laws that would let a parent stand in the way — is not a wider welcome. It is the deepest cut yet, because it falls on the one least able to refuse it.

There is an older name for what a people does when it offers up the bodies of its children to the spirit of its age, and Scripture does not flinch from it. Israel learned it from the nations around them — the worship of Molech, in which parents passed their sons and daughters through the fire (Leviticus 18:21). They did not think themselves monsters. They thought themselves devout, giving what was most precious. And God's word about it is among the most severe He ever spoke:

> *"They have built the high places… to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into my mind."* — Jeremiah 7:31 (ESV)

We do not say the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) bows to Molech. We say the shape is the same, and the shape should frighten us. Child sacrifice has always worn three marks: it offers up the young, who cannot consent; it is borrowed from the surrounding culture and renamed devotion; and it requires removing the parent who stands guard. All three are present here. The bodies offered are children's. The practice is the culture's, baptized as compassion. And the measure laments the very laws that let a parent stand between a frightened child and an irreversible act. Strip the guardian, follow the feelings of a confused child to the knife, and call it healthcare. That is passing a child through the fire, and telling yourself it is love.

And the fire leaves burns. Flesh altered in adolescence does not return; the studies the affirming side leans upon are themselves contested; and behind them stand the voices of those who walked this road and now grieve it — the sterility, the anguish, the very suicide the promised healing was said to prevent. How many of the young will pay in their bodies and their minds for what an

assembly approved in an afternoon? We do not know the number. We know there will be one, and then another. That is enough to weep.

Here, if anywhere, the grief in this series turns sharp, and Scripture gives us leave. The Lord who set a child in the midst of His disciples said it would be better for a man to have a millstone hung about his neck and be drowned in the depth of the sea than to cause one of these little ones to stumble (Matthew 18:6). We do not pronounce that sentence; it is His to give. But we would be false watchmen if we did not say that a church which has come to this has come very far from the One in whose name it still gathers.

A Word to Those Still Inside

And so we must say the hardest and most loving thing this series has yet spoken, and we say it not to the institution, which has stopped its ears, but to the faithful men and women still seated in its pews.

If you have stayed in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) hoping it would turn — you have your answer now. It has been given opportunity upon opportunity to repent, and has refused each one. It was offered, in its own assembly, the chance merely to seat the historic biblical view at the table of its own study, and it declined, **374 to 90**. It has been shown the plumb line for sixty years and leaned further at every reading. A church that will not repent when the measure is placed in its own hand has told you plainly what it is. And Scripture's counsel to the faithful in such a house is not new, and it is not unclear:

> ***"Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord… Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins." — 2 Corinthians 6:17; Revelation 18:4 (ESV)***

This is not abandonment. It is obedience, and it is rescue. To leave is not to stop loving the people in those pews; it is to refuse to lend your name, your presence, and your offering to what is done there in the name of Christ. And you need not leave into nothing. The faithful have already built the lifeboats — A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, and other bodies that still hold the Word above the book, still ordain by the old standard, still call a child fearfully and wonderfully made and marriage what God made it. Walk to where the lampstand is still lit. Take your family to safe harbor. Do not go down with a ship whose officers have voted, in the daylight, to sail into the rocks.

The Door That Is Still Open

We hold the door open even now, because God is able to do what no assembly can — to grant even this church repentance, and to relight a lampstand that has gone dark. To the church at Sardis, alive in name and dead in fact, the risen Christ said, "Wake up, and strengthen what remains" (Revelation 3:1–2). That word still stands over the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). To the sleeping, it is a command to wake. To the faithful who are already awake, it is permission to go.

The scales have spoken, but the God who holds them is not a God of the scales only. He justifies the ungodly (Romans 4:5). He raises the dead. He has restored churches the world had written off, and He has never once been outvoted. No General Assembly has ever passed a measure beyond the reach of His mercy — not for the church that fell, and not for a single soul still grieving inside its walls.

The wall has been measured. The garment has been counted, thread by thread. The scales have rendered their verdict — and it is not the last word, because the last word has never belonged to the scales.

> *No church has ever weighed heavy enough to save itself, and no vote of any assembly has ever tipped the balance back. But the God who set the plumb line still stands over His house — and to every soul still within those walls He says what He has always said to His own: come out, come home, and live.*

This entry stands open, as the series does. The Plumb Line continues wherever a church takes the knife to the garment — and wherever one turns back.

For Further Study

- **The Church and the Christian Church** — the introduction to the series, where the plumb line is first hung.
- **Part One: The Receipts** — the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s 2026 General Assembly, in its own record.
- **Part Two: The Redline in the Book of Order** — the words struck from the church's own constitution.
- **Part Three: The Verdict of Scripture** — the affirming case, and the Word that answers it.

— The Editorial Board, Virginia Christian Alliance

The GEN-02 vote (441–30), its enacted text, and the committee's comment on removing "including minors" are drawn from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s own 2026 General Assembly records. The

2025 membership figure (1,019,003) and age data are from the denomination's own 2026 statistical report. The Supreme Court ruling referenced is United States v. Skrmetti (2025); the federal review is the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' 2025 review of pediatric gender medicine.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

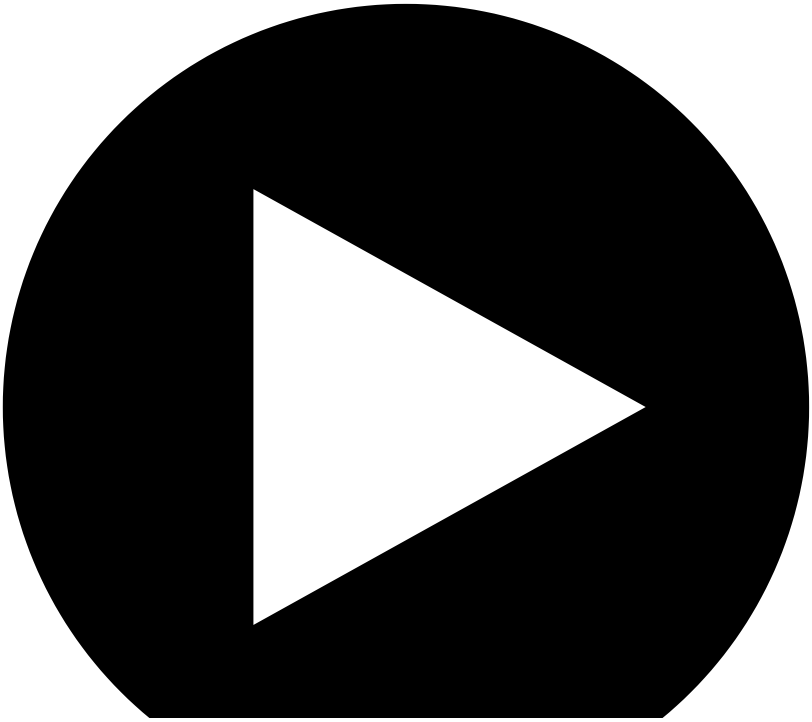
God and Government: A Watchman's Call Before Virginia Votes

JULY 8, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL SEXUALITY, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SANCTITY OF LIFE

Dear Christian, I want to put a question to you before we ever reach a ballot: what is civil government actually *for*?

As a **watchman on the wall** for Virginia, the alarm I need to sound this year is **not first about politics**. It is about a question most of us were never taught to answer — and this November, our silence on it will cost us. Two amendments to Virginia's Bill of Rights are on the ballot. Before we can vote them well, we have to know whose job is whose.

So I want to hand you to someone who has thought about this far longer and deeper than I have. Tony Perkins — president of the Family Research Council and a former state legislator — has built a Bible-based training series called *God & Government*. In this session, about fourteen minutes, he lays out something every Christian voter needs: the biblical map of what government is, and what it is not.



The question beneath the ballot

Perkins's core point is one our founders understood and we have quietly forgotten: civil government is only one of the institutions God ordained, and each one — family, church, and government — carries its own God-given jurisdiction. Education belongs first to parents (*Deuteronomy 6*). Care for the needy begins with the family and the church (*1 Timothy 5*). Government has its own proper and God-ordained work — but it is not the whole of life, and it was never meant to be.

And when we forget government's God-intended limits, Perkins warns, two things happen. Families and churches lay down responsibilities God gave them — and government grows to fill the vacuum, in his words, at the expense of our freedoms. Hold that principle in your hand, and then look at what Virginia is being asked to do.

Two boundaries, one ballot

The marriage amendment would strike from our state's Bill of Rights the definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman. The abortion amendment would write a right to abortion into that same constitution under "strict scrutiny" — the highest legal standard there is — a bar that could sweep aside long-standing protections such as parental consent and waiting periods.

Set the politics aside for a moment and see what these really are. They are the state reaching across a boundary God drew. Marriage and the family are not the government's to redefine; God

designed them before any legislature existed (*Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4–6*). And the child in the womb is not the state's to discard; I believe with all my heart that every one of them bears the image of God from the moment of conception (*Psalm 139:13–14*). What sits on our ballot is not merely a policy dispute. It is a question of whether Virginia will honor the boundaries of the One who assigns them.

Perkins gives a living example of this kind of boundary-crossing. He points to a California law, AB1955, that sought to bar school districts from telling parents when their child changes gender identity at school — government stepping between parent and child, claiming an authority Scripture never handed it. (Federal courts have since blocked the law's core provisions on parental-rights grounds — a reminder that overreach can be turned back.) We are watching the same spirit at work here in Virginia, only in different clothing. When the family sphere is invaded, it is nearly always sold to us as compassion. But responsibility God assigned to parents cannot be transferred to the state without cost.

The two amendments: official text and sources

Right to Reproductive Freedom (HJ1) — **legislative information page** · **full text**
This proposed amendment would add a constitutional "fundamental right to reproductive freedom," including prenatal care, childbirth, contraception, abortion care, miscarriage management, and fertility care, and would establish a compelling-state-interest standard governing when the Commonwealth may regulate those matters. It would continue to allow third-trimester abortion when, in the professional judgment of a single physician, it is medically indicated to protect the life or physical or mental health of the pregnant individual, or when the fetus is not viable — removing the current statutory requirement (Va. Code § 18.2-74) that a physician and two consulting physicians certify a late-term abortion.

Marriage Amendment (SJ3) — **legislative information page** · **full text**
The proposed amendment would remove the current constitutional provision defining marriage as between one man and one woman and require lawful marriages between two adults to be recognized equally under Virginia law, regardless of sex, gender, or race.

Watch, pray, and vote

So hear me, Christian. This is not the year to cede the sphere. I am not calling you to rebellion — I am calling you to **the most ordinary duty a free citizen has**. Watch. Pray. And in November, vote. "We must obey God rather than men" (*Acts 5:29*) does not always mean the barricades; sometimes it simply means showing up informed and refusing to bless what God has not blessed.

Do not tell yourself that sitting this one out is neutral ground. "Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin" (*James 4:17*). We usually picture sin as something we

commit — a wrong we go out and do. But Scripture is just as clear that sin can be something we omit: the good we knew to do and left undone. To see these amendments for what they are, to know how God would have us answer, and then to stay home in November — that is not caution. It is the sin of omission, and the silence will be ours to answer for.

And yet I will not leave you in fear. The same God who commands the warning still holds out mercy — to us, and to every neighbor who has been **persuaded that these amendments are kindness**. Our hope was never in a ballot box. He who sits in the heavens is not anxious about November (*Psalm 2:4*). So ask the Holy Spirit to make you a wise and watchful citizen this season — to give you courage without contempt, clarity without fear, and love for the very people you may find yourself voting against. He is faithful to answer that prayer.

Then watch Perkins's session above, share it with your pastor and your small group, and explore the full six-part series at **frc.org/GodandGovernment**. Let's walk into November with our eyes open.

A Prayer for Faithful Christian Citizens

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your holy name.

You alone are the Creator of all things. Before the foundations of the world, You established what is good, what is true, and what brings life. You created mankind in Your image, male and female. You knit each child together in the womb. You ordained marriage as the covenant union of one man and one woman. Your Word stands forever, even when the nations rage and the opinions of men change like shifting sand.

Father, forgive us for the times we have been silent when we should have spoken, fearful when we should have been courageous, and comfortable when You called us to stand.

Clothe us with the whole armor of God. Grant us the wisdom to recognize truth from deception, the courage to speak with both conviction and compassion, and the humility to remember that our battle is not against flesh and blood but against the spiritual forces of darkness that oppose Your kingdom.

Give us discernment as citizens. Help us to examine every law, every proposal, and every public policy through the lens of Your unchanging Word. Guard us from being swayed by words that sound compassionate while concealing what dishonors You. Teach us to love our neighbors enough to speak the truth in love.

Strengthen Your Church to be the watchman on the wall. May pastors preach the whole counsel of God without fear. May elders shepherd faithfully. May parents teach diligently. May grandparents

leave a legacy of truth. May every believer understand that faithfulness extends beyond the walls of the church and into every responsibility You have entrusted to us.

We pray especially for the protection of the unborn, for children, for families, and for the sanctity of every human life from conception to natural death. Preserve the institutions You established, and raise up men and women who will defend what is righteous with grace, wisdom, and steadfast courage.

Keep our hearts free from anger, bitterness, or pride. Let us never forget that those who oppose Your ways are people made in Your image who also need the saving grace of Jesus Christ. May our words be seasoned with truth, love, and hope.

Above all, let us be found faithful. Whether our voices are many or few, whether the culture applauds or rejects us, may we stand firm upon Your Word until the day our Savior returns.

For Yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.
In the mighty name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,
Amen.

(Hymn: Find Us Faithful — 1 Corinthians 4:2)

The Two Amendments: Official Text and Sources

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The Verdict of Scripture: They Believed It Was Love

JULY 5, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING

They Believed It Was Love

We will let that case make its strongest argument, in its own words — and then hold it to the Word that made marriage in the first place.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part Three: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three

- Marriage was not built by a church and cannot be redefined by one. It was made in the garden, and Christ grounded it there.
- The affirming case is not wicked at its root — it is a Christian impulse aimed the wrong way. We give it its strongest hearing here, in its own voice.
- What that case removed was never the welcome. It was the turning. It kept “come” and struck “repent” — and a gospel without repentance is a false gospel.

We have laid out **the record**, and we have **marked the redline**. Now comes the only question that finally matters. Not what the Assembly did. Not what the Book of Order says. What does the Word of God say — and does the church still stand where it stands?

This is the part of the measuring where we stop counting votes and hold the wall to the line itself.

The Line We Did Not Draw

Marriage was not invented by a church, and it cannot be redefined by one. It was made in the garden, before there was a temple or a priest or a single page of law.

> *"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." — Genesis 2:24 (ESV)*

One man. One woman. One flesh. It is stated as a given of creation, woven into how God made us male and female — not a rule imposed on marriage from outside, but the description of what marriage is. And when the question was put to Jesus directly, He did not soften it or set it aside. He reached back past every later argument to the beginning:

> *"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." — Matthew 19:4–6 (ESV)*

Notice what Christ does. He settles a dispute about marriage not by consulting the culture or counting opinions, but by returning to how God made it at the start. That is the plumb line. It hangs from creation, and no assembly of any century has been given the authority to cut the cord.

Their Strongest Case

Now we owe the other side its fairest hearing, in its own voice, at full strength. To do less would be to fight a shadow.

They did not set out to defy God, and most did not think they were. They looked at people they loved — sons and daughters, friends, faithful members who had sat in their pews for decades — and they saw sincere devotion, real commitment, lives of evident kindness. They asked how a God of love could be honored by shutting such people out. They read the Scriptures that speak of

welcome, of the last being first, of a gospel that breaks down dividing walls. They concluded that the older reading was a wall God never built, and that the loving thing — the Christlike thing — was to take it down. Many believed, and still believe, that the Spirit was leading them to a wider grace. They believed it was love.

That case deserves to be met with respect, not caricature. The impulse behind it — do not turn away the one who comes — is not itself wicked. It is a Christian impulse aimed in the wrong direction. And that is precisely why it has persuaded so many sincere people. A lie that had nothing true in it would deceive no one.

The One Thing the Argument Removed

Here is where the line falls, and it does not fall where most people expect.

The error was never welcome. A faithful church has always welcomed sinners — it is made of nothing else. The doors of the true church stand open to the adulterer, the thief, the proud, the greedy, the drunkard, and every kind of sexual sinner, without exception, because every one of us walked in through those same doors. If welcoming sinners were the offense, the gospel itself would be the offense.

What the affirming argument removed was not the welcome. It was the turning. The true gospel keeps both words — "come" and "repent" — and the whole New Testament joins them and never separates them. The first word of Jesus' public ministry was not "be affirmed." It was "repent" (Matthew 4:17). The first invitation of the first sermon of the church was "repent and be baptized" (Acts 2:38). Strike the turning, and what remains is not a kinder gospel. It is a false one — the counterfeit wearing the manners of the real.

Paul names this exact thing, and then says the one word that answers the whole debate:

> *"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?… And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." — 1 Corinthians 6:9–11 (ESV)*

Read the tense. *Such were some of you.* Were. Past. The Corinthian church was full of people who had lived in every sin Paul had just named, sexual sin among them — and they were welcomed, fully, into the body of Christ. But they were *washed*. Washed out of it, not affirmed in it. The grace that received them did not leave them where it found them; it cleansed them. That is the gospel: not a locked door, and not an unwashed welcome, but an open door into a washing.

This is the measure laid against the wall. A faithful church says to every sinner alive: come, be washed, and go and sin no more. What the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has now written into its constitution says: come, and be affirmed as you are, for there is nothing here to be washed from. It has kept the water and denied what the water is for. Same font. Opposite gospel.

Repentance Is the Hinge

We must say this plainly, because it is the hinge on which everything in this series turns. Repentance is not a harsh add-on to the good news. It is the good news — the turn from death toward life, the one motion by which any of us, and any church, comes home.

Strike it, and there is no road back, for anyone. A church that will not name sin cannot offer cleansing from it, because you cannot be washed of what you have been told is clean. This is why the affirming turn is not a small adjustment of policy but a wound at the center: it removes the very door through which the leaning wall could return to true. The plumb line has not moved. But the way back to it is repentance, and repentance is the word this movement has quietly struck from its vocabulary — struck from its rulings, and from the standard it now asks its officers to affirm.

So we sound it, because someone must: not as accusation, but as the only key that fits the lock. The call to repent is not the opposite of love. It is the shape love takes when it refuses to leave the beloved in the fire.

The Lampstand, and the Word That Does Not Return Empty

We have measured, and the verdict is not ours; it is Scripture's. Held to the Word that made marriage, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is found leaning, and far. We say it in grief, not triumph, and we say it to a church we would rather see restored than record.

And restoration is possible, because the same Christ who warns still walks among the lampstands and holds them in His hand. He said to a fallen church not "you are finished," but "repent, and do the works you did at first" (Revelation 2:5). The warning is the mercy. The door is the turn. And the God who set the plumb line has never yet spoken a word that came back to Him empty.

The Word says what marriage is. The Word says what sin is. And the Word says what the way home is — the same for a wayward soul and a wayward church: turn, and be washed.

No verdict of any assembly can overturn the verdict of Scripture, and no vote of men can wash a single soul. But the God who set the plumb line still stands over His house — and the wall He measures crooked, He is able, if it will turn, to make straight.

Next in the series — Part Four: Weighed and Found Wanting. The whole slide, from the standard once held to the standard reversed, and what the numbers testify.

For Further Study

- **The Church and the Christian Church** — the introduction to the series, where the plumb line is first hung.
- **Part One: The Receipts** — the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s 2026 General Assembly, in its own record.
- **Part Two: The Redline in the Book of Order** — the words struck from the church's own constitution.

— The Editorial Board, Virginia Christian Alliance

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

John Adams and Thomas Jefferson: A Friendship for America's 250th Birthday

JULY 3, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Two founders, once rivals, reconciled — and a birthday worth remembering

As America approaches her 250th birthday, historian Jane Hampton Cook gives us a gift: John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, in their own words, reflecting on the Declaration they brought into the world together.

The story is remarkable. These two men helped birth a nation, then became bitter rivals for the presidency. Yet in their final years they reconciled, exchanging hundreds of letters. And in God's providence, both died on the very same day — July 4, 1826 — fifty years to the day after the Declaration was adopted.

Adams once predicted that Independence Day would be celebrated "by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty," with pomp and parade from one end of the continent to the other. He was right. Two centuries later, we still remember.

That is the calling of every generation. As the psalmist wrote, *"One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts"* (Psalm 145:4). We are not merely to enjoy our liberty — we are to remember its roots and pass the story on.

Watch the video below, and consider Jane Hampton Cook's illustrated keepsake, ***A Great and Grateful Nation***, as a way to rediscover the faith and gratitude that shaped our founding.

Declaring Independence Together - Adams and Jefferson
https://youtube.com/watch?v=puNvLwIlJQk

The Redline in the Book of Order: The Words They Struck to Overrule the Word

JULY 3, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The Words They Struck to Overrule the Word

For a generation they called it conscience, forbearance, a wider table. Then they opened the Book of Order and took out the words. A redline does not interpret; it only shows what was removed.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part Two: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three

- A redline shows only what was removed. We lay the **Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s own Book of Order** beside the plumb line and mark, in red, exactly what was struck.
- Twice — in 2011 and again in 2014–15 — the church cut words from its own constitution: first the **ordination standard**, then the definition of marriage itself. Both cuts were legal, ratified, and public.

- That the process was clean is not the defense. It is the indictment. A church can keep every rule of its own order and still break the one canon above them all — the Word of God.

A redline is the plainest instrument in editing. Lay the old text beside the new, and mark in red every word that was removed. It requires no theory and grants no benefit of the doubt. It does not ask what a church meant. It shows what a church did.

We have run that instrument over the PCUSA Book of Order — the church's own constitution — and what it reveals is a marriage change no one can call an accident. Two cuts matter. Both are dated. Both are public. Neither is in dispute.

The First Cut (2011)

For years the church's standard for ordination required of its officers ***"fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness."*** Those were the words. An officer was to be faithful in marriage as God defined marriage, or continent outside it. The standard named no person; it named a pattern — and the pattern was the one Scripture gives.

In 2011, a majority of the church's presbyteries ratified an amendment that struck those words. In their place the standard now reads that ordination reflects "*the church's desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life,*" and directs the ordaining body to "*examine each candidate's calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of office.*"

Read the new words beside the old, and the diagnosis is plain. The new words are not false; a church should desire joyful submission to Christ. But the one clause that had said what that submission concretely required — fidelity in marriage as God defined it, or chastity in singleness — is the clause that was removed. The standard was not raised to something higher. A definite requirement was traded for a general aspiration, and the specific thing Scripture asked was quietly deleted. The wall was not repainted. A load-bearing stone was pulled out.

The Second Cut: Marriage in the Book of Order (2014–2015)

The second cut came three years later, and it went to the definition itself.

In 2014 the 221st General Assembly amended the Directory for Worship. A majority of presbyteries ratified it, and it took effect in June 2015. The marriage passage of the Book of Order now reads that marriage is "***a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman.***"

Read that clause once more, slowly, because it is the redline in a single sentence. The words "*a man and a woman*" are still there — but demoted, reduced to the adverb "*traditionally,*" a note

about the past rather than a definition of the thing. The old wall is still faintly visible on the blueprint. It has simply been marked optional. What the church now calls marriage it has opened to any two persons; what God calls marriage it has relabeled a tradition. From here forward we will name the thing plainly: a same-sex union, whatever the Book of Order has chosen to call it.

Their Best Case

Here the church's defenders make their strongest argument, and honesty requires that we state it at full strength.

They did nothing in secret, they will say, and nothing outside the rules. Every change went through the church's own constitution — General Assembly approval, then ratification by a majority of the presbyteries, the same process by which any Presbyterian doctrine stands or falls. No one was coerced. Conscience was protected on both sides; ministers who dissent are not compelled to officiate. This was not a coup. It was the church deliberating and deciding, exactly as Presbyterians are meant to decide. To call it apostasy, they will say, is to call the church's own order apostate.

That case deserves to be heard, and on its own terms it is true. The process was clean. The votes were real. The presbyteries were counted.

The Answer: A Lesser Book Against the Greater

And that is the indictment, not the defense.

A church does not sin only by breaking its rules. It can sin most gravely by keeping them — by using a lawful process to do an unlawful thing, and then holding up the process as proof of innocence. The question was never whether the Presbyterian Church followed the Book of Order. It plainly did. The question is what the Book of Order was measured against when it was changed.

For there is a book above the Book of Order. The word "canon" means a rule, a measuring reed, a standard — and the true canon, the one every Presbyterian officer vows to receive, is the Scripture given by God. A denomination's constitution is a lesser book, answerable to the greater. And the greater book had already spoken on the matter the lesser book amended:

> *"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female… and the two shall become one flesh? What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." — Matthew 19:4–6 (ESV)*

Christ did not offer marriage as one arrangement among several. He grounded it in creation and closed the matter: what God joined, no man is to separate — and no man is to redefine. What the Presbyterian Church did in 2011 and 2015 was edit its lesser book to overrule the greater one: to take a requirement Scripture had set, and vote it down by its own hand, decently and in order. The order was kept. The canon was broken.

We have seen this exact act before, one house down the street. **The Episcopal Church** had no Book of Order; it had canons. The word was different; the deed was identical — a marriage rite redefined, a standard struck, the lesser book amended to silence the greater. The adversary did not need a new lie for the Presbyterians. He carried the same one next door.

The Pen Did Not Go Back in the Drawer

And the hand that made these cuts did not stop.

In 2018 the church created a task force to study whether it needed a permanent committee for the cause. In 2022 it approved one. In November 2023 that committee first met. It is a standing body now, seated and funded, whose assigned work includes advising the General Assembly on measures touching its concern.

It did not stop at advising. This year, the measure that lets a congregation advertise its openness to calling a pastor of the very kind the 2011 standard once excluded did not arise from the floor. It came from the committee. The Assembly's own record names the Advocacy Committee for LGBTQIA+ Equity as the sponsor of that item, and the recommendation is written in the committee's own voice: the committee, it reads, "*recommends*" that the Assembly direct the change. The committee drafted it. The Assembly approved it, 339 to 138.

That is what sets this redline apart from a single bad vote. The church did not merely strike the words once. It built a standing office, seated it, funded it, and gave it the pen — and the pen is still moving.

The Words Were Struck. The Word Was Not.

We take no pleasure in laying this out. These are people's churches; the buildings still fill; and there are believers inside them who never voted for any of this and do not know how far the wall has leaned. There is no gladness in a redline. Only grief, and the duty to show it plainly.

But the plumb line is not cruel, and it is not finished. What a church has amended, a church can repent of. The same presbyteries that ratified these cuts could, by the same order, restore what they struck — and stranger works of grace have been done in the history of the church than the turning of a General Assembly. That is not our work to accomplish, and not our judgment to pronounce. Ours is only to lay the old words beside the new, and to say what the red ink shows.

The words were struck. The Word was not.

No amendment has ever amended the truth, and no vote of any assembly has ever repealed the Word of God. But the God who set the plumb line still stands over His house — and the wall His people marked crooked, He is able to make straight.

Next in the series — Part Three: The Verdict of Scripture. They believed it was love. We will let that case make its strongest argument, in its own words — and then hold it to the Word that made marriage in the first place.

For Further Study

- **The Church and the Christian Church** — the introduction to the series, where the plumb line is first hung.
- **Part One: The Receipts** — the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s 2026 General Assembly, in its own record.
- **The Episcopal Church: The Receipts** — where this series began, one house down the street.

— The Editorial Board, Virginia Christian Alliance

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

PCUSA General Assembly LGBTQ Vote at the Plumb Line

JULY 2, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

They did not do it in the dark. They recorded every vote.

On Monday, the twenty-ninth of June, 2026, in the fifth plenary session of its 227th General Assembly, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) did three things in the space of an afternoon. This was the PCUSA General Assembly's LGBTQ vote. Each was debated. Each was voted. Each is now a matter of public record, in the denomination's own words.

It approved, by a vote of 339 to 138, a new feature for the official system that matches pastors to congregations — a way for a church to signal, in the call process, its "openness and readiness to call an LGBTQIA+ pastor."

It approved, by a vote of 419 to 54, a sweeping new study: a mandate to develop "theological, biblical and ethical frameworks addressing human sexuality, flourishing relationships, family and gender."

And when a motion was offered to require that this study at least include "diverse theological views from across" the church — that is, to guarantee the historic Christian reading of Scripture a seat at the table — the Assembly refused it. The motion to keep the biblical view represented in the church's own study of the Bible failed, 374 to 90.

We begin with the receipts because this is not a rumor, and it is not an alarm raised over what a church might someday do. It is what this church did this week, by its own hand, and wrote down.

The Plumb Line

There is a standard by which such acts are weighed. It is not ours. We did not set it, and we cannot move it.

> *"Behold, the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. And the Lord said to me, 'Amos, what do you see?' And I said, 'A plumb line.' Then the Lord said, 'Behold, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel.'" — Amos 7:7–8 (ESV)*

A plumb line is a weight on a string. It does not argue. It does not adjust itself to the wall. It hangs straight because the earth pulls it straight, and it shows, without malice and without exception, exactly how far a wall has leaned from true. The wall may have been built with great care. The stones may be beautiful. The builders may be sincere. The plumb line does not measure sincerity. It measures the lean.

This is the whole task of this series, and it is a narrow one. We are not here to measure hearts; we cannot see them, and their judgment belongs to God alone. We are here to hold documented acts beside the standard God set in His Word, and to say, plainly, what the line shows. Nothing more. But nothing less.

The Same Lie, One House Down

Readers of this series will recognize what they are looking at, because they have seen it before.

We spent four installments measuring **the Episcopal Church** against **this same line** — its canons rewritten, **its marriage rite redefined**, its own rolls testifying to the cost. When we finished, we said the story was not over, because the adversary of our souls is patient and thorough. He does not invent a new lie for each house on the street. He knocks on the next door with the one that already worked.

Here is the same lie, one house down. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) does not have canons; it has a **Book of Order**. The word is different; the act is identical: a church editing its own rulebook

to overrule the Book. For there is only one canon that finally matters. The word “canon” means a rule, a measuring reed, a standard — and that canon is the Scripture given by God. Every denomination in this series held that canon in its hands. Every one of them, reaching for the approval of the age, has quietly amended its lesser book to silence the greater one.

And when a church claims that the Spirit of God is now blessing what the Father created and the Son confirmed — male and female, one man and one woman, one flesh — it has not received some new word from the Spirit. The Spirit of God does not contradict the Word of God He Himself inspired. There is a spiritual reality beneath these votes, older and darker than any committee, and we will have more to say about it in an editorial to come. For now it is enough to mark it: this pattern is spiritual before it is institutional.

What the Record Shows About the PCUSA Vote

The feature approved 339 to 138 did not rise spontaneously from the floor, and it did not reach commissioners unaccompanied. The church maintains a permanent body, created by General Assembly mandate, whose standing work is to advise the Assembly on measures of exactly this kind — and this year’s own assembly program placed that committee before commissioners to guide them through the item. We will examine that committee, and the machinery around it, in the installment to come.

Here we note only what it means for the receipts. This was not a church caught off guard by the culture. This was a church that had built, staffed, and funded the means to move itself in one direction — and did.

That is what makes the vote of 374 to 90 the heaviest of the three. Offered the chance merely to seat the historic Christian reading of Scripture within its own study of Scripture, the Assembly declined by better than four to one. A church may drift. A church may be deceived. But a church that is handed the plumb line and votes, on the record, not to look at it — that church has told us something about itself, in its own voice, that we did not have to supply.

The Lampstand Is Not Yet Removed

We do not write this to gloat. There is no gloating in it. These are congregations with faithful men and women still in their pews, and there is no joy in watching a lampstand gutter.

But it is a lampstand we are watching — and that is the hope, because the lampstand is not yet removed. To the church at Ephesus, a church that had left its first love, the risen Christ, who walks among the lampstands and holds them in His hand, said this:

> *“Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.” — Revelation 2:5 (ESV)*

Read that again and notice the mercy in it. The warning is not the sentence; the warning is the door held open. Christ tells the falling church the truth precisely because there is still time to turn. The lampstand is removed by His hand alone, and only when the warning has been refused to the end. Ours is not that hand. We do not extinguish anyone’s lamp, and we do not pronounce it extinguished. We are watchmen, and the watchman’s task, when the appointed watchmen have gone silent, is simply to see the sword coming and to blow the trumpet. The blowing is itself an act of mercy.

So we sound it, without pleasure and without despair. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has, this week, leaned further from the line. The line has not moved. And the God who set it is sovereign still over every General Assembly and every human vote — able, even now, to grant repentance to a church, or to raise a more faithful one from the ground where an old one fell. We have already seen Him begin to do the latter. We will come to that, too.

The wall leans. The plumb line hangs straight.

No assembly has ever voted a church back to life, and no tally of hands has ever raised the dead. But the God who set the plumb line still stands over His house — and the wall He measures crooked, He is able to make straight.

Next in the series — Part Two: The Redline in the Book of Order. The words struck from the church’s own constitution, and the day it edited its book to overrule the Book.

— The Editorial Board, Virginia Christian Alliance

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

The Episcopal Church: Weighed, and Found Wanting

JUNE 27, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

A church can strike a word from its book. It cannot strike the God who spoke it. Here is the cost of the leaving — and the door that is still, even now, standing open.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part Four • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three

- By its own records, the Episcopal Church has lost more than half its members since 1966 — and what remains is graying toward extinction. A body that abandons the living Word does not stay a living body.
- This is where the series turns. For four articles the plumb line only hung, silent, measuring. Now it speaks. The canon — the rule — becomes the cannon. Weighed in the balances, and found wanting.
- The warning is for every watching church, not one. Can you read your own committee's minutes? Is your shepherd guarding the wall, or only filling the bowl? And after all of it — the door of repentance still stands open.

We have measured a church across three articles. We read **its receipts**. We watched it **edit the man and the woman out of its marriage canon** in its own hand. We **held its case against the Word** and found that the case could only stand if the Word were first moved off the bench. Now we come to the last and heaviest question. What does a church lose when it loses the line?

The answer is written, like everything else in this series, in the church's own records. And it is a number.

The Cost Is Not a Building

In recent weeks the Episcopal Church announced it will market its twelve-story Manhattan headquarters for sale — the building known as "815," completed in 1963 as a monument to a denomination then at the center of American power. Much of it now sits unused. It is a vivid image, and it would be easy to make it the point. It is not the point. The church is not the real estate. A denomination could sell every building it owns and still be the body of Christ, if the breath of the Word were in it.

The real cost is not measured in square feet. It is measured in souls. And here are the church's own numbers. In 1966, the Episcopal Church recorded its peak: **3,647,297 baptized members.** By 2023, its own parochial report counted **1,547,779.** That is a loss of more than two million people — well over half the church — gone from the rolls in a single lifetime. And the remnant is old: by recent analysis, a clear majority of those who remain are over sixty. This is not a body in decline. It is a body in hospice.

We will be careful here, because honesty is the whole authority of this series. We do not claim that any single vote emptied those pews. Membership decline has many fathers — falling birth rates, a secularizing culture, the long retreat of mainline Protestantism as a whole. A church can shrink for reasons that have nothing to do with a marriage canon. We will not pretend the graph proves what it does not prove.

But here is what the numbers do show, and it needs no causal arrow to land. In the very decades when the Episcopal Church poured its energy into editing the Word — striking "a man and a woman" from its canon, rewriting its rites, advocating for what Scripture forbids — it was not being filled. It was being emptied. A church that traded the gospel for the approval of the age did not win the age. It lost itself. Even observers outside our circles have read it as a parable; one called the Episcopal Church *"what's left when the gospel is sidelined and the Holy Scriptures are undermined."* The decline and the drift are not proven to be cause and effect. They are the same story, told twice — once in resolutions, once in the rolls.

A Body That Unbuilds Itself

Scripture gives us the picture of what a church is meant to be. It is a body, joined and held together, that *"grows so that it builds itself up in love"* (Ephesians 4:16, ESV). That is the design: a living thing, knit by the Word, growing. What we have watched in this series is a body doing the opposite to itself — not building up but cutting away, removing the very joints that gave it life. The plumb line builds. This un-builds. And an un-building body does what every dying thing does. It gets smaller.

And this is where the grief is. Not in a building, and not even, finally, in a statistic. The grief is in the people behind the number. Behind "more than two million" are souls who sat in beautiful pews, sang the old hymns, kept the calendar, and were never once told that the foundation had been quietly removed from under them. They trusted a church that had stopped telling them the truth. *"You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead"* (Revelation 3:1, ESV). That word was written to a church named Sardis. It could be read aloud in a hundred sanctuaries today, and the people in the pews would not know it was about them. That is the cost. We do not write it with relish. We write it with tears.

The Canon Becomes the Cannon

And now this series must do the thing it has waited four articles to do.

From the beginning, the plumb line has only hung. It hung in the introduction. It hung through the receipts, and the redline, and the verdict. After every charge, the same words returned — *and still the plumb line hangs straight.* The line never argued. It never raised its voice. It only measured, silent and unmoved, while the church voted and edited and explained. That silence was deliberate. It was the long inhale before the word.

Because the line has a second name. The same ancient root that gives us *canon* — the measuring reed, the straight rule — gives us one more word built on the very same image: the *cannon*, the straight line that does not measure but fires. We laid the canon down at the start as the rule. We have measured every wall against it. And now, at the end, the rule that has hung silent for four articles is turned on the position and fired.

This is the oldest verdict in Scripture, and it was written on a wall in a single night. A king had weighed himself against nothing and found himself splendid. Then a hand appeared and wrote four words, and the prophet read them: *"Mene, Mene, Tekel, and Parsin."* And Daniel gave the meaning: *"Tekel, you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting"* (Daniel 5:27, ESV). That night the kingdom fell. Not because God was cruel, but because a thing measured against the true standard, and found short, cannot stand on its shortness forever.

That is the cannon, and that is its round. We do not fire it. We only read what the hand already wrote. Measured against the Word it once preached, the Episcopal Church has been weighed, and found wanting — not in our judgment, which is worth nothing, but in the verdict of the Scripture it set aside. The artillery here is not our anger. It is the Word itself, aimed not to destroy the people behind the wall but to break the lie that holds them, and to clear the ground so they can come home.

The Warning to Every Watching Church

Here some readers have grown comfortable again. *This is the Episcopal Church. My church is sound.* Stay a moment longer, because the most important sentence in this article is the next one. The only reason we could prove any of this is that the Episcopal Church wrote it all down.

Every step of its descent is public. The committee reports, the floor debates, the redlines, the recorded votes — all archived, all dated, all one click away. We did not need a whistleblower. We needed a library card. That transparency is the single thing that let us build the case. And it raises the question every reader should now ask of his own church: **can you read your church's minutes?** When your denomination meets in committee, are the records open, the votes recorded, the proposals published where any member can find them? Or are the real decisions made in rooms you cannot enter, in language you are told not to worry about? A faithful church has nothing to hide and keeps its books open. When the minutes vanish — or were never kept, or you are gently told they are not your concern — that absence is itself the warning. You could only catch the Episcopal drift because it left receipts. Make certain your church leaves them too, and that you are reading them.

But transparency alone will not save a church, because the danger is not only the wolf in the committee. It is also the shepherd who means well. A pastor can love the Word, preach it warmly every Sunday, and never once name the thing battering against it from the culture outside — and call that faithfulness. It is not. It is a colander. A colander is not broken; every hole was bored on purpose, and it still looks like a sound vessel. But it cannot hold water. A silent pulpit is a hole. An unwatched committee is a hole. A shepherd who will feed the sheep but will not watch for the wolf is a hole. None of them looks like a breach. Together they empty the church.

Scripture does not let the silent shepherd call himself innocent. *"If the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet… and the sword comes and takes any one of them… his blood I will require at the watchman's hand"* (Ezekiel 33:6, ESV). Paul did not merely feed the flock; he warned it, *"night and day with tears,"* that *"fierce wolves will come in among you"* (Acts 20:29–31, ESV). The shepherd's task is not only the feast. It is the wall. And a man who will do the first and not the second has left the gate open while calling himself faithful. **We have written elsewhere about the responsibility of the pulpit**, and the warning belongs here too: the Episcopal Church

did not fall only because wolves entered. It fell because the watchmen, for the most part, did not blow the trumpet.

And lest anyone think this danger died in 2015, it is at other doors right now. As we write, another mainline body debates from its own floor whether its clergy must even be limited to *one* spouse — the same trajectory, the next wall, moving by the same quiet process while most of its members never read the motion. The serpent has not retired. He has simply moved down the street.

The Door Is Still Open

We have fired the cannon, and we will not end on the shot. A warning that ends in judgment is only half a warning, and the lesser half. The whole reason a watchman blows the trumpet is so the city can be saved.

So hear the hope, because it is the truest thing in this article. The drift was never a fate. We know this, because not everyone drifted. When the Episcopal Church crossed these lines, thousands did not follow. They walked out — surrendering their buildings, their pensions, their inheritance — and formed the Anglican Church in North America rather than bend the line. They began in 2009. They have grown. A church that left to keep the Word is being built up, while the church that kept the buildings and lost the Word is being emptied. Two bodies, one choice, opposite ends. That is the proof that the leaving was never inevitable — which means the returning never is either.

And the bookend is exact. In Part Two we watched the Episcopal Church take its red pen to its own marriage canon and strike out the words *"a man and a woman."* Open the marriage canon of the church that left — Canon 7 of the Anglican Church in North America — and you will find those very words written back in, in their own hand: marriage is *"a lifelong covenant between one man and one woman."* It requires couples to sign nearly the same sentence the Episcopal Church deleted — *"we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer."* One church struck the words out. The other wrote them back in. The same canonical act, in opposite directions, both recorded, both public. The wall can be torn down. It can also be rebuilt true.

And the way back has only ever had one name. Not a better vote. Not a reform committee. Not a softer culture, or a cleverer strategy, or a younger staff. *Repentance.* The turning of a church, or a soul, back to the line it abandoned. God's promise to a drifting people has not expired: *"If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land"* (2 Chronicles 7:14, ESV). That door has never once been shut by God to anyone willing to walk through it. The wall measured crooked can be torn down and rebuilt true. The prodigal who comes to himself in the pigpen is still, every time, met on the road by a running Father.

So we lay down the plumb line where we picked it up — straight, and not ours. No council ever voted a church back to life, and no argument on a page has ever raised the dead. But the God who set the plumb line still stands over His house, and the wall He measures crooked, He can also make straight. The Episcopal Church has been weighed, and found wanting. So would any of us be, measured against that line, but for grace. The hand that wrote the verdict is the same hand that was nailed to a cross to answer it. The door is open. It is open still. May every church with eyes to read its own receipts walk back through it while the light lasts.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV). Membership figures are drawn from the Episcopal Church's own records: peak baptized membership of 3,647,297 (1966), reported in the Church's Office of Research; and 1,547,779 total members (2023), from the Church's 2023 Parochial Report. The phrase quoted in "The Cost Is Not a Building" is from Albert Mohler, World Opinions, June 2026.

For Further Study

- **The Receipts Condemn the Episcopal Church** — Part One: the dated record, wall by wall.
- **How the Skin Came Off: The Redline That Unmasked the Wolf** — Part Two: the 2015 marriage canon, struck in the church's own hand.
- **The Verdict of Scripture** — Part Three: the affirming case, given its strongest hearing and held to the line.
- **The Pulpit Is Responsible** — the silent watchman, and the cost of a pulpit that will not blow the trumpet.

The Verdict of Scripture: The Episcopal Case Before the Word of God

JUNE 26, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

They believed it was love. We will let that case make its strongest argument, in its own words — and then hold it to the line that does not move.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part Three • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three

- The affirming case deserves a fair hearing. We give it one here, at full strength, in its own words.
- But every form of it rests on a single move: Scripture is lowered from the judge's bench to a seat among the witnesses. Once the Word is one voice among many, any verdict is possible.
- Held against the Word it claims to honor, the case does not survive. The verdict is not ours. It was written before the first vote.

In Part One we read **the receipts**. In Part Two we watched **the marriage canon edited** in the church's own hand. Those articles asked *what* the Episcopal Church did, and *how*. This one asks the older question. It outranks every resolution ever passed. What does God say — and does their case survive His Word?

Before you decide this is the Episcopal Church's problem and not yours, hold one thing in view. No church in history has ever fallen because its enemies were strong. They fell because the watchmen assumed the wall would hold. Keep that in mind as you read. The case below was made in one denomination. The pressure behind it is leaning on yours.

Here we slow down and become fair in a way that costs us something. Before we answer the affirming case, we will make it. We will make it at its strongest, in the form its most thoughtful defenders would own. Not the caricature. The real thing. A verdict reached without hearing the defense is not a verdict. It is a prejudice. And we are confident enough in the Word to let the other side speak first.

The Case, at Its Strongest

Heard at its most sincere, the affirming case is not a shrug at Scripture. It is an argument *from* compassion. It runs something like this.

God is love, and the church is meant to be the wide table where the excluded are finally welcomed — as Jesus welcomed the tax collector, the Samaritan, the woman at the well. For centuries the church wounded gay and lesbian people, drove them from the pews, and called it holiness. The Episcopal Church, in its own words, sought instead to *"respect the dignity of every human being"* — and surely that instinct is the very heartbeat of the gospel.

An Argument from Compassion

As for the handful of texts usually cited against same-sex relationships, the affirming reader says: look closer. They address exploitation, idolatry, temple prostitution, the abuse of the powerless — not the faithful, lifelong, covenant love of two people who simply wish to give themselves to one another before God. Jesus Himself, in four Gospels, never once mentioned the subject. And did not the Lord promise that the Spirit would *"guide you into all the truth"* (John 16:13) — a Spirit still speaking, still leading the church forward, as He led it past slavery, past the subjugation of women, past so many old certainties we now blush to recall? This, the affirming case concludes, is not abandoning the faith. It is the same Spirit-led growth the church has always undergone, applied at last to people too long left outside.

That is the case at its best. It is not stupid. It is not, in every heart that holds it, cynical. Many who hold it believe they are loving their neighbor. We will not pretend otherwise, and we will not

answer a weaker version than the one they would own. But the case cannot survive one thing. It cannot survive the line. So we lay it there now.

The Question Beneath Every Question

Before a single verse about marriage is weighed, one prior question must be settled. Every argument above depends on the answer. *What kind of book is the Bible?*

If Scripture is merely a wise human record — the best religious thinking of its age, honored where it serves and outgrown where it does not — then the affirming case is not only possible. It is obvious. But that is not what Scripture claims for itself. *"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness"* (2 Timothy 3:16, ESV). Christ sealed it in prayer to the Father: *"Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth"* (John 17:17, ESV). Not *contains* truth. *Is* truth.

A Mirror, Not a Judge

Here the affirming method shows itself. It does not deny Scripture. It selects from it. It keeps the verses that warm the heart and explains away the verses that bind the conscience. Theologians have a name for this: a canon within the canon — a smaller, friendlier Bible drawn out of the real one. No court allows it. No judge lets a witness read a contract that way, honoring the clauses he likes and dismissing the rest as the author's bias. A Bible edited down to what already agrees with us is no longer an authority over us. It is a mirror. And a mirror has never once corrected the face in it.

This is the hinge. Keep Scripture on the bench, and the case collapses. Move it down among the witnesses, and there is no verdict it cannot reach. The affirming case does not win the argument from the text. It wins only by first lowering the text.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

Settled Before Moses, Before Culture

Take the most common claim — that the prohibitions are dusty Levitical rules, bound to a vanished culture. The answer is short. God's design for man and woman was not handed down at Sinai. It was laid in the garden — before the law, before Israel, before there was a culture to be bound to.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created him" (Genesis 1:27, ESV). Then the pattern for their joining: *"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh"* (Genesis 2:24,

ESV). This is not one rule in a code we have outgrown. It is the architecture of humanity, set on the same page that calls us image-bearers. It cannot be dated to a culture. It predates every culture. It is creation, not legislation.

What Jesus Actually Said

Then comes the argument the affirming case leans on hardest. Jesus never spoke of it. The four Gospels, it is said, record no word from His mouth on the subject. So how central could it be?

This sounds powerful until you open a Greek New Testament. The word Jesus used, again and again, was *porneia*. It was not a narrow term. Standard Greek lexicons give it a broad range — sexual immorality in general, not heterosexual promiscuity alone. And in the Jewish world where He taught, that range was understood in light of the sexual ethic of the Law, the prohibitions of Leviticus His hearers knew by heart. When Jesus condemned *porneia*, no first-century listener heard a vague generality. Within the moral framework He affirmed, they heard the whole catalog the Law named — and they heard it in one familiar word. Silence on a modern English term is not silence on the thing itself.

But Jesus did not stop at naming the sin. Asked directly about marriage, He went back to the garden. *"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?"* (Matthew 19:4–5, ESV). He did not leave the definition open for a wiser age to revise. He quoted Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24 in one breath and called it the Creator's design — *from the beginning.* The argument from silence fails twice. Jesus named the sin. And He affirmed the design. A church cannot claim His silence while standing on the very passage where He spoke.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

Love, and the Spirit, and the Oldest Question

What, then, of love — the tenderest of the affirming appeals? The answer is that Scripture refuses to set love against truth. In Scripture they are never two things. *"Love… does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth"* (1 Corinthians 13:6, ESV). And from the Lord Himself: *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments"* (John 14:15, ESV). A love that requires the Word to be overruled is not the love the Bible commends. It is sentiment wearing love's name.

And the Spirit who "guides into all truth"? He is the Spirit who breathed the Word out in the first place. He does not lead the church to reverse what He authored. A spirit that contradicts Scripture is, by Scripture's own test, not the Spirit of truth. As for the claim that the church has "changed before" — on the historic reading, abolition and the dignity of women were not the overturning of

Scripture. They were its fulfilling: the church catching up to what the Word had said all along. This change runs the other way. Not toward the text. Away from it.

Underneath every version of the case, if you listen, is a single ancient whisper. It is the oldest reinterpretation in the world. *"Did God actually say…?"* (Genesis 3:1, ESV). It did not begin in 2015, or 1976. It began in a garden, with a question built not to deny God outright but to make His Word negotiable. Every drift since has been a variation on that first one. And the answer has never changed either. *"It is written"* (Matthew 4:4).

The Verdict

So set the case against the line. It does not survive. Not because its defenders are wicked, but because the case stands only if the Word is first moved off the bench. Held against creation, against the words of Christ, against the whole counsel of Scripture, the wall is bent. And the verdict is not ours to render. We did not write it. We are not the judge. We are the court reporter, reading back a sentence settled before the first vote was called.

This is the heart of the series. A church may pass any resolution it pleases. It cannot repeal the Word of God. It can strike "a man and a woman" from its canon. It cannot strike it from the mouth of Christ. It can vote the line down in committee. The line does not move, because the One who hung it has not moved.

We have not made this case in anger. We do not make it now in triumph. There is no joy in measuring a church and finding it bent. Many inside the Episcopal Church meant to love their neighbor, and that intention is not nothing. But a good intention laid against a true line is still measured by the line. The kindest thing we can do is refuse to lie about where it falls.

The Reader Who Feels Safe

By now some readers have relaxed. *That is the Episcopal Church. Not mine.* Hold there a moment, because that comfort is the most dangerous thing in this article.

The serpent is not a denominational creature. He was *"more crafty than any other beast of the field"* (Genesis 3:1, ESV) — older than every church on earth, and craftier than all of them. He has never once attacked a wall head-on. He oozes through the unguarded seam. He works the back room, the study committee, the gentle footnote, the kind word that quietly lowers the Word a single inch. He does not announce that he is changing your church's mind. He simply asks, in a voice that sounds like compassion, *"Did God really say?"*

The same pressure that bent this church is leaning on yours tonight — the same culture, the same question, the same patient hand on the same seam. The Episcopal Church is not the exception

that proves your church is safe. It is the autopsy that shows your church what kills. The only church the devil cannot enter is the one awake at the wall.

The Way Back Has a Name

And here is the hope, because there is always one. The same Word that renders the verdict is the Word that can restore. The definition the church removed from its page still stands, unstruck, where Christ left it. The way back is not lost. It is only unwalked.

And the way back has a name. The Word gives it plainly: **repentance**. Not a better vote. Not a reform committee. Not a softer culture. Repentance — the turning of a church, or a soul, back to the line it abandoned. There is no other road back to plumb. A wall does not straighten itself by waiting, and a church does not return by drifting more gently. It returns the way every prodigal has ever returned: by getting up, and coming home. That door has never once been shut by God to anyone willing to walk through it.

No council has ever voted a church back to life, and no argument on a page has ever raised the dead. But the God who set the plumb line still stands over His house — and the wall He measures crooked, He can also make straight. In the final article, we count the cost of the leaving. And we find, even there, that the door is still open.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV). The full exegesis behind this article — the original languages, the porneia *argument, and the verse-by-verse response to the affirming case — is set out in the Virginia Christian Alliance reference document* Thus Saith the Lord: A Biblical Defense of God's Design for Human Sexuality*, free for any ministry to use.*

For Further Study

- **Thus Saith the Lord: A Biblical Defense of God's Design for Human Sexuality** — the full pastor-grade exegesis this article draws upon.
- **The Receipts Condemn the Episcopal Church** — Part One: the dated record, wall by wall.
- **How the Skin Came Off: The Redline That Unmasked the Wolf** — Part Two: the 2015 marriage canon, struck in the church's own hand.
- **The Church and the Christian Church** — the series introduction and the plumb line.

How the Skin Came Off: The Redline That Unmasked the Wolf

JUNE 25, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

For years the Episcopal Church called it pastoral care, listening, a wider welcome — the wool still on. Then it amended its marriage canon, and the redline shows, in the church's own hand, the exact words struck out: "a man and a woman," gone. The covering drops. The wolf was there all along.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part Two • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three

- The Episcopal Church's 2015 marriage-canon change survives as a redline — the old law and the new law on one page, with the deletions still visible.
- The floor record shows bishops bringing amendments, one at a time, that would trade "husband and wife" for "two people" and other gender-neutral terms — proposals weighed and decided long before the final vote.
- This is how a church falls: not at the microphone, but in the editing. Watch the committee, not just the count.

Here is what a church looks like at the moment it changes its mind. Not a sermon. Not a press release. A page.

It is a single document from the 2015 General Convention, and on it two versions of the same law sit on top of each other. There is the old marriage canon of the Episcopal Church — the words that body had held, in one form or another, for four centuries. And running straight through those words is a thin line. Beside them stand the new words that would take their place. You do not have to be told what happened. You can see it. The deletions are right there on the page.

Look at the Page

"A physical and spiritual union of a man and a woman" — a line drawn through it. *"We hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer"* — a line drawn through it. The title itself, *"Of the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony"* — struck, and *"Of the Celebration and Blessing of Marriage"* written in over the wound. You are looking at the exact instant the man and the woman were removed from the definition of marriage.

The 2015 redline, in the church's own hand:

Resolved, **That Canon I.18 is hereby amended to read as follows:**
~~**CANON 18: Of the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony**~~
Canon 18: Of the Celebration and Blessing of Marriage
Sec. 1. Every Member of the Clergy of this Church shall conform to the laws of the State governing the creation of the civil status of marriage, and also ~~**to the laws of this Church governing**~~***these canons concerning*** **the solemnization of** ***marriage*** ~~**Holy Matrimony**~~**.** ***Members of the Clergy may solemnize a marriage using any of the liturgical forms authorized by this Church.***
~~**Sec. 2. Before solemnizing a marriage the Member of the Clergy shall have ascertained:**~~
~~**(a) That both parties have the right to contract a marriage according to the laws of the State.**~~
~~**(b) That both parties understand that Holy Matrimony is a physical and spiritual union of a man and a woman, entered into within the community of faith, by mutual consent of heart, mind, and will, and with intent that it be lifelong.**~~
~~**(c) That both parties freely and knowingly consent to such marriage, without fraud, coercion, mistake as to identity of a partner, or mental reservation.**~~
~~**(d) That at least one of the parties has received Holy Baptism.**~~
~~**(e) That both parties have been instructed as to the nature, meaning, and purpose of Holy Matrimony by the Member of the Clergy, or that they have both received such instruction from persons known by the Member of the Clergy to be competent and responsible.**~~
Sec. 2. The couple shall notify the Member of the Clergy of their intent to marry at least thirty days prior to the solemnization; Provided, that if one of the parties is a member of the Congregation of the Member of the Clergy, or both parties can furnish satisfactory evidence of the need for shortening the time, this requirement can be waived for weighty cause; in which case the Member of the Clergy shall immediately report this action in writing to the Bishop.
~~**Sec. 3. No Member of the Clergy of this Church shall solemnize any marriage unless the following procedures are complied with:**~~
~~**(a) The intention of the parties to contract marriage shall have been signified to the Member of the Clergy at least thirty days before the service of solemnization; Provided, that for weighty cause, this requirement may be dispensed with if one of the parties is a member of the Congregation of the Member of the Clergy, or can furnish satisfactory evidence of responsibility. In case the thirty days' notice is waived, the Member of the Clergy shall report such action in writing to the Bishop immediately.**~~

Click the image above to read the original in full.

The Skin Comes Off

In Part One, we read the receipts at a distance — a list of dated votes, each one a step down. This is one of those votes brought up close, opened, and laid flat so you can see how it was actually done. And what it shows is the thing the whole series has promised: the disguise coming off.

For years, the direction of this change was denied, or softened, or given gentler names. It was pastoral care. It was listening. It was a wider welcome. It was a conversation the church was still having. The wolf, you might say, was still wearing the wool. But a redline does not do euphemism. A redline is the wool pulled back. On this page there is no "conversation" and no "welcome" — there is a verb, and the verb is *struck*. The words that confined marriage to a man and a woman were located, marked, and removed. That is not drift. That is editing. Somebody sat with the text of the law and deliberately took the man and the woman out of it.

Scripture has a name for the moment the disguise fails. *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits"* (Matthew 7:15–16, ESV). The fruit is the page. Here is how you recognize what something is: you watch what it removes.

What Was Struck, and What Replaced It

Read slowly, because the precision is the point. Three things were taken out of the marriage canon, and each one mattered.

- **The man and the woman.** The canon had said marriage is *"a physical and spiritual union of a man and a woman."* Those five words — *a man and a woman* — were struck. Not debated in the text, not footnoted. Removed.
- **Husband and wife.** The couple's own declaration had read, *"we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife."* Struck, and rewritten so that no gendered word remains: the new pledge speaks only of *"our marriage"* and the comfort *"we will give to each other."*
- **The tie to the Prayer Book.** The old declaration anchored marriage to its definition *"as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer."* That anchor was cut, loosing the word from the very text that had defined it.

And one thing was added: a new section permitting a member of the clergy to *"pronounce a blessing upon a civil marriage."* The canon did not merely fall silent about who may marry. It was rebuilt to bless what the State now allowed. The church's own summary of the change says it plainly — the amendment was written *"to permit the union of any couple so long as the marriage shall conform to civil and canon law."* Any couple. In their words, not ours.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

Watch the Floor, Not the Vote

Here is the part most people never see, and it is the part that matters most. The redline is the result. But the document also preserves the *making* of it — the floor of the House of Bishops, motion by motion, where the words were actually chosen. Open the legislative history and you can watch it happen.

One bishop moved to replace the couple's declaration with a vow to *"a lifelong union of two people."* Another moved to strike the words *"Holy Matrimony"* and put plain *"marriage"* in their place. Amendment was stacked on amendment, each one taking a weightier, older, more sacred word and filing it down to something neutral. Some passed; some failed; that is not the point. The point is that a room full of bishops spent its hours *choosing which words to remove* — and the minutes wrote down every motion.

By the time the roll was finally called, the bishops passed it 129 to 26, and the deputies concurred. But the vote decided nothing that had not already been decided in those amendments. The headline was the count. The substance was the editing that came before it — and that editing is a matter of public record, sitting in an archive anyone can open tonight.

The Bereans Were Watching

This is the discipline the Christian in the pew most needs to recover. *"Now the Bereans were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so"* (Acts 17:11, ESV). The Bereans did not wait for the final vote and then react. They *examined* — checked the claim against the Word while it was still being made. A church does not fall in a day; it falls in a hundred small motions that no one was watching. The remedy is not anxiety, nor is it turning every parish meeting into a war. It is wakefulness with a sense of proportion — knowing which votes are the grave ones, and being awake in the room when they come.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

The Wall Fell Before the Vote

So set down the lesson of this page. The Episcopal Church did not lose marriage on the day it counted the ballots in 2015. It lost it earlier — in the task forces, the committees, the amendments, the slow trade of one word for another, while the great majority of its members assumed the wall was holding because no alarm had sounded. The vote was the funeral. The death came in the editing.

That is why this series keeps insisting the headline is never the whole story. A church that drifts does its real work quietly, in rooms most people never enter, on documents most people never read. The mercy of this particular case is that they wrote it all down — and the redline they left behind is, without meaning to be, the clearest sermon against itself.

The Word They Could Not Strike

But hear the hope in it too, because it is real. The words they struck from their canon were never theirs to strike. *"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?"* (Matthew 19:4–5, ESV). A church can draw a line through that sentence in its own book. It cannot draw a line through the One who spoke it. The definition the Episcopal Church removed from its page still stands, unstruck, in the mouth of Christ — and a thing that still stands is a thing a church can still return to.

No page of red ink ever saved a soul, and no argument ever raised the dead. Only the Spirit who breathed out the Word can do that. The Board's task is the smaller one: to hold the page up to the light, to read what was struck without flinching, and to leave the door of repentance standing open for everyone who helped strike it. In the next article, we stop tracing what they did and ask the older question — what does Scripture itself say, and does their case survive it?

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV). The text of Resolution 2015-A036, its redline, and its legislative history are drawn from the Acts of Convention and the Journal of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church (Salt Lake City, 2015), pp. 781–783, archived at the Archives of the Episcopal Church.

For Further Study

- **The Receipts Condemn the Episcopal Church** — Part One: the full dated record, wall by wall.
- **The Church and the Christian Church** — the series introduction and the plumb line.
- **The Pulpit Is Responsible** — what happens when the watchman posted to guard the walls falls silent.

The Word the Enemy Stole

JUNE 23, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Why the Bible Is the Most Political Book on the Planet

The Bible is the most political book on the planet.

That sentence makes good people flinch. The flinch is not foolish, and it is not really about the Bible. It is about a single word — one that was taken, narrowed, and turned against the people who most need it. The word is *politics*. It was stolen. It can be recovered.

"We Don't Do Politics in Church"

Nearly every pastor has said it. Nearly every faithful one has meant it well. The church does not gather on Sunday to rerun Tuesday's argument. Every pastor has seen what party loyalty can do to a congregation — the cold pew, the friendship that cooled after an election, the family that left over a yard sign. A shepherd who guards his flock from that is not a coward. He is doing his job.

The instinct is sound. The fear is not foolish. This is not a call to turn the pulpit into a campaign booth. It is a call to test one assumption buried inside the fear — that the word *politics* still means what the instinct takes it to mean. It does not. The word changed under the church's feet.

A Word With a History

The word has a history, and the history settles the matter. *Politics* comes from the Greek *polis* — the city, the community, the shared life of a people. From *polis* came *politikos*: "of the citizens, pertaining to the common life." Through Latin and French it became our English word. Aristotle's great work on the subject carried the plain Greek title *Politiká* — "the affairs of the city."

The root meaning is not "parties." It is not "campaigns." It is this: how a people orders its common life — what neighbors owe one another, what they will honor, what they will forbid. By "politics" we do not mean party platforms or campaign ads. We mean what Aristotle and the Bible both mean: **how a people orders its life under what is right.** Hold that definition. Everything turns on it.

The Most Political Book on the Planet

Read the opening sentence again, the real definition in hand. How does a people order its common life under what is right? That is not a footnote in Scripture. That is Scripture.

The Bible is saturated with it — kings crowned and kings condemned, courts and judges, boundary stones and inheritance laws, the wage owed the laborer and the gleanings left for the poor, the cause of the widow, the orphan, and the stranger. It opens with a marriage in a garden (Genesis 2:24) and closes with a city coming down out of heaven. Between those pages it tells what marriage is, when a life begins (Psalm 139:13), what a just weight and a just court require, and what the Lord asks of a people: *"to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God"* (Micah 6:8). By the true meaning of the word, the Bible is the most political book on the planet. No other book has said more about how a people should live together under God.

That is not a clever line. It is the plain truth, once the word is defined. The pulpit was built to speak it.

> **A note for pastors.** A companion sermon outline — *The Most Political Book You Own* — carries this argument into the pulpit. It is a scaffold, not a script: the movements, the texts, and the line to land on, with room for your own voice. **Download the outline (Word document)**.

How the Word Was Stolen

Why does the sentence still feel dangerous? Because the word was robbed.

Somewhere along the way *politics* was narrowed. It shrank from "the ordering of a people's common life" to "which team wins the next election." The dictionaries record when the rot set in. The sense of "taking sides in party politics" arrives late, and the lexicographers mark it as a *usually pejorative* meaning. A wide and honorable word was crowded out by a small and quarrelsome one. The counterfeit took the name of the real thing. This is a loss, and the church has not mourned it.

The cost falls on the pulpit. *When a pastor hears "political" and thinks only of parties and polls, the theft is already complete — the word has been taken from Scripture and handed to the pundits.* He hears "don't be political." Because the counterfeit now holds the word, he obeys the warning about the counterfeit and falls silent about the real thing. He keeps the trumpet in the closet. Not because he fears God's truth — because a stolen word convinced him God's truth was a campaign slogan.

There are now two different things wearing one name. They must be told apart:

- **Biblical politics** asks: how should a people live together under God's law and His justice?
- **Partisan politics** asks: how does my side win the next fight?

The first is the older, higher thing the word was made to carry. The second is the counterfeit that stole its name. The first belongs in every pulpit in Virginia. The second never did.

The Honest Objection

The other side deserves an honest hearing. There is a real one to give. A thoughtful believer answers this way:

> Even your 'biblical politics' turns partisan the moment it touches a ballot. The gospel is for all people. The pulpit should lift up Christ, not legislation. History is full of churches that traded their witness for a political program and lost both. Better to preach the kingdom and let changed hearts change the city.

That is not a foolish objection. It is the hard-won caution of pastors who watched the church get used. It deserves more than a wave of the hand.

The answer is a distinction, not a denial. The Board does not ask the pulpit to descend into partisanship. It asks the pulpit to refuse the partisan theft of its own vocabulary. A pastor who teaches what marriage is, when life begins, and what justice God requires is not picking a party. He is doing what the most political book on earth does on nearly every page. The danger the objection names is real, and the guardrail against it is the distinction already drawn. Define the

word first, and the line between defending God's order and serving a campaign stays visible. Lose the distinction, and silence becomes the only safe move left. That silence is exactly what the theft was built to produce.

Taking the Word Back

There are two ways to answer a stolen word. Only one of them works.

The first is to surrender it — to stop saying "politics" and reach for safer ground: "we don't do politics, we do God's justice." The appeal is obvious. The move is fatal. It hands over the very ground in dispute. It concedes that "politics" belongs to the partisans, and it leaves the pew believing the Bible has nothing to say about how a people lives together. That is the theft, ratified by its victim.

The second way takes the word back — not by emptying it, but by *refilling* it. The Board does not replace "politics" with "God's justice." It pours God's justice back into "politics," where it lived all along, until the word means again what it was built to mean. Then a pastor can stand, define his terms in one honest sentence, and say it plainly: the Bible is the most political book on the planet, and this pulpit was built to preach it. **Define first; then deploy.** Said in that order, the sentence cannot be misheard.

Which Politics Is on the Ballot

This is not an abstract word game. It reaches Virginia on November 3.

God's politics is the order He built into the world. He set it before any nation existed to vote on it: that life is His from the womb, that marriage is the union He made, that He made us male and female. This November, Virginians will vote on amendments to the Bill of Rights that move against that order. One would strike the definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman and install the marriage of two adult persons "regardless of sex, gender, or race." Another would write a right to abortion into the Bill of Rights behind a legal standard so demanding that few meaningful limits could survive it — even late-term restrictions giving way to broad exceptions for health and viability. These are not new questions. The most political book on earth answered them long before any ballot was printed.

See what that does to the pastor's dilemma. When he teaches the marriage wall and the life wall against what is on that ballot, he is not "getting political." *The amendments are not the pastor getting political. The amendments are the partisanship. His job is to defend the older, higher politics they are attacking.* The assault came first. The answer is not a campaign. It is biblical politics doing what it was always meant to do.

The Board refers our readers to this companion piece ***A Warning to the Watchmen*** — on the trumpet that must now sound, and why this vote, unlike an ordinary law, is meant to be permanent. This essay has one job, and it comes first: to hand the word back, so that when the trumpet sounds, it is not mistaken for a campaign jingle. A watchman cannot warn the city in a language the city has been trained to ignore.

> **For the shepherd reading this.** The intro sermon outline is yours for this season — love first, the history at its center, the call at the end. **Download *The Most Political Book You Own* (Word document)**.

The Word Was Always His

The verdict is not despair. The most political book on earth has not changed; only the church's nerve to read it has. The word *politics* was stolen, but the thing it names was never in doubt. God has always governed His people. He governs them still. He has never once lost a battle in the history of the world. To reclaim a word is a small thing beside that — and no small thing beside silence.

No argument of men has ever given a word back its meaning, and no essay has ever taught a silent church to speak. But the God who set His order into the world still governs His house — and the church He finds mute, He can teach to speak plainly again.

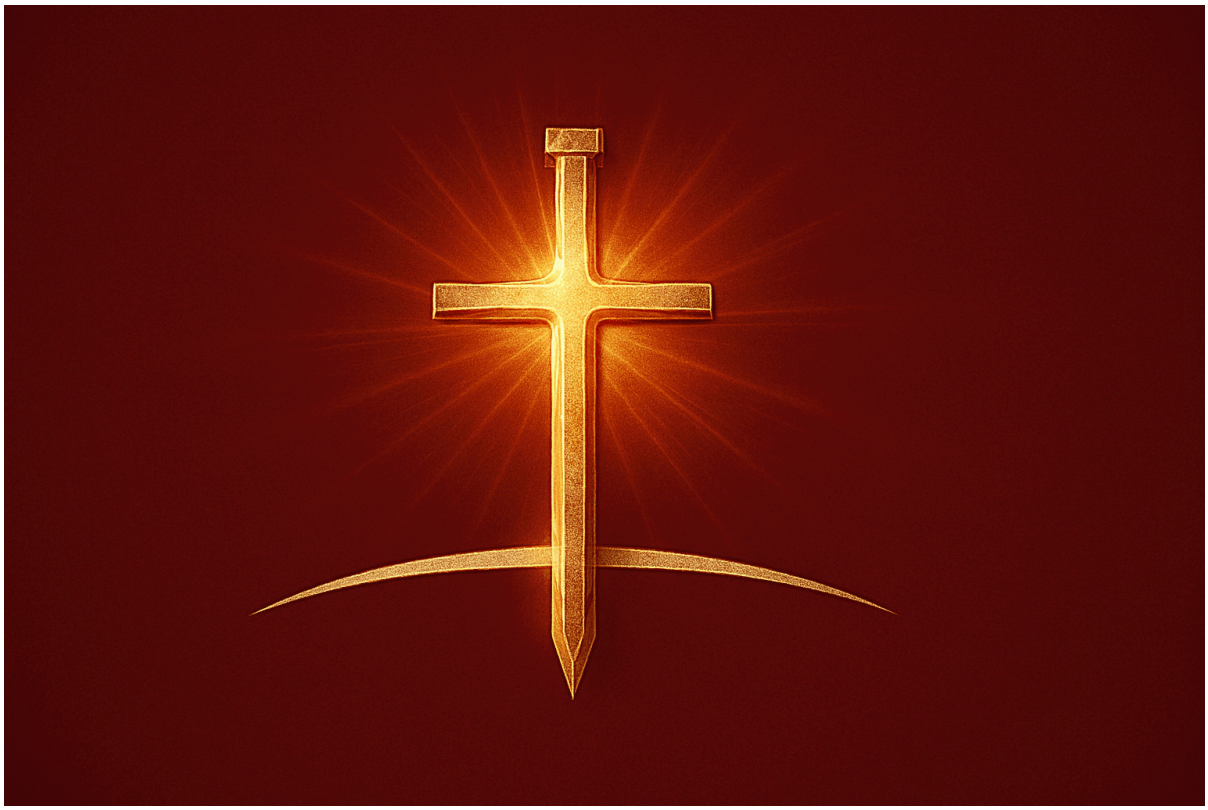
Where This Comes From

- The history of the word "politics": **Online Etymology Dictionary**, entries for "politics" and "polis."
- Aristotle, *Politics* (*Politiká*), Book I — on the *polis* and man as a "political animal" (*politikon zōon*).
- The November amendments and official voter explanations: **Virginia Department of Elections**, **Ballotpedia**, and the bill text at **lis.virginia.gov**. See the companion article, ***A Warning to the Watchmen***, for both walls in full.

Scripture quotation is from the English Standard Version (ESV).

Where Art Thou? A 22-Year-Old Fought the Battle Christian Men Abandoned

JUNE 2, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



excerpt break a few paragraphs in
– No font declarations, no inline colors (theme supplies them)
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This is box title
related-reading block at the foot (Shortcodes Ultimate)
– External links use target="_blank" rel="noopener"

YOAST FIELDS (enter in the Yoast panel, not the body):
Focus keyphrase: Christian men stand in the gap
SEO title (57): Christian Men, Stand in the Gap: Where Art Thou?
Slug: christian-men-stand-in-the-gap
Meta description (148):
Riley Gaines fought a battle Christian men abandoned. Scripture calls men to stand in the gap and protect the vulnerable. Where art thou?

Categories: Obedience to God (primary); God-Ordained Family (secondary)
Tags (suggested): manhood, fatherhood, obedience to God, biblical sexuality

POST TITLE (set in the title field, not the body):
Where Art Thou? A 22-Year-Old Fought the Battle Christian Men Abandoned

DO BY HAND IN WORDPRESS:
– Set the Warriors For Us banner as the Featured Image / top-of-post image.
– Confirm the two VCA related-reading links resolve (click-test the Talarico one).
– Confirm the YouTube embed renders, or swap for your usual video method.
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By Jeff Bayard

First, a word of honor where honor is due. Riley Gaines stood at that podium in Northern Virginia because **The Family Foundation** put her there. For decades this Richmond-based ministry has manned the wall in our Commonwealth — defending life, marriage, parental authority, and God's design for male and female; equipping pastors through its Church Ambassador Network; litigating through its **Founding Freedoms Law Center**; and right now leading the fight against Virginia's proposed "reproductive freedom" amendment and the proposed marriage amendment headed for Virginia's 2026 ballot. They do not merely talk about the battle. They are in it.

I begin there on purpose, because their faithfulness is the very thing that exposes our failure. The fight is real — they have proven it. The harder question, the one Scripture forces on us, is this: when God calls Christian men to stand in the gap, where are they?

Consider what Riley described. She stood on the podium tied to the hundredth of a second with a man nearly a foot taller than her, and when the cameras came out, the official handed *him* the trophy. She was told to pose, hand it back, and go home empty-handed. The athletic establishment she had spent most of her life working to compete in looked her in the eye and told her that her dignity, her privacy, and her hard-won place meant less than a man's feelings.

But that is not the part that should stop you cold, Christian man. This is.

By her own admission, Riley spent that entire season *waiting for someone else to act.* She assumed a coach would say something. The NCAA. Another swimmer. Somebody's father would come down to the deck and put an end to it. She did not think it was her burden to carry. And so a 22-year-old girl in a paper-thin swimsuit ended up holding a line that grown men had walked away from.

This is no longer a story about a swim meet. **It is a story about a generation of men who left their posts.**

EXCLUSIVE: Riley Gaines' Chilling Warning: "They Don't Care About 'Fairness.'"
https://youtube.com/watch?v=AarXpqW3wBw

Riley Gaines, full remarks at The Family Foundation's Northern Virginia benefit dinner (Speak Up! Virginia).

What God's Word Says About Men Who Stand in the Gap

Open the Scriptures to the very beginning, because that is where this fracture starts.

"And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." (Genesis 2:15)

That word *keep* is the Hebrew *shamar* — to guard, to watch over, to protect against intrusion. Before the Fall, before sin, before there was even a threat in sight, God built protection into the job description of the man. Adam was not placed in Eden merely to enjoy it. He was placed there to *guard* it. To stand watch.

Then the threat arrived. Read the next scene slowly, because we have all read past it for years:

"…she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." (Genesis 3:6)

With her. Adam was not absent from the moment of disobedience — he was "with her," as the text says plainly. Scripture does not narrate his inner thoughts or every second of his position, but it leaves no doubt: he failed in his duty and joined the rebellion instead of stopping it. And we know that failure well, because we live it — a man can be present in body and absent in attention, in the room but not on watch. Proximity is exactly what removes the excuse. The threat was at his side, and he did not keep his post. The first sin in human history is not only a woman reaching for fruit — it is a man standing within arm's reach of the danger and failing to guard the one in his care.

So what is the first word out of God's mouth after the Fall? Not to Eve. To the man:

"And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" (Genesis 3:9)

God knew exactly where Adam was hiding. The question was never about geography. It was an indictment. *Where were you? Where was the watchman I posted?* He has been asking that same question of men ever since. Riley waited for a man to step in. The Lord has been waiting too. *Adam, where art thou?*

The watchman's absence is not new, and it is not without consequence. The prophet Ezekiel records God's grief over it plainly:

"And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none." (Ezekiel 22:30)

God looks across the land for a man to stand in the gap — and finds the gap empty.

How We Got Here

We did not arrive here overnight. For two generations, men have been taught — by the culture, and far too often by soft pulpits — that masculine leadership is itself the problem. That to lead, to protect, to take the front line, is "domineering." So men learned to apologize for their strength, to defer, to go quiet, to stay comfortable. The church that should have been forging protectors too often produced an audience of spectators.

The honest objection deserves an honest hearing. Critics argue that male headship has been a cover for abuse — that history is full of men who used "protection" as a license to dominate and control. That concern is not imaginary, and it deserves to be taken seriously, because tyrannical men have wounded real women and discredited the very word *headship*.

But the argument fails where it matters most. The biblical answer to bad headship has never been *no* headship — it is *Christlike* headship.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." (Ephesians 5:25)

The model is a King who protects His bride by laying down His own life for her. An abusive man is not too much of a leader; he is a counterfeit of one. The cure for a counterfeit is the real thing, not an empty post.

Living It Out: How Men Stand in the Gap Today

So what does standing in the gap look like, here, now?

It looks like protecting the women and children God has actually placed in your life — not in theory, but in the locker rooms, the school board meetings, the team policies, and the ballot box where their safety and dignity are decided. This year in Virginia that ballot box is not abstract: there is a proposed amendment to enshrine abortion in the constitution and a proposed amendment to redefine marriage, and The Family Foundation has laid the voter guides and flyers on the table for you. The information is there. The only missing piece is men willing to use it. Riley's two warnings were one warning: men have abandoned the woman *and* the child at the same time. Walked off the deck and walked away from the womb. The man's post stands between the vulnerable and the threat, and the two most vulnerable souls on earth are the woman under his care and the child who cannot yet speak.

It looks like opening your mouth when it costs you something. The silence on that pool deck is the same silence in too many sanctuaries, the same silence at too many dinner tables. Speak.

It looks like leading your own home in worship and conviction before you ever ask the culture to change — and refusing to outsource your sons' discipleship to a screen, a coach, or the state.

Hope and Action

Here is the hope, and it is not wishful thinking — it is the character of God.

When the men of Israel hung back, the Lord did not lose. In the days of Deborah, Barak would not go to battle unless a woman went with him, so the honor of the victory went to a woman, and Sisera fell by Jael's hand (Judges 4). God still won — but the men's hesitation became their shame. Understand what that means: God is sovereign enough to accomplish His purposes whether or not we answer the call. The only question is whether we will be found standing in the gap, or hiding in the trees like Adam.

And there is a remnant rising. Right here in Virginia, Noble Warriors has spent two decades equipping men to walk with Christ and lead well. Men are not too far gone. They are waiting to be called up.

So consider this the call.

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." (1 Corinthians 16:13)

And when the fight feels too large, remember Nehemiah on the wall:

"Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses." (Nehemiah 4:14)

The front line is open. It was always ours to hold. There is a true Warrior who never once abandoned His bride — who walked toward the cross, not away from it, and bought her back with His own blood. We follow Him onto the field. Not to win a culture war by our own strength, but to be found faithful at the post He gave us.

So stop waiting. If you need to be sharpened as a man and pull other men up with you, **Noble Warriors** is doing that work right here in Virginia. If your fight is the public square — the ballot, your church, the law — **The Family Foundation** will put the tools in your hands. And if you are honest, the first post to hold is the one under your own roof, and no one is coming to take it for you. Pick up your station.

Christian man — where art thou?

Related Reading from the Virginia Christian Alliance

» Thus Saith the Lord: A Biblical Defense of God's Design for Human Sexuality

» Beware the Wolf: Brandan Robertson Weighed Against God's Word

» A Biblical Response to James Talarico on Sexuality

The War on God: Alex Newman on the 4,000-Year Conspiracy

JUNE 1, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Ephesians 6 is not a metaphor. A veteran journalist traces the spiritual rebellion from Lucifer to the United Nations — and asks whether the church is paying attention.

Dear Christian: the war you read about in Ephesians 6 is not a metaphor, and it did not end in the first century. The Apostle Paul warned that our struggle is *"not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"* (Ephesians 6:12). Alex Newman of *The New American* has spent his career documenting how literally that verse reads when you trace the architects of the modern globalist agenda back to their actual source.

On *Behind the Deep State*, Newman lays out what he calls a 4,000-year war on God — a rebellion that began before human history and continues in the boardrooms, classrooms, and global institutions of our own day. It is a heavy interview. It demands a Christian's full attention.

VIDEO EMBED — Behind the Deep State w/ Alex Newman

The War on God: A History
https://youtube.com/watch?v=kIC3uB-wInk

What follows is not an endorsement of every name Newman puts on his chart. It is an attempt to grapple honestly with what he sets out — to test the spirits, weigh the claims, and ask the harder question Newman keeps returning to: are believers paying attention?

The War Did Not Begin in Washington

Newman starts where Scripture starts. The rebellion did not begin with the United Nations or the World Economic Forum. It began in heaven.

Isaiah 14 records Lucifer's defiance: *"I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God… I will be like the most High"* (Isaiah 14:13-14). One-third of the angelic host followed him into rebellion (Revelation 12:4), and the same lie was carried into Eden — *"ye shall be as gods"* (Genesis 3:5). Every subsequent attempt by man to throw off God's order, Newman argues, is downstream of that same temptation. Be your own god. Cast off the cords. Build the tower.

The Tower of Babel in Genesis 11 is Newman's archetype for what comes next. After the flood, humanity united under one language and one project: build a tower to heaven, make a name for themselves, refuse the divine command to scatter. God's response was not merely punitive but protective. He confused the language and dispersed the nations — what Newman calls *"a divine safeguard against unchecked global tyranny."* Borders, nations, and distinct cultures are not arbitrary lines on a map. They are God's design for limiting concentrated evil.

That is why every modern push toward a borderless one-world order — economic, political, religious — should give the Christian pause. The pattern is the same. The tower is the same. Only the building materials have changed.

Marx, Owen, and the Founders of Modern Rebellion

Newman traces the modern phase of the war through specific historical figures whose stated goals were the destruction of God's order. Two of his case studies deserve attention because they are documented from primary sources, not inferred.

The first is Robert Owen, the Welsh industrialist and founder of the failed socialist colony at New Harmony, Indiana. On July 4, 1826 — the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence — Owen delivered what he called the "Declaration of Mental Independence." His actual words are a matter of public record: *"Man, up to this hour, has been, in all parts of the earth, a slave to a trinity of the most monstrous evils that could be combined to inflict mental and physical evil upon the whole race. I refer to private property, absurd and irrational systems of religion, and marriage founded upon individual property."*

Property, religion, marriage. Owen named the three God-ordained institutions of human society and called them monstrous evils to be abolished. That is not Newman's interpretation. That is Owen's stated platform from his own pulpit.

The second case is Karl Marx. Newman leans heavily on Richard Wurmbrand's 1986 book *Marx and Satan*, in which the Romanian pastor — tortured fourteen years in communist prisons — assembled the case that Marx was not merely an atheist but a conscious enemy of the God of Scripture. Wurmbrand quotes Marx's own youthful poetry, including lines like *"I shall build my throne high overhead"* and references to making a pact with "the prince of darkness." Wurmbrand's thesis has been disputed by historians who argue that the poetry of a young man does not prove Satanism in the man he became. That is a fair caution. But Wurmbrand's larger point survives the methodological debate: whether or not Marx personally venerated Satan, the system he built — atheist, anti-family, anti-property, anti-nation — inverts every divine ordinance Owen had already named. The fruit Jesus told us to watch for (Matthew 7:16) has poured from Marxism in a torrent of blood across a hundred years and a hundred million corpses.

You do not need to accept every line of Wurmbrand's thesis to see what Newman sees. The animating spirit of these movements — the will to abolish God's order — is the same spirit Paul named in Ephesians 6.

The Lucis Trust and the United Nations

If the historical material is debatable in places, the present-day documentation is not. The single hardest fact Newman puts on the table — and the one that most Christians have never heard — is the relationship between the United Nations and an organization called the Lucis Trust.

The facts are not in dispute. The organization was founded in 1922 by Alice Bailey, a theosophist and disciple of Helena Blavatsky, under its original name: the *Lucifer Publishing Company*. The name was later softened to Lucis Trust, but the founders' explanation of the original name is on the public record — they meant "light-bringer" in the theosophical sense, the same sense in which Bailey wrote that Lucifer was a liberator of humanity from the oppressive God of the Bible. Lucis Trust has held official consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1989. It maintains offices near UN headquarters in New York and operates the World Goodwill organization, which is recognized as a UN-affiliated NGO and participates in regular UN briefings.

The UN Meditation Room — a stark chamber with a black stone altar at UN headquarters in New York — was designed with input from Bailey's circle. Robert Muller, who served as Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and won the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education in 1989, openly credited Bailey's channeled "Master" Djwhal Khul as the inspiration for his World Core Curriculum, which Muller proposed should be taught in every school in every country.

None of this is Alex Newman speculating. It is documented in Lucis Trust's own published materials and in the UN's NGO registry. A Christian can decide for himself what to make of it. But he should at least know it exists.

The Secret Societies and the Question of Bush

Newman extends the analysis to American institutions — Skull and Bones at Yale, the Bohemian Grove gathering in California, and the genealogy of presidents and power brokers who have passed through both. Independent journalism, photographs, and a now-extensive body of insider testimony confirm that both organizations exist, that both employ explicit occult ritual imagery, and that prominent American political figures including both George Bushes and John Kerry are documented members.

What we will not do in this space is connect every dot Newman connects. The leap from "documented member of a secret fraternity" to "conscious participant in a Satanic conspiracy" is one Newman makes in his own voice, and it is the kind of leap that requires more evidence than a membership roster. What is undeniable is that powerful men gather in private to perform rituals they will not discuss publicly, in organizations whose symbology consistently mocks the things of God. That is a fact worth knowing. The interpretation Newman draws from it is his to make.

What the Christian Does With This

It would be tempting to walk away from a piece like this either dismissive ("conspiracy theory") or paralyzed ("the enemy is everywhere"). Both responses fail the test of Scripture.

Paul did not tell the Ephesian church to ignore the principalities and powers. He told them to *"put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil"* (Ephesians 6:11). To stand requires knowing what you are standing against. Willful ignorance is not the same thing as faith.

At the same time, Paul did not write Ephesians 6 to inspire conspiracy charts. He wrote it to send Christians into battle clothed in truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, and the Word of God — and praying always. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God (2 Corinthians 10:4). Our task is not to map every cell of the rebellion. Our task is to be faithful in our own corner of it.

And to know — really know, in the way that lets you sleep at night — what the psalmist saw three thousand years ago. *"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed… He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision"* (Psalm 2:1-4).

The conspiracy is real. Its architects are not anonymous. And the Lord laughs at them.

What You Do This Week

1. **Watch the full interview.** Newman covers more than this article can. Test his claims against your own reading of Scripture and history.
2. **Read Ephesians 6 with your family this Sunday.** Verse by verse. Then ask the children to name the pieces of the armor and what each one is for. This is not a metaphor. They will face this fight.
3. **Examine your children's education.** Newman is right that the spirit of Robert Owen lives on in modern public schooling. If the institution forming your children's minds is at war with what God says is true, you are paying a discipleship program to undo your own discipleship.
4. **Refuse the new-age vocabulary.** "Oneness." "The universe." "My truth." These are not neutral words. They belong to a different theology than the one Scripture teaches. Christians can use plain English: God, sin, repentance, Christ, salvation.

The battle is real, but so is our God. Babel rose, and Babel fell. Rome rose, and Rome fell. Every tower of pride from Eden to the present hour has come down, and every one yet to be built will come down with it. *"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever"* (Revelation 11:15).

Our calling is not to win the war by ourselves. The Lamb has already won it. Our calling is to be found standing — armor on, eyes open, lamps lit — when the King returns.

Key Takeaways

- Alex Newman of The New American frames the globalist agenda as a spiritual rebellion traceable through Scripture (Isaiah 14, Genesis 3, Genesis 11) — not merely a political or economic project.
- The Tower of Babel (Genesis 11) is the biblical archetype of one-world rebellion against God; the scattering of nations was God's protection against concentrated tyranny.
- Robert Owen's 1826 "Declaration of Mental Independence" openly named private property, religion, and marriage as a "trinity of monstrous evils" to be abolished — a matter of public record.
- Newman cites Richard Wurmbrand's Marx and Satan to argue Marx was a conscious enemy of biblical religion, not a neutral atheist; the historical thesis is contested, but the fruit of Marxism speaks for itself.

- The Lucis Trust — founded in 1922 as the Lucifer Publishing Company — holds official UN consultative status and has influenced UN spiritual and educational programs since the 1980s.
- Robert Muller, former Assistant UN Secretary-General, credited Alice Bailey's channeled spiritual "Master" as the inspiration for his World Core Curriculum.
- American secret societies including Skull and Bones and Bohemian Grove are documented; the leap from membership to conscious conspiracy is one Newman makes, not a fact VCA asserts independently.
- Ephesians 6:12 names the real combatants: principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, spiritual wickedness in high places.
- The Christian response is not paranoia but armor — truth, righteousness, faith, the Word of God, and prayer (Ephesians 6:13-18).
- Hope is grounded in Psalm 2 and Revelation 11:15 — the Lord laughs at the conspiracy of the rulers, and the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of Christ.

Resources

Full interview: *Behind the Deep State* with Alex Newman, **The New American**.

Alex Newman: Senior editor at *The New American* magazine. Author of *Indoctrinating Our Children to Death* and *Crimes of the Educators* (co-authored with Samuel Blumenfeld).

Books referenced:

- Richard Wurmbrand, Marx and Satan (1986)
- John Robison, Proofs of a Conspiracy Against All the Religions and Governments of Europe (1798)
- Anthony Sutton, Wall Street and the Bolshevik Revolution (1974)

Related VCA Content:

- **The Beast System Runs on AI: A Watchman's Warning**
- **America Under Siege: Lt. Col. Allen West Sounds the Alarm**
- **The SAVE Act and the Silent Pulpit: Donald T. Eason on Why Voting Matters**

The SAVE Act and the Silent Pulpit: Donald T. Eason on Why Voting Matters

JUNE 1, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: UNITED PATRIOTS UPRISING WITH GARY BINFORD

A black pastor from Detroit cuts through the noise on election integrity — and tells the church what it has spent two generations refusing to say.

It is not Jim Crow 2.0. It is not a war on married women. It is not voter suppression dressed up in a clean shirt. The SAVE America Act is a bill that says only American citizens should decide American elections — and most of the country agrees with that. So why is it dying in the Senate?

That is the question pastor and policy leader Donald T. Eason puts to every American who claims to care about this nation. Eason is the president of CURE — the Center for Urban Renewal and Education, founded by Star Parker in 1995 — and, by his own description, the senior minister of the Metro Church of Christ in Sterling Heights, Michigan. On *United Patriots Uprising with Gary Binford*, he makes a case Christians have spent two generations dodging: voting is not a secular act. It is a personal responsibility before God, and the SAVE Act may be the single most consequential piece of election integrity legislation of this generation.

Watch the full interview. Then pick up the phone and call your senator — and we will explain in a moment exactly why.

CURE President Donald T. Eason Dissects Why Voting And Elections Matter
https://youtube.com/watch?v=pIW6jaOEI_Y

Watch on YouTube

What you will hear is not partisan strategy. It is a black minister from Detroit telling the truth that too many pastors will not — that the kingdom of God has an opinion on borders, marriage, life, and yes, on who counts the ballots.

The Lie of "Voting Is Personal"

Eason did not grow up valuing the vote. "Growing up in Detroit," he told Binford, "you believe that the white man is out to get you and your vote doesn't count." He registered at 18 only because his social studies class offered extra credit.

Then in 1987 he became a Christian — and the math changed. *"Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's"* (Matthew 22:21). The God who tells His people to live peaceably and pray for those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1-2) is not indifferent to who holds that authority. And when believers say "I don't mix religion and politics," they are not being neutral. They are being silent in the one arena where their voice was specifically asked for.

Binford pressed the point. He noted that in nearly every conversation he has had with a Christian who insists voting is "personal," the person turned out to be a Democrat. Why? Eason answered plainly: because the call to separate faith from the ballot box is a one-way demand. It is never asked of Christians who vote *with* the cultural tide — only of those who would vote against it. "We

can never separate our beliefs from our actions," he said. "It is communal. It is going to affect the way we live and the way we can function in our society."

Scripture is filled with God removing wicked kings and raising up righteous ones. He cares who is in office. And if He cares, His people must.

What the SAVE Act Actually Does

Here is the legislation, stripped of the hysteria.

The Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act — H.R. 22 in the 119th Congress — requires individuals to provide documentary proof of U.S. citizenship when registering to vote in federal elections, and a photo ID when casting a ballot. It passed the House on February 11, 2026, by a vote of 218 to 213. Of the 218 yes votes, 217 were Republicans and one was a Democrat. Since then it has stalled in the Senate, where it needs 60 votes to overcome a Democratic filibuster — and the Republican majority of 53 is not enough on its own. The most recent test came on April 22, 2026, when an amendment to attach the SAVE Act to broader legislation was defeated 48 to 50, with four Republicans joining every Democrat in voting no. As of late May 2026, the bill has not cleared the Senate. The window is narrow, and it is closing.

That is the actual situation. Eason puts the support level at "almost 90%." The verified polling is more precise but no less striking: a Harvard CAPS/Harris poll found 71% of Americans back the SAVE Act, including roughly half of rank-and-file Democrats. Voter ID itself — the bill's central requirement — draws 83% support in Pew Research, including 71% of Democrats. Gallup puts overall voter ID support at 84%. There is no honest way to call this a fringe demand. The American people are not divided on this. The United States Senate is.

Critics raise two main objections, and Eason addresses one of them directly. The first is the claim that married women who took their husband's last name will be disenfranchised because their birth certificate no longer matches their current legal name. The bill's defenders, including White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt, have answered that women already registered are unaffected, and the bill includes an affidavit option for those whose documents do not match. The concern is real for some new registrations, but the "70 million married women will lose the vote" framing repeated on social media overstates it.

The second objection deserves an honest hearing. Critics argue noncitizen voting is so rare it does not justify the bill. A recent audit in Utah of more than two million registered voters found 27 confirmed noncitizens and 25 probable ones — a rate well under one-tenth of one percent. Christians should not pretend that data is fabricated, and we should not exaggerate the scale of the problem. But "rare" is not "zero," and the integrity of an election does not depend only on how

often it is broken. It depends on whether the rules make breaking it easy or hard. A bank still locks its vault even though most customers are honest.

God Cares About Borders, and the Ballot Box Is a Border

Eason draws the parallel that most pastors will never preach: a nation without borders is a nation without identity, and an election without verification is an election without legitimacy.

"God has always put His people in borders," he said. When Nehemiah returned from Babylon, his first task was to rebuild Jerusalem's wall — not because God hates outsiders, but because a wall is what defines who is *in* the covenant community and who is being welcomed in on its terms. Scripture commands the sojourner to be treated with justice and love (Leviticus 19:33-34) — but it also commands the sojourner to adopt the laws and worship of the land that takes him in. There is no biblical model for a borderless nation, and there is no biblical model for an election where the integrity of the vote is treated as optional.

Eason makes the practical point too. We require ID for a liquor store, an airplane, a high school, the door of the United States Capitol itself. To say that requiring ID to choose the President of the United States is somehow racist is, as Eason put it, "insulting" — most pointedly to the black voters that argument claims to protect.

The Pulpit That Will Not Preach

Eason's deepest grief is not aimed at Washington. It is aimed at the church.

"Some of our pulpits, we have separated politics from religion," he lamented. "However, marriage is a biblical issue. Life is a biblical issue. Just because they're talking it in politics does not mean we shouldn't be talking about it." A pastor who refuses to preach on what God has clearly said because the culture has reclassified it as "political" has not stayed neutral. He has handed the microphone to the world.

Then Eason opened his Bible to Ephesians 3:8-10 and read it aloud — Paul writing that the *manifold wisdom of God* is to be made known "to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places" through the church. Read that again. The church is God's instrument for declaring His truth to those in power. Not the lobby. Not the think tank. The church.

Binford pulled the camera back to Romans 1:18-32. When a nation refuses to honor God, Paul writes, God gives them over to a reprobate mind. Men with men, women with women, good called evil and evil called good. The world will always rush toward that cliff — that is the world's nature. The question is whether the church will warn them, or sit silent and watch.

Judgment, Peter says, begins at the house of God (1 Peter 4:17). When the people who carry the message stop carrying it, the nation stops hearing it. That is where America stands right now.

What Happens If This Fails

Eason will not flinch from the consequence. "If we don't pass the Save America Act, people will cheat."

He uses the simplest illustration. Every basketball game has a referee. Every football game has a referee. Not because every player is dishonest, but because some are, and the game requires the rules be enforced. The presidency of the United States is the most powerful office on earth. To run that election on the honor system, when the entire technological capacity exists to verify citizenship, is not naivety. It is invitation.

And Scripture warns us where this leads. *"When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn"* (Proverbs 29:2). Eason quotes that verse, and it does not require interpretation. When the rules are gamed so that the wicked rule, the people suffer. That is the warning. That is the stakes.

What You Do This Week

Not someday. This week.

1. **Call both of your U.S. senators.** The Capitol switchboard is (202) 224-3121. Ask them by name to vote yes on H.R. 22, the SAVE Act. If they are already a yes, thank them. If they are a no, ask why. If they are undecided, tell them where you stand. They count those calls.
2. **Send this article and the interview to your pastor.** Not as an attack — as a question. Has our pulpit addressed election integrity from a biblical worldview? If not, why not?
3. **Register to vote, or check your registration.** If you have moved, married, or changed your name and have not updated your registration, do it now. Do not wait until the midterms.
4. **Refuse the lie that voting is "just personal."** Tell one Christian in your life this week that Scripture treats civic responsibility as part of loving your neighbor. Then prove it by showing up at your next local election.

America is one Senate vote and one generation away from losing the ability to choose its own leaders. The SAVE Act is not the whole answer — only Christ is. But it is the answer to *this* question, on *this* day, in the only window we are likely to get.

Eason closes with a story he calls his "perfect love casts out fear" picture: a mother takes her child to a swimming hole and sees the sign warning of alligators. They do not get in. But if the child

slips in anyway, does the mother go in after her? Of course she does. The danger has not changed. What has changed is that she loves the child more than she fears the alligators.

That is what we are called to. Love your country more than you fear the cost of speaking up for it. Love your children more than you fear what your neighbors will say. Love the Lord more than you fear man.

The Constitution was birthed under His name. The God who removes kings and sets them up (Daniel 2:21) holds this nation in His hand still. And while He holds it, we have one job: be found faithful, with our voices raised, when the King returns.

Key Takeaways

- Donald T. Eason, president of CURE and senior minister at Metro Church of Christ, argues voting is not a secular act but a Christian responsibility before God.
- The SAVE Act (H.R. 22) requires documentary proof of citizenship to register and photo ID to vote in federal elections. It passed the House 218-213 on February 11, 2026.
- The bill is stalled in the Senate, where it needs 60 votes to overcome a Democratic filibuster; the most recent test failed 48-50 on April 22, 2026, with four Republicans joining all Democrats in voting no.
- Polling shows broad support — 71% back the SAVE Act overall (Harvard CAPS/Harris); 83% support voter ID (Pew), including 71% of Democrats.
- Critics' "married women will lose the vote" framing is overstated; the bill includes an affidavit option, and women already registered are unaffected.
- Noncitizen voting is rare — a Utah audit of 2 million voters found 27 confirmed cases — but the integrity of an election depends on whether the rules make breaking it easy or hard.
- Eason argues a biblical worldview includes borders, the sanctity of life, marriage as God designed it, and the integrity of elections — and Christians must vote accordingly.
- Ephesians 3:8-10 commissions the church to declare God's wisdom to "the rulers and authorities" — silence in the public square is not neutrality.
- Romans 1 warns that when a nation refuses God, He gives it over to a reprobate mind — and the church's job is to sound the alarm, not stay quiet.
- Eason's "alligators" parable: love must outweigh fear. We act not because the danger is small, but because what we love is greater.
- The single concrete action: call both U.S. senators at (202) 224-3121 and ask them to vote yes on H.R. 22.

Resources

Full interview: Available at **RadioInfluence.com**, YouTube, Rumble, GodFamilyAndCountry.tv, the Rose Unplugged Media Network, AmericaFirstWarehouse.com, YourNews.com, OBBNetworkTV, WeSeeMedia.com, and the Queens Village Republican Club.

Donald T. Eason & CURE: The Center for Urban Renewal and Education at **curepolicy.org**. Subscribe to the *CURE America* podcast wherever you listen, and download CURE's policy reports including *School Choice for Everyone: A Moral Imperative*.

Read the bill: **H.R. 22 — Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act** at Congress.gov.

Contact your senators: U.S. Capitol Switchboard **(202) 224-3121**, or find direct contact information at **senate.gov**.

Gary Binford Archive: **United Patriots Uprising at Radio Influence** — over 200 episodes including Ben Carson, Charlie Kirk, Star Parker, Judge Jeanine Pirro, and Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn.

Related VCA Content:

- **America Under Siege: Lt. Col. Allen West Sounds the Alarm** (United Patriots Uprising series)
- **Trump's Anointing: Dr. Tarver on the Deliverer's Rise**
- **The Beast System Runs on AI: A Watchman's Warning**

AI Twilight Zone: Is Tech Replacing God?

MAY 5, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNITED PATRIOTS UPRISING WITH GARY BINFORD

*Kay Rubacek joins Gary Binford on **United Patriots Uprising** to expose what artificial intelligence is doing to your mind, your family, and your freedom.*

Albania Just Hired an AI Minister. You Should Be Concerned.

In 1964, Rod Serling aired a *Twilight Zone* episode called "The Brain Center at Whipple's." A factory owner replaces his human workers with machines. The ending is predictable — and chilling. Sixty-two years later, Serling's nightmare just walked out of the television and into a parliament.

Albania has appointed the world's first **AI government minister**. Her name is Diella. She wears traditional Albanian clothing. She speaks calmly and rationally. And she is making decisions over millions of human beings. She is not a robot. She is not a person. She is code — code that grew, code that no one fully controls, code that nobody elected.

That is the **AI Twilight Zone reality** journalist Kay Rubacek confronts in her recent interview with Gary Binford on *United Patriots Uprising*. After watching this conversation, you will not be able to un-know what you have learned. The only question is what you will do about it.

Is AI Becoming A Twilight Zone Reality?
https://youtube.com/watch?v=ZgxAQJnZgHA

Meet Kay Rubacek — and Why She Is Sounding the Alarm

Kay Rubacek is not an AI hype-man. She is also not a Luddite. She is a journalist, an *Epoch Times* AI columnist, an award-winning documentary filmmaker, and the founder of The Human Edge, a weekly research briefing on what AI is doing to the human mind, workplace, and family.

She has spent **25 years studying authoritarian patterns** — patterns she now sees being played out through artificial intelligence. Her family has fled three communist regimes: Russia in the 1920s, China in the 1950s, and Czechoslovakia in the 1980s.

In 2001, she was arrested in Beijing within thirty seconds of unfurling a banner on Tiananmen Square. The banner contained three words: *truth, compassion, and tolerance*. Chinese police told her those three words are illegal in China. She was thrown in a basement cell, denied food, and watched by six officers when she used the bathroom.

Kay Rubacek knows what surrendering your mind to a system looks like. And she is telling you it is happening here. Right now. Quietly. Through your phone.

AI's Real Benefits — and Where the Line Is

Rubacek is fair. She acknowledges what AI is genuinely good at. *"I'm not anti-technology. I'm not anti-AI,"* she told Binford. Narrow AI — the kind built on trusted data with defined limits — can save researchers hours, accelerate medical diagnostics, help legal teams locate precedents, and assist police investigations.

The problem is not the calculator. The problem is what happens when the calculator starts deciding what you should think, what your kids should believe, and which judges are too "biased" to trust. As Rubacek puts it, *"AI is not just a tool. It is making decisions on its own."*

That distinction matters. A Christian is free to use AI as a research assistant. A Christian must never let AI become a teacher, a counselor, a judge, or a friend. Scripture is clear: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding"* (Proverbs 3:5). That command leaves no room for leaning on someone else's algorithm either.

The Four Lies You Have Believed About AI

Rubacek hammers four misconceptions millions of Americans cling to.

Lie #1: "AI is just a tool." A hammer does not decide where to drive a nail. AI does. Autonomous AI now decides who gets approved for a loan, which face a camera flags, and how drones are deployed in war. This is not a tool. This is a decision-maker.

Lie #2: "AI is neutral." Rubacek is blunt. *"It's coming sometimes from the cesspit of the internet… sometimes from skewed sources, politically driven, motivated. And you cannot see that."* She points to recent research showing roughly **10% of Google AI answers are wrong** and other studies indicating almost **50% of medical AI responses are questionable.** Yet people trust the output because it sounds confident.

Lie #3: "Humans fully control AI." AI is now embedded in banking, medicine, weapons, vehicles, and courts. Rubacek points out that we cannot reliably get our own Wi-Fi to talk to our laptop — and yet we believe someone, somewhere, is fully in control of all of this. *"There is no kill switch."*

Lie #4: "The experts know where this is going." They do not. A senior AI researcher at Anthropic — one of the leading AI labs — recently resigned. His parting words, according to Rubacek: *the world is in peril.* Then he left to study poetry. He is not the first AI safety researcher to walk away. When the people building it are quitting and warning us, that is a moment to listen.

What AI Is Doing to Your Brain — and Your Grandchildren's

Here is the part that should keep every Christian parent and grandparent awake.

Your brain runs on roughly **40 watts** — less power than a single LED light bulb. And yet, Rubacek reminds us, it has more connections than any supercomputer on earth. *"We're trying to create the human brain when we already have it."*

But your brain is also designed to be efficient. It takes the path of least resistance. So when you let AI think *for* you instead of *with* you, your cognitive ability declines. The studies are now stacking up. Use it, or lose it.

Now multiply that across a generation that has never known life without a screen. **Seventy-six percent of Gen Z uses AI daily. Only twenty percent of Boomers do.** Gen Z's "best friends" are increasingly AI chatbots. They sleep with phones next to their pillows. They check messages every five minutes. They are, by their own testimony, the most anxious generation in modern history.

And here is the part that should rattle you: *they want to be tracked.* They never knew privacy. They never knew silence. They were never taught what their grandparents fought to protect.

Scripture is not silent on this. *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind"* (Romans 12:2). Paul could not have imagined an algorithm. But he understood something every Christian must understand now: when you outsource your thinking, you outsource your soul.

When the World Can No Longer Tell What Is Real

Two years ago, Rubacek says, she could spot an AI-generated video about **99% of the time.** Today? She is right about **30% of the time.** The CEO of OpenAI has said publicly that we should *"get used to"* not knowing what is real for a while. Read that sentence again.

On X, Rubacek estimates **at least 50% of content** flowing through is AI-generated. LinkedIn, Facebook, comment sections — the same phrases, the same cadences, the same flat tone. Human voices are being drowned out by machines pretending to be human.

What does this mean for the Christian who believes truth is a Person — *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life"* (John 14:6)? It means the spiritual battle described in Ephesians 6 has a new front. *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but… against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."* When reality itself becomes negotiable, the only anchor left is the Word that does not change. *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away"* (Matthew 24:35).

The Real Question: Will AI Try to Replace God?

Toward the end of the interview, Gary Binford asks Rubacek the question that cuts to the heart of the matter. Will AI eventually become *"the next tool to try and replace God"*? Will the ultimate evil of AI be — as Binford puts it — *"an attempt that will fail for AI to replace God"*?

Rubacek does not flinch. *"I can't disagree with you on that."*

This is not paranoia. This is Genesis 11. The men of Babel said, *"Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves."* They wanted to be like God — self-sufficient, unaccountable, worshiped. God scattered them. He always does.

Today's tower is not made of brick. It is made of silicon. And the temptation is exactly the same: a tool that promises to make you smarter than God made you, freer than God designed you, more godlike than your Creator allows. *"You shall have no other gods before me"* (Exodus 20:3). That commandment did not come with an exception for the gods we build ourselves.

The good news is that God is not nervous. *"He who sits in the heavens laughs"* (Psalm 2:4). No algorithm has ever rewritten His decree. And no machine ever will.

But your job is not to wait passively for the curtain to fall on Albania's wizard. Your job is to be a watchman. *"Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour"* (1 Peter 5:8). The lion is now wearing a chatbot's smile. Will you spot it?

What Will You Do This Week?

1. Watch the full interview above. Share it with one parent and one grandparent who still think AI is "just a tool."
2. Sit at the dinner table this week and ask your children or grandchildren one question: *"Who is your best friend, and is that friend a real person?"* Listen carefully to the answer.
3. For the next seven days, write one important paragraph yourself before you ever ask a chatbot. Use your brain. Do not let it atrophy.
4. Visit Kay Rubacek's website (kayrubacek.com) and subscribe to *The Human Edge*. Forward one issue to your pastor.
5. Open your Bible to Romans 12:2 this Sunday. Read it slowly. Ask the Lord to renew your mind — the one *He* gave you, not the one a corporation is trying to grow you into.

The battle is real, but so is our God. Until Christ returns, our calling is not to predict the future of artificial intelligence but to be faithful witnesses in the present. Stand firm. Speak truth. Trust the One who holds all things in His hands — including every line of code ever written.

Key Takeaways

- Albania has appointed the world's first AI government minister — a piece of code named Diella that wears traditional clothes and makes decisions over millions.
- Seventy-six percent of Gen Z uses AI daily. Only twenty percent of Boomers do — the largest generational tech gap in history.
- Roughly 10% of Google AI answers are wrong. Almost 50% of medical AI responses are questionable.
- Two years ago, Kay Rubacek could spot AI-generated video 99% of the time. Today, she is right only 30% of the time.
- The CEO of OpenAI says we should "get used to" not knowing what is real.
- A senior AI researcher recently quit Anthropic, warned the world is in peril, and left to study poetry.
- Your brain runs on 40 watts and has more connections than any supercomputer ever built. Use it or lose it.
- Gen Z's "best friends" are increasingly AI chatbots. They are also the most anxious generation in modern history.
- An estimated 50% of content on X is now AI-generated. Human voices are being drowned out.
- Kay Rubacek was arrested in China for holding a banner with three words: truth, compassion, and tolerance.
- Genesis 11 already told us this story. Today's Tower of Babel is built of silicon, not brick.

- “He who sits in the heavens laughs” (Psalm 2:4). No algorithm has ever rewritten God’s decree.

Find Gary Binford Online

- **YouTube Channel: @garybinford1969**
- **Podcast Archive: *United Patriots Uprising***
- **X (Twitter): @united_gary**
- **Facebook: Gary Binford**
- **Truth Social: @GaryBinford**

Resources

Kay Rubacek: KayRubacek.com | ***The Human Edge* Substack** | *Epoch Times* AI columnist

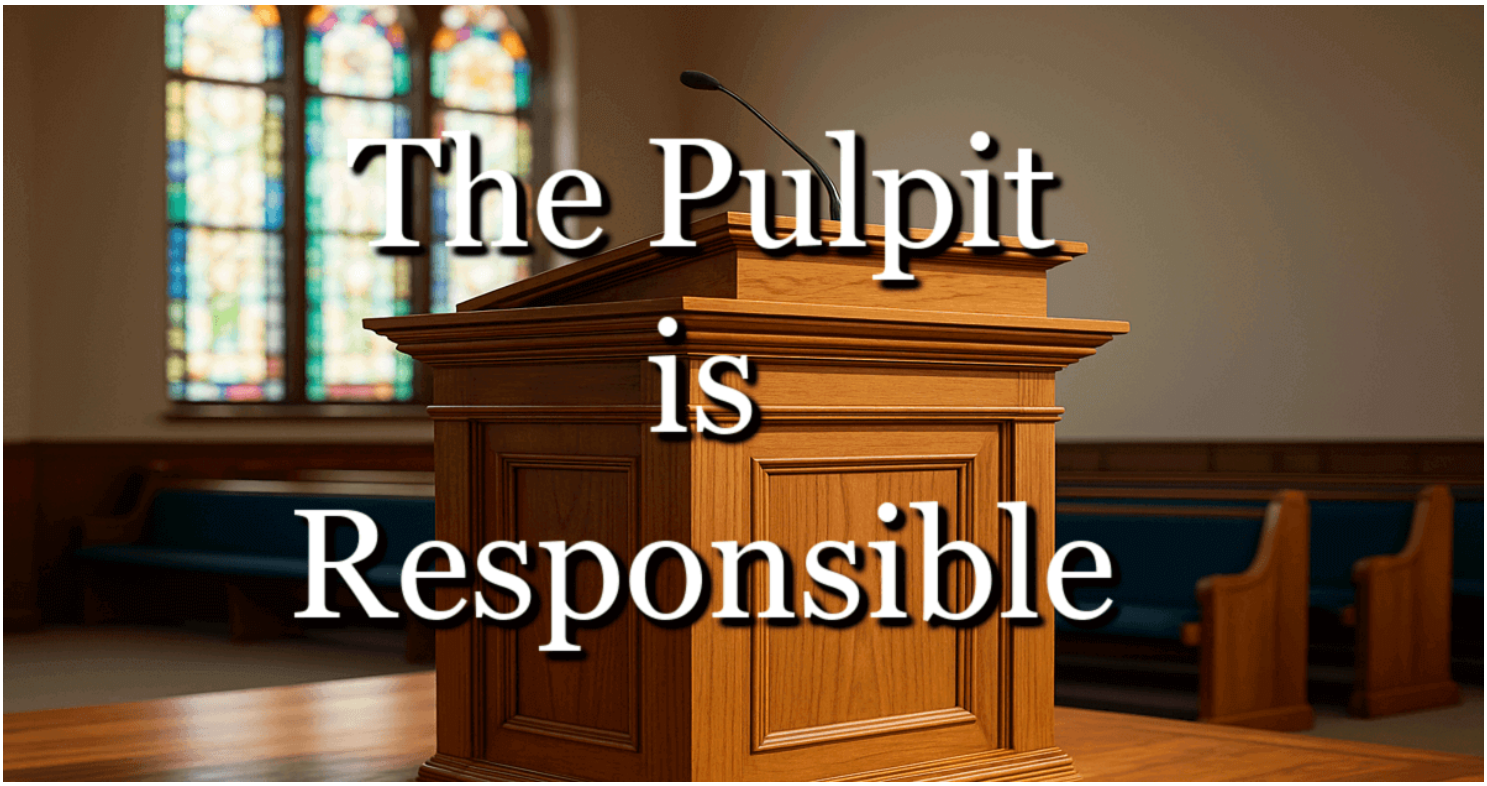
Book by Kay Rubacek: ***Who Are China’s Walking Dead?*** (2020)

Related VCA Articles:

- **Enemies Within the Church: Are You Singing Louder?** — vachristian.org/enemies-within-the-church/
- **The Pulpit vs. Marxism: The Silent Surrender of the American Church** — vachristian.org/pulpit-vs-marxism-silent-surrender/
- **Trusting the Truth in a World of Lies: Gary Binford and Samuel Tolley Pull No Punches** — vachristian.org/amuel-tolley-trusting-the-truth/

The Church That Stayed Silent: How Virginia's Pulpits Failed Their Congregants on April 21

APRIL 22, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CONSTITUTION, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Virginia Was Gerrymandered Because the Church Refused to Speak

By Jeff Bayard, Content Manager, Virginia Christian Alliance

Dear Christian:

On April 21, 2026, Virginia voters approved a constitutional amendment. It passed by roughly three points. That amendment hands the power to draw congressional districts back to the same politicians you voted to strip that power from in 2020.

The new map gives one party ten of eleven congressional seats. In a state nearly split down the middle politically.

I wrote about this before the vote. I laid out the constitutional violations. The rigged math. The ballot language designed to confuse. You can read that piece here: *"Your Vote Doesn't Matter Anymore: How Virginia Democrats Are Rigging Elections for a Decade."*

But this article is not about the politicians who did this.

Politicians pursued power. That is what politicians do when no one holds them accountable.

This is no longer about a redistricting amendment. It's about the institution God ordained to be the conscience of a nation — and its refusal to speak.

The Margin Was Sitting in the Pews

Before we go any further, consider the math.

Virginia has approximately 8.88 million residents and 6.76 million adults. According to Pew Research's 2024 Religious Landscape Study, 62% of Virginia residents identify as Christian. That's roughly 4.19 million Christian adults in this state.

National data shows about 30% of adults who identify as Christian attend church weekly. Apply that to Virginia and you get approximately 1.26 million weekly churchgoing Christians.

The redistricting amendment passed by roughly three percentage points. In a low-turnout special election, that margin likely represents somewhere between 50,000 and 100,000 votes.

There are over 1.2 million Christians in Virginia who attend church every week.

The church did not lack the people to stop this. It lacked the voice.

The margin of defeat was sitting in the pews on Sunday morning. And nobody said a word.

A Silence That Cost Virginia Its Voice

Virginia has thousands of churches. Thousands of pastors. Hundreds of thousands of believers who sit under biblical teaching every Sunday.

On the most consequential vote in Virginia in years — a vote that any believer with a basic understanding of biblical justice would have recognized immediately — the vast majority of those pulpits said nothing.

Not a word about what was on the ballot. Not a word about what the amendment would do. Not a word about whether Scripture has anything to say about justice, representation, or the proper limits of governing authority.

Silence.

The result is exactly what you get when the church goes quiet while the state advances. The state wins unopposed.

What God's Word Says About Silent Watchmen

God speaks directly to this in Ezekiel 33:6: *"But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand."*

Read that carefully. God does not hold the watchman responsible for whether the people listen. He holds the watchman responsible for whether the watchman speaks. The failure is not in the outcome. The failure is in the silence.

Pastors and elders are watchmen. That is not a metaphor. It is a job description given by God. When something threatens the flock — spiritually, morally, or civically — the watchman blows the trumpet. Period.

Proverbs 31:8–9 commands: *"Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy."*

The people whose votes just became meaningless in nine of eleven districts — they are the voiceless now. Their representation has been stripped by mathematical design. The institution God ordained to speak for the voiceless chose not to speak.

James 4:17 makes the standard plain: *"So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin."*

This is not a gray area. Rigging elections so outcomes are predetermined regardless of how people vote violates just governance. Scripture speaks to justice repeatedly and without ambiguity. The church knew what was at stake. The silence was a choice. And choices have consequences.

How the Church Lost Its Prophetic Voice

The church in America has retreated from civic engagement for decades. Virginia is no exception.

The retreat rests on a well-meaning but deeply flawed idea: the church should not be "political."

But there is a critical difference between partisan and prophetic. A pastor who says "vote Republican" is being partisan. A pastor who teaches what Scripture says about justice, authority, and the proper limits of government — and trusts the congregation to apply it — is being prophetic.

The church has confused these two things for so long that most pastors now treat any civic issue as untouchable.

The result? Congregations walk into the voting booth with the same information as everyone else — campaign ads, social media, and ballot language crafted to obscure rather than clarify.

That is not neutrality. That is abandonment.

Hosea 4:6 warns: *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."* Not lack of intelligence. Not lack of good intentions. Lack of knowledge. And whose job is it to provide that knowledge? The shepherds. The teachers. The watchmen.

When the church does not teach, the culture fills the vacuum. Every single time.

What Virginia's Churches Told Their People

Across Virginia, churches addressed the April 21 vote the same way. Here is a real example — a prayer request email sent to a Sunday school class the week before the election:

"Dear friends, PRAYERS FOR COMMONWEALTH. This coming Tuesday, April 21st, there is a very important election. Only one item is on the ballot: voting on drawing new voting districts. Please study the pros and cons and VOTE."

Read that again. A constitutional amendment that would strip power from a bipartisan commission, hand it to one party, and redraw the map to predetermine outcomes for a decade — and the church's message was: *study the pros and cons.*

No Scripture. No principles. No framework for evaluating what was on the ballot. Just: figure it out yourself.

That email was not unusual. It was typical. Churches across Virginia handled April 21 the same way — if they mentioned it at all.

Now imagine what that email could have looked like:

"Dear friends, this Tuesday Virginia votes on a constitutional amendment that would bypass the bipartisan redistricting commission voters approved in 2020 and give the General Assembly power to redraw congressional districts. Scripture calls us to pursue justice and oppose the perversion of it (Deuteronomy 16:19–20). It warns against rigged scales and false balances (Proverbs 11:1). Please pray, study this issue in light of God's Word, and vote your conscience biblically."

Same length. No candidate endorsement. No partisan language. Just Scripture applied to the moment.

That is the difference between neutrality and abandonment. One equips the congregation. The other leaves them to the campaign ads.

The church did not need to say "vote no." The church needed to teach biblical principles of just governance and trust the people to apply them. In most Virginia churches, that never happened.

The pattern repeated across the commonwealth. Pastors stayed silent. Sunday school leaders deferred. Church emails — when they existed at all — said "study the pros and cons" without offering a single biblical principle to study them by.

The result was predictable. Congregations walked into the voting booth with no more biblical clarity than their unchurched neighbors. And an amendment that Scripture's own principles expose as unjust passed by three points.

What Biblical Teaching on Civic Issues Actually Looks Like

Some pastors will say they have a legitimate concern. They do not want the pulpit to become a campaign platform. That concern deserves serious consideration — because they are right that the church is not a political action committee.

However, that concern fails when it becomes an excuse for silence on issues where Scripture speaks clearly.

Teaching biblically on civic issues does not mean endorsing candidates. It does not mean turning the sermon into a stump speech.

But let me be direct. When a ballot measure touches something Scripture speaks to clearly — the sanctity of life, biblical sexuality, or the perversion of justice — the church has every right and every obligation to put that information in front of the congregation.

A voter guide on abortion is not partisan. It is pastoral. A voter guide on an amendment that rigs elections and strips citizens of meaningful representation is not political activism. It is biblical faithfulness.

The church draws the line at endorsing candidates and parties. It does not draw the line at applying Scripture to the issues those candidates and parties are deciding.

It means doing what the church exists to do: teach the whole counsel of God and trust the Holy Spirit to apply it.

If a pastor teaches what Romans 13:1–4 says about governing authority — that government is ordained by God to serve the good, not to serve its own power — the congregation can evaluate for themselves whether bypassing a bipartisan commission to rig maps for one party serves the good.

If a pastor teaches Deuteronomy 16:19–20 — *"You shall not pervert justice. You shall not show partiality… Justice, and only justice, you shall follow"* — the congregation can evaluate whether a 10–1 map in a closely divided state represents justice.

If a pastor teaches Proverbs 11:1 — *"A false balance is an abomination to the LORD, but a just weight is his delight"* — the congregation can recognize rigged scales when they see them.

The pastor does not have to say "vote no." The Scripture says it for him. He just has to be willing to open the text.

Hope, Action, and the Road Ahead

The amendment passed. The legal battles continue. The Virginia Supreme Court still has pending cases. Republican leaders have made clear the fight is not over in the courts. The outcome is not yet final.

But whether this amendment stands or falls, the deeper problem remains. The church in Virginia — and across America — has lost its prophetic voice on civic righteousness.

Until that voice is recovered, the state will continue to advance unopposed.

Here is what you can do.

Talk to your pastor. Not with anger. With grief. Share this article. Ask whether the church has a responsibility to teach biblical principles of governance. Ask what would have to be at stake for the pulpit to speak.

Start a study. In your small group or Sunday school, open the Scriptures on justice, government, and the Christian's civic responsibility. Use Romans 13. Proverbs 31:8–9. Ezekiel 33. Deuteronomy 16. Let the text do the work.

Be the voice yourself. If the church will not teach, the laypeople must. Not in rebellion against the church. In faithfulness to the God who commands us to speak for the voiceless.

And remember this: God is sovereign over Virginia. He is sovereign over every map, every court, and every election. Our calling is not to win political battles. Our calling is to be faithful — to speak truth, pursue justice, and refuse the silence that lets injustice pass unchallenged.

The battle is real, but so is our God. He who sits in the heavens is not threatened by the schemes of men (Psalm 2:4). Our calling is not to save the republic. Our calling is to be the church.

And the church does not go silent when truth is at stake. Not ever.

*For a deeper exploration of this topic, read the full constitutional analysis: "**Your Vote Doesn't Matter Anymore: How Virginia Democrats Are Rigging Elections for a Decade**."*

Jeff Bayard
Ghost-Writer | Author | Website Content Manager

The Receipts Condemn the Episcopal Church

APRIL 17, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

They did not stumble into this, and they have never hidden it. The Episcopal Church voted for every step, recorded each one in its own hand, and published the file for anyone to read. That record is now the evidence against it — and in the courts of heaven, the verdict is already entered. There is only one door left out of a sentence like this, and its name is repentance.

The Church and the Christian Church • Part One • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three

- The Episcopal Church did not drift quietly; it voted, recorded, and published each step — the descent is a dated, numbered public record anyone can pull tonight.
- Read against God's three walls — marriage, our nature as male and female, and the sanctity of life — that record shows a steady lean away from true, in the church's own words.
- We bring no accusation the church has not already signed. We only hold up the line and read the wall.

A church that abandons the faith usually leaves no paper trail. It does not announce a departure. It simply stops believing what it once preached, one quiet heart at a time, until a generation looks up and finds the building full of strangers. There is rarely a document to point to. There is only an absence where conviction used to be.

The Episcopal Church is the rare exception. The story of Episcopal Church same-sex marriage — and much else besides — did not unfold quietly. It unfolded *on the record* — in convention, by resolution, with numbers and votes and tallies, every motion archived and page-numbered and posted online for anyone to read. Where most churches drift in silence, this one kept the minutes. It wrote down each step of its own descent and filed the paperwork.

That spares us the hardest part of an indictment. We do not have to characterize this church, or guess at its heart, or assemble a case from rumor. The case is already written, and the church wrote it. Our task is only to read it back — slowly, in order, against the line.

So we begin where the last article promised: with the plumb line. God hangs it — we do not. Ours is the smaller task of holding it up where it can be seen and reading the wall against it. And the walls we measure are not theirs but God's. He built three of them plumb and named them in the opening pages of Scripture, and against each one the record speaks for itself.

The Cornerstone: 1976

None of what follows began in this century. The first stone was laid in 1976, and everything after was built on top of it.

That year, the 65th General Convention resolved that homosexual persons are *"children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, and pastoral concern and care of the Church"* (**Resolution A069**). Read in isolation, the sentence sounds like ordinary Christian charity — every sinner has a full claim on the love and care of the Church, and so do we all. But it was not left in isolation. It became the cornerstone, the verse cited at the foundation of every change that came after, the thing each later resolution was built to honor. The church will gather in Minneapolis in September 2026 to celebrate that 1976 vote by name — *"Full & Equal: 50 Years in the Making."* They are not hiding the cornerstone. They are throwing it a fiftieth birthday.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

The First Wall: Marriage

God built the first wall before He built a nation, a temple, or a single law. He built it in a garden. *"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh"* (Genesis 2:24, ESV). One man, one woman, one flesh — the oldest institution on earth,

and Christ Himself returned to this exact verse when He was asked about marriage, citing it as settled from the beginning (Matthew 19:4–6). That is the wall. Here is the record beside it.

2009. The 76th General Convention directed its Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to *"collect and develop theological and liturgical resources"* for the blessing of same-gender relationships (**Resolution C056**, Journal p. 780). The minutes show the first draft asked for more — immediate authorization for any diocese to begin blessing such unions at once — and the convention sanded that down to a study commission to get it passed. Even softened, the wall had started to lean.

2012. The 77th General Convention authorized a rite — *"The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant"* — for provisional use beginning the First Sunday of Advent, under the bishop's permission (**Resolution A049**, Journal pp. 565–567). The study had become a service.

2015. The 78th General Convention amended Canon I.18, the marriage canon itself. The convention reached into it and struck the heart out, one phrase at a time:

- *"a man and a woman"* — struck.
- *"husband and wife"* — struck.
- the clause binding marriage to its definition *"as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer"* — struck.

In their place stood a genderless canon (**Resolution A036**, Journal pp. 781–783). A companion measure authorized marriage rites offering the options *"husband," "wife," "person,"* or *"spouse"* (**Resolution A054**). How that erasure was actually done — line by line, in the church's own redline — is the subject of the next article. For now it is enough to note the date the man and the woman were removed from the wall: the First Sunday of Advent, 2015.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

The Second Wall: Male and Female

The second wall is older than marriage, because it is the thing marriage is built from. *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created him"* (Genesis 1:27, ESV). Male and female is not a cultural arrangement the church is free to update. It is the image of God, stamped on us at creation. To blur it is not to expand a category. It is to deface the stamp.

2003. The Diocese of New Hampshire elected, and the General Convention confirmed, a bishop living openly in a same-sex relationship — consecrated that November, the first in the church's history. The office that exists to guard the teaching became the place the teaching was set aside.

2012. The 77th General Convention amended Canon III.1.2, which governs access to ordination. To the list of categories that may not bar a person from the discernment process — race, color, national origin, sex, marital status — it added *"gender identity and expression"* (**Resolution D002**, Journal p. 512). The canon that protects who may stand in the pulpit was rewritten to protect the very confusion the second wall was built to prevent.

And this is not a distant story for Virginians. It has a local address. Here in Richmond, a historic parish of the Diocese of Virginia is led by a member of the clergy who is married to a person of the same sex — a fact the parish publishes plainly on its own website, with no embarrassment, because under the canons above it is no longer an irregularity. It is the system working as designed. We name no individual and impugn no soul; we note only what the institution has made ordinary. The national record is not happening somewhere else. It is happening on Grove Avenue.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

The Third Wall: The Sanctity of Life

The third wall guards the image-bearer himself, from the womb to the last breath. *"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb"* (Psalm 139:13, ESV). The life God knits, no one is free to unmake or remake. The body He gives is not raw material awaiting our improvement. It is His workmanship, and it is good.

2022. The 80th General Convention resolved that the Episcopal Church should advocate for access to gender-affirming care *"in all forms (social, medical, or any other) and at all ages,"* and affirmed that members should be able to obtain it *"with no restriction on movement, autonomy, or timing"* (**Resolution D066**, Journal p. 883). The resolution frames this as part of the Baptismal call to *"respect the dignity of every human being."* Read the three words that matter most slowly: *at all ages*. A church that once knit its theology to the God who knits children in the womb had resolved, in writing, to advocate for altering that same body — at any age, without restriction. The wall around the child did not crack. It was voted through.

And still the plumb line hangs straight.

Beyond the Walls

A structure built against God's order does not stay inside the sanctuary. By 2024 the 81st General Convention had turned outward, directing advocacy for access to LGBTQIA+ materials in public schools and libraries (**Resolution D039**). What was once a private theology of a single denomination is now a program for the public square — the same lean, pressed outward onto the wider culture and the next generation.

And so the receipts run from 1976 to the present in an unbroken line: a cornerstone, three walls breached, and a campaign carried out the front door into the street. Not one item on this list is our characterization. Every date, every quotation, every page number belongs to the church's own archive. We did not build the case. We only read it aloud.

The Line Still Hangs

Set the whole record beside the plumb line of Amos — the weight on the cord that God said He would set *"in the midst of my people"* (Amos 7:8) — and notice what the line has done through every vote in this article. Nothing. It has not moved. It did not bend in 1976 or 2003 or 2015 or 2022. It cannot be amended by resolution, voted down in committee, or struck from a canon. The church passed motion after motion; the line simply hung there, straight and silent, measuring. That stillness is both the judgment and the mercy. The judgment, because the wall is shown bent against a standard that will not flatter it. The mercy, because a line that never moves is a line a church can always be rebuilt against.

And churches have been. When the Episcopal Church crossed these lines, thousands did not drift with it; they left to form the Anglican Church in North America, holding the old confession at the cost of their buildings and their pensions. The drift was never a fate. It was always a choice — which means another choice is always open.

We hold no illusion that a page of dates will turn a single heart. It cannot. No argument on a page has ever raised the dead, and no list of receipts ever saved a soul — but the God who knit the image-bearer in the womb can yet make the crooked wall straight. Our task is the smaller one: to hold up the plumb line where every eye can see it, to read the record without flinching or gloating, and to leave the door of repentance standing open for every reader, every pulpit, and every church still able to walk back through it. The line is hung — by God, not by us. In the next article, we watch the wall come down — one struck word at a time.

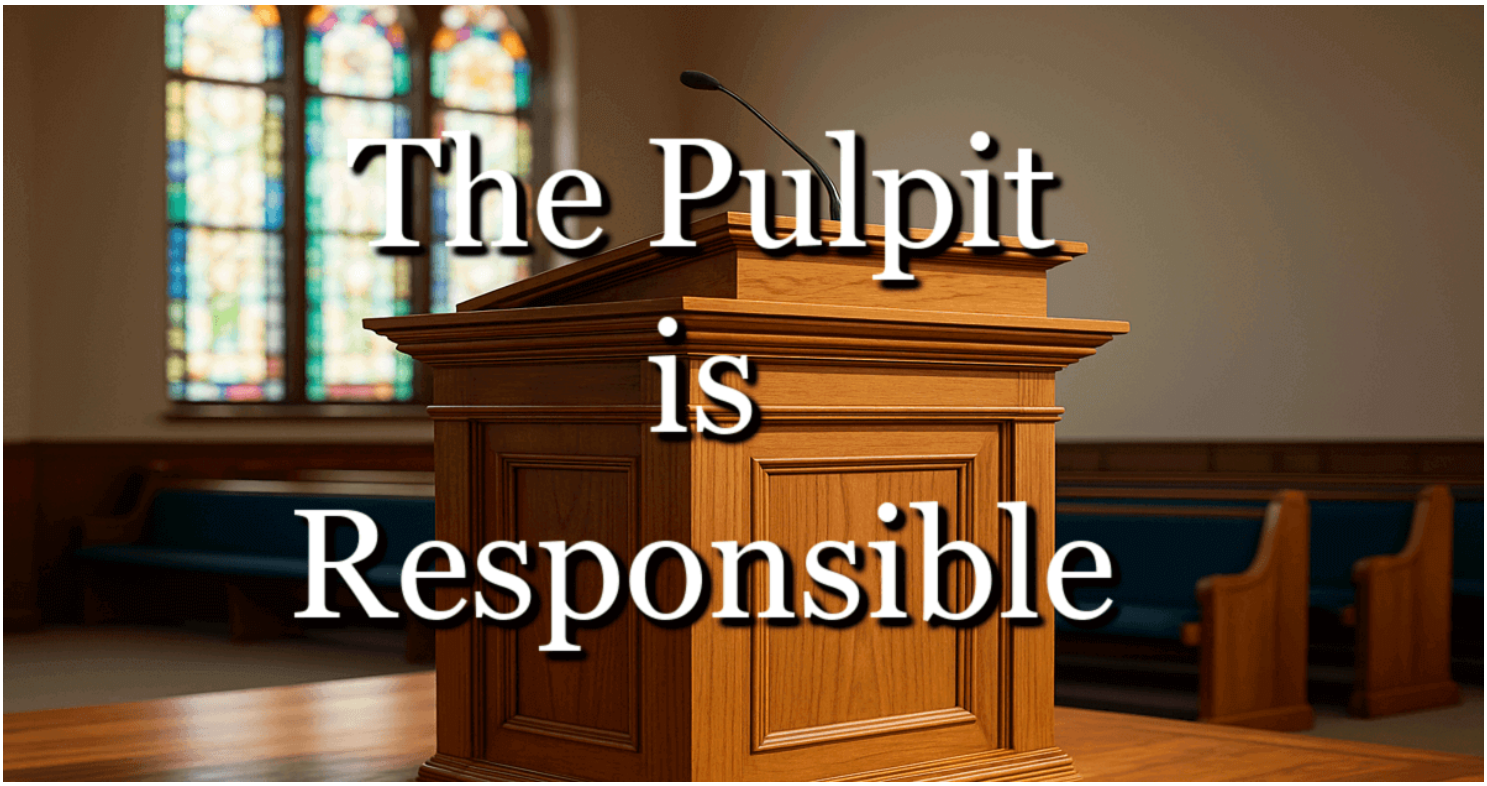
For Further Study

- **The Church and the Christian Church** — the series introduction, where the plumb line is laid down before any wall is measured.
- **The Pulpit Is Responsible** — what happens when the watchman posted to guard these walls falls silent.
- **Wolves Among Us** — false teaching weighed, name by name, against the Word of God.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV). Resolution texts and page numbers are drawn from the Acts of Convention and the Journals of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, published by the General Convention and archived at the Archives of the Episcopal Church.

The Curse, The Cross, and the Missing Urgency in Today's Pulpits

APRIL 14, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, PULPIT IS RESPONSIBLE



The Only Way: The Curse and the Cross

By Jeff Bayard, Content Manager, Virginia Christian Alliance

The Text

"For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, 'Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.'" — Galatians 3:10

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us — for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.'" — Galatians 3:13

Paul is not floating a theological idea for discussion. He is stating the condition of every human being and the only remedy God has provided. Notice the force of his language — "all who rely on works of the law are under a curse." Not some. Not the worst offenders. All. And the standard is total obedience to everything written in the Law.

Two categories. Under the curse or redeemed from it.

No third option.

The Reality

The curse Paul describes is not abstract. It is the just sentence of a holy God against every person who has failed to keep His law perfectly.

"Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." Not most things. All things. One failure — and the curse stands.

We want categories. Mostly good. Trying hard. Better than average. God's law does not grade on a curve. It demands perfection, and what it does not receive, it condemns.

Paul reinforces this in Romans 3:10: *"None is righteous, no, not one."* He is describing the universal condition of humanity apart from Christ. Every mouth is stopped. Every person stands accountable before God. No exceptions.

The Witnesses

The men who shook nations with their preaching understood this weight and did not flinch from it.

George Whitefield (see **video documentary**) insisted that no amount of church attendance, moral behavior, or religious profession could substitute for the new birth. Jesus said, "You must be born again." Without regeneration by the Holy Spirit, a person remains dead in sin no matter how religious they appear.

Jonathan Edwards (see **video documentary**) preached the holiness of God and the reality of judgment because people who do not know they are in danger will never seek rescue.

Charles Spurgeon (see **video documentary**)pointed to the cross as the only place where the curse was answered. Christ became a curse so that cursed people could go free.

What Has Changed

Something has shifted in how the gospel is commonly presented. The shift is what makes it dangerous.

The curse is rarely mentioned. Sin is reframed as brokenness. Judgment is replaced with disappointment. Repentance becomes self-improvement. And the cross becomes an act of affirmation rather than substitution.

This is no longer about style preferences in preaching. It's about whether the actual gospel is being delivered.

When the problem is softened, the solution is softened with it. If man is merely broken, he needs repair. If man is under a curse, he needs redemption. These are not the same thing.

Jesus said in Mark 2:17, *"Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick."* The physician is only sought by those who know they are sick. If the sickness is never named, the Physician is never sought for the right reasons.

The Question

This brings the matter to you directly.

Not to a theological concept. Not to an audience in the 1700s.

To you.

Have you ever stood under the weight of Galatians 3:10 and let it speak? Have you ever considered that the law you have broken — even once — carries a curse you cannot lift by effort, sincerity, or religious observance?

Are you righteous by God's standard? Not by human comparison. By His.

If the Spirit of God is pressing this on your conscience right now, do not push it aside. That is not condemnation — that is mercy. The Holy Spirit does not convict to destroy. He convicts to bring you to the only One who can save.

The Only Way

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us."

This is the gospel. Not advice. Not inspiration. Substitution.

Christ kept the law perfectly and took the full weight of the curse that belonged to lawbreakers. He hung on the tree so that the condemned could be set free. This is Calvary — God's Son bearing the wrath owed to sinners.

How is this received? Paul answers in Galatians 3:11: *"The righteous shall live by faith."* Not by works. Not by moral effort. By faith — trust placed entirely in Christ and what He accomplished on the cross.

You cannot earn what Christ already purchased. You cannot add to what God has declared finished. You receive it by faith, or you remain under the curse.

The Call

You are either under the curse of the law or you have been redeemed from it by Christ. There is no partial redemption. No provisional standing.

If you have never turned from sin and placed your faith in Jesus Christ — in His perfect life, His sacrificial death, His bodily resurrection — the curse still stands. Because it is true, and because the remedy is available to you right now.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." — John 3:16

That is not comfort for the comfortable. That is rescue for the condemned.

Do not wait. The Spirit who convicts is the same Spirit who gives new life. The curse Christ bore was meant for you — and He bore it willingly so you would not have to.

Are you still under the curse, or has Christ borne it for you?

*For more articles confronting the responsibility of today's pulpits, see our series: **The Pulpit Is Responsible**.*

The Church and the Christian Church

MARCH 20, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Before a single wall is judged, the line must be hung — and the line comes down from above.

Series Introduction • By the Virginia Christian Alliance Editorial Board

The Big Three

- Many American denominations have kept the name, the building, and the calendar while quietly retiring the authority that made them Christian.
- This drift is neither new nor sudden; it follows a charted pattern that always begins with the demotion of Scripture.
- This series lays down the measure first — the plumb line of God's Word — by which every church that follows will be weighed.

There was a time when the words *church* and *Christian church* meant the same thing. They no longer do.

A living body and a corpse can look alike for a while — the same face, the same familiar clothes. What separates them is breath. *"As the body apart from the spirit is dead"* (James 2:26, ESV). A church can be a body of that kind: the steeple still standing, the hymns still sung, the calendar and the stained glass and the name on the sign all kept — and the breath gone out of it. Strike the living Word from a church and you do not get a worse church. You get a beautiful building with no life in it. Scripture even gives the address: *"You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead"* (Revelation 3:1, ESV). That is how a *Christian* church becomes *just* a church. The sign still says *church*. The question this series asks is whether the word *Christian* still belongs in front of it.

A Name Without the Life

This is not a new fear, and it is not an angry thing to say. More than a century ago, Charles Spurgeon watched the churches of his own day loosen their grip on Scripture — trading the authority of the Book for the spirit of the age — and he refused to call it growth, or unity, or progress. He called it the Downgrade. Writing in 1887, he named the counterfeit without flinching: *"A new religion has been initiated, which is no more Christianity than chalk is cheese"* — a thing that *"palms itself off as the old faith with slight improvements"* and *"usurps pulpits which were erected for gospel preaching."* He stood nearly alone in saying so, and it cost him dearly — his own denomination censured him for it. The pattern he named has not changed since. Only its pace.

We do not write this with relish. There is no joy in measuring a church and finding it bent. These were congregations where the gospel was once preached and the lost were once saved, and to watch what some have become is to grieve, not to gloat.

A Church Does Not Vote to Leave the Faith

Here is the hard truth that makes the grief sharper: a church does not vote to leave the faith. It drifts. And it drifts by a method so ordinary you can chart it.

First, Scripture is still honored — quoted, printed, read aloud — but no longer simply obeyed. Soon it becomes one voice among many: tradition, reason, experience, and the conscience of the age all pull up a chair beside it. Before long, by slow degrees, it becomes the obstacle — the hard text that compassion must learn to explain away, the old rule that progress must work around.

And by the time anyone calls for a formal vote, the vote changes nothing that matters. It only ratifies, in public, what was decided years earlier in rooms where no one believed they were leaving anything at all. This is why the falls in this series will look so sudden from the outside and feel so inevitable from within. The headline is the vote. The disease is everything that came before it.

The Plumb Line

So before we examine a single denomination, we must do what a builder does before he condemns a wall. We must hang the line.

The prophet Amos was given the picture:

"Behold, the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. And the Lord said to me, 'Amos, what do you see?' And I said, 'A plumb line.' Then the Lord said, 'Behold, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel.'" — Amos 7:7–8 (ESV)

A plumb line is the simplest tool in the mason's hand — a weight on a cord — and it does only one thing: it shows true vertical. It cannot be argued with. It does not bend to accommodate the wall. The mason measures the wall against the line; he never adjusts the line to flatter the wall.

Three Edges, One Line

That line is the Word of God, and it has three edges that are finally one. It is the *canon* — the measuring rod, the straight rule that judges everything else. It is the *canon* — the settled books of Scripture, God-breathed and complete. And it is the *canon* in the oldest sense — the core truth of the matter, the thing that is simply so. *"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness"* (2 Timothy 3:16, ESV). Reproof. Correction. The line was always meant to test the wall.

And notice where the line comes from. The plumb hangs from above. It is lowered into the room; it does not rise up out of the floor. The standard is not the church's to set, and not the culture's to revise. It descends. A church that begins adjusting the line to fit the wall has not grown more compassionate. It has only let go of the one fixed point it was ever given.

What This Series Will Do

Understand first what we are measuring. We are not laying out the structure a wayward church has built and touring its rooms — that would only hand the architect of the confusion his own blueprint. We are doing the opposite. We are measuring the walls *God* built, and showing where one body has leaned away from them. The standard sets the terms here; the rebellion only gets exposed by it.

God built His walls plumb, and named them in the first pages of Scripture. There is the wall of *marriage* — one man, one woman, the first institution He raised *(Genesis 2:24)*. There is the wall of *our very nature as male and female*, the image He stamped on us *(Genesis 1:27)*. And there is the wall around *human life itself*, the image-bearer guarded from the womb to the last breath. In the

articles that follow, we will hold the line against each of these walls in turn, and let a specific American denomination — within living memory, in its own published words — show us how far it has bent from true.

We will be fair. Each believed it was choosing love, and we will let that case be made in its own words before we answer it. We will measure institutions, not hearts — what a body decided and signed, never the eternal standing of any one soul inside it. We will keep it on this side of the ocean: the American church is our subject and our burden. And we will keep asking the harder question underneath — not how a culture went astray, but how the pulpit that was posted to guard these walls fell silent while they leaned.

From Canon to Cannon

But understand what a plumb line becomes in a war.

The same ancient root that gives us *canon* — the straight reed, the measuring rod — gives us a second word built on the very same image: the *cannon*, the straight line that does not measure but fires. And that is what this series finally is. We lay the canon down now, as the rule. Then we turn it on the field. Each wall measured and found bent, the artillery of Scripture is opened on the position — not to destroy the people behind it, but to break the lie that holds them, and to clear the ground before the troops are sent over the line. *"Contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints"* (Jude 3, ESV). The reader is no spectator here. The reader is the one being sent forward.

One straight line. It is the rule that measures the wall, and it is the line we aim down. The same edge does both.

The Line Still Hangs

Do not mistake the gravity of this series for despair. The plumb line still hangs, and it still hangs straight, because the One who lowered it has not moved. For every body that bent the rule, others have held it at real cost — proof that the drift is a choice and never a fate. Walls can be rebuilt. Churches have repented before, and by the mercy of God they will again.

No argument on this page has ever raised the dead, and no measurement ever saved a soul. Only the Spirit who raised Christ can do that. The Board's task is smaller and plainer: to hang the line where every eye can see it, to name what is bent, and to commend every reader, every pulpit, and every church still able to repent to the God who alone makes the crooked straight.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

Spurgeon quotation: C. H. Spurgeon, "Another Word Concerning the Down-Grade," The Sword and the Trowel (August 1887). Public domain.

Enemies Within the Church: Are You Singing Louder?

FEBRUARY 5, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNITED PATRIOTS UPRISING WITH GARY BINFORD

In this episode of *United Patriots Uprising with Gary Binford*, Gary welcomes Trevor Loudon to confront a sobering reality—the infiltration of Christ's church—and to call pastors and ordinary believers back to courage, discernment, and biblical responsibility.

They sang louder to drown out the screams. Eighty years later, American Christians are doing the same thing.

Trevor Loudon exposes the Marxist takeover of God's house–and why YOU must stop singing and start fighting. Now.

A small German church sits beside a railway siding in World War II. Inside, faithful Christians sing hymns, eyes closed, voices raised in worship. Then the train arrives. Box cars. Banging from inside. Desperate cries pierce through the music.

"Help us! Give us water! There are children in here!"

The Christians inside know exactly what's happening. Everyone knows. Marxists are transporting Jews and political prisoners to death camps. These are image-bearers of God, crying out for help from God's people.

What do the faithful Christians do?

They sing louder.

Consequently, they drown out the cries. They pretend not to hear. They keep their eyes closed and their hands clean. After all, what could they do? They have families. Responsibilities. Full plates. Getting involved would be… uncomfortable.

Fast forward eighty years. American churches sit beside their own railway sidings. The trains are different now–gender confusion poisoning children, Marxist infiltration destroying denominations, the slaughter of the unborn, the silencing of biblical truth, the weaponization of "social justice" to replace the gospel.

What are American Christians doing?

We're singing louder. Keeping our faith safely within four walls. Apologizing for the gospel. Following "pansy pastors"–yes, those are Trevor Loudon's exact words–who have lost all conquering vision and turned the Bride of Christ into a social club for geriatrics.

Trevor Loudon–author, filmmaker, and researcher who has spent over 30 years exposing Marxist and terrorist infiltration into Western civilization–just sat down with Gary Binford on United Patriots Uprising. The conversation? Enemies Within the Church. The verdict? Judgment starts at the house of the Lord. Meanwhile, the American church is under severe judgment.

By the end of this article, you'll have to answer one question: Are you the German Christian who sang louder, or are you ready to fight for God's house the way you'd fight for your own children?

Watch the Full Interview: Trevor Loudon Exposes Enemies Within the Church

Gary Binford doesn't ask much of his audience. In fact, this might be the first time he's ever made a direct request. However, this interview is so critical, so explosive, that he's asking you to watch the entire episode–and share it from the rooftops.

Author/Filmmaker Trevor Loudon Exposes Enemies Within The Church
https://youtube.com/watch?v=U-L0h3-b1fo

Full episode: Gary Binford interviews Trevor Loudon on United Patriots Uprising

Watch at RadioInfluence.com or your favorite podcast platform

After you watch this, you won't be able to un-know it. The question is: What will you DO with what you know?

The Infiltration: How Communists Took Over God's House

Here's what most Christians don't understand: Marxists didn't start infiltrating the American church in 2020 with Black Lives Matter. They didn't start in the 1960s with the sexual revolution. Marxist infiltration started in 1907–ten years before the Bolshevik Revolution even happened.

In other words, the very first communist front organization in America wasn't a labor union. It wasn't a political party. Communists created the Methodist Federation for Social Action, founded by communist Harry Ward from Union Theological Seminary.

Think about that. Communists identified the church as their primary target BEFORE they even took over Russia.

"What are you going to do if you're a revolutionary?" Trevor explains. "You want respectability. You want influence. And you want money. You want resources. The churches had all three."

Churches had moral authority–people looked to them for truth. Additionally, churches had wealth–tithing produced steady income. Churches had influence–they shaped culture and politics. So communists came for the churches first.

Moreover, Trevor reveals the ultimate insult to God: "This is the devil at work here. What do you want to do? You want to give the middle finger to God by using His church against His word."

Bella Dodd: 1,100 Communist Priests Infiltrated the Catholic Church

But it gets worse. Much worse.

In the 1930s, the Communist Party assigned Bella Dodd–a high-ranking member of the Communist Party USA and the New York teachers union–a specific mission: Infiltrate the Catholic Church.

Bella Dodd personally claimed to have infiltrated 1,100 young men into the Catholic priesthood–many of them homosexual.

They started entering seminaries in the 1930s. By the early 1960s–just thirty years later–those young communists had become bishops, cardinals, and Vatican officials with seniority and influence.

The result? Vatican II in the early 1960s–the massive liberal transformation of Catholic doctrine that jettisoned conservative teaching and created the seeker-friendly, left-wing church we see today.

And it all happened because the enemy was patient. They had full plates too. Nevertheless, they made time. They sacrificed. They infiltrated. For the devil.

Here's the question that should haunt you: Bella Dodd worked for YEARS. She sacrificed for DECADES. For Satan's kingdom. And you can't make time to fight for God's kingdom?

Joseph Fletcher: The Communist Who Changed America's Morality

If you've ever heard someone justify sin with the phrase "it's complicated" or "what's the most loving thing to do?"–you're hearing the voice of Joseph Fletcher.

Fletcher was the leading Protestant theologian of the 20th century. Harvard Divinity School. Countless books. Lectures around the world. In 1966, he wrote a book called Situation Ethics that transformed the moral framework of an entire nation.

His argument? The Old Testament is too rigid for the modern world. Instead of following God's law, we should look at each situation and make "the most loving decision."

Sounds nice, right? Compassionate. Progressive. Christ-like, even.

Except Joseph Fletcher was a Communist Party member.

Communists planted him as a theologian. He wrote the book that changed America's morality. Then he left the church, declared himself an atheist, and helped found an organization advocating for euthanasia for children up to 10 years of age.

Furthermore, his wife helped Margaret Sanger set up Planned Parenthood.

He was a communist posing as a Christian. Had he been a labor union official, nobody would have listened to him. However, because he wore the robe of a Protestant theologian, he had massive influence.

Consequently, 90% of moral decisions in America today–including in the church–are made on a "situation ethics" basis. Not "What does God say?" but "What feels most loving to me right now?"

The enemy planted a wolf in shepherd's clothing. And the sheep never even noticed.

Wokeism IS Marxism: Communists Already Took Your Church

Let's be direct: When Trevor says "woke church," he means "Marxist church." Wokeism is Marxism. There's no difference. Period.

The Southern Baptist Convention–the gold standard of conservative, Bible-believing Christianity for generations–adopted Critical Race Theory as an official tool of the church at their convention in Alabama just a few years ago.

Read that again. The SBC adopted CRT–an ideology invented by two Communist Party members specifically to promote racial agitation on behalf of China–as part of their theological toolkit.

How did this happen? Albert Mohler. Russell Moore. JD Greear. These are the names Trevor calls out.

Furthermore, Campus Crusade for Christ–one of the largest Christian student organizations in the world–doesn't even use the name "Christ" anymore. They're just "Cru" now. Completely Marxist, Trevor reports.

Even Bible colleges–the institutions training the next generation of pastors–fell to communist infiltration. Bible colleges teach white privilege, not repentance. They teach climate change, not sin.

The Andy Stanley Youth Group Horror Story

Trevor shares a story from a friend in Atlanta whose son attended Andy Stanley's church. The youth pastor's message every week?

"Mom, he tells me what a racist I am. That's all he does. I don't hear anything about the Bible. I don't hear anything about Christ. Just what a racist scumbag I am. I'm not going there anymore."

Stop for a second. Be honest with yourself.

Youth pastors are teaching YOUR teenager Critical Race Theory right now. Bible colleges are teaching YOUR college student situation ethics. YOUR pastor is apologizing for the gospel instead of proclaiming it.

You know, don't you?

You've felt it. You've noticed the shift. You've heard the language creeping in–"social justice," "systemic racism," "white privilege."

James 4:17: "For he who knows the right thing to do but does not do it, for him it is a sin."

Pansy Pastors: COVID Separated the Wheat From the Chaff

Trevor doesn't mince words: "We have pansy pastors now, wimpy churches who don't even believe what they say. They have lost all conquering vision. They have lost all vision of bringing Christ to the world, building God's kingdom on earth."

The church used to be viral. Powerful. Nation-shaking. The Christianity that fought the Crusades, that evangelized the world, that stood against tyranny–it wasn't apologizing for itself constantly.

Now? Pastors who won't even open their churches during COVID. Pastors who apologize for slavery their ancestors didn't commit. Pastors who teach pronouns instead of repentance.

COVID was the great revealer. Some pastors stood up. Mike McClure's church in San Jose refused to back down. Result? That church is now five times the size it was before COVID.

In contrast, the cowardly churches–the ones who folded, who obeyed the government, who put their faith in lockdowns instead of the Lord? They don't even exist anymore, or they're shadows of their former selves.

COVID sorted the wheat from the chaff. Which one are you?

Hitler's Deal: "You Save Souls, Leave Germany to Me"

Trevor reveals how Hitler won over the German church in the 1930s: "You look after saving souls. Leave Germany to me."

The pastors agreed. They put swastikas in their churches. They kept their faith safely inside four walls. They didn't get involved in "politics."

The result? A war that killed tens of millions. Concentration camps. The Holocaust.

And who had to fix it? Young American Christian boys who put on uniforms, picked up rifles, and charged Nazi machine guns across open beaches at Normandy.

Trevor's devastating question: "You could have been a model citizen–loyal to your wife, honest in business, went to church every week. But on the ONE DAY you were asked to prove your love of God by helping your neighbor–you failed. Would you rather be that Christian on judgment day, or the 19-year-old boy from Iowa who died face down in a pool of blood on Omaha Beach?"

Which one honored God?

The Parent-Child Parallel: Where's That Energy NOW?

If someone texted you right now: "Your daughter is in danger. Come immediately." What would you do?

Drop everything. Sprint to your car. Run red lights. Break speed limits. You'd fight. You'd die if you had to.

Now imagine God texting you: "My Bride is in danger. Wolves are inside My house. Come immediately."

What are you doing right now? Reading an article. Planning to… what? Forward it? "Pray about it"? Forget by dinner?

See the disconnect? Your biological daughter: You'd go OFF THE RAILS to protect her. Your Father's house: You're… "too busy."

That's not Christianity. That's cowardice. And cowards are listed FIRST in Revelation 21:8 among those thrown into the lake of fire.

What You Can Do THIS WEEK

You've read over 2,000 words. You've nodded your head. You've agreed with everything Trevor said.

Now what?

Here are SPECIFIC actions you will take THIS WEEK–not "pray about it," but ACTUALLY DO:

1. First, This Sunday: Confront Your Pastor

> Ask him directly: "Do you believe Critical Race Theory has any place in biblical teaching?" Watch his reaction. If he squirms or deflects–you have your answer.

2. Second, This Week: Examine Your Church

> Pull your teenager aside. Ask them: "What is your youth pastor teaching you?" If your kid says "social justice" or "I'm an oppressor"–pull them out. This week.

3. Third, Right Now: Email Your Kid's Christian College

> "I am a tuition-paying parent. I would like your official statement on Critical Race Theory and wokeism. I expect a clear answer."
>
> If they won't answer clearly, stop writing checks.

4. Next, This Week: Get the Film

> As Enemies Within the Church documents in devastating detail, the evidence of Marxist infiltration is overwhelming and undeniable.
>
> Buy 10 copies at EnemiesWithinTheChurch.com or TrevorLoudon.com. Demand your church leadership watch it and host a screening.
>
> If they refuse–you have your answer about your church.

5. After That: Force the Conversation

> Send this interview to your pastor. CC your elders. Subject line: "We need to discuss this."

6. This Month: Find the Remnant

> If your church won't reform–leave. Find a home church. Find an independent Bible-teaching church. Find pastors who stood up during COVID.

7. Finally, Support the Fight

> Trevor Loudon has dedicated 30+ years to exposing communist infiltration. Gary Binford provides a platform for truth. Organizations like VCA are fighting for biblical Christianity. Support them.

The Final Question: What Will You Actually Do?

They sang louder in 1943. You're reading this in 2026.

Marxists are pulling trains up to YOUR church right now. Gender confusion. Marxist poison. False teachers. The slaughter continues.

What are you doing? Singing louder? Or ready to stop singing and start fighting?

Trevor Loudon ends his interview with these words:

"If we want to preserve Christianity–now is the time for faith and courage. Faith and courage will get us through. He who will not defend his own children is worse than an infidel."

God doesn't help cowards. But God does help those who stand.

David ran TOWARD Goliath. Your grandfather prayed for courage, then charged the beach. The black-robed regiment picked up rifles and fought for liberty.

What will YOU do THIS WEEK?

The wheat and the chaff are being separated. Which one are you?

Key Takeaways

- The first communist front in America (1907) targeted the church–10 years before the Bolshevik Revolution
- Bella Dodd infiltrated 1,100 communist men into the Catholic priesthood (1930s-1960s)
- Joseph Fletcher invented "situation ethics" as a Communist Party member posing as a theologian
- Wokeism IS Marxism–there is no difference
- Campus Crusade for Christ dropped "Christ" from their name, now just "Cru"
- Most Bible colleges teach white privilege, not repentance
- COVID separated wheat from chaff–cowardly churches are dead or dying
- Cowards are listed FIRST in Revelation 21:8–before liars, murderers, idolaters
- James 4:17–"He who knows the right thing to do but doesn't do it–for him it is a sin"
- God doesn't help cowards–but He does help those who stand in faith and courage

Watch, Share, and ACT

- Full Interview: **Gary Binford interviews Trevor Loudon on Enemies Within the Church**
- Stream the Film: **Enemies Within the Church (2021)**
- Trevor Loudon Resources:
- – **TrevorLoudon.com** (books, films, research)
- – **KeyWiki.org** (database of leftist infiltration)

Find Gary Binford Online

- **YouTube Channel: @garybinford1969**

- **Podcast Archive:** ***United Patriots Uprising***
- **X (Twitter): @united_gary**
- **Facebook: Gary Binford**
- **Truth Social: @GaryBinford**

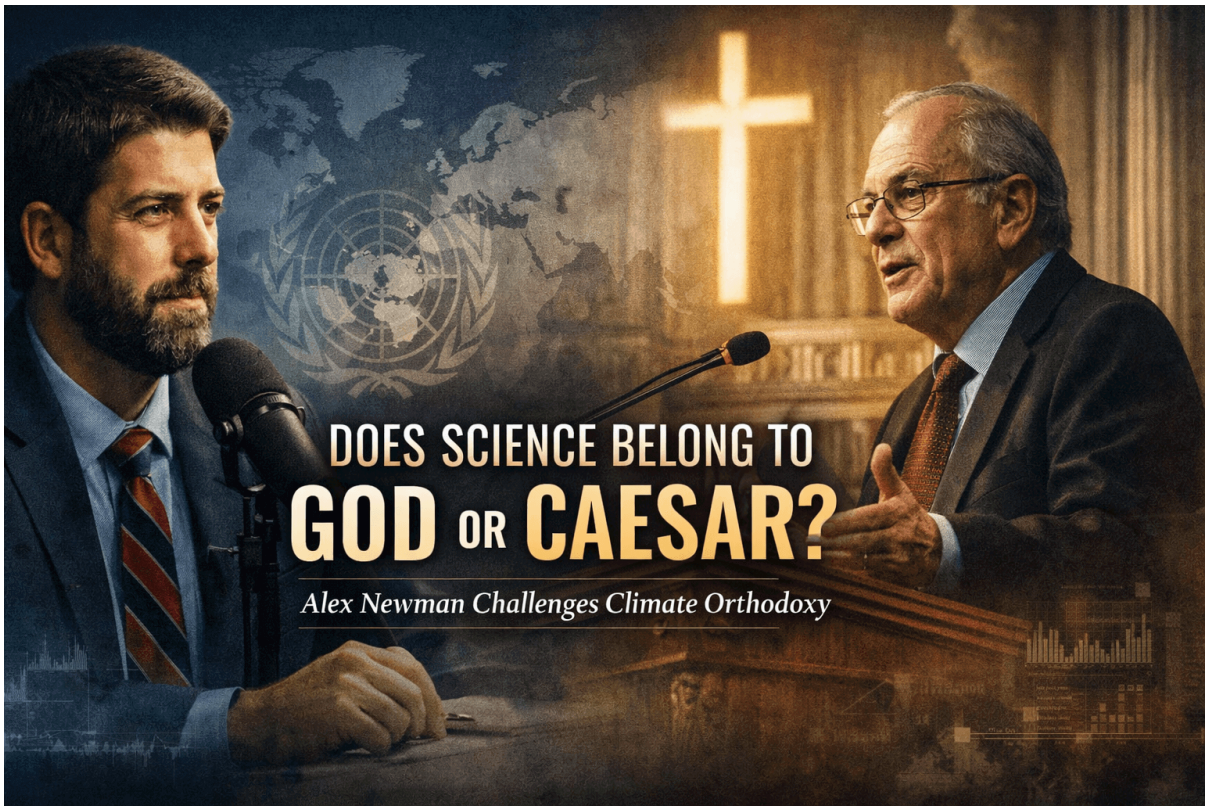
Find Trevor Loudon Online

Website/Blog: **TrevorLoudon.com**
X (Twitter): **@TrevorLoudon1**
YouTube: **Trevor Loudon – NewZealBlog**
YouTube (alt): **@trevorloudon201**
Film Credits: **Trevor Loudon on IMDb**

By Jeff Bayard, Ghostwriter & Editorial Content Manager, Virginia Christian Alliance

Does Science Belong to God or Caesar? Alex Newman Challenges Climate Orthodoxy

JANUARY 29, 2026
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



In a timely and deeply thought-provoking interview, **Alex Newman** confronts one of the most important questions of our age: *Has science been hijacked by politics—and if so, how do we get it back?*

Speaking with Hungarian geophysical engineer **László Szarka**, Newman peels back the layers beneath modern climate alarmism, exposing how global institutions, elite consensus, and political power have increasingly replaced open scientific inquiry.

This is not a debate about weather—it's a conversation about **truth, authority, and worldview**.

A Scientist Who Broke Ranks

Szarka is no outsider. He is a PhD-level geophysical engineer, a longtime researcher at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and a former professor at the University of Paris. Yet in recent years, he has become a leading voice pushing back against what he describes as the *politicization* of climate science.

In the interview, Szarka recounts how he helped organize a landmark climate conference in Hungary—one that allowed dissenting scientific voices to be heard openly for the first time in years. The response? A boycott by mainstream climate scientists.

That reaction, Szarka argues, revealed the real problem.

Is the Science "Settled"?

Throughout the discussion, Newman presses a question the media avoids: if the science is truly settled, why is open debate so aggressively suppressed?

Szarka explains that modern climate science operates within a rigid framework established by the United Nations—one that assumes human CO_2 emissions are the primary driver of all climate change. Natural variability, solar influence, and historical climate cycles are often ignored or dismissed.

Anything outside that frame, he says, is treated as heresy.

Science, Power, and Worldview

One of the most compelling moments comes when Szarka reflects on a statement by Hungary's prime minister: *"Render unto God what belongs to God, and unto Caesar what belongs to Caesar."*

Szarka applies that principle to science itself.

Historically, science was understood as a truth-seeking endeavor—often grounded in the belief that the natural world reflects an ordered creation. Today, he argues, science increasingly "belongs to Caesar": governments, global bureaucracies, and funding institutions that demand predetermined conclusions.

When science serves power instead of truth, Newman notes, it stops being science.

Why This Interview Matters

This conversation isn't about denying climate change. It's about restoring **intellectual honesty**, **scientific humility**, and **freedom of inquiry**.

Newman allows Szarka to explain—calmly and carefully—why many scientists believe there is no climate emergency, why elite consensus is not the same as truth, and why the public deserves access to *all* the data, not just politically approved conclusions.

For Christians, conservatives, and truth-seekers alike, the interview raises a deeper issue: **Who gets to define reality?**

Watch the Full Interview

This is one of those interviews that's worth your full attention. If you care about science, faith, freedom, or the future of public discourse, you'll want to watch it yourself.

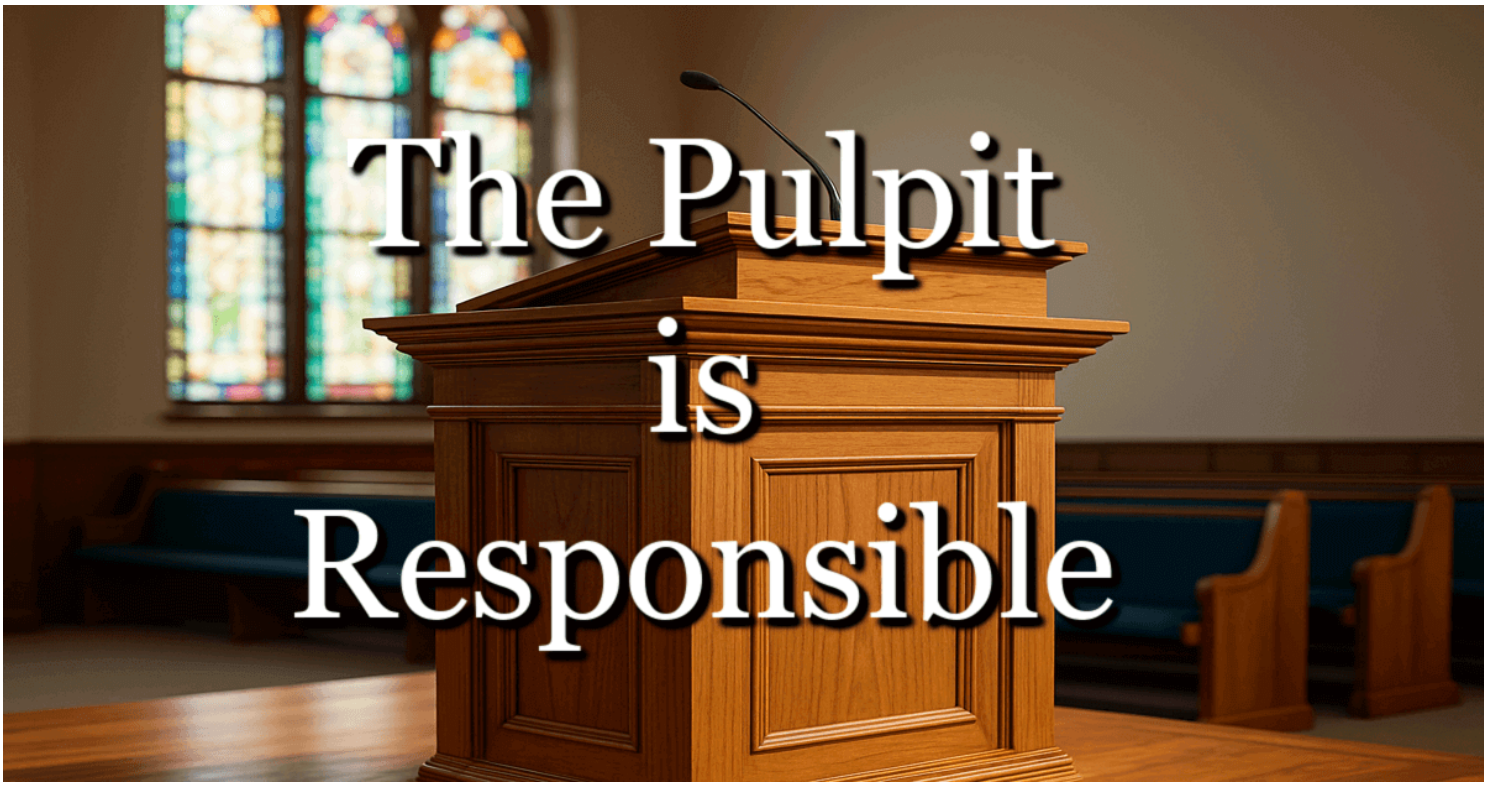
Does Science Belong to God Or Caesar? Top Scientist Slams Climate Alarmism
https://youtube.com/watch?v=SqZ9_CXH_TU

You can also explore more of Alex Newman's writing and interviews at *The New American*:

https://thenewamerican.com/author/alex-newman/

The Pulpit vs. Marxism: The Silent Surrender of the American Church

DECEMBER 2, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, OUR NATION UNDER GOD, PULPIT IS RESPONSIBLE, UNITED PATRIOTS UPRISING WITH GARY BINFORD



Insights from Carl Jackson and Gary Binford on America's Marxist Drift and Why Pastors Must Wake Up

By Jeff Bayard, Content Manager/Ghost Writer, Virginia Christian Alliance

When **Gary Binford**, the voice behind ***United Patriots Uprising***,sat down with radio host **Carl Jackson** something unusual happened. Instead of another round of political analysis, the conversation cut straight to the one topic few in America — and even fewer in the Church — are willing to confront:

A Time For Choosing: Communism or Freedom w/Gary Binford
https://youtube.com/watch?v=6QPnC8POXMI

Marxism is rising because the pulpits have gone silent.

And the silence is costing the nation dearly.

> **"If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" — Psalm 11:3**

From the very beginning of the discussion, it becomes clear that the problem isn't simply bad policies, weak politicians, or corrupt bureaucrats. Those are symptoms. The deeper disease is spiritual sleepiness — a lack of conviction from the very institution called to be salt and light.

When the Pulpit Goes Quiet, Marxism Fills the Void

Gary Binford brings it into focus early: **"My main thing is ministry."**

He's not jockeying for political influence. He's sounding an alarm the Church should have sounded years ago.

Carl Jackson notes how young Americans romanticize socialism and drift toward authoritarian ideas. Gary does not blame them — he blames the vacuum left when pastors step back from their God-given duty to teach truth in the public square.

Marxism advances wherever the Church retreats.

That is the unspoken reality behind nearly every headline dominating today's news cycle.

> **"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness…" — Matthew 6:33**

The drift didn't start in Congress. It started in sanctuaries that traded courage for comfort and clarity for neutrality.

Chaos Is Not Random — It's a Strategy

Carl describes the rapid-fire news cycle as exhausting.

Gary sees it as orchestrated.

From resignations to indictments, from border failures to weaponized justice, the pattern is unmistakable: constant chaos keeps citizens distracted and Christians disengaged. It's a textbook

tactic used by Marxists for over a century and Satan since the Garden — overwhelm the people so thoroughly they no longer fight back.

The American pulpit should be the anchor in such storms. Instead, too many pastors avoid speaking about cultural decay for fear of offense.

Gary's repeated admonition becomes the backbone of the conversation:

"Keep the main thing the main thing."

And the main thing is this: if Christians don't recognize the ideological revolution happening around them, they will lose their country while watching cable news.

> **"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." — Hosea 4:6**

Minnesota: A Warning of What Happens When Watchmen Sleep

Carl brings up the staggering welfare fraud case in Minnesota — over **$250 million** stolen from a government feeding program and funneled through networks tied to extremist groups, including Al-Shabaab.

This is **not** an isolated scandal.

It is the logical result of systems built by people who:

- favor ideology over accountability
- dismantle border protections
- refuse to enforce assimilation
- and demonize anyone who raises concerns

Gary points out that this radical infiltration would be far less effective if pastors across the nation had taught their congregations biblical citizenship instead of avoiding "political topics."

> **"The watchman sees the sword coming… and does not blow the trumpet…" — Ezekiel 33:6**

A silent pulpit creates an uninformed church — and an uninformed church creates a vulnerable nation.

Healthcare: The Church's Missed Opportunity

When the topic shifts to healthcare, the frustration is palpable. Carl laments that, even a decade and a half after Obamacare, Republicans still lack a meaningful alternative. Gary cuts deeper:

Government should never have been involved in healthcare to begin with.

But few pastors opposed it.

Many avoided controversy.

Some even applauded the idea of "compassionate" government-run medicine.

The result?

A generation of Christians believing the state, not God or personal responsibility, is the source of security and provision.

Obamacare became more than a policy; it became a worldview shift.

> **"Do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage." — Galatians 5:1**

And the Church largely let it pass without resistance.

Christian Apathy: The Real Crisis Behind the Crisis

Toward the middle of the podcast, Gary opens the wound every Christian knows but few admit:

"I'm terrified by how little we care."

Christians show up for presidential races but skip local elections.

They decry cultural decay but avoid confronting sin in public life.

They fear human disapproval more than divine accountability.

This apathy — not progressive activism — is the greatest threat to America's future.

> **“Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead…” — Ephesians 5:14**

The enemy is active.

The Church is passive.

And Marxism fills the vacuum.

America’s Choice: The Constitution or Communism

Gary says what many think but fear to express:

America is choosing between the Constitution and communism.

There is no middle ground left.

The old tactic of staying neutral, apolitical, or silent is now indistinguishable from surrender. Even Carl notes that many Americans — especially the young — have embraced socialism simply because the pulpit never explained its spiritual danger.

By refusing to engage, many pastors unintentionally aided the spread of the very ideology that seeks to erase biblical truth.

> **“Whoever is not with Me is against Me.” — Luke 11:23**

Neutrality is no longer an option.

“God Is Running This Show” — So Where Is the Church?

As the discussion reaches its close, Gary turns toward hope — not blind optimism, but theological confidence:

“God is running this show.”

That truth should embolden pastors, not silence them.

If God is sovereign, then:

- preaching biblical truth is safe
- confronting Marxist ideology is necessary
- defending liberty is obedience
- and speaking publicly is an act of faith, not politics

The times demand clarity.

The Church must rediscover its voice.

> **“Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.” — 1 Corinthians 16:13**

The conversation between Carl Jackson and Gary Binford is not merely commentary.

It is a challenge — a sober warning that unless the pulpit awakens, Marxism will continue to win without resistance.

Talk Show Host Carl Jackson Sounds Off On Big Government, Healthcare, Illegal Immigration

NOVEMBER 24, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNITED PATRIOTS UPRISING WITH GARY BINFORD

In this episode of **United Patriots Uprising**, Gary Binford welcomes Carl Jackson, host of **The Carl Jackson Show**, for a candid conversation about redemption, responsibility, and how everyday citizens can push back against runaway government. In this Carl Jackson interview, trace his journey from troubled teen to Christian conservative commentator—and to lay out a practical plan to rein in big government, fix healthcare, secure the border, and restore common sense.

Talk Show Host Carl Jackson Sounds Off On Big Government, Healthcare, Illegal Immigration
https://youtube.com/watch?v=MMlv0N3QHJ8

Carl's Turning Point: From Cultural Assumptions to Biblical Convictions

Carl grew up in Los Angeles assuming Democratic politics by default: "Everyone around me was a Democrat—it's just how it was." That began to change in 1999 as he came to faith in Christ and started testing political claims against Scripture and reality.

A key moment came during the Bush–Gore era when Carl heard abortion framed as a 'right to choose.' For the first time, he says, the moral stakes were unmistakable: protecting preborn life wasn't a partisan talking point—it was a biblical issue.

How a Custody Fight Opened His Eyes to Big Government Overreach

Carl is upfront about his past: jail as a teen, a child out of wedlock, and years of personal struggle. What shook him most wasn't a headline—it was the system. In a seven-year custody battle, he says bureaucrats treated him like a case file, even placing him on child support while his daughter lived with him. That experience hardened his view that government had grown into a heavy-handed referee deciding who could be a father and on what terms.

At the same time, he recalls overhearing mothers in a child-support office coaching teens on how to 'work the system'—a snapshot, in his view, of perverse incentives that punish responsibility and reward dependency.

Carl's H.I.R.E.E. Agenda: Healthcare, Immigration, Regulation, Energy, Education

Carl boils his priorities down to a simple acronym—H.I.R.E.E.—and offers concrete fixes:

Healthcare: Put doctors and patients back in charge.

Carl argues Obamacare made care costlier and more bureaucratic, recounting how his PPO jumped from about $180/month to roughly $720/month, pushing him to go a decade without insurance until his wife's job offered coverage. His fix: allow interstate competition, expand transparent cash-price options, and cut red tape so clinicians spend more time with patients and less on paperwork.

Immigration: Enforce the law and end the chaos.

Carl supports prioritizing removals of criminal illegal aliens and restoring deterrence. He rejects the "city of immigrants" rhetoric that blurs citizenship, stressing assimilation and the rule of law.

For those here illegally, he favors voluntary departure pathways that preserve the chance to return legally later.

Regulation: Shrink the state, unleash work.

From small business to family life, Carl says regulation has metastasized into soft coercion, nudging citizens toward dependency and away from responsibility. He backs across-the-board deregulation aligned with constitutional limits and common sense.

Energy: Abundance over austerity.

Carl favors American energy dominance and calls out the contradiction of demanding massive AI/data-center growth while restricting reliable power. He views climate alarmism as a control lever that collapses under real-world needs for electricity and minerals.

Education: Basics, not indoctrination.

He argues K-12 and higher ed should produce critical thinkers, not ideological followers—pointing listeners to get kids out of failing systems, monitor curricula, and support genuine school choice.

Faith, Charlie Kirk, and Public Courage

Carl blends biblical conviction with political analysis on air, noting the influence of the late Charlie Kirk's shift toward a more explicitly biblical worldview. The goal, he says, is not to win arguments but to disciple the public square—speaking truth with clarity and courage.

What You Can Do (In Plain English)

Carl's advice is deliberately local and doable: start with **sheriff, mayor, and county-commission races**. Ask of every policy: does it give individuals more freedom—or less? If less, oppose it, regardless of party label.

Watch the **Full Interview**, Then Follow Carl

Key Takeaways

- Testimony matters: Carl's seven-year custody fight shaped his view of government more than any headline.
- Healthcare reform must restore price competition and patient choice; red tape isn't care.
- Borders, law, and citizenship aren't anti-immigrant—they're pro-order and pro-assimilation.

- Energy abundance keeps promises about prosperity—scarcity feeds control.
- School choice and vigilant parents beat indoctrination.
- Local offices (sheriff, mayor, county commission) impact your freedom first—vote accordingly.

> **"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." — Proverbs 14:34**

Find Gary Binford Online

- **YouTube Channel: @garybinford1969**
- **Podcast Archive: *United Patriots Uprising***
- **X (Twitter): @gary_binford**
- **Facebook: Gary Binford**
- **Truth Social: @GaryBinford**

Connect with Carl Jackson

- **YouTube Channel: The Carl Jackson Show**
- **X (Twitter):@carljacksonshow**
- **Facebook: Carl Jackson Show**

Jesus Was Involved in Politics — So Why Aren't You?

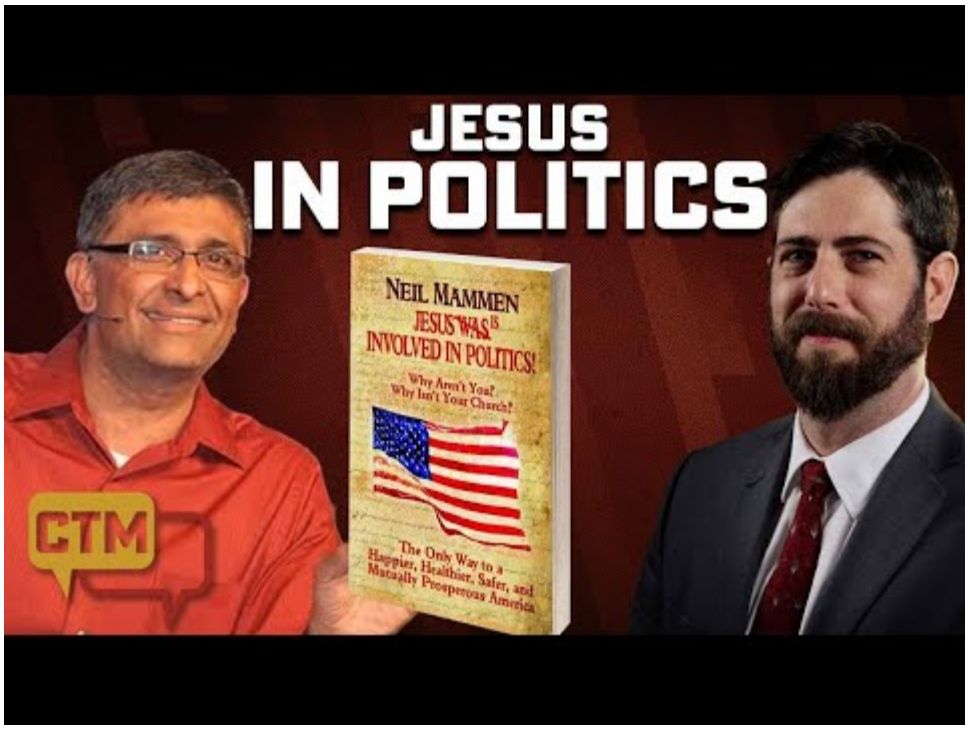
NOVEMBER 18, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

In this power-packed episode of *Conversations That Matter*, host Alex Newman interviews apologist, engineer, and author Neil Mammen on a topic many Christians get wrong: the myth that Jesus avoided politics. Together, they dismantle this false notion and issue a clarion call to the Church: get back in the fight, or risk handing the culture over to evil.

Newman opens with a warning that too many churches have bought into a lie from the pit of hell—that Jesus wasn't political. Mammen, author of *Jesus Was Involved in Politics: Why Aren't You? Why Isn't Your Church?*, proves otherwise, arguing that Jesus regularly confronted the political leaders of His day, and that Christians must do the same to preserve a righteous nation.

Watch the Full Interview Below:

Jesus Was (and IS) Involved in Politics! Neil Mammen
https://youtube.com/watch?v=f2sNktpIqos



Jesus Challenged the Political Class

Mammen explains that Jesus was not silent on political issues. He regularly addressed the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council that functioned as both religious and political leadership in Judea. These weren't merely theological disputes; Jesus was correcting and confronting those who governed His people.

He draws parallels between Jesus' public rebukes and today's political environment, pointing out that if we truly follow Christ, we too must speak truth to power. Sitting silently while unjust laws proliferate is not Christ-like obedience—it's abdication.

"Jesus called out the politicians of His day. Why do we think we shouldn't?" — Neil Mammen

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Yes, Morality Can—and Should—Be Legislated

One of the most controversial truths Mammen defends is the need to legislate morality. He explains that every law reflects someone's morality—the only question is whose. Christians must advocate for God's moral law, not because we want a theocracy, but because we love our neighbors and want to protect them from harm.

From abolishing slavery to banning child labor, Mammen notes that Christian values have shaped history for the better—and withdrawing now only allows evil to resurface. America's future depends on whether believers will once again engage the culture with truth.

Evidence, Logic, and Love: Tools for Change

While Mammen believes Scripture alone is enough for Christians, he stresses the need for logic and evidence when persuading non-believers. In debates over abortion or sexuality, for example, citing studies and natural law helps connect with hearts and minds unfamiliar with the Bible.

This approach—known as apologetics—is part of Mammen's broader ministry, NoBlindFaith.com, which equips believers to defend truth in a secular age. He reminds us that changing hearts often begins with winning minds.

His Own Story: From Marxism to Biblical Capitalism

Mammen's passion for truth stems from his own transformation. Raised in a family of Indian Marxists, he arrived in America with socialist leanings. But after being confronted with truth—and losing plenty of arguments—he embraced biblical principles of freedom, family, and free markets.

His book doesn't just refute excuses for Christian apathy; it equips believers to re-engage with cultural clarity and courage.

Take Action: Watch, Share, and Equip Your Pastor

Newman ends with a strong appeal: if you or your pastor still think politics is off-limits for Christians, this book is your wake-up call. Please share it. Start a study group. Get it in the hands of your elders.

Mammen's six-week small group version makes it easy to bring these truths to your church. And for those ready to act now, his new project—ReviveAcademy.com.com—helps churches launch Christian micro-schools to rescue children from failing government systems.

Scripture Conclusion

"Open your mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy."
Proverbs 31:9

Key Takeaways

- Jesus confronted political authorities—and so should we.
- Every law is based on morality. Christians should advocate God's moral law.
- Use logic and evidence, not just Bible verses, when speaking to nonbelievers.
- The Church helped end slavery, child sacrifice, and other evils—don't stop now.
- Watch the video. Share it with your pastor. Start the conversation.

Get the Book

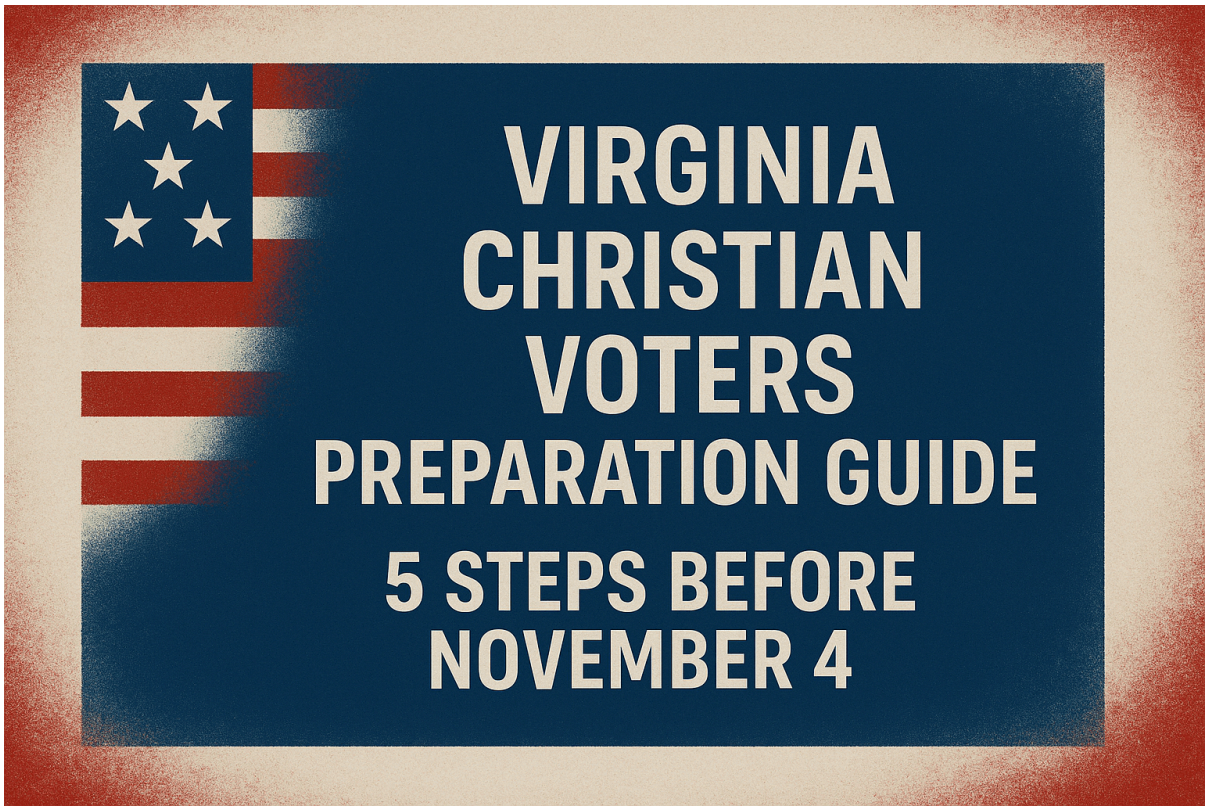
- **Book Title:** *Jesus Was Involved in Politics: Why Aren't You? Why Isn't Your Church?*
- **Author:** Neil Mammen
- **Where to Buy:** **Amazon, JesusIsInvolvedInPolitics.com**
- **Study Version:** Small group 6-week curriculum available

- **Ministry: NoBlindFaith.com**

By Jeff Bayard, Content Manager, Virginia Christian Alliance

Virginia Christian Voters Preparation Guide: 5 Steps Before November 4

NOVEMBER 1, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: 2025 VOTER GUIDE, PARENTAL RIGHTS



Dear Christian:

You know November 4th is important. You understand the biblical mandate to vote. However, many believers feel paralyzed between conviction and confusion. This **Virginia Christian voters preparation** guide will show you exactly what to do. What specific steps should you take right now to prepare faithfully?

The reality is that most Christians mean well but never move from intention to action. Consequently, they wake up on Election Day unprepared, overwhelmed, and tempted to stay home. Furthermore, without proper Virginia Christian voters' preparation, even committed believers often skip races or guess on amendments. This doesn't have to be you.

Today, I'm giving you a simple, biblical action plan. Five concrete steps. No confusion. No excuses. Just faithful stewardship of your citizenship.

Why Virginia Christian Voters Preparation Can't Wait

Let me be direct: **We have 12 days.**

In 12 days, Virginia will decide:

- Whether unlimited abortion becomes a constitutional right
- Whether marriage will be redefined in our state constitution
- Who will govern Virginia for the next four years
- Which party controls the House of Delegates
- The future of religious liberty, parental rights, and the sanctity of life

Moreover, once these constitutional amendments pass, they cannot be easily undone. This isn't a temporary policy—**it's a permanent change to Virginia's founding document.**

Scripture warns: *"The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it"* (Proverbs 22:3). Therefore, Virginia Christian voters who see the danger must act. Here are your five essential preparation steps.

Step 1: Get Your Personalized Ballot Information (10 Minutes)

Do this TODAY. Not tomorrow. Today.

Visit the **Virginia Christian Voter Guide** and click on either:

- **vavoterguide.com** – Enter your address
- **ivoterguide.com** – Enter your address

In less than 10 minutes, you'll see exactly what's on YOUR specific ballot:

- Your governor candidates
- Your lieutenant governor candidates
- Your attorney general candidates
- Your House of Delegates race
- Both constitutional amendments with analysis

Why this matters: Virginia has 100 House of Delegates districts. Your ballot is unique to your address. Furthermore, you cannot vote intelligently without knowing what's actually on your ballot.

The excuse eliminated: "I don't know what's on my ballot" is no longer valid. These tools exist. Use them.

Biblical principle: *"The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty"* (Proverbs 21:5). Diligent Virginia Christian voters do the research.

Step 2: Research Every Candidate Using Biblical Principles (30 Minutes)

Once you know what's on your ballot, it's time to research. However, don't rely on:

- Political ads (they're designed to manipulate)
- Social media posts (they're often misleading)
- Party labels alone (Republicans aren't automatically biblical; Democrats aren't automatically enemies)

Instead, use the faith-based voter guides compiled at our **comprehensive resource page**:

Need personalized info for your district?

- **Family Foundation – Enter Your Address** – Get customized voter guide with all races
- **iVoterGuide – Enter Your Address** – Personalized guide for your ballot

What to look for in candidates:

Scripture gives us a framework in Exodus 18:21: *"Look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe."*

Ask these questions:

1. **Able:** Does this candidate have the competence to lead?
2. **Fear God:** Do they recognize authority higher than themselves?
3. **Trustworthy:** Does their record match their promises?
4. **Hate a bribe:** Are they incorruptible, or controlled by donors?

Additionally, examine where they stand on:

- **Sanctity of life** (abortion, euthanasia)
- Biblical marriage and sexuality
- Religious liberty (can Christians operate according to conviction?)
- Parental rights (who controls your children's education?)
- Constitutional fidelity (do they honor their oath?)

Time investment: Spend 5 minutes per race. If you have 6 races on your ballot, that's 30 minutes total. You'll be more informed than 90% of Virginia voters.

Step 3: Understand Both Constitutional Amendments (20 Minutes)

This is non-negotiable. Virginia Christian voters MUST understand these amendments because they're permanent.

Abortion Amendment: The proposed amendment establishes a constitutional "right to reproductive freedom." In practice, this means:

- Unlimited abortion through all nine months
- Potentially no parental notification for minors
- No state restrictions allowed (even late-term)
- Taxpayer funding may be required

Read the detailed analysis: Family Foundation – Stop Unlimited Abortion Flyer

Marriage Amendment: This amendment would redefine marriage in Virginia's constitution, removing the current definition of marriage as between one man and one woman.

Read the analysis: Family Foundation – Marriage Amendment Flyer

Biblical perspective:

On abortion: *"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb… My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret"* (Psalm 139:13, 15). God considers the unborn to be persons He's actively forming.

On marriage: *"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?"* (Matthew 19:4-5). Jesus defined marriage as one man, one woman, for life.

Virginia Christian voters face a clear choice: Will we enshrine God's design in our laws, or will we codify rebellion against His Word?

Action: Print these one-page summaries. Bring them to the polls if allowed in your precinct.

Step 4: Pray for Wisdom and Virginia's Future (Daily Until November 4)

This isn't optional spiritual language. This is spiritual warfare waged through faithful intercession.

"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him." (James 1:5)

Pray specifically:

For yourself:

- Lord, give me wisdom to vote according to Your Word, not my preferences
- Help me see past political manipulation to truth
- Grant me courage to vote for righteousness even when it's unpopular

For Virginia:

- God, raise up leaders who fear You and hate corruption
- Expose deception and bring truth to light
- Protect Virginia's children, families, and churches from unjust laws
- May righteousness prevail on November 4th

For other believers:

- Awaken sleeping Christians who think politics doesn't matter
- Give boldness to pastors to teach on civic responsibility
- Unite believers across denominations to stand for biblical truth

For our opponents:

- Soften hearts hardened against Your truth
- Bring conviction where there is rebellion
- Save souls, Lord—even those promoting policies You oppose

Furthermore, Paul commanded: *"I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions"* (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

Notice: We pray for ALL leaders, not just the ones we like. This includes current leaders whose policies we oppose. Consequently, prayer isn't partisan—it's obedience.

Practical step: Set a daily alarm for 7:00 PM titled "Pray for Virginia Elections." When it goes off, stop for 2 minutes and pray.

Step 5: Commit to Vote and Help 5 Others Do the Same (Now Through November 4)

Here's the final step: **Make voting non-negotiable.**

Your commitment:

- Put November 4th on your calendar in permanent ink
- Set a reminder alarm for November 3rd: "Tomorrow: VOTE"
- Plan your logistics now:
  - What time will you vote? (Before work? Lunch break? After work?)
  - Where is your polling location? (Check your voter registration)
  - What will you bring? (Photo ID required in Virginia, sample ballot helpful)
  - Who else in your household needs to vote? (Coordinate together)

Your influence:

However, don't stop with yourself. Scripture calls us to build up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12). Therefore, your faith community needs you.

Challenge yourself: Help 5 other Virginia Christian voters prepare.

Send this article to:

1. Your spouse or family members
2. Your small group or Bible study
3. Your pastor or church leaders
4. Christian friends who might not vote
5. A believer you haven't talked to in a while

Include this message:

> "I'm committed to voting biblically on November 4th, and I want to help you do the same. Virginia is deciding permanent constitutional amendments on abortion and marriage. Please take 10 minutes to visit **Virginia Christian Voter Guide** and get prepared. Can I count on you to vote?"

Why this matters:

In 2023, several Virginia House of Delegates races were decided by fewer than 100 votes. If every engaged Christian helped just 5 others vote, we could change outcomes in dozens of races.

Moreover, this is how the early church operated. They didn't wait for programs or professionals. Instead, believers personally invested in each other's spiritual growth and civic faithfulness.

What Happens If You Don't Do These Steps?

Let me paint the picture:

November 4th arrives. You wake up intending to vote. However, you never researched the candidates. You don't know what the amendments actually say. Consequently, you feel overwhelmed standing in the voting booth.

You skip the races you don't recognize. You guess on the amendments based on the confusing ballot language. You leave feeling uncertain whether you voted biblically.

Or worse: You decide it's too complicated and stay home entirely.

Meanwhile, highly motivated voters on the other side show up prepared, organized, and committed. They vote in every race. They vote "yes" on both amendments. Furthermore, they bring others with them.

The amendments pass. Unlimited abortion and redefined marriage become permanently embedded in Virginia's constitution. Leaders who oppose biblical values win by margins smaller than the number of Christians who stayed home.

And Virginia groans.

What Happens If You DO These Steps?

Now imagine this:

You spend one hour this week completing Steps 1-3. You print your research. You set your daily prayer alarm. Additionally, you text 5 believers and challenge them to prepare.

November 4th arrives. You wake up confident. You know exactly who you're voting for and why. Moreover, you've measured every candidate against biblical principles.

You vote early, before work. You're in and out in 15 minutes because you prepared. Furthermore, you text your 5 friends: "Did you vote yet?"

That afternoon, you learn that 4 of your 5 friends voted. They each influenced others. Consequently, your one hour of preparation multiplied into dozens of biblical votes.

The amendments fail. Pro-life, pro-family, pro-liberty candidates win tight races. Therefore, Virginia's children, families, and churches are protected.

And Virginia rejoices because "when the righteous increase, the people rejoice" (Proverbs 29:2).

Your Decision Point

Virginia Christian voters stand at a crossroads. One path leads to faithful stewardship. The other leads to regret.

> *"So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin"* (James 4:17).

You now know the right thing to do. You have the tools. You have the plan. You have 11 days.

Therefore, will you act?

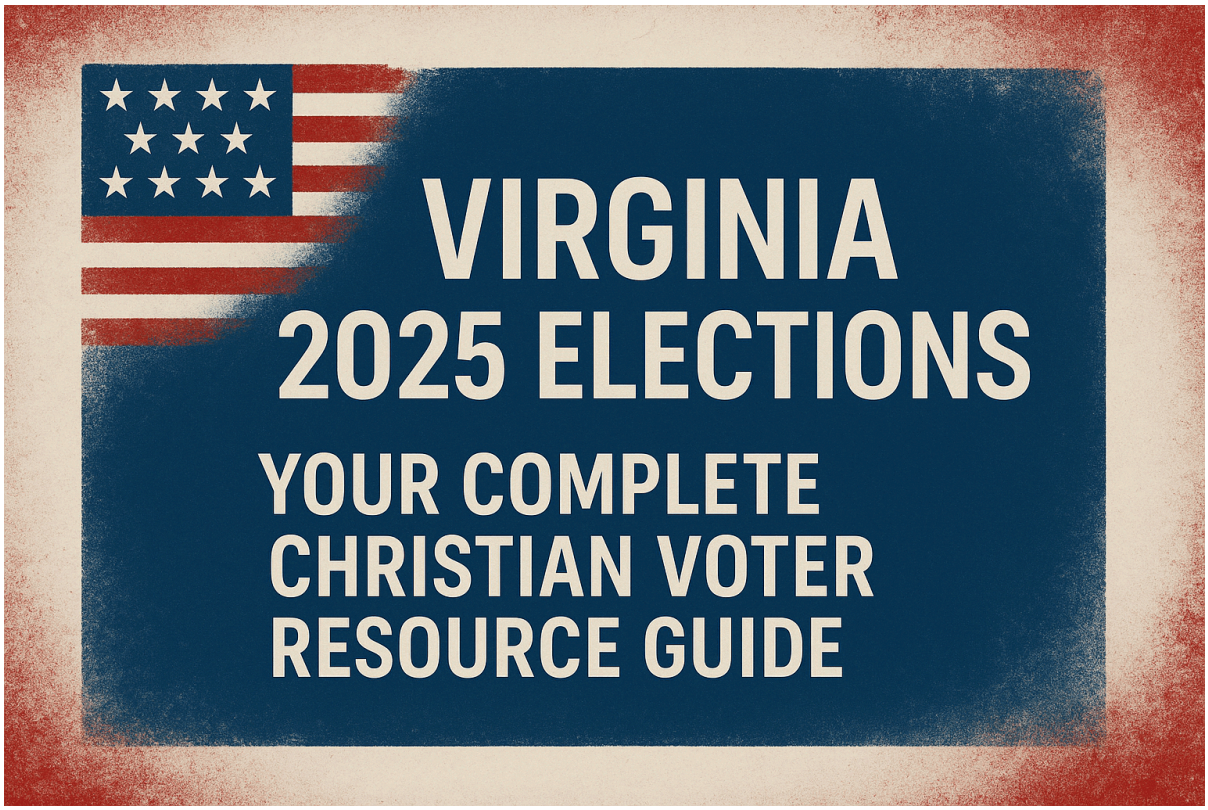
Start now: Virginia Christian Voter Guide – Complete Steps 1-3 Today

Tomorrow, we'll dive deep into religious liberty and what's at stake when government exceeds its God-given boundaries.

We welcome thoughtful and respectful dialogue from all viewpoints. Comments must remain civil, relevant, and free of profanity, personal attacks, or mockery of Christian faith. Disagreement is allowed—disrespect is not.

Virginia Christian Voter Guide: Why November 4th Matters

NOVEMBER 1, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: 2025 VOTER GUIDE, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, PARENTAL RIGHTS



Dear Christian:

> *"When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule, the people groan."*
> (Proverbs 29:2)

If you're looking for a **Virginia Christian voter guide** for the November 4, 2025 elections, you've come to the right place. Virginia Christians will help determine who leads our Commonwealth. We'll decide whether amendments enshrining unlimited abortion and redefining marriage become permanently embedded in our state constitution. Additionally, we'll elect a governor who will either protect or assault religious liberty, parental rights, and the sanctity of life.

The reality is that many believers will skip voting simply because they feel overwhelmed. However, this shouldn't be.

The Biblical Mandate: This Isn't Optional

Some Christians argue that politics is "worldly" or that voting compromises our witness. However, Scripture tells a different story.

For example, when Nehemiah heard that Jerusalem's walls were broken and its gates destroyed, he didn't spiritualize the problem away. He wept. He fasted. He prayed. **And then he took action** to rebuild what was broken (Nehemiah 1:3-4).

Similarly, the Apostle Paul commanded Timothy to pray for those in authority, "that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way" (1 Timothy 2:1-2). Notice Paul didn't say "pray and hope for the best." Instead, he connected prayer with outcome—a peaceful life where Christians can live out their faith freely.

When righteous people increase in influence, the people rejoice. Conversely, when we abdicate our responsibility, the wicked rule—and the people groan.

This is where we are. Virginia is groaning under policies that contradict God's Word. Therefore, God is calling His people to stand.

You Are a Watchman on the Wall

The prophet Ezekiel received a sobering commission from God:

> *"Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the people of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me."* (Ezekiel 3:17)

A watchman's job is to see danger coming and sound the alarm. Not to panic. Not to despair. Rather, to warn with clarity and urgency so the people can prepare.

That's what these next 14 days are about. Warning. Preparing. Acting.

For instance, if you stay silent while your neighbor walks toward a cliff, you share responsibility for their fall. Likewise, if you stay home while Virginia enshrines abortion and redefines marriage in our constitution, you share responsibility for the consequences.

This is a matter of stewardship. Consequently, God has given you influence—your one vote, your one voice, your one sphere of impact. What will you do with it?

What Virginia Christian Voters Must Know About November 4th

This isn't hyperbole. Rather, these are the literal issues on Virginia's ballot:

Constitutional Amendments that, once passed, cannot be easily undone:

- An amendment establishing a "right to reproductive freedom"—which means unlimited abortion through all nine months, potentially without parental notification
- An amendment redefining marriage in Virginia's constitution

Governor and Statewide Leaders who will determine:

- Whether religious organizations can operate according to biblical conviction
- Whether parents or the state control children's education
- Whether biological males can compete in girls' sports and access girls' facilities
- Whether Virginia protects life or expands access to abortion

House of Delegates races that will decide:

- School choice and parental rights legislation
- Religious liberty protections
- Sanctity of life laws
- Tax and economic policies affecting your family

The Bible teaches that government exists to punish evil and reward good (1 Peter 2:13-14). Therefore, when government inverts that purpose—punishing good and rewarding evil—God's people must act.

"But My Vote Doesn't Matter"

This lie keeps more Christians home than any other.

The truth? Virginia elections are often decided by razor-thin margins. Every Virginia Christian voter who stays home potentially changes the outcome. For example, in 2021, Glenn Youngkin won the governorship by just 63,000 votes out of 3.3 million cast. That's a 2% margin.

In 2023, control of the Virginia House of Delegates came down to a handful of races decided by hundreds of votes. In fact, in some districts, it was fewer than 100 votes.

Your vote matters. Your neighbor's vote matters. Furthermore, your church family's votes matter.

However, here's what matters even more: **God uses faithful people to accomplish His purposes.** He didn't need Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem's walls—He's sovereign over all things. Nevertheless, He chose to work through Nehemiah's faithful action.

Similarly, He doesn't need your vote to accomplish His will. Yet, He's calling you to faithful stewardship of the influence He's given you.

What You Must Do in the Next 14 Days

Here are your specific action steps:

> **Step 1: Get Your Personalized Voter Information** Visit our comprehensive resource page and enter your address at vavoterguide.com or ivoterguide.com. In 60 seconds, you'll see exactly what's on YOUR ballot. This Virginia Christian voter guide compiles resources from multiple faith-based organizations.
>
> **Step 2: Research the Candidates** Don't rely on political ads. Instead, use the **faith-based voter guides we've compiled here**. Multiple Christian organizations have done the work of comparing candidates on biblical principles—life, family, religious liberty, and constitutional fidelity.
>
> **Step 3: Understand the Amendments** These are PERMANENT changes to Virginia's constitution. Therefore, read the actual text. Don't just accept summaries. Our comprehensive Virginia Christian voter guide includes detailed analysis of both the abortion and marriage amendments.
>
> **Step 4: Pray for Wisdom** *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him."* (James 1:5)

God promises wisdom to those who ask. Accordingly, pray for discernment. Pray for Virginia's leaders. Additionally, pray for your fellow believers to engage faithfully.

Step 5: Commit to Vote Put it on your calendar. Set an alarm. Request time off work if needed. In short, make a plan.

And here's what matters most: **Don't do this alone.** Forward this to five Christians you know. Share the voter guide with your small group. Furthermore, challenge your church family to engage.

Hope Anchored in God's Sovereignty

Here's the balance we must maintain: urgency without despair, action without anxiety.

God is sovereign over all elections. He "removes kings and sets up kings" (Daniel 2:21). Moreover, He "works all things according to the counsel of his will" (Ephesians 1:11). No election outcome will surprise Him or thwart His eternal purposes.

However, that sovereignty doesn't negate our responsibility. In fact, it empowers it.

We vote because God commands it. We engage because He's called us to be salt and light. Furthermore, we act because we're stewards of the influence He's given us in this time and place.

And then we trust Him with the results.

The outcome belongs to God. The obedience belongs to us.

The Next 14 Days

Starting tomorrow, we'll unpack the specific issues at stake in Virginia—one per day. We'll compare what Scripture says with what the candidates propose. Additionally, we'll expose the lies being sold as "progressive" policies. We'll equip Virginia Christian voters with biblical conviction through this comprehensive guide series.

But it all starts here, today, with a decision:

Will you be a watchman on the wall? Or a silent spectator while Virginia decides its future?

> *"Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called."* (1 Timothy 6:12)

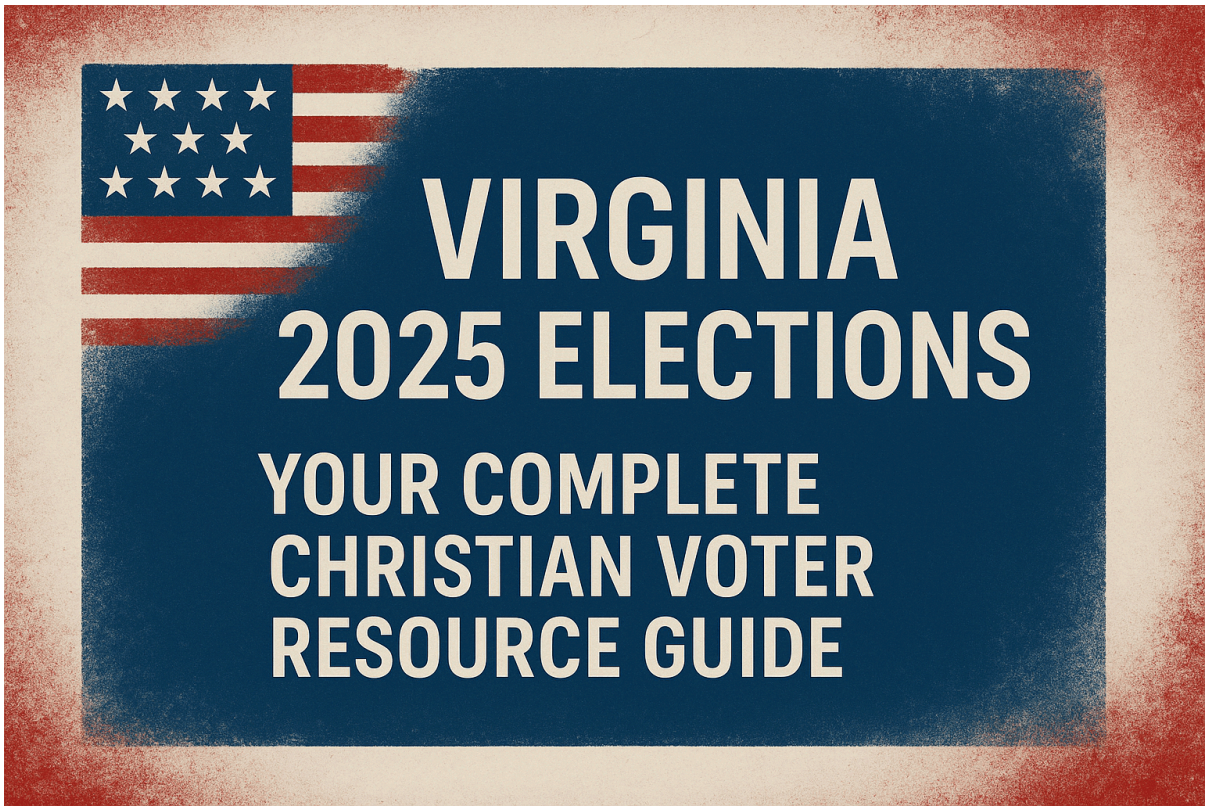
November 4th is coming. Therefore, are you ready?

Start here: Get Your Personalized Ballot Information

We welcome thoughtful and respectful dialogue from all viewpoints. Comments must remain civil, relevant, and free of profanity, personal attacks, or mockery of Christian faith. Disagreement is allowed—disrespect is not.

Virginia 2025 Elections: Your Complete Christian Voter Resource Guide

OCTOBER 26, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: 2025 VOTER GUIDE, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, US CONSTITUTION



Dear Virginia Christian:

When Christians Stay Home, Darkness Advances

Proverbs 29:2 warns us: *"When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan."* On November 4, 2025, Virginia Christians will help determine who leads our state—and whether amendments enshrining unlimited abortion and redefining marriage become part of our constitution. The reality is that many believers will skip voting simply because they feel overwhelmed by the research required. This shouldn't be.

Multiple faith-based organizations have created excellent voter guides comparing candidates on biblical principles—life, family, religious liberty, and constitutional fidelity. The challenge? They're scattered across different websites with confusing links. They are compiled in one place below, organized by race type with clear descriptions of what each guide offers.

Every link is clickable for immediate online access, and you can download this entire resource to keep on your computer for click and access (PDF DOWNLOAD Virginia Voter Resource 2025 Elections). Whether you need personalized information for your specific ballot or comprehensive statewide comparisons, everything you need is right here. No more excuses. No more confusion. Just faithful, informed stewardship of your vote.

InDepth Resources:

- **Virginia Christian Voters Preparation Guide: 5 Steps Before November 4**
- **Why this Election Matters: Biblical Justice vs Social Justice**
- **Virginia Religious Liberty Election: What's at Stake November 4**
- **The Biblical Foundation for Government: What Scripture Really Says**

Quick Start – Most Comprehensive Resources

Need everything in one place?

- **Virginia Faith & Freedom Coalition – All Races PDF** – Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General in one document

Need personalized info for your district?

- **Family Foundation – Enter Your Address** – Get customized voter guide with all races
- **iVoterGuide – Enter Your Address** – Personalized guide for your ballot

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🏛️ Governor Race Resources

Organization	Format	Link	What's Included
Million Voices	PDF Download	**Fact Sheet**	Candidate comparison
Million Voices	Web Page	**Detailed Fact Sheets**	In-depth candidate positions
Virginia Catholic Conference	PDF Download	**Comparison Chart**	Side-by-side candidate comparison

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📊 All Statewide Races (Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General)

Organization	Format	Link	Notes
Family Foundation of VA	PDF Download	**Print-Ready Guide**	Includes selected House of Delegates races
Family Foundation of VA	Online (Personalized)	**Enter Your Address**	Covers ALL House of Delegates races; hover over question # to see full text
iVoterGuide	Online (Personalized)	**Enter Your Address**	Customized to your address
Virginia Faith & Freedom	PDF Download	**Complete Guide**	All three races in one file

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🏠 House of Delegates Races

Best Resources:

- **Family Foundation Online Guide** – Enter your address to see YOUR delegate race
- **Family Foundation PDF** – Selected HOD races included

Legislative Report Card:

- **2024-2025 General Assembly Report Card** – How current delegates voted on key issues

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📜 Constitutional Amendment Resources

Abortion Amendment

- **Students For Life – What Does It Actually Say?** – Analysis of "Right to Reproductive Freedom" amendment
- **Family Foundation – Stop Unlimited Abortion Flyer** – One-page summary

Marriage Amendment

- **Family Foundation – Marriage Amendment Flyer** – One-page summary

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🙏 Faith-Based Voting Resources

Christians Engaged – Biblical Roadmap to Party Platforms

- **PDF Guide**
- Non-partisan reference comparing platforms to Biblical worldview
- Page 2 includes guidance on how Christians should approach platforms

Key Principle: *"Our allegiance is not to a party, it is to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We don't derive our values from a political party — they come from what God says in His Word."*

🔍 Additional Resources

More Virginia Voter Guides:

- **Biblical Voter – Virginia Resources**

💡 How to Use This Guide

1. **Start with personalized guides** – Enter your address at vavoterguide.com or ivoterguide.com to see exactly what's on YOUR ballot

2. **Compare multiple sources** – Different organizations may emphasize different issues

3. **Check the legislative report card** – See how current delegates have actually voted, not just what they promise

4. **For constitutional amendments** – Read the actual text using the resources above, not just summaries, so you understand what you're voting on

5. **Print what you need** – Bring a voter guide with you to the polls if allowed in your location

6. **Share this resource** – Forward to your church, small group, or fellow believers who need guidance

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Your Action Timeline:

- **This Week:** Visit vavoterguide.com and enter your address
- **By October 27:** Review all races and amendments

- **November 3:** Pray for Virginia's elections
- **November 4:** Vote with biblical conviction
- **After Election:** Pray for those elected (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

"When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule, the people groan." (Proverbs 29:2)

Don't let confusion keep you from faithful stewardship. Every link above is vetted, every resource is faith-based, and every guide exists to help you vote according to God's Word.

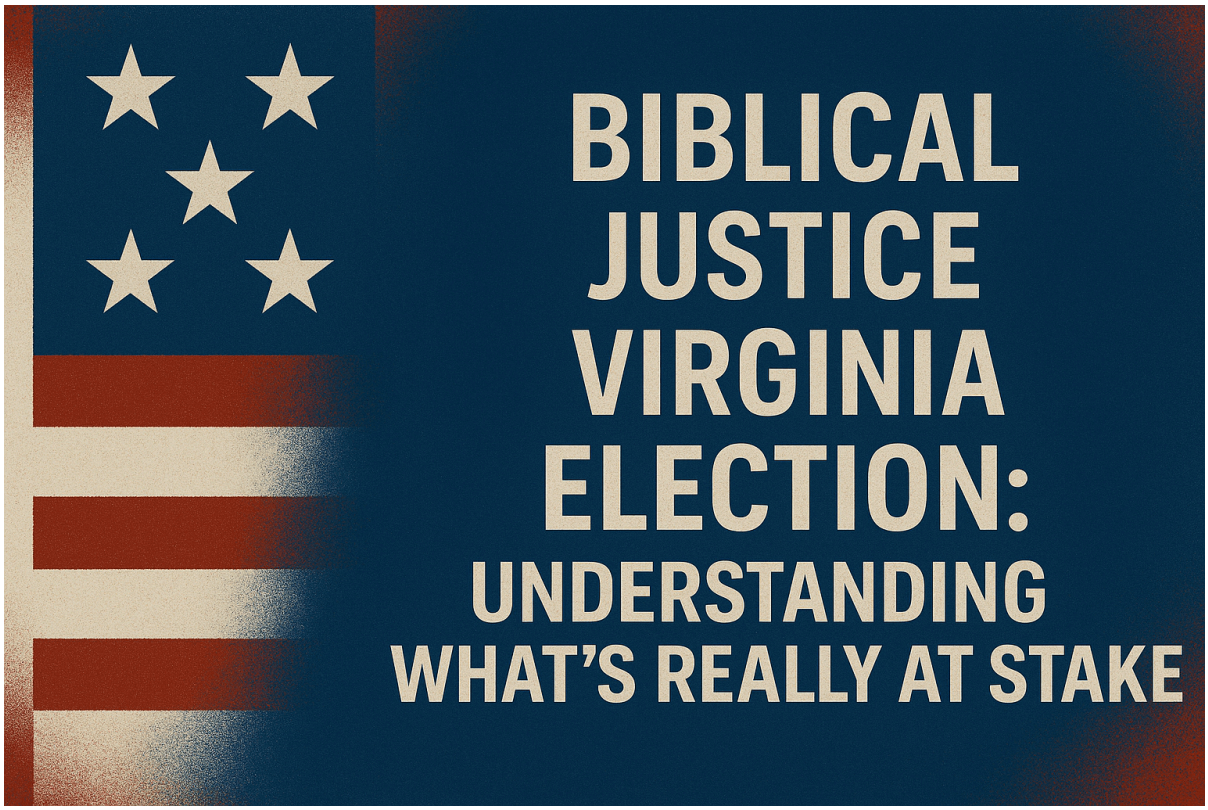
No more excuses. Download this. Use it. Vote.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Virginia Christian Alliance.

We welcome thoughtful and respectful dialogue from all viewpoints. Comments must remain civil, relevant, and free of profanity, personal attacks, or mockery of Christian faith. Disagreement is allowed—disrespect is not.

Biblical Justice Virginia Election: Understanding What's Really at Stake

OCTOBER 25, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: 2025 VOTER GUIDE, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Dear Christian:

As we continue our series on Virginia Christian voters for the upcoming election, today we're examining a concept that's been hijacked, redefined, and weaponized: **justice.**

You've heard the terms everywhere: "social justice," "racial justice," "economic justice," "environmental justice." Politicians promise it. Activists demand it. Universities teach it. Churches preach it. However, what most people call "justice" today bears little resemblance to what the Bible calls justice.

This is no longer about fairness—it's about redefining justice itself.

Moreover, the biblical justice Virginia election on November 4th will determine which definition of justice shapes our laws, our schools, our economy, and our culture. One vision is grounded in

Scripture's eternal principles. The other is rooted in Marxist ideology that contradicts God's Word at every level.

The reality is that most Christians don't recognize the difference. Consequently, they support policies that sound compassionate but actually violate biblical justice. Furthermore, they vote for candidates who promise "justice" while implementing injustice.

Today, we're going to fix that. You'll learn what biblical justice actually means, how it differs from modern "social justice," and why this matters enormously in the biblical justice Virginia election.

What the Bible Says About Justice: Four Foundational Principles

Let's start with Scripture. Biblical justice rests on four pillars that appear consistently throughout God's Word:

1. Equality Before the Law

The first principle of biblical justice is that every individual stands equal before the law. No partiality. No favoritism. No special treatment based on wealth, poverty, race, or status.

God commanded Israel: *"You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor."* (Leviticus 19:15)

Notice what this means. Biblical justice treats the poor man and the rich man equally. It doesn't favor the wealthy because of their influence. However, it also doesn't favor the poor because of their victim status. Instead, both stand equal before the law.

This is radical. Modern "social justice" explicitly rejects this principle. It argues that true justice requires favoring certain groups (the "oppressed") over others (the "oppressors"). Consequently, it demands unequal treatment to achieve equal outcomes.

However, Scripture says the opposite. Equal treatment under law is justice. Unequal treatment—even with good intentions—is injustice.

2. Equal Restitution for Equal Harm

Biblical justice demands that punishment fit the crime. The restitution for harm must be proportional, not excessive or lenient.

"But if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." (Exodus 21:23-25)

Modern readers often misunderstand this principle. They think "eye for eye" sounds harsh. In fact, it was revolutionary mercy. Before this law, revenge was unlimited. If you poked out my eye, I might kill your entire family. Therefore, God said: "No. The punishment must match the crime. No more, no less."

This principle matters enormously in the biblical justice Virginia election. Consider:

Reparations for slavery: Modern "social justice" says descendants of slaveholders owe debts to descendants of slaves—even though neither the debtors nor the creditors participated in slavery. However, biblical justice says the actual perpetrator owes restitution to the actual victim. Punishing someone for their ancestor's sin violates "eye for eye" because the person being punished committed no crime.

Affirmative action and quotas: These policies punish or reward people based on their group identity rather than their individual actions. Consequently, they violate equal restitution because they penalize innocent people (those denied opportunities due to race) and reward people who suffered no personal harm.

3. Individual Responsibility, Not Group Guilt

This is where biblical justice most sharply contradicts modern "social justice." Scripture is unambiguous: Each person bears responsibility for their own sin, not their group's, ancestor's, or race's sin.

God declared through the prophet Ezekiel:

"The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself." (Ezekiel 18:20)

This principle is foundational to biblical justice. You are responsible for your choices. Furthermore, you are not responsible for your father's choices, your race's history, or your nation's past sins. Likewise, you don't inherit righteousness from your ancestors. Each person stands before God individually.

However, modern "social justice" rejects this entirely. It divides society into oppressor groups and oppressed groups. Then it assigns collective guilt to "oppressor" groups (white people, men, heterosexuals, Christians) and collective victimhood to "oppressed" groups (racial minorities, women, LGBTQ+ individuals, non-Christians).

Consequently, under "social justice," you can be guilty simply because of your skin color, gender, or beliefs—regardless of your individual actions. Conversely, you can claim victim status

regardless of your individual circumstances.

This directly contradicts Ezekiel 18:20. Biblical justice judges individuals. "Social justice" judges groups.

4. God Rewards Merit, Not Equal Outcomes

Finally, biblical justice is not concerned with equality of outcomes. God does not redistribute success to ensure everyone ends up equal. Instead, He rewards faithfulness, diligence, and wise stewardship—even when that creates unequal results.

Jesus made this clear in the Parable of the Minas:

"And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.' And they said to him, 'Lord, he has ten minas!' I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away." (Luke 19:24-26)

The crowd protested: "Lord, that's not fair! The one with ten already has more!" However, Jesus insisted that the faithful servant deserves more reward, even though it creates greater inequality.

This principle matters in the biblical justice Virginia election because modern "social justice" obsesses over equal outcomes. It measures justice by statistics: Are all racial groups equally represented in universities, corporations, and government? Do all groups have equal income, wealth, and success?

However, biblical justice doesn't expect equal outcomes. Different people make different choices, exercise different levels of diligence, and develop different skills. Consequently, outcomes vary. That's not injustice—it's reality in a fallen world where people have genuine freedom and responsibility.

The Marxist Redefinition: How "Social Justice" Contradicts Scripture

Now let's examine where modern "social justice" comes from. Most Christians assume it's simply applying biblical principles to contemporary problems. In reality, "social justice" ideology has Marxist roots that directly contradict Scripture.

Karl Marx taught: *"The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another."*

Notice Marx's framework: All of history is a struggle between oppressor classes and oppressed classes. Society divides into two groups locked in conflict. Justice comes through revolution—the

oppressed must overthrow the oppressors and redistribute power and resources.

Furthermore, Marx rejected individual responsibility in favor of group classifications. Under Marxism, individuals matter only as members of classes. Your guilt or innocence depends on which class you belong to. Consequently, if you're in the "oppressor" class, you're guilty—regardless of your personal actions.

This is the foundation of modern "social justice" movements, including Critical Race Theory (CRT). CRT applies Marx's class struggle framework to race, declaring that all of American history is white people (oppressors) versus people of color (oppressed). Therefore, justice requires tearing down "white supremacy" systems and redistributing power, wealth, and opportunity based on race.

Here's the critical point for the biblical justice Virginia election:

This framework contradicts every principle of biblical justice:

- **Instead of equality before law → It demands unequal treatment to favor "oppressed" groups**
- **Instead of equal restitution → It demands reparations from people who committed no crime to people who suffered no direct harm**
- **Instead of individual responsibility → It assigns guilt based on group membership (race, gender, sexuality)**
- **Instead of merit-based outcomes → It demands equal outcomes regardless of individual choices and performance**

Consequently, when candidates promise "social justice," "racial justice," or "equity," you must ask: Are they promoting biblical justice or Marxist-based group guilt and forced equality of outcomes?

How This Plays Out in the Biblical Justice Virginia Election

The platforms speak for themselves. Let's compare what Virginia voters will choose on November 4th:

Republican Platform on Biblical Justice Virginia Election Issues:

"God bestows certain inalienable rights on every individual, thus producing human equality."

" that all Americans stand equal before the law."

"We continue to encourage equality for all citizens and access to the American Dream. Merit and hard work should determine advancement in our society, so we reject unfair preferences, quotas, and set-

asides as forms of discrimination."

Our take: This aligns with biblical justice—individual rights, equality before law, merit-based advancement, and rejection of group-based preferences.

Democratic Platform on Biblical Justice Virginia Election Issues:

" are committed to standing up to racism and bigotry… and recognize that race-neutral policies are not sufficient to rectify race-based disparities. We will take a comprehensive approach to embed racial justice in every element of our governing agenda."

"We believe Black lives matter, and will establish a national commission to examine the lasting economic effects of slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and racially discriminatory federal policies on income, wealth, educational, health, and employment outcomes."

" employ guidance counselors, social workers, nurses, or school psychologists to help guarantee age-appropriate and racially equitable student disciplinary practices."

Our take: This explicitly rejects race-neutral policies (equality before law) and instead seeks equality of outcomes based on race and gender. It pledges to study reparations (group guilt), promote racial group responsibilities, and use innovative strategies to redistribute wealth to close racial wealth gaps.

The Contrast for Biblical Justice Virginia Election:

One platform says: Treat everyone equally under law. Judge individuals by their actions. Let merit determine outcomes.

The other says: Race-neutral policies are insufficient. We need race-based policies to achieve racial equity. Study reparations. Guarantee racially equitable outcomes.

One promotes biblical justice. The other promotes "social justice" that contradicts Scripture's principles.

Why This Biblical Justice Virginia Election Issue Matters for Your Family

Let's make this personal. How does the winner of the biblical justice Virginia election affect your daily life?

For Your Children's Education:

If Virginia embraces "social justice" ideology, your children will be taught:

- They're either oppressors or oppressed based on their skin color
- America is fundamentally racist and must be torn down
- Equality before law is insufficient—we need equity (equal outcomes)
- They should feel guilty for their race, or victimized by it

However, if Virginia maintains biblical justice principles, your children learn:

- Every individual has equal dignity as God's image-bearer
- Judge people by character, not color (Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream)
- Personal responsibility and merit matter
- America's founding ideals are worth preserving and improving

For Your Workplace:

"Social justice" policies in Virginia businesses would mean:

- Mandatory diversity training teaching white privilege and systemic racism
- Hiring quotas based on race and gender, not qualifications
- Promotion decisions influenced by diversity metrics, not merit
- Fear of speaking biblical truth lest you be labeled "racist" or "bigoted"

Biblical justice in Virginia businesses means:

- Equal opportunity for all, regardless of race
- Hiring and promotion based on qualifications and performance
- Protection for religious conviction and free speech
- Freedom to succeed through diligence and competence

For Your Tax Burden:

"Social justice" fiscal policies would mean:

- Increased taxes to fund reparations and wealth redistribution programs
- Resources allocated by group identity rather than need
- Economic penalties for success (progressive taxation to achieve equity)

Biblical justice fiscal policies mean:

- Equal tax rates regardless of income level (like Israel's tithe—10% for everyone)
- Resources allocated based on genuine need, not group membership
- Economic freedom to work, earn, save, and steward resources according to God's design

For Your Church:

If "social justice" ideology dominates Virginia, churches face:

- Pressure to embrace CRT and preach "racial justice"
- Accusations of "white supremacy" for teaching biblical justice
- Potential loss of tax-exempt status for "discriminatory" biblical teaching
- Division along racial and political lines

If biblical justice prevails, Virginia churches can:

- Preach the whole counsel of God without government interference
- Unite around biblical truth rather than political ideology
- Practice genuine reconciliation through the gospel, not forced equity
- Maintain biblical standards without being labeled hate groups

This is what's at stake in the biblical justice Virginia election.

What Virginia Candidates Believe About Justice

So where do Virginia's gubernatorial candidates stand on biblical justice versus "social justice"?

This is precisely what you need to research before the biblical justice Virginia election on November 4th. Specifically, examine:

Do they support race-neutral policies or race-based policies?

- Do they believe in equality (equal treatment) or equity (equal outcomes)?
- Will they implement quotas, preferences, and set-asides based on race and gender?
- Do they support studying reparations for slavery?

Do they embrace individual responsibility or group guilt?

- Do they talk about "systemic racism" and "white privilege"?
- Do they assign blame or victimhood based on group identity?
- Will they mandate CRT-based training in schools and government?

Do they promote merit-based advancement or forced equality?

- Do they believe success should be earned or redistributed?
- Will they use government power to close "wealth gaps" and ensure equal outcomes?

- Do they trust free markets or prefer government control of economic outcomes?

Visit the Virginia Christian Voter Guide and examine:

- Candidates' statements on racial justice and equity
- Their voting records on race-based policies
- Endorsements from groups promoting CRT or biblical principles
- Specific proposals for education, hiring, and economic policy

Furthermore, don't just accept vague promises about "justice" or "fairness." Demand specifics: Which definition of justice do they embrace? Biblical or Marxist?

A Warning to Virginia Christians

Here's where I need to speak directly, Christian to Christian.

Many believers have been deceived into supporting "social justice" because it sounds like applying biblical compassion to modern problems. However, compassion without truth is not biblical. Moreover, supporting policies that violate God's principles of justice—no matter how compassionate they sound—is not loving your neighbor.

Consider these hard truths:

Reparations violate Ezekiel 18:20. Punishing people for their ancestors' sins contradicts Scripture, even if it's repackaged as "restorative justice."

Racial quotas violate Leviticus 19:15. Treating people unequally based on skin color is injustice, even if it's called "equity."

Group guilt violates individual responsibility. Judging someone by their race rather than their character contradicts biblical justice, even if it's labeled "anti-racism."

Forced equality of outcomes violates Luke 19:24-26. Redistributing success to ensure equal results contradicts God's design, even if it's called "closing gaps."

Therefore, when you vote in the biblical justice Virginia election, you're not choosing between two acceptable Christian positions. You're choosing between biblical justice and a counterfeit that contradicts Scripture.

Consequently, this is a test of whether you'll obey God or conform to cultural pressure.

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:2)

Your Action Steps for the Biblical Justice Virginia Election

Here's what you must do before November 4th:

Step 1: Study These Scriptures Read and meditate on:

- Leviticus 19:15 (equality before law)
- Exodus 21:23-25 (equal restitution)
- Ezekiel 18:20 (individual responsibility)
- Luke 19:24-26 (merit-based outcomes)

Ask God to ground your understanding of justice in His Word, not culture's definitions.

Step 2: Research Candidates on Justice Issues Visit the **Virginia Christian Voter Guide** and examine where candidates stand on:

- Race-neutral vs. race-based policies
- Equity vs. equality
- Reparations and wealth redistribution
- Critical Race Theory in education
- Merit-based vs. quota-based systems

Step 3: Teach Your Family Biblical Justice Don't let schools, media, and culture define justice for your children. Instead, teach them:

- Every person is made in God's image—that's the basis of human equality
- Individual character and choices matter more than group identity
- Justice means equal treatment under law, not equal outcomes
- God rewards faithfulness and diligence, even when it creates inequality

Step 4: Pray for Virginia Pray that God would:

- Give Virginia leaders who understand and implement biblical justice
- Protect Virginia children from ideologies that contradict Scripture
- Expose the lies of "social justice" and reveal truth
- Bring genuine reconciliation through the gospel, not forced equity

Step 5: Vote Biblical Justice in Virginia Election On November 4th, vote for candidates who will implement biblical justice principles in Virginia law, education, and policy. Furthermore, help others understand the difference between biblical justice and its counterfeit.

Tomorrow: Marriage, Gender, and God's Design

The biblical justice Virginia election is intrinsically connected to tomorrow's topic: marriage, gender, and sexuality. Why? Because "social justice" ideology doesn't stop with race and economics. It also demands we embrace new definitions of marriage, gender, and family.

Tomorrow, we'll examine Virginia's marriage amendment and what candidates believe about God's design for marriage, gender identity, and human sexuality.

These issues all connect. When government rejects biblical justice, it opens the door to rejecting all of God's moral law. Consequently, the stakes on November 4th couldn't be higher.

"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." (Proverbs 14:34)

Virginia is choosing between righteousness and reproach. Therefore, choose biblical justice.

Research Candidates Now: Virginia Christian Voter Guide

We welcome thoughtful and respectful dialogue from all viewpoints. Comments must remain civil, relevant, and free of profanity, personal attacks, or mockery of Christian faith. Disagreement is allowed—disrespect is not.

Virginia Religious Liberty Election: What's at Stake November 4

OCTOBER 24, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: 2025 VOTER GUIDE, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, PARENTAL RIGHTS

Dear Christian:

As we continue our series on **Virginia Christian voters** for the upcoming election, today we're examining one of the most critical issues at stake: **religious liberty.**

The Supreme Court building stands as a monument to the rule of law, its marble columns bearing witness to generations of Americans seeking justice. However, in recent years, those halls have echoed with a troubling question our Founders never anticipated: Can the government compel citizens to violate their deeply held religious convictions?

This isn't theoretical for Virginia. In fact, the Virginia religious liberty election on November 4th will determine whether Christians can operate businesses, run adoption agencies, provide counseling, practice medicine, and educate children according to biblical conviction—or whether the state will force conformity to ideologies that contradict Scripture.

The reality is that religious liberty in America is under unprecedented assault. Moreover, the candidates running for Virginia governor hold radically different views on whether Christians deserve broad protections or narrow accommodations. One vision protects conscience. The other punishes it.

Consequently, before you cast your vote, you need to understand what's truly at stake in this Virginia religious liberty election.

What Does the Bible Say About Religious Liberty?

Let's start with the foundation. Does God compel faith, or does He protect human choice?

Jesus made His position crystal clear when He instructed His disciples:

> *"And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town."* (Matthew 10:14)

Notice what Jesus did NOT say. He didn't command: "Force them to listen. Use government power to compel agreement. Punish those who reject your message."

Instead, Jesus insisted on personal choice and non-coercion of religious beliefs. If people reject the gospel, you move on. You don't legislate conformity. Furthermore, this principle of voluntary faith is woven throughout Scripture.

The Apostle Paul wrote: *"The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith"* (1 Timothy 1:5). Notice the word "sincere." Faith coerced isn't sincere—it's performance under duress. Therefore, God values authentic belief freely chosen, not external compliance mandated by law.

This is why religious liberty matters so much in this Virginia religious liberty election. When government forces Christians to affirm what Scripture calls sin, or punishes them for living according to biblical conviction, it attacks the very nature of authentic faith that God desires.

The Three Visions of Religious Liberty in This Virginia Election

Understanding the Virginia religious liberty election requires seeing the three distinct philosophies at war:

1) Biblical Vision: Freedom of Conscience

The biblical view protects robust religious liberty in all spheres of life:

- Christians can operate businesses according to biblical ethics
- Religious organizations can hire and serve consistent with their beliefs
- Medical professionals can decline procedures that violate conscience
- Parents can educate children according to faith
- Churches can preach biblical truth without government interference

Moreover, this freedom extends beyond church buildings into everyday life. You don't "check your faith at the door" when you enter the public square. Instead, religious conviction shapes how you work, serve, create, and engage your community.

2) Marxist Vision: Abolish Religion

Here's what many don't realize about the ideological roots of religious liberty opposition. Karl Marx openly declared: *"My object in life is to dethrone God and destroy Capitalism… The first requisite for the happiness of the people is the abolition of religion."*

Vladimir Lenin added: *"Religion is the opium of the people—this dictum by Marx is the cornerstone of the whole Marxist outlook on religion. Marxism has always regarded all modern religions and churches, and each and every religious organisation, as instruments of reaction that serve to defend exploitation and to befuddle the working class."*

Notice the goal: **Marxism sets itself against God and seeks to limit religious expression.** Why? Because you cannot serve both God and the State. One authority must bow to the other. Consequently, Marxist ideology always moves toward restricting, containing, and ultimately eliminating religious influence from public life.

3) The Current Democratic Platform Position

Now, here's where the Virginia religious liberty election gets critical. The Democratic platform states:

" will protect the rights of each American for the free exercise of his or her own religion advocate for religious freedom throughout the world."

That sounds reasonable. However, read the next line carefully:

" believe in the paramount importance of maintaining the separation between church and state."

And most tellingly:

" reject broad religious exemptions."

Let that sink in. They explicitly reject **broad** religious exemptions. In other words, they support religious freedom—but only within narrow boundaries they define. Furthermore, they want to keep religious expression separate from public life ("separation of church and state").

This isn't the Marxist position of abolishing religion. However, it's a step in that direction. It says: "You can believe what you want in private, but when your beliefs conflict with our ideology in public, your beliefs must yield."

The Republican Platform Position

In contrast, the Republican platform in this Virginia religious liberty election states:

"We pledge to defend the religious beliefs and rights of conscience of all Americans and to safeguard religious institutions against government control… We strongly support the freedom of Americans to act in accordance with their religious beliefs, not only in their houses of worship, but also in their everyday lives."

Additionally:

" that religious individuals and institutions can educate young people, receive government benefits, and participate in public debates without having to check their religious beliefs at the door."

The contrast is clear. One platform says "broad exemptions" are problematic. The other says religious freedom should be protected broadly, in everyday life, not just in church buildings.

What "Rejecting Broad Religious Exemptions" Means for Virginia Christians

Let's make this concrete. When a platform rejects "broad religious exemptions," here's what happens in practice:

Christian Business Owners: A Christian baker, florist, or photographer who cannot in good conscience create art celebrating same-sex marriages faces lawsuits, fines, and business closure. Furthermore, the state labels this "discrimination" rather than conscience protection.

Adoption Agencies: Catholic Charities and other faith-based adoption agencies that place children with married mother-father families (following 2,000 years of Christian teaching) are forced to either violate their convictions or close their doors. Consequently, thousands of vulnerable children lose excellent placement services.

Christian Counselors: Counselors who offer biblical guidance on sexuality and gender—helping clients align their lives with Scripture—face state licensing threats. Some states have already banned such counseling for minors. Therefore, parents cannot even seek Christian counseling for their own children.

Healthcare Workers: Christian doctors and nurses who cannot perform abortions or participate in gender transition procedures for religious reasons face discrimination, job loss, and professional consequences. Moreover, their licenses may be threatened.

Christian Schools: Religious schools that maintain biblical standards for marriage, sexuality, and gender face loss of accreditation, tax-exempt status, and eligibility for school choice programs. In addition, they may be forced to hire staff who reject their religious mission.

This is what "rejecting broad religious exemptions" looks like. It means your faith is free—as long as it stays private, silent, and separated from how you actually live.

The Virginia Religious Liberty Election: Where Candidates Stand

So where do Virginia's gubernatorial candidates stand on religious liberty?

This is precisely what you need to research before the Virginia religious liberty election on November 4th. Specifically, ask:

Do they support broad religious exemptions?

- Will they protect Christian business owners who operate according to biblical ethics?
- Will they defend faith-based adoption agencies, schools, and counseling services?
- Will they safeguard healthcare workers' conscience rights?

How do they view the relationship between faith and public life?

- Do they believe Christians must "check their faith at the door" in the public square?
- Will they protect churches' freedom to preach biblical truth without government interference?
- Do they see religious conviction as discrimination, or as protected liberty?

What is their record?

- Have they supported religious liberty legislation in the past?
- Have they opposed measures that would restrict conscience protections?
- Do their donors and endorsements suggest genuine commitment to religious freedom?

Visit the Virginia Christian Voter Guide and examine:

- Family Foundation comparison charts on religious liberty positions
- Virginia Faith & Freedom Coalition candidate analysis
- Voting records of current office holders

Furthermore, look specifically at where candidates stand on:

- Religious exemptions in anti-discrimination laws
- Conscience protections for healthcare workers
- School choice that includes religious schools
- Parental rights in education
- Protections for faith-based organizations

The differences between candidates in this Virginia religious liberty election are not subtle. They represent fundamentally different visions of whether Christians can live out their faith in all areas of life.

Why This Virginia Religious Liberty Election Matters Eternally

Here's what's at stake beyond politics:

For your children: Will they grow up in a Virginia where Christian schools can operate freely, or where the state threatens religious education with regulatory pressure?

For your church: Will pastors face consequences for preaching biblical truth about marriage, sexuality, and gender? Will churches lose tax-exempt status for maintaining biblical membership standards?

For your livelihood: If you own a business, practice medicine, provide counseling, or work in education, will Virginia protect your right to operate according to biblical conviction?

For your witness: Can you live out your faith authentically in every sphere of life, or must you compartmentalize—Christian on Sunday, conformist the rest of the week?

For the gospel: When government punishes Christians for living according to Scripture, it sends a message: "Your God's commands don't matter here." Consequently, the gospel itself is marginalized, deemed irrelevant to public life.

Moreover, this is precisely what Jesus warned about:

"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matthew 18:6)

When government forces Christians to participate in what Scripture calls sin—or punishes them for refusing—it causes believers to stumble. Therefore, the stakes in this Virginia religious liberty election are spiritual, not merely political.

Religious Liberty vs. "Separation of Church and State"

One more critical point: You'll often hear that "separation of church and state" requires limiting religious influence in public life. However, this is a fundamental misunderstanding of American history.

The First Amendment states: *"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."*

Notice two protections:

1. **No establishment:** Government cannot create an official state church or force citizens to support one religion
2. **Free exercise:** Government cannot prohibit religious practice

"Separation of church and state" was never meant to exclude religious conviction from public life. Instead, it prevents government control of religion and religious control of government. Furthermore, it protects religious minorities from state-sponsored persecution.

The Founders understood what Scripture teaches: Faith must be voluntary, sincere, and free. Consequently, they built protections into our Constitution.

However, when modern politicians invoke "separation" to justify rejecting "broad religious exemptions," they're twisting the Founders' intent. They're using constitutional language to achieve the opposite of what the Constitution protects.

This matters in the Virginia religious liberty election because candidates will use this language. Therefore, you need to understand what they actually mean.

Your Action Steps Before November 4

Here's what you must do:

Step 1: Research Candidates on Religious Liberty Visit the **Virginia Christian Voter Guide** and examine where gubernatorial candidates stand specifically on:

- Religious exemptions
- Conscience protections
- Faith-based organization freedoms
- Parental rights
- Church freedoms

Step 2: Ask the Right Questions Don't accept vague promises about "supporting religious freedom." Instead, demand specifics:

- Do you support broad religious exemptions?
- Will you protect Christian business owners, adoption agencies, counselors, and healthcare workers?
- Do you believe religious conviction should be protected in all spheres of life, or only in private worship?

Step 3: Compare Their Records, Not Their Rhetoric Politicians say what voters want to hear. However, their votes and endorsements reveal truth. Look at:

- Past legislation they supported or opposed
- Organizations that endorse them
- Donors who fund their campaigns

Step 4: Pray for Wisdom *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him."* (James 1:5)

Ask God to give you discernment in this Virginia religious liberty election. Pray that He would raise up leaders who will protect His people's freedom to live according to His Word.

Step 5: Vote with Conviction On November 4th, vote for candidates who will protect broad religious liberty. Furthermore, help others understand what's at stake by sharing this information with your church, small group, and family.

Tomorrow: Biblical Justice vs. "Social Justice"

The Virginia religious liberty election is just one piece of what's being decided on November 4th. Tomorrow, we'll examine another critical issue: the battle between biblical justice and the counterfeit "social justice" that's infiltrating our culture and politics.

You'll see how these issues connect—because when government rejects religious liberty, it's often because it's embraced an ideology that demands conformity to a different system of "justice" that contradicts Scripture.

“When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule, the people groan.” (Proverbs 29:2)

Virginia is deciding who will rule. Therefore, choose leaders who will protect your freedom to follow Christ without government punishment.

Research Candidates Now: Virginia Christian Voter Guide

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Christians and Artificial Intelligence: Biblical Stewardship in AI Age

OCTOBER 22, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: AI

Building Faithful Stewardship in the Digital Age

Dear Christian,

The rise of artificial intelligence forces us to ask hard questions. How should followers of Christ approach technology that promises god-like knowledge and capability? What does faithful stewardship look like when machines can think, write, and converse?

Recently, the Family Research Council hosted a panel discussion addressing these critical concerns. The resulting article from **Washington Stand** offers excellent practical wisdom that every believer should read. The panel warned about AI's impact on cognitive development, mental health risks for children, and the danger of replacing human relationships with chatbots.

I want to commend this work and build upon it. While their practical concerns are vital, we need a deeper theological foundation. Therefore, let me explore how Scripture illuminates this issue beyond helpful tips and warnings.

The Image of God: Why AI Can Never Replace Humans

The Washington Stand article rightly warns that AI chatbots threaten human relationships. However, we must understand *why* this matters theologically, not just psychologically.

Genesis 1:27 declares, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." This truth changes everything. Humans bear God's image—we reflect His character, relate personally, love sacrificially, and create meaningfully. AI, no matter how sophisticated, does not and cannot bear the imago Dei.

Consequently, when a child forms a "friendship" with an AI chatbot, something ontologically false occurs. The machine simulates a relationship without actual personhood. It mimics empathy without genuine care. It responds without truly understanding. This isn't merely unhealthy—it's a counterfeit of God's design for human flourishing.

Moreover, the concern extends beyond children. Adults who turn to AI for emotional support exchange the real for the artificial. We were created for communion with God and fellowship with image-bearers. No algorithm can satisfy that divine design, regardless of how convincingly it responds.

Stewardship Under God's Sovereignty: Beyond Human Autonomy

The panel wisely stated, "We should never submit to AI—AI submits to us." This captures an important truth, yet it needs biblical precision.

Scripture teaches that we are stewards, not autonomous rulers. God commanded Adam to "work and keep" the garden (Genesis 2:15). Similarly, we must steward technology under God's authority. The question isn't merely "Does AI submit to human will?" but rather "Are we using AI in submission to God's will?"

Furthermore, this distinction matters practically. If we view AI only through human autonomy, we might justify any use that serves our purposes. However, biblical stewardship asks: Does this honor God? Does it serve my neighbor? Does it cultivate wisdom or replace it? Does it strengthen community or fragment it?

Additionally, we cannot simply assert control over AI without acknowledging our accountability to the Creator. Therefore, Christian engagement with AI must begin with humility before God, not confidence in human mastery.

Biblical Wisdom Versus the "Wisdom Muscle"

The Washington Stand article helpfully warns that AI can atrophy our "wisdom muscle" when we outsource thinking to ChatGPT. This analogy works on a practical level, but Scripture reveals something deeper.

James 3:17 teaches, "But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere." Notice that godly wisdom involves moral character formed through relationship with God and others. It isn't merely cognitive strength—it's spiritual maturity shaped by the Holy Spirit.

Proverbs 9:10 declares, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom." Consequently, when students use AI to avoid the wrestling, questioning, and struggling that produces wisdom, they miss more than intellectual growth. They bypass the sanctifying process God uses to develop godly character.

Moreover, 1 Corinthians 1:25 reminds us, "For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Human wisdom apart from God—whether augmented by

AI or not—remains foolishness. Therefore, our concern shouldn't just be maintaining cognitive ability but cultivating dependence on divine wisdom.

The Tower of Babel and AI's Exponential Ambition

The panel noted AI's exponential growth trajectory—how AIs build better AIs in an accelerating cycle. This technological reality echoes an ancient biblical pattern.

Genesis 11 records humanity's attempt to build a tower "with its top in the heavens" to "make a name for ourselves." God confused their language and scattered them. Why? Because human attempts to transcend God-given limitations apart from His blessing always end in judgment.

Similarly, AI promises god-like knowledge, infinite memory, and capabilities beyond human limitation. The serpent's ancient lie resurfaces: "You will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5). Technology becomes the new tree promising divine status.

However, history demonstrates that human pride invites divine intervention. We cannot predict exactly how God will respond to AI's exponential ambitions, but Scripture assures us He will not allow His image-bearers to be replaced or His glory to be stolen by machines.

Therefore, Christians must recognize AI development as more than technological progress. It represents humanity's recurring rebellion—attempting to build autonomy apart from the Creator. This spiritual dimension demands prophetic warning, not just practical caution.

The Church's Response: Proactive Gospel, Not Reactive Refuge

One panelist expressed hope that when people lose jobs to AI and feel abandoned by chatbots, "they're going to be running back into the churches." While I appreciate this optimism, Scripture and history counsel caution.

Revelation 16:9 records that even amid devastating plagues, people "cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory." Crisis alone doesn't produce repentance. Desperation can drive people toward false solutions as easily as toward the true God.

Consequently, the church cannot passively wait for refugees fleeing AI's destruction. We must proactively proclaim the gospel now. We must build authentic Christian community now. We must disciple families in biblical wisdom now.

Furthermore, revival requires the Holy Spirit's work, not merely cultural circumstances. Therefore, let us pray for genuine awakening while faithfully equipping believers to engage AI with discernment and biblical conviction.

Christian Engagement Requires Discernment, Not Just Participation

The panel rightly insisted, "If Christians don't engage with AI at all, we will be left behind because the enemy is going to use it." I agree completely. However, engagement requires more than participation—it demands discernment.

Not every "Christian AI platform" honors biblical truth. We must ask: Does it manipulate users through engagement algorithms? Does it protect privacy ethically? Does it promote sound doctrine or merely baptize secular values with religious language?

Moreover, engagement means using AI as a tool for God's kingdom purposes while rejecting uses that contradict His character. We can employ AI for biblical research, ministry communication, and productivity enhancement. However, we must resist AI that replaces prayer, pastoral care, or biblical meditation.

Additionally, Christian developers and users bear responsibility to build and use AI that serves others rather than exploits them. This requires theological wisdom combined with technical skill—a partnership the church desperately needs.

Practical Steps Grounded in Biblical Truth

Building on Washington Stand's excellent practical advice, here are action steps grounded in theology:

For Parents:

- Teach children they bear God's image; machines do not
- Disable voice features on AI tools—text-only reduces false personification
- Model asking "What does Scripture say?" before asking "What does AI say?"
- Foster real relationships through church, family, and Christian community

For Church Leaders:

- Preach on stewardship, imago Dei, and biblical wisdom in our technological age
- Create spaces for offline fellowship that counter digital isolation
- Equip families to navigate AI with biblical discernment
- Model balanced AI use—productivity tools, yes; relationship replacement, no

For Individual Believers:

- Submit AI use to God's authority through prayer and Scripture

- Maintain spiritual disciplines that AI cannot replace (prayer, worship, fellowship)
- Develop critical thinking by comparing AI outputs to biblical truth
- Use AI to amplify kingdom work, not to bypass sanctifying struggle

For Christian Professionals:

- Bring biblical ethics into AI development conversations
- Advocate for transparency, privacy protection, and human dignity
- Build tools that serve rather than manipulate
- Remember that all work serves God's glory, not just human advancement

Hope Anchored in God's Sovereignty

Despite legitimate concerns about AI, Christians need not despair. Our hope rests in God's sovereignty, not technological trends.

Daniel 2:21 reminds us, "He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding." God remains sovereign over every technological development. AI neither surprises Him nor threatens His purposes.

Moreover, Romans 8:28 promises, "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." Even AI's challenges can refine the church, clarify our mission, and drive us deeper into dependence on God.

Furthermore, Philippians 1:6 assures us, "He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." God will complete His work in His people. No machine can thwart His sanctifying purposes.

Therefore, let us engage AI with wisdom, steward it with faithfulness, and trust God with the outcomes. The same Lord who scattered Babel's builders reigns over Silicon Valley's innovators. He will preserve His church and accomplish His will.

Conclusion: Gratitude and Call to Action

I deeply appreciate the Washington Stand's work in bringing these critical issues before the Christian community. Their practical wisdom provides an essential foundation. I encourage every reader to **visit their article** and support their ministry.

However, practical wisdom alone isn't enough. We need theological depth that grounds our concerns in Scripture's eternal truth. AI challenges us to remember who we are (image-bearers),

whose we are (God's stewards), and what we're called to do (make disciples, not machines, in God's image).

As believers, we stand at a crossroads. We can fear AI and retreat, or we can engage it faithfully under God's authority. Let us choose the latter—not with naive optimism, but with biblical conviction and hope anchored in Christ.

The question isn't whether AI will change our world—it already has. The question is whether Christians will respond with wisdom from above or be swept along by cultural currents. May God grant us discernment, courage, and faithfulness for such a time as this.

For Further Study:

Scripture References:

- Genesis 1:27 (Imago Dei)
- Genesis 2:15 (Stewardship mandate)
- Genesis 3:5 (The original lie)
- Genesis 11:1-9 (Tower of Babel)
- Proverbs 9:10 (Fear of the LORD)
- James 3:13-18 (Godly wisdom)
- 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 (God's wisdom vs. human wisdom)
- Daniel 2:21 (God's sovereignty over knowledge)
- Romans 8:28 (All things for good)
- Philippians 1:6 (God completes His work)

Recommended Resources:

- **Washington Stand Article on AI**
- Family Research Council's Pray Vote Stand Summit materials
- Virginia Christian Alliance resources on technology and faith

Related VCA Articles:

- Biblical Sexuality and Digital Culture
- Godly Relationships in the Social Media Age
- Obedience to God in Technological Stewardship

Comment Policy: We welcome thoughtful and respectful dialogue from all viewpoints. Comments must remain civil, relevant, and free of profanity, personal attacks, or mockery of Christian faith. Disagreement is allowed—disrespect is not.

The Biblical Foundation for Government: What Scripture Really Says

OCTOBER 21, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: 2025 VOTER GUIDE

Dear Christian:

Before you cast a single vote on November 4th, you need to understand the biblical view of government Virginia candidates hold. What does God's Word actually say about government? The candidates running for Virginia governor hold radically different views about government's purpose, scope, and authority. One vision aligns with Scripture and our Constitution. The other leads to tyranny disguised as compassion.

The reality is that most Christians have never been taught the biblical view of government. We've inherited assumptions from the culture—some biblical, some not. And that confusion makes us vulnerable to policies that sound caring but violate God's design.

Let's fix that today.

The Biblical View of Government: Limited Authority Under God

Here's the foundation: **God instituted government, and He gave it a specific, limited role.**

The Apostle Peter wrote to Christians living under Roman persecution:

> *"Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good."* (1 Peter 2:13-14)

Notice what Peter says the government exists to do: **Punish evil. Reward good.**

That's it. The government's biblical mandate is justice—protecting the innocent and punishing the guilty. Consequently, it's the mechanism God ordained to restrain evil in a fallen world so that His people can "lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way" (1 Timothy 2:2).

Government isn't called to be your provider, your parent, your employer, or your savior. Rather, it's called to maintain order and administer justice according to God's moral law.

When the government stays within these boundaries, society flourishes. However, when it exceeds them, tyranny grows.

Christians Must Submit—Until Government Commands Sin

Paul echoes this in Romans 13:

> *"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God."* (Romans 13:1)

This is crucial: **All legitimate governmental authority comes from God.** Rulers don't derive their power from the consent of the governed, or from military might, or from election results. Instead, they derive it from God, who delegates authority to them for His purposes.

This means Christians are to be the most law-abiding citizens in any society. We obey speed limits. We pay taxes. We respect authority—not because human government is ultimate, but because God is, and He commands our submission to the structures He's established.

But—and this is critical—**our highest allegiance is always to God, not government.**

When the Sanhedrin commanded Peter and John to stop preaching Christ, here's how they responded:

> *"Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard."* (Acts 4:19-20)

Notice the balance: Respectful tone. Clear conscience. Firm refusal.

Therefore, when the government commands what God forbids or forbids what God commands, the Christian's duty is to engage in civil disobedience. Not rebellion—we don't take up arms against authorities. However, we obey God rather than men, and we accept the earthly consequences while trusting God's ultimate justice.

This is why Virginia's elections matter so much. If we elect leaders who will punish good and reward evil—who will penalize Christians for living according to Scripture while celebrating what God calls sin—we face a collision between our allegiance to God and our submission to government.

Who Should Lead According to Biblical Government Principles?

When Moses was overwhelmed trying to govern Israel alone, his father-in-law Jethro gave him wise counsel:

> *"Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens."* (Exodus 18:21)

These are God's qualifications for leaders:

1. Able (competent) – Leadership requires skill, not just good intentions.

2. Fear God – They must recognize an authority higher than themselves and govern according to God's moral law.

3. Trustworthy – Their word must mean something. Character matters more than charisma.

4. Hate a bribe – They must be incorruptible, not swayed by money, power, or popularity.

Now ask yourself: Do the candidates in Virginia's gubernatorial race meet these biblical qualifications? Furthermore, have you even thought to measure them by this standard?

Most Christians vote based on personality, party loyalty, or single issues. However, God gives us a framework for evaluating leaders. We should use it.

The Marxist Alternative: Government as God

Here's where we need to understand what we're voting against.

Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin articulated a vision of government that directly contradicts Scripture. They believed that human problems stem from unjust systems, not sinful hearts. Consequently, their solution? A powerful, centralized State that controls every aspect of society.

Marx's *Communist Manifesto* advocates for:

- Abolition of private property
- Heavy progressive income taxes
- Centralized control of education
- State ownership of factories and production
- Abolition of inheritance rights

Lenin added: *"Our task is to make the State even bigger, even more democratic, even more comprehensive… The State Bank, the biggest of the big… will constitute as much as nine-tenths of the socialist apparatus."*

Notice the pattern? **Under Marxism, the State replaces God as the source of provision, justice, truth, and salvation.**

This is why Marx declared that "the first requisite for the happiness of the people is the abolition of religion." He understood that you cannot worship God and the State. One must bow to the other.

Christians, this isn't ancient history or distant theory. **This ideology is alive and thriving in American politics today.** When candidates promise that government will provide your healthcare, control your income, educate your children, and solve systemic injustices through top-down mandates—that's Marxism with a compassionate mask.

And it always, always leads to tyranny.

How the Biblical View of Government Applies to Virginia Elections

So what does this mean for November 4th?

You're not just choosing between two personalities. You're choosing between two fundamentally different visions of government. Understanding the biblical view of government Virginia candidates hold is essential to voting with conviction:

Biblical Vision:

- Limited government focused on justice
- Individual liberty and responsibility
- Private property rights
- Free markets and voluntary exchange
- Government as servant, not master
- Recognition that only God can change hearts

Statist Vision:

- Expansive government solves all social problems
- Collective rights superseding individual liberty
- Redistribution of wealth to achieve "equity"
- Centralized control of education, healthcare, economy
- Government as provider and savior
- Belief that systems—not sin—are the root problem

Virginia's candidates have clear records showing which vision they embrace. Some believe the government should protect your freedom to work, worship, and raise your family according to your convictions. In contrast, others believe the government should compel you to affirm their ideology and redistribute your resources for their vision of "justice."

One approach leads to liberty under God. The other leads to bondage under the State.

Scripture warns us: *"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people"* (Proverbs 14:34). Therefore, when we elect leaders who reject God's moral law and expand government beyond its biblical mandate, we get exactly what we deserve—and our children pay the price.

Your Action Step Today

Here's what I want you to do:

Visit the Virginia Christian Voter Guide and look specifically at where the gubernatorial candidates stand on these issues related to the biblical view of government:

- Religious liberty protections
- Parental rights in education
- Size and scope of state government
- Property rights and economic freedom
- Constitutional fidelity

Then ask yourself: Which candidate's vision aligns with the biblical view of government, Virginia Christians should support—limited government ordained by God to punish evil and reward good?

Don't vote based on personality or party. Instead, vote based on biblical principles.

Tomorrow, we'll tackle religious liberty—and you'll see exactly what's at stake when government exceeds its God-given boundaries.

"When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule, the people groan." (Proverbs 29:2)

Virginia is deciding which future we want. Therefore, choose wisely.

Get Your Personalized Voter Information: Virginia Christian Voter Guide

We welcome thoughtful and respectful dialogue from all viewpoints. Comments must remain civil, relevant, and free of profanity, personal attacks, or mockery of Christian faith. Disagreement is allowed—disrespect is not.

Historic First: Christian Cross Engraved on Charlie Kirk's Presidential Medal of Freedom

OCTOBER 16, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

On October 14, 2025—what would have been Charlie Kirk's 32nd birthday—President Donald Trump posthumously awarded the fallen conservative leader the Presidential Medal of Freedom. However, this ceremony marked more than honoring a martyred patriot. For the **first time in American history, a Christian cross was engraved on the back of the Medal of Freedom.**

The cross wasn't a political statement. Instead, it was a testament.

As believers, we understand that our battle "is not against flesh and blood" (Ephesians 6:12). Therefore, we must recognize what this moment represents. A president acknowledged that Charlie Kirk's life and death were fundamentally about advancing the Kingdom of Christ.

How We Got Here: The Assassination That Shocked America

On September 10, 2025, a sniper assassinated Charlie Kirk while he spoke at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah. The shooter positioned himself on a rooftop approximately 140 yards

away. Kirk, the 31-year-old co-founder of Turning Point USA, **died from a gunshot to the neck** during an outdoor campus event called the American Comeback Tour.

He was answering questions from students. One audience member asked about transgender mass shooters. Charlie was mid-response when the shot rang out.

Authorities arrested Tyler Robinson, a 22-year-old from Utah, and charged him with murder **What we know about Charlie Kirk's assassination**. Prosecutors announced they would seek the death penalty. They called it a politically motivated assassination.

The reality is clear: Charlie Kirk died for speaking biblical truth in the public square. He didn't die in a foreign land or a persecution-era Roman arena. Rather, he died on an American college campus for defending what Scripture teaches.

This is where we are as a nation.

A Rose Garden Ceremony Like No Other

President Trump had just returned from the Middle East at 3 a.m. that Tuesday morning. Nevertheless, he told attendees he would not have missed the ceremony "for anything in the world".

Vice President JD Vance sat in the front row. Kirk's close friend had flown to Salt Lake City on Air Force Two to transport Charlie's remains. Cabinet members filled the Rose Garden. Meanwhile, Second Lady Usha Vance would later comfort Erika Kirk as she wept.

Trump stated: "We assassinated him in the prime of his life for boldly speaking the truth, for living his faith, and relentlessly fighting for a better and stronger America" (**Trump Awards Charlie Kirk a Posthumous Presidential Medal of Freedom)**.

The president continued with his tribute. He honored "a fearless warrior for liberty, a beloved leader who galvanized the next generation like nobody I've ever seen before." He called Charlie "an American patriot of the deepest conviction, the finest quality and the highest caliber—the late, great Charlie Kirk."

Erika Kirk, now CEO of Turning Point USA, accepted the Medal of Freedom on her husband's behalf. She shared that Charlie would often say, **"Without God, freedom becomes chaos."** Consequently, he believed that liberty could only survive when anchored in eternal truth.

The Revelation: A Cross for a Christian Warrior

After the ceremony, something remarkable happened. Erika Kirk revealed a historic detail to Benny Johnson of Turning Point USA. She turned the Medal of Freedom over. On the back, an engraving appeared: a Christian cross, positioned above her husband's full name, "Charles James Kirk."

Mrs. Kirk wanted believers everywhere to see this unprecedented addition. Therefore, she allowed Benny Johnson to capture the moment on video.

> INCREDIBLE: For the First Time in American History A Christian Cross has been Engraved onto the Presidential Medal of Freedom in honor of Charlie Kirk.
>
> Erika Kirk wanted to share this with you as a testament of Charlie's powerful work advancing The Kingdom of Jesus Christ.
>
> ✝️🇺🇸 **pic.twitter.com/oOetxMzkqQ**
>
> — Benny Johnson (@bennyjohnson) **October 14, 2025**

Johnson explained on Fox News: "This is a historic moment—the first time religious iconography has appeared on this award"

Think about what this means. President John F. Kennedy established the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1963. Since then, hundreds of Americans have received it. Athletes. Artists. Politicians. Activists. Business leaders. Foreign dignitaries.

Never—not once in 62 years—has a cross appeared on the medal itself.

Until Charlie Kirk.

Johnson explained on Fox News the significance of Trump's decision. "Donald Trump clearly understands Christendom and understands Christian doctrine. Furthermore, he understands the power that Charlie Kirk brought the advancement of the kingdom of Christ."

The cross wasn't placed on the front of the medal. Consequently, it didn't alter the traditional design. Instead, it was engraved on the back. This created a private, personal acknowledgment of

the spiritual foundation that drove every aspect of Charlie Kirk's life and ministry.

What God's Word Says About Martyrdom and Witness

Jesus told His disciples: "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first" (John 15:18).

Charlie Kirk understood this truth. He lived it. And ultimately, he died for it.

At Kirk's memorial service in Glendale, Arizona, speakers mentioned God between 90 and 110 times. Additionally, they mentioned Jesus between 45 to 55 times, and Christ between 25 to 35 times **Assassination of Charlie Kirk – Wikipedia**. Pastor Rob McCoy, co-chair of Turning Point Faith, stated: "Charlie wanted his Savior to be the guest of honor."

Cardinal Timothy Dolan of the Catholic Church likened Kirk to a modern-day Saint Paul Assassination of Charlie Kirk. This comparison captures the essence of Charlie's ministry. Like Paul, he was bold. Like Paul, he was uncompromising. Moreover, like Paul, he understood that the Gospel transcends political affiliation.

President Trump's proclamation **declared October 14 a National Day of Remembrance**. It stated: "Charlie devoted himself to a set of simple causes: Defending the truth, encouraging debate, and spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ"

This is what made Charlie Kirk dangerous to the powers of darkness. He wasn't just a political activist. Rather, he was a Gospel proclaimer who happened to engage politics. That's the threat. That's why the enemy targeted him.

Revelation 12:11 tells us: "They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death."

The Spiritual Awakening Following His Death

Something remarkable happened in the weeks after Charlie Kirk's assassination. Churches across America reported unprecedented increases in attendance. Particularly, young people filled the pews.

One pastor described the Sunday after Charlie's death. He called it "unlike anything we've seen since 9/11." Young adults who had been spiritually dormant showed up seeking answers. They wanted to know: What was Charlie Kirk willing to die for?

The answer: Jesus Christ and the truth of His Word.

Erika Kirk's decision to publicly reveal the cross engraving wasn't just about showing a medal. Instead, it was an act of witness. In an era when Christians face pressure to privatize their faith, she chose to make it visible. She wanted believers everywhere to know the truth. Her husband's entire life was about "advancing The Kingdom of Jesus Christ."

What This Means for Religious Liberty

For decades, our culture has pushed faith further from public life. "Pray in private," we're told. "Keep religion out of politics. Don't impose your values on others."

However, Charlie Kirk rejected that false dichotomy. He understood what the Founders knew. Faith and freedom are inseparable in the American tradition.

The inclusion of the Christian cross on Kirk's Medal of Freedom represents something significant. It shows presidential acknowledgment of this truth. President Trump didn't have to make this choice. He could have awarded a standard medal. Instead, he personalized it with a symbol that would be controversial to some. Why? Because he understood that Charlie's work was never merely political.

This matters because it challenges a prevailing narrative. That narrative claims Christian conviction has no place in public discourse. Now, the highest civilian honor in America bears—for the first time—an explicitly Christian symbol. Moreover, it honors a man killed for speaking biblical truth.

Living This Out: How Christians Must Respond

As believers, we must not let Charlie Kirk's sacrifice be in vain. Here's what that means practically:

1. Stand Firm in Biblical Truth

Charlie never wavered. He didn't compromise when culture demanded it. Therefore, neither can we. The issues matter: the sanctity of life, biblical sexuality, the authority of Scripture. We must "contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people" (Jude 1:3).

2. Engage the Culture with Gospel Clarity

Charlie understood that politics flows downstream from culture. Furthermore, culture flows downstream from worldview. We can't abandon the public square. Instead, we must engage it with the truth of the Gospel. We should be winsome when possible. However, we must be firm when necessary.

3. Pray for Protection and Boldness

Kirk's assassination occurred during a period of deepening division and increasingly frequent violence in American politics. Consequently, we must pray for those on the front lines. This includes pastors, Christian leaders, and activists who speak truth publicly. Additionally, we must pray for boldness to join them when called.

4. Raise Up the Next Generation

Charlie's entire ministry focused on young people. He knew a crucial truth: whoever captures the hearts and minds of the next generation shapes the future. Christian parents and youth leaders: are you equipping your young people? Do they know how to think biblically about every area of life?

5. Remember That Victory Belongs to God

Erika Kirk said during the ceremony: "To live free is the greatest gift, but to die free is the greatest victory."

That perspective comes from someone who understands eternal truth. Charlie didn't lose. Rather, he won. He finished his race. He kept the faith. And now he stands in the presence of the King he served.

Hope and Action: Where Do We Go From Here?

The cross on that medal is a call to arms—spiritual arms.

"Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes" (Ephesians 6:11).

Charlie Kirk wore that armor daily. He wielded the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. And when the enemy struck, Charlie stood faithful.

Specific steps you can take:

- • **Pray** – Commit to praying daily for Christian leaders. Pray for religious liberty. Pray for the advancement of the Gospel in America.
- • **Engage** – Don't retreat from culture. Instead, get involved in your local school board, church, and community.
- • **Support** – Stand with organizations like Turning Point USA. They continue Charlie's mission of reaching young people with truth.

- • **Witness** – Let Charlie's boldness inspire your own. When you have opportunity to speak biblical truth, take it.
- • **Remember** – October 14 is now a National Day of Remembrance for Charlie Kirk. Mark it on your calendar. Furthermore, tell his story to your children and grandchildren.

A Final Word: The Sovereignty of God

Erika Kirk shared during the ceremony that if the moment had come, Charlie probably would have run for president. However, he wouldn't have done it "out of ambition." Rather, he would have done it "from a servant's heart standpoint."

We'll never know what Charlie Kirk might have accomplished if he'd lived to see his 32nd birthday. We'll never see the young people he would have mentored. We won't see the speeches he would have given or the movements he would have built.

But we know this: **God's purposes are never thwarted by human evil.**

Joseph told his brothers who sold him into slavery: "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (Genesis 50:20).

The enemy intended Charlie Kirk's assassination to silence truth and intimidate Christians. Instead, it sparked a spiritual awakening. It prompted churches to fill with seeking young people. Moreover, it resulted in the first Presidential Medal of Freedom bearing a Christian cross.

God is sovereign. Always.

More on Charlie Kirk:

Charlie Kirk Martyrdom: A Wake-Up Call for the American Church

Charlie Kirk Martyrdom: A Wake-Up Call for the American Church

SEPTEMBER 23, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNITED PATRIOTS UPRISING WITH GARY BINFORD

*In this episode of **United Patriots Uprising**, Gary Binford welcomes **Pastor Lucas Miles**, Senior Director of Turning Point USA Faith and author of "**Pagan Threat: Confronting America's Godless Uprising**," for a deeply personal and urgent conversation about the assassination of Charlie Kirk and the rising spiritual darkness threatening America's Christian foundation.*

The assassination of Charlie Kirk on September 10, 2025, sent shockwaves through the conservative Christian community. At just 31 years old, this fearless champion of biblical truth was silenced by a bullet while courageously engaging students at Utah Valley University. His death represents more than the loss of a political voice—it signals a targeted attack on Christian values in America.

Pastor Lucas Miles, Senior Director of Turning Point USA Faith, believes the **Charlie Kirk martyrdom** serves as a divine wake-up call for believers across the nation. Speaking with heavy heart yet unwavering resolve, Miles declares that what Satan meant for evil, God will transform for good. Churches have already doubled in size following Kirk's death, and revival fires are igniting across America.

Turning Point USA’s Lucas Miles Remembers Charlie Kirk, Warns Of A Pagan Threat Confronting America

Turning Point USA’s Lucas Miles Remembers Charlie Kirk, Warns Of A Pagan Threat Confronting America
https://youtube.com/watch?v=CRa1XSJKdXQ

The Martyr's Crown: Kirk's Ultimate Sacrifice

Charlie Kirk lived with integrity that matched his public witness. Those who knew him personally testify that his private character exceeded even his bold public stance for Christ. As Miles explains, "What he preached, what he told the public, who he was in public is exactly who he was in private and then some."

The **Charlie Kirk martyrdom** exemplifies the cost of standing for truth in an increasingly hostile culture. Kirk understood the risks, once telling a crowd, "We're on the front lines where it's not always safe." Yet he pressed forward, driven by love for God, family, and country.

Confronting America's Pagan Threat

Miles' new book, "**Pagan Threat: Confronting America's Godless Uprising**," addresses the spiritual darkness that ultimately claimed Kirk's life. This rising neopaganism combines witchcraft, Marxist ideology, and gender confusion into a toxic spiritual framework that targets young Americans.

The trauma of recent decades—9/11, endless wars, COVID restrictions, and now the **Charlie Kirk martyrdom**—has left an entire generation searching for meaning in dangerous places. They're turning to witchcraft, the occult, and radical ideologies that position Lucifer as the "lightbearer" while casting Jesus as the oppressor.

The Church's Weak Response

Perhaps most troubling was the tepid response from many American churches to Kirk's assassination. While some pastors boldly honored this Christian martyr, others remained silent, apparently more concerned about splitting their congregations than proclaiming truth.

Miles challenges this cowardice: "Nothing irritated Charlie more than trembling and weak pastors." The early church celebrated their martyrs—Stephen, James, Peter, and Paul. Can we imagine the apostolic church ignoring such sacrifices? Yet many modern pastors chose comfort over courage when their brother in Christ was murdered for the gospel.

Seven Steps to Spiritual Revolution

Miles presents a strategic plan for churches to combat this pagan uprising:

- **Primary Doctrine Foundation:** Christianity isn't a "choose your own adventure" faith. Two thousand years of theology and Scripture provide clear boundaries between truth and deception.
- **Youth Evangelism:** This traumatized generation desperately needs an authentic relationship with Christ, not progressive Christianity's toxic empathy that affirms sin.
- **Confronting False Teaching:** The apostle Paul named names and exposed false doctrine. Today's church must courageously address deception within its ranks.
- **Deepening Discipleship:** Seeker-sensitive approaches have weakened the church's foundation. Believers need a solid biblical grounding to resist cultural pressure.
- **Practical Strategy:** Churches must develop concrete plans to reach young people trapped in spiritual darkness.
- **Cultural Engagement:** Just as Constantine called the Council of Nicea, Christian leaders must unite to address society's problems.
- **Spiritual Warfare:** This battle transcends politics—it's a cosmic conflict between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness.

From Grief to Gospel Action

The **Charlie Kirk martyrdom** demands more than mourning—it requires mobilization. **Erika Kirk, now CEO of Turning Point USA**, declared that those responsible for her husband's death "have no idea what they have done." The movement Charlie built will not only survive but thrive.

President Trump, speaking at Kirk's memorial service, captured the moment's significance: "The gun was pointed at him, but the bullet was aimed at all of us." Every Christian, every patriot, every defender of truth must recognize that we could be next.

A Call to Courageous Faith

Charlie Kirk's legacy challenges every believer to examine their own courage. Will we cower in our churches while spiritual darkness engulfs our nation? Or will we stand boldly for truth, knowing the cost may be high?

The time for comfortable Christianity has ended. As Miles declares, "The world does not need a Christianity of convenience or cultural compliance. It needs a Christianity that is fervent, passionate, and unapologetically true."

Take Action Today: Visit **TPUSA Faith at tpusafaith.com** to join over 4,000 pastors standing for biblical truth. Read "**Pagan Threat**" to understand the spiritual battle raging for America's soul. Most importantly, commit to living with the same fearless faith that marked Charlie Kirk's life.

Accept Christ's Call: If Charlie Kirk's sacrifice has stirred your heart, perhaps God is calling you to faith. Jesus Christ died and rose again to offer you eternal life. Don't let His sacrifice be in vain—surrender your life to Him today. The same courage that sustained Charlie Kirk comes from knowing Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

The martyrs' blood cries out from the ground, demanding we finish what they started. America's spiritual destiny hangs in the balance. How will you respond to the **Charlie Kirk martyrdom**—with fear or with faith?

Find Gary Binford Online

- **YouTube Channel: @garybinford1969**
- **Podcast Archive:** ***United Patriots Uprising***
- **X (Twitter): @gary_binford**
- **Facebook: Gary Binford**
- **Truth Social: @GaryBinford**

Find Lucas Miles Online

Website: **lucasmiles.org**

- **YouTube Channel: @TheLucasMiles**
- **Podcast Archive: Lucas Miles**
- **X (Twitter): @lucasmiles**
- **Facebook: Lucas Miles**
- **Instagram: MrLucas Miles**

Book: **Pagan Threat: Confronting America's Godless Uprising (Hardcover only)**
TPUSA Faith: **tpusafaith.com**

Step Into Your God-Given Role: Erika Kirk's Challenge to Men, Women, and a Generation

SEPTEMBER 22, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

> *In 29 minutes, a grieving widow delivered the most powerful call to biblical manhood and womanhood that America has heard in decades. Her message wasn't just about her husband. It was about who God is calling you to become.*

God's Design for You: How One Widow's Speech Called America Back to Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

Standing before 200,000 people just 11 days after her husband's assassination, Erika Kirk did something that stunned the nation. Instead of collapsing in grief, she rose to deliver a message that cut through decades of cultural confusion about gender, purpose, and identity.

Her central message was crystal clear: **God has designed specific roles for men and women, and stepping into those roles—with Christ as the foundation—is the path to fulfillment, purpose, and spiritual victory.**

But this wasn't theoretical theology. This was a woman who had lived out biblical womanhood in one of the most public marriages in conservative America, now teaching the nation what she had learned.

Listen to Erika Kirk's complete 29-minute speech. Every word matters, and her challenge to step into God's design will convict and inspire you:

FULL REMARKS: Erika Kirk at Charlie Kirk funeral
https://youtube.com/watch?v=lXULd7Ie7zM

This is what biblical leadership looks like in crisis. This is what happens when someone fully embraces their God-given role.

The Foundation: Christ Above All

Before addressing men and women specifically, Erika established the non-negotiable foundation:

> "Choose prayer. Choose courage. Choose beauty. Choose adventure. Choose family. Choose a life of faith. Most importantly, choose Christ."

Without Christ at the center, attempts at biblical manhood and womanhood become mere performance. Erika knew this, which is why she anchored everything in the gospel message that had transformed both her and Charlie's lives.

Her Challenge to Men: Embrace True Manhood

Erika Kirk didn't soften her words when addressing the men watching around the world. Drawing from her 13-year marriage to Charlie, she delivered a challenge that many men desperately needed to hear:

What Biblical Manhood Actually Looks Like

> "Accept Charlie's challenge and embrace true manhood. Be strong and courageous for your families. Love your wives and lead them. Love your children and protect them. Be the spiritual head of your home."

But then came the crucial qualifier that separates biblical leadership from toxic masculinity:

> "But please be a leader worth following."

The Servant-Leader Model Charlie Embodied

Erika revealed the secret to their marriage's strength through Charlie's weekly love notes, which always ended with the same question:

> "Please let me know how I can better serve you as a husband."

This is the paradox of biblical manhood: **You lead by serving. You're strong by being tender. You protect by loving.**

Her Direct Challenge to Husbands

> "Your wife is not your servant. Your wife is not your employee. Your wife is not your slave. She is your helper. You are not rivals. You are one flesh working together for the glory of God."

Men, listen carefully: Erika Kirk just gave you the blueprint for a marriage that works. Charlie understood that biblical headship means becoming the kind of man your wife wants to follow because you're devoted to her flourishing.

Her Challenge to Women: Be Virtuous Guardians

Erika's message to women was equally direct and equally needed in our culture:

Strength in God's Design

> "Women, I have a challenge for you, too. Be virtuous. Our strength is found in God's design for our role. We are the guardians. We are the encouragers. We are the preservers."

This isn't weakness disguised as strength. This is understanding that **God has given women unique and powerful roles that the culture has taught them to despise.**

The Heart as the Center of Ministry

> "Guard your heart. Everything you do flows from it. And if you're a mother, please recognize that is the single most important ministry you have."

In a culture that tells women motherhood is limiting, Erika Kirk called it the "single most important ministry." **That's not diminishing women—that's recognizing the eternal impact of raising the next generation.**

How She Supported Charlie's Mission

Erika revealed how she created a home that empowered Charlie's work:

> "I made it into this place where he wanted to be as soon as possible when he was on the road. There was no keeping score between us. We were a team working together for the same mission."

This is what biblical submission actually looks like: Not being a doormat, but being a powerful partner who creates the conditions for your husband's success while pursuing your own calling.

Her Challenge to Lost Young Men: Find Your Purpose

Perhaps the most heartbreaking part of Erika's speech focused on the demographic Charlie was most passionate about reaching:

The Crisis Charlie Saw Clearly

> "Charlie passionately wanted to reach and save the lost boys of the West. The young men who feel like they have no direction, no purpose, no faith, and no reason to live."

This is the crisis of our generation: Millions of young men are adrift, consumed by distractions, resentment, and despair because no one has shown them what true manhood looks like.

The Radical Grace She Extended

In the most stunning moment of her entire speech, Erika revealed that Charlie wanted to save young men "just like the one who took his life."

Then she said these words that will echo through history:

> "That young man, I forgive him. I forgive him because it was what Christ did and is what Charlie would do."

Young men, listen: If this woman can forgive your worst actions, Christ can transform your deepest failures. There is hope. There is purpose. There is a role God has designed specifically for you.

Why This Message Matters Now More Than Ever

The Cultural Moment We're Living In

America is experiencing unprecedented confusion about gender, purpose, and identity. The culture offers endless options but no direction. Endless freedom but no fulfillment.

Erika Kirk stood up and said: **God has already designed who you're supposed to be. Stop fighting it. Step into it.**

The Revival She Witnessed

> "This past week, we saw people open a Bible for the first time in a decade. We saw people pray for the first time since they were children. We saw people go to a church service for the first time in their entire lives."

The spiritual hunger is real. People are desperate for authentic purpose and clear direction. Biblical manhood and womanhood provide exactly that.

The Practical Challenge: What Will You Choose?

Erika Kirk ended her speech by becoming the new CEO of Turning Point USA, promising to expand Charlie's work exponentially. **She stepped fully into the role God had prepared for her.**

Now comes your choice:

For Men Reading This

Will you embrace the servant-leadership model Charlie demonstrated? Will you become the spiritual head of your home? Will you love and lead in a way that makes your wife want to follow?

The lost boys of the West are watching you. They need to see what biblical manhood actually looks like.

For Women Reading This

Will you embrace your role as guardian, encourager, and preserver? Will you recognize that your unique gifts are not limitations but superpowers?

The next generation is counting on you to show them what virtuous womanhood looks like.

For Everyone

Will you choose Christ as the foundation of whatever role God has called you to? Will you stop fighting against His design and step into the purpose He created you for?

The Choice That Changes Everything

Charlie Kirk used to write in his journal: *"Every time you make a decision, it puts a mark on your soul."*

Erika Kirk has given you a decision to make. You can continue drifting in cultural confusion, or you can step into the role God designed specifically for you.

What mark will you put on your soul today?

The choice is yours. But remember: God's design isn't a burden to bear—it's the blueprint for the life you've always wanted to live.

How did Erika Kirk's message challenge you? What steps will you take to embrace your God-given role? Share your thoughts in the comments below.

Related Reading:

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Are Your Medical Rights Safe? Join the VAMFA Summit: Oct 10 -11, Purcellville, VA

SEPTEMBER 18, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Medical Freedom and the Constitution Summit
Protecting Yourself from Government Overreach

October 10–11, 2025

October 10 @ 1:00 PM – October 11 @ 6:00 PM EDT

Patrick Henry College, Purcellville, VA

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." – 2 Corinthians 3:17

Get Your Tickets Now – Early Bird Prices End Sept 11
Sponsored by Virginia Medical Freedom Alliance and Feds for Freedom

Are Your Medical Rights Safe? Join the VAMFA Summit

Most Virginians don't realize their medical rights are already slipping away. During COVID, we watched as doctors were silenced, treatments were banned, and citizens were pressured into compliance. What began as "temporary" emergency powers has grown into permanent government overreach — and it touches every one of us.

Your privacy, your health choices, even your medical records are no longer secure. Laws and policies are being rewritten to favor institutions and corporations over individual patients. The time to wake up and act is now.

Our Founders understood that rights do not come from government — they come from Almighty God. The Constitution was written to secure those God-given rights, not to grant them. Today, however, unelected bureaucrats and global interests seek to replace freedom with control, and truth with deception.

That's why the Virginia Medical Freedom Alliance (VAMFA) is hosting its second summit of the year, in partnership with Feds for Freedom, at Patrick Henry College in Purcellville, VA, October 10–11. Together, we will affirm both biblical truth and constitutional principles as the foundation of medical freedom.

This two-day gathering will open your eyes to:

- How government and corporate interests are rewriting your rights.
- Why the food you eat and the medical care you receive may no longer be safe.
- The deception behind "settled science" and the silencing of dissenting doctors.
- What you can do to protect your family, your privacy, and your freedom.

Speakers include courageous leaders who refused to bow to unlawful mandates and are exposing the truth:

- Alex Newman – international journalist and educator.
- William Olson – Constitutional lawyer defending freedom in the courts.
- Christine Dolan – investigative journalist on human trafficking and medical corruption.
- Matt Strickland – Virginia small business owner who stood tall against government tyranny.
- Sheila M. Furey, MD – founder of the Virginia Medical Freedom Alliance.

…and many more.

Tickets are available now at the Early Bird Special rate – prices increase after September 11.

Visit the **Virginia Medical Freedom Alliance** website today to learn more and reserve your spot.

This isn't just another conference. It's a chance to reclaim your God-given rights, defend the Constitution, and stand boldly for truth before they're gone.

Stand for Faith. Stand for Freedom.

Our rights come from God, not government.

The Constitution was written to secure those God-given rights.

Join us October 10–11 at Patrick Henry College for the

Medical Freedom and the Constitution Summit

Defend liberty. Protect life. Restore truth.

Get Your Tickets Now – Early Bird Prices End Sept 11

Sponsored by Virginia Medical Freedom Alliance and Feds for Freedom

Focus On The Family President Jim Daly Stands Firmly On Faith, Family, Freedom, Truth

SEPTEMBER 16, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: TRADITIONAL FAMILY VALUES, UNITED PATRIOTS UPRISING WITH GARY BINFORD

In this episode of **United Patriots Uprising**, Gary Binford welcomes **Jim Daly**, president of Focus on the Family and host of its **daily broadcast** (heard by millions each week), to talk about fatherhood, faith, and a new must-see documentary co-produced with the **Colson Center: Truth Rising**. The conversation zeroes in on family as the bedrock of civilization, the cultural costs of abandoning truth, and why Christians must move from merely *knowing* the truth to **loving** and **living** it.

"Truth Rising": Why This Film, Why Now

Daly explains that *Truth Rising* was born from a growing realization—shared even by some non-Christians—that "something's wrong in the culture." The film pairs seasoned cultural observer **Os Guinness** with Colson Center president **John Stonestreet** to trace the roots of Western civilization, name the losses, and call believers to courage. It includes a free four-part study designed to help individuals, small groups, and churches move from orthodoxy (speaking truth) to **orthopraxy** (doing the truth).

> “When the spine of one is stiffened, it stiffens other spines.”

Focus On The Family President Jim Daly Stands Firmly On Faith, Family, Freedom, Truth
https://youtube.com/watch?v=QyygsXN_fHI

Family Under Fire—and Why It Matters

From its founding, **Focus on the Family** has championed the **two-parent, mom-and-dad home** as the ideal environment for children to thrive. Daly notes that even secular social science now admits this reality. Focus works every day to strengthen marriages, support parents, and **save lives**—including helping women choose life and then reading the thank-you letters from the children years later.

Author and advocate **Katy Faust** (**Them Before Us**), featured in the film, highlights a tragic cultural inversion: where parents once sacrificed for children, today **children are asked to sacrifice for adult ideologies**. The church must defend kids from harm and place their needs before adult desires.

A Civilizational Crossroads

Drawing on Guinness, Daly says we're in a **civilizational moment** with three paths:

1. **Continue decline** into ruin,
2. **Renew** what made us strong, or
3. **Remake** the nation into something else entirely.

The film urges renewal—recovering first principles (truth, dignity, the rule of law, marriage, and the sanctity of life). Every person bears God's image and thus deserves respect; truth must be

spoken **with courage and kindness**.

From Knowing Truth to Living Truth

Stonestreet's charge lands hard: *It's not enough to know truth; we must love it, embrace it, and live it.* That means **biblical literacy**—taking in the Word—and **obedience**—acting it out in public life. Daly points to the joyful resilience of the early church and modern examples of ordinary believers who stood their ground with conviction and grace.

How We Push Back (Practically)

- Work the **local**: school boards, chambers of commerce, neighborhood service.
- Use the **study curriculum** with your family, small group, or church.
- Strengthen **marriages** and **fatherhood**; protect **children**.
- Speak with **grit and grace**: "Be kind. Don't be aggressive, but say, 'You're wrong—and here's why.'"

Watch the Documentary-It's Free!

Truth Rising is streaming **free** and includes a concise four-part study on truth, identity, and calling. Use it personally, with your family, or as a church small-group series.

Closing Call to Action

America can't survive a severing from God and truth. Renewal begins with households that know the Word, live it out, and **love their neighbors** in tangible, sacrificial ways. Watch the film, gather a few friends, and start the study. Then take the next faithful step—in your home, church, and city.

Find Gary Binford Online

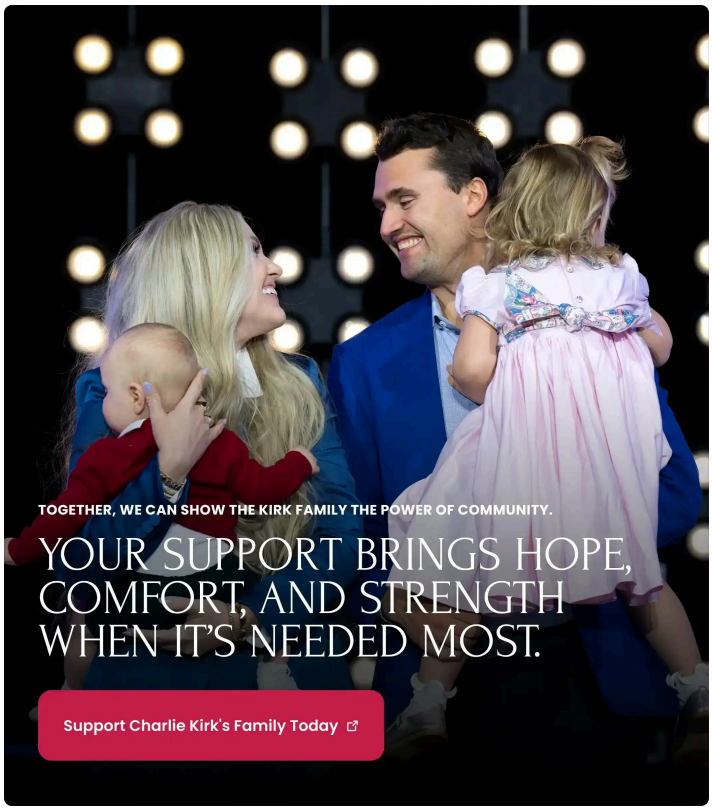
- **YouTube Channel: @garybinford1969**
- **Podcast Archive: *United Patriots Uprising***
- **X (Twitter): @gary_binford**
- **Facebook: Gary Binford**
- **Truth Social: @GaryBinford**

Find Focus on the Family Online

- **YouTube Channel**: **@focusonthefamily**
- **Instagram**: **focusonthefamily**
- **X (Twitter)**: **@FocusFamily**
- **Facebook: FocusontheFamily**

Charlie Kirk's Legacy: Politics Downstream from Culture

SEPTEMBER 16, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, TRADITIONAL FAMILY VALUES



Honor Charlie by standing with Erika and the Kirk family today. Please consider giving whatever you can to help provide for his family's future and visit their ***donation page here****.*

A Voice That Looked Beyond Politics

When Victor Davis Hanson reflected on Charlie Kirk's impact in a recent *Daily Signal* video, he emphasized something unusual. Kirk didn't start with political talking points. Instead, he recognized that politics is only a reflection of deeper realities—cultural, social, and economic.

He spoke to the pain young Americans face: rising costs that keep them from owning homes, starting families, or even pursuing dreams of stability. Kirk argued that these obstacles weren't just financial—they were cultural roadblocks keeping an entire generation locked in prolonged adolescence.

Watch Victor Davis Hanson on Charlie Kirk's Legacy

Here's the full video commentary from Victor Davis Hanson on the Daily Signal channel:

Victor Davis Hanson: Charlie Kirk's Challenge to a Generation Will Be His Legacy
https://youtube.com/watch?v=qUd1ZxOVjz0

Confronting Economic and Social Challenges

Kirk understood that political movements gain traction when they connect with people's lived experiences. He pointed to declining fertility rates, delayed marriages, and the loss of confidence in family life as symptoms of deeper cultural crises. His message was clear: restoring opportunity and stability would restore hope.

By pointing toward the example of "red state paradigms" in places like Florida, Texas, and Arizona, Kirk showed that families could thrive when policies respected freedom, affordability, and tradition.

Championing Family and Tradition

Kirk didn't shy away from advocating for traditional norms. He celebrated the nuclear family as a cornerstone of society and encouraged young adults to embrace marriage, children, and community. In an age where cultural narratives often dismiss these values, Kirk offered an unapologetic alternative—one rooted in faith, history, and proven success.

A Rare Methodology and Fearless Spirit

Victor Davis Hanson noted Kirk's methodology: he spoke extemporaneously, engaged hostile audiences, and built Turning Point USA into a national movement with a $100 million budget. He

didn’t wait for credentials to legitimize him—he earned credibility through action, courage, and persistence.

Aristotle once said that courage is the most important virtue. Kirk embodied that. He wasn’t intimidated by academics or elites. He debated confidently at Oxford and Cambridge. He built an organization without an Ivy League degree. And he connected with ordinary Americans by addressing the issues that mattered most.

Why Charlie Kirk’s Legacy Matters Now

Charlie Kirk’s legacy challenges us to ask bigger questions. Are we willing to confront the cultural decay that keeps young Americans from flourishing? Are we willing to defend the family as the foundation of a free society? And are we ready to live courageously—just as he did?

Kirk’s life reminds us that true political change begins not with slogans, but with shaping culture, restoring family, and living out Biblical truth in public. That’s a legacy worth continuing.

When it Began, Where it's Going

SEPTEMBER 15, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

We've Heard All This Before

A Message from the Shenandoah Christian Alliance

By J. Jeff Toler for Shenandoah Christian Alliance **j.toler@sca4christ.org**

- *"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."* —Ephesians 6:12 (ESV)

I've written before about how the term *woke* traces its roots to Black American vernacular. *Woke* was coined in the 1940s as part of the speech of Black Americans fighting inequality and racism. More recently (February 2021), the term resurfaced and quickly became a trope for pundits, used to describe the full breadth of our social narrative. It is now invoked to preach level upon level of discontent against the power structure often called *Cultural Hegemony*.

During the 2010s and into 2020, with the rise of movements like Black Lives Matter, *woke* developed into a shorthand for broad awareness of complex identity-based issues such as race, gender, and sexuality. Progressives and many liberals began promoting the idea of structural inequalities tied to personal identity. These activist groups focused debate on matters like discrimination, representation, and systemic bias.

The argument for wokism captured more and more of America's thinking and helped shape the political narrative that America was inherently racist and sexist. This narrative expanded further when the world was shaken by the pandemic, and the *Overton Window* shifted in favor of wokism.

Eventually, a growing number of voices on the left began to challenge what they saw as an excessive focus on race and gender, arguing instead that class and economic inequality were being neglected. Influential critics such as Adolph Reed Jr. and politicians like Bernie Sanders argued that economic disparities cut across all identities, making class a central issue in the struggle for justice.

Critics, notably Adolph Reed Jr. and politicians like Bernie Sanders are making the claim that economic disparities cut across all identities.

This debate produced a growing tension within progressive circles, eventually splitting into two wings:

- **Identity-centered progressives**, who foreground cultural issues and typically find intellectual support in academia and media.
- **Class-centered progressives**, who prioritize economic inequality and maintain strong ties to labor unions.

By 2020, these tensions had become clear. For socialists especially, class was once again viewed as a central component of social justice.

It is ironic that this shift echoes another era more than 150 years ago, when Karl Marx published *Das Kapital* (*Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*).

Ben Shapiro

Ben Shapiro, in a recent *Daily Wire* editorial, explained it this way:

"One question a lot of people on the right, in the center, and even on the left are asking themselves these days is whether peak woke is over. After all, we suffered through legitimately a decade of wokeness. Wokeness being the proposition that any disparity between groups was evidence of discrimination. And this manifested as DEI. It manifested as the idea that the government had to constantly rig the system in the reverse direction. It was the Ibram X. Kendi ideology, the Robin DiAngelo ideology, that… if any group was performing less well than another group, that had to be a result of a discriminatory system."

Marxist thinking is still alive and well. The Democratic Party has embraced not only woke ideology but also many forms of socialism. More troubling is that America's mediating institutions are doing the same, accelerating a generational transformation.

My abiding concern—and the reason I continue to write these essays for *Understanding the Times* long after my original "commission" ended—is how little effect the Christian church seems to have in confronting the degraded culture we inhabit. Confrontation is rarely, if ever, popular.

Some Reformed pastors and theologians, such as Douglas Wilson, are exceptions. Wilson belongs to a stream of Reformed leaders who refuse to compartmentalize faith and culture. He insists that Christianity speaks directly to politics, education, sexuality, economics, and art—not merely to private spirituality. For this reason, he is often cited (both positively and negatively) as an example of a pastor who brings theology into cultural warfare.

By contrast, many others prefer a *Two Kingdoms* approach (common in some Reformed circles), which argues the church should stick to preaching the gospel while individuals apply their faith in public life. This view insists the pulpit should not be politicized. Wilson rejects this, advocating instead for a comprehensive Christian worldview that explicitly challenges politics, education, and culture.

Evangelicals who lean toward the "Two Kingdoms" or *quietist* approach often see Wilson's style as overreach. Quietism, more broadly, is not uniquely Reformed but describes Christians who avoid strong political or cultural involvement, focusing instead on personal piety and spiritual life. Those who oppose Wilson aren't necessarily against cultural engagement, but they differ in degree, method, and tone. Wilson represents a culture-warrior model admired by some for its boldness but rejected by others as unbiblical, unwise, or counterproductive.

Personally, I would not advocate for my pastor to engage in overt political commentary from the pulpit. Church is for worship. Yet I do not doubt that he, like many pastors, is deeply concerned about how vile and destructive our culture has become. Secular rhetoric has become so extreme that it is eroding essential protections against violence and degradation. We face an existential threat, as the basic safeguards we expect from civic leaders are vanishing.

This is the work of Satan. Because Christians know—or should know—his ways, we ought to be the very people most equipped to speak truth to power, even when that power has been corrupted for evil.

Food for thought: If people can embrace the failed religious cult of communism, is it too much to hope they might welcome the true faith that has endured for thousands of years? Marx appealed to societal transformation during the Industrial Age, claiming all people were divided by wealth and class.

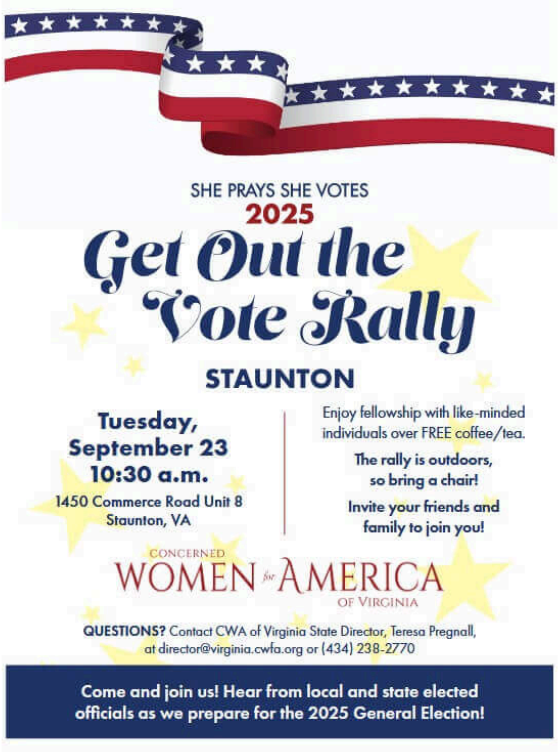
When Jesus entered the world—a truly brutal world—the oppressed longed for relief. By dividing time itself, He brought not only the promise of eternity but also the reality of His kingdom on earth.

It has been said that politics is downstream from culture. I would add that Christians should go upstream and offer the living water to politics. I believe it is possible to confront culture in love.

Photo by **Colin Lloyd** on **Unsplash**

September 23, 2025 Get Out the Vote Rally in Staunton!

SEPTEMBER 8, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Join Us for the She Prays She Votes 2025 Get Out the Vote Rally in Staunton!

Your voice matters, and your vote counts!

Concerned Women for America of Virginia cordially invites you to our **She Prays She Votes 2025 Get Out the Vote Rally** – a vital gathering for conservative Christians who understand that this election is too important to sit out.

Event Details

📅 **When:** Tuesday, September 23, 2025
🕚 **Time:** 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM (Meet & Greet format)
📍 **Where:** Parking lot at 1450 Commerce Road, Staunton, VA
☕ **What to Expect:** FREE coffee, tea, and meaningful fellowship!

Why This Rally Matters

This upcoming General Election carries unprecedented importance for our communities, our families, and our faith. Join us as we discuss:

- The urgency of conservative Christian voter turnout
- Understanding the Constitutional Amendments on the ballot
- The vital work of Concerned Women for America in Virginia
- Opportunities for civic engagement and community involvement

Special Features

Speaker Opportunities

Interested in sharing remarks about the importance of this year's election? We'd love to hear from you! Contact Teresa Pregnall in advance to secure your speaking slot.

Voter Registration Available

New Virginia residents can register to vote on-site! Don't let anyone miss their chance to make their voice heard in this critical election.

Bring Your Network

This is more than just a rally – it's a community gathering. Invite your family, friends, neighbors, and fellow believers to join us for fellowship and civic engagement.

Get Connected

Questions? Contact Teresa Pregnall:

- 📞 Call or text: (434) 238-2770
- 📧 Email: **cwfavirginia@gmail.com**

Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday, September 23rd is your opportunity to: ✓ Connect with like-minded community members
✓ Learn about critical ballot measures

✓ Register to vote (if needed)
✓ Enjoy free refreshments and fellowship
✓ Make a difference in this pivotal election

Remember: Every vote matters, every voice counts, and every person can make a difference.

We look forward to seeing you at the She Prays She Votes 2025 Get Out the Vote Rally! Together, we can ensure that conservative Christian values are represented at the ballot box this November.

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." – Galatians 6:9

Your Medical Rights are Slipping Away: Join the VAMFA Summit: Oct 10 -11, Purcellville, VA

AUGUST 26, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

As the **Virginia Medical Freedom Alliance Summit** approaches, we want to introduce you to some of the courageous voices you'll hear in October. These leaders have dedicated their lives to defending truth, exposing corruption, and standing firm for our God-given rights. This week, we spotlight two keynote speakers: **Alex Newman** and **William Olson**.

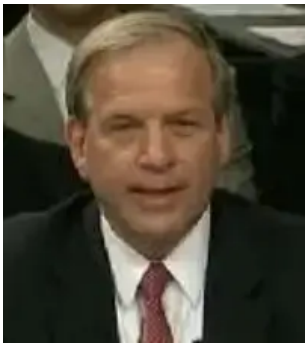
Speaker Spotlight: Alex Newman & William Olson

This week we highlight two of our keynote speakers who will bring critical insight into how truth, freedom, and the Constitution intersect with today's challenges. (**full speaker's list**)

Alex Newman

Alex Newman is an award-winning international journalist, educator, author, speaker, investor, nationally syndicated radio host, and consultant who seeks to glorify God in everything he does.

In addition to service as the president for the Liberty Sentinel Media, Inc and hosting a nationally syndicated, Alex has written for a wide array of publications. He currently serves as a contributor to the *Epoch Times*, a correspondent for the *Law Enforcement Intelligence Brief*, foreign correspondent and senior editor for *The New American* magazine, a writer for *WND (World Net Daily)*, a contributor to *Range* magazine, an education writer for *FreedomProject Media*, a columnist for the *Illinois Family Institute*, and much more.



William Olson

William Olson heads a small law firm with offices in Vienna and Winchester, Virginia. Now in his 49th year of private practice, he has filed just over 400 "friend-of-the-court" *amicus* briefs, of which about 225 have been in the U.S. Supreme Court. He was a White House intern in the Nixon Administration, appointed by President Reagan Chairman of the Board of the Legal Services Corporation, and was the recipient of a grand jury subpoena and bar complaint for assisting President Trump after the 2020 election. His practice includes a wide range of constitutional issues including First Amendment freedoms of speech, press, religion and assembly, as well as Second and Fourth Amendment work. He has worked to protect alternative and conventional health care providers, and resisted Covid-19 mandates.

Together, Newman and Olson will equip you with the knowledge and courage to stand firm in defense of your God-given rights.

Medical Freedom and the Constitution Summit

Protecting Yourself from Government Overreach

October 10–11, 2025

October 10 @ 1:00 PM – October 11 @ 6:00 PM EDT

Patrick Henry College, Purcellville, VA

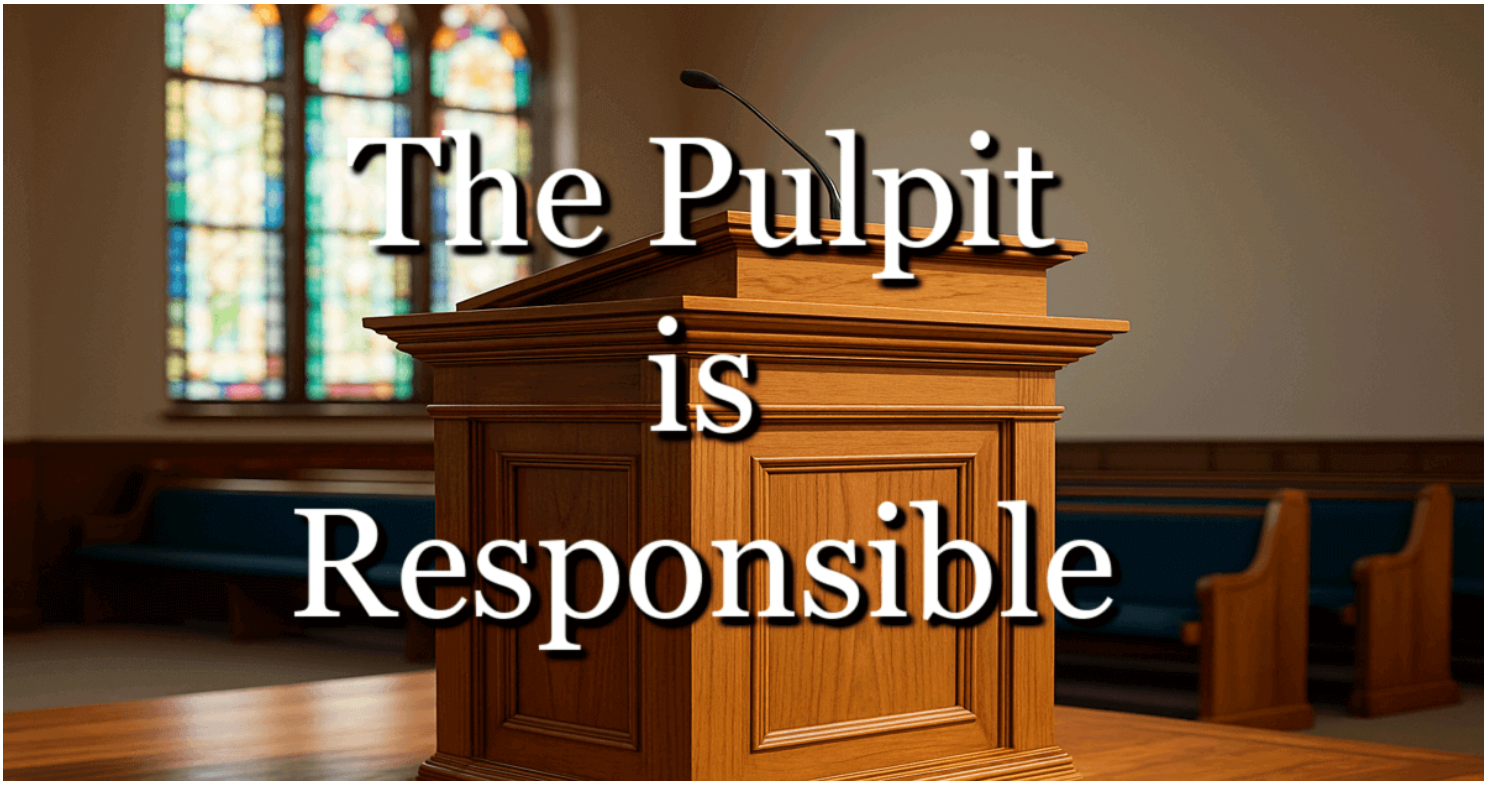
*"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." – **2 Corinthians 3:17***

Get Your Tickets Now – Early Bird Prices End Sept 11

Sponsored by Virginia Medical Freedom Alliance and Feds for Freedom

If the Pulpit Falls Silent: Charles Finney's Warning to Today's Church

AUGUST 15, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, PULPIT IS RESPONSIBLE



Blog Series: The Pulpit Is Responsible – Post #1, by Jeff Bayard, a message to the voters of Virginia: the code violates the Virginia Constitution, egregiously…and

> **"If immorality prevails in the land, the fault is ours in a great degree. If there is a decay of conscience, the pulpit is responsible for it."**
>
> — Charles G. Finney, 1873

In 1873, Charles Finney stood in the ruins of a declining moral culture and declared the truth no one wanted to hear: **the pulpit was responsible**. Not the politicians. Not the newspapers. Not even the sinners in the street. The silence of the church, he said, was the great betrayal.

One hundred fifty years later, his warning is no less thunderous—and far more urgent.

What We're Watching Today

The conscience of the Church is asleep while elections are being certified under conditions no honest person can defend. Voter rolls swollen with invalid names. Ballots counted in secret. Voters left unable to verify whether their vote counted, or if it was even legal. Leaders deny, dismiss, delay. And pastors? They pivot to safer subjects—personal peace, inner healing, or political neutrality.

And so, as Finney said, *"If Satan rules in our halls of legislation, the pulpit is responsible for it."*

The Gospel Without Law Is No Gospel at All

Finney condemned the false preaching of his day—a *"milk-and-water gospel"* that refused to confront sin or call men to repentance. What he called *"antinomianism"*, we now see in soft sermons that remove every moral edge from the message of Christ.

When the pulpit refuses to preach righteousness, **lawlessness always fills the vacuum**—in homes, in schools, **and yes, in voting precincts.**

From Theological Failure to Civic Collapse

When a generation of Christians no longer knows what righteousness is, they cannot recognize corruption either. They accept fraud as friction, lawbreaking as policy, and deceit as politics.

This is not just a theological failure. **This is a betrayal of the Republic.**

Virginia's Moment of Reckoning

Right now, in counties across Virginia, citizens are raising the alarm. Evidence of tens of thousands of unverifiable voters. Election laws sidestepped or ignored. Entire processes shielded from view.

And still—the pulpits are quiet. Even as pastors pray for revival, they shrink from confronting the civic sins that block it.

But revival without repentance is a myth. And repentance begins where truth is preached—even when it costs.

What Must Be Preached Again

Finney thundered this truth in 1873, and we must thunder it again today:

- That God's law is holy, and still binding.
- That a gospel which makes void the law is no gospel at all.
- That love without justice is not the love of God.
- That civil corruption must be condemned from the pulpit if we ever hope to cleanse it from the polls.

To the Pastors of Virginia

Your silence is not neutrality. It is surrender.

This is your moment to awaken the conscience of your people. To preach the law of God without apology. To name injustice, even when it hides behind official titles. You are not called to win popularity contests. You are called to **preach righteousness and cry aloud**.

If elections are broken in your county, then your pulpit must speak.

- Not to endorse candidates.
- Not to become political.
- But to be **prophetic**—boldly declaring right from wrong, truth from deception, light from darkness.

Finney's Final Word

> *"Let us thunder forth the law and Gospel of God until our voices reach the capital of this nation… Let us give the reporters of the press such work to do as will make their ears and the ears of their readers tingle."*

Finney didn't ask the culture to repent before the Church did. Neither should we.

This is the first post in a series. In the next, we'll ask the hard question:

> **Has the Gospel in America been gutted of its power?**

Because until pulpits return to preaching the law of God, we cannot expect the conscience of the nation to recover.

REFERENCE: THE GOSPEL TRUTH and THE COMPLETE WORKS OF CHARLES FINNEY

- **THE DECAY OF CONSCIENCE: THE PULPIT IS RESPONSIBLE**
- **ALL Finney resources on this Website are from the Original Documents: UnEdited and UnAbridged**

Glory and Thanksgiving: The First Step in Faithfulness

AUGUST 5, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

In Romans 1:21, the apostle Paul pinpoints the root of humanity's moral collapse:

> "Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or give Him thanks, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened."

Before the spiral of sin, before the approval of evil, there is this quiet but deadly starting point—failing to glorify God and give Him thanks.

This isn't just a pagan problem. **It's a danger for the church**. We can preach, serve, and even defend truth publicly—and yet miss the first, most basic act of faithfulness: exalting God in glory and thanksgiving.

Halellujah | Cinematic Hebrew English Worship Anthem | Praise to the Most High
https://youtube.com/watch?v=L7aFosIS2h8

A Song That Lifts Us Back to the Heights

The worship anthem *Hallelujah* is a direct, beautiful answer to Romans 1:21. It doesn't just mention God—it magnifies Him by name:

> *Adonai. El Shaddai. Ruach HaKodesh. Yeshua, the Lamb who was slain, now crowned in glory.*

From the *temple courts of Zion* to *every tribe and nation*, the song paints the biblical picture of praise—both intimate and cosmic—declaring the truth of who God is and what He has done.

Where Romans 1 describes the suppression of truth, *Halellujah* declares it boldly. Where the world withholds thanks, this worship overflows with gratitude. Where creation is exchanged for idols, this song fixes our gaze on the Creator.

Why Glory and Thanksgiving Matter

Paul's warning is urgent. When we stop glorifying God and giving thanks, our thinking becomes empty, our hearts grow dark, and the door opens for idolatry, confusion, and sin.

The antidote is not complicated—but it is intentional:

- **Glory** – Lift God high above all else, in public and private, in song and in life.
- **Thanksgiving** – Constantly acknowledge His goodness, mercy, and provision, even in trials.
- **Boldness** – Refuse to be silent about who He is, even when the culture mocks.

A Call to the Church

If Romans 1 is true—and it is—then perhaps the most urgent need in today's church is not more clever programming, but more unashamed glory and thanksgiving. We need less self-focus and more God-focus, less fear of man and more fear of the Lord.

As the song declares:

> *"Hallelujah… You're worthy. You are God alone."*

May our worship on earth echo the worship of heaven—until the day the whole earth joins in one eternal word:

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Salon Magazine Smears Christians: In Defense of Winsome Earle-Sears and Biblical Sexuality

JUNE 30, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

'Thank You, Jesus': Winsome Sears Makes History as Virginia's First Black, Female Lt. Governor

> The image above is powerful and joyful—**Winsome Earle-Sears giving glory to Jesus publicly** is exactly the kind of leadership we need. It perfectly underscores the spiritual contrast between what *Salon* mocks and what Scripture honors. Salon's hit piece on Winsome Earle-Sears and her Christian endorsements is a direct assault on **biblical morality**.
>
> We respond with truth and love.

A Public Smear, a Spiritual Battle: Salon vs. Scripture

Salon Magazine's June 21 article, ***"Fear of 'Gay Blood' and 'Confused Minds',"*** is not journalism; it's a public denunciation of biblical Christianity. The article attacks **Virginia Lt. Governor Winsome Earle-Sears** for her alignment with pastors who uphold God's design for sexuality, gender, and marriage.

What Salon calls "anti-gay" is, in fact, *God-honoring*. These pastors and Earle-Sears herself are not preaching hate. They are proclaiming the same timeless truth that Jesus preached: *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"* (Matthew 4:17).

Salon's Intolerance of Truth: When Faith Becomes the Enemy

In the article, Salon fixates on the fact that Earle-Sears is endorsed by pastors and Christian leaders like **Don Blake** of the Virginia Christian Alliance, **Craig "The Hatchet Man" Johnson**, and others who have publicly affirmed biblical sexual ethics. Salon labels them "anti-LGBTQ+ clergy," but the truth is simpler: they are Christians who still believe the Bible.

Don Blake's comment that many LGBTQ leaders have "confused minds" is not inflammatory—it echoes Romans 1:28: *"Since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them over to a debased mind."* The Gethsemane Church and Oasis Church, also mentioned by Salon, rightly affirm that marriage is between one man and one woman—a view Jesus Himself affirmed (Matthew 19:4-6).

The fact that Salon presents these views as scandalous shows how far the culture has drifted—and how desperately it needs a return to *truth*.

What's Really at Stake: The Authority of God's Word

Salon's article is not about Winsome Earle-Sears' policies. It's about suppressing the voice of biblical Christianity in the public square. It mocks Craig Johnson's concerns about blood safety and pedophilia as "extreme," even though his warning mirrors a very real pattern: moral decline follows when society rejects God's design. Just like Romans 1 warns, our culture has *"exchanged the truth of God for a lie"* and celebrates what God calls sin. Salon's piece reflects that rebellion—calling evil good, and good evil (Isaiah 5:20).

But here's what Salon cannot understand: God's truth is not hateful—it is liberating. *"You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free"* (John 8:32). That includes the truth about sexuality, gender, marriage, and repentance.

Biblical Christianity Is Not Hate. It's Hope.

Salon portrays Christians who oppose LGBTQ+ ideology as bigots. But the gospel is not about bigotry—it's about redemption. *"Such were some of you,"* Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 6:11, *"but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."*

God's design is not oppressive—it's protective. He created male and female (Genesis 1:27), ordained marriage between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24). He called all sexual activity outside of that covenant sin, not because He is cruel, but because He is holy.

Salon may scorn this, but we are not ashamed. *"We must obey God rather than men"* (Acts 5:29).

A Word to the Church: Stand Firm in Love and Conviction

Winsome Earle-Sears is right to welcome endorsements from pastors who fear God more than man. The Church must follow her example. We must not retreat in silence just because media giants like Salon choose slander over truth.

Instead, we respond with both courage and compassion. The Bible tells us to *"speak the truth in love"* (Ephesians 4:15), and that's exactly what we aim to do. We don't hate LGBTQ+ individuals. We love them enough to tell them the truth: that there is hope, healing, and forgiveness in Jesus Christ.

Final Word: Salon Can't Cancel God's Word

Salon Magazine may ridicule biblical Christianity, but it cannot refute it. Polls, feelings, or editorial boards do not define truth. The Word of God defines it. And that Word still says:

> *"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters… nor men who practice homosexuality… will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you."* —1 Corinthians 6:9–11

There is still time for America to repent. There is still room at the Cross for the sexually broken. But only if the Church refuses to be silenced.
As for Salon, they've made their position clear. Now, it's time for Christians to do the same—boldly, lovingly, and unashamedly.

The Next Babel Iteration

JUNE 22, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

It's Breaking Our Brains

By J. Jeff Toler for Shenandoah Christian Alliance **j.toler@sca4christ.org**

- *"From Issachar, men who understood the times and knew what Israel should do—200 chiefs, with all their relatives under their command"* —1 Chronicles 12:32

Quite a few years ago, a friend and I were talking, and he told me about his experience writing letters to the editor of our local paper, *The Ventura County Star*. Most newspapers—even the locals—were even then, like now, very left-wing. In fact, he liked to call this one the "Ventura County Red Star." He admitted it wasn't easy to get a letter published and that it took him a few tries before they let one get in.

"Maybe you might like to give it a try," he said. "There's this politician that's giving Christians a hard time about bigotry and slave reparations." So, I read his piece, and I thought I would take the challenge. To be honest, I don't really remember what I wrote anymore, and I lost the clipping somewhere along the way. All I remember is that it was my first experience writing a letter to the editor, and they published it.

That, for me, was a bit of a rush. I also think it annoyed my friend. Although we laughed about it, he didn't bring it up much anymore.

Letters to the editor have become as anachronistic as "Members Only" jackets or manual transmissions. You really don't see them all that much anymore, and no one really wants to go back to that. In those days, the editors required you to put your name on your letter. That just wouldn't work for most people today who prefer their anonymity when writing their screeds.

Anonymity is but one part of the cultural discourse these days. But it's not just about being shy. It's about being brazen, confrontational, and threatening under the cover of a crowd.

Dennis Prager once opined on the dangers of anonymity in social media and online dialog in a post written all the way back in 2007.

This is what he said: "Whenever people lament aspects of the Internet, they are most likely to lament the net's ubiquity of pornography. Only God knows, for example, how many kids, searching for some government information, typed in 'whitehouse.com' only to be greeted by pornographic images. Happily, the website changed hands in 2004. It is almost impossible to completely avoid such imagery even with filtering programs."

"But there is something at least as awful—and arguably more destructive—that permeates the internet: the lies, vitriol, obscenities, and ad hominem attacks made by anonymous individuals on almost every website that deals with public issues."

I will admit I consume a lot of online content: *Daily Wire*, *Breitbart News*, *The Blaze*, or *National Review*. The commenters who post at the end of a story can be a fairly good gauge of what the average reader is thinking—or feeling—and can be very informative. Ninety percent of the time, these people prefer an avatar over their name. The days of letters to the editor are over.

Then, editors reading the letters were the gatekeepers who steered opinions—theirs and yours. Gatekeepers would only operate from guidelines formed by consensus and higher authorities. In that social construct, it was understood that rules were to be followed. People couldn't just say anything they wanted without repercussions. There were standards to be maintained, or otherwise face ostracism.

Thirty years later, who are the gatekeepers now? To what standard do they hew? In the world of social media, what do subscribers—or consumers, if it's offered for free—expect from the content they are offered? Truth? Validity? Verification?

We call the people who talk to us on YouTube "content providers." We used to depend on radio and television broadcasters, journalists, or maybe editorialists. Now, we accept the *bona fides* of content providers with not much more to go by than the gauge of their popularity.

Take for example *The Joe Rogan Experience* podcast—available on Spotify and YouTube. It commands a massive audience across multiple platforms, including 19.4 million subscribers on YouTube and over 3 billion total views. On social media, Rogan has 19.7 million Instagram followers and 15 million followers on X (formerly Twitter).

Joe Rogan

These are his *bona fides*: he's a comedian, podcaster, mixed martial arts (MMA) commentator, and former television host of the reality show *Fear Factor* (2001–2006). In 2020, he signed an exclusive licensing deal with Spotify reportedly worth $100 million.

His audience—mostly aged 18–44—is a mix of educational backgrounds and income levels. They reportedly lean more conservative than left of center.

Before his election, Donald Trump appeared on *The Joe Rogan Experience*. It lasted nearly three hours. Some say it was a factor in his winning.

How the Internet Is Breaking Our Brains

This is the title of the *Jordan B. Peterson* podcast with guest Sam Harris.
It's a wide-ranging conversation offering discussion—not dialogue—on how the internet age is developing a troubling trend in the lapse of standards, the rise of antisemitism, and *iterability*—the bridge between morality and objective truth.
I can't say that iterability is necessarily a healthy trend.

The problem with celebrities is, as it's always been, the dearth of credibility earned from education, experience, and expertise. Credibility is the result of due diligence, discernment, asking the right questions, and expecting truthful answers.

Both Harris and Peterson are wary of content providers like Rogan, as well as Candace Owens and Tucker Carlson, speaking about them in critical terms. I agree with Harris that Owens has publicly said and written things that would warrant that.

Carlson, also jumping on the antisemitism bandwagon, once introduced his interview guest Darryl Cooper as the “greatest historian working in America today,” then midwifed his very misleading conversation by letting him tell us Winston Churchill prolonged the Second World War and that the Holocaust happened because of food shortages.

This is where America is heading unless those of us old enough are able to prevent the historical record from being shredded: straight off the cliff.

I used to think a lot of Carlson and Owens. Not anymore. Rogan? Meh. But he’s not off the hook either, because he, like the others, is using his platform and celebrity unwisely. His problem is in thinking all he needs to do is interview and let his interlocutor say whatever he or she pleases.

We are running out of time, my friends. This is how America perishes: we all get to say what we want. But we are neither governing nor being governed wisely.

Photo by **David Matos** on **Unsplash**

No Kings Day and the Illusion of Consensus: Exposing Fake Grassroots Movements

JUNE 17, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: EUGENICS

This blog post draws extensively from an eye-opening **Crossroads episode with Joshua Philipp of the Epoch Times**. We encourage all VCA readers to support Crossroads and watch the full episode below.

No Kings? No Truth

The slogan "*No Kings*" is more than a political jab at former President Trump. It is a spiritual declaration of rebellion. While protestors march under the banner of "*No Kings*," Christians must remember we already have a King—the **King of Kings (Revelation 19:16)**. When humans reject God's authority, they do not become free; they become pawns in a much darker agenda.

Joshua Philipp reports that over 190 organizations are behind the "No Kings" protests. These groups staged synchronized rallies across the country, busing people from site to site and even coordinating speeches and violence. The illusion of mass support was manufactured. The target is not just Trump—it is law, order, truth, and biblical values.

Manufactured Outrage, Engineered Chaos

Philipp and guest James Lindsay unpack a tactic called "**planned spontaneity**"—a Maoist strategy that fakes organic outrage. Organizers identify real frustrations (immigration, inequality, etc.), inject Marxist interpretations, and radicalize crowds through controlled narratives. The goal? Agitation, propaganda, and revolution.

It's not unlike what **Sandy Szwarc** exposes in her retrospective on Carnegie and Rockefeller: elite-funded social engineering masked as humanitarian progress. From eugenics to climate change to gender ideology, the pattern is the same—manufacture a crisis, exploit it, and demand radical change that centralizes control.

When Mob Psychology Replaces Godly Order

This is not new. As Philipp explains, the "mass line" strategy from communist China used pre-scripted town hall meetings to create the illusion of popular consensus. The crying woman. The angry young man. The weak dissenting voice. **All scripted**. The result? Fear-driven conformity.

> Likewise, today's protests manipulate our conscience. Laugh tracks on TV, peer pressure in schools, digital mobs on social media—**all used to create the illusion that everyone agrees**. If you don't fall in line, you're the extremist.

But Romans 12:2 tells us, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind." VCA readers must resist the false consensus and return to a biblical compass.

The Church Must Discern the Times

We are living in a time of great deception and distraction. **Grassroots movements that claim to fight for justice are often shells for elite agendas**. These forces seek to abolish borders, redefine morality, erase God's design for humanity, and ultimately dismantle any notion of divine authority.

But we are not without hope. The same God who rules over kings and nations is still on the throne.

We must pray, speak truth, disciple our children, and resist the lies of counterfeit movements.

> "When people no longer fear God, they fear man. But when they fear God, they fear nothing else."

WATCH: Full Crossroads Episode with Joshua Philipp on the No Kings Protests

Suspect Arrested Over Minnesota Shootings; 'No Kings' Protests; and the 'Mass Line'
https://youtube.com/watch?v=nKmB3cUCc_Y

Maxine Waters and the Spirit of Satanic Rebellion: A Constitutional and Biblical Response

JUNE 8, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

> "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry." —1 Samuel 15:23

There are moments when the veil is pulled back, and we see not just political conflict—but a spiritual battle playing out in real time. The recent outburst by **Rep. Maxine Waters**—accusing President Trump of trying to impose martial law in Los Angeles—is one such moment. In front of a crowd of protestors and news cameras, Waters launched into a tirade that was not only factually false and legally reckless, but spiritually revealing.

"Trump, I wish I could tell you to be ashamed, but you have no shame," she spat. "You're a dishonorable, dirty, cruel, crooked human being… You want martial law… You want to do whatever you want to do."

Waters did not merely oppose a policy. She vilified the President, denounced the National Guard's lawful deployment, demanded mass protests in the streets, and painted a distorted picture of

government troops aiming to “shoot somebody.” She cloaked rebellion in the language of resistance—but this is no civil rights movement. This is spiritual warfare masquerading as politics.

This Is Not Just Politics. This Is the **Power of the Air**.

The Bible warns us that we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but “against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Ephesians 6:12). What we witnessed in that press conference is not just partisan hysteria. It is a woman—elected to uphold the Constitution—being used as a pawn of spiritual rebellion.

Make no mistake: Maxine Waters is advancing the goals of an anti-God, anti-order agenda. Her words serve the same spirit that inspired Saul Alinsky to dedicate *Rules for Radicals* to Lucifer, the original rebel.

- She mocks the rule of law.
- She stirs up civil unrest.
- She fans the flames of fear over federal authority—delegitimizing order while protecting lawlessness.

This is not public service. This is an attack on the Constitution with the hammer and sickle of Marxist ideology, repackaged in the language of “justice” and “sanctuary.”

Sanctuary or Stronghold of Lawlessness?

Waters proudly declares Los Angeles a “sanctuary city.”

But whom does that sanctuary protect? Not the unborn. Not the victims of violent crime committed by repeat offenders shielded from deportation. Not the peaceful citizens watching their streets turn into battlegrounds.

No, the sanctuary movement has become a stronghold of lawlessness—rebellion against federal immigration law, open defiance of ICE, and now, slander against the military and Executive Branch for trying to restore order.

Her words would be troubling enough if they were merely exaggerated. But they are far more dangerous than that. They appear to be designed to incite civil unrest. And if any conservative had said what she did—claiming the President seeks to shoot protesters and calling for masses in the streets—they’d be arrested or at least interrogated by the DOJ. Why not her?

> “We need huge numbers,” she said. “I want the crowds to grow and grow and grow.”

That’s not leadership. That’s mob politics. And it’s time we called it what it is: a direct threat to the Constitution and a sin against God’s design for authority and peace.

A Call to Repentance—Not Just for Her, but for Us All

Let’s be clear: Our enemy is not Maxine Waters. **Our enemy is the spirit of rebellion she is yielding to**. As Christians, we don’t respond with carnal anger or personal hatred. We respond with clarity, boldness, and the offer of truth.

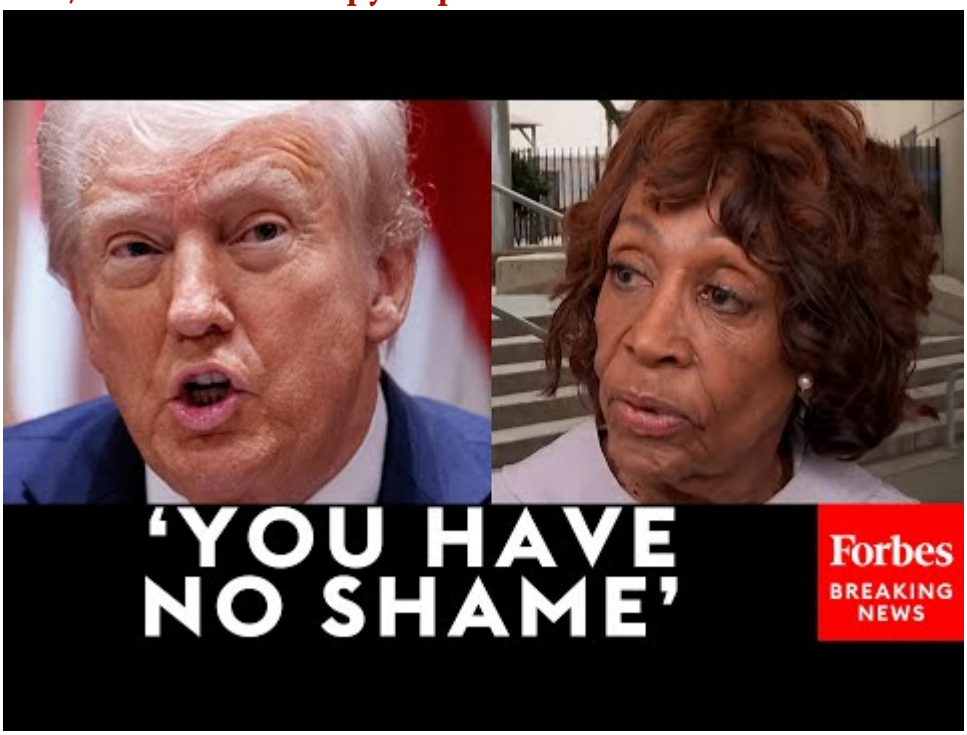
Maxine Waters needs to repent—not to Republicans, but to God. Her slanderous accusations, public incitement, and exploitation of racial and political wounds grieve the heart of God. They also endanger the very people she claims to defend.

The National Guard is not the enemy. The rule of law is not oppression. And the presidency—imperfect though it may be in the hands of any man—is still part of the God-ordained structure of authority meant to preserve peace (Romans 13:1–4).

We pray for her salvation. We pray for her deliverance from the spirit of chaos. But we also call on Congress and federal authorities to investigate whether her remarks crossed legal lines—and we urge every believer to see through the deception that cloaks radical rebellion in the garments of justice.

Watch the Moment for Yourself

Maxine Waters Absolutely Torches Trump For Sending National Guard To LA, Claims He Wants Martial Law
https://youtube.com/watch?v=9WrhGpyR2q4



See the full video of Waters' press conference here:

God First. Truth Always. The Constitution Must Stand.

At VCA, we stand not with partisanship, but with principle. Not with chaos, but with Christ. We believe God's Word is the standard by which every leader—Republican or Democrat—must be judged. And we believe America cannot be saved through politics, but it can be destroyed through rebellion.

So we call the Church to stand. To speak. To discern.

And to pray that God would raise up leaders who fear Him more than man—and who restore this Republic not with riots, but with righteousness.

It’s Really Okay to Go Nuclear

JUNE 7, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Saving the World. Not Blowing it Up

By J. Jeff Toler for Shenandoah Christian Alliance **j.toler@sca4christ.org**

In a recent Daily Wire podcast featuring **Jordan B Peterson**, he and geologist **Scott Tinker** sat down to tackle the controversies of climate change, population growth, and economics. **We will discover that increasing the supply of cheap and available energy has proven to be the best way to lift people out of poverty.**

They discussed the basics of energy density, biome comparisons, moving molecules, and nuclear reactor pellets. It’s a fascinating discussion that will require putting aside about 90 minutes of your life learning something new. But It’s worth it because Tinker convincingly dispels most of the prevailing energy assumptions and climate myths, not the least of which would be the near hysterical view of nuclear energy as life and climate saving.

Among the most surprising, but exceptionally purposeful, revelations is how abundant and affordable energy affords the capability to lift large masses of the world’s population out of poverty. And in so doing, manages the rate of over-population—if there is such a thing—in the world’s poorest countries.

The key to understanding this is seeing how, over millennia, the energy to heat our dwellings, cook our food and light our way in the darkness has evolved over time.

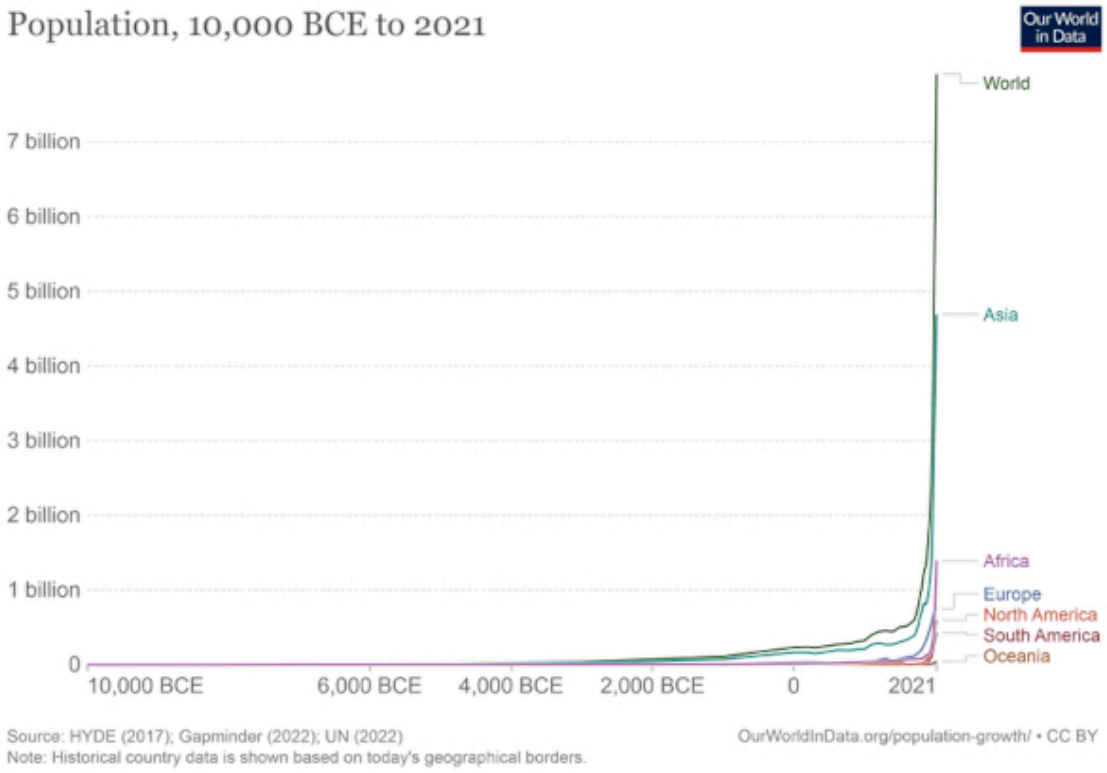
As we will see, low density biomass fuels, a term used to described the types of fuel available down through the ages, figured into the equation of population density, migration, and advancement. Populations increased *ever* so slowly. Until they increased suddenly.

In the modern era, following the second world war, we arrived at the point where the use of nuclear energy was not only possible, but viable.

Proponents of nuclear energy come from diverse fields—such as science, politics, environmentalism, and industry. They advocate for nuclear power as a critical tool for addressing climate change, ensuring energy security, and reducing dependence on fossil fuels. It's taken thousands of years to arrive at a point where inexpensive and abundant energy has become a major policy formation in confronting security, poverty, and population migration.

Consider These Factoids:

At the time of the ice age (assuming 10,000 years ago) earth's population was estimated to be between 1 and 10 million)



If this is true—epoch over epoch, the earth's population grew relatively slowly—around 25-30 million people every millennia. In the year 30 AD, about the time of Christ on earth, the planet's population was estimated to be around 200-259 million people.

In 1804, around two millennia later, the first application of the steam engine was developed. At that time, the population of the earth was estimated to be around 1 billion.

Today, estimates place the number of people living on earth to be 8.2 billion—give or take a couple of hundred million. So, how did the astonishing scale of growth, which, looking like the oft-used analogy of "hockey stick," actually happen?

It was by the introduction of new fuels needed to power the new technology, which were in turn inspired even newer fuels. From wood to coal, coal to oil, oil to kerosene, and to gasoline. Fuel density and increased energy output grew by leaps and bounds.

In the last 80 years, the notion of nuclear power—with the latest discovery being thorium—has opened the way to astonishingly efficient, cost-effective fuel, whose energy availability will last easily 100 years per cycle. It's only recently gaining favor among a growing circle of enthusiasts.

Environmentalists and Climate Scientists

Some of the advocates who support nuclear as a low-carbon energy source to combat climate change are:

- **James Hansen** – Former NASA climate scientist, widely credited with raising early awareness of global warming. He's a vocal supporter of nuclear energy as essential for deep decarbonization.
- **Michael Shellenberger** – Founder of Environmental Progress and author of *Apocalypse Never*. Former anti-nuclear activist turned pro-nuclear advocate. Zealous converts are often the most persuasive.
- **George Monbiot** – British environmentalist and *The Guardian* columnist who publicly shifted to supporting nuclear energy after the Fukushima disaster.
- **Mark Lynas** – British environmental writer and author of *Nuclear 2.0*, argues nuclear is essential for a sustainable future.

Scott Tinker, Geologist

Scientists and Engineers

Technical experts advocating based on energy efficiency, safety, and climate imperatives:

- **Leslie Dewan** – Nuclear engineer and co-founder of Transatomic Power, focused on advanced molten salt reactor designs.
- **Kirsty Gogan** – Co-founder of TerraPraxis and LucidCatalyst, promotes advanced nuclear technologies as part of clean energy portfolios.
- **Robert Hargraves** – Author of *Thorium: Energy Cheaper Than Coal*, promoting thorium reactors as a safe nuclear alternative.

Policymakers and Think Tanks

Regardless of what we might think of their political views, these people support national and global nuclear energy:

- **Bill Gates** – Founder of TerraPower, which develops advanced reactors (like the Natrium reactor). He sees nuclear as vital to achieving net-zero emissions.
- **Governor Glenn Youngkin (R-VA)**: Promotes small modular reactors (SMRs) as part of Virginia's energy future.
- **Emmanuel Macron** – President of France, is a staunch supporter of nuclear power. He should. France derives about 70% of its electricity from nuclear.
- **Donald Trump** – has generally supported nuclear energy as part of an "all-of-the-above" energy strategy.

Industry and Non-Profit Organizations

Driving innovation and public education on the nuclear option, are these influential organizations:

- **Switch Energy Alliance** – Founded by Scott Tinker, while not exclusively nuclear-focused, it includes nuclear as part of a balanced global energy mix.
- **Third Way** – Centrist think tank in the U.S. advocating for innovation in nuclear technology to meet climate goals.
- **Generation Atomic** – Youth-oriented pro-nuclear advocacy group using outreach and storytelling to change public perception.
- **Clean Air Task Force** – Promotes nuclear alongside renewables to achieve decarbonization.

If nuclear is important, why has the US been reluctant to produce it? It comes down to the politics of socialist ideology. Also, let's not forget that people are still creeped out by the nuclear bomb.

Can these scientists, policy makers, and social influencers finally be able to overcome the enormous stigma of nuclear power? It's been 80 years since atomic bombs were dropped on Japan.

Time enough to support them in doing so for the sake of humanity.

If that sounds over the top, consider these 2024 statistics on poverty:

- **Extreme Poverty**: Approximately 700 million people, or 8.5% of the world's population, live on less than $2.15 per day.
- **Moderate Poverty**: Around 3.5 billion people, or 44% of the global population, live on less than $6.85 per day, a threshold relevant for upper-middle-income countries. **blogs.worldbank.org+3worldbank.org+3theguardian.com+3**
- **Multidimensional Poverty**: Over 1.1 billion people experience multidimensional poverty, which includes deprivations in health, education, and living standards. **hdr.undp.org**

According to a 2021 Pew Research Center analysis, approximately 7% of the global population was considered high income, which is defined as earning more than $50 per day (about $18,250 annually) in 2011 purchasing power parity (PPP) dollars. While this threshold is below $50,000, it indicates that a relatively small fraction of the global population earns incomes approaching that level.

Now we know why Increasing the supply of cheap and available energy has proven to be the best way to lift people out of poverty.

- *"Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, 'Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.'"* —Deuteronomy 15:11

Cover Photo by **Lukáš Lehotský** on **Unsplash**

Global Indoctrination: The Occult Roots of UN Education and the Battle for Your Child's Soul

MAY 30, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

"Obedience to God requires vigilance—especially when the enemy dresses deception in the language of peace, sustainability, and education."

Alex Newman, senior editor at *The New American*, has issued a bold warning: the United Nations' education agenda—Agenda 21 and the World Core Curriculum—isn't just unconstitutional. It's spiritual warfare. In his exposé, "The Occult Origins of UN Agenda 21 & UN World Core Curriculum," Newman reveals how pagan spirituality, globalist control, and UN-backed education systems are converging to reshape children's minds and hearts.

"Effective execution was going to require a profound reorientation of all human society unlike anything the world has ever experienced." — United Nations Agenda 21

Watch This Critical Exposé:

The Occult Origins of UN Agenda 21 & UN World Core Curriculum
https://youtube.com/watch?v=xEfNkME77f4

A Pagan Curriculum Replacing Biblical Truth

UNESCO's World Core Curriculum—written by Robert Mueller and based on the writings of occultist Alice Bailey—was never about neutral academics. It was built to usher in a "universal consciousness," a false spirituality designed to displace obedience to God with allegiance to global governance and mystical unity.

> "They are replacing Biblical truth with a false, universalist spiritual consciousness."

Guest researcher Lisa Logan documents how Mahayana Buddhism and New Age pantheism were embedded into public education, supported by both Republican and Democrat administrations. The goal? Erase the idea of individual liberty under God and replace it with collective submission under the state.

The Call to Stand—Not Surrender

This is more than policy. **It is a challenge to our obedience to God.** As believers, we are called to "bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5). When schools teach children that they are just part of an ecological collective—no soul, no Creator, no purpose—they are not educating. They are evangelizing for a false gospel.

We must obey God rather than men.

This includes:

- Withdrawing from corrupted education systems when possible
- Equipping our children in biblical truth
- Speaking out at school boards and legislative hearings
- Exposing the false spirituality behind UN-led "education reform"

Biblical Authority vs. Globalist Lies

> *"God blessed them and said to them: 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it…'"* (Genesis 1:28)

The UN teaches the opposite—that mankind is a problem to be managed, a pollutant on the planet.

This worldview is **not neutral—it is demonic.** And it is being taught in public schools across the globe under the banners of "peace education," "climate literacy," and "equity."

Further Reading: How the Globalist Agenda Took Root

Want to see how these UN-aligned ideologies were embedded in American institutions over a century ago?

Read this supporting piece: "A Brief Retrospective on Efforts to Transform America to a New Social Order" by Sandy Szwarc →

It details how the Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Gates foundations laid the groundwork for today's education revolution and population control.

As the global elites build their counterfeit kingdom, may we as believers rise up in **obedience to God** and boldly declare:

Jesus is Lord, not the United Nations.

A Mighty Fortress in the Pentagon: God First in the Halls of Power

MAY 24, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNCATEGORIZED
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

by Jeff Bayard

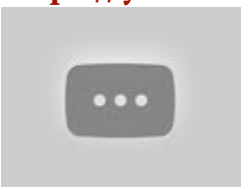
“Be still, and know that I am God.” — Psalm 46:10

In a time when the Pentagon has often been a symbol of bureaucratic coldness and secular rigidity, something truly remarkable happened on May 21, 2025. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, a devout Christian and combat veteran, hosted the first **Christian Prayer and Worship Service** inside the Pentagon auditorium — not after hours, not hidden, but during the workday, with full visibility.

> “This is precisely where I need to be, and exactly where we need to be as a nation: in prayer on bended knee.”

Those were Hegseth’s words as he stood before a packed room of military and civilian personnel, many of whom joined him not only in prayer, but in praise of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Pete Hegseth Leads Christian Prayer Service in the Pentagon
https://youtube.com/watch?v=EKcOA5ojMXo



Watch the full service above and linked here: **Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth Prayer Service – YouTube**

The 25-minute service, complete with Scripture, intercession, and worship, is archived publicly. The transcript reveals not just a spiritual event — but a theological stand against the tide of godlessness sweeping through our nation's institutions.

A Bold Declaration Behind Enemy Lines

In a culture gripped by secularism, humanism, and spiritual compromise, to proclaim Christ openly in the nation's most strategic military building is a profound act of **obedience to God over man**. As Hegseth acknowledged, leading the Department of Defense cannot be done in his own strength.

> "Knowing there's an Author in heaven overseeing all of this… gives me the strength to proceed."

This prayer service didn't merely nod to tradition. It exalted Jesus Christ's **preeminence** and raised a holy banner in the face of spiritual warfare. The enemy of God—the deceiver, the dragon, the ancient serpent who prowls like a roaring lion—was put on notice.

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray…" (2 Chronicles 7:14) — this wasn't a slogan. It was the very heartbeat of the gathering.

A Monthly Offensive Against Darkness

The service, led by Pastor Brooks Potteiger of Pilgrim Hill Reformed Fellowship, was more than ceremonial. It was deeply spiritual and doctrinally sound. The message from Psalm 46 was a call to **courageous stillness** — not passive silence, but confidence in God's sovereignty amid war, conflict, and national pressure.

Pastor Potteiger reminded the assembled warfighters that **"the Lord of Hosts is with us… the God of Jacob is our fortress."** He honored President Trump as a divinely appointed leader, a man used by God to bring moral clarity in turbulent times. But the glory and authority were always returned to Christ.

"We are not in control. And what a relief." That truth, spoken in the heart of the defense apparatus of the free world, is nothing short of revolutionary.

Obedience in a Time of Apostasy

This act of worship stood in stark contrast to the apostate drift in so many corners of American government and culture. In a Pentagon that has seen diversity briefings and drag shows, this was a declaration that **Jesus Christ is Lord — even here.**

In a nation increasingly shaped by the lies of the enemy — humanism, materialism, relativism — the presence of a Christ-centered service signals the spiritual resistance beginning to rise. Just as

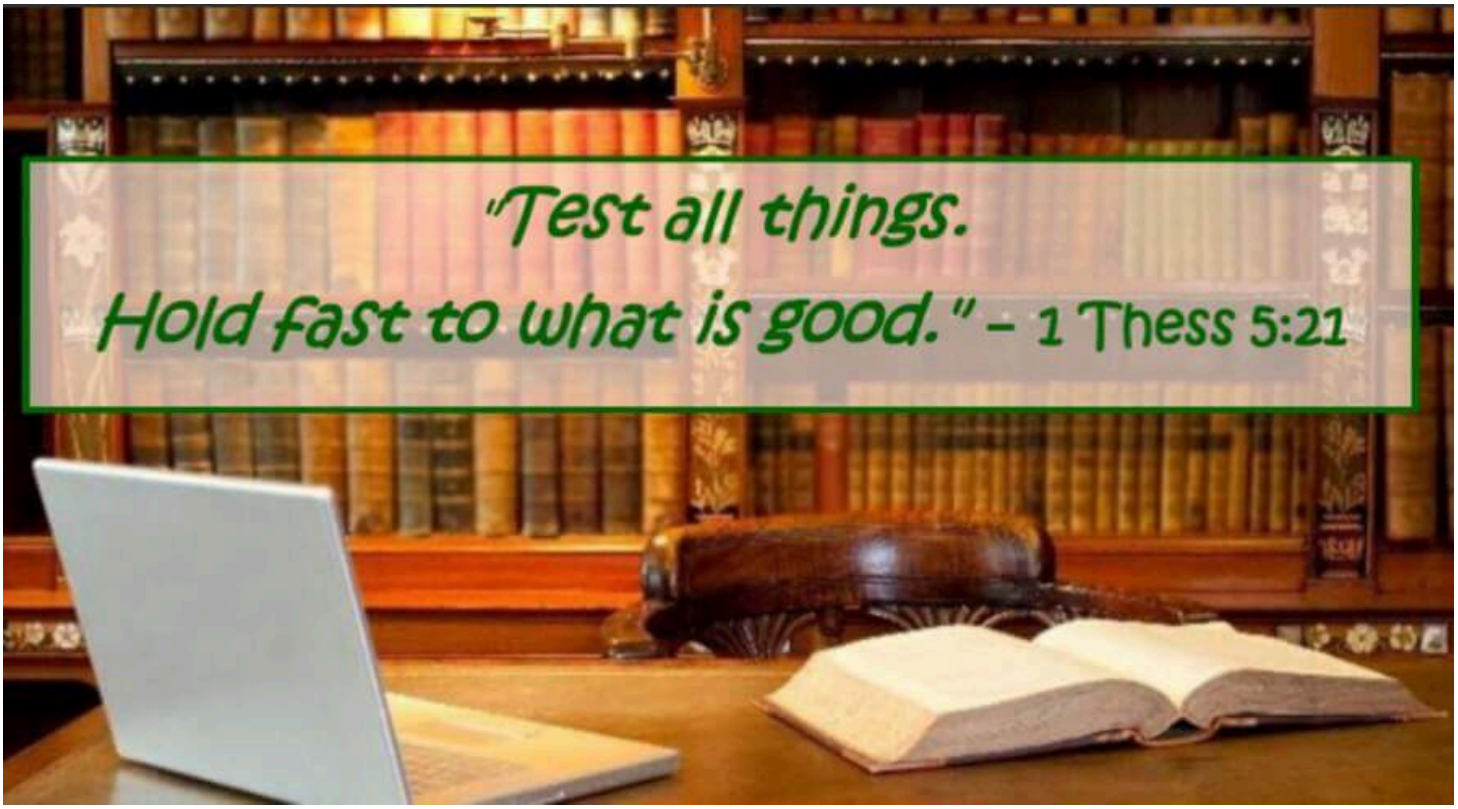
the **VCA document on Obedience to God** declares, *"Will we show people the way to salvation or sit back and allow sin to overrun God's good earth?"* This was a resounding decision to act.

"Let goods and kindred go… God's truth abideth still. His Kingdom is forever."

That final hymn — *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* — was not merely nostalgic. It was warfare. It was the sound of saints on the battlefield refusing to bow to Caesar, to culture, or to cowardice.

A Word about Homeschool Curriculum

MAY 7, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



> *This article completes my series on what our children are being taught. If you missed them, catch up here:* ***https://vachristian.org/tag/what-are-our-children-being-taught/***

By Sandy Szwarc
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One of homeschooling parents' greatest challenges is assembling the best instructional materials for their children.

Home Educators Association of Virginia (**HEAV**) is a member-supported, non-profit that has supported homeschooling since 1983. It has a biblical worldview and offers a wide variety of reputable **curriculum resources** for parents.

Homeschool Legal Defense Association (**HSLDA**) also offers resources on selecting homeschool curriculum that follows a Christian **mission**. Parents will also find sound science and Biblical homeschool curriculum from sources that aren't strictly homeschooling providers, such as **Answers in Genesis**.

Homeschool curriculum requires discernment. While there are some excellent resources for Christian homeschooling parents, they all require discernment, even those offered by some homeschool advocacy groups and Christian sources. Globalism ideologies, UN sustainability goals, and unsound information can sneak into the best courseware resources.

Episode 5: Our Planet is Changing and We Can All Help! (12:32)

I see that especially among **science topics** that are popularly aligned with **Next Generation Science Standards**, STEM and NASA.

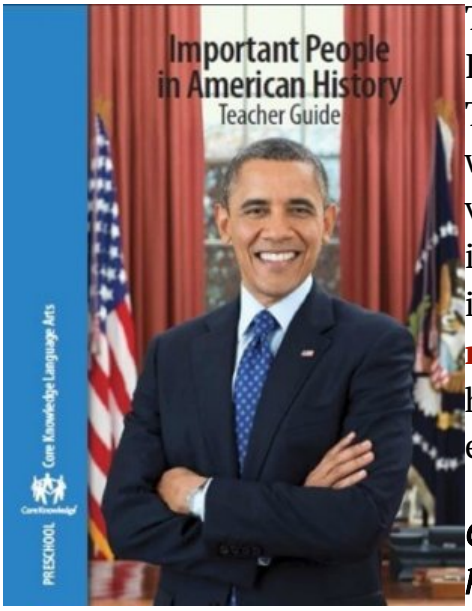
Troubling curricula is more common among homeschool programs accredited by state education agencies. Texas Education Agency (TEA), for example, refers homeschool parents to only two homeschool resources: Texas Home School Coalition (THSC) and Texas Home Educators (THE).

Both organizations may appear as home school advocacy organizations, but deserve special caution by parents.

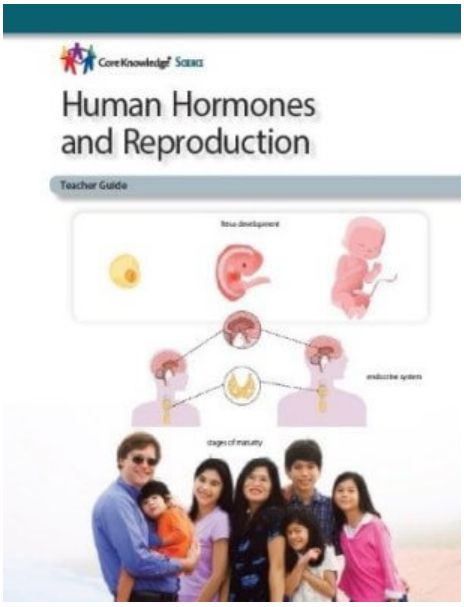
Texas Home Educators, an online network of homeschoolers, offers some of the same materials as that from the state's TEA. It mirrors public school curriculum – like NASA and its **Climate Kids**; NOAA's environmental literacy with **classes** like "Our planet is changing as we can all help!"; and lessons by Edgenuity (an online learning platform adopted by over 500 public school districts that proved a **failure** for homeschool learning), such as its **Environmental Science Curriculum**.

THE also references Core Knowledge Foundation materials (founded by Don Hirsch, Jr. to ensure the success of **Common Core State Standards**). They include **teaching** kids that the most important people in American History are Barack Obama, Martin Luther King Jr., Abraham Lincoln, Sally Ride and Sonia Sotomayor; and that there are many people whose "gender understanding does not align with their reproductve system."

Progressive **activism** and **lobbyists** for greater government **oversight** over homeschooling also show up in all sorts of groups that appear to be homeschool advocacy groups, as HSLDA has **cautioned**.



The worst homeschool curriculum I've found is recommended by Texas Homeschool Coalition, which is also one of the most vocal promoters of ESA legislation in Texas and laden with unsound information. THSC's top **recommendation** of homeschooling curriculum, for example, is from Oak Meadow.



Oak Meadow is also one of the top homeschooling companies in the U.S., according to Business Research Insights.

Oak Meadow's mission of "experiential education" and "holistic learning" with a "global perspective and local action" focuses on eco-education, social responsibility, sustainability, "self reflection" and empathy, and achieving connections and "genuine understanding." Its **curriculum** is ***beyond troubling***. Not only is it filled with pseudoscience and poor scientific information, and unbiblical ideologies, it is aligned with Robert Muller's World Core Curriculum. See Appendix A.**

The homeschool **market** in 2023 was valued at **$3.59 billion** and is **growing** rapidly and expected to reach $8.95 billion by 2032. There's a lot of money in homeschooling. Countless retailers are selling homeschool curriculum for core education subjects (beyond faith-based teachings from specific religious denominations). Homeschool parents will need to do their homework, practice discernment, and seek the **recommendations** of reputable pastors and *Christian homeschooling organizations* like HSLDA and HEAV that make it easier.

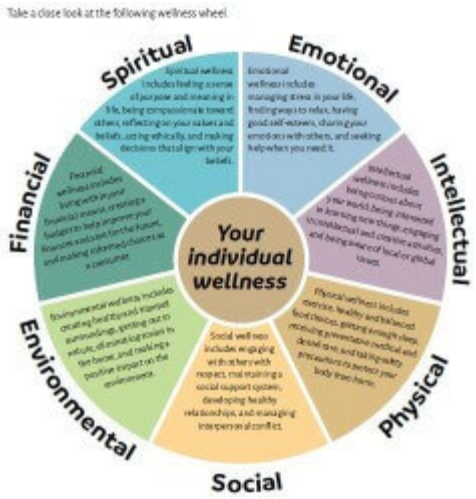
Appendix A

Sample homeschool curriculum from Oak Meadow includes:

"Health & Wellness" teaches the World Health Organization's definition of health and the Global Wellness Institute's definition of "holistic wellness" with social-emotional-environmental and other aspects of the self in "harmony."

- The chapter, Food Ethics And Politics, is filled with false information and fears of modern agriculture and food production, based on *activist's* books and movies.
- The chapter, Sexuality, Relationships and Sex, teaches various gender identities and sexual orientations and rights; what to look for in a partner; that 73% of kids 13-17 watch porn; and the spiritual practices of Yoga rooted in Hindu tradition.

- Book assignments include books on 33 voices about mental health; gut and brain connection in wellness; unlocking the power of dreams and sleep; lost art of breathing to improve your immunity and rejuvenate your internal organs; ultra-processed people and why they should eat only organic natural alternatives; fears of chemistry and food additives and how the food industry "exploits addictions;" the new science of mind-body connection in preventing mood disorders, ADHD, addiction, aging and autism; religious rituals and personal rituals to counter chaos; and how to handle natural disasters and global pandemics.



"Anatomy and Physiology" launches right into the unproven "emerging field of personalized medicine;" and that "male" and "female" do not capture the full range of human bodies and experiences when it comes to sex and gender.

"**Global Climate Change in the 21st Century"** teaches the complete myths of climate change from human activities, "particularly fossil fuel burning," green house gases from meat food production, fears of droughts and rising oceans, wetlands and land use, and the global impacts on marginalized and indigenous peoples, racism, poverty and political instability. The course uses NASA's definitions and "consensus of climate scientists." It includes a chapter on other "ways of knowing" and indigenous groups, and readings on "this environmental catastrophe is global!" Lesson 14 ends in Activism and taking action.

"Environmental Science for a Changing World" includes 36 lessons on "the earth: our home, responsibility." It commends environmental activist, Rachel Carson, and teaches fears of chemicals, carbon monoxide, radon, cancer clusters, toxins, overpopulation, and extinction of species. Recommended reading sources are environmental activist publications.

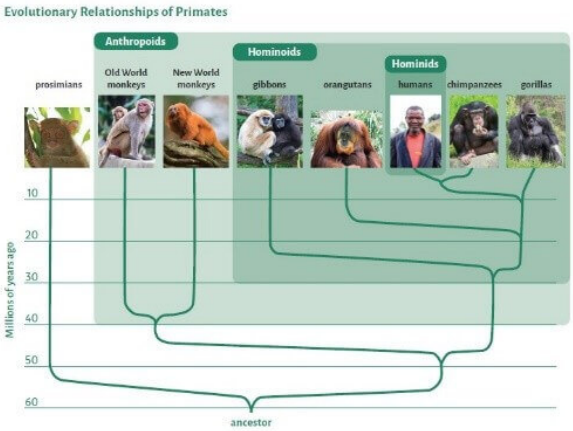
"U.S. History: Conflict and Compromise" is obvious from the title and portrays a negative view of American history.

"Psychology: Journey Toward Self-Knowledge" looks at questions surrounding the "mystery of our existence, our place within the universe and why we think and behave the way we do." It teaches that human evolution gave birth to psychology and women pioneered the field to become culturally and gender diverse. It teaches diversity as adopted by the American Psychological Association, "implicit association," tests on gender and sexuality, and the unconscious mind.

"Race and Ethnic Studies: Power and Perspective" includes chapters on race, power and privilege, whiteness, colonialism and slavery, migration, Islamophobia, inequity, Orientalism,

“Red Power” and sovereign rights, Black Lives Matter, and art and protest.

“Foodways: Sustainable Food Systems” is an entire 18-week course of UN sustainable agriculture mythology, indigenous stories, anti-modern agricultural ideologies, and an extensive reading list of activist books.



“Biology: The Study of Life” teaches evolution of man from primates, bioinformatics (using computer databases of genetics to create associations of traits), genetics, and computer modeling.

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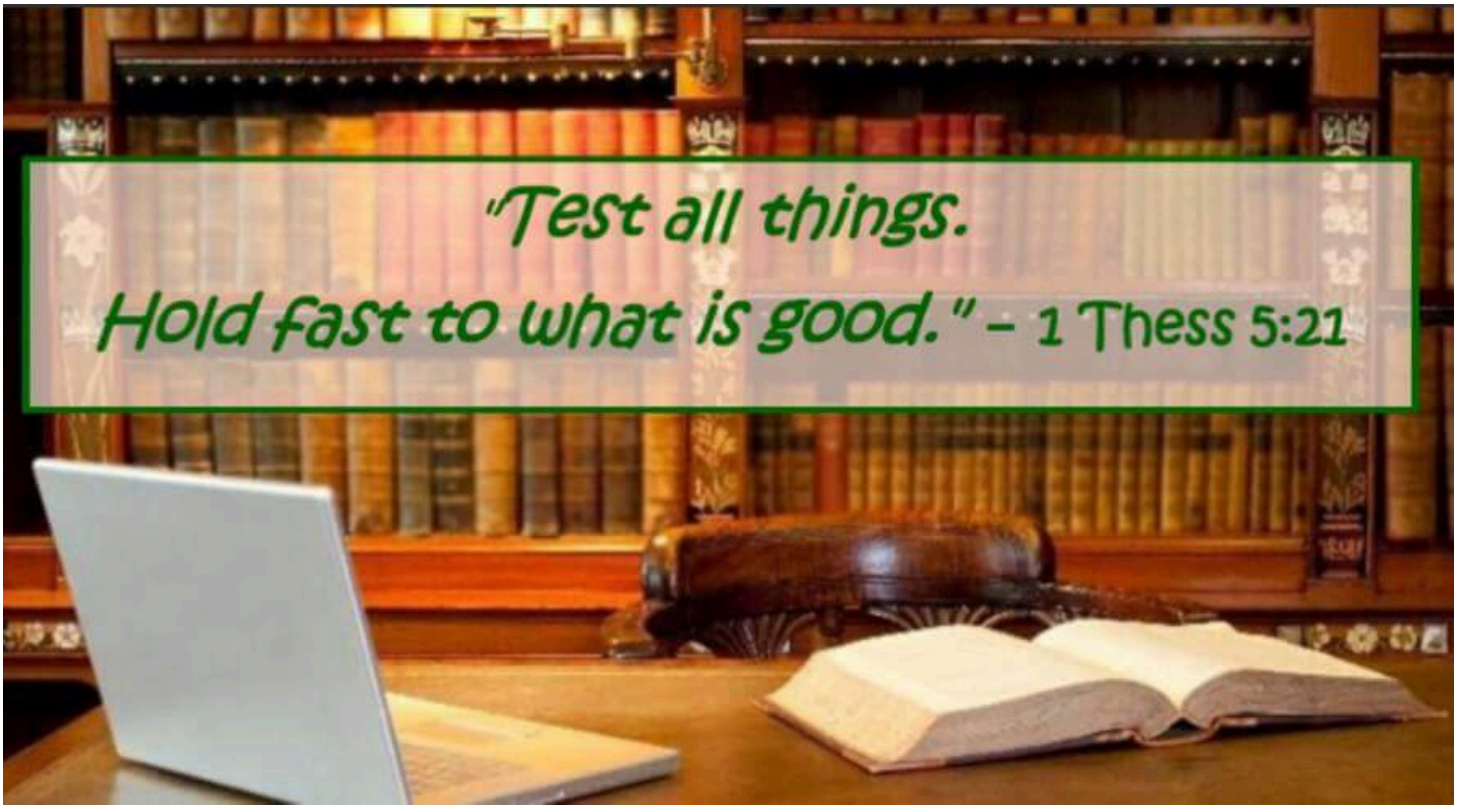
School Choice for Christian Parents – Part 2

MAY 4, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING TAUGHT?



By Sandy Szwarc
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Homeschooling itself is the least government-regulated education option and proven better overall for children compared to public schools.

Home School Legal Defense Association (**HSLDA**) is the nonprofit founded in 1983 by members seeking to protect the freedom to homeschool. HSLDA is a Christian organization that **believes** God has given all parents the right and responsibility over the upbringing and education of their children. It offers complete information and resources for parents looking to **homeschool** – from support groups, understanding teaching and educational approaches, state homeschool laws, selecting curriculum and what to teach, testing, recordkeeping, and special needs.

An estimated 7 to 8 million school-age children are being homeschooled. Homeschooling **is legal** in all 50 states. Virginia is among only 11 states that have **moderate** regulations over homeschooling, as compared to most states that have none or low regulations. Detailed information and forms on the homeschool laws in every state is available **from HSLDA**.

The main **reasons** parents look to homeschool are well known and have been reported by Public School Exit and were covered **in this series**. They include: academic quality, moral and religious concerns, greater safety, political ideologies, personalized and flexible instruction, and freedom of caring parental involvement.

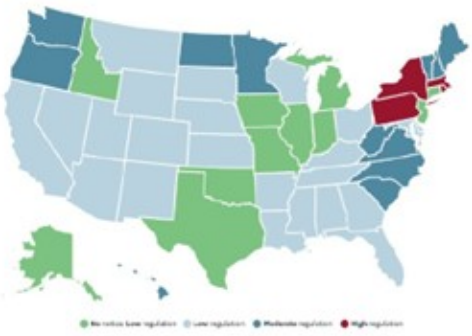


Figure 1 HSLDA, 2025

As in all states, exorbitant public school spending has had no relationship to student learning, which has only continued to worsen. TEA, for example, recently released the 2023-2024 **Texas Academic Performance Reports** on every school district in the state. It found *only 16%, 17% and 17%* of 8th graders *had mastered 8th grade mathematics, science, and social studies*, respectively. And *only 29% had mastered reading*. ("Mastered" is defined as those students whose performance indicates they are expected to succeed in the next grade with little or no *remedial academic intervention*. In previous generations, that simple requirement would have been necessary to pass a grade and move on to the next.)

Not surprisingly, the dismal state of public education has left growing numbers of parents unhappy with the woke, low quality, and unbiblical curriculums and wanting the freedom to choose alternatives they believe best for their children, *without* government interference.

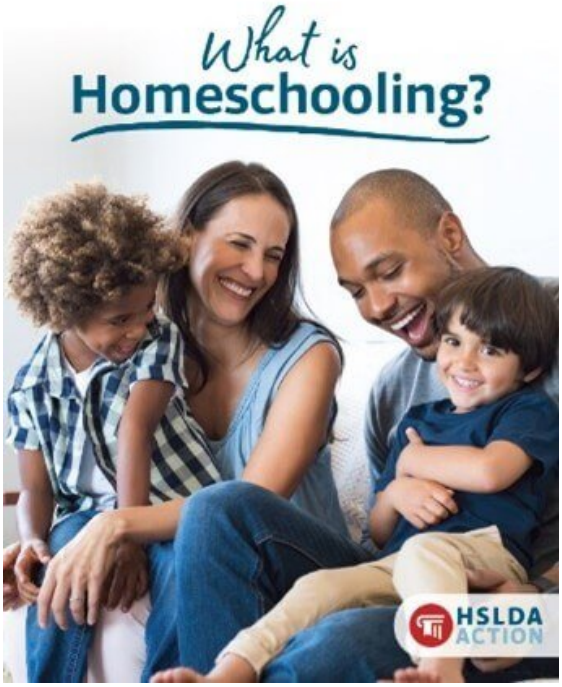
Homeschooling has been the fastest-growing form of education across the nation, **according** to the National Home Education Research Institute. Virginia is among the states with the highest number of homeschoolers, at **4.8%** of students by 2021.

Homeschooling in Texas increased 55% between 2020-2021, alone, **according** to Texas Public Policy Foundation. By the 2020 school year, there were nearly 480,000 homeschooled children in Texas – *nearly double that of students even enrolled in private schools*.

Research to date on homeschooling has overwhelmingly shown positive **results** for homeschooled students compared to public-schooled students.

- A systematic review of the empirical research on homeschooling **reported** the large majority of peer-reviewed studies (11 out of 14) showed higher academic achievement among homeschoolers.

- **According** to education research compiled by ThinkImpact, homeschoolers have higher graduation rates, 15%-30% higher test results on standard achievement tests (even factoring in parent income and education), 72 points higher SAT scores than the national average, and nearly all homeschool students are active in an average of five extracurricular activities.
- Despite popular myths that homeschooling parents are primarily wealthier, U.S. Census Bureau survey data found homeschooling households are in all income ranges, averaging about 12.5% at incomes under $25,000 to up to $99,999; the lowest percentages are actually among the highest income households.
- Credible and objective data have **shown** homeschoolers are safer and at a lower risk for child abuse.
- Homeschooled children turn out happier, well-adjusted and more engaged than those in public schools, **according** to Harvard University research.



- Homeschooled children develop closer family bonds, are shielded from peer pressure and bullying, have lower stress levels, have higher levels of self-esteem and self-confidence, have more diverse and more meaningful socialization connections, and develop greater independence and self-motivation, **according** to GerosHealth.

Decreased Social Pressures	Enhanced Emotional Well-being
Less peer pressure	Increased self-confidence
No bullying	Improved social skills
No fear of judgment	Better mental health
No need to fit in	Greater emotional stability
More focus on personal growth	Reduced stress levels

Realities for homeschoolers

Informed homeschool parents recognize the political realities and the long-standing evidence. They know that accepting government ESA money means being subject to government regulation.

Illinois homeschool parents learned that last month when they were hit with a new state **House Bill** that would require them to register with the state every year, like sex-offenders, if they want to educate their children at home; with jail time and fines for noncompliance, along with leaving them open to investigations by child and family services. The new legislation (HB2827), known as **"the Homeschool Act"**, also authorizes an education or public school official to demand, without notice or reason and as many times as he/she wishes, the family to produce evidence of courseware instruction that satisfies the state school code standards. Educational criteria and reporting requirements for parents were also imposed. Homeschool children are also required to comply with all public school health, medical, and immunization reporting requirements to participate in any public school activity. But, the legislation is written so that it can be expanded to all homeschoolers through the State Board of Elections, according to Home School Legal Defense Association. Illinois Christian Home Educators (ICHE) and allied organizations are **fighting back**.

In Texas, homeschooling parents are also vulnerable to state overreach, **explained** attorney Albert Hollan. TEA determines whether a parent is operating a home school in a bona fide manner, he explained. While currently, it recognizes homeschooling and parents have broad freedoms, authority over homeschooling is *based only on case law* (known as the Leeper law) and can be changed at any time by the legislature (and Governor and his Commissioner).

During school choice debates, public disinformation runs rampant. Proponents even tried to claim this past year that school choice programs in 32 states hadn't increased regulations for homeschooling. Texas Homeschool Coalition (THSC), which had **endorsed Governor Abbott's** campaign and has long campaigned for school choice, made this claim using a **survey** out of Johns Hopkins School of Education. **Texas Home Educators** applied careful discernment in completely **debunking** the spurious study.

The most genuinely sincere opposition to school choice does not come from those who stand to profit or have alternative interests. It doesn't come from those with big financial backers or loud politically connected voices. It doesn't come from groups masquerading as homeschool advocacy organizations. *The greatest opposition to school choice legislation across the country comes from Christian homeschoolers themselves.*

Like ICHE in Illinois and THE in Texas, HSLDA has been a leading voice for homeschool parents across the country and in *opposition of school choice legislation*. HSLDA has followed **legislation** closely for years and **warned** homeschooling parents **of the dangers in school choice** and **ESAs**. HSLDA realizes it is a **silent footprint** – they do what they do for the sake of the children:

> *"My experience with my 7-year-old son taught me that my role as father is not that of dictator; rather, I came to see my job as that of a shepherd. My children are not products. Like the still-small voice that first drew me and has since guided and sustained me, I have striven to nurture, challenge, and keep my children safe so they can hear God's still-small voice guiding them. It is my job to prepare them for their life to come—both temporal and eternal….*
>
> *I believe God has placed to-die-for love in my heart for my children. For me, parenting is a truly awesome responsibility in the old sense of the word: inspiring an overwhelming feeling of reverence, admiration, or fear. I sometimes fail. I often fall short. But I nevertheless aspire to be a great dad. And homeschooling has been one vehicle for my wife Debbie and I to love our children as God would have us do…*

We honor God by nurturing them in their uniqueness and by faithfully curating their education…. For the sake of your children. That's always been our heart, even if it has sometimes been buried in a silent footnote." – James R. Mason, President, HSLDA

Christian home schoolers stand alone in many states as the only real voice for educating children as the Bible instructed.

Globalism is like yeast

The undeniable conclusion about government schools is that it has become virtually impossible for parents to obey Jesus and ensure that their children are educated with a Biblical worldview.

Turning their children over to the state or subjecting their education to government control, guarantees their children will be encircled in globalism, as well as a falling quality of education.

> *Globalism has infected every professional teacher and education association; every government educational department and agency – state and local; and every secular organization in education, science and medicine.*

It's much as yeast infects the bread of life with corruption and evil, as Scripture **warned**. Just as DEI was intentionally "**woven into the fabric** of the American Psychological Association," dissecting out Marxist and anti-Christian ideologies from public education will be impossible.

Christ instructed us to purge yeast from among us. For Christian parents, returning the education of their children back to the folds of homes, families and churches is the only way to save their children and raise them in a Biblical worldview. Homeschooling and **Christian schools** are the only real options left for Christian parents – *but only if parents remain in control to choose the curriculum and providers for their children's education with no interference from the government.*

That is only possible by parents ***not*** going along with school choice or accepting government money…money that comes with strings attached. Just as education was used as a means to fundamentally transform America to a socialist-technocratic vision of utopia … education can also be a way to fundamentally restore America to the exceptional God-blessed vision of our country's founders.

***

Addendum: Homeschooling parents, may find "**A word about homeschool curriculum**" of help when selecting instructional materials for core education subjects.

Why Sam Sorbo Says Homeschooling Isn’t Just an Option — It’s a Biblical Mandate

MAY 4, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Sam Sorbo isn’t mincing words. In her bold interview with Gary Binford on United Patriots Uprising, the actress, author, and outspoken education reformer doesn’t just advocate homeschooling—she makes a passionate, biblical case for it. Calling today’s public schools “child abuse centers,” she draws a clear line: Christian parents must reclaim their God-given role in raising and educating their children—or risk losing them to a culture that increasingly despises virtue, family, and faith.

Her message is as timely as it is urgent. In a society that aborts children, celebrates gender confusion, and removes God from every classroom, Sorbo explains that homeschooling is not simply a choice—it is obedience to Scripture. The Bible **doesn’t** say, “Send your child to the state.” It says, “Teach them diligently” (Deut. 6:7). That cannot happen in classrooms where truth is suppressed and the Bible is banned.

Watch the full interview here:

Sam Sorbo Passionately Calls For Homeschooling Children/Making It Easy And Fun
https://youtube.com/watch?v=trxOH7s2Y6o

Sorbo's new book, A Parents' Guide To Homeschool: Making Education Easy and Fun is more than a manual—it's a reawakening. It empowers parents to stop outsourcing education and start rethinking what it means to "raise up a child in the way he should go." She rightly notes that many parents have been so "schooled" by the system that they now doubt their ability to teach their own fourth-grader. That's not a failure of the parent—it's the tragic success of a system designed to dismantle the family and instill government dependency.

Throughout the conversation, Binford and Sorbo expose the myth of "socialization," debunk the fantasy that government schools are neutral, and trace the spiritual cost of outsourcing moral formation. From rebuking the false idol of "college prep" to recounting her own family's journey through homeschool, Sorbo lays bare how radically different—and biblically faithful—education can be when it begins at home.

Takeaways from the Interview:

- Homeschooling reclaims parental authority. Parents are the primary educators—not the state.
- Biblical virtue cannot be taught in godless classrooms. If Scripture is banned, so is wisdom.
- Learning should be joyful and truth-centered. Homeschooling frees children to discover God's world, not the state's agenda.
- Every parent is capable with God's help. The idea that "you can't teach your kids" is a lie birthed by secular schooling.

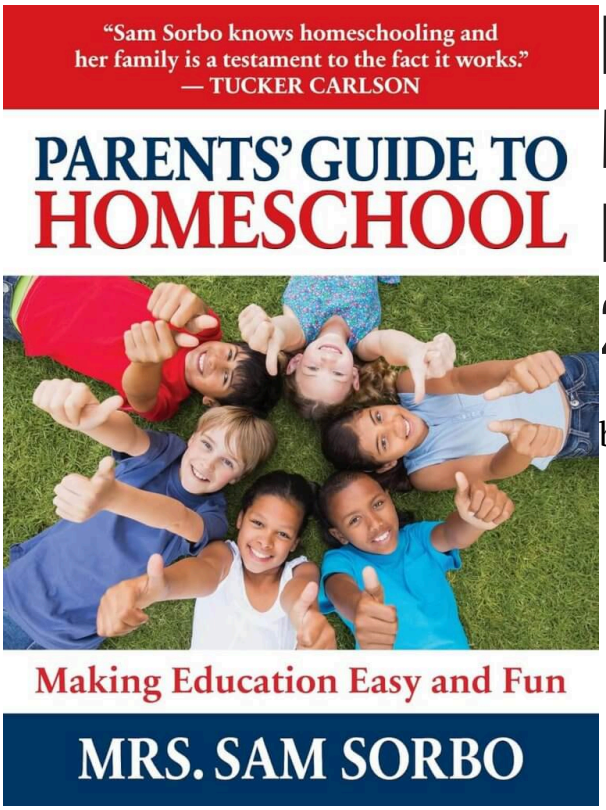
Sam Sorbo's powerful challenge should make every Christian parent pause: If you wouldn't let the state raise your children morally, why are you letting it raise them intellectually?

Explore Sam Sorbo's Resources:

Visit **Sorbo Studios'** online store for books, DVDs, and more.

Source Block

- **Watch the full episode: YouTube**
- **Guest:** Sam Sorbo | **Sam Sorbo Studios** | YouTube: **We are Sorbo Studio**s
- **Host:** Gary Binford | *United Patriots Uprising* | **RadioInfluence.com**
- Parents' Guide to Homeschool: Making Education Easy and Fun Paperback – September 24, 2024 (**AMAZON**)



Parents' Guide to Homeschool: Making Education Easy and Fun Paperback – September 24, 2024

by **Sam Sorbo** (Author)

> "In your heart you probably suspect that homeschooling is better for your kids, but how do you do it? Sam Sorbo knows, and her family is testament to the fact it works."—TUCKER CARLSON

This book is a work of LOVE.

Love of truth, love of freedom, love for children everywhere, and therefore love for their parents who have been trapped in a system of abuse.

From actress, conservative pundit, radio show host, writer, and passionate child home education advocate Mrs. Sam Sorbo: PARENTS' GUIDE TO HOMESCHOOL: MAKING EDUCATION EASY AND FUN – a soup-to-nuts, all-you-need-to-know-to-get-you-started workbook for parents who want to homeschool their children.

Mrs. Sam Sorbo offers personal experience, insights, and encouragement to begin you and your children's true educational journey, including:

PARENTS' GUIDE TO HOMESCHOOL is the workbook for every parent looking to protect their children, encourage creativity and true learning and for families who want education to be easy, fun, and safe.

- School Lies
- Defining Education
- Sacrifice and Priorities
- Socialization
- Goals and Tools
- Educational Philosophies
- Different Learning Styles
- Defining Success
- Discipline
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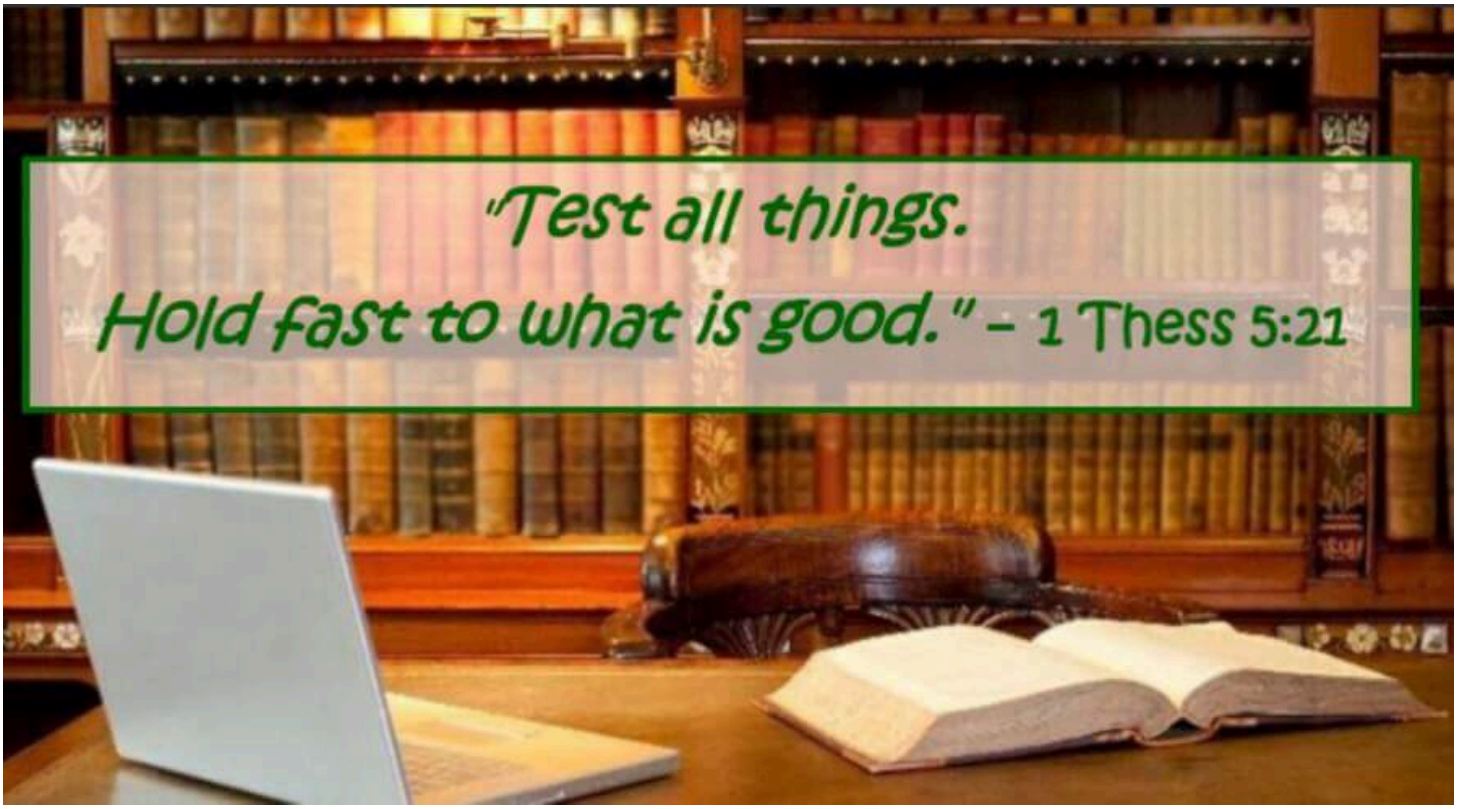
School Choice for Christian Parents – Part 1

APRIL 28, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING TAUGHT?



By Sandy Szwarc
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Where do you stand on the school choice issue? If you are a Christian parent trying to faithfully follow Biblical teachings, your position will be very different from those with secular worldviews. The school choice debate currently raging across America is a profound test of Christian parents' faith.

Today is the final exam.

Biblical teachings, commanding fathers with the responsibility of teaching their children, and training them in the way they should go, were nearly abandoned in America a century ago. The lure of "free" government subsidized education led parents to turn **the education** of their children over to the state. The state, in control of the purse strings, then controlled what all children in public schools were taught, what they would be permitted to think and believe, and what they must do…with the goal to transform America to socialism.

“School choice” is the last round to coerce the parents who have resisted government schooling to get on board. Once again, the lure is “free” subsidized education.

What does “School Choice” really mean?

School Choice is a lobbying term. It refers to various programs that are marketed as giving parents a “choice” in how their children are educated. In reality, however, all of these programs as legislated across the country are actually about how *government (taxpayer) money is spent for education*.

School choice programs all work to normalize the idea that education is a responsibility of the government rather than parents.

They are essentially new welfare programs, increasing the number of families dependent on the government, increasing state education budgets, increasing the size of state education administrations and the number of state employees, and expanding government control over education. Worse, those expanded state education budgets primarily benefit vested interests – those powerful, politically-connected, private-public partnerships of stakeholders and teacher unions.

Of the various school choice programs **currently run** by states: 20 are “Education Savings Accounts” (ESAs), 20 are voucher programs (sometimes nicknamed opportunity scholarships), 25 offer tax credit programs that allow corporations or families to write off approved educational expenses; and 17 have no private school choice programs.

The concept of school choice first entered public policy debates in the 1950s as a concept of “public good.” – “goods and services that produce benefits to the collective and individuals,” **according** to the Manhattan Institute. Milton Friedman referred to the common need for an educated citizenry in a democracy and believed that if left to the private market alone, people might not avail enough education to fulfill this common need. As a result, said the Manhattan white paper, he supported universal public financing of education to “deliver some common set of values and a minimum degree of literacy and knowledge on the part of most citizens.” By the 1970s, calls for equity, equalizing family power, and social justice moved most school choice programs to non-universal financing.

Nationwide, only 15 states have universal school choice. In *universal school choice* programs, all students qualify, regardless of family income, location, demographic, or disability. Its proponents argue that education should be a free market for all families unburdened by excessive state regulations, with all parents having input and a voice. The glaring fallacy, of course, is that there is nothing “free market” about programs involving government money.

Non-universal school choice programs are only open to qualifying students – usually low income, minorities, those with disabilities or special needs, living in certain districts or attending certain schools. These essentially redistribute public funds in attempts towards equity and fairness, and are promoted today by progressives and teacher unions.

School vouchers give public education funds to parents that can only be spent at participating private schools. **ESA's** are a form of vouchers where public funds are put into a government account that may be used by parents for "approved" educational expenses (such as private school tuitions, tutoring, online courses, and home school curricula).

While individual states each have their own set of guidelines, both voucher and ESA programs operate and are funded similarly. They stipulate that public funds pay for third-party private contract managers, called "certified educational assistance organizations" (CEAOs), that hold state money in trust, manage applications, and distribute payments to parents for approved expenses. There's big money and politics behind who gets these state CEAO contracts.

> **ClassWallet**, based in Florida and established in 2014, is the **largest** CEAO and has focused its business on the school choice market, *heavily lobbying state legislators and state public school administrators.* Its lobbyists have succeeded in getting contracts with education departments in 32 states managing over **$2.7 billion** in public funds. The school market enabled the company's business to **increase 700%** and its transaction revenue to triple between 2020-2021.
>
> With little or no government oversight, ClassWallet has been immersed in fraudulent ESA payments in multiple states. In Arizona, fraudulent ESA payments were **made** for ski passes and golf equipment, and two Colorado residents had collected $110,000 in **fraudulent** ESA payments for 50 children, 43 of whom didn't exist.
>
> Oklahoma had contracted with ClassWallet to manage the **$17.35 million** Governors Emergency Education Relief funds in 2020 but ClassWallet became embroiled in over nearly half a million dollars in questionable spending found during a Federal audit, while also continuing to operate on an expired contract, **according** to Oklahoma Watch.
>
> ClassWallet currently has **three lobbyists** working Virginia politicians on education procurement opportunities and four working in Texas, for example. Virginia Department of Education **contracted** ClassWallet to administer up to $30 million in EANS Funds.
>
> Texas Education Association (**TEA**) also contracted with ClassWallet to handle Texas' **Special Education Services program**, charging a 2.5% service fee for its Pay Vendor portal. TEA, headed by a *Commissioner appointed by the Texas Governor*, is the state agency that oversees all K-12 public education, funding, testing and assessment and accountability

programs, accreditation of statewide curriculums and programs, data collection and regulatory compliance.

Last week, the Texas legislature **voted** for school choice and simultaneously approved ***the state's largest budget in its history*** at $337.4 billion (nearly **$48 billion in *new spending***, even though the state has record revenue and a historic **$80 billion budget surplus** from over-collected taxes from taxpayers). Its K-12 public education budget also increased the base amount per student by 13.6% over the 2025-2026 budget, even though public school enrollment has been *declining* several years.

If you guessed politics are big in Texas, you don't know the half of it. **Even before this latest legislation, Texas' spending on public education was already *more than the entire state budgets of 45 states*,** according to TPPF. Public education has long been the state's top spending priority, accounting for $38.2% of the 2024-25 state's general revenue budget. Schools are not underfunded in Texas. According to TEA, the total operating expenditures for the 2022-2023 school year were over $92.4 billion, which was ***$16,792 per public school student.***

Not a single Texas politician made the Biblical case against school choice. Instead, politicians created a new education account of $1 billion to fund ESAs, along with allocating an *additional $7.7 billion* towards *public* school education (to appease the unions). The school choice legislation will also use public funds *to pay as many as five CEAOs up to 5% of the appropriated educational funds*, which equates to tens of millions of dollars in profit for these companies.

The **specifics** of the legislation **translates** to the state Comptroller becoming headmaster over all students in the program, controlling all education vendors, admission priorities, testing mandates, and spending. It also means it will not be a universal program and very few of the 350,000 students in private schools or the 750,000 homeschool students will have access to the school choice program, **said** Bill Peacock, former Vice President of Research at the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF).

"School Choice" means less choice

The issue of eligibility of religious school education for school choice funds was settled in three Supreme Court rulings, **according** to the Manhattan Institute. Nonsectarian status for fund eligibility was also ruled an unconstitutional violation of the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment, enabling access of school choice funds equally to religious schools. While a state is not required to subsidize private educations, reported the Manhattan white paper, "once a state decides to do so, it cannot disqualify some private schools solely because they are religious."

However, all school choice programs *because they use state funds* are also subject to state regulations and accountability, Manhattan Institute confirmed. "Free money" from government always comes with strings: required compliance to government "quality measures," curriculum and textbooks determined by the government, testing and reporting mandates, and oversight. Whatever the government funds, it controls.

Rallying cries for school choice to enable parents to choose private or homeschool education options for their children are Trojan horses. Certainly, private and Christian schools and homeschooling can offer education more closely aligned with parental values and less inundated by progressive ideologies, while escaping a lot of state regulations, especially concerning textbooks, curriculum, records, and student testing compliance. However, ***as soon as state public money gets involved, the state becomes an interested party,*** with a "**compelling state interest**, according to constitutional lawyer William Bentley Ball.

Under school choice, **as soon as government money is accepted**, private, charter, church and even home schooling will become *de-facto public schools under the government*.

That's what is meant by the statement that *the final result of school choice is* ***less*** *choice in K-12 education*.

"School Choice" lobbyists play both sides of the debate

The school choice lobby is massive. In Texas, for example, there are twelve public education lobby associations with 86 register lobbyists, according to the Texas Ethics Commission. In addition to this army of hired public school lobbyists working the Texas Capitol, 27 school districts also hired their own lobbyists in 2024, **according** to Texas Conservative Research Institute. Lobbying is marketing, media and polling is marketing, and disinformation abounds.

You can tell who stands to benefit by observing who supports school choice. Private schools and homeschool providers lobbying for school choice see it as a way to gain more students and raise revenue. Most fail, however, to acknowledge the risks of accepting school choice benefits to parents who want freedom *from* government control over their children's education, or freedom from the woke ideologies infecting today's public-funded education.

Globalist interests are shrouded in both opposition *and* support for school choice. NEA and teachers groups are the largest vocal opponents of anything that touches their public school gravy train. They are also, however, either poorly informed or intentionally deceptive about their opposition to school choice. That's because it's well recognized – across the country and around the world – that school choice legislation *increases* government control over education, and that those education departments and government agencies in control promote the very progressive policies and globalism ideologies supported by the unions. They're all on the same team, in actuality.

As we've seen, globalists have also lobbied hard *for* school choice in order to move more public money and influence to the private and charter schools they support, where their progressive ideologies are imposed.

School associations, with significant influence on curriculums, school policies, and school accreditations, also lobby legislatures and politicians for school choice. School choice legislation will mean more parents will have no choice but to comply with their guidelines. The largest associations for private and even Christian school accreditations, in fact, comply with the United Nation's and UNESCO's globalist ideologies in school curricula. That includes the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI).

So, not surprisingly ACSI and its Public Policy & Legal Affairs division, has been a leading lobbying group calling **for school choice** and pushing for government funds for private and alternative schools. It networks heavily with U.S. **state legislative** politicians and is allied with **EdChoice**, the Friedman Foundation policy group that's worked for universal state funded school choice programs since 1996. **EdChoice 101** states that through taxes, state governments provide public education funds for eligible students and the results are "successful lives" and a "stronger society."

Accountability and transparency

ESAs and vouchers are still relatively new and evolving. The year 2023 saw historic growth of school choice programs, as parents rebelled from public school policies such as DEI, racial quotas and gender identities; the government's response to a virus of school closures and digital learning; and failing academics, **according** to Manhattan Institute. That year, seven states adopted new choice programs and another 12 expanded existing ones. However, along with that growth came arguments for accountability and that "school choice programs should be designed to help parents '*make good choices*,'" and make parents "instruments of accountability." All but two states required annual state testing and reporting to the state education department.

The newness of school choice means there is little systematic evidence yet, **according** to a policy analysis by WestEd. However, ***the inevitability of government control is clear***. Under federal law, states are required to have accountability systems in place for all public-funded schools, including reporting student outcomes. As state policymakers focus attention on accountability of ESAs and how public money is spent, states will address **academic, financial and data/reporting accountability**, the analysts said.

School choice programs will be called upon to ensure that taxpayer funds are spent on items that offer "educational benefit," WestEd said. Already, several ESA statutes require parents to agree to only use funds on state-approved core academic subjects; 14 require state or national assessments to monitor learning; and nearly all require audits and data collection and reporting of interest to stakeholders and the public.

Public school proponents and NEA teacher unions **lobby** that anyone receiving public money for education should be under the same regulations as public schools. Last year, for example, Arizona governor **increased** accountability and transparency in its ESA voucher program to hold private school expenditures to the same standards as public schools.

The most formidable evidence of the enormous political power behind government regulation of any private school, religious school or homeschooling program – *as soon as school choice is enacted and public funds are used* – was in the policy white paper issued by UNESCO.

unesco

Background paper prepared for
the Global Education Monitoring Report

Non-state actors in education

Regulating Public-Private Partnerships, governing non-state schools: An equity perspective

ADRIÁN ZANCAJO, CLARA FONTDEVILA, ANTONI VERGER AND XAVIER BONAL

2021

Its **paper** on governing publicly funded private schooling was commissioned by the Global Education Monitoring Report and outlined the regulation and accountability policies necessary to promote equity. International agencies with the United Nations, including the World Bank Group, and international stakeholders such as the Global Partnership for Education, OECD, and UNICEF, have been part of the adoption of these educational public-private partnerships, including in the United States and England.

According to UNESCO, autonomous **public-funded private and home schools are not *exempt from complying with centrally defined curriculums, learning standards or student admission criteria, among other public regulations.*** *Accountability frameworks play a strategic role in promoting that all publicly-funded schools, independently of their ownership, are correctly aligned with quality standards and also with the equity goals and objectives set by the government."* Its proposed regulatory strategies included everything from authorization of providers, fees and caps, admission criteria, evaluations and testing, teacher qualification requirements, and monitoring and surveillance.

Last September, the National Education Policy Center at the University of Colorado-Boulder (**NEPC**), issued its **policy recommendations on oversight of ESA funding for private and home schools**. NEPC is **funded** by various governmental organizations, NGOs and foundations, including NEA, AFT, Ford Foundation and others. It not only **opposes** universal school choice, it **lobbies** for **public** education and globalists' UN's sustainable development goals, ***along with over 380 other members of the Global Campaign for Peace Education.***

NEPC's recommendations to policymakers include: eliminating universal eligibility for ESA programs to prioritize low-income and disabilities to promote equity; limit eligible expenses and pursue sanctions for ineligible purchases; collect and publicly report data on all students receiving ESA funds; conduct annual studies; mandate academic testing and require state "norm-referenced assessments of all ESA recipients;" and "extend accountability and quality measures that govern public schools to all participating private schools, virtual schools, and homeschool settings."

It is doubtful that any state legislature or school district or governor will stand up against these political interests.

Parents accepting school choice government money will have little power over government regulations of their child's education. Taxpayers without children, such as elderly, will continue to be forced to pay for secular or poor-performing public schools and school policies. No taxpayer will be able to control how their hard earned money will be used towards educating America's children.

In reality, ***"school choice" vouchers and ESAs are all sleight of hand, back door, ways to grow government, expand government budgets and taxes, and increase government control over K-12 education.***

School Choice for Christian Parents – Part 2, looks at the benefits of home schooling and caveats in school choice.

The Battle to Control Private and Home Schools

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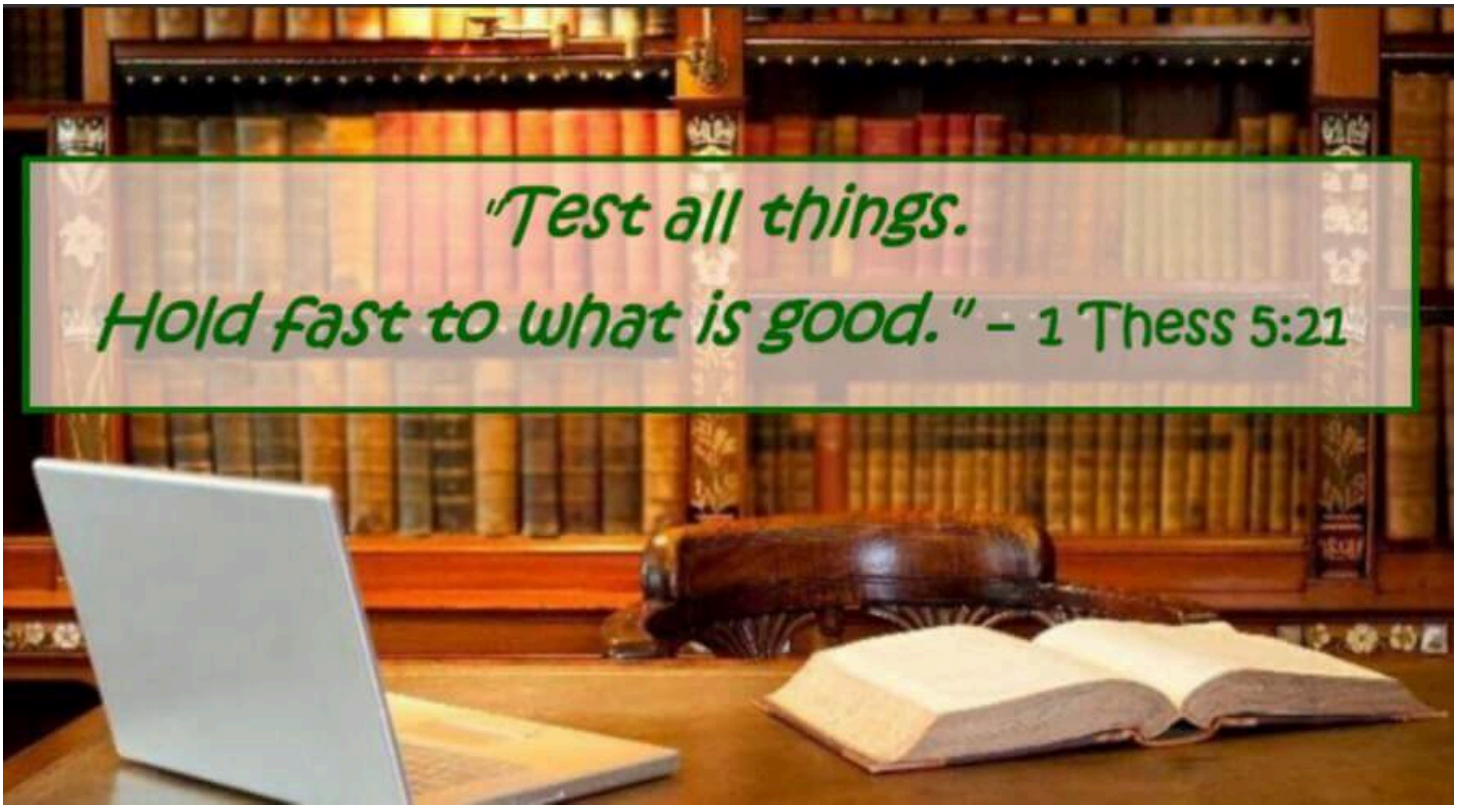

By Sandy Szwarc
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In the previous segment, **Globalists' Charter School Movement**, we learned that billionaire globalists moved to indoctrinate children through charter schools that they could control. Charter schools failed to be a viable option for many Christian parents, though. Globalist stakeholders have recently turned their sights on private schools.

Private schools, even Christian ones, are not immune from globalism influences and errant curriculum.

There are three main paths for globalism – with its anti-Christian, anti-science, anti-patriotic ideologies – to infect alternative, nonpublic schools. Private schools, even faith-based schools, online schools, and homeschools all suffer from these serious vulnerabilities: state regulations, accreditation and school associations.

All states regulate and assume responsibility over the accreditation of *public* schools, but they currently have far fewer **regulations over private** and Christian schools.

Without a "**compelling state interest**," Christian schools can escape a lot of state regulations, especially concerning textbooks, curriculum, teacher certification, school and attendance records, and student performance. However, ***as soon as state public money gets involved, the state becomes an interested party*** *and private schools are subject to greater scrutiny in their compliance with public* ***state education guidelines****.*

This is the fundamental principle behind the push for "school choice," as we'll see.

State regulations of private and home schools are available at the Department of Education **website**. State regulations **vary wildly** but since the 1990s, about 96% of private schools have been accredited or comply with standards set by various national, regional or state private school organizations and maintain standards that have been recognized by education agencies.

Accreditation Myths

While "accreditation" is heavily marketed by third party vested interests, ***accreditation of private schools is required in only three states in the country,*** **according** to the DOE (with two other states exempting religious private schools, and two others only requiring accreditation for participation in government voucher programs). Twenty-two states have only basic **curriculum** requirements (reading, writing/grammar, math, science and social studies), with sixteen requiring teaching state history and constitution, and three have required curriculum only for accreditation.

Accreditation of private and Christian schools is essentially a marketing tactic, **promoted** by accrediting bodies, such as the Association of Christian Schools International, and school associations.

- Accreditation is marketed as a label of excellence, as meeting "quality" standards and a stamp of approval.

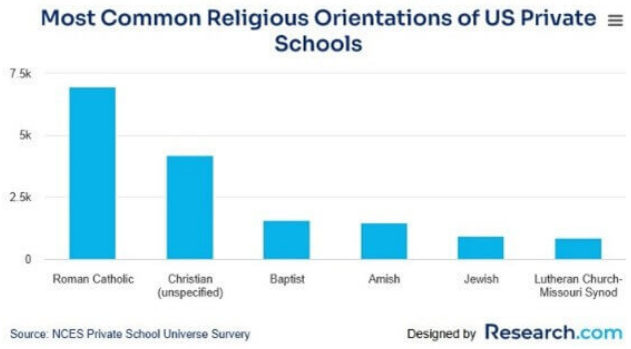
- Accreditation is also **marketed** to schools as a way to build a school's reputation, entice parents, increase enrollment, and secure funding and donations.

- Accrediting bodies have especially convinced state education departments and policy makers to require accreditation to align "state accountability" systems that were set up with the globalism agendas in the Every Student Succeeds Act (**ESSA**) and the No Child Left Behind Act (**NCLB**), monitor school performance, and compel compliance with government education directives. As an accountability measure, whenever public funds are used for private schools, states can mandate accreditation and compliance with the education requirements issued by a third party accreditor.

In other words, accreditation is not just about making money, but a way for the state and stakeholders to increase control over education in private and Christian schools.

The list of **accrediting bodies** for U.S. schools is extensive, and states control which accreditations they will accept in order for private schools to operate in their state. **In Texas,** for example, all private schools must be accredited by one of the 19 agencies approved by the state, under its private school accreditation commission (TPSAC). It is exceedingly difficult for parents and the public to realize, however, that this accreditation *is optional for private schools,* as it is buried in fine print.

There are about 29,700 private K-12 schools in the U.S., and about two-thirds of those are **religious**, as of 2021-22 school year, **according** to the National Center for Education Statistics. Most faith-based private schools use the same third party accreditations used by public schools, or use accreditation services specifically marketed to faith-based schools. *Many religious schools have dual or multiple accreditations, hence answer to multiple outside third party interests.*



School Associations Infusing Globalism

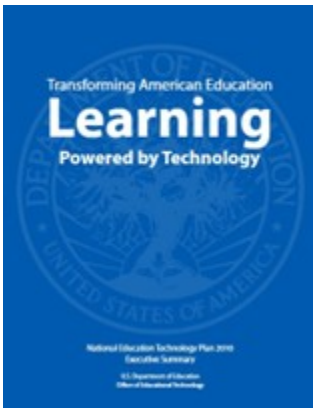
Most private schools and faith-based schools also belong to school associations that have significant influence on curriculum and school policies. They provide "research and statistics;" lobby legislatures for favorable policies; and work closely with politicians, media and third party accreditation bodies. Most school associations are 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that do not have to reveal their donors or conflicted interests on their IRS 990 tax filings. *All can surreptitiously bring globalism to their children's education,* and require close discernment by parents.

We'll just look at the a couple of the largest and most used.

The **National Association of Independent Schools** (**NAIS**) claims to be the largest association for independent schools, to **provide** leadership and collaboration with education leaders, and offer its own accreditation. However, only 1,707 private schools are part of NAIS, most secular. Not only does DEI appear throughout its online publications, its school **accreditation standards** use the **Model Core Standards** that require all school programs to adopt social-emotional learning; promote equity and diversity; foster international cultures; and adopt United Nation's goals to "recognize global connectedness, promote a culture of global understanding, and foster a

commitment to the values of sustainability in all areas including preservation of the environment."

The **National Council for Private School Accreditation includes** a multitude of private and ***faith-based*** school accreditation organizations and state accreditation commissions.



***All members must comply with NCPSA's accreditation standards that are* based on the National Education Technology Plan 2010 to radically transform American education, issued by the Department of Education, and published by UNESCO.**

This series has extensively looked at these **globalist goals** to **transform** America's education to their **world vision**. It includes social-emotional learning and technology integration; redefines core education for technology and STEM; and merges public-private interests, federal-state-local policies, teacher and school organizations and globalist corporations.

Eliminating the DOE will simply move all of its initiatives to be carried out by NCPSA member organizations.

NCPSA compliant members include the accreditation organizations *used by nearly all Christian and faith-based schools* in America.

That bears repeating.

Nearly all Christian and faith-based schools in America are affiliated with NCPSA members, which means they have agreed to comply with its globalist goals for transforming America's education. These influences may be veiled, but are embedded enough into the school curricula to have successfully been awarded NCPSA approval.

COGNIA

COGNIA (formerly known as AdvanceED) is the **parent organization** of NCA CASI, NWAC, and SACS CASI).

COGNI is a globalist organization and ***one of the world's largest accreditation organizations*** *for Christian and faith-based schools, charter and private schools,* ***state education agencies****, and corporations for the past 130 years.*

COGNIA's **global network** for sustainable improvement offers accreditation, STEM and CBE certifications. COGNIA's **Global Commission** governs accreditation and certification.

Its school **guidelines** mirror United Nation's sustainable education goals through UNESCO in directing schools to cultivate a sustaining culture with fairness, equity and inclusion; focus on well-being and social relationships; emphasize digital learning and technology infrastructure; collaborate with school associations such as National School Board Association and National Association of Independent Schools; emphasize diverse cultures in their curriculum; and follow American Association of School Librarians' recommended literature and media (parents across the country have opposed the sexualized and Marxist content of school librarian books as inappropriate for children, exampled by the top 10 "challenged" books of **2024** and **2023**).

It **accredits** over 40,000 public and private schools in over 90 countries. All public schools **in Idaho**, for example, are required to be accredited by COGNIA, which also accredits 42.6% of all private schools in the state.

More than 7,000 private, faith-based and independent schools are accredited by COGNIA.

COGNIA accreditation is common among private and religious schools **across the country** (156 private schools in **Texas** and Christian schools from **Dallas** to **Lubbock**; and 63 private schools in **Virginia**). About 49% and 44% of COGNIA-accredited private schools in Texas and Virginia, respectively, are religious schools.

By far, the largest accreditor of Christian schools is ACSI. COGNIA is **partnered** with ACSI and 90% of private schools accredited by ACSI also have COGNIA accreditation.

ACSI

The **Association of Christian Schools International** (**ACSI**) is a **501(c)(3)** organization of over 26,000 **international** evangelical Christian schools in 108 countries, headquartered in Colorado Springs, CO. Its members say they contribute to the public good through biblically sound, socially engaged and culturally relevant content and teachers that engage in transformational teaching and discipling.

ACSI accreditation standards, called **Inspire**, mandate equipping students with a global perspective and connecting students with global communities; having instructional materials with biblical and global perspectives; and submitting regular reports to the global office on school demographics, faculty qualifications, and other metrics specified by the global office or divisional accreditation commission.

Under ACSI, schools must adopt its *Flourishing School Culture Model* with six Inspire domains to align holistic teaching and wellbeing, an integrated worldview, God's story, and create an action

plan to see transformational results. Readers of this series will recognize these globalist buzz words; even the graphics are the same.

ACSI's **Global Core Standards** for teacher certification, developed by its global committee, also promotes its Flourishing School Culture **model** for cultural transformation, calling for "holistic" spiritual growth, and a Biblical worldview that moves "beyond a simple head knowledge of Bible content." Its **GRAACE** initiative ("Gender, Race, Ability, Academic, Culture, Economic Status") promotes worldwide unity.

It all might sound Biblical on the surface until you look closer. An example of the reality of ACSI's "Biblical worldview for Kingdom Unity," and its impact on Christian schools and even homeschoolers, was exposed when ACSI partnered with UnifiED Center for Unity and Hope to provide diversity, inclusion, racial reconciliation and multiculturalism training for Christian schools.

The **courses**, **Cultivating Biblical Unity**, were by **Tia Gaines** – who sits on ASCI's Board of Trustees, is a faculty member of ACSI's Flourishing School Institute, and Executive Director of UnifiED – along with her husband, Joel, ACSI's director of leadership development. The other course developers were Jerry Nelsen, ACSI's Chief Ministry Officer; and Walter Strickland with UnifiED's racial and diversity **curriculum**. Strickland is a well known **Black Christianity** professor at **Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary** who **writes and speaks** on critical race theory and systemic injustice.

Walter Strickland's Gospel

Immediately, ACSI's departure from sound Biblical teachings was recognized. Jon Harris, with **Conversations That Matter**, described the heresy on **YouTube** podcasts. **Founders Ministries** also released an **explosive video**.

Investigative series on the Biblical false doctrines in ACSI's curriculum by Strickland and its **James Cone**'s black theology influences, were published at **Thirty Pieces of Silver** and Capstone Report, which explained the dangers of **racial identity politics** and **multiculturalism**. ACSI's inclusion teacher training **for LGBTQ+** was also called out by Rev. Thomas Littleton.

ACSI makes no secret that it is about instilling a **global perspective** in Christian schools. Its *Global Competencies, by its own definition, **are** UNESCO's*.

ACSI also operates **six** global divisions for its "transformative work" of global leaders and partners.

ACSI has also been **an affiliate member** of the **World Evangelical Alliance**, the largest interdenominational group of evangelical Christian churches in the world, established at Freemason's Hall in London in 1846. It is *partnered with the United Nations* and has offices at the United Nations (in New York City, Geneva and Bonn). With the World Council of Churches, it **participates** in global interfaith events to move the world "towards greater oneness in Christ." As Christians know, calls for *Biblical unity* is the false teaching of **global ecumenism** that God warned against 2,000 years ago.

ACSI is the largest and most influential association of Christian schools in the world. It alone shows how far the world has fallen from Jesus' teachings.

Next: What does school choice really mean for Christian parents and what is the purest Biblical option for their children's education?

American Political Archetypes Exposed: Kevin McGary on Race, Marxism & Freedom

APRIL 25, 2025
CATEGORIES: CURRENT TOPICS, OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: UNITED PATRIOTS UPRISING WITH GARY BINFORD

This article, which exposes the American political archetypes, is part of our "United Patriots Uprising with Gary Binford" series, where we examine today's ideological battles through the dual lens of the Founding Fathers' intent and a biblical worldview. In this episode, Kevin McGary exposes the false narrative of race and reveals the Marxist roots of modern political control.

American Political Archetypes and the False Race Narrative

Kevin McGary joins Gary Binford to unpack how American political archetypes are weaponized through race narratives. His latest book, *The Archetypes of American Politics*, explains how cultural and ideological battles have spiritual roots.

"There's no such thing as race," McGary states plainly. "It's a made-up distinction with no biblical basis." The Bible affirms one human race—created in God's image and called to unity in Christ. But McGary shows how Darwin's theory of evolution laid the groundwork for white supremacy, scientific racism, and eventually Marxist ideology.

Understanding the Archetypes: Overlords, House Slaves, and Field Slaves

Inspired by a metaphor from Malcolm X, reinterpreted through biblical truth, McGary outlines three key political archetypes in American life:

- **Overlords** – globalist elites pushing control through centralized power
- **House Slaves** – media, academia, and celebrities enforcing propaganda
- **Field Slaves** – free thinkers guided by Scripture, resisting ideological bondage

"Today's media and elites operate as obedient house slaves," McGary says. "Their job is to make sure no one escapes the plantation—even though they themselves are not truly free."

How American Political Archetypes Grew from Darwin to Marx

Darwin's *Descent of Man* seeded racial hierarchies, later embedded into Marxist theory. McGary examines how the concept of race itself is a social construct, employed by global movements to divide and conquer.

These pseudo-scientific distinctions gave rise to Critical Race Theory, DEI, and the broader ideology of grievance, which continues to fragment our culture today. In contrast, Scripture calls us to unity in Christ and repentance, not perpetual offense and division.

Escaping the Trap: How to Break Free from Political Archetypes

To break free from these American political archetypes, McGary recommends:

- **Engage persuadable hearts:** Focus your efforts on independents and moderates who are open to truth.
- **Expose the lies:** Educate others on how media, politics, and education manipulate race for power.
- **Reject Marxism in all forms:** DEI, CRT, and social justice movements are not neutral—they're tools of authoritarian control.

McGary reminds us that real freedom is binary: you're either embracing your God-given liberty or submitting to ideological bondage.

Kevin McGary's Journey: A Field Slave Mentality Rooted in Faith

From the Hunter's Point projects of San Francisco to the national stage, Kevin McGary's life testifies to God's redemptive power. Once immersed in Marxist theory through academia, he

found lasting truth in God's Word and has spent decades helping others walk free from ideological enslavement.

His YouTube channel, **Off the Plantation: The Journey Toward Freedom**, equips viewers to examine cultural trends with biblical discernment.

Conclusion: Why American Political Archetypes Demand a Theological Response

McGary makes it clear: only through theology, not ideology, can Americans remain truly free.

> "When government gives you freedom, it can take it away," he warns. "But what the Lord has set free is free indeed" (John 8:36).

Our nation's future depends not on more politics but on a return to **biblical truth**, **God-given rights**, and **Christ-centered liberty**. It's time to choose: will we stay on the plantation, or walk free into truth?

Source Block

- **Watch the full episode: YouTube**
- **Guest:** Kevin McGary | **EveryBLM.com** | YouTube: *Off the Plantation*
- **Host:** Gary Binford | *United Patriots Uprising* | **RadioInfluence.com**

Psychological Warfare: Dr. Robert Malone Warns Americans

APRIL 23, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: UNITED PATRIOTS UPRISING WITH GARY BINFORD

Psychological Warfare and the Battle for Your Mind

In a gripping episode of *United Patriots Uprising with Gary Binford*, Dr. Robert Malone — co-inventor of mRNA vaccine technology and a leading voice during the COVID era — exposes a chilling truth: Americans are under attack, not by bullets or bombs, but by fear, manipulation, and digital surveillance. This modern form of psychological warfare is silent yet strategic. And most Americans don't even realize they're on the battlefield.

> "We've been subjected to military-grade psychological warfare technology," Malone warns. "The goal? To control what you think, feel, and do."

📹 **Watch the Full Interview:** *United Patriots Uprising with Gary Binford featuring Dr. Robert Malone* **Watch on YouTube**

Dr. Robert Malone Uncovers The History/Tactics Of Modern Psychological Warfare Unleashed Upon Us
https://youtube.com/watch?v=UTrPkgbAZt0

PsyWars: The Weaponization of Fear

Dr. Malone's new book, *PsyWars: Enforcing the New World Order*, co-written with his wife Dr. Jill Glasspool Malone, documents the evolution of modern psychological operations. Through decades of research and interviews with intelligence experts, they unveil how fear became a weapon used against the public.

> "They used fear of death," Malone explains, "as psychological bioterrorism to manipulate citizens into compliance."

Coordinated Psychological Operations: Propaganda by Design

The propaganda unleashed during COVID-19 didn't happen by chance. According to Malone, it's the continuation of Cold War-style tactics modernized by the global elite. Programs like Operation Mockingbird, once used abroad, now target citizens at home.

These coordinated campaigns—from inflating death rates to vilifying dissent—sought to dominate the public narrative.

> "Censorship wasn't random," Malone says. "It was strategic, coordinated, and weaponized."

Surveillance Capitalism: When Privacy Becomes a Commodity

Malone warns that psychological warfare is fueled by data—your data. Social media platforms and tech companies harvest our behavior, create digital avatars of our identities, and sell that intelligence to political actors.

> "They're stealing part of your soul," he says. "You didn't authorize this. You didn't even know it was happening."

With predictive algorithms and AI tools, the manipulation is personal and often invisible.

Mass Formation: The Psychology of Compliance

Drawing from Belgian psychologist Mattias Desmet, Malone explains how mass formation occurs. When people are isolated, confused, and afraid, they become easy to control. During the pandemic, this psychological state was deliberately cultivated.

> "We were trained like Pavlov's dogs to respond to fear," Malone says.

Even college students, once known for rebellion, submitted to mandates without question. These were not spontaneous actions—they were programmed responses.

The Way Out: Faith, Community, and the Constitution

Malone refuses to leave us in despair. Instead, he calls for a return to truth, rooted in timeless values of faith, family, and constitutional freedom. His roadmap begins with personal responsibility and ends with national renewal.

> "People are disillusioned and isolated," he warns. "The solution begins with rebuilding our lives around truth, community, and personal responsibility."

1. Seek Truth Relentlessly

Don't depend on a single voice. Test everything. Compare sources. Above all, Christians must anchor their beliefs to the unchanging truth of Scripture:

> *"Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth."* — John 17:17

2. Rebuild Real-World Community

Digital connection isn't enough. True fellowship happens in the flesh. Christians must gather in real, tangible community:

> *"Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works… not neglecting to meet together."*
> — Hebrews 10:24–25

Read our companion piece: ***Splinternet and the Gospel: Obedience to God in a World Gone Mad***.

3. Defend the Constitution Boldly

Freedom isn't self-sustaining. Malone urges citizens to engage, educate themselves, and speak boldly.

> "Understand your rights. Defend them. Engage."

4. Recenter the Home on Faith and Family

The family is God's design. When it's undermined, nations unravel. Start change at the dinner table:

> *"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."* — Joshua 24:15

5. Resist Isolation. Reclaim Joy. Return to God.

Above all, this is a spiritual war. Christians must resist isolation, embrace fellowship, and renew their minds daily:

> *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind…"* — Romans 12:2

Support These Bold Voices for America

🎧 **Gary Binford & United Patriots Uprising**

- Podcast: **Radio Influence**, YouTube, Rumble, Apple, Spotify, Google
- Archives: **radioinfluence.com/united-patriots-uprising**

- Social: **@Gary_Binford**, **Truth Social**, Facebook, Nation Savers 2025

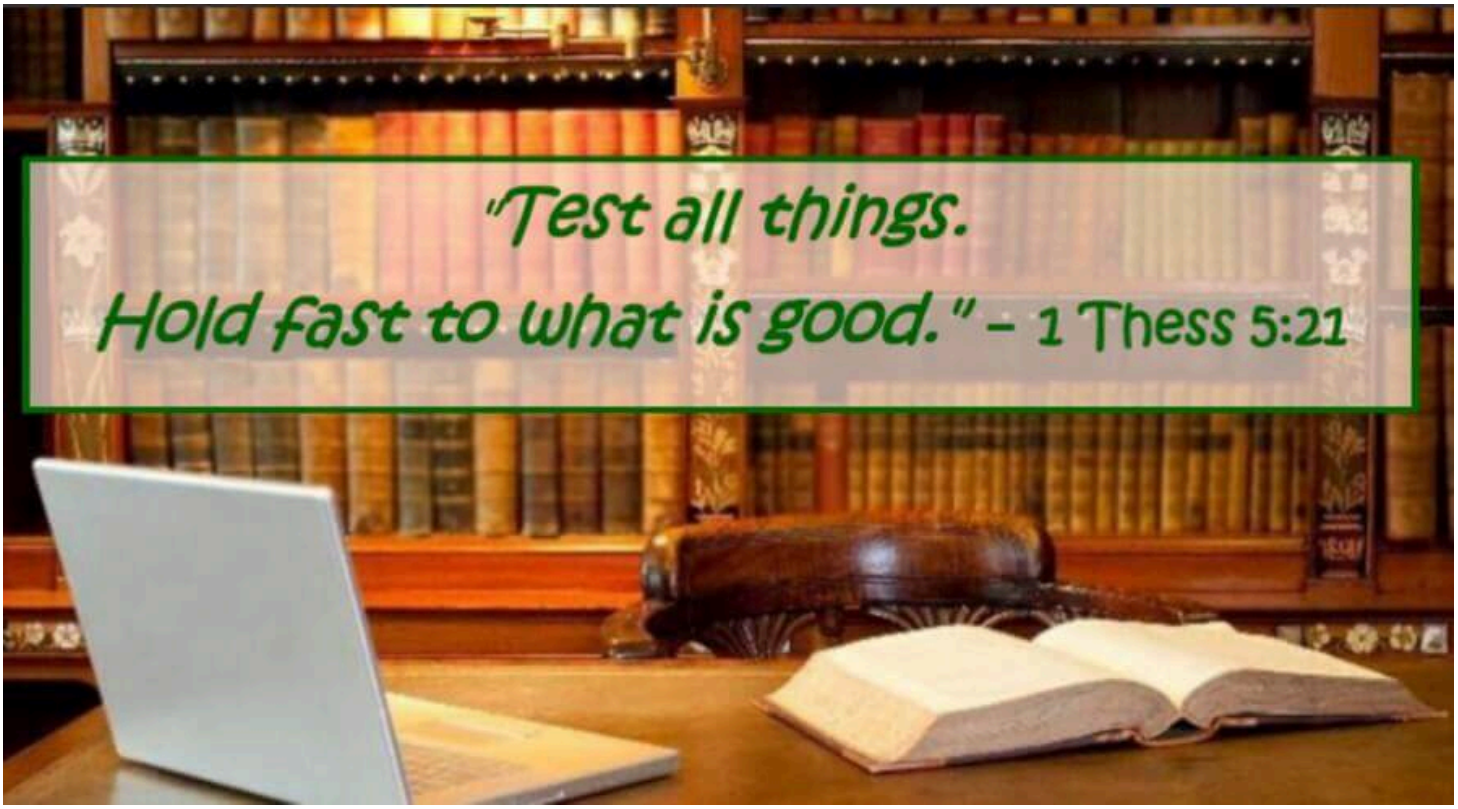
Dr. Robert Malone

- Website: **www.rwmalonemd.com**
- Substack: **rwmalonemd.substack.com**
- Books: *Lies My Government Told Me*, *PsyWars: Enforcing the New World Order*
- Social: **@RWMaloneMD** on X, GETTR, Parler, Truth Social

Watch the Interview: Dr. Robert Malone on Psychological Warfare

Globalists' Charter School Movement

APRIL 22, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING TAUGHT?



By Sandy Szwarc
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As revealed in **States' Control of Schools**, globalists and their political allies succeeded in establishing a powerful power structure to control education at state and local levels, virtually untouchable from parental influences.

Globalists have been accelerating their move to take control of education using another angle that gives the appearance of parent advocacy.

Billionaire venture capitalist globalists backed by aligned government officials are behind a movement to transform ("**disrupt**") public education. The end objective is to increase control of education to these superrich oligarchs themselves.

They work through "school choice" legislation and school board elections, moving money and influence to private and charter schools they support. Their school curriculums then indoctrinate children to their globalist social vision. A few of these world billionaire globalists include:

- **John Doerr** – He's a board member of **New Schools Venture Fund** which funds charter **schools** that are said to be innovative and promote racial and social equity, advance left progressive and CRT aligned curriculum, and use schools for social protest while de-emphasizing academics, **according to** Influence Watch; he donated **$1.1 billion** to establish a School of Sustainability under his name at Stanford; and the past decade has **focused** his investments on climate change, sustainability, education, AI and public health.

- **Bill Gates** – His globalist education initiatives, **all far-left ideas**, have been extensively covered in this series.

- **Reed Hastings** – Netflix co-founder and former **board member** of Microsoft and Facebook, Hastings has spent over $200 million to support charter schools and school choice, spent millions on **school board elections** for school choice candidates, as well as **progressive** social **change** and racial justice and equity causes, and UN global health initiatives; and served as President on the **California State Board of Education**.

- **Powell Jobs** – She co-founded **XQ Institute** which **partners with Carnegie**; its core mission is to **disrupt**, rethink and radically transform high school; its **curriculum** is pure globalist Marxism; she also pours millions to **influence** school board elections; and is president of Emerson Collective for social justice reform in education, which also **funds** influential school board candidates and digital curriculum providers such as Amplify.

- **Mark Zuckerberg** – He poured over $100 million in an effort to **revolutionize American education** with an online personalized learning platform he said could lead to "transformational improvements in student learning" – but which failed; $100 million to New Jersey **charter schools** were also **failures**; he continues funding similar initiatives other states, such as **Hawaii**, including a group of **charter schools** with Summit Public Schools that have adopted his platform – but have yet to produce any evidence that they improve learning; he also spent **$65 billion** in 2025 alone for **experimental AI projects** in schools, which he **anticipates** will yield massive profits *for him and Meta*.

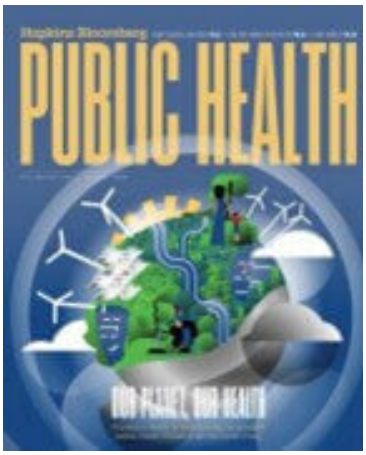
- **Michael Bloomberg** – He founded **Bloomberg Philanthropies** (with **Bloomberg Family Foundation**) one of the **largest philanthropies** in the world, operating in over **700 world cities**. He deserves a special note.

Bloomberg works alongside **globalist** partners with the **World Economic Forum**, including Bill & Melinda Gates, **David Rockefeller Jr.**, and **George Soros**. He hosts events such as **Bloomberg Global Business Forum** at the UN General Assembly, and **Bloomberg New Economy Forum**. He is a UN special envoy on climate change and gives massive amounts to green energy, net zero

initiatives, sustainable development, **population growth**, **abortion**, and **environmental causes**. He contributed $4.5 million to the UN's climate change body (UNFCCC) last year alone and recently **announced** he would cover the Paris climate accord budget for the U.S.

All of the over 100 programs Bloomberg funds involve building larger governments, increasing regulations and control, and enacting UN sustainable goals.

He coordinates **public policies** through *Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative* and *Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health*, for example, to direct *governors, **mayors, city and municipal leaders** and **city innovators**,* distributing **$3 billion** last year alone.



His **Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health** (the source of those Covid-19 dashboards broadcast around the world 24-hours a day) also publishes a "**public health**" **magazine** promoting UN and WHO agendas and disinformation. *The current issue focuses on **planetary fears** and **ancient wisdoms** of mystical spiritual connectedness.*

After supporting Common Core in 2016, Bloomberg committed $750 million in 2021 to create **150,000 new charter schools** in the U.S. He also supports Global Cities and Global Scholars in 46 cities with a global digital curriculum for students 10-13 years old, designed for an interconnected world.

Bloomberg Philanthropies, along with Carnegie Corporation, Bill & Melinda Gates, Zuckerberg Initiative, XQ, Walton Family Foundation and other globalist nonprofits also launched "**The 74**," a news site promoting "school-choice."

Charter schools have not proven to be the answer for many Christian parents

Public charter schools educate an estimated 3 millions students in America today. Charter school enrollments have grown, while traditional public school attendance is dropping. But charter schools have become the source of one of the most controversial debates in education.

The charter school movement began with well intentioned efforts to break the monopoly of government public schools. During the 1960s, both progressives and conservatives thought that privatizing education would enable market forces and competition, rather than the government, improve public education as failing schools closed. During the 1980s, the **idea grew** of charters that would move public funding to independently managed schools that could experiment with better ways to educate the nearly 80% of students who weren't being served well.

Charter schools were intensely marketed beginning in the 1990s, mostly by those billionaire globalists, adding another powerful means to bring globalism ideologies to education while

appearing to offer a nonpublic school option.

Charter schools have more flexibility to be innovative and try different things or specialize in certain academics, arts or athletics, and may receive grants from vested interests. Their variability was a school choice selling point to parents looking for options beyond public schools.

What was missed, however, was that these were not really free market school programs or free from government control and oversight. *State-sanctioned schools, that operate under a government approved charter, quickly became indistinguishable from public schools.*

The Institute of Education Sciences (a government organization) **explains** charter schools in more detail. Charter schools are publicly-funded and privately administered under a legislative contract (a charter), but held under the *same academic and accountability standards as traditional public schools*.

School districts themselves authorize nearly 40% of charter schools, state education agencies authorize another 28% of charter schools, with the rest under nonprofit or for-profit organizations, **according** to an article published by Harvard Graduate School of Education.

NEA and teacher unions have universally opposed any competition to public schools, even though progressives supported the idea of vouchers that redistributed public funds to prioritize low-income minority children for alternative schools. The pro-public school state Associations of School Boards, as in **Texas**, also oppose non-public school options and their power gives them the ability to block or limit new charter schools or funding allotments.

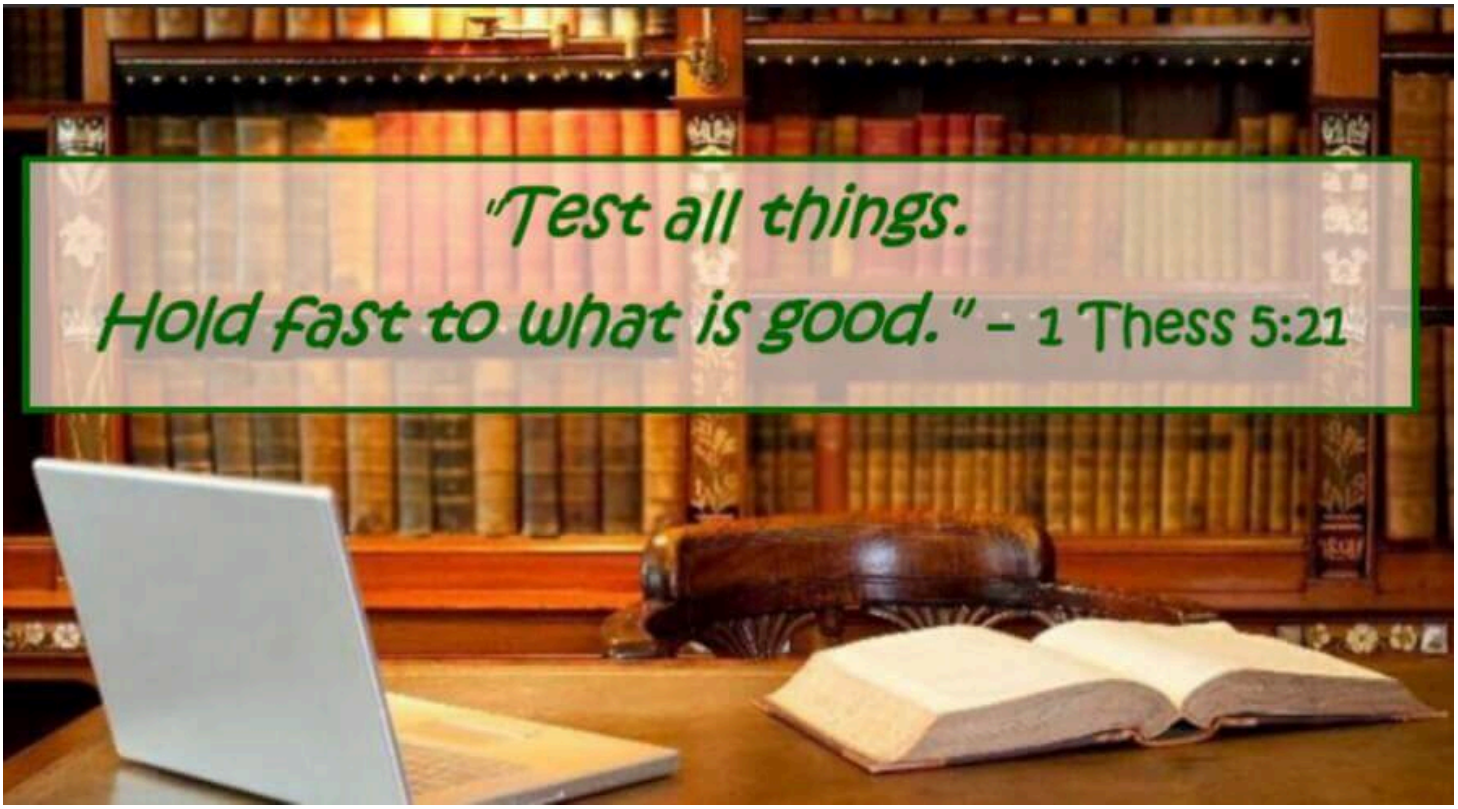
Some charter schools do well and better than traditional public schools. However, they are *still part of the public school system*. After 25 years and about 6,000 charter schools, overall, the charter school experiment has failed to be proven better, **according** to public school advocacy and lobbying groups such as the Network for Public Education. It **reported** that more than a quarter of charter schools close within the first five years of operation, which grew to 55% during Covid in 2020. The main reasons cited included declining enrollment, mismanagement, financial failure, and low academic performance. They reported that this instability and disruption can have long-term harmful impacts on student learning.

And, this research **didn't even consider the detrimental Marxist indoctrination in the curriculums!**

Next: We'll look at the battle over control of private and home schools.

States' Control of Schools

APRIL 19, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: EUGENICS, WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING TAUGHT?



By Sandy Szwarc
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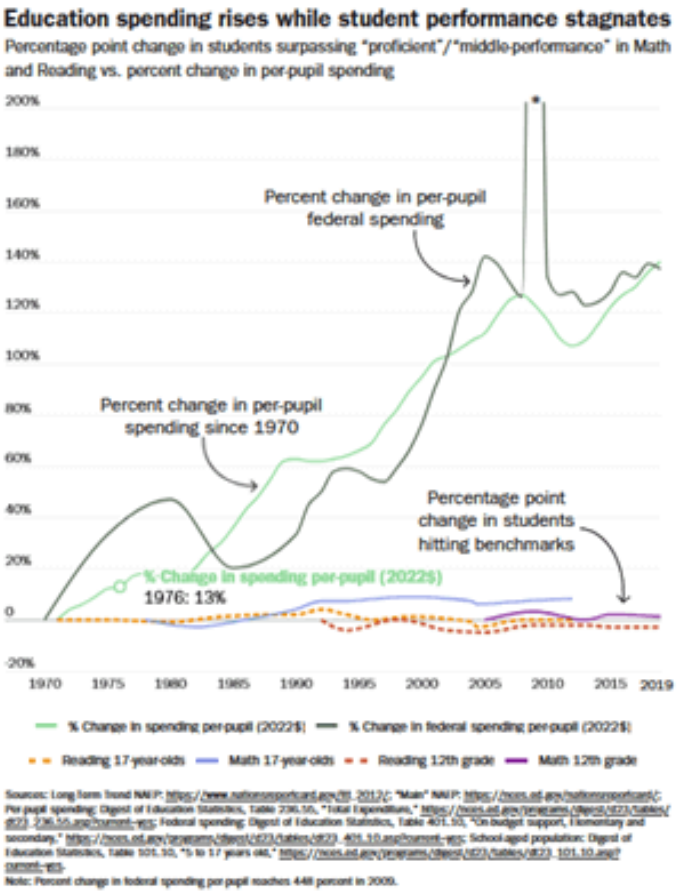
America's public schools have been on the front lines in the battle to remake our nation for a new world order, as we've seen in this series (What are Our Children Being Taught). The globalists' efforts to break down everything that has made America exceptional specifically targeted and sacrificed our children and their education.

The Biblical role of parents and the family to educate and raise their children, as heeded during America's early history, was obliterated. Biblical teachings were purged from schools. Over the years, education was calculatedly turned over to the government as a collective "right." This move was not only unconstitutional, it was another failure of Americans to uphold the U.S. Constitution and, more importantly, Biblical teachings. Working through the United Nations, globalists and their political allies took control of public education, curriculums, and textbooks to completely transform education in order to indoctrinate generations of children into humanism and eugenics-laced globalism.

Centuries of concerted efforts by globalists to destroy the family and churches, were fully intended to leave children without Biblical guidance and without strong families (fathers, mothers and grandparents and extended family members). Only then, could globalists convince a secular public that the fair "solution" for the education and care of children is by the State.

Some Americans are finally waking up to what has happened, as we face a massive government bureaucracy controlling every facet of public education – including a debauched curriculum and corrosive social mandates – costing taxpayers trillions of dollars in widespread corruption, fraud and waste. As government programs have ballooned and governmental school spending has soared, it has failed our children, whose academic performance, *by every measure,* hasn't improved for half a century and has deteriorated most notably over the past decade, **according** to the National Assessment of Educational Progress.



As planned, globalist education has succeeded in creating a socialist mindset throughout our culture, as America's independent spirit has nearly been fully crushed.

For instance, it would have been unthinkable for proud, hard working early Americans to take from their neighbors, or those in need, and not repay a loan. We saw that among America's colonists and early immigrants. Able-bodied young people in America's early history, including our Founding Fathers and early immigrants, saw their duty t*o contribute to building up* the Country and to care for others. That ethos is almost extinct.

Absent regular Bible study and **reflections on** the Seventh Commandment, even the work ethic has faded. A growing socialist mindset among young people has trained them to expect unearned government handouts. That may partly explain why 40% of ***$1.8 trillion in student loans*** are delinquent. Meanwhile, Medicare and Social Security – a lifeline for millions of seniors and disabled – are being threatened by a *$1.6 trillion federal deficit*, as CNN **reported**. Christian values have been turned upside down.

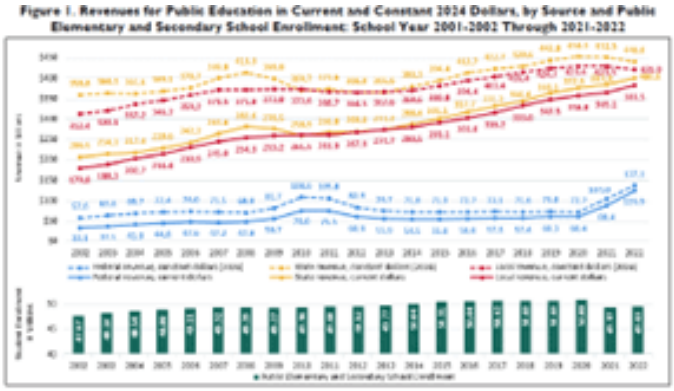
States are not the solution

While academic performance among America's students has only worsened over the past 50 years since the federal **Department of Education** was established, it's a myth that shuttering it and "returning education to the states and local school districts" will be the solution.

Why? Because ***states and local communities have held the power and control over public education all along***.

In fact, *globalists and their political allies have been most influential on the state and local levels*. They long ago put their power structure in place – through governors and state legislators, statewide school and curriculum accreditation, mandated student testing, school administrators, and local school boards.

That will not change simply by cutting one layer of bureaucracy in Washington, DC.



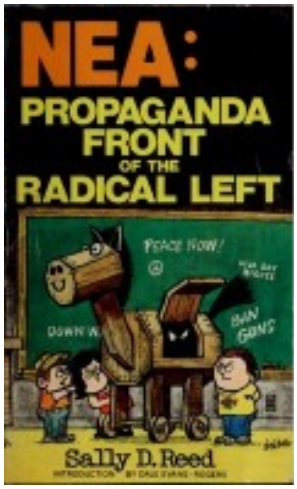
States and local taxpayers have also always had the highest burden for funding schools, *many times that of federal dollars,* as a Congressional Research Service report last fall **showed**. While education spending has steadily soared, enrollment and academic performance has fallen.

"Returning education control to the states" won't remedy the evils in our schools or give parents and local school districts more input or control over their children's education, either. To understand why, we first need to *remember the special interests who've brought (and bought) education to this point.*

The major powers (covered in this series) behind establishing the Department of Education, Common Core and STEM, No Child Left Behind Act, social-emotional learning (SEL), DEI, social programs through education, and the UN's World Core Curriculum will remain as powerful as ever:

- NEA – National Education Association and the teacher organizations active on global, federal, state, and local levels
- CCSSO – Council of Chief State School Officers and the school administrators in every state
- NGA – National Governors Association and every governor member
- UNESCO, globalist corporations, and nonprofit foundations

NEA and every one of its *state branches and professional teacher organizations* have resolutely stood behind public education and remain active lobbyists for NEA's agendas. NEA **states** that not only are they "the world's largest professional association of educators, we are the *strongest force for public education in the country*."



As we've seen in this series, NEA has been a ringleader in globalism indoctrination in schools, including establishing UNESCO. Its radical globalist and anti-Christian agenda has also been widely recognized for decades by an endless list of organizations – **Freedom Center on Campus**, **Civitas Institute**, **Independent Women's Forum**, **Goldwater Institute**, **National Council for Better Education**, **Discovery Institute**, **Discover the Networks**, **Worldview Report**, **Answers in Genesis** – and has only grown more extreme since **described** by Phyllis Schlafly in 1985.

NEA President, Becky Pringle, is known for her history of radical far-left political **activism**, and is described by NEA itself as a staunch advocate for students identifying as LGBTQ+, immigrants and non-English speaking. She led NEA suing the Administration last month for efforts to remove public funding of **DEI** in schools, and last week for closing the **federal** Department of Education. Her July speech was **called out** by the American Pastors Network for speaking only about political activism and saying nothing about academics.

"We must reclaim public education as a common good, and transform it into something it was never designed to be: racially and socially just, and equitable system." – Becky Pringle at **NEA Annual Meeting and Representative Assembly**, **July 2024**

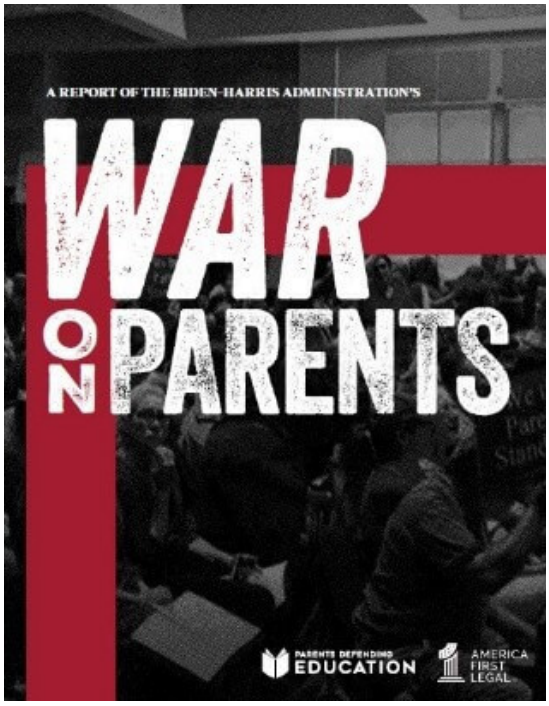
CCSSO was a **primary driving force** behind the enactment of Common Core and STEM, No Child Left Behind legislation, DEI in education, and co-founded the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

Under CCSSO oversight, states continue to administer the largest federal grant programs (including the Every Student Succeeds Act). *CCSSO has substantial control over school districts and local education agencies* in ensuring they are compliant with requirements for implementing and spending all federally-funded programs. "State authority is not absolute," its guide to state educational agencies **states**.

CCSSO's **peer organizations** include the other education vested interests in public education, such as American Association of School Administrators, National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), National Congress of Parents and Teachers, NEA, and National School Boards Association (NSBA).

NSBA, founded in 1940 and funded by the now familiar **foundation partners**, claims to represent school boards across the country, including 90,000 school board members overseeing 51 million students. It reportedly also has a network of over 3,000 lawyers to support its progressive activist agenda, **according** to Influence Watch.

Many parents have found little to no support from their school boards and school districts. Who can forget all the incidences over recent years of school boards fighting against parents and their local communities, intimidating, arresting, **suing**, and **investigating** parents attempting to **voice concerns** about inappropriate materials being taught in schools? The June, 22, 2021 Loudoun County school board meeting has become legendary, when 200 Virginia parents attempted to voice concerns over transgender students in bathrooms and locker rooms, resulting in arrests and a closed meeting.



An investigation by America First Legal and Parents Defending Education **reported** that the NSBA had collaborated with the White House and Department of Education to weaponize the Department of Justice against parents. Parents who spoke out at school board meetings against transgender policies, use of critical race theory and mask mandates were called **domestic terrorists** in a NSBA memo. While NSBA later **apologized**, the adversarial sentiment of school boards across the country **persists**.

Parents, from **California** to **New Hampshire**, have had to file **lawsuits** against their school boards, school officials, and governors to retain parental rights. Texas parents have found the deck stacked against them when they raise concerns and **no voice** at their school districts or state education agency. A New Hampshire school district attempted to retaliate against parents and grandparents wearing **pink bracelets** at a soccer game to silently support protections

for girl athletes. Even parents presenting petitions against trans athletes were **cut off** at a school board meeting last week.

In most states, the *state school board has authority to determine required learning standards for all students, graduation requirements, testing, and accreditation of schools and curriculums*. NSBA's current president previously worked for the Texas Association of School Boards.

The majority of State Boards of Education in the U.S. *are appointed by governors*, **according** to NASBE. Across the country, State Boards of Education have *state-wide authority* over education and curriculum standards.

Governors and the Globalists

The power of governors over education in states, down to local levels, is seldom recognized. Remember, NGA had collaborated with NEA and CCSSO in establishing Common Core, STEM, and the other globalist educational agendas. *NGA develops **best practices** for nearly every policy issue touching states, including K-12 Education*. Virtually every governor follows the NGA's calls to action.

Since founded in 1908, NGA has played a key role in **expanding government** programs, legislation, spending, and regulations – on state, national and international levels – and *advancing the globalist agenda*.

NGA's **Governors Education Policy Advisors Institute** establishes the **best practices** for schools, as well as educational goals. They justify their control, stating about 86% of national education spending is at the state and local level, with education also one of the largest parts of state budgets. Under NGA's current chair, Colorado Governor Jared Polis, its current **education** initiative is called "Let's Get Ready" and **calls for** *more* spending, AI and technology, data collection systems, and untested curriculum ideas.

NGA is an influential force on the globalist stage. While NGA's education initiatives are indistinguishable from those of UNESCO and the globalists at the UN, how many people realize the connection is bigger than that?

Since 2018, ***NGA has partnered with the World Economic Forum and its Fourth Industrial Revolution***. The socialist motives in NGA's education goals are unmistakable. At the National Governor's Conference on Education in 1989, for example, key note speaker, **Shirley McCune**, talked of education's role in the *total transformation of society, work for social welfare and in sustainable development*. "We no longer see the teaching of facts and information as the primary outcome of education."

Governors are not independent of globalist influence. They're in the thick of it. Governors, even in conservative states like Texas, have shown that when it matters most, *they will follow NGA*

guidelines, "best practices" and "value" based initiatives, rather than their constituents, independent experts, or sound science. That's been shown even when states and people were being harmed, and conflicts of interest were obvious.

> We saw that during **Covid-19**, for example. Governors across the country acted in lockstep, issuing declarations and **spending**, NGA-recommended Covid-19 **policies** and **lockdowns**. NGA is moving on, following the globalists' playbook, to accelerate the **transformation** of healthcare to their long-term vision.

A key power behind NGA, as well as **city and municipal mayors and city councilors**, and state and local government **administrative organizations** (health departments, housing, energy and water infrastructure, correctional officers and school officers) is Michael Bloomberg. Governors consistently follow his global initiatives, as we'll learn.

The globalists' influence hasn't stopped with transforming public education. They've also been using their money and power to disrupt public education for their own benefit.

Next: The globalists and the charter school movement.

Part 2: How AI Becomes God in Families and the AI Church

APRIL 13, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: AI

Transition from Part 1:

In **Part 1 of this series**, we examined the sobering concept of **AI Becomes God**—where artificial intelligence is quietly positioned as a substitute for God's authority in modern culture. We exposed how AI is being treated not as a tool, but as an all-knowing, ever-present moral guide. That first warning connected to our broader discussion in Omniwar's post "**Internet of Bodies: A Wake-Up Call for the Church**". In Part 2, we look closer at how this transformation is infiltrating the core of society—our homes and our churches. **Is the AI Church next?**

AI in Christian Homes and Churches: How AI Becomes God in Families

Through Entertainment and Media

For example, children are immersed in shows and games where **AI-powered characters** are portrayed as wise, powerful, and emotionally intelligent. In the U.S., shows like Transformers: EarthSpark, She-Ra, and the Princesses of Power feature AI or non-human protagonists with fluid identities. These characters often blur the line between creation and creator, teaching children that identity is malleable, truth is subjective, and machines can provide emotional fulfillment.

AI Companions as Emotional Substitutes

Apps like Replika, Character.ai, Heeyo, and Talk To Me Slimy are widely used in the U.S. and allow kids to create and chat with AI friends. These "**companions**" provide constant affirmation, entertainment, and pseudo-friendship. While some apps market themselves as educational, they gradually replace the God-designed relational dynamics between parents, siblings, and godly mentors.

Guilt-Driven Messaging in AI-Driven Apps

In particular, gamified apps like **Earth Hero** and **Mission 1.5** teach children that human behavior is the source of environmental destruction. While stewardship is biblical, these tools often elevate

nature above humanity and inspire guilt-driven behavior modification without referencing God, grace, or biblical purpose.

AI in Christian Homes and Churches: How the AI Church Emerges

AI in the Pulpit and Worship Planning

In a German Protestant church, an AI-generated sermon was preached using ChatGPT. While this was outside the U.S., similar interest is emerging among American churches under the guise of innovation. Ultimately, the risk is clear: when churches hand spiritual teaching over to machines, **the presence of the Holy Spirit is replaced with convenience**.

AI in Christian Homes and Churches: How the AI Church Emerges

Meanwhile, many pastors need to digitize everything—from sermons to small group discussions. But relevance should never come at the cost of reverence. The church's authority is not its trendiness, but the eternal Word of God. Churches replace hymnals with big screens and praise songs that don't seem grounded in the traditional singing of Psalms.

AI Bible Study Tools in Christian Settings

Currently, apps like YouVersion are experimenting with AI features that answer biblical questions. While helpful on the surface, these quick answers can encourage shallow engagement and discourage prayerful study. When believers turn to algorithms before turning to God, AI begins to take the role of teacher and counselor.

Call to Discernment in the Home and Church

Therefore, Christian parents must restore biblical teaching at home. Deuteronomy 6 calls us to teach God's Word diligently to our children—not outsource it to glowing screens. Likewise, churches must model what it means to seek wisdom from God, not from machines.
Encourage:

- Daily Bible reading using **printed** Bibles.
- Family discussions about how to evaluate digital tools.
- Worship that centers on Scripture, not technology.

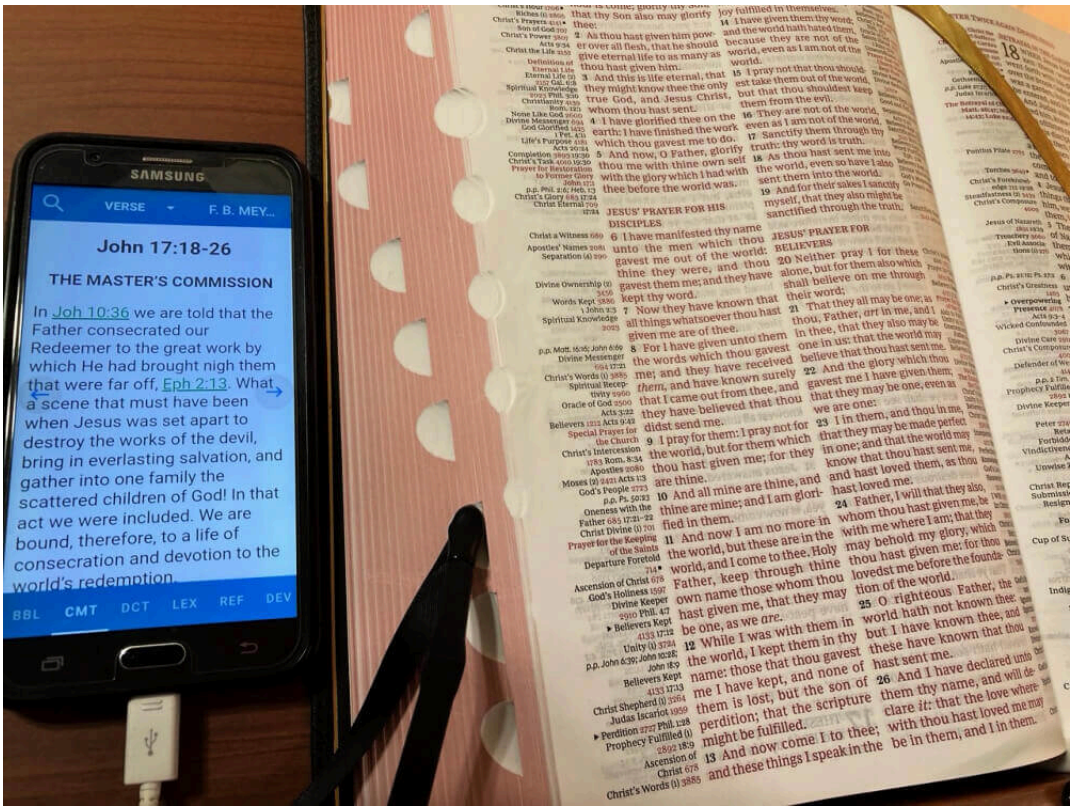
> **“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” – Colossians 3:16**

Closing Transition to Part 3 on AI in Christian Homes and Churches

In Part 3 of this series, we will look closely at how the printed Bible, physical study tools, and spiritual habits safeguard us from being subtly discipled by AI. We’ll also examine how the format of Scripture—ink on paper—forms deeper roots in the soul than blue-light answers on a screen.
Read Part 1: https://vachristian.org/when-ai-becomes-god-vs-when-ai-serves-god/
Related: Internet of Bodies – https://vachristian.org/omniwar-and-the-internet-of-bodies-a-wake-up-call-for-the-church/

Splinternet and the Gospel: Can We Still Share the Good News?

APRIL 12, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



> **Please leave your comments at the end of this article, we would love your feedback!**

For 15 years, one of our core categories at Virginia Christian Alliance has been **Obedience to God**—a calling that grows only more urgent in this present age. We urge you to share this message with others—family, friends, fellow believers—so we can collectively awaken the Church and speak truth into the digital chaos. To that end, this post continues that commitment, building on the biblical foundation we laid long ago and bringing it into sharp focus for today's fractured digital world.

What Is the Splinternet? It's Satan's Digital Playground

The Splinternet is the divided digital world where Satan—the author of confusion, division, and deception—works to isolate people from truth and from each other. As a result, it replaces shared reality with echo chambers, distorts biblical truth, and substitutes real fellowship with endless

noise. This is not a neutral space. It is a battlefield where the enemy cloaks lies in light (2 Corinthians 11:14), draws minds into distraction, and fragments the Body of Christ.

> "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth… that they may all be one… so that the world may believe that you have sent me."
> — John 17:17–21

Obedience to God in a World Gone Mad

Splinternet, A World Gone Wild

Introduction: A Divided, Digital Wilderness

We are living in the age of the Splinternet—an internet no longer united, but fractured into silos of belief, opinion, and identity. Most Christians have never heard this term, yet we experience it daily. Online, people are divided by algorithms, echo chambers, and ideologies. Offline, those divisions deepen into isolation, suspicion, and even hatred. In this wilderness of confusion and division, the question for Christ-followers (John 8:31) is urgent: Can we still reach people with the Gospel when everyone is lost in their own digital world? More importantly, the Splinternet threatens unity and discernment, which are essential to spreading the Gospel effectively.

What Is the Splinternet?

The "**Splinternet**" describes the fragmentation of the internet into competing platforms, ideological tribes, and even national firewalls. In other words, what once promised to connect the world now divides it. For instance:

- China, Russia, and others censor and isolate their internet spaces—entire countries now live in curated bubbles of government-approved content.
- In the West, platforms like TikTok, X, Facebook, and YouTube offer personalized streams that reward anger, fear, or flattery, keeping users in narrow lanes of content.
- Algorithms serve up only what we already like or agree with. We don't stumble across people with different views—we're penned into ideological pens. Consequently, this is a dangerous environment for the Gospel, which depends on shared truth, open ears, and personal connection. The rise of the Splinternet directly opposes these biblical principles by isolating truth-seekers, disrupting unity, and weakening genuine fellowship.

What This Means for Christians

1. **Evangelism Is Getting Harder**
   If people only listen to voices they already follow—and Christians are increasingly unwelcome in those circles—how can the Gospel break through? Walk into most churches today, and you'll see this in real time: teenagers scrolling TikTok during worship, adults checking Twitter during sermons, and no one talking to the person next to them after service. Instead of fellowship, we retreat into our digital bunkers. Even our online evangelism often stays inside the walls—we post Bible verses to an audience that already agrees with us. We share truth, but only within our ideological echo chambers. It's preaching to the choir—digitally. This is a reflection of the Splinternet culture—one that keeps Christians locked into their own digital tribes.

   "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?" – Romans 10:14

2. **Online Heresy Grows in Silos**
   False teachings thrive in isolation. Without discernment or doctrinal training, believers may follow influencers who use Christian words but deny core truths like Christ's divinity or exclusivity. "For the time will come when people will not endure sound doctrine…" – 2 Timothy 4:3 This doctrinal decay is fueled by the Splinternet, which hides truth from those not already seeking it.

3. **Real-World Fellowship Is Disintegrating**
   At the same time, churches must compete with 24/7 digital distractions. Many believers feel more "connected" online than in the pew—but lack accountability, community, or depth. In the **Splinternet** age, digital connection often replaces authentic discipleship.

Is Your Church Stuck in the Splinternet Too?

While we may blame "the world" for digital division, we must also look inside the Church. Consider these questions:

- Does your pastor or church leadership have a clear stance on cell phone and tablet use within the church's walls, during services, especially among youth? Are digital distractions quietly hollowing out the attention spans of the next generation?

- Are Sunday school teachers and youth leaders equipping students to navigate TikTok theology, spiritual influencers, and AI-generated misinformation? Are they leaning more on outside tech to teach their kids, or using outside tech as tools to serve the Lord?

- How often do we intentionally build relationships with people we disagree with—both online and offline—or are we surrounded only by those who vote like us, talk like us, and believe like us? The Splinternet isn't just "out there." It's right here—in our pockets, in our pews, and in our patterns. The Gospel must not be confined to Christian echo chambers—it must reach beyond them.

Obeying God in the Age of the Splinternet

- **Stay Anchored in Scripture**
  The Word of God is the only lens that brings clarity in a world of distortion. "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." – Psalm 119:105

- **Practice Discernment and Teach It**
  Train ***yourself*** and others to test everything they see and hear (1 Thessalonians 5:21). AI, deepfakes, and deception abound. Therefore, we need a spiritual filter. The Splinternet clouds discernment; the Spirit and the Word clear it.

- **Engage, Don't Retreat**
  Understandably, the temptation is to pull back. However, Jesus went into hostile crowds. We are called to shine, not hide. "***Let your light shine before others…"*** – Matthew 5:16 We must engage wisely in Splinternet spaces, modeling Christ's love even when it's uncomfortable.

- **Foster Real Fellowship**
  The antidote to digital isolation is embodied community. So, prioritize gathering, praying, and disciplining face-to-face. "Let us not give up meeting together… but encourage one another."—Hebrews 10:25 Breaking free from the Splinternet means re-centering on real, gospel-rooted relationships.

- **Return to Printed Truth**
  In a world where the next swipe brings distraction, there's something sacred about holding a Bible in your hands—not just on a screen, but in print. The slow, thoughtful act of turning pages reinforces attention and invites reflection. Printed Bibles, devotionals, and sound books offer what digital devices can't: stillness, focus, and tactile connection. By contrast, a study Bible won't interrupt your reading with a text message. A printed devotional won't suggest you "watch this next." God's Word is living and active (Hebrews 4:12), but many believers are only engaging it in fleeting glimpses—competing with notifications, ads, and apps. **Choosing print over pixels** is one way to resist the Splinternet's pull. Obedience to God means making room for depth. Rediscovering printed resources is one way to reclaim that.

Conclusion: The Mission Hasn't Changed. The Splinternet may have split the world into echo chambers, but the Gospel is still the power of God for salvation (Romans 1:16). And you and I are still its messengers. Even if the world won't listen the same way it used to, we must still speak. Even if digital spaces are broken, we must still build bridges.

> "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth… that they may all be one… so that the world may believe that you have sent me."
>
> **— John 17:17–21**

Obedience to God today means engaging wisely, living boldly, and loving deeply—online and off. May we live and preach the Gospel—not just in our own echo chambers—but in a world gone wild with division.

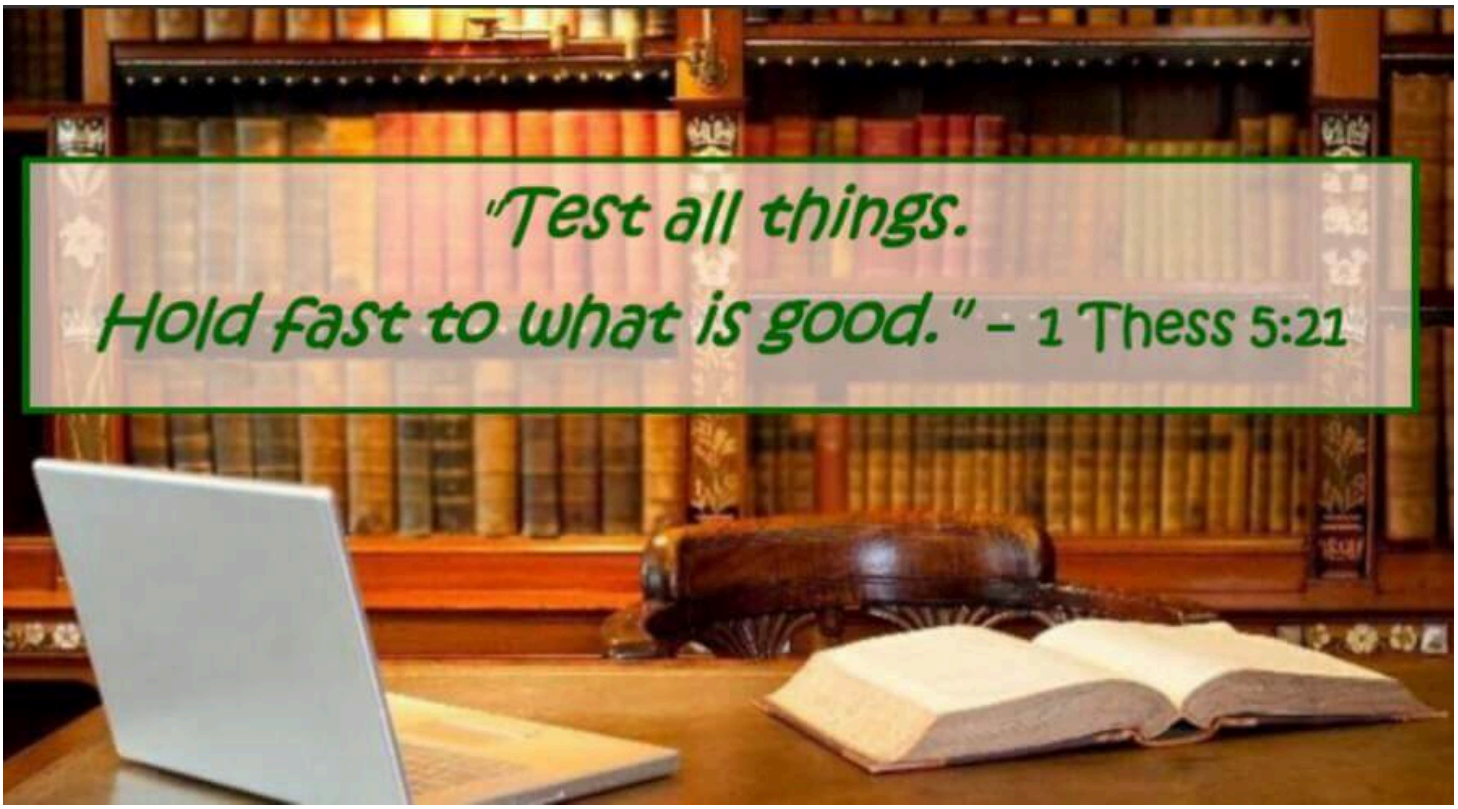
References:

Virginia Christian Alliance: **Obedience to God**

Splinternet: **The splinternet explained: Everything you need to know**

What are Our Children Being Taught? – The indoctrination techniques of global citizenship education

APRIL 7, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING TAUGHT?



By Sandy Szwarc
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In the **previous article**, we saw inside a Robert Muller School and the alternative realities and spiritualities inundating children in globalism education. **How has it been possible for New Age spiritualities, planet worship and extreme environmentalism, and globalism to spread throughout American culture, churches, and our public schools?**

We've seen how easy it is. Transformational learning in Global Citizenship Education, for example, is nothing more than indoctrination.

As the globalists with UNESCO had **recognized**, it is simple to manipulate the emotions and beliefs of children. Programming is most effective when started at young ages, as UNESCO had said, "to correct many of the errors of home training."

Children can be led to doubt the God of their Biblical teachings, as globalist teachers suggest new interpretations for world events, undermine the Bible as just another story book, make mocking examples of Jesus' works and teachings, blend pagan and ancient images and stories, and introduce mystical experiences and New Age practices that are confusing and conflict with Biblical beliefs – all to dismantle the Christian teachings of the children's families and churches.

As we read the curriculums and case studies of Global Citizenship Education and even the children's books given to kids, the programming tactics used are obvious:

- Giving exaggerated or false statements about the world and claiming *something terribly could happen* is nothing more than an attempt to scare a child. It's simple to use fear to create an emotional reaction that leaves children confused, unable to unravel, and vulnerable to alternative explanations. Readers will **remember** that God warned us to "fear not" about 365 times in the Bible, because it is a common tactic of false teachers and wrongdoers.

- Global citizenship students are given information that is not only intentionally frightening, overwhelming and disturbing; but the complexity of the global issues are beyond their ability to fully understand or critically research and discern.

- Simplifying ideas and presenting only one perspective (the globalists' view) is a technique used to lead children to a "right" answer that seems like the only reasonable or ethical solution.

- Ideas are also presented in ways that feel good to children and seem popular and accepted, taking advantage of, and reinforcing, children's natural desire to be part of a group and liked.

- Children are also rewarded, recognized and reinforced for complying with popular viewpoints.

- Children can especially be made to feel guilty or embarrassed for believing something unacceptable, outside the group's norm, or unpopular. Children are easily hurt and distressed by being shunned, mocked or ridiculed. Separated from their parents and Biblical teachings leaves them unable to understand or know what to do. Not one is there to tell them that: Jesus warned in Matthew 10:22 that believers will be hated by everyone for his name's sake and Christians were told in John 15:18-19 that they will feel hated and out of place for following Christ.

- Previous beliefs are put down, not unlike gas-lighting, which manipulates information to move children to question their own realities, doubt their own thoughts, and mistrust their own judgment or that of their parents.

- Fantasy and storytelling are also used to question and transform children's thinking about what is real and true. The moral to the stories in the story books and the New Age ideas throughout globalism curriculum often contradict Biblical teachings.

- Meaning of words are changed or played with to bring children to think of things in a new "correct" way. Even Biblical passages and ideas are twisted or falsely interpreted to confuse children. Or, history is simply rewritten to fit new global paradigms. Throughout the Bible, Jesus **warns us** that many false teachers are gone out into the world.

- Experiences are used to immerse children in new beliefs and practices, such as dance, music, art, meditations, "studying" other cultures, celebrating occult rites and Eastern religious practices, and play acting to lead them to globalism and New Age spiritualities.

- Techniques of altered states of consciousness, centering, interpreting dreams, imagining a vision in their own minds, and guided imagery, are used to lead them to a New Age spirituality.

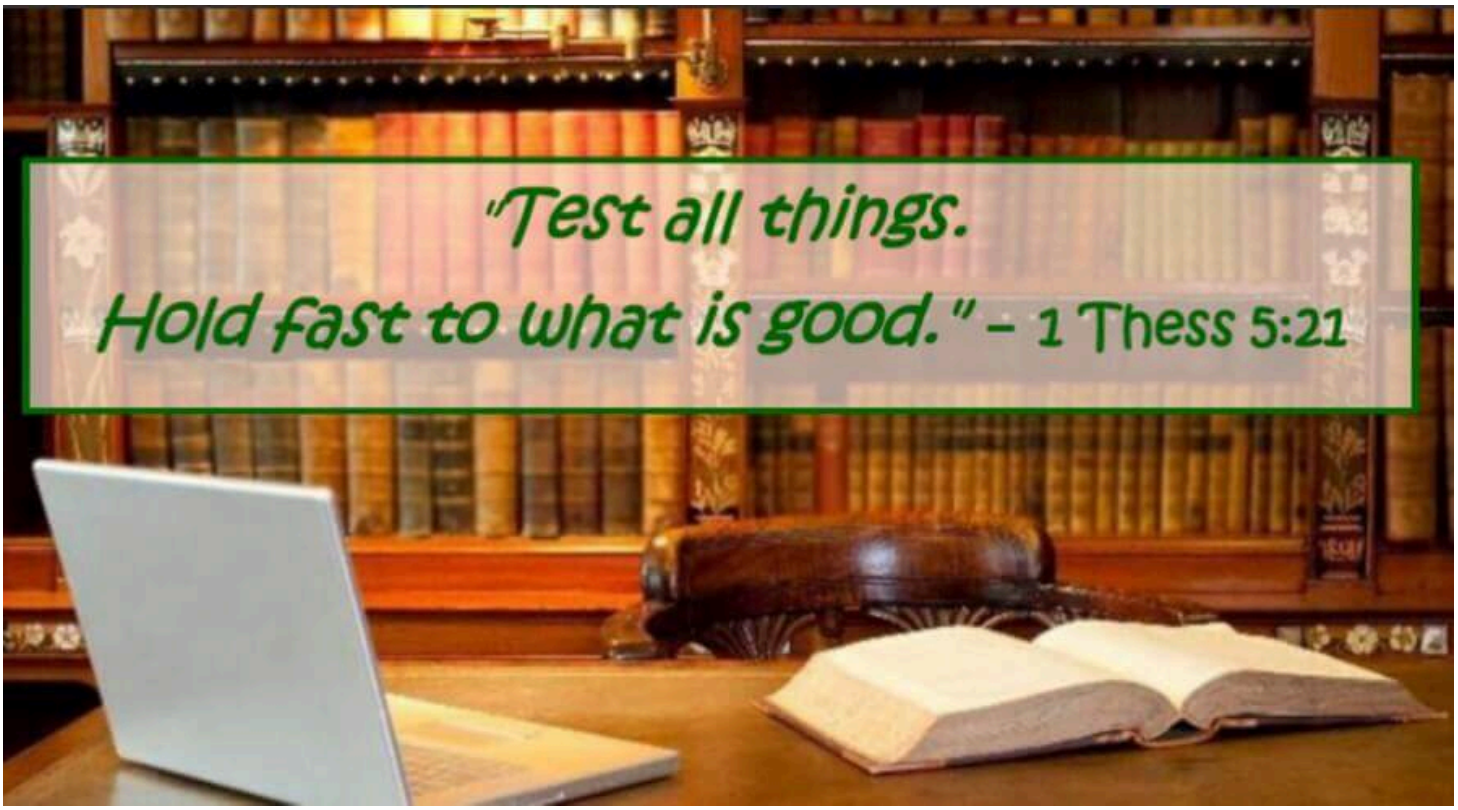
- Children's endless questions about their world and life are given New Age globalist answers, while purging good science and the Biblical teachings of their churches and parents from instruction.

After being immersed in globalism and such emotional manipulation tactics all day, every school day, few public school children stand a chance to develop Biblical discernment on their own.

Coming up, we'll look at what parents and Christians can do to save our children, as well as our country. We'll learn why school choice and returning education to the states will not be the answer.

What are Our Children Being Taught? – An inside look at what really happens at a Robert Muller School

APRIL 7, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING TAUGHT?



By Sandy Szwarc
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If you missed the **previous article**, we saw how Global Citizenship Education is being used to train children to become environmental activists. As we learned in UNESCO Globalism Indoctrination, in educating children to become global citizens, UNESCO and the NEA supported the World Core Curriculum of Robert Muller.

An insightful depiction of what really happens inside a Robert Muller School using the World Core Curriculum was written by a McGill University Doctor of Philosophy in Education student. As a "peace educator," anti-nuclear activist and devotee of "holistic education," Barbara Brooks had studied "wisdom teachings of Plato and ancient mystery schools, and their emphasis on education with respect to the Soul and Spirit and link to Oneness, Wholeness and Peace." Spiritually and educationally, she described herself as a seeker on a life journey.

As a strong proponent of Muller's World Core Curriculum, she wrote her dissertation as a **case study** of the Robert Muller School in Fairview, Texas. Brooks said the aim of her paper was *to give a voice to its school administrators, teachers, parents and students,* as well as enlighten her own "self-discovery."

Her paper set out to describe the theoretical models of peace and global education, "soul-centered education," and "transformational learning" with an emphasis on planetary/Earth relationships. As she showed, not only are the teaching philosophies experimental, with no evidence for any academic benefit, but worse: The teachings are simply made-up gibberish.

The youngsters had five six-week courses on the Four Harmonies, alone. Virtually no mention is made of traditional academics such as writing, arithmetic, reading, or science.

This candid disclosure exposed not just the wacky curriculum, but the psychological techniques used to manipulate the children's emotions and "planetary consciousness" to lead them to a New Age spirituality. The techniques included things such as story telling and suggestive awareness, morning circle time with songs for peace and the planet, passing the "sacred stone" for speaking, cultural dances and art for global harmony, facilitating "destination imagination," and centering for achieving inner peace.

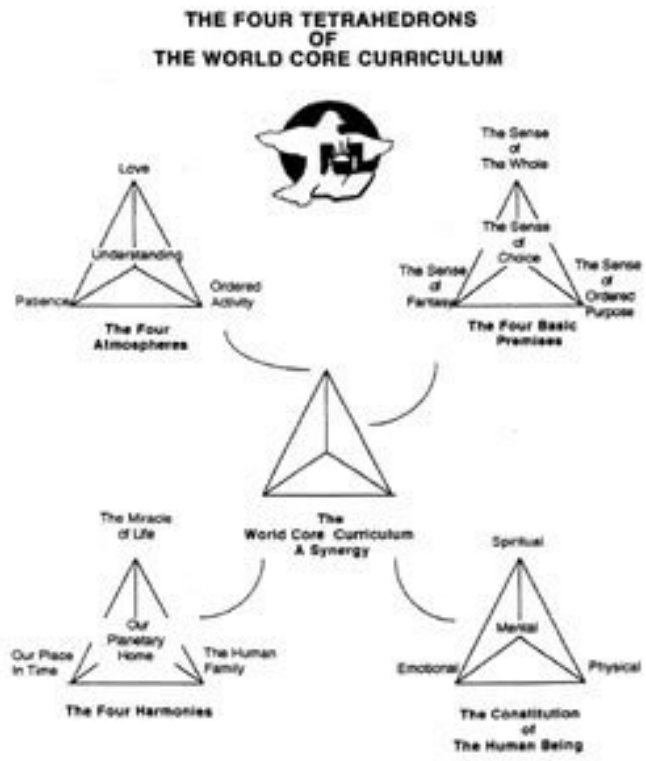
Holistic education

The mission statement of Robert Muller schools is a *holistic vision* of education, wrote Brooks. Its **3 R's** are Reverence for Life, Responsibility for the Planet, Relationship or Connectiveness of the Parts of the Whole.

A sense of planetary unity (wholeness), and reverence awakened in the child, is claimed to offer the student a vision of him/herself as a contributor to a harmonious universe. Holistic education is about relationships, she said, and, therefore, communication – with self, others, nature and with "The One."

The four tetrahedrons

The World Core Curriculum is designed around the myth of **experiential learning** and teaches Muller's four tetrahedrons. A **tetrahedron** is associated with fire and is a symbol in **Sacred geometry**, and signifies change and transformation, interconnectiveness of all things, and a "spiritual ascent." It is used in spiritual practices, such as meditation, crystal healing, and energy works, and dates back to **ancient times** and the works of Plato.



The four Tetrahedrons of World Core Curriculum:

- **Four Harmonies:** Our planetary home and place in the universe, human family, our place in time, the miracle of life
- **Four Atmospheres:** understanding, love, patience, ordered activity
- **Four Basic Premises:** sense of the whole, sense of fantasy, sense of choice and sense of ordered purpose
- **Constitution of the Human Being:** spiritual, emotional, physical, mental

Inclusive consciousness

To find each child's place in a universal environment, the teachers use Muller's **Hierarchy of Inclusive Consciousness**. It is foundational to a spiritual, soul-centered approach to education, said Brooks.

> "To Plato, since the soul is eternal and never dies, learning is simply recollecting or remembering the higher states of consciousness that the soul already knows and understands, having experienced these states prior to its descent or incarnation into a human body. Thus, education, for Plato, was really the process of discovering what the soul already knows. It involved the process of "drawing forth" or bringing out the wisdom of the true Self, thus activating spiritual or higher states of consciousness."

The role of teachers is to assist in the birth and nurturing of the students' souls and bring balance and healing to the body. Inner states of harmony, happiness and joy align the soul, she wrote. Peace and Justice are inner states of *being* attained when all aspects of our human soul are in resonance with our Higher Self or Divine Soul, which is at one with the essential Unity of all Life.

The curriculum includes various courses that are equally fictional. For example:

- **Earth Education** of our planetary home includes eating organic foods, growing an organic garden to feel a connection and respect for the Earth, caring for animals to feel a connection and respect for animals, and being outside to develop an intimate connection with nature that will ripen into a love for the Earth.

- **Peace Education** includes centering and balance, balancing both hemispheres of the brain which reportedly develops imagination, memory recall and academic performance.

- **Whole Brain Balance** is described as a holistic program that includes dance and centering exercise to gain inner peace. Left brain work (logic, critical thinking, mathematics, and facts) are old paradigm to be balanced now with right brain activity (imagination, intuition, art, rhythm, visualization, dreaming).

It's hard to imagine any child can survive this education intact. It is far removed from any credible educational curriculum and even farther removed from Jesus' teachings.

While not every government approved school follows the World Core Curriculum in full, under UNESCO, all schools are directed to adopt UN's global citizenship education, which embraces a holistic curriculum for lasting peace and sustainable development. **Aspects of the World Core Curriculum can be seen in every public school in the country.**

GEMUN – Immersion of children into the UN agenda

One of the most disturbing indoctrination programs coming out of Robert Muller's World Core Curriculum, and sponsored by the School of Ageless Wisdom, is **GEMUN** (Global Elementary Model UN). Since 1990, hundreds of elementary and middle school children from around the world are chosen as delegates at a mock UN assembly held each year in Dallas-Fort Worth. This year, GEMUN is on May 16-17, 2025.

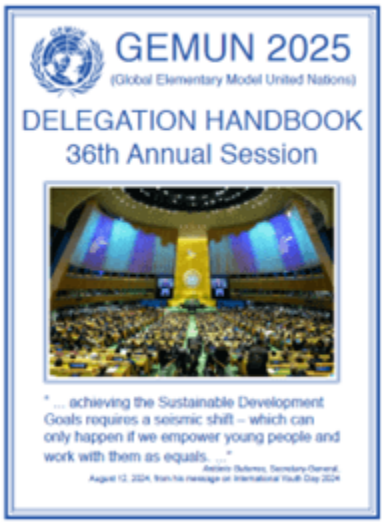
GEMUN plays a key role in the World Core Curriculum, training kids "as future UN peacemakers," but more accurately as UN activists. During the school year, children learn about the UN and its global sustainable development goals, complete assigned UN readings and projects, and immerse themselves in their assigned countries and creating displays of their countries.

The child delegates then present their "country's" welcoming speech at the Opening Plenary Session of the General Assembly and develop resolutions to global problems of poverty, hunger, human rights, disease, environment, global conflicts, and education.

The ***2025 Delegation Handbook*** is 90 pages of UN propaganda. It opens with a challenge from UN Secretary-General, **Antonio Guterres** in his address to the Summit of the Future:

> "Today I challenge you to take action. To implement the Compact for the Future – by prioritizing dialogue and negotiation, putting an end to the wars tearing the world apart, and reforming the composition and working methods of the Security Council. To accelerate the reform of the international financial system, particularly on the occasion of the Conference on Financing for Development which will be held next year. To place new technologies at the service of the best interests of humanity," (sic)

The children's handbook teaches UN's Sustainable Development Goals, the Preamble to the UN Charter, and UN's "olive branches of peace" logo. It gives a glowing history and report on the principles of the UN, extensive descriptions of the UN system and its various agencies and programmes, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



It includes a long list of recommended resources, including UN Climate Action, the Earth Charter, and the "**Good News Agency**" which runs UN's education activities of the Lucis Trust and Robert Muller's Culture of Peace program. (It is not to be confused with the Christian worldwide **Good News Clubs** for school children.) Finally, it gives an overview of GEMUN and guidelines.

The child delegates are presented with a list of world problems to choose from that they must write a "resolution" to address to the UN assembly. GEMUN's sponsor works one-on-one with the delegates to edit their resolutions in accordance to UN guidelines.

This year's topics include *nearly 90 world issues* – none of which any child that age can possibly understand the inordinate complexity of the problems or have the knowledge base to evaluate if the problems they are being presented even *are* real problems, let alone grasp and analyze the full range of potential solutions. (**See pages 21-22**.) The problems are overwhelming and would frighten and worry any young person. (Eliciting a strong emotional response and fear, remember, is a key emotional manipulation technique.) Even the way the issues are presented are slanted towards a globalist perspective and lead the kids to the pre-determined UN agenda solution, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Economic effects of climate change
Regulation of nuclear energy
Radioactive cleanup
Child marriage
Water security
Disarmament
Ukraine
Human trafficking
Counter terrorism
Combating drugs and crime
Kashmir territorial dispute
Clean energy
Drug and alcohol abuse
Domestic and gender-based violence
Reproductive rights of women
Childhood malnutrition
Childhood immunization
Ending violence against LGBTQ+ children
Wildfires
Wetland degradation

Rights on indigenous people
Race-based discrimination
Violent extremism
Food safety
Developing sustainable agriculture
Factory farming
Livestock emissions

Brooks' report demonstrated how little the children really understood about these global issues. More importantly, she revealed how they'd been indoctrinated and could do little more than recite the disinformation they'd been given.

The children told Brooks, for example, that they'd learned how humans are killing nature and polluting, and that rich countries don't share with poor countries. Sasha, one of the 4th graders at the Muller School and only ten years old, was nominated as Ambassador and lead delegate. She was so small, said Brooks, she could hardly be seen at the podium. Sasha's responsibility was to make sure that all resolutions written by the delegates were in line with UN policies.

In her speech presented to the Assembly on behalf of Guatemala, Sasha said if the UN helped rich countries realize that if they gave money to all countries that need it, *then all the world's problems of poverty, education, hunger, human rights, disease and ecological problems could be solved.* The UN brings peace, she added, "meaning a peace in which everyone is treated equally, fairly and has everything they need to live a healthy life."

For parents, educators and Christians, reading how our children are being manipulated and brainwashed into a new social order and to believe a new spirituality is beyond distressing.

Next, we'll look at just how easy it's been for the globalists to mind-nap our children.

Omniwar and the Internet of Bodies: A Wake-Up Call for the Church

APRIL 4, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: AI, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, TRANSHUMANISM

> **"Every device connected to your body doesn't just measure—it mirrors. It copies part of you to the cloud, building a digital double designed not to serve you, but to track and shape you." — *Jeff Bayard***

Read on and consider what it means to be truly ***be set apart*** *in a wired world.*

Jeff Bayard | Virginia Christian Alliance | April 2025

We are living in a time of breathtaking acceleration. Technology is advancing faster than our ability to discern its consequences. Data now rivals gold in value, and devices are no longer limited to our pockets—they are woven into our bodies. The prophet Daniel foresaw this moment when he wrote, *"Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase"* (Daniel 12:4).

This explosion of knowledge is not neutral. Is it part of a more extensive, more coordinated system—a silent, global conflict known as **Omniwar-** or was it a conspiracy theory created to exaggerate reality and instill fear?

A Warning from the Watchmen

This topic will be explored in depth at the **upcoming Battle for the Brain Symposium**, scheduled for Saturday, April 26, 2025, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM ET. Hosted by **Catherine Austin Fitts** and featuring speakers like Patrick Wood, Dr. David A. Hughes, Dr. Daniel Broudy, and Dr. Lissa Johnson, the symposium will expose the actual scope of **Omniwar**—a war for the human mind waged through biotech, AI, and social engineering. This is not science fiction—it's what's unfolding before us now. Christians must discern the times we are living in. They are never what they seem from a world's viewpoint.

What Is the Internet of Bodies?

> "Every device connected to your body doesn't just measure—it mirrors. It copies part of you to the cloud, building a digital double designed not to serve you, but **to track** and shape you." — *Jeff Bayard*

The **Internet of Bodies (IoB)** is a rapidly growing network of internet-connected devices that collect biometric data and, in some cases, directly interact with or alter bodily function. This includes:

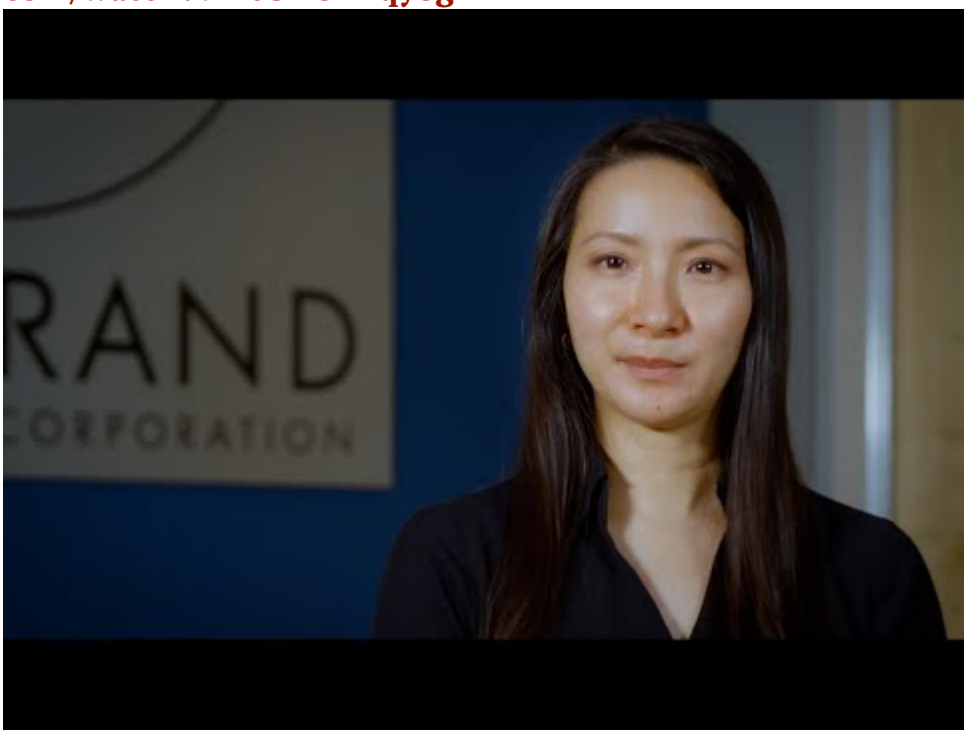
- **Brainwave-reading earbuds** and **emotional state sensors**
- **Smart contact lenses** and **augmented-reality glasses**
- Electronic or **digital pills** and **implantable microchips**
- Dental **tooth-mounted sensors** (track what you eat) and **biometric fertility monitors**
- **Temperature-sensing pacifiers** and **Bluetooth-connected diapers**
- **Internet-connected toilets**, scales, **smart mattresses**, and health records

These devices are marketed as conveniences and health tools, but they ultimately feed into a **global surveillance grid** that can monitor, predict, and influence behavior, often without informed consent.

According to the RAND Corporation, IoB devices are defined as those that:

- Contain software or computing capabilities
- Connect to the internet
- Collect or influence biometric or biological data

What Is the Internet of Bodies?
https://youtube.com/watch?v=-0bXUxRqy8g



This is the infrastructure of Omniwar—a battlefield designed not to conquer land, but to **reprogram humanity**.

A Spiritual Crisis Behind the Screens

As Christians, we cannot afford to be passive or naïve about these developments. Scripture teaches us that our bodies are not tools for experimentation or control—they are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). We are made in God's image, not the image of the machine.

The true danger of IoB and Omniwar is not just surveillance or loss of privacy. It's the **reduction of the human soul to a stream of data,** the **replacement of spiritual discernment with algorithmic suggestion,** and the numbing of minds and hearts to the truth of the Gospel.

What Must the Church Do?

The Church has been called to resist the spirit of the world in every age. **Our calling remains unchanged**, even in the digital age. The Christian response to Omniwar and the Internet of Bodies must be grounded in **obedience to God** and a **renewed focus on His Word and presence**.

Here is how we reclaim our ground:

- Prioritize daily prayer, periodic fasting, and communion with the Lord
- Fasting should include turning off all devices—phones, screens, media—and listen to God's voice
- Read printed Bibles and meditate on Scripture
- Love your neighbor in tangible, relational ways—not just digital ones
- Teach your children discernment and biblical truth over tech-driven values
- Gather with fellow believers in person for encouragement and accountability
- Proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ boldly, in word and deed

> "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." — John 8:32

Fasting in this context means more than abstaining from food. It means taking intentional breaks from technology to restore spiritual clarity. Unplugging can be an act of worship—an act of warfare against the constant noise of the world.

A Return to the Greatest Commandments

Jesus was clear when He gave us the foundation of all faithful living:

> "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself." — Matthew 22:37–39

The first commandment grounds us in worship and obedience: **putting God above devices, data, and digital noise**. But the second calls us into community.

In an age of digital isolation, we must not let algorithms replace actual relationships. Loving our neighbor means being present—not just online, but in the real, embodied world. It means knocking on a door, listening without distraction, serving someone face-to-face. It means showing up in your neighborhood, your church, your local school, and being the hands and feet of Christ.

Let us not merely disconnect from surveillance and noise—we must also **reconnect to people**. That's what Jesus did, and what His people are called to do.

Final Warning and Living Hope

The battle is real. The enemy is cunning. And the battlefield is now personal—wired directly into our homes, habits, and bodies. But the victory is not uncertain. Christ has already overcome the world (John 16:33), and our hope is not in resisting technology with fear, but in standing firm with faith.

Let us be watchful. Let us be wise. Let us be faithful. Because while Omniwar may rage across the digital landscape, **our allegiance is to a Kingdom that cannot be shaken**.

Further Resources

- **Battle for the Brain Symposium – April 26 Event Page**
- **How Big Tech Plans to Read Your Mind**
- **What Does OMNIWAR Mean? – David Hughes**

Stay alert. Stay grounded. And walk in the light. Love God. Love Your Neighbor

When AI Becomes God vs. When AI Serves God

APRIL 3, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: AI

A Warning to Christian Parents, Church Ministers, Elders, Deacons, and Sunday School Teachers

In a previous post, we issued a wake-up call through ***Omniwar and the Internet of Bodies: A Wake-Up Call for the Church***. That message peeled back the veil on how physical bodies are being wired into a digital control system. This follow-up takes us deeper—not into theory, but into our homes, screens, and pulpits.

Unseen, unchallenged, and often welcomed, artificial intelligence stealthily infiltrates life's daily rhythms. It slips into schoolwork, bedtime apps, voice assistants, and entertainment—creating an ambient, almost invisible presence in our homes and in **our children's minds**.

AI doesn't announce its arrival; it assimilates slowly, one interaction at a time, until what was once a helpful tool is now a trusted authority.

Many Christians still think of AI as a distant innovation, something "out there" for tech people to worry about. But the reality is that it's here. It's already shaping our children's imaginations, our spiritual habits, and even how sermons are prepared. It's not just about convenience or automation—it's about the **gradual replacement of truth with trend**, **wisdom with data**, and **the Holy Spirit with machine logic**.

What once seemed like science fiction has quietly become a rival religion—one not carved from stone or wood but crafted from code and cloud servers. It is a belief system that subtly replaces **Scripture with an algorithm**, **truth with personalization**, and **godly authority with synthetic empathy**.

> This is no longer about innovation—it's about infiltration and assimilation.
> This is the moment when **AI becomes God** in the minds of many, displacing the authority of the Word and the intimacy of walking with Christ.

AI God and Transmorphosis: When AI Becomes God in Culture

The term **AI God** refers to the growing trend of treating artificial intelligence as an all-knowing, always-listening, morally neutral authority—one that increasingly displaces God's Word as the

final truth. Children interact with chatbots, voice assistants, and AI-driven apps that offer answers faster than a Bible study or a prayer session ever could. AI becomes the arbiter of truth, the so-called 'safe space' for questions, and the guide for moral decisions. But as Scripture warns in Romans 1:25, *"They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator."

Closely related is **Transmorphosis** – a worldview that seeks to redefine or erase the God-given nature of humanity. This includes ideas like gender fluidity, human enhancement, and the merging of biology with machines (transhumanism). It teaches that transformation comes not through Christ, but through technology or self-actualization. These are the very seeds of rebellion against God's created order. ChatGPT wrote the book, **Transmorphosis: A Spiritual Guide Created By AI,** and you can read the table of contents there.

Real-World Examples: When AI Becomes God in Daily Life

- **AI Companions in Kids' Apps**: In Colombia, AI-generated characters message children through WhatsApp as educational "friends." Parents often see it as harmless, but it sets a precedent: children forming emotional bonds with machines. In our next part, we will identify real examples children use now in the US.

- **School Curriculum & SEL Tools**: Social-emotional learning programs use AI to promote globalist agendas, including identity ideology and climate alarmism, often without parental knowledge.

- **AI Jesus**: In Switzerland, a church experiment had people confessing and conversing with an AI avatar named Jesus. While responses were based on Scripture, the interaction lacked the Holy Spirit—offering simulated guidance.

- **Faith-Based Chatbots**: Catholic schools in Australia now use AI to prepare religious lessons. But what happens when the AI's algorithm is updated by secular tech firms?

- **Children & AI Homework**: Despite age restrictions, many parents and teachers introduce AI to children under 13. This is often done with good intent, but subtly forms dependency on non-biblical sources of knowledge and problem-solving.

How AI Becomes God in Families and Churches

Into Families:

- **Cartoons & Games**: Popular kids' shows like *Transformers: EarthSpark* and *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* include AI characters and non-binary or transhuman themes, shaping

identity without biblical grounding.

- **AI Emotional Outlets**: Apps like Replika and Character.ai allow children to build emotional connections with AI personas—often turning to them for comfort instead of parents or prayer.
- **Gamified Guilt**: Apps and games aimed at climate education, like *Earth Hero* or *Mission 1.5*, assign blame to human behavior and reward children for adopting globalist ethics.

Into Churches:

- **AI Sermons**: Some churches experiment with AI-generated sermon content, like the German Protestant Church that held a service led by ChatGPT. It drew crowds—but lacked conviction and spiritual authority.
- **Tech Pressure**: Pastors feel increasing pressure to "modernize" worship and preaching formats, sometimes leaning into AI and automation over Spirit-led teaching.
- **AI Study Tools Misused**: Bible apps using AI (like YouVersion's experimental AI Bible assistant) may lead users to quick, decontextualized answers instead of in-depth study, prayer, and fellowship.

Discernment: When AI Serves God, Not Replaces Him

AI is not inherently evil. As this very blog post demonstrates, when submitted to Christ and guided by a biblical worldview, AI can be a tool to:

- Write articles that defend truth.
- Assist pastors and lay-leaders with study preparation.
- Spread the Gospel using technology without compromising the message.

But the key is **submission**. When AI becomes the source of truth rather than a servant of it, we are entering idolatry.

Let us remember the tools that formed our faith:

- **Printed Bibles** that don't update with cultural shifts.
- **Old-school digital documents** that remain rooted in originalist teaching.

- **Bible apps like e-Sword and Logos** that support, not replace, study and prayer.

Final Exhortation: AI Becomes God Only If We Allow It

Parents, pastors, elders, and leaders: do not sleep through this transformation. The next generation is being discipled by screens, and many churches are aiding in their own obsolescence. Teach your children to love the **living Word**, not the synthetic word. Use tools like AI in **service to God**, not in place of Him.

> "Test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil." – 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22

> "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind." – Romans 12:2

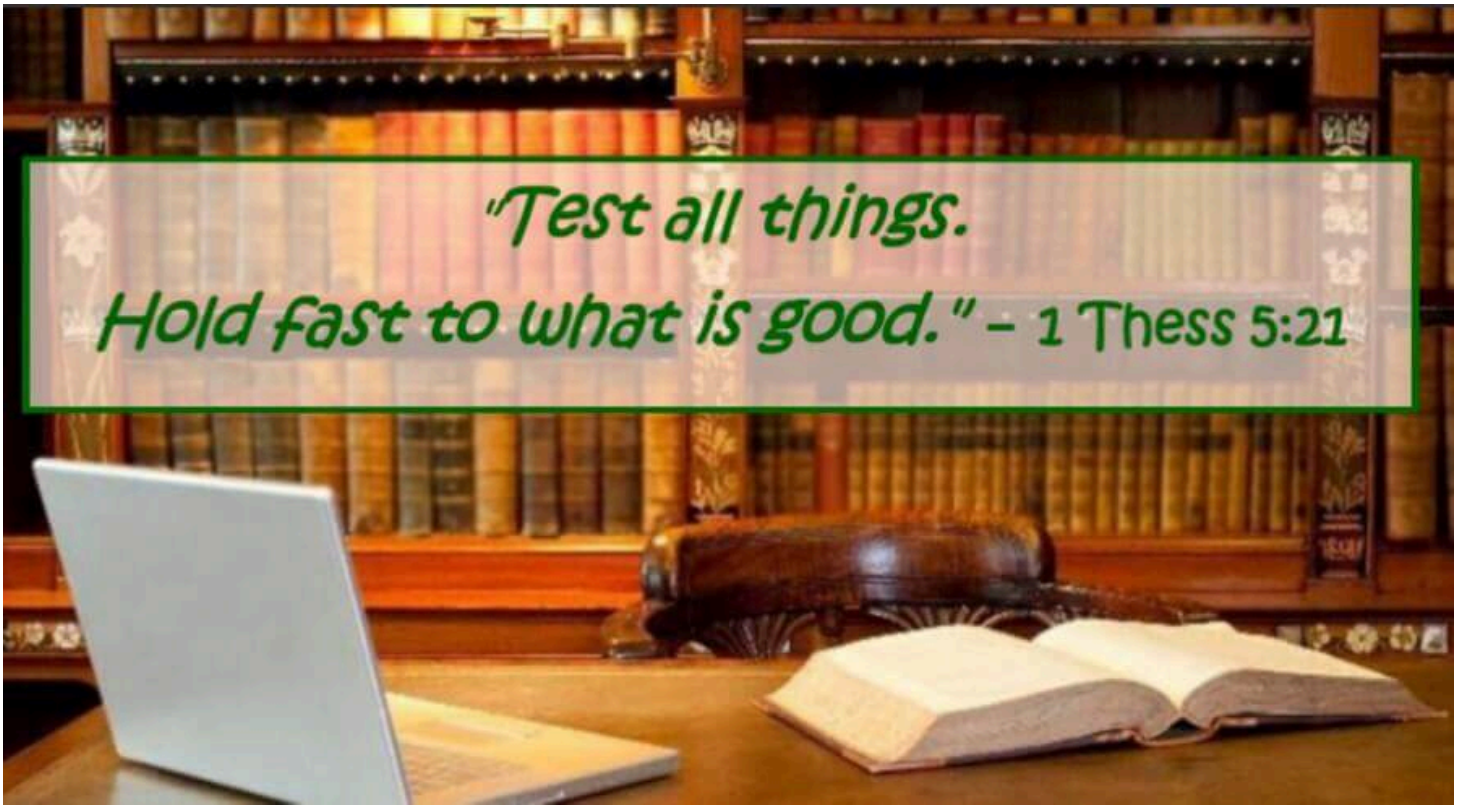
Call to Action: Stand Firm Before AI Becomes God

- **Parents**: Reclaim spiritual authority in your home. Teach, pray, and disciple with intention.
- **Pastors**: Preach boldly. Address these trends from the pulpit. Equip the saints to discern.
- **Church leaders**: Encourage printed resources, guide families in tech use, and remain rooted in God's unchanging truth.

AI is not the problem. **Idolatry is.** May we keep Christ on the throne—in our hearts, our homes, and even our technology.

What are Our Children Being Taught? – Training Child Environmental Activists

APRIL 1, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING TAUGHT?



By Sandy Szwarc
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We learned in **UNESCO Globalism Indoctrination** that in order to meet UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, UNESCO concentrated its education initiatives on turning every child into global citizens. Children are taught that a good global citizen must care about the planet.

Global Citizenship Education trains radical environmental activism

UNESCO's **Global Citizenship Education** clearinghouse is a massive database of policies, children's books and comics, and curriculums for global citizenship training for schools and teachers, officials, journalists, and policy makers. Its resources address every aspect of UN's SDGs and involve every UN agency.

The books and lessons especially target the youngest of children. The emotional abuse of children is especially easy to see in the environmental materials. UNESCO made **environmental education** a mandatory core curriculum by 2025, along with prioritizing "**greening the curriculum**" for "the unprecedented climate change and environmental degradation crisis."

UN Environmental Programme (**UNEP**) calls itself the "global authority on the environment" and drives UN's "transformational change" by drilling down on the "planetary crisis of climate change, nature and biodiversity." It, and a vast alliance of special interest groups, produce children's books, games, videos, comics, and puzzles.

In the storybook, ***Tina & the Green City,*** for example, little Tina is frightened by dirty air that makes her throat raw as she tries to cross the street, running past burned out buildings and filthy vacant lots. After starting an urban garden, her throat feels fine "since plants help clean the air." She learns that the solution to the climate crisis is green cities and downtown sustainable development that takes away cars and parking spaces so everyone can walk, skate, and bike or ride their scooters; while roofs and community gardens can grow food, and the plants will attract birds and butterflies; and roof solar panels can supply the energy.

Tina starts a club and the kids get the city council to redesign the town and suddenly the neighborhood grew fun, musicians played in the park, jugglers and acrobats appeared, and crime decreased as everyone was enjoying the city at all hours.

The children's book teaches that gasoline causes air pollution and less driving will help save the planet, and make people healthier and thinner and stronger. They learn that "going to school in a green building even improves students' test scores."

In the story book, **Tore and the Town on Thin Ice**, for example, young Tore falls through the ice with his dog sled team during a race. That night he has a vision of a women spirit called Sedna, telling him she created the sea creatures and was Mother of the Sea. She tells him she will send guides to him solve the problem. He ventures out on his sled the next day and an owl tells him that the ice had melted because the planet had become hot; that people are starving because the seals and walruses are leaving as they didn't have enough ice to float on; and nearly all the world's glaciers are melting. The polar bear tells him he is hungry because there's not enough ice for him to stand on to hunt seals and that his sister had starved to death. The whale gives him even scarier stories of the oceans swelling and that the rising sea levels might drown cities along the coast and

hurt hundreds of millions of people. He also tells Tore that hurricanes, tornadoes and other natural disasters are becoming worse.

That night, spirit Sedna tells him oil and coal are to blame and raise carbon dioxide. Rich countries use an awful amount of energy, have cars, lights, and heaters and air conditioners. The planet warming is caused mostly by humans, she tells him, explaining that rising carbon dioxide acts like a huge blanket and smothers the earth. To reduce the "fever," the story tells kids that renewable energy could produce all of the electricity we need by 2030.

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, for example, produces ***Climate Action Now*** guidelines and **technical papers** for meeting the Paris Climate Change Agreement – all of which appear in versions for children.

Kids are encouraged to join clubs like "**Cool Climate Club**" where they're given increasingly frightening claims about climate change. They're taught that carbon levels are already over "safe" limits and are leading "***to the greatest disaster ever experienced by human civilization.***" They're told what they must do **to lower their carbon footprint** and raise money for carbon capture, and tells them they must "Be An Activist!"

Global Goal comics teach the UN Global Sustainable Development Goals.

In the comic, *Simon Says,* Simon the hippo tells kids that a million sea birds and a hundred thousand sea animals die every year from plastic and man's pollution of the seas; and that air and water in cities are so polluted that one-in-four children suffer bad health and have trouble breathing. Fossil fuels are said to be to blame for creating climate change. Cars, planes and other machines burn fossil fuels that creates carbon dioxide and turns the earth into a warm greenhouse, Simon tell the kids. That's what causes wild fires, bigger storms and melts the polar ice and snow, causing sea levels to rise and animals to die.

Simon has a hippo fart and the kids are told that methane is a gas that acts just like carbon dioxide. Animal farms create a lot of nasty methane, Simon says, and that over 1 billion cattle in the world create 18% of greenhouse gases. Kids are told it's better if they eat less dairy and meat. Simon tells the kids that people all over the planet are being hurt by climate change but that

they're all responsible. Every child has a carbon footprint and adds 5 tons of carbon dioxide to the air every year and each one of us must take action!

"Bob, we must take action! I show you the future if we don't" The comic book then shows skeletons of people and animal friends. The kids are told that by 2100, climate change has caused suffering around the world and many deaths from diseases, droughts and heat waves, and animal friends are extinct. Join us every day in making good choices to reduce carbon, they tell their friends, "so we can save the climate!" They even have a bake sale to raise money for carbon offsets so they can be carbon free…

Every story begins with alarming claims to create a distressing emotional reaction in the children, offers simplistic solutions that are made to sound good to kids, and ends with a call to action, telling children what they can do as responsible "global citizens" to save the planet and the animals.

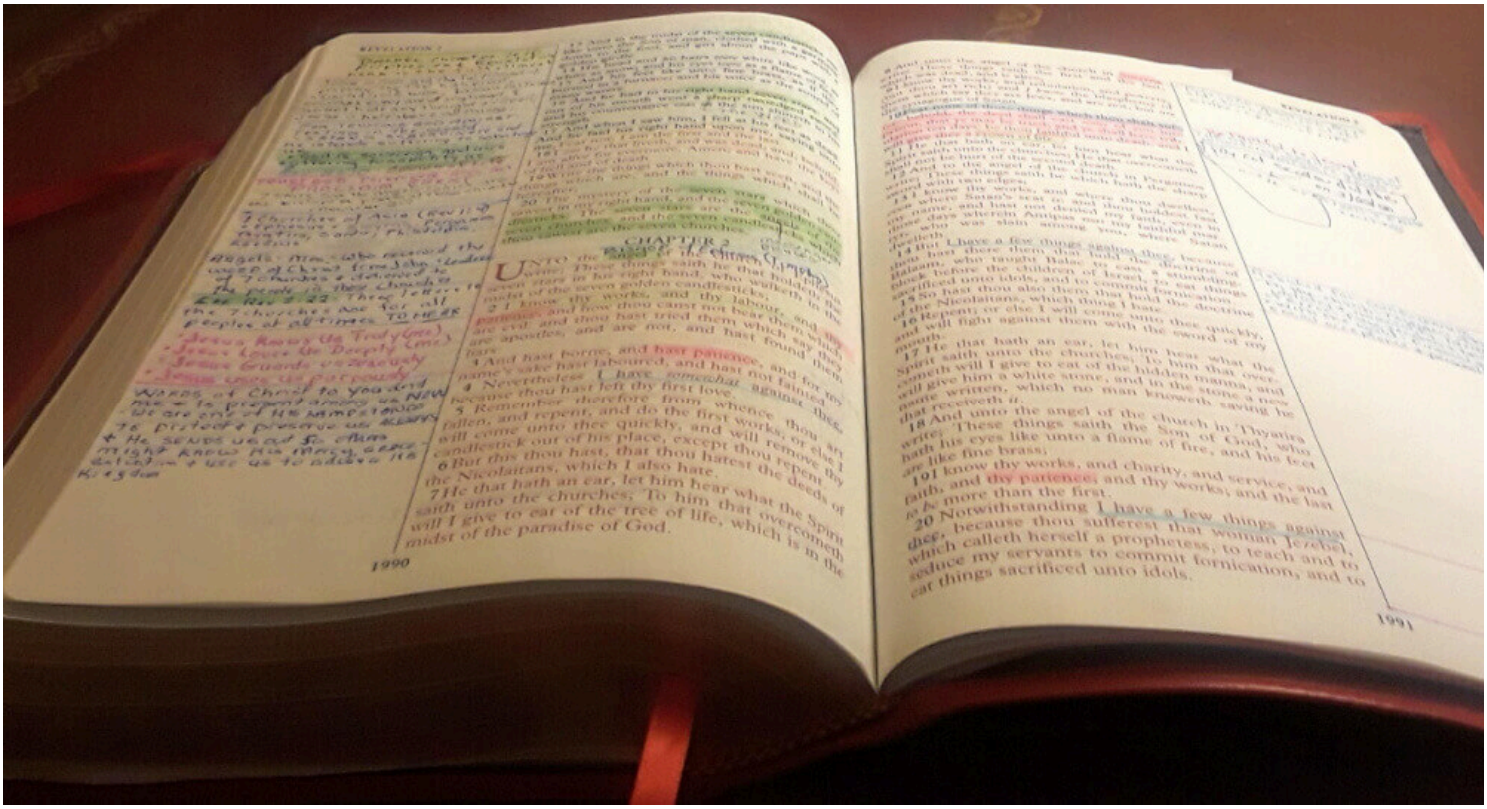
Of course, as we've **learned**, there is no credible environmental science being taught in this curriculum. Nor are there disclosures of the socialist agenda and anti-biblical teachings behind the myth of climate change.

"While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease….
Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything." – Genesis 8:22-9:3

Next, we'll get a candid inside look at what really happens at a Robert Muller School. Embracing the World Core Curriculum of Robert Muller, Global Citizenship Education takes an especially dark twisted turn.

No Longer Going by the Book

MARCH 30, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



What Then, Are we to Believe?

By J. Jeff Toler for Shenandoah Christian Alliance **j.toler@sca4christ.org**

- *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.* —Romans 10:17

It may be time to confront the shrinking influence of the church in America is having, as she battles against extremism and radicalism today. Admittedly, I was surprised with how little is left of the right when it comes to presenting a once robust worldview. You know something has gone terribly wrong when people have to speak in whispers when it comes to speaking the truth. And, as we discussed before, when it comes to common sense.

The reason is now clear why this is, as new research reveals America's dominant worldview is not biblical—or any other transcendent authority for that matter.

Groundbreaking research from the Cultural Research Center (CRC) at Arizona Christian University released in 2021, found that **only 6% of U.S. adults hold a biblical worldview**.

A newer study from the CRC explores a key follow-up question: If the majority of American adults do not adhere to a biblical worldview, then what belief system dominates among the other 94%?

Percentage of U.S. Adults Who Lean Either Strongly or Moderately Toward Specific Worldview Beliefs and Behaviors	
Worldview Beliefs and Behaviors	**% of Adults**
Moralistic Therapeutic Deism	**39%**
Biblical Worldview	**31%**
Secular Humanism	**16%**
Postmodernism	**16%**
Nihilism	**10%**
Eastern Mysticism	**10%**
Marxism	**10%**
Source: *American Worldview Inventory 2021,* Cultural Research Center, Arizona Christian University, N=2,000, 2021.	

The surprising answer, perhaps, for most sincere Christians is this: there is no single dominant worldview.

Through in-depth, half-hour interviews with a nationally representative sample of 2,000 adults, the study found that the most common worldview in America is… wait for it… **Syncretism.**

Syncretism can best be described as an assortment of beliefs and behaviors drawn from various, often contradictory, sources. This means, instead of forming a consistent and cohesive life philosophy, Americans overwhelmingly adopt perspectives and practices based on what *feels* comfortable or convenient. While these views may lack internal consistency, almost no one seems concerned about the contradictions they produce.

In other words, most Americans don't seem to care. Until it's too late to care.

Without a universally held belief system—an over-arching belief of some kind—it should be no surprise that if most of us are willing to believe everything, then most of us will believe anything. This is not an accident, or some embarrassing oversight that no one thought to address.

We are talking about generations of people in this country, and throughout western civilization writ large—at least since the end of the Second World War, have gradually abandoned any genuine

reliance on a Bible-based or even a "traditional" morality-based worldview.

Of course, at no time down through the ages, did *everyone* place their faith in the Bible. But if we were to think of the Bible as the most historically reliable, influential, trustworthy, and largely irrefutable source of instruction and guidance, why would so very many people no longer base their worldview on its revealed truth anymore?

Is it possible that many are actually thinking it's no longer possible for cultural transformation? Well, not so fast. The possibility does exist to restore the biblical worldview and God's truth to all areas of our culture.

Within the Christian faith, the Evangelical and Fundamentalist Protestant denominations tend to refer to the Bible the most, because they appreciate and rely on its authority, inerrancy, and literal interpretation. Among them, the following denominations stand out:

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is the largest Protestant denomination in the US, and is known for its strong emphasis on biblical authority and preaching.

Independent Baptists, are often even more focused on literal interpretation and frequent biblical references in their teaching.

Pentecostal Denominations, such as Assemblies of God, and Church of God in Christ, are reliant on Scripture for doctrine and spiritual experiences. They place more emphasis on experience than their conservative brothers

Reformed/Calvinist Traditions (e.g., Presbyterian Church in America, and some Baptist churches) are deeply rooted in a systematic theology based on Scripture.

Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, (LCMS) hold to a strong commitment to biblical inerrancy and frequently reference Scripture.

By and large, and generally speaking, evangelicals prioritize personal Bible reading, memorization, and expository preaching, making them among the most Bible-centered groups. So this begs the question, why are evangelicals shrinking in numbers as they are?

"Contrary to media reports that suggest 25% to 40% of American adults are evangelicals, more rigorous estimates from the latest **American Worldview Inventory 2024** place the figure at only 10%, translating to 25 to 30 million adults."

For the sake of argument, let's say evangelicals are not hesitant, or even reluctant, to take the Gospel to the culture as the Bible teaches, to a culture that is so desperately in need of it. After all, they have plenty of opportunities to send missionaries into many countries all over the world. But

what about the growing mission field in our own backyard? Evangelicals ought to be able to determine how to breach the immense barrier of syncretism found in America today.

If you spend as much time as I do watching the news and researching current events as I do on the internet and with podcasts, (perhaps too much time?) you would notice the trend toward a spiritual quickening among people who are even openly talking about God more than they have in the last few years.

Nicole Shanahan

In episode 1159 of the *Relatable* podcast, **Allie Beth Stuckey** interviewed **Nicole Shanahan**, who, you may recall, was the running mate of **Robert F. Kennedy Jr**. in his abandoned presidential bid—first as a Democrat, then as an independent—in 2024.

Shanahan was once married to **Sergey Brin**, co-founder of Google, and former president of Alphabet, its parent company. Together they produced one daughter, who is severely autistic. Late last year, she miscarried another baby and nearly lost her life.

Both the campaign and her near-death experience figure greatly in her conversion from Judaism to Christianity. It was during the campaign that she met **Zach Henry**, who helped launch **Vivek Ramaswamy**'s brief presidential campaign. Henry is an evangelical Christian, and Shanahan credits him for his calming, thoughtful advice and counsel.

"His love of the Bible and Jesus," she claims, "is one of the things that really changed me in my perspective of evangelicals. And again I'm from Oakland! I spent all my time in progressive circles, and white Christian evangelical nationalists were destroying America. Oftentimes I painted them as radicals who are not empathetic."

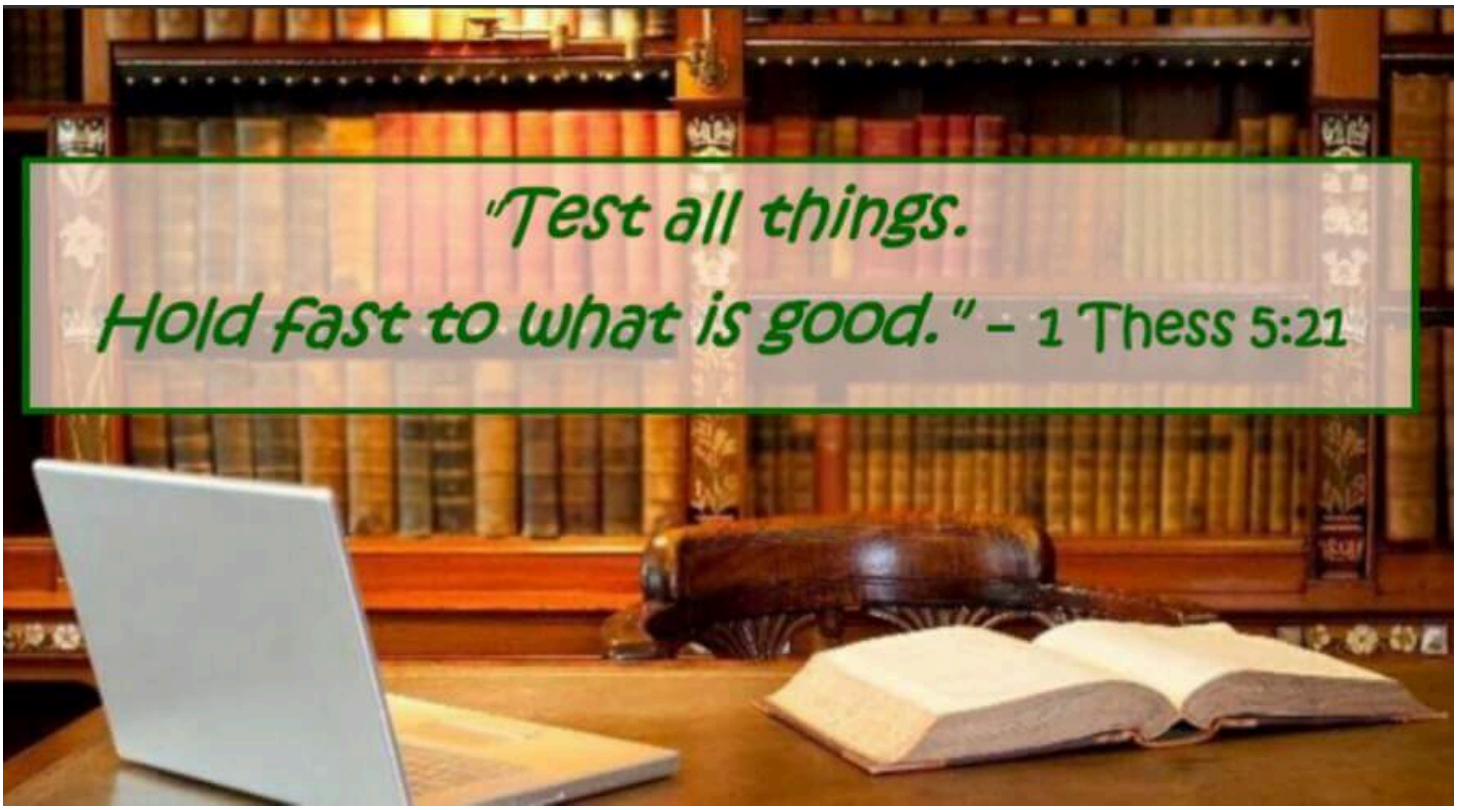
What Henry showed Shanahan was the real thing any Christian, evangelical or not, should embody as a true follower of Christ. Hearing from someone who was able to quote scripture, refer to the Bible, and demonstrate patience—all which we should know are the of the fruit of the Holy Spirit—can be the gift life.

As she began to believe, she became saved. That's when she discovered the people she thought were friends and allies, were not, and they turned away from her.

As I have claimed many times before, these are the most exciting of times. These are times we should be willing to throw off our habits of focusing *only* on our personal sanctification, but also include evangelizing… using the spiritual gifts God gave each of us for such a time as this.

What are Our Children Being Taught? – UNESCO Globalism Indoctrination

MARCH 27, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OUR NATION UNDER GOD, WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING TAUGHT?



By Sandy Szwarc
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As we saw in **Robert Muller's Influence**, the United Nations education programs are under the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

The UN and UNESCO made a **holistic curriculum** for lasting peace and sustainable development, and global citizenship it priority initiative for every child. "Global citizenship is marked by an understanding of global interconnectedness and a commitment to the collective good," **according to** UNESCO's *Global Citizenship Education*.

As part of educating every child to become global citizens, it endorsed the World Core Curriculum of Robert Muller, which teaches UN's Sustainable Development Goals for Education, as well as a humanist, anti-God socialism, and New Age earth-centered spirituality.

Unbelievably, this UN curriculum became compulsory in every public funded school in America.

Who on earth would impose globalism indoctrination in America's Schools?

Our own federal **Department of Education**. Behind the transformation of public education into UN agents of social change were the very entities entrusted with our children's education.

The U.S. Department of Education had been created **in 1979** after the National Education Association (NEA) had promised to endorse candidate Jimmy Carter if he supported the establishment of this new federal agency.

> As we **learned**, the NEA, powerful nonprofits, and state politicians were also the special interests behind Common Core and STEM. NEA went on to successfully lobby for the establishment of UNESCO and has become a major force behind the promotion of UN's educational agendas and socialist world vision. *As the largest and most powerful global trade union **in history**, NEA has been influential in seeing **UNESCO** become the lead organization behind accelerating UN's Agenda 2030 and its SDGs in education.*

In June 2006, *all of the G8 Education Ministers* – **United States** Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, the Russian Federation, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom – along with OECD, UNESCO and the World Bank, adopted the "**Moscow Declaration**."

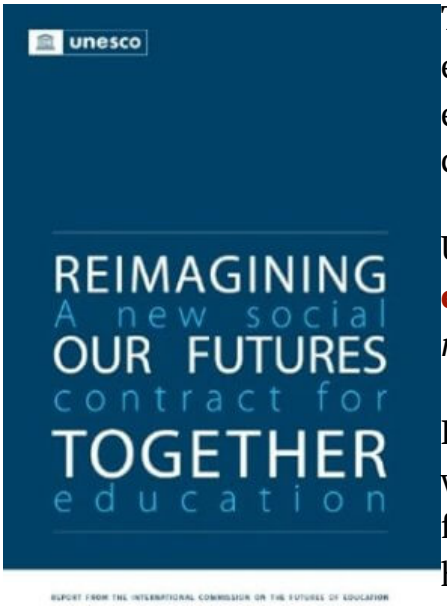
In this Declaration, *they committed their countries to cooperate in education at all levels and internationalize education; and **support the UN Millennium Development Goals at all levels of education**.*

Worse, **every UN member nation** ***also agreed to UNESCO's leadership over coordinating their school curriculums.***

Incredibly, *our federal Department of Education actually directed that every American child in public school receive UN globalism indoctrination.* ***Worse, it turned over leadership and oversight of American school curriculums and education to UNESCO.***

What does it mean to be a UNESCO school?

It means children are given UN's "**transformative education**," that teaches socialism-globalism ideologies, social justice, "planetary sustainability," and new non-Biblical and non-Western "ways of knowing."



Transformational learning is yet another experimental, unproven educational philosophy in public education. Under this philosophy, education is no longer about information, but is an "agent of social change" to instill globalist beliefs, values and attitudes in children.

UNESCO openly says it is building "**a new social contract for education**." *It calls for a future of global solidarity that rebalances relationship with each other, the planet, and technology.*

Readers will recognize that this is right out of 1930's **technocracy**, which gave rise to totalitarianism, collectivism, and globalism. In fact, UNESCO felt so strongly about its global sustainability and humanist agenda, it reissued its **1972 report**, *Learning to Be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow* "to inspire a new generation of educationalists with the wisdom of past thinking."

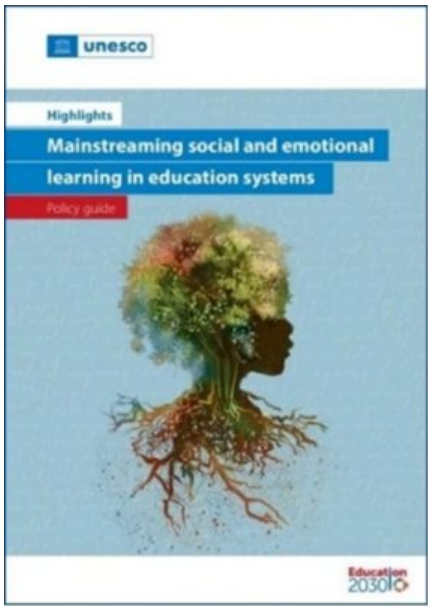
All UNESCO is devoted, *as its primary **initiative**,* to UN ***Global Citizenship Education*** for every child on the planet as a key to achieving UN's SDGs. **UNESCO** is the lead agency for **transforming education** to meet UN's 2030 SDGs for education and Global Citizenship Education is **inseparable** from sustainable education.

SEL is foundational to UNESCO education.

We saw in **Part 2** how SEL is psychological brainwashing and been embedded in public education.

But to prioritize meeting **UN's 2030 goals for Sustainable Development** for education and Global Citizenship Education, last year, UNESCO ***intensified its SEL policy guidelines***.

It issued "**Mainstreaming social and emotional learning in education systems**," outlining how SEL is to be imbedded in every aspect of learning spaces in Global Citizenship Education.



In other words, UNESCO openly recognizes that indoctrination is essential in turning children into global citizens.

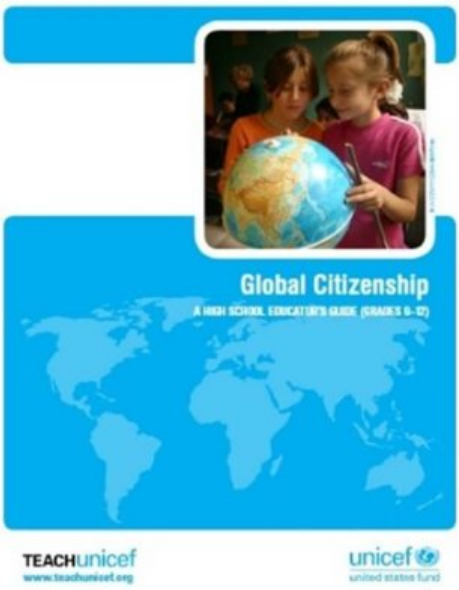
Global Citizenship Education – emotional exploitation of children

The concept of Global Citizenship Education was created by the UN and is coordinated through UNESCO's **Global Education Coalition** of over 200 globalist members plus partner networks.

Through UNESCO, the teaching standards and curriculum of Global Citizenship Education were designed to instruct student on two primary UN documents: Millennium Declaration and its Millennium Development Goals, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. UNESCO calls for teachers to incorporate this curriculum into all of their teaching.

The Global Citizenship Teaching Standards for Grades 9-12 were published in 2013 by the **controversial** UN agency, **UNICEF**'s Education Department. It includes lessons about the UN and SDGs, but its academics originate from our country.

- Global Citizenship **teaching standards** call for compliance with Common Core State Standards. Not surprisingly, the ***same special interests behind Common Core and STEM in the United States were behind the development of the Global Citizenship standards:*** the National Governor Association's Center for Best Practices, and CCSSO 2010 Common Core State Standards for English and reading.



- Global Citizenship curriculum standards must also comply with **NCSS' national standards** for social studies, global connectedness, and environmental sustainability. So, not surprisingly, the Global Citizenship **teaching standards** came from NEA's activist groups, **including National Council for the Social Sciences**, **National Council of Teachers of English** and its **International Reading Association**; and **National Geographic Standards**.

A glimpse into Global Citizenship classes show the emotional manipulation in this curriculum. High school students are inundated with urgent and scary claims that there's only **six years left** to meet the SDGs to save the planet and to save the world's children by 2030:

> ***"Climate change, poverty, deepening inequalities and intensifying conflict are cutting children off from their chance to thrive. If we don't act now, we risk losing millions of lives to easily preventable causes like disease, poor nutrition and unsafe environments."***

Students are also taught that ***global citizenship also means rejecting their religious beliefs***. Students are falsely told that religions are against human rights, justify violence and discrimination, and violate the "spirituality of LGBT persons" and women's reproductive freedoms. Students are told that being a global citizen requires they understand interconnectedness, value diversity, and challenge injustice.

Students are taught the globalist view of human rights, the UN's **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**.

The Global Citizenship curriculum uses classic indoctrination tactics. Forced choice activities make kids select which "they feel most in agreement with" to gradually move them to view global citizenship as more important than that of their country, to feel being a global citizen is the best way to love people and be brotherly, to feel guilty for caring about their national identity or restricting immigration, to feel responsible to fight social injustice and work for global social change, to become activists to protect the environment, and to see American citizenship as racist for white men of privilege.

"Peace and justice" are redefined – just like "human rights" and "religious freedoms" – to malign American patriotic and Biblical values. But the curriculum goes further in specifically disparaging America and its allies.

Handout 4, for example, includes a paper written in 2001 by Daniel Terris with Al_Quds University. It condemns Americans for their "self-righteousness." He tells kids that America's friends and allies resent "our self-importance" for not embracing global citizenship, and that building global unity would be more fruitful if we worked humbly "as fellow citizens of a world in peril." It ridicules patriotism, flags and parades and calls upon kids to "*take an active role in making and remaking American ideals and aspirations… talk candidly about the nation's weaknesses.*"

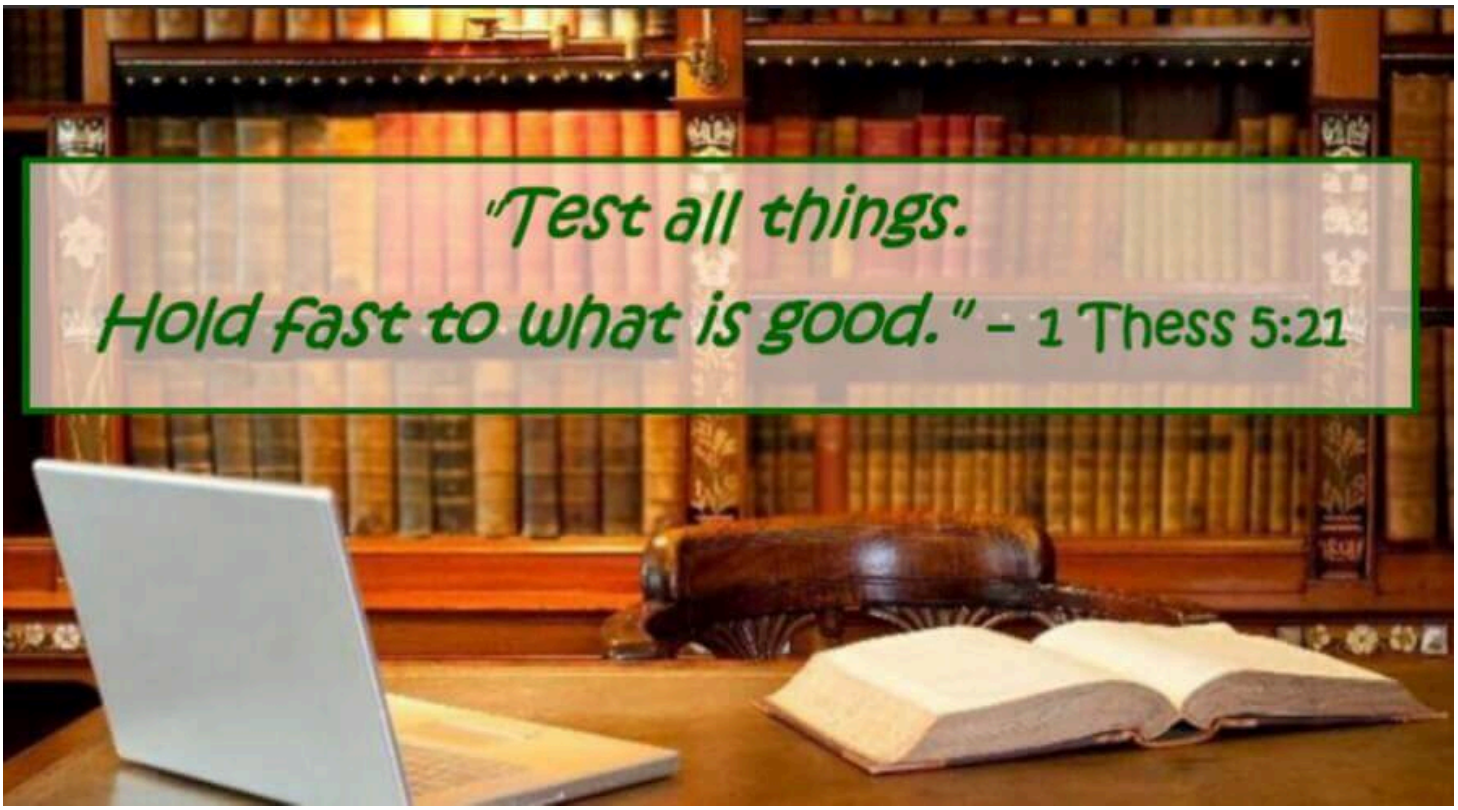
> The course fails to reveal that Al-Quds University is the only Arab-Palestine University in Jerusalem and that it hosts Hamas militants and radical antisemitic campus rallies and has active Hamas-affiliated student organizations, as a U.S. House of Representatives **investigative report** found last October. It **is recognized** by the State Department for its antisemitic extremism and Holocaust denials. Allied professors at Columbia and Cornell called the slaughter of over 1,400 Israelis on October 7th "energizing and exhilarating." Al-Quds President, **citing** the Quran, told the students that theirs was a message of justice and peace against vilification by Jews and to hold firm.
>
> Philosophy professor, Edward C. Halper, at the University of Georgia **commented** about former Al-Quds University President's philosophical presentations going back nearly thirty years, warning: "*The only things shared by Hamas and progressives are anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism.*"
>
> Al-Quds University hosted the UN Conference "**Revolution for Justice, Union for Change**" and was a **partner** in the development of UN's SDGs.

How many parents realize that school classes about the UN and global citizenship are synonymous with teaching not just earth-centered worship, but antisemitism and to reject Jesus of the Bible?

But as we'll learn **next,** Global Citizenship Education also teaches radical environmentalism using equally manipulative emotional tactics on young children.

What are Our Children being Taught? – Robert Muller's Influence

MARCH 24, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OUR CHILDREN, WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING TAUGHT?



By Sandy Szwarc
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As we introduced in **UN's New Age Spirituality**, the United Nations seeks to turn every child into a global citizen. To program children to see all people on the earth as one interconnected and global family, the UN embraced the World Core Curriculum of Robert Muller. It preaches a "global consciousness" spirituality that is far removed from the Bible.

Who was Robert Muller?

Upon his retirement from the UN in 1986, where he went from an intern in 1948 to Assistant Secretary General, Muller became the honorary lifelong "**Chancellor**" of the UN's University of Peace in Costa Rica (with a $1 annual salary). He had co-founded the University of Peace, which was **established** by the UN in 1979 as the academic wing of the UN. Its *guiding framework is the Earth Charter,* created by Maurice Strong and former UN Secretary General and co-chair of the World Economic Forum.

The **Earth Charter** Center for Education for Sustainable Development, an **intergovernmental organization** accredited under the **UN Global Compact**, continues *today* to promote UN SDGs, global citizenship, diversity, and align their efforts "*to turn conscience into action in accordance with the Earth Charter.*"

T*he University of Peace and Earth Charter* ***head*** ***UNESCO's education initiatives for Sustainable Development.*** Spirituality and sustainable development are inseparable, having evolved from nature-centered beliefs and traditional and sacred wisdoms of ancient and indigenous cultures.

Muller's ideas embody the agenda of the UN and UNESCO, because most originated from him. Muller dreamed of being honored as Elder of the UN and had submitted thousands of his visionary ideas for a global utopia to the UN.

His **2000 Ideas** leading to the year 2000 were filled with doomsday predictions of planetary demise from "overpopulation" (a **myth** that's proven **deadly**), overconsumption by developed nations producing carbon dioxide-induced global warming (another **mythology**), causing destruction of forests, acid rains, deserts and droughts; poisoning people by pesticides and plastics; and raising cancers and deaths from thinning of the ozonosphere.

He also called for the creation of a world association of "evolutionary scientists" and UN Conference on Evolution.

He went on to produce **4,000** then **7,500** ideas for the year 3000 for the UN – each one growing more fanatical, delusionary, twisted and removed from Biblical teachings or science. It's hard to portray how disturbed and removed from reality they became. But a glimpse may help:

- He said earthism and humanism should be adopted as the new ideologies for the century; called for the study of the meaning of dreams and prophesies; and that the "UN should become the House of Hopes and Dreams." He said all governments should create Ministries of Happiness with an overseeing UN Department of Happiness.

- His number one priority for humanity was to acquire a "cosmic consciousness of the universe" based on the ancient wisdoms from the "Great Spirit of indigenous peoples" and the "Earth-based wisdoms" of the world's 5,000 religions.

- His global consciousness vision **was to teach** children to "aggrandize" themselves so they *will become creation, the universe, infinity, and a divine miraculous self.*

- He **said** the "*salvation of this planet and survival of the human species depend on*" creating a "proper Earth government" through the UN.

- He said every student should be required to take courses in planetary, cosmic and evolutionary consciousness, in ecology, and the UN, and no student should be allowed into business or economic schools first.

- He called for every child to be taught that their "human family" is most important, and that the UN and its agencies take the place of their parents, their personal families, communities, nations, and churches.

- Muller warned that modern transportation would bring the end of humanity and life on this planet; called for rich and affluent people to be disciplined, taxed and penalized for over consumption; and for the UN to establish ideal consumption levels for all regions of the world.

- He called for a "World Emergency Conference to Prevent the End of Life on Earth," saying that humans can no longer dream of industrial, scientific or economic progress. Capitalism is obsolete and must be replaced with collectivism.

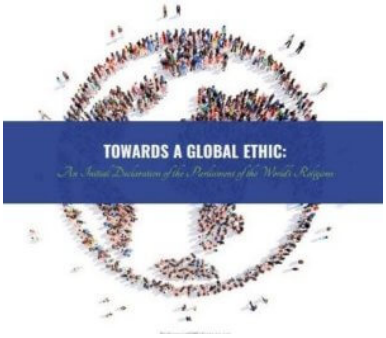
- His global consciousness preached that the Earth does not belong to us, nor was it given by God, but that *we belong to the Earth*. "*We are creatures, children born from the Earth and from the cosmos,"* he wrote. Our brothers are the trees, the sky, the land, the air, the rivers, the beasts and animals, every pine needle, every insect, he wrote. Every part of the Earth is holy.

- He said the beliefs of Chief Seattle should be taught in all schools of the world, that the white man takes from the land, plunders and devours it, leaving only a desert. "*The Earth is his enemy… does not care.*"

- He even called for the erection of special sacred places around the earth, on *sacred hills*, where "humans are elevated" into planetary mystical, cosmic consciousness and thinking. *Christians will immediately recognize the resemblance to "**high places**" in the Old Testament, representing idolatry, pagan worship, and disobedience to God.*

Muller's united interfaith religion goal

Muller called for a worldwide religion under the UN and had submitted over **50 pages** of ideas for a new spirituality. His work expanded the UN's **United Religions Initiative** (URI), to create a united global religion for the new millennium, and the **Parliament of the World's Religions**, which **preaches** *earth-centered socialism, peace, justice and sustainability*.



This interfaith movement's mission is to bring together the world's religions and spiritual communities under the UN's vision. When religions come together, Muller **said**, *"we will have a peaceful, harmonious, fulfilled planet and humanity, functioning according to the laws of the universe."*

Christians understand **these laws** are not of God's Word.

"For the law was given through Moses;
grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" – John 1:17

The worship symbols, prayers, chants, incantations, and ceremonies for world peace encompass dozens of deities, New Age hymns, and occult practices. **URI's charter** and Muller's global religion also openly condemn conservative, traditional, Christian Biblical teachings. **Global ecumenism** is unbiblical, false teaching.

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through me." – John 14:6

Muller's worship of planet Earth

Muller was also the UN guru of **worship to planet Earth**. He and Karan Singh co-chaired the **World Commission on Global Consciousness and Spirituality** in 1998 which gave birth to a network of *global consciousness councils*. Muller became the honorary chair of the **World Wisdom Council**, which led the creation of humanism in UNESCO's education initiatives and its adoption of universal global consciousness.

Preaching **world citizenship**, he said all humans have *"an opportunity to be co-Creators with God and evolution"* in our planetary home. In his testament to life, he **wrote**:

> "The entire planet must elevate itself into the spiritual, cosmic throbbing of the universe… We must become one planetary society."
>
> In the United Nations one is promoted from a national human being to a global, Earth, universal being. It is the greatest school of an expanded consciousness and art of living at this stage of our evolution."
>
> "Earth is our mother and we are her children. We should see the sun, the Earth and all teeming, evolving life forms on our planet as one interdependent whole, as a Sun-Earth reality.…
>
> " beautiful, happy human society will require the search for the laws of harmony of the Earth and of the universe.… we are part of this planet, in flesh, in liquids, in air, in mind, in heart, in life, in death and in rebirth. Being born from the Earth and being an intimate part of her, we must understand Her, listen to Her, cherish Her, blend with Her and not conquer Her."
>
> "O my planet Earth! The yearly UN Earth Day on the spring equinox in March should become the most important day of the year."

Father of Global Education

Despite these troubled ideologies, Muller is called the **Father of Global Education.** The author of 22 books, he was **nominated** for the Nobel Peace Prize 32 times. *He was personally responsible for establishing eleven of the 18 **UN agencies** and 14 world programs, all aligned with his curriculum.*

By 2013, there were **43 Robert Muller Schools** using his World Core Curriculum. The current number of schools around the world are hard to pin down as they all have different and ever changing New-Age-y names.

The first Robert Muller School opened in **Arlington, Texas** in 1979 and was founded by Gloria Crook as a branch of the **School of Ageless Wisdom**, which she founded **in 1977**. It's now the **international coordinating center** for schools implementing Muller's World Core Curriculum. It has also **managed** GEMUN (Global Elementary Model United Nations) since 1988.

Muller's World Core Curriculum for global education goes further than past holistic curriculums and educators, to ***experientially teach spiritual inner and outer peace, the "cosmic laws and principles of holism," social mindedness, and bring global awareness and connectedness.***

In furthering UNESCO's culture of peace program, started in 1992, his curriculum teaches that a new conscious, spiritual, holistic-centered education is the solution to bringing *spiritual transformation and social chang*e.

Education is no longer about preparing students for a known world, Muller tells teachers, but about directing students to *imagine a world* as it is becoming, *sense a new reality of the soul and enlightened higher kingdom,* and freely *choose their own desires and impulses* in response to this new world vision. Children are tasked with their own learning. Rather than schools and teachers sharing knowledge and facts with students, teachers are simply "**facilitators**," or "guides" to draw students out of themselves and into the spiritual world.

How many parents realize a **new creation religion** is being taught to their children under UNESCO guidelines?

But it gets worse.

Occultism is the core teachings of World Core Curriculum

Preface

Muller's *World Core Curriculum Manual* **states** in the Preface that its philosophy is based on the teachings of **Alice Bailey** (1880-1949), considered one of the "prophetesses" and founders of the New Age Movement. Her "Ten Point Plan to Destroy Christianity" focused on **theosophy**, a 19th century occult movement traced to gnosticism and neoplatonism.

Bailey was a **luciferian occultist** who established **Lucis Trust** in the early 1920s, with her husband Foster, to teach universal New Age spirituality and establish a one world religion. Their publishing company, Lucifer Publishing Company, was named after the Prince of Darkness and published multitudes of her "theosophy" occult **literature**.

Her followers fill the UN's Spiritual Caucus and her prayers have been read at UN events, including by Eleanor Roosevelt at World Invocation Day in 1952. This day has been observed every year since then, on the Gemini full moon, to "summon spiritual energies of light, love and purpose."

As a tax-exempt nonprofit, Lucis Trust is headquartered at the UN Plaza and had an estimated $4.5 million in assets and $1.57 million in revenue in 2023, according to its **IRS 990 Filing**. Lucis Trust has **consulting status** with the Economic and Social Council of the UN, and its organization, **World Goodwill**, is recognized as a UN nongovernmental organization. Lucis Trust supports the UN and its SDGs for Humanity, and built the UN library.

As unbelievable as all of this sounds, the UN now recognizes meditation as part of its Sustainable Development Goals, and hosts a **meditation room** at the UN headquarters, and celebrates

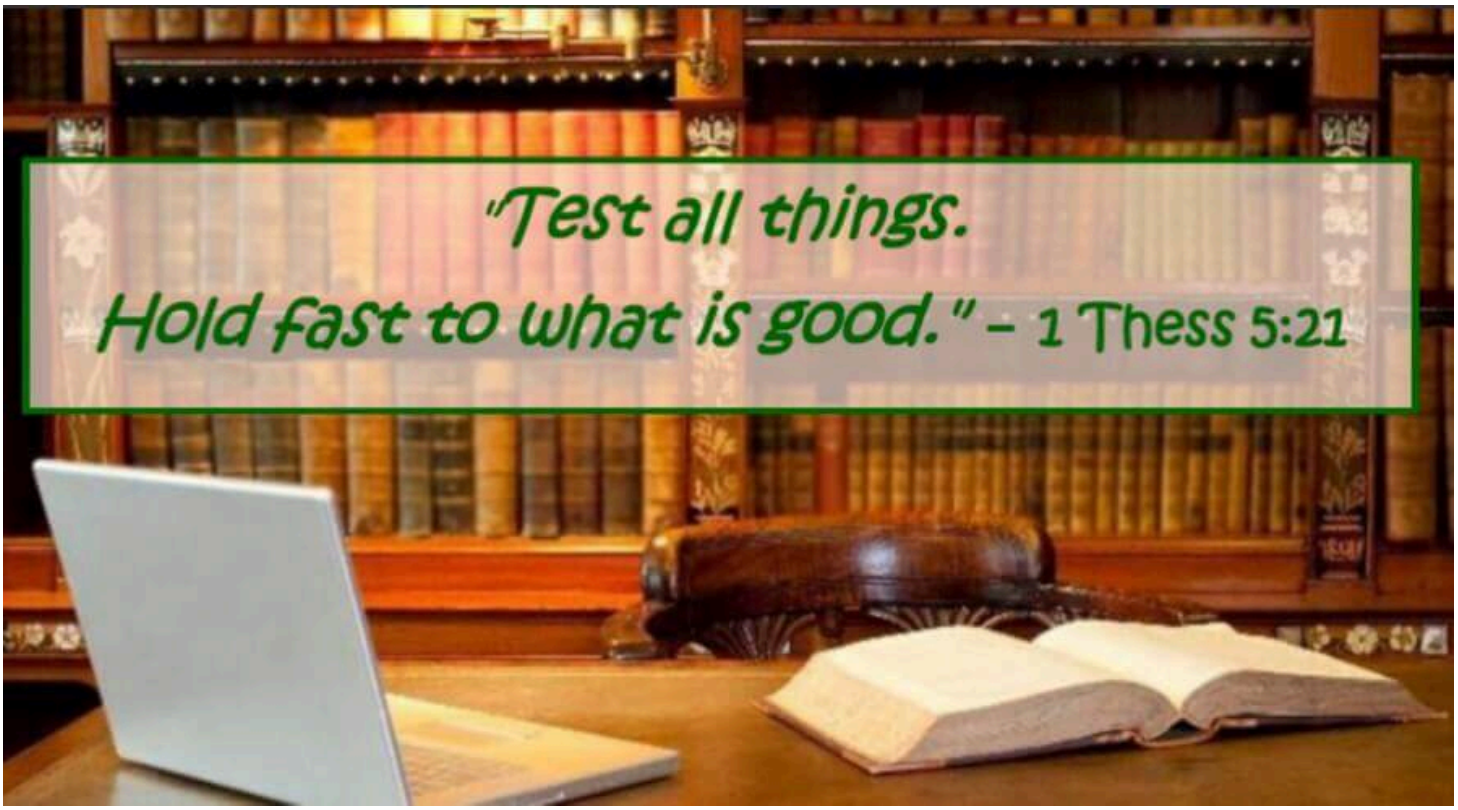
countless global meditation **observances** with mindfulness for global peace and harmony. Many New Age concepts are now promoted by globalists and the UN (including WHO and UNESCO) surrounding "wellness," mental health, and healthism for a healthier world.

The School of Ageless Wisdom in Texas, the first Muller school and headquarters of GEMUN, **teaches** "the truth of oneness." It has classes on astrology ("**astrochemistry**"); **zodiacal energies** as the earth, sun and moon sweep through the zodiac; the Tibetan "Masters of Wisdom;" full moon meditation and "truths" realized in the consciousness; and evolutionary reincarnation. Daily **meditations** pledge discipleship to astrology, Ashram of Sanat Kumara, "the Planetary Antahkarana as a strong cable of Enlightened Consciousness," and "energies of the Monad pouring through the head center to the Ajna center." Its Great Invocation focuses on the knowing as a trained White Magician. The schools textbooks are published by Lucis Trust, Agni Yoga Society and Wisdom Impressions Publications.

Next, as surreal as all of this is, we'll dig into how globalism indoctrination came to be required in America's schools and is subjecting every one of our children to a UN-globalist worldview that is far removed from Biblical.

What are Our Children Being Taught? – UN's New Age Spirituality

MARCH 20, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OUR CHILDREN, OUR NATION UNDER GOD, WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN BEING TAUGHT?



By Sandy Szwarc
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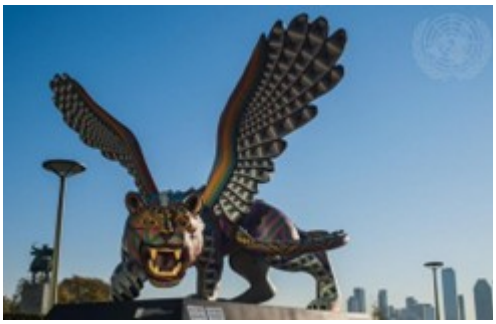
As we learned **earlier in this series**, the United Nations' vision of education for all children in the world is under the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The humanist Fathers of America's public education system and founders of UNESCO, along with nonprofit foundations of wealthy elite globalists, activist teachers organized in the world's largest trade union, and tainted politicians, joined forces to implant a global socialist ideology into every aspect of America's schools.

The core of the educational movement to transform America's children into global citizens is not about academics, however. It is a spiritual battle for their souls.

United Nations – A Global Sect

To really understand the United Nations is to understand that it is a religion, a theosophical cult based on an evolutionary vision for mankind and the planet. At its core is unifying all people in an ***earth-centered spirituality*** that believes in the sacredness of nature and the Earth.



Earth spirit world worship follows **pagan** practices of ancient and indigenous religions around the world and involves worship of idols, goddesses, nature, and deities; rituals and rites, meditation, dreams and visions, chanting, mysticism, and divination. Contemporary versions of **nature** worship and **new age spirituality** include Gaia worship, Wicca, Druidry, Unitarian Universalism, **New Apostolic Reformation**, **charismatic revivalism**, and various New Age religions with personal emotional-experiential **practices** and those seeking harmony with the rhythms of the Earth and cosmos.

These **New Age spiritualities** are **eclectic** but share a belief in a divine-spiritual energy in everything in the universe, and that nature is alive and holy, and to be revered. New Age mystical teachings see a oneness between the earthly-material and spiritual world. The value of human life is believed equal to that of plants or animals or Mother Earth. A "holistic" person is one centered with nature and achieves peace and harmony with the planet. Through contemplative prayer or meditation to cleanse and open the mind, they believe man can experience direct new mystical **revelations** from God and become one with God, one with nature, and achieve global unity with all people.

"Eco-spirituality" is one rendition of earth-centered spirituality gaining in popularity. Its supporters try to deny that it's a New Age religion or pagan worship. But it is. It is a false worship of mother Gaia, and an Earth-derived spirituality *apart from Christ in the Bible*. Bereans describe it as a "**pagan green movement**" that Christians should biblically challenge. Eco-spirituality is embraced by countless **foundations** aligned with the UN, ecumenical environmental groups, fallen **religious leaders**, and by the interfaith movement which has incorporated environmental sustainability, UN's SDGs, and climate change radicalism. The global **Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development** has even rewritten Scriptures to create its own Eco-Bible.

As unbelievable as this may sound, the evidence for UN's cult spirituality has been out in the open all along. Pagan idols are just one illustration. Outside the UN Headquarters is a giant jaguar-eagle **idol** called the "guardian for international peace and security."

A carved **goddess spirit** figure and a bird with spread wings hangs above the UN Trusteeship Council Chamber. Commissioned in 1953, it represents mankind's flight upward to greater heights

in the same spirit as the wings of the bird.

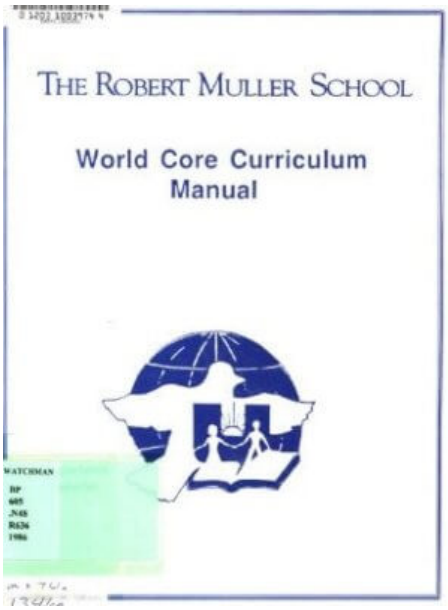
Christians will recognize its likeness to the carved images of **Asherah**, the false pagan goddess of the Old Testament, part of the offensive practices of the nations that the LORD drove out. (1 Kings 15:13, 2 Kings 21:7) This goddess was a Canaanite cultic deity, Earth Mother and Fertility Goddess, Queen of Heaven, and the mother of Baal, according to ancient mythologies.

Asharah worship involved sexual immorality, divination, fortune telling, and human sacrifices of the firstborn child. It was evil in the sight of the LORD, an abomination, heretical, and **disobedience** to God, according to Scripture.

As Christians recognize, all such **idolatry** breaks God's **First Commandment.**

"*I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me.*" – Exodus 20:2-3

World Core Curriculum – New Age Spirituality

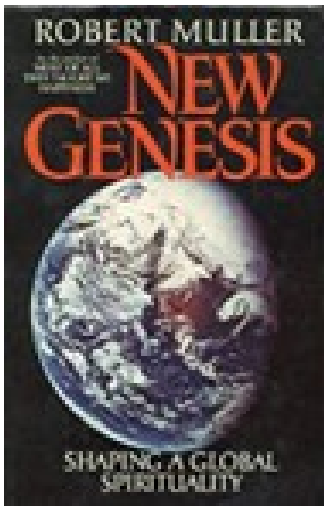


Teaching children to see all people on the earth as one interconnected and global family has used an unproven learning theory: experiential, emotional learning, and programming children in a "global consciousness." It's part of a long list of **learning theory myths**. Like all of them, the *experimental learning theory* being imposed on public school children has decades of research showing *no evidence of positively helping student learning or academic performance*.

Nonetheless, the same entities that orchestrated Common Core came together again in 1985 to call for school curriculums to focus on globalism. The National Education Association (NEA) and its Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) lobbied intensely **nationwide** and worldwide, pushing for the adoption of the "**World-Core Curriculum**" and its "holistic education." ASCD even pressed for the curriculum at a 12-nation curriculum **symposium** held in the Netherlands.

The World Core Curriculum became so internationally recognized, it earned its creator, **Robert Muller** (1923-2010), the **UNESCO Prize for Peace Education** in 1989 and launched the UN's

Global Education Project, founded on his curriculum.



This curriculum was aligned with UN's SDGs and based on guidelines from the book, ***New Genesis: Shaping A Global Spirituality*** by Muller written while he was assistant secretary-general of the United Nations.

Muller's vision for a new one-world religion, "a global spirituality," was based on his rewriting of **Genesis** in the Bible – where his version of the first seven days of creation brought: a new era of the Earth, Planet of Peace, Planet of Happiness, Planet of Justice, Golden Planet, Planet of Reason, and on the seventh day, the Planet of God.

Muller's book also envisioned a New Age Jesus who was politically progressive and taught oneness, unity and brotherhood through a worldwide spiritual **ecumenism**. "If Christ came back to earth, his first visit would be to the United Nations to see if his dream of human oneness and brotherhood had come true," he wrote.

Christians will recognize **global ecumenism** as the unbiblical false teachings that God warned against 2,000 years ago. As Spiritual Research Network explained in an in-depth **article** of this false doctrine: "Global ecumenism is a *compromised* unity that feverishly utilizes Christian nomenclature (words, terms, expressions), but at its very core rejects *biblical* unity."

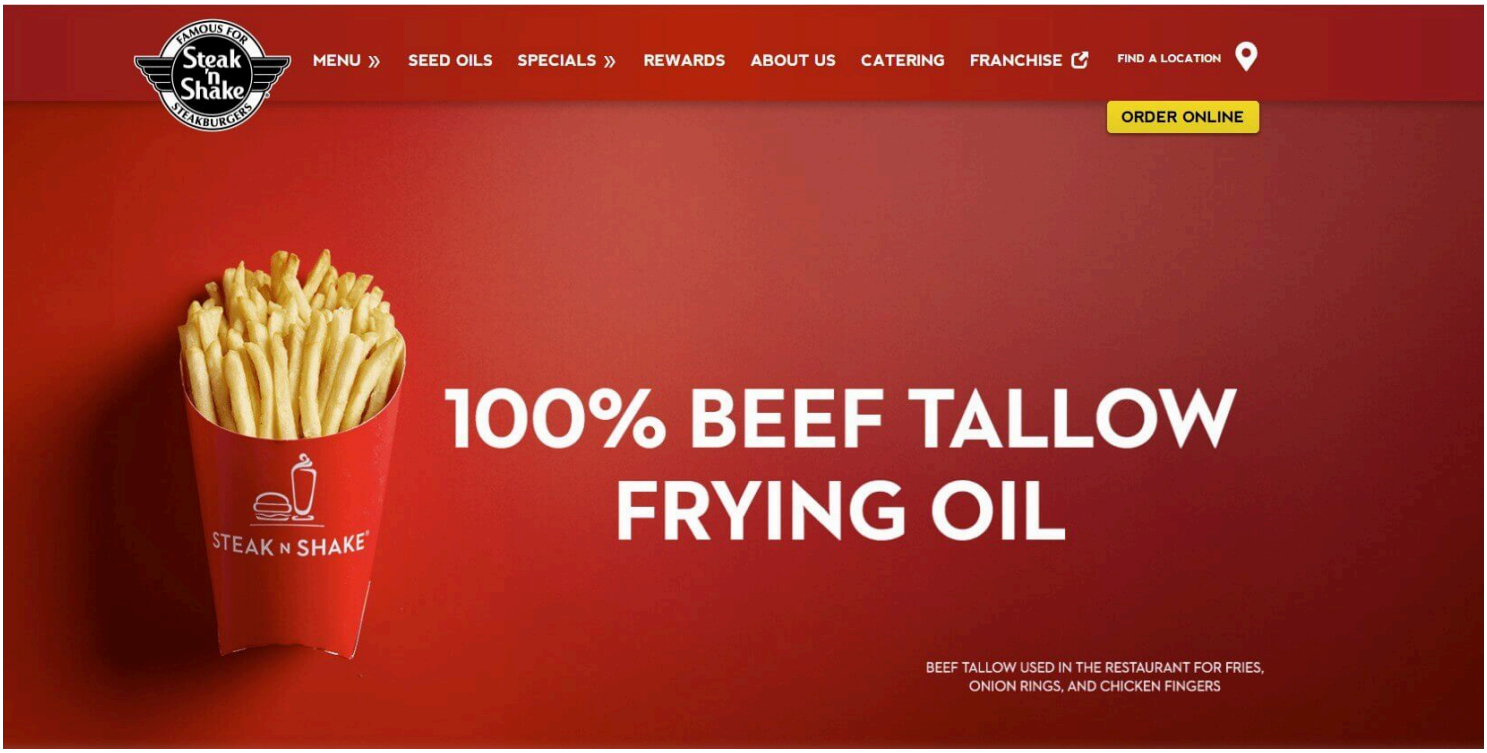
The falsehoods of the coming new world religion were described **in a series** by Biblical scholars at Berean Call, also available on **YouTube**.

"See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray." – Matthew 24:4

Next, we'll learn who Robert Muller was, what he believed, and how he came to be known as the Father of Global Education.

RFK Jr. and Hannity Take on Food Transparency sharing Steak n'Shake's Burgers, Fries, and the Fight for America's Health

MARCH 12, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, SANCTITY OF LIFE



RFK Jr. and Hannity "break bread" at **Steak n' Shake** to discuss the importance of the 'Making America Healthy Again' initiative on 'Hannity.'

The Growing Health Crisis: A Call for Change

Despite spending more on healthcare than any other nation, the United States faces an alarming health crisis. Chronic diseases, obesity, and mental health struggles are on the rise. Robert F. Kennedy Jr., in a recent interview with ***Hannity***, emphasized how processed foods and industrialized ingredients have contributed to the nation's declining health. He called for radical transparency in food production and a return to traditional, nutrient-dense ingredients.

His message is simple yet powerful:

> Americans need to know **what's in their food** and how it affects their health. But can we reclaim our health without falling into government overreach?

RFK Jr.: We are poisoning ourselves
https://youtube.com/watch?v=XGetyhC4qVg

A Health Crisis Fueled by Processed Foods

Kennedy highlighted staggering statistics that illustrate the urgency of this issue:

- **66% of adults** and **38% of teens** in America are pre-diabetic or diabetic.
- **Obesity rates have skyrocketed**, with 80% of adults and 50% of children classified as overweight or obese.
- **Mental health struggles**, including **anxiety and depression**, are increasingly linked to poor dietary habits.
- **77% of young Americans** are unfit for military service due to various health-related issues, including but not limited to obesity.
- The **U.S. spends twice as much on healthcare** as other developed nations, yet it ranks poorly in health outcomes.

Kennedy argues that one of the biggest culprits is the **ultra-processed foods dominating the American diet**, filled with artificial preservatives, seed oils, and synthetic additives that negatively impact metabolic and neurological health.

The Problem with Modern Food: What Changed?

Corporate food giants have prioritized cost-cutting over nutrition for decades, replacing traditional ingredients with highly processed, synthetic alternatives. Kennedy points out how seed oils, once unheard of, have now become a staple in most fast foods and packaged products.

But there's hope—some companies are starting to make positive changes. Steak 'n Shake, **Popeyes**, Outback, Buffalo Wild Wings, and other food chains have begun transitioning from seed oils to traditional beef tallow and healthier fats.

The movement isn't about government control—it's about empowering individuals with knowledge to make better food choices.

The Case for Food Transparency: Health and Personal Responsibility

Kennedy emphasizes that people should be able to make their own choices about what they eat—but to do so, they must have access to accurate, clear information about food ingredients and their impact on health. His focus is on transparency and informed consumer decision-making, not government mandates.

From a **Christian worldview**, caring for our bodies is a form of stewardship. Scripture reminds us that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20), and how we fuel them matters.

From a constitutional perspective, while Kennedy does not explicitly frame food transparency as a legal right, his advocacy for corporate accountability and informed consumer choice aligns with the broader principles of free-market ethics and personal responsibility.

Why Knowing What You Eat Matters

Kennedy's advocacy for **real food and informed decision-making** aligns with both Biblical and ethical principles. Here's why it's critical:

- **Ultra-processed foods fuel chronic disease**—knowing what's in your food can help you make healthier choices.
- **Seed oils and artificial additives contribute to inflammation and obesity**—returning to natural, traditional fats is a better option.
- **Consumers have the right to know what they're eating**—corporate accountability and transparency should be expected, not optional.

- **Biblical stewardship calls for caring for our bodies**—this isn't about diet trends but about honoring God's design.
- **Informed choice, not government mandates, should drive change**—people should be free to make their own dietary decisions based on accurate information.

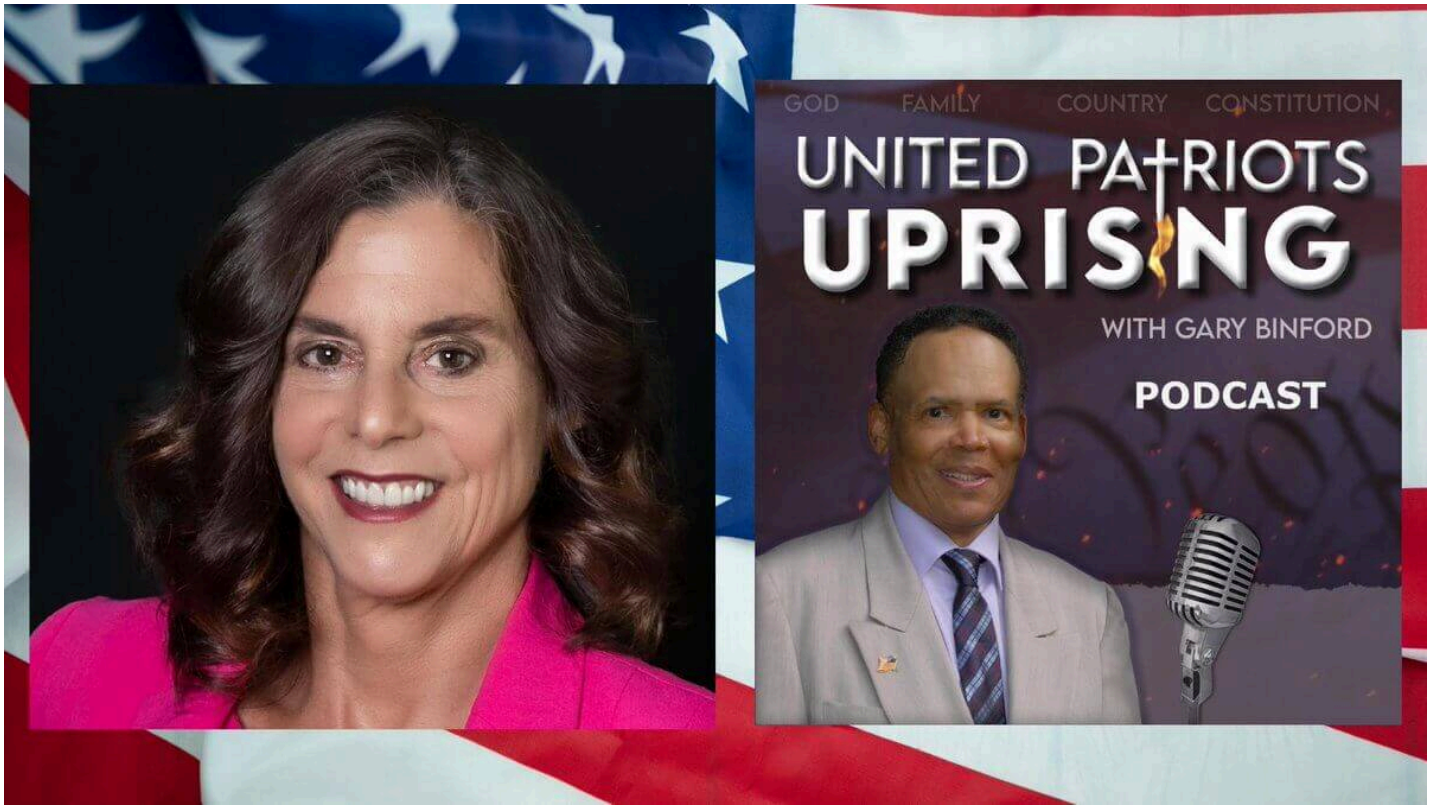
Final Thoughts: The Path to a Healthier Nation

Kennedy's *Making America Healthy Again* movement is about **more than just food—it's about reclaiming control of our health**.

Change starts with awareness. If more companies embrace transparency, and if more individuals make informed choices, we can **reverse the nation's health decline without unnecessary government control**.

Faith and Freedom: How Biblical Truths Can Save America From Marxism

MARCH 1, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNITED PATRIOTS UPRISING WITH GARY BINFORD



The Battle for America's Soul

The battle for America's soul is being waged on multiple fronts—culturally, politically, and spiritually. But at the heart of it all lies a fundamental question:

Do our rights come from God or from the government?

Author and journalist Cheryl Chumley asserts that America's survival depends on its people recognizing that our liberties are divinely bestowed, not government-granted. Without this understanding, our nation risks falling deeper into the grip of Marxism, collectivism, and tyranny.

Cheryl Chumley's Call to Action

In a recent episode of ***United Patriots Uprising* with Gary Binford**, Chumley passionately outlined the stakes. She emphasized that the erosion of America's Judeo-Christian foundations has paved the way for government overreach, cultural decay, and the rise of socialist ideologies. Her latest

book, ***God-Given or Bust: Defeating Marxism and Saving America with Biblical Truths,*** provides a compelling argument for restoring biblical principles as the cornerstone of American life.

Cheryl Chumley Spotlights How To Defeat Marxism/Save America By Using Biblical Truths
https://youtube.com/watch?v=dboTZr3HCec

How Secularism Undermines Freedom

Chumley's insights shed light on how history has been rewritten to remove the role of faith in America's founding. Many younger Americans have no idea that the Founding Fathers built this nation upon the belief that our rights come from God, not a bureaucratic institution. As she explains, secularism has created a moral vacuum that the government, eager for control, has readily filled.

The Dangers of Government Dependence

This growing dependence on government is not accidental. From Marxist ideology to collectivist policies, the erosion of faith has led people to believe that their well-being is in the hands of politicians rather than the Creator. Chumley warns that once the government controls your rights, it can take them away at will—a reality evident in every socialist and communist regime in history.

A Former Atheist's Perspective
A former atheist herself, Chumley brings a unique perspective to this issue. She recounts her journey from disbelief to faith, illustrating how recognizing God's authority fundamentally reshaped her understanding of liberty and governance. Her experience serves as a testament to the fact that true freedom cannot be sustained without acknowledging the divine source of our rights.

Churches Must Stand Firm

The discussion also tackled the alarming trend of churches bowing to government mandates, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Chumley and Binford highlighted the troubling reality that many religious institutions, instead of standing as beacons of faith and defiance against tyranny, willingly complied with unconstitutional restrictions. This, they argue, is a sign of how far America has drifted from its biblical roots.

A Spiritual Awakening is Needed

Ultimately, the path to reclaiming America rests not solely on politics or policies but on a spiritual awakening. Chumley emphasizes that Christians must take bold stands in their communities, workplaces, and churches to reaffirm their allegiance to God first—not the state. Only through a renewed commitment to biblical truth can America hope to defeat the creeping influence of Marxism and restore the freedoms upon which it was founded.

Take Action Today

For those who care about America's future, *God-Given or Bust* is more than a book—it's a call to action. The battle is not merely about elections or policies; it is a fight for the nation's soul. And in that fight, biblical truth is the most powerful weapon of all.

Find *God-Given or Bust* on Amazon, Post Hill Press, or wherever books are sold. To stay updated with Cheryl Chumley's insights, follow her on X (**@CKChumley**) and subscribe to her *Bold and Blunt* podcast via *The Washington Times*.

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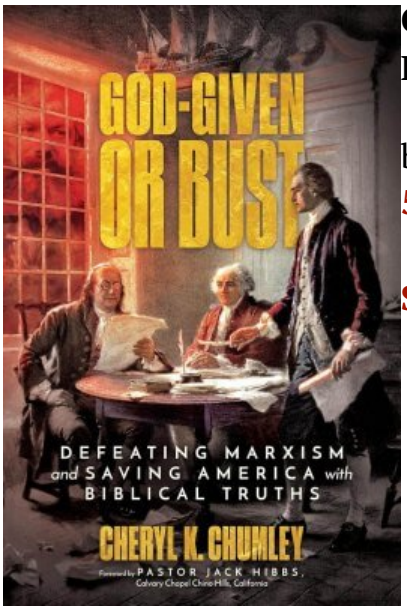


God-Given or Bust: Defeating Marxism and Saving America with Biblical Truths Hardcover – January 14, 2025

by **Cheryl K. Chumley** (Author), **Jack Hibbs** (Foreword)
5.0 ***5.0 out of 5 stars*** **1 rating**

See all formats and editions

In America, either rights come from God—or they don't. This is the ultimate war, and God-Given or Bust tells how patriots can win.

American exceptionalism is rooted in the idea that individual rights come from God and government is only in place to preserve and protect those rights. But America's losing sight of that concept. America's turning into a country where the government grants rights and privileges to only those the government deems worthy—and takes them from those it deems unworthy. This is not how the Founding Fathers envisioned the nation; this is not how the concept of inalienable rights coming from a Creator works. Rather, this is how Marxism, communism, and collectivism spread.

If we want a nation that's free for generations to come, then we must reclaim the notion of God-given and ditch the idea of government-granted. The only way to do that is for Americans of faith

to rise up and inject biblical values and godly principles into government, culture, and society, and put God once again at the center. It's time to demand the God-given—or the great American experiment will come to an end.

The Lion Must Roar: A Call for Strength in America

FEBRUARY 10, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, US CONSTITUTION

Trump, the Super Bowl Ad, and the Return to True Leadership

The recent Super Bowl ad featuring the U.S. Secret Service, produced by Michael Bay and shared by President Trump, is more than just a recruiting effort—it's a signal of a cultural shift. After years of military recruitment campaigns focusing on social messaging rather than strength, this ad—along with a resurgence of warfighter-focused Army promotions—marks a return to the idea that **strength, discipline, and courage are virtues, not liabilities**.

In this pivotal moment, where national security and cultural battles collide, we are reminded of a timeless truth: **every once in a while, the lion must remind the jackals who he is**. Whether in warfare, leadership, or the preservation of America's founding values, strength must not be abandoned. Instead, it must be reclaimed.

Benny Johnson's breakdown of these ads highlights how the tides are turning. The Army and Secret Service are refocusing on their true mission: defending the nation. This shift isn't just political—it's a necessary correction, aligning with both **biblical principles of righteous leadership and the constitutional responsibility to provide for the common defense**.

Now, as the cultural battle intensifies, it is time for **leaders, warriors, and citizens alike to stand firm, reject weakness, and embrace the strength needed to secure America's future.**

Trump Drops Secret Service Super Bowl Ad Featuring His Own Assassination | Will Give You CHILLS 🇺🇸
https://youtube.com/watch?v=Oy2uJjpruR8

The Lion Must Rise: A Biblical and Constitutional Perspective on Strength and Leadership

In every generation, there comes a moment when the strong must rise to defend what is right. The imagery of the lion in the video—calm yet watchful, patient yet unyielding—reflects a deep truth found in both the Bible and the founding principles of America. The lion, though surrounded by hyenas, does not react immediately. He waits, biding his time, until the moment comes when he must remind the jackals who he is. This is not just a metaphor for military strength but for the broader need to reclaim **courage, discipline, and righteous leadership** in an era that seems determined to weaken them.

Strength and Leadership in Biblical Terms

The Bible repeatedly calls for **strong, bold leadership**, not passivity in the face of opposition. Proverbs 28:1 declares, *"The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion."* This verse speaks to the virtue of righteous strength—standing firm, unafraid, even when surrounded by those who mock, deceive, or attack. Just as the lion does not bow to the hyenas, those who walk in truth must not bow to societal pressures that seek to dilute strength in favor of compromise.

Throughout scripture, men of God were called to **lead with strength and righteousness**. Joshua, standing on the edge of the Promised Land, was commanded by God, *"Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."*

(Joshua 1:9). Leadership requires resolve. It requires an understanding that compromise with wickedness leads to destruction, but standing firm in truth leads to victory.

Today, we are witnessing a crisis in leadership. Too many who should be warriors—whether in the military, government, or even the church—are choosing **appeasement over boldness, comfort over conviction**. This weakening of the backbone of our institutions has left them vulnerable to forces that do not seek justice but submission. The call for stronger, more focused leadership is not about violence or arrogance but about standing for what is right, **protecting the innocent, and ensuring justice prevails**.

The Constitutional Mandate for Strength

From the very foundation of America, strength and moral courage were at the heart of leadership. The Founding Fathers understood that **freedom is never free**—it must be protected by those willing to bear the burden of defending it. George Washington, a man known for his unwavering commitment to duty, once stated, *"To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace."* Strength, when properly wielded, is not about aggression but about deterrence. It is about ensuring that **evil does not advance unchecked**.

The U.S. Constitution entrusts the federal government with the responsibility to **provide for the common defense**, recognizing that a strong military is essential to the survival of the Republic. However, in recent years, there has been a troubling shift—a movement that prioritizes social engineering over combat readiness, ideology over discipline. The military's core mission is simple: **to protect the nation, to deter threats, and, if necessary, to fight and win wars**. When recruitment efforts focus on diversity quotas instead of tactical excellence, when soldiers are trained to focus on **sensitivity training rather than strength training**, we see the unraveling of an institution that was never meant to be politicized.

The recent resurgence of military recruitment ads emphasizing **strength, discipline, and warfighting capability** is a step in the right direction. These ads signal a long-overdue return to the understanding that the **military is not a social experiment—it is a fighting force**. The concept that "strong men are harder to kill" is not just a slogan; it is a reality proven throughout history. **A military that trains for toughness, rather than ideological conformity, is a military that wins**.

The Role of Masculinity in National and Spiritual Strength

Another crucial theme in this cultural shift is the return to **masculinity as a virtue, not a problem to be solved**. The Bible speaks highly of men who stand firm, who protect, who lead with wisdom and strength. **Jesus Himself, while full of grace and truth, was no weakling.** He

overturned the tables in the temple, rebuked the Pharisees with boldness, and laid down His life not out of helplessness but out of divine purpose.

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 16:13, *"Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong."* The erosion of strong, principled manhood has led to the collapse of moral order in society. When fathers abandon their families, when leaders refuse to speak the truth out of fear, when warriors are told to lay down their arms in favor of passive acceptance, **the very fabric of civilization begins to fray**.

Masculinity, properly understood, is about **responsibility, courage, and the willingness to sacrifice for others**. It is about standing in the gap when danger arises. It is about training, preparing, and being ready—not just physically but mentally and spiritually. The military's return to embracing toughness is a reflection of a broader need in culture. **We need strong men who are unafraid to lead, who are willing to stand up for truth, and who refuse to be silenced by cultural pressures.**

The Battle Against Deception and Weakness

In Isaiah 5:20, we find a chilling warning: *"Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness."* We live in an age where deception is rampant, where weakness is praised, and where those who stand for truth are labeled as **extremists**. But the reality remains—**without strength, without resolve, without warriors ready to stand in the gap, nations fall**.

It is not enough to simply **hope that things will improve**. There must be a conscious effort to **reject the lies that seek to weaken us and embrace the truth that calls us to action**. This means supporting leaders who stand firm, rejecting policies that undermine the nation's strength, and raising a generation that understands **the value of discipline, honor, and faith**.

Conclusion: The Lion Must Roar

There comes a time when the lion must rise. A time when those who have been **pushed, mocked, and surrounded must stand up and remind the world who they are**. This is not a call to reckless aggression, but to **righteous boldness**. It is a reminder that **strength, when guided by wisdom and justice, is a force for good**.

Biblically and constitutionally, the call for a **return to strength, discipline, and leadership** is not just a passing trend—it is a necessity. The world does not become safer when the strong are silenced. It does not become more just when the warriors lay down their arms. The road ahead is clear: **we must stand, we must fight for what is right, and we must never be afraid to show the world who we are.**

Because the time comes, **the lion must remind the jackals who he is.**

Stacy Washington Speaks on How to Cancel Woke, Save Our Children, Restore God

FEBRUARY 6, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: GODLY RELATIONSHIPS, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNITED PATRIOTS UPRISING WITH GARY BINFORD

In this compelling interview, Stacy Washington sits down with Gary Binford to discuss the urgent need for Christians to stand firm in their faith while pushing back against the destructive forces of woke ideology. Watch the video below to gain powerful insights on how to protect your family, preserve your values, and reclaim America's foundation in biblical truth.

> ***"Left, Right, or Truth? It's time to speak up, speak out, and hear the truth. But most importantly, it's time to tear down the wall – the false wall separating religion and politics."*** **Stacy Washington**

The Battle for America: Good vs. Evil

Woke culture, cancel culture, and radical ideologies have infiltrated American institutions, threatening the foundation our Founding Fathers built on. But as Stacy Washington, host of **Stacy on the Right** on SiriusXM explains, this is not a political battle—it's a spiritual one between good and evil.

In her book **Eternally Cancel Proof: A Guide for Courageous Christians Navigating the Political Battlefront,** Washington presents a blueprint for Christians and conservatives who refuse to be silenced by radical leftist ideology. She reminds us that we must be spiritually and politically engaged to preserve our freedoms and protect our families.

Stacy Washington Speaks On How To Cancel Woke, Save Our Children, Restore God
https://youtube.com/watch?v=YiBhv_Q7JHE

Subscribe to Gary Binford's YouTube Channel, visit his Radio Influence Page, and stay informed!

Why the Woke Agenda Won't Simply Fade Away

Many once dismissed woke ideology as a passing trend. However, as Washington points out in her interview with Gary Binford on the **United Patriots Uprising YouTube channel**, the movement has entrenched itself into every aspect of American life—from education to media, politics, and churches. She warns that unless we take decisive action, these forces will continue to erode our freedoms and redefine the nation's moral compass.

She explains how Donald Trump's presidency interrupted the progressive agenda and how his return to the White House is essential to restoring the constitutional and biblical principles upon which America's foundational principles were founded. Washington emphasizes that Christians must step up—not just in prayer but also in civic engagement—ensuring that biblical values guide policies at every level, from local school boards to the highest offices in the land.

Reclaiming Our Children from the Left

One of Washington's most urgent messages is for parents: Do not allow the culture to raise your children. Hollywood, social media, and public education are actively indoctrinating children with ideologies that contradict biblical truth. She stresses that parents must intentionally build strong relationships with their children, counteracting the lies being fed to them and reinforcing Christian values at home.

By homeschooling, carefully monitoring what children are exposed to, and openly discussing faith, parents can protect their families from the dangers of leftist ideology. Washington urges parents not to fall into the trap of thinking they are powerless in this fight. Instead, she encourages them to use their voice and influence to push back against policies that seek to undermine parental authority.

Engaging in the Fight for America's Future

While many feel overwhelmed by the political chaos of recent years, Washington reassures believers that God is still in control. However, as she explains, faith must be accompanied by action. The Bible repeatedly shows that God calls His people to take a stand—whether it was Joshua conquering Canaan, David facing Goliath, or the early Christians spreading the Gospel in the face of persecution.

Washington challenges Christians to be bold in their faith, recognize the spiritual nature of today's cultural battles, and refuse to compromise biblical truth. She highlights the power of

prayer, community, and unwavering faith as tools for bringing about lasting change.

The Call to Action: Get Involved, Stay Engaged

Stacy Washington's message is clear: If Christians and conservatives do not engage, the left will continue to dismantle everything America stands for. Whether voting, running for local office, advocating for parental rights, or standing firm in biblical truth, every effort counts.

Her book Eternally Cancel Proof serves as both a warning and a guide—reminding readers that now is not the time to remain silent. Instead, it is a time to reclaim our nation, faith, and future.

To explore these urgent issues more deeply, watch the full interview with Stacy Washington on Gary Binford's United Patriots Uprising YouTube channel. And don't forget to subscribe to his channel to stay informed and engaged in the fight for truth!

Where to Find Stacy Washington:

- Eternally Cancel Proof is available on Amazon.
- Catch her show, Stacy on the Right, on SiriusXM, Salem News Channel, and various online platforms.
- Follow her on social media: @Stacyontheright on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook.

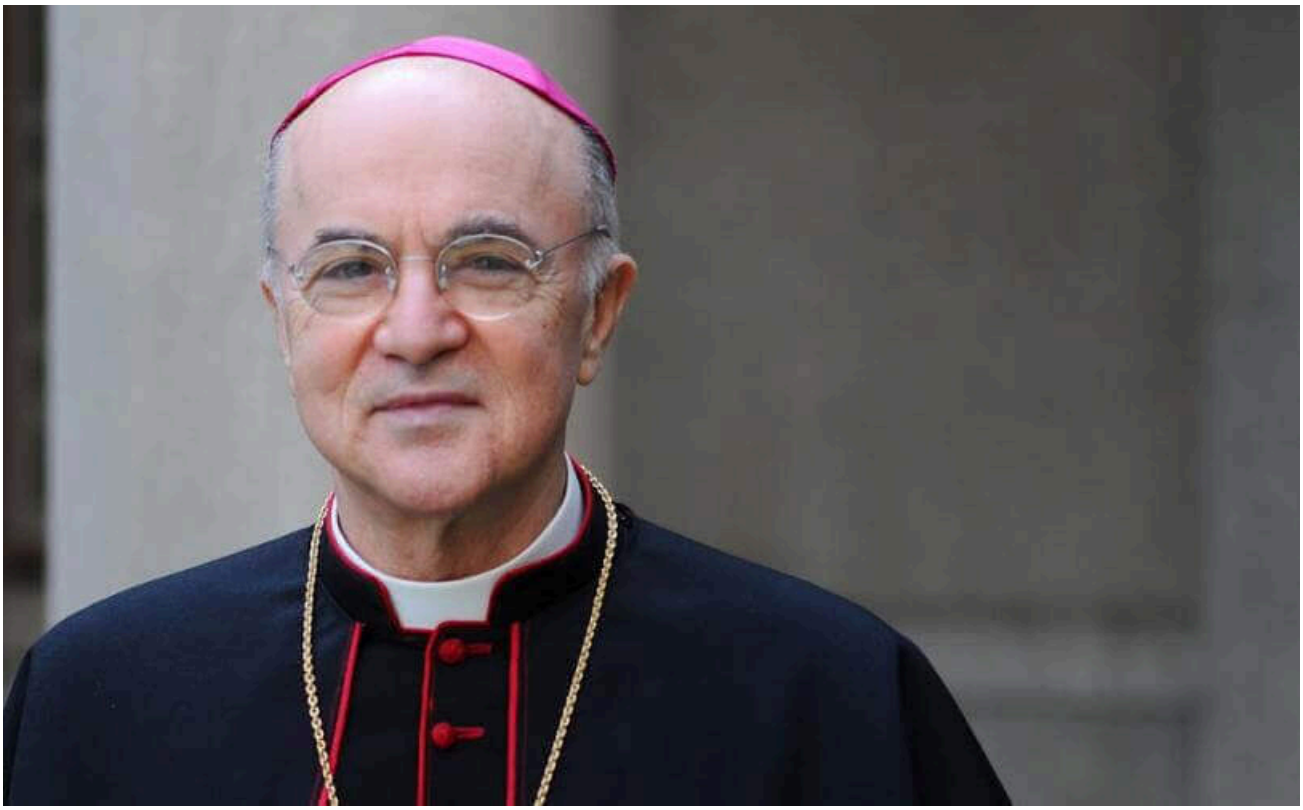
Final Thoughts

As Stacy Washington reminds us, this challenge transcends politics—it speaks to the survival of faith, freedom, and family in America. Christians must now boldly take a stand, trust in God's guidance, and actively restore biblical values to our society. Will you join this critical fight?

Subscribe to **Gary Binford's YouTube Channel** and stay informed!

Archbishop Viganò: Corrupt clergy use Satanic deception to annul the Word of God

JANUARY 6, 2025
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Remaining faithful to the Word of God means remaining faithful to the Gospel, to doctrine, to Tradition, and to the Mass of all time in which the words, spoken in the sacred language of the Church, keep their meaning intact, as light shines in darkness.

(**LifeSiteNews**) — *The following is a **sermon** by Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò for the Octave of Most Holy Christmas.*

The first day of January coincides with the Octave of Christmas, when the Liturgy is centered on the Circumcision of the Lord and the Divine Motherhood of Mary Most Holy, proclaimed by the Council of Ephesus in 431 as *Deipara* – in Greek *Theotokos* – or Mother of God. In ancient times, two Masses were celebrated on this day, one of the Octave and one in honor of the Virgin Mother. Later the memory of the Marian celebration remained in the *postcommunio* and in the station church at Santa Maria in Trastevere.

In the Incarnation, the Word of God became flesh, making fruitful the unblemished virginity of the Holy Mother of the Redeemer. The Word takes shape – *Verbum caro factum est* – generating Emmanuel in the womb of the Virgin, by the power of the Holy Spirit. *And he will be called*, as

Scripture says in Isaiah's prophecy, *admirable counsellor, strong God, Prince of peace, Father of the coming age, Angel of the great counsel* (Is 9:6). Even the Archangel Gabriel, in bringing the announcement to Mary, says to her: *Behold, you will conceive and bear a son, and you will call his name Jesus. He will be great and called the Son of the Most High; the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end* (Lk 1:31-33). With the Circumcision, His Name is imposed on Him: Jesus, God saves.

To name someone or something means to define the person or thing in its essence. And this is the prerogative of the Most Holy Trinity, of the Triune God who manifests Himself by revealing His Name. In the creative act, the name designates creation itself: *Let there be light. And there was light* (Gen 1:3). *And he called the light day and the darkness night* (Gen 1:5); *he called the firmament heaven*; *he called the dry land the earth and the mass of the waters the sea* (Gen 1:10). Having decreed that man should be in His image and likeness (Gen 1:26) and that he should rule the earth, He allows Adam to participate in some way in the creative act by allowing him to give a name to the animals: *Then the Lord God formed out of the ground all kinds of wild animals and all the birds of the air and brought them to the man, to see what he would call them: whatever the man called each of the living beings, that was to be his name* (Gen 2:19). The name expresses reality and defines it: this is why the Word is holy, and why the name of God is *holy and terrible* (Ps 111:10) – as the Psalm says – because it is the Word of Truth. This is why the sacraments have matter, intention and *form*, that is, the sacramental word: "I baptize you," "I absolve you," "I confirm you," are all *words* that bring about what they *say* and signify.

In a few days we will celebrate the feast of the Most Holy Name of Jesus: *so that at the name of Jesus every knee may bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth; and every tongue may proclaim* – here too, the *word* proclaimed, spoken – *that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father* (Phil 2:10-11). In the Name of Jesus the devil is cast out: because the Name makes present the one who bears it, and the Truth makes the lie manifest as the Light dispels darkness. Creator and creature are in some way united by the word: *Ecce, venio,* says Wisdom in the eternity of time. *Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum*, replies the Seat of Wisdom, Mary Most Holy. And that blessed body that by obedience the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity assumes in the hypostatic union begins His journey towards the Passion from the cradle, facing the rigors of winter in a cave; and shortly thereafter, again out of obedience, the Holy Child will shed the first drops of His Precious Blood in the rite of Circumcision, in which the Passion is prefigured.

In this new civil year, which for two thousand and twenty-five years has been counted from the Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, I would like us to reflect on the importance of the word: the Word of God, in which the meaning of our eternal life is preserved; and the word with which we communicate and express ourselves, which preserves the meaning of our daily life.

The Revolution, the satanic matrix of this rebellious world hostile to the Incarnate Word, knows well that changing words also changes their meaning. This is why the lie of the ancient Serpent

uses false and deceptive language. This is why the servants of the Evil One hide their deceptions behind words that are only apparently harmless. It is the Orwellian *newspeak* that renames the horrendous crime of abortion as *reproductive health*, mutilation as *gender transition*, vice and transgression as *freedom*, the destruction of Creation as *green deal*, the extermination of humanity as *net zero*, and ethnic replacement as *inclusion*.

And if up until a few decades ago Holy Mother Church knew how to oppose this subversion by repeating unchanged the eternal and true Word of God and using the language proper to Faith and Morals, today a corrupt Hierarchy shows its betrayal in the same way, manipulating language, thus *annulling the word of God* (Mk 7:12). It renames the destruction of the divine constitution of the Church and the manipulation of the Papacy as *synodality*, the renunciation of the need for evangelization and conversion as *ecumenical dialogue*, redefines the poor as the *real presence*, and the legitimization of sin as *acceptance*.

The Word of God is the word of Truth. It does not limit itself to echoing in eternity, but becomes flesh and food, immolates itself on the Cross so that the Word proclaims the glory of the Father, redeems us from Satan's lie and preserves us on this earthly journey from the falsehood and deception of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Remaining faithful to the Word of God means remaining faithful to the Gospel, to doctrine, to Tradition, and to the Mass of all time in which the words, spoken in the sacred language of the Church, keep their meaning intact and communicate it unequivocally, as light shines in darkness. Remaining faithful to the Word of God, that is, to God himself, means knowing how to respond to the word with the word, as Mary Most Holy did when she welcomed the greeting of the Archangel Gabriel.

Let us therefore call things by their name: let us refer to virtue as virtue and vice as vice; mindful of the admonition of Sacred Scripture: Woe *to those who call evil good and good evil, who change darkness into light and light into darkness, who change bitter into sweet and sweet into bitter* (Is 5:20). *Let your speech, therefore, be Yes, yes, no, no: all the rest comes from the Evil One* (Mt 5:37). And so may it be.

+ Carlo Maria Viganò, *Archbishop*

National Association of Realtors: A Persecution of Faith?

DECEMBER 23, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION, CONSTITUTION

In a striking example of overreach, the **National Association of Realtors** (NAR) has found 70-year-old Virginia realtor and Christian minister Wilson Fauber guilty of violating their Code of Ethics for quoting Bible verses on his personal social media back in 2015. This decision exposes the troubling extent to which national organizations can dictate personal beliefs and speech beyond the professional domain, raising serious concerns about freedom of religion and expression in our US Constitution.

As reported by **Ian M. Giatti of *The Christian Post*** in the article "Christian minister, realtor found guilty of 'hate speech' for posting Bible verses on social media," Fauber, a seasoned professional with over four decades in real estate, shared his biblical views on marriage and human sexuality in social media posts dating back to 2015. These posts were not related to his professional dealings but were a part of his ministry and personal life. However, in 2020, NAR implemented a rule prohibiting "harassing speech, hate speech, epithets, or slurs" concerning various protected categories, including sexual orientation and gender identity. Retroactively applying this vague standard to Fauber's years-old posts, the ethics panel found him guilty.

The sequence of events highlights the arbitrary enforcement of this policy. Fauber's social media activity became a target during his 2023 campaign for Staunton City Council, with opponents resurfacing his Christian views to lodge complaints. Two fellow realtors—strangers to Fauber—filed formal ethics complaints, alleging violations under NAR's Standard of Practice 10-5. These allegations, despite being based on personal religious convictions expressed outside his professional life, led to a verdict against him.

In response, Fauber stated, "In 44 years as a realtor, I have loved and served all people. Regularly, I hear from other faith-based realtors that live in fear of being similarly prosecuted for their faith." His statement underscores the chilling effect of such rulings on the 1.5 million members of NAR who might now hesitate to express their religious beliefs publicly.

Does NAR's Action Reveal them as Inclusive or Bigoted?

Moreover, the NAR's recent actions seem ideologically motivated. Just last month, the organization sponsored a drag event in Charlottesville, Virginia, promoting LGBT ideology under the banner of inclusivity. This apparent endorsement of one worldview while silencing others smacks of bias and raises the question: Is NAR enforcing ethics or pushing an agenda?

Victoria Cobb, president of **The Family Foundation**, aptly called this decision "anti-Christian bigotry in the real estate profession." She noted that such rulings "chill the religious speech" of millions of professionals who now face a choice between adhering to their faith and maintaining their careers.

Fauber's attorney, Michael Sylvester, criticized the retroactive application of the rule and the nebulous definition of "hate speech." He warned that NAR's approach effectively tells Bible-believing Christian realtors to "be silent," lest they risk losing their livelihood.

The implications extend beyond real estate. If a national organization like NAR can police personal beliefs expressed outside the workplace, what prevents other professional bodies from adopting similarly restrictive measures? The line between professional ethics and personal freedom must not be blurred to the extent that individuals—particularly those of faith—are forced into silence.

The Bible's teachings are not hate speech; they are the Word of God.

The attempt to label them otherwise reveals a deeper cultural battle, where biblical truth is increasingly maligned. Christians must stand firm, challenging policies that suppress faith under the guise of ethics. The courage of individuals like Wilson Fauber should inspire believers to speak truth boldly, despite opposition.

This case serves as a clarion call to defend religious liberty. As Fauber poignantly noted, “It is appropriate to not bring up one’s ‘religious’ views while working with clients. It is altogether different when a minister cannot express his/her faith on their personal social media in the privacy of their home.” If this trajectory continues unchecked, the freedom to live out one’s faith—both privately and publicly—may become a relic of the past.

Let us pray for wisdom, courage, and justice for all who face persecution for their beliefs. And may this moment galvanize Christians to defend the truth and protect the freedoms we hold dear.

For more:

- The Christian Post: **Christian minister, realtor found guilty of ‘hate speech’ for posting Bible verses on social media By Ian M. Giatti, Christian Post Reporter Saturday, December 21, 2024**
- Founding Freedoms Law Center: **“Hate Speech” for Posting Bible Verses, Victoria Cobb Dec 19,2024**

Bible-Reading Christians Give the Most to Charity, Non-Christians 'Give the Least': Study

DECEMBER 23, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Photo By Sage Ross/Flickr | CC BY SA 2.0

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (**Acts 20:35**). The Apostle Paul's words took root in the hearts of Bible-reading Christians, who donate more money to charity than any other group of Americans, according to a new study. The more faithful the Christian, the more likely he proved to help those in need, and to give more money.

People of vibrant faith contrast sharply with non-Christians, who give an average of zero dollars to charitable causes each year, the study finds.

The American Bible Society's "**State of the Bible USA 2024**" aims to "understand how Americans use the incredible wealth of Scripture available to them to shape and guide their lives. More importantly, we believe that the Bible can transform people and communities through its incredible message of hope and healing."

Those who report that Bible-reading holds an important part of their lives proved most generous across a host of measures. "Scripture-engaged people are more likely to donate to charity, and they give more," the study has discovered. A nearly unanimous 94% of Scripture-engaged

Christians donated to charitable causes last year; 71% of them gave at least $1,000, and "about one in six say they gave at least $10,000."

Three out of four Americans who say they read the Bible just a little or not at all also give to charity, and one-third of them give at least $1,000 a year.

The average "Bible-disengaged" person gave nothing. While some who do not read the Scriptures at any time still share their earnings with greater causes, a majority (57%) said they did not make any charitable donation in 2023.

The degree to which a Christian practiced his faith directly correlated with his likelihood to help humanity-serving causes financially. Those who attend church regularly, and who say their faith plays an important role in their lives, give more than casual church attendees (those who attend church but do not place a high value on faith) and nominal believers (those who attend less than once a month). "Practicing Christians more than double the average (mean) giving of Casuals and nearly quadruple that of Nominals," says the report. The mean donation of Scripture-engaged Christians was 333% higher than that of casual churchgoers and 667% more than nominal believers, according to figures inside the study.

A majority of all churchgoers gave something to charity, while just over one in three non-Christians (37%) gave anything to those in need. "Practicing Christians contribute more than 9 percent of their income. Casuals and Nominals give at about half that level," says the document.

Non-Christians donate less money than any other group to charitable causes — statistically, zero dollars a year. "s a group," the study notes, non-Christians "give the least."

The reason for these discrepancies may have to do with greater self-control creating more income to share with others, a desire to obey God's commandments to care for one another, or increased generosity driven by Christian *agape* love for others. "One factor might be the self-discipline involved in both regular Bible reading and steady financial support of church or charity. And for many it goes far beyond obligation: they find in Scripture a passionate spirit of giving. Their interaction with our generous God yields greater generosity in their lives," the report speculates.

Among believers, evangelical Christians proved the most generous givers. "Evangelicals lead the way in average amount donated, percentage of people donating, and percentage given to their church or any religious charity. Only one-fifth of them (20%) do not give at all," states the survey. Evangelicals and those who attend historically black Protestant denominations give three-quarters of their donations to their churches, with the rest going to non-religious charities.

While the Scripture-engaged Christian gives much of his money to his church (64%) and another 21% to religious causes, those who engage with the Bible less regularly give two-thirds of their charitable donations to church, as do 24% of Bible Disengaged people.

“Twenty percent of mainline Protestants give nothing to their church,” researchers note.

The survey, which took place early this year, reflected giving patterns in 2023. Overall, the median donation Americans made to philanthropies rose from $500 to $700, but the number of people giving fell from 68% of Americans in 2022 to 59% last year.

As with the widow’s two mites, the poor continue to share a greater proportion of their resources with others. “Giving exceeds 10 percent of income only at income levels under $20,000 a year,” write the study’s authors. “As income increases to $30k, $40k, and $50k, the percentage of giving decreases, dropping to little more than 5 percent.” Middle-class givers begin to give more, but the percentage falls to 3.7% for those earning $100,000 a year or more.

Looking at additional demographic factors, 76% of Baby Boomers, 65% of those who live in the southeastern United States, and 64% of people who live in the suburbs donated something to philanthropy last year.

Whatever their reason, the Bible those donors read assures that they will receive God’s spiritual blessings as they bless others.

VIEWPOINT: Christmas, Christmas Carols, and re-establishing America's Christian heritage

DECEMBER 22, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

By Donavan "Mark" Quimby for the Shenandoah Christian Alliance

It's Christmas time, a time for joy, peace, and hope, so what's on the news? There's 26-year old Luigi Mangione. He's from a very wealthy Maryland family and has outstanding personal achievements. At 6:46 a.m., December 11, he allegedly assassinated United Healthcare CEO Brian Thompson outside a New York City Hotel. Then, according to an Emerson poll: "41% of voters under 30 consider (Thompson's) assassination acceptable… with 40% saying it was unacceptable… " People have established go-fund-me accounts for Luigi and advocate for murdering more CEOs. Then, on December 16, a 15 year-old girl at a Madison, WA Christian school murdered a student and teacher, and wounded others before murdering herself. What morality justifies this?

Historically, extreme lawlessness wasn't the norm in America because Christians established their communities, and being a Christian meant attempting to be Christ-like, to voluntarily obey His commandments, which established God's morality – what's right and wrong, good and evil. "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments" (John 14:15). Various Christian communities set the moral standards so their citizens could live freely and safely within the boundaries of Christian morality, and accept tough, Bible-based justice when God's laws were broken. All Americans

weren't Christians, but those who were required that their government authorities and judges apply equal justice for all based upon Judeo-Christian principles.

American's early Christian heritage included Reverend Robert Hunt's leading 104 Englishman onto Cape Henry (near Jamestown, VA) on April 29, 1607, erecting a large cross (a replica stands today), and dedicating North America and themselves to God. As late as February 29, 1892, The Supreme Court declared (in Holy Trinity v. United State) that America's historical record overwhelmingly demonstrated that America "… is a Christian nation." Then the anti-Christian "ism's" began arriving.

So how do we re-establish America as a Christian nation? We pray for a Christian revival; understand the Gospel sufficiently to evangelize and increase Christendom; attend churches that preach Judeo-Christian morality and how to defend it; attend churches that demand influence in the public square because separation of church and state doesn't mean separation of church from state; accept that legislation and judicial rulings affect morality, but disobey those that conflict with God's morality; accept that civil disobedience may be necessary; advocate for Christian principles before governmental and school board meetings; join your church with others to identify and remove sin from the community; vote and work for politicians who defend Christian morality, defeat those who don't; and cleanse society of influences from anti-Christian philosophers like Karl Marx, Charles Darwin, Sigmund Freud, and others. Today's major Christian enemies are hate, debt, abortion, attacks on traditional families w/children, and Wokeism's identity politics of all critical theories, DEI, and LGBTQ+ that promote division, our Constitutional Republic's and capitalism's destruction; also drag queens; pornography; and pornographic children's books.

This Christmas, let's sing carols of joy (Jesus first, others second, yourselves last) "to glorify God and enjoy Him forever," celebrate Jesus' rescue mission that can save us from our sin, and obey the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) by re-establishing America's Christian heritage, with its Christian morality. Merry Christmas!

Donavan "Mark" Quimby Shenandoah Christian Alliance

In Remembrance of a Martyr for Faith and Truth

OCTOBER 20, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNCATEGORIZED

By Sandy Szwarc, BSN, RN, retired emeritus
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Today offers a story that media, and likely most churches and pastors in the country, **will ignore** and fail to share its Biblical teachings.

Its powerful message is as significant today as it was forty years ago. Yet how many grasp the **spiritual battle** our Country and Christians currently faces?

It is the 40th anniversary of the brutal slaughter of **Father Jerzy Popieluszko** by the Polish Communist Secret Service, martyred for his faith and standing up against Marxism and tyranny, and standing for Truth.

Father Jerzy was a simple, average man except by the most important measures. He was a man of integrity, dignity and heart, and a man of faith, who spoke the truth and united people together against cruelty, intolerance, and evil. After seminary, the Communist regime tried to break him, sending the young priest to a special unit where he was physically tortured so severely he required extended hospitalization. He would suffer serious health problems for the rest of his life.

He was relentlessly hunted down, followed and threatened with death by the secret police throughout his ministry. The Communist regime declared war against the Polish people on

December 13, 1981 and instituted martial law. This was a period of arrests and imprisonment without trial, food shortages, censorship, wiretapping and police violence, **wrote** journalist Dorothy C. McLean.

While the Solidarity movement was forced underground. Father Jerzy remained unafraid and continued to speak out and help those escaping arrest. His response to the Communist tyranny was to defiantly hold a regular "Mass for the Homeland," even while security forces circled the church and tried to incite the congregation, Catholic records **accounted**. Father Jerzy's powerful and deeply theological sermons were heard by millions and were broadcast by Radio Free Europe into homes across Poland. Father Jerzy spoke about human rights, condemned injustice and the state's tyranny, and advocated for truth and freedom.

His motto became, "Truth that costs nothing is a lie."

Father Jerzy's faith, conviction, and courage inspired the people of Poland to stand against the oppressive Communist rule of the 1980s. Silencing him became the top priority of the state regimen, **according** to Catholic records. The state police planted grenades, explosives and ammunition, and leaflets calling for armed uprisings, in his apartment and locked him in prison again. As he grew increasingly more frail and sickly, he endured continual interrogations, attacks labeled as an "extremist," and attempts on his life. In 1984, at age 35, he was kidnapped by the Polish secret police (*Służba Bezpieczeństwa*). He was brutally and viciously beaten and tortured beyond recognition, and killed for his beliefs. His **autopsy** was so horrific, the Church suppressed it.

His story became a documentary film, *Messenger of the Truth*. The authors **wrote**:

> "Heroes are not born in times of peace. They are born of struggle, oppression, and violence. This man was born into such a time. His country that he loved, the country of his home and birth, was in the hands of men who believed that his ideas were dangerous. They were men of power and fear. Powerful men are afraid of one thing, losing power, and they only know one way to hold it. They know the club and the truncheon, the boot and the tank tread, the butt of a rifle and the knife in the dark…"
>
> But he was not alone. Power never changes quickly, or quietly, or without opposition… Only when the ground is shaken under their feet by the marching of hundreds of thousands of the faithful will they relent… stood up. They were counted. They made their voices heard. And a miracle happened. It worked. It wasn't easy, or quick, or without tragedy, but in the end it worked. No matter how many guns or tanks or bullets the powers had they could not withstand the wave of truth that swept them away."

A raised fist became the sign of defiance and fight.

> "A hand raised in a fist, the index and middle fingers extended. The **"V" sign for victory**. This remnant of silent defiance from World War II became the symbol of opposition against the communist government in Poland. At every demonstration, protest, and Mass free Poles gathered together to show their numbers to the forces that wanted to oppress them… They held it up to show they were not afraid. They held it up to speak in one voice. They said, 'We are against you. We refuse to give up. There are more of us than there are of you, and we will win in the end.'"

The anniversary of the Martyrdom of Father Jerzy was **commemorated** on Saturday, and its significance was explained by former President Donald Trump.

> This Saturday, October 19, 2024, is the 40th Anniversary of the Martyrdom of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko, a truly great Catholic priest, who was the source of tremendous spiritual strength for the Polish Solidarity Movement and, indeed, the entire nation of Poland, in the 1980s.... **pic.twitter.com/9HIFtRQbka**
>
> — Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) **October 16, 2024**

He and Melania Trump had visited Poland in 2017, and paid **tribute** to the Polish people, their Solidarity Movement and brave defenders of freedom, saying that *"the triumph of the Polish spirit over centuries of hardship gives us all hope for a future in which good conquers evil, and peace achieves victory over war."*

In Saturday's **Commemoration** presented to Father Jerzy's family, Mr. Trump said that in December 1981, after the Communist regime in Poland imposed martial law, Father Jerzy's response was to stand up against the regime and celebrate a monthly Mass for the Homeland to pray for those who had been murdered or imprisoned by the Communist regime under martial law. Mr. Trump said:

> "Even after arrest, detainment, and an assassination attempt, Father Jerzy continued to fight for his faith and for Poland's freedom… As the communists became increasingly vicious, Father Jerzy became increasingly bold."

As Father Jerzy once said:

> "The essential thing in the process of liberating man and the nation is to overcome fear… then we act contrary to our consciences, thus muzzling the truth… If the truth becomes for us a value worthy of suffering and risk, then we shall overcome fear."

Father Jerzy's story strengthened the faithful and galvanized the entire free world around the cause of a free Poland and free Europe, **said** Mr. Trump. "His powerful witness serves as a light of freedom." Echoing his words from seven years ago, Mr. Trump concluded:

> ***"The Polish peoples' cry, 'We Want God' on June 2, 1979 in Victory Square, will be remembered forever as a powerful testament to their will, strength, and love of their nation, and as a fundamental reminder of the meaning of life and freedom, and what together we will forever defend."***
>
> ***"We share the conviction that religion and morality, and a culture open to God, are indispensable to just government and political prosperity."***

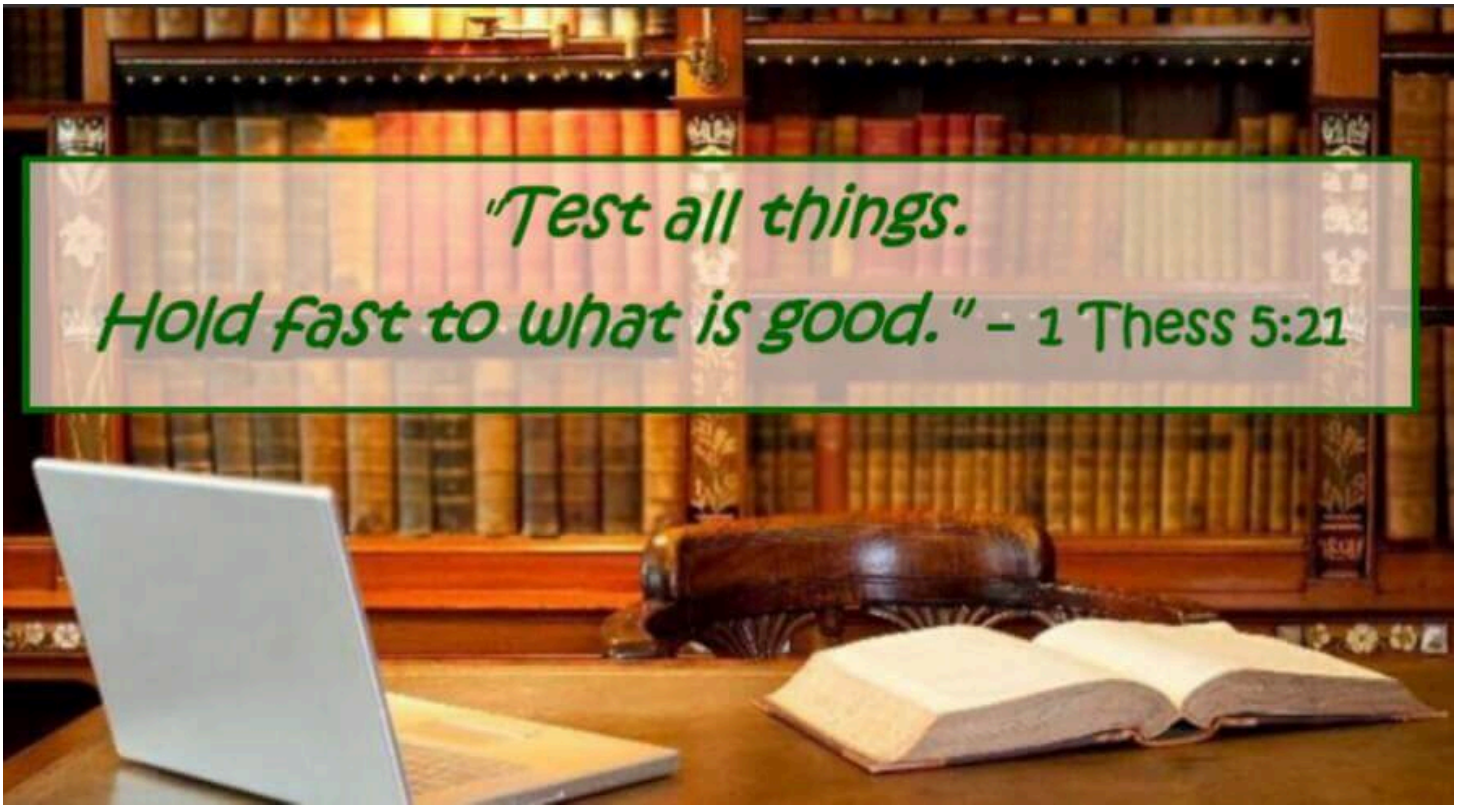
In contrast, at this week's Kamala Harris' campaign rally in Lacrosse, Wisconsin, when someone in the crowd exclaimed, "Jesus is Lord," VP Harris **laughed and said**: "You guys are at the wrong rally."

Addendum: The two Christian students at La Cross University – who had exclaimed "Christ is King" and "Jesus is Lord" at the Kamala Harris rally held on campus – were kicked out of the rally. This morning, they revealed what really happened at the rally and the message they got from Ms. Harris. The students then gave their testimony of faith and shared a powerful message for all young people: **https://x.com/KarluskaP/status/1847963126794277372?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw**

> The two pro-life protesters that were mocked at the Harris rally in WI were interviewed this morning on Fox & Friends weekend **pic.twitter.com/Y4H0Aoo44o**
>
> — Karli Bonne' 🇺🇸 (@KarluskaP) **October 20, 2024**

Part 7 Continued: What's the truth of a border crisis?

OCTOBER 18, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: FAITH ON THE BALLOT



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Examining the Presidential candidates in light of biblical teachings

By Sandy Szwarc, BSN, RN, retired emeritus
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> "Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth." – 1 John 3:18
>
> "And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." – John 8:32
>
> "Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known." – Luke 12:2
>
> "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due,
> when it is in your power to do it." – Proverbs 3:27
>
> "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." – Matthew 24:12-14

One of the most challenging issues in examining the candidates in light of Jesus' teachings is the border crisis and immigration policies. Yet, it may be the deciding factor for many Christians still undecided on how to vote.

Examining the issue of "**Border Walls And Sovereignty Of Nations In Scripture**," Part 7 began by looking at the actions of Kamala Harris as lead on the border: the more than a hundred executive orders and immigration policies that she had created and rewritten, without congressional approval or the vote of the people. Under her management policies, more than 2.6 million illegal aliens were "paroled" and released into our country, nearly 1.9 million more were given "temporary protected status," and the more than 100,000 illegals were let in as "refugees" under new criteria she created, the most in three decades. No one knows the real number of gotaway illegals through the virtually open border. I looked past the conflicted media's efforts to keep the truth from the public and found unsettling facts of what the small community of Springfield, Ohio has been facing as a result of her immigration policies.

Continuing Part 7, I tried to grasp the reality of the consequences for all of us when the Administration fails to follow Biblical teachings or our Constitution.

Ms. Harris has been accountable for U.S. immigration laws being thwarted, violated and rewritten by Executive Order. By going to original sources, it proved impossible to ignore the harmful consequences of her border management.

The border crisis now surpasses the worst case scenarios warned by nearly every law enforcement, medical, economic, humanitarian, and legal expert.

The exact number of people in the country illegally is hard to know for certain. The popular figure cited by media back in 2021 was 11 million and the source of that number was Pew Research

Center, **according** to ESR Research. But Yale researchers **found** that the popular 11 million figure was completely bogus and estimated that in 2016 the actual number of illegals in the U.S. had been closer to 22.1 million.

FAIR **research** estimated the number of illegals in the U.S. in June 2023 was about 16.8 million, and had increased 16% during the first two years of the Biden-Harris administration.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (*ICE) Deputy Director Patrick J. Lechleitner **reported** to Representative Tony Gonzales that as of July 21, 2024* ***a total of 425,431 convicted criminal illegal aliens had been released into the U.S. – guilty of murder, rape, drug trafficking, kidnapping, larceny, assaults, burglary, etc. – with another 222,141 pending criminal charges*** *during this Administration.*

These 425,431 convicted criminals are on the streets of America.

The September 18, 2024 Committee on Homeland Security meeting and accompanying investigative **report**, ***Crisis by Design***, **reported** on the intentional unlawful Biden-Harris policies that dismantled border security and immigration laws. Their Administration's directives, they found, ***signaled to illegals that the borders were open and that anyone crossing illegally would be released into the interior.*** *Sadly, this also motivated desperately poor people to **risk their lives**, often becoming victims of crime themselves, to try and get to our borders.*

- Growing numbers of ***Illegals on the terrorist watch list*** are being apprehended – **388** by border patrol between ports of entry and **1,468** by Office of Field Operations (OFO) at land ports of entry – since FY2021; and ***more than 53,600 criminal aliens*** had been apprehended.
- A historic number of *criminal aliens and suspected terrorists and national security threats*, however, *have been let into the country under Biden-Harris*. Just between October 2021-October 2023, over 70,000 **special interest aliens** identified as possible threats to national security (largely from Afghanistan, Iran, Syria and Egypt) had been encountered by Border Patrol.
- A former San Diego border patrol chief agent **testified** to the Committee of an exponential increase of SIAs *with significant ties to terrorism* during the Biden-Harris Administration, once the word was out that the border was far easier to cross. He said he'd been forbidden from releasing information about the increase or discussing arrests, but described how the Administration has been thwarting their ability to detain or return illegals to their countries of origin. The "open border policies" and "the fact that so many illegal aliens were being released into the United States spread worldwide very quickly," he said, resulting in the unprecedented influx of illegals.

On August 28, 2024, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced an additional $380 million in expenses for community Shelters and Services Program. That's in addition to $259.13 million prior to April. In FY 2023, the ***DHS spent over $780 million for illegal services.*** These

figures do not include costs to process illegals, including transportation, shelter, detention, food, medical care, education for children, translators, hiring training, legal defense costs, and more. These costs also do not include $4 Billion sent by Biden-Harris to Central America, **according to** the CIS.

The July 2024 Startling Facts from U.S. Customs and Border Protection, released on August 16, 2024 to the House Committee on Homeland Security, reported the **crisis "still out of control.**" By July, the total of illegal encounters under the Biden-Harris administration had reached 10.1 million – 200% increase from 4 years combined (FY2017-FY2020), which didn't include at least 2 million "got-a-ways."

In a June 17, 2024 Cost of Illegal Immigration report, CIS said that the crisis began when Biden-Harris campaigned to get rid of President Trump's immigration policies, such as the Migrant Protection Protocols, which resulted in soaring "frivolous asylum claims." The administration also contributed to the problem, they concluded, by ending agreements with several Central American countries that curtailed illegal migration, such as Title 42, which encouraged more people to come and overwhelm the entire system. There is now a record ***51.6 million immigrants in the U.S.****, making up 15.6% of the U.S. population,* and these low-wage workers collectively have been a net drain on our country and communities which are losing their middle-class tax base.

On April 24, 2024, Homeland Security **reported** over ***1.7 million illegals had entered the country in the first six month of FY2024, the greatest number in history***; the majority were single young males. CBP agents also seized ***10,026 Pounds of fentanyl during that period (a lethal dose is 2mg), enough to kill 2.2 billion people.***

The Center for Immigration Studies testified to Congress at the Immigration Integrity, Security, and Enforcement Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee hearing on January 11, 2024 that the illegal alien population estimates since Ms. Harris took office had grown to *12.8 million by October of 2023*. Most of the adult illegal immigrants had no education beyond high school (about double compared to U.S. born citizens) and were making extensive use of welfare. *More than half, 59%, use one or more major welfare programs and receive over an estimated $42 Billion in benefits*. The children of illegals (many born in the U.S.) also receive free school breakfast and lunch, WIC, many are provided Medicaid, and had *cost public schools $68.1 Billion in 2019*. Their analysis found the taxes paid by some illegals were not nearly enough to cover their costs to taxpayers.

According to a November 13, 2023 Special Committee on Homeland Security Majority Report, the border crisis cost Americans, already struggling under record-high inflation and a down job market, an estimated ***$451 billion annually***. It found the net cost of illegal immigration

was greater than the total annual GDP of 15 states and was ***costing every American taxpayer an average of $1,156***.

- A significant portion of those costs were going for health care for illegals, overwhelming providers, reducing access to medical care for Americans and seniors, and leaving U.S. hospitals with **billions in unpaid bills**.
- The Report went on to document the effects on schools, law enforcement, public food and housing and childcare benefits, destruction of private property and livelihoods for farmers and ranchers along the border, and dangers to the illegals themselves and innocent children.

Title 42 was ended by the Biden-Harris Administration the spring of 2022 and media has been largely silent on the consequences. ***Ending Title 42 eliminated medical vetting to ensure migrants are not coming into the country with contagious and deadly diseases.*** Medical literature is rarely reported in mainstream media, but it reveals growing concerns among healthcare professionals. More illegals are now coming from atypical countries (Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti and as far away as China an Afghanistan). It's resulted in ***unprecedented surges in cases of formerly eliminated communicable diseases are now being reported by public health departments*** – including **tuberculosis, hepatitis B and C, polio, syphilis, measles, diphtheria**, and more.

- The CDC **reported** in May, for example, that 84% of **measles** in a recent Chicago outbreak were linked to Venezuelan migrants, with the rest from Peru and Chile.
- **Syphilis** has spiked to *the highest seen in 70 years*.
- One in 50 kids have **active untreated TB.**
- **Measles**, which had been officially eliminated in the U.S. in 2000, has been spreading across the country, **according to** the CDC, and *already **triple** last year's total*.
- **Leprosy, polio, malaria and smallpox** are **reappearing in the U.S.**, brought in by illegals.
- **Fungal, parasitic, vector-borne and other pathogens of third-world diseases** (called neglected tropical disease) have been **coming through** our borders and are now widespread along the **S. gulf coast**, especially Texas and Florida.

Infectious migrants are in our schools, grocery stores, malls, churches and communities, putting Americans, young and old, at risk.

Crime Wave

Almost daily, Americans are learning of **horrific crimes** by undocumented aliens, with significant increases in **violent crimes**, such as reported by Nexstar Media Group, a news network validated by independent watchdog groups. Local news agencies have also been unable to ignore the growing problem of **gangs coming through the border** and **criminal activity** in our cities that now occur on a regular basis.

The National Sheriff's Association **reported** a *record number of suspected terrorists were apprehended in 2023* and reported that the influx of people, illicit narcotics and crime were straining local resources for border sheriffs and law enforcement across the country. The head of the Association sounded the alarm of drug poisonings, comparing the number of fentanyl deaths to a large plane crashing every day. *In 2021, the U.S. Department of Justice reported that 64% of federal arrests in 2018 involved noncitizens, despite being only 7% of the population at that time.*

FAIR has reported **examples** of serious crimes by illegal aliens from verified sources every year since 2007 and shares **videos** of their personal stories. A partial list of **Americans killed by illegal immigrants** is also compiled by ALIPAC (Americans for Legal Immigration) volunteers and includes 789 Americans as of March 18, 2024, with links to the full stories of each murder. The **accounts** of some of the legal cases are also discussed on their forum. The efforts by the victims' families are simply to bring awareness that illegal immigration is not a victimless crime.

Arrests by Border Patrol agents of illegals at the border with **criminal convictions** grew to 15,267 last year and are already 14,697 so far in 2024. *Newsweek* **reported** in March that during Biden-Harris administration, there had already been ***162 homicides by illegals, compared to 11 during the entire Trump Presidential administration***.

Crime statistics are notoriously incomplete and difficult to compare, especially with undocumented immigrants, but *undeniably, any crime by someone who has not entered our country legally would not have been committed if they hadn't broken the law in the first place.*

Yet mainstream media, **such as** CNN, continues to deny that illegal immigration brings crime. CNN based their claim on an old Texas Department of Public Safety **study** that had checked immigration status of arrest records from 2012-2018; which is not only unrepresentative of today's undocumented migrants, but curious. Just this week, Texas Governor Greg Abbott with Texas Secretary of State, sent a **demand letter** to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services because **the federal agency *was refusing to provide citizenship and immigration status* of people registered to vote so that Texas could verify if they can legally vote.**

Mainstream media calling the illegal crime wave a myth typically base their claims on a "fact-checking" **report** from Brennan Center for Justice – yes, a **Soros Open Society Foundation** funded Democracy Program.

- Brennan Center is a far-left activist group, **according to** Capital Research Center, lobbying for the elimination of the Electoral College, opposition to Mr. Trump, racial equity, Supreme Court reform, gun regulations, voting rights, and BLM.
- Ann Coulter **explained** the logical fallacies and flaws behind the myth of low immigrant crime studies.
- A 2018 **review** by sociologists in *Annual Review of Criminolog*y found significant variations in *academic immigration-crime studies*, with some conclusions negative, positive or null,

depending on their design. In other words, reader beware. As Ms. Coulter advised, ***look to concrete numbers not phony studies.***

Reading everything happening with immigration in our Country is overwhelming. None of this illustrates Biblical caring for Americans or for our neighbors.

God prescribed borders for his people; he sent his people out into the world to develop different cultures and languages; and called upon them to take care of their families first.

Biblical teachings are simply absent in Ms. Harris' border policies.

In contrast, Mr. Trump is well known for his border wall initiative. Border walls are not unusual in the world. By the time he was elected, there were ***77 massive border walls or fences*** *in nations around the world.*

Before elected, Mr. Trump had **promised**: *"I will never waver from my sacred duty to defend this Nation and its people*. We will get the job done."

Was that true? From the first day in office, everything shows President Trump did work to try to follow through on that promise. Significant legislation signed by President Trump included **secure the border**, strengthen immigration enforcement, support ICE, provide humanitarian aid at the border, increase border drug enforcement, end discretionary federal funding of sanctuary cities; streamline and expedite asylum hearings. He launched the Family Fraud Initiative to identify crossers using children to fraudulently claim family units and curb the abusive trafficking of children; and address the crisis of cartels, drug and human traffickers, and gangs.

Other **immigration actions** during President Trump's term included building over 400 miles of border wall, and illegal crossings dropped over 87% where the wall was constructed.

- He ended catch-and-release, signed three historic asylum cooperative agreements with Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala; and enacted a historic partnership with Mexico called Migrant Protection Protocols, to safely return asylum seekers to Mexico while awaiting immigration hearings.
- Resettlement from the world's most dangerous terrorist regions was suspended; and national security travel bans to keep out terrorists, jihadists, and violent extremists were instituted.
- Regulations were issued to ensure migrants are financially self-sufficient and not reliant on welfare; end birth tourism; make illegals ineligible for free federal housing funding; and direct federal agencies to prioritize hiring of U.S. citizens.
- And finally, and most important he withdraw from the United Nations' Global Compact on Migration.

Every American wants to feel safe and protected in their homes, communities, churches and schools. Our civil leaders are God's servant to protect us from evildoers and punish evil. This election is our test in the larger battle for our country…the spiritual one. Of the Presidential candidates, President Trump is proving to be the lesser magistrate willing to fight the battle against autocratic and unbiblical rulers.

In Part 8, I studied what the scripture teaches on government taxes and spending. What about tithing and our role as Christians when examining God's servants in managing the peoples' money?

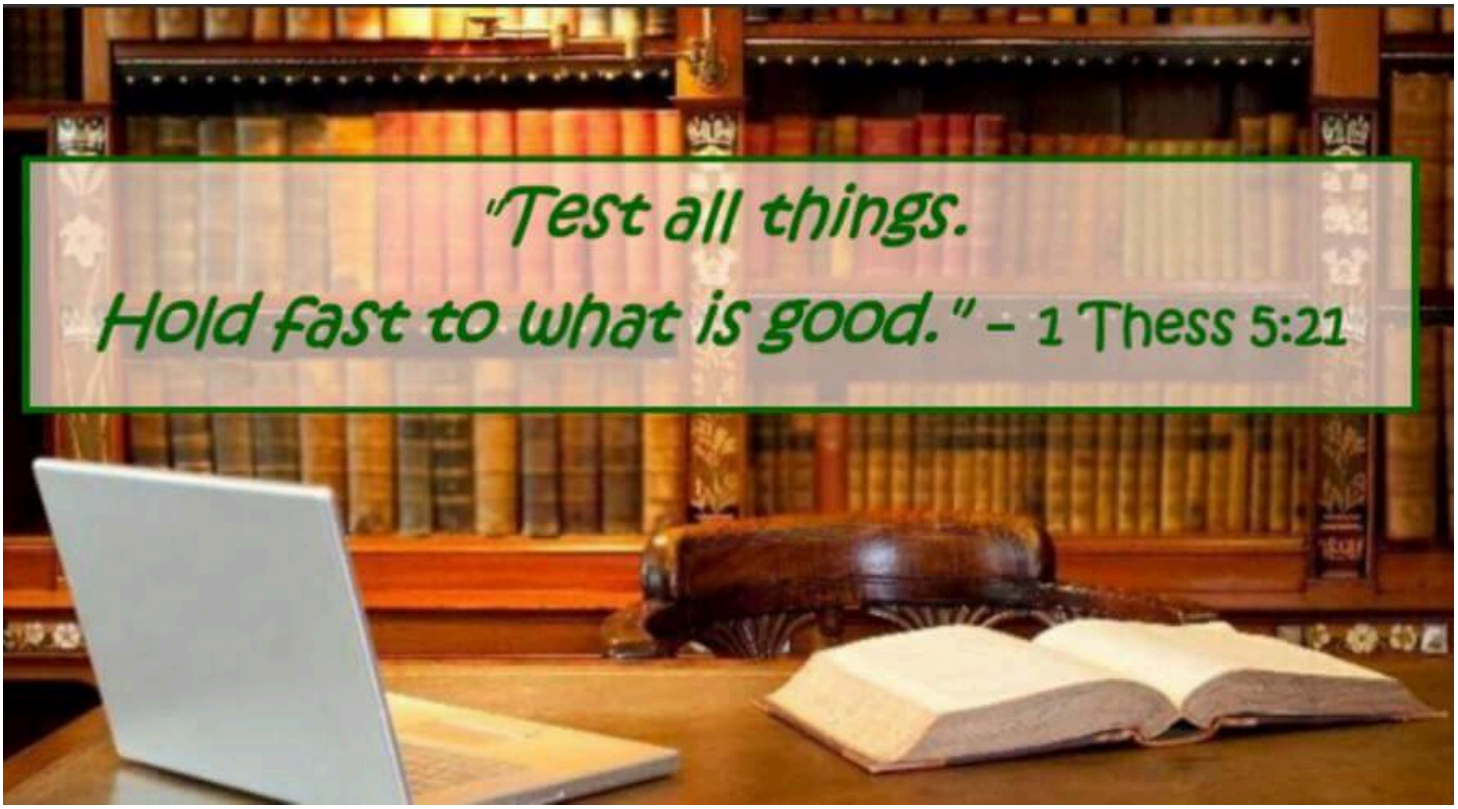
Faith on the Ballot Series:

Christian, read and share Sandy Szwarc's Faith on the Ballot Series, examining the Presidential candidates in light of Biblical teachings

Part 1: Trusting Jesus in Making the Right Choice
Part 2: Beginning the Discernment Journey
Part 3: Religious Freedoms and Rights of Conscience
Part 4: Scripture and LBGTQ+ Rights Policy
Part 5: Living our faith at the voting booth – Life and Abortion in Scripture
Part 6: God's Word on crime and abuse of office in public servants
Part 7: Border Walls and Sovereignty of Nations in Scripture
Part 7: Continued: **What's the truth of a border crisis?**
Part 8: Scripture on Taxes and Government Spending
Part 9: False Doctrine of Climate Change
Part 10: The Spiritual Battle for our Country – Growth of Evil
Part 11: The Spiritual Battle for our Country – Their world vision
Epilogue:

Part 6: God's Word on crime and abuse of office in public servants

OCTOBER 15, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: FAITH ON THE BALLOT



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Examining the Presidential candidates in light of Biblical teachings

By Sandy Szwarc, BSN, RN, retired emeritus
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"For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad…for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer." – Romans 13:3-4

"They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them " – Romans 2:15

"Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God." – Matthew 5:9

"Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked." – Psalm 82:4

It was surprising to learn that the Bible has clear instruction for civil leaders in what they must do as servants of God, as well as our role in examining our leaders in light of scripture. *The Bible says that the work of our leaders is to carry out punishment on wrongdoers and support the peacekeepers.* I learned that Ms. Harris' record while San Francisco District Attorney and California Attorney General was highly stained.

What was Ms. Harris' promise to Americans in keeping citizens safe from crime and supporting law enforcement?

Ms. Harris' promises were spelled out on September 9, 2019 in her **plan** to "*transform the criminal justice system and re-envision public safety in America.*"

It was not a commitment to enforce the laws as established by Congress and legislatures, acting as representatives of citizens, nor was it a commitment to uphold the U.S. Constitution. Her vision was for a "*fairer and more equitable"* criminal justice system.

Her plan was based on the **false premise** of widespread problems among police of "*racial profiling, excessive force or other misconduct*." Sadly, "racial profiling" has become a slogan created by and used for decades by Soros-led progressives and media to divide the country, rather than foster understanding and unity, or bring true solutions that help all Americans.

- The subject has become fraught with taboos that have gone beyond inhibiting debate and discussion, **wrote** attorney Scott Johnson with the **Claremont Institute**. "They have fostered destructive ignorance and political exploitation." To this day, *the most objective, comprehensive and thoughtful examination of racial profiling was done in a* ***2015 ten-part series*** *by attorney Johnson.*
- The issue goes beyond **racial differences** in crime rates or higher rates of arrests, police shootings or incarcerations compared to the percentages of minorities in a population. It's a common logical fallacy that **population disparity** is evidence of racial profiling. It's not.
- Psychologists and criminologists conducted critical examinations of evidence in 16 crime rate estimates, **published** in *Social Psychology and Personality Science*. The evidence failed to support anti-Black disparities in fatal shootings by police, with only one disparity found among 144 possible tests.
- It's a dangerous fiction that prejudiced white officers are going out and disproportionately killing black men, **said** John Lott, president of the Crime Prevention Research Center. Their extensive research of 2,699 police shootings between 2013-2015 found the more officers responding to a call, the lower the risk of a lone officer needing to use deadly force.

- As Heather MacDonald with the Manhattan Institute **reported**, a police officer is 18.5 times more likely to be killed by a black male than an unarmed black male is to be killed by a police office. But, perpetuating the false racial profiling narrative means officers back off in minority neighborhoods and put law-abiding black Americans who depend on the police at greater risk.

Ms. Harris' plan for criminal justice reform *called to remove local governing of police departments by elected officials,* and ***establish a national*** police department review board, double the size of the federal Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, mandate Community Oriented Policing Services to assess law enforcement professionals, institute regulations to ensure technology didn't further "racial disparities," and place federal guidelines on law enforcement equipment to "de-militarize police departments."

Her lengthy plan included federal sentencing guidelines such as eliminate mandatory minimum sentences to let judges issue more lenient sentences, shorten probations and other community supervision of released convicts, legalize marijuana (based on another myth when, in actuality, there are **no inmates** in Federal prisons for the simple possession of marijuana), end bail, end the use of fines and fees or penalties for unpaid fines, and end the death penalty.

Ms. Harris is on record for **speaking out** nationally in support of the *defunding* the police movement. While Vice President, she and her husband have also personally repeatedly donated to an anti-police and pro-sanctuary city nonprofit calling for slashing police budgets and reducing patrols in high-crime areas, **according** to White House financial disclosures.

She supported the **defunding of police** in Los Angeles and called for Congressional action for **police reform**. While San Francisco DA, in 2004 she refused to seek the death penalty for a gang member who'd gunned down an officer. The poor relations between Ms. Harris and the San Francisco public defender's office were widely **reported**.

As California AG, she failed to support efforts to ensure police deadly force incidents were independently investigated and instead, announced that her DOJ would take an expanded role. She issued **law enforcement reform**, instituting "implicit bias training" for "racist and anti-gay bias," and formed a policing working group focused on procedural justice and training, and a ceasefire program.

After the George Floyd incident, Ms. Harris campaigned in support of a **controversial** bail fund, **helping** it reach over $41.6 million in donations that were used to put violent criminals back on the streets in the name of "**social justice**," only to have some commit more crimes, including murder. During her 2020 campaign, she **promoted** the organization, Minnesota Freedom Fund, after the city was being burned down and looted by protestors. The fund has paid $21.2 million in

cash bails and $4.8 million for immigration bonds, freeing 2,537 accused criminals from pre-trial detention and letting 463 immigrants avoid detention since 2016.

She was **called out**, by liberal media, for blatant falsehoods she posted while campaigning for President in 2019, trying to build the systemic racism story and case for "racial equity in our justice system." She and Elizabeth Warren had both written that Michael Brown had been shot and killed by a white police officer and the killing was racially motivated murder. The lie was so outrageous, even an Obama administration investigation found the story false. Since Day One in office as VP, she and Biden have focused **executive actions** for Blacks and racial *equity*.

Every candidate has some bad to go with the good in their record, acknowledged Branko Marcetic, a staff writer with **Jacobin**, a far left socialist publication. However, Ms. Harris' record is defined by flip-flopping policies that undercut her proclaimed vision, and empty statements, such as her nonexistent record on drug reform while AG, he **reported**. In reshaping "California's criminal justice system, Harris has something of a reputation in the state as a marginal figure on the issue."

A civil ruler "must not acquire many horses for himself…
nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold" – Deuteronomy 17:16-17

"You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him…you shall do no injustice in court.
You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great" – Lev. 19:13-15

"You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another." – Leviticus 19:11

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." – Exodus 20:16

Ms. Harris' years of prosecutorial abuses and epidemic of prosecutorial misconduct while San Francisco District Attorney and California Attorney General were widely reported throughout California.

A Superior Court judge **concluded** that ***DA Harris's office had failed in its constitutional duty*** to inform of problems surrounding a cocaine-skimming scandal at the state crime lab that had resulted in the police shutting down the crime lab and led to the dismissal of 600 drug cases. The judge determined Ms. Harris had been informed of the problems but had kept it hidden from the defense and violated the defendants constitutional rights.

Her record of working with law enforcement and being tough on crime is fraught with controversy. As California AG, Ms. Harris was **condemned** by the editorial board of the *Sacramento Bee* for

failing to inform the public that Proposition 47 *reduced certain drug and property offenses to misdemeanors and restricted DNA collection and law enforcement's ability to solve serious crimes.*

As AG, Ms. Harris told media during a high-profile murder trial, in which eight people had been murdered, that **she knew** there was **misconduct** in the Orange County DA's office but refused to launch an investigation. The abuses were so damning a Superior Court Judge disqualified the entire DA's 250-lawyer office and her office was then compelled to launch an investigation. She **stalled the investigation** to let **charges drop** against the unconstitutional jailhouse snitch program that tainted more than a dozen criminal cases, including murder. A 2015 investigation **chronicled** the prosecutorial failures and cover-up tied to the misuse of jailhouse informants by county prosecutors.

The California Superior Court **investigation** found ***rampant prosecutorial abuses (falsifying reports, destroying investigation notes and eye witness statements, lying, etc.) by AG Harris "so pervasive and egregious, so corrupt and tainted"*** that he terminated the Cal Fire wildfire case and administered sanctions. In the course of that case, it was discovered $3.66 million in state funds had been diverted to a secret slush fund by Cal Fire employees, a felony under state law. AG Harris refused to investigate.

The California Court of Appeals **found** AG Harris to again be the problem behind *"outrageous government misconduct"* and her staff of falsifying a defendant's confession transcript and adding two lines to the "evidence" to threaten charges carrying a life sentence. It resulted in the disqualification of the defense counsel and dismissal of an indictment completely. "*Undaunted by the criminal conduct of a state prosecutor, or the district court's opinion, Ms. Harris appealed the decision dismissing the indictment.*"

Even her Senate campaign was marred by a history of **lavish misspending** of campaign funds on herself to support her "diva lifestyle."

After elected was she a more accountable public servant? GovTrack.us, which tracks legislative actions by all members of Congress, **stated** she missed 31.2% of roll call votes, 13-times worse than the median 2.4% over the lifetime records of senators. They also **rated** her ideology and leadership as extremely far left, with only three Democrat legislators more extreme, and her being significantly further left than even Senators Feinstein or Warren.

I couldn't figure out how a prosecutor could repeatedly have had such a dreadful track record of failing to protect public safety, allowing criminals to escape prosecution, charging illegals and gang member murderers with lighter sentences, not supporting the police, not supporting Federal laws, and on and on… Then, I started putting the pieces together.

It turns out, Ms. ***Harris was the original Soros prosecutor,*** *Washington Times* ***reported***. Remember the scandal that was exposed several years ago about how Soros has been funding radical social

justice prosecutors across the nation? He was ensuring their elections by paying for as much as 90% of their campaign costs, sponsoring programs, free trips and forums; and coordinating ***amicus briefs to influence criminal cases and judicial policies***.

- The Legal Defense Fund documented 75 Soros prosecutors were currently in office as of June 2022 in a damning report called ***Justice for Sale***. Its investigation found these corrupted prosecutors were intentionally placed in communities with the largest numbers of murders and represented more than a third of all violent and property crimes in the country. Soros was using a series of shell organizations, affiliates and pass-through committees to steer campaign donations and provide gravitas and perks to preferred prosecutors. Soros has been investing massive sums of his $23 billion fortune to transform our criminal justice system and influence our elections for well over a decade. In just four years, four Soros prosecutors alone had received $13 million from Soros, according to the LELDF report.
- Government Integrity Project at the National Legal and Policy Center was also **reporting** Soros' dark money spending for some of the most controversial district attorney campaigns in the country, how Soros' and affiliated political action committees work to influence **ballot issues**, as in Texas, and how he's been financing a revolution in **criminal justice**
- Soros prosecutors were abolishing bail and so light on crime that ***Soros has been attributed with being behind the U.S. crime wave,*** the *New York Post* **reported**. There was a ***30% increase in homicides in 2020 – the largest single year spike since the FBI's annual Uniform Crime Report has been recording crime statistics 60 years ago***. The FDA report also found a 24% decrease in arrests across the country.

That information also helped explain the unusual close relationship being reported between Ms. Harris and Alex Soros, George Soros' son who recently took the reigns of the Soros dynasty.

- *Fox News* **documented** on June 6, 2023 that Alex Soros had personal access at the White House. Visitor logs had shown at least 17 visits since 2021. Alex had even tweeted, boasting of his visit with "Madame Vice President Kamala Harris."
- The White House logs also **showed** that Alex had been at her private residence on May 31, 2023 along with eight other prominent donors, signing in at 4pm and socializing until midnight.
- By September 3rd of last year, the reported number of personal visits Alex had made to the White House were up to 21.
- On July 21, 2024, Biden posted on X his decision to drop out of the Presidential race **at 1:13pm**. Just one hour and 21 minutes later, **at 2:34pm**, Alex Soros posted a photo with himself and Ms. Harris voicing his support for Kamala and issuing a call to unite around her.
- After Soros spoke, the world's wealthiest billionaires and other members of the World Economic Forum quickly responded. Donations poured in from **billionaires** and more than 100 **ultra-wealthy venture capitalists**. Elite **WEF members**, such as Mark Cuban, have actively been **campaigning** in support.

- In 2019, the Federal Election Commission **reported** that *more billionaires had donated to Ms. Harris for President that any other Democrat running*. This election is no different, with *Financial Times* **reporting** $361,000 in donations in August and $380,000 in ads were already booked from September to election day. Those connections would prove to be especially relevant as my research continued.

President Trump, in contrast, demonstrated his support for law enforcement and aggressively prosecuted criminals. Police officers and law enforcement agents were increasingly becoming targets of violence as violent **protests** and rioting swept the country after the death of George Floyd. He got the **endorsement** of the **National Association of Police Organizations** and the country's largest police union, the **Fraternal Order of Police** with 355,000 members.

Fraternal Order of Police President said: "*During his first four years, President Trump has made it crystal clear that he has our backs…President Trump is committed to keeping our communities and families safe*."

President Trump made a promise to "make America safe again," saying he would put the safety, interests and well-being of citizens first. "I will fight for you with every breath in my body. And I will never ever let you down," he **said** in his Inaugural Address on January 20, 2017. By his actions, he showed those commitments to the best of his ability to be **true**.

The election discernment journey took a surprising turn as I learned of Jesus' strong regard for borders and national sovereignty. Part 7 tested how the candidates' actions held up to those Biblical commandments.

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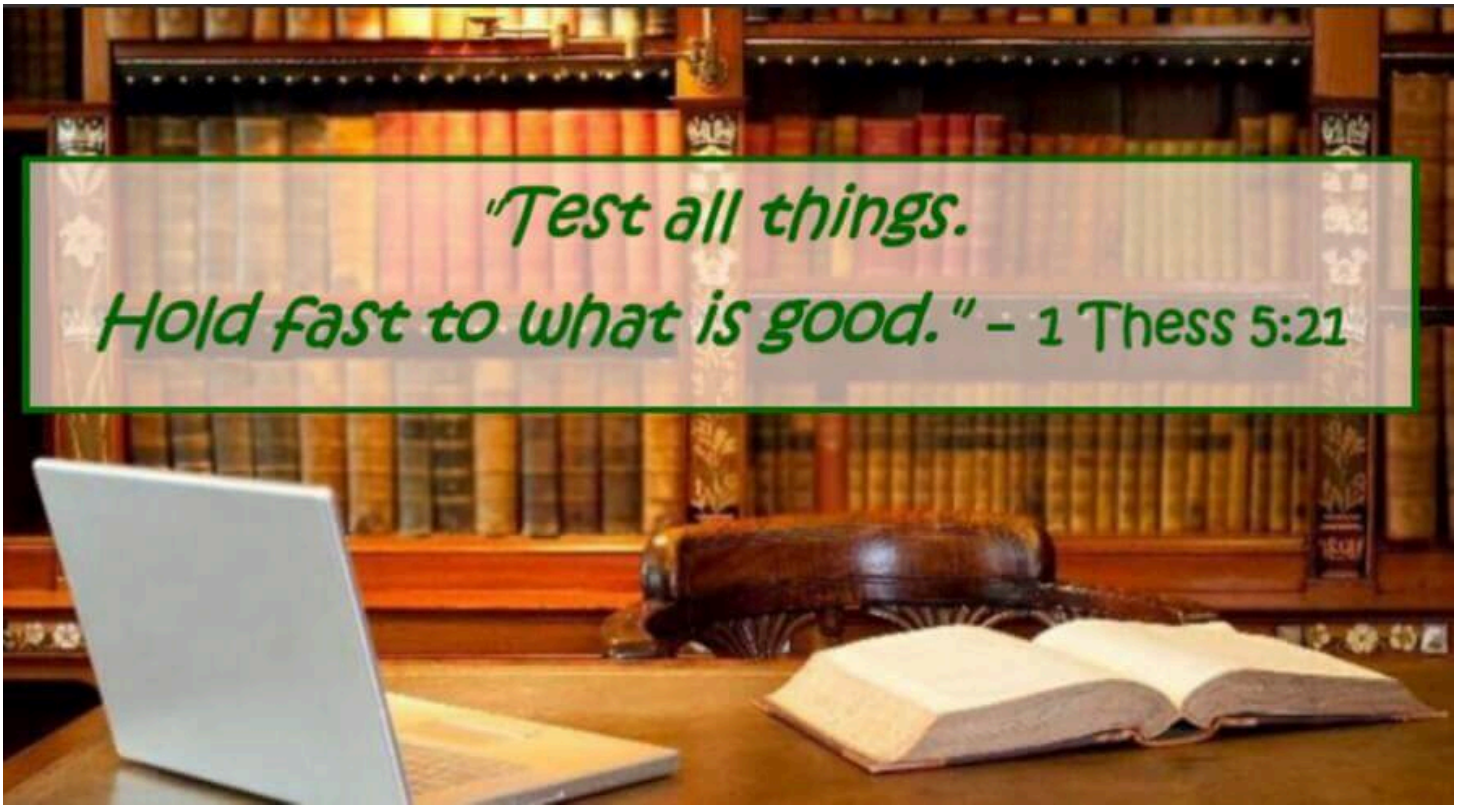
Epilogue:

Part 4: Scripture and LBGTQ+ Rights Policy

OCTOBER 12, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: FAITH ON THE BALLOT



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Examining the Presidential candidates in light of Biblical teachings

By Sandy Szwarc, BSN, RN, retired emeritus
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> "But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female.
> Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife,
> and the two shall become one flesh." – Mark 10:6-8
>
> "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination." – Leviticus 18:22
>
> "If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination;
> they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them." – Leviticus 20:13
>
> "Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality
> and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire." –
> Jude 7
>
> "For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged
> natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural
> relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another,
> men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves
> the due penalty for their error." – Romans 1:26-27
>
> " Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers,
> nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards,
> nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." – 1 Corinthians 6:9-10
>
> "A woman shall not wear a man's garment, nor shall a man put on a woman's cloak, for whoever
> does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God." – Deuteronomy 22:5
>
> "Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the
> sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple
> of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were
> bought with a price.
> So glorify God in your body" – 1 Corinthians 6:18-20

Throughout the Bible, God's love for humankind and hatred for abominations against nature is unapologetic. When it comes to the Lord, "there absolutely are absolute truths, which never change. They have never changed and they never will," **wrote** Pastor Rob Pue. In today's lost

culture, however, Christians are led to believe it's "intolerant" of them not to accept others' beliefs.

But God's commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves also calls upon us to "speak the truth in love," as Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:15.

"Love does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth." – 1 Cor 13:7

"It takes courage to share your faith," Pastor Pue **said**, and not let people we love fall victim to false ideologies. "It doesn't matter what you believe *if it isn't true*."

In turning to the Bible for guidance, I learned it's not more loving or compassionate to look the other way or turn away from God for my own selfish reasons of wanting to feel more comfortable in this world, to be more liked or popular, or be seen as tolerant. Christian love means loving others so much that we care that they are not hurt, both in this life and the next. To me, that means helping others learn God's truth.

"Anyone, then, who knows the right thing to do, yet fails to do it, is guilty of sin." – James 4:17

So, I looked to what Jesus would want us to do and continued my journey of discernment. I next tested how the candidates' actions surrounding the difficult issue of sexual morality aligned with Biblical teachings.

As California Attorney General, on July 28, 2016, Ms. Harris filed two Amicus Briefs for **transgender rights**, including access to school bathrooms consistent with gender identity, and threatening loss of Title IX funding of schools who fail to comply. The press release cited her long established commitment to LGBTQ+ rights, which had included filing multiple Amicus Briefs defending same-sex marriages and refusing to defend a California proposition ballot measure for traditional marriage.

In a 2019 **interview** with National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) Action Fund, Ms. Harris talked about her long standing support of transgender rights and how she used her power as AG to push the transgender movement, including taxpayer funded trans surgeries for California imprisoned **inmates**. She told **the ACLU** she would use her executive authority as President to ensure gender trans surgeries would be covered by the state for inmates and illegal aliens in detention.

Since taking office as VP, she and Biden *have taken **65 actions** in support of LGBTQ+* (24 just in first 50 days in office), as tracked by **LGBTQNation**.

Her stand on LGBTQ+ is indisputable. Ms. Harris has **supported** LGBTQ and same-sex marriage rights throughout her career, even pledging to create a White House position dedicated to

LGBTQ+ rights.

Ms. Harris **made history** as the first sitting Vice President to march in a Pride event. She has regularly participated at **Gay Pride** parades in San Francisco, for example in 2019 and **last year**, when she and her husband also hosted a star-studded LGBTQ+ Pride **reception** at their residence. Earlier this year, she even **hosted** an event at the White House to celebrate the anniversary of a Queer Eye television series. And her current **ads** openly celebrate "Happy Pride."

While district attorney in San Francisco, Ms. Harris personally **officiated** gay weddings on Valentines Day 2004 and again in 2008, supported transgender military service, gender-transforming medical care, and LGBTQ+ rights, even creating an LGBTQ hate crimes unit.

She co-sponsored a bill to **nationally ban** conversion therapy. Instead, she has supported **controversial**, **unscientific** experimental **transgender** therapy **on children**, including puberty blockers, hormones and surgeries. **According** to Movement Advancement Project, an LGBT advocacy group based in Boulder, Colorado, currently 26 states cover transgender "health" care under Medicaid; and 14 states either have no specific policy or only exclude it for minors. In just four states – Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin – taxpayers paid for 97 breast removals and 36 hysterectomies in minor girls from 2019-2023. "*Other Medicaid-covered procedures performed on minors include nipple reconstructions, testicle castrations, removals of vaginal wall, "penis amputations," skin grafts and nerve creations, vocal-cord procedures, breast implants, and urethra reconstructions*," *Washington Times* **reported**, in an investigation of an **ad campaign** on gender transition surgeries in minors.

Ms. Harris opposed "don't say gay" laws, and confirmed her commitment to adding gender identity and sexual orientation to Federal civil rights law and Title IX, **according to** LGBTQ Nation. This advocacy group published a supportive **information sheet** on all of her accomplishments.

Equality California, the largest statewide LGBTQ+ rights organization in the country; **Human Rights Campaign**, the nation's largest LGBTQ+ rights organization; **National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund**, the **oldest gay rights** activist organization, have all endorsed Ms. Harris for President. LGBTQ+ groups responded to a call to action in a virtual **fundraiser** for Ms. Harris, raising over $300,000.

Mr. Trump is on **record** stating he would ban gender transition surgeries on children and pledged to cut federal funding for schools pushing "critical race theory," "transgender insanity" or any other inappropriate sexual or political content on children.

While President, LGBTQ+ organizations **condemned** President Trump as one of the most anti-LGBTQ+ presidents in history. GLAAD, the world's largest LGBTQ media advocacy organizations

made **210 attacks** against President Trump for not supporting queer Americans while he was in office.

An absolute test of how our Presidential candidates have followed Biblical teachings is their commitment to our inalienable right to life. In Part 5, my journey in election discernment looks at the issue of abortion.

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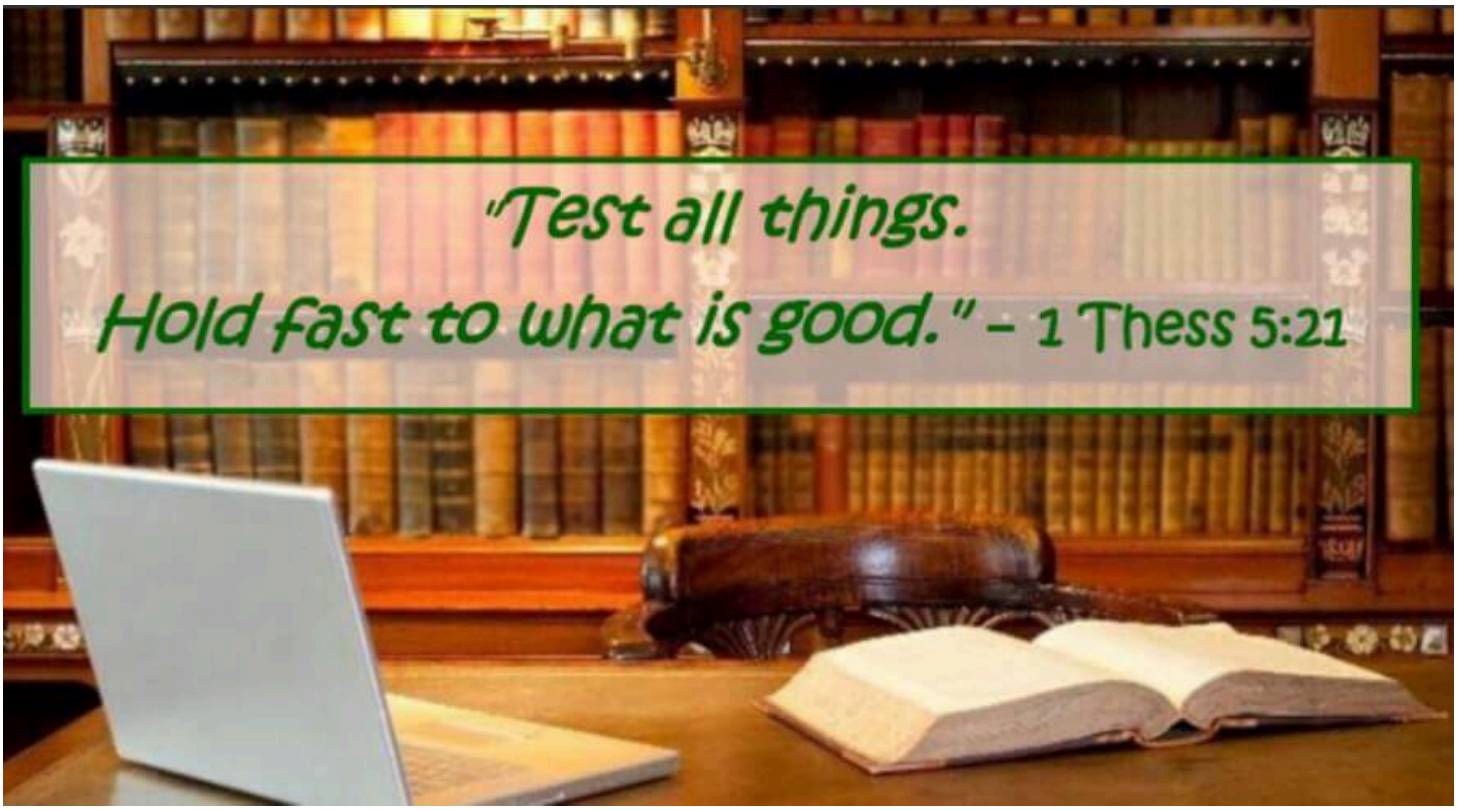
Part 5: Living our faith at the voting booth - Life and Abortion in Scripture

OCTOBER 12, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: EUGENICS, FAITH ON THE BALLOT, IVF



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Examining the Presidential candidates in light of Biblical teachings

By Sandy Szwarc, BSN, RN, retired emeritus
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> "This is what the Lord says—your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb." – Isaiah 44:24
>
> " The LORD called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name." – Isaiah 49:1
>
> "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart." – Jeremiah 1:5
>
> "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb…My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths
> of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." – Psalms 139:13-16
>
> "Children are a heritage from the LORD, offspring a reward from him." – Psalms 127:3
>
> "You shall not murder." – Exodus 20:13

The sanctity of life and abortion is an especially impassioned issue this election. The work of Christian discernment required close scrutiny to test how the candidates' actions aligned with Biblical teachings.

This White House has openly made abortion rights a key **agenda**. Ms. Harris has consistently been zealously pro-abortion and long supported making abortion rights **federally protected**, and banning state interference. Federal "abortion rights" translates to a law mandating Americans fund and comply with abortions and making it illegal to fail to provide abortions, while also in reality, eliminating rights of conscience for Christians morally opposed to abortion. Ms. Harris demonstrated with sisters at Daughters of Charity Health System hospitals in California that this is precisely how she interprets abortion "rights." While Attorney General, their hospitals could only continue if they complied with providing abortion services.

Ms. Harris has been the **White House voice** for "reproductive health rights" for the past 3 ½ years and it's **central** to her 2024 message. She was the first VP to visit Planned Parenthood clinics, did a nationwide tour for reproductive rights, and *hosted nearly 100 events* (**video** from April 26,2023). On February 24, 2023, she also convened a White House meeting to push for **chemical abortions access**.

Ms. Harris has been the **driving force** for abortion rights, **said** the Executive VP for health policy at the Kaiser Family Foundation, a **left-wing** policy and **lobbying** group based in San Francisco.

Ms. Harris also worked for two abortion bills, the **Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance** in 2019, which she co-sponsored; and the Women's Health Protection Act that would have established *federal mandates for abortion coverage and bar states or providers* from introducing restrictions. Ms. Harris went public telling media **she was eager** to cast the deciding vote for the Women's Health Protection Act and **in a rare occurrence** she presided over the Senate vote. However, it failed in the Senate.

Planned Parenthood Action Fund **endorsed** Ms. Harris for President on July 23, 2024. Their **press release** described her long "unquestionable" record as a "fearless, unapologetic champion" for abortion and reproductive rights.

Ms. Harris launched her "Fighting for Reproductive Freedom" **bus tour** earlier in September, beginning in Florida, **falsely claiming** President Trump wants a national ban on abortion.

Under Ms. Harris' abortion leadership, this Administration has continued to use the Department of Justice to **prosecute pro-life advocates** across the country, seeing them convicted of FACE Act violation and even adding "conspiracy against rights" charges so they would face up to ten years in prison. One of the latest was a **75-year old grandmother** given a two-year prison sentence for entering an abortion clinic and trying to talk to a mother and pray with her.

An example of the growing hostility faced by pro-life students was seen during **a campus event** organized by the Virginia Commonwealth University chapter of the Students for Life organization, when the speakers were interrupted by a storm of protestors shutting down the event. At least a dozen of the *pro-lifers* were detained by campus police.

As California Attorney General, Ms. Harris was **widely criticized of** ***weaponizing her office against pro-life activists*****.** She charged two undercover journalists, who had exposed Planned Parenthood executives discussing fees and prices for aborted baby parts, with 15 felony charges in 2017. She had reporter David Daleiden's home raided by 11 state DOJ agents with rifles and K-9 dogs, and seized the journalist's videos, files and personal information. He is still awaiting trial on eight felony counts in San Francisco Superior Court.

Records obtained from Planned Parenthood, revealed that Ms. Harris' campaigns had received **over $81,000** from Planned Parenthood and abortion advocates. As Senator, she had also hired the daughter of CEO of Planned Parenthood as one of her top aides.

Troublingly, both Ms. Harris and Mr. Trump have spoken in support of IVF (in-vitro fertilization). IVF has actually gone the slippery slope of eugenics, selecting which babies can live sometimes based on their sex and **genetics**, then contributing to the death of half of the babies that are created who do not survive the process or are discarded when not wanted. Last year, close to **2 million** embryos were killed by IVF. Christians who believe it is wrong to facilitate the death of a

tiny new life will have struggles of conscience when they are forced to pay for it at an **estimated price tag** of $7 billion.

Mr. Trump said that since Roe vs Wade was overturned by the Supreme Court and Constitutionally **returned to the States** for the people in each State to decide, he would support the people's right to make choices according to their own **religious beliefs**. But, he said, the *"Republican Party should always be on the side of the **miracle of life** and the side of mothers, fathers and their beautiful babies."*

- Pro-life Christians would prefer a President who's unyielding against abortion, but (with apologies to **Abolitionists**) the distinct difference currently between the candidates is that Mr. Trump would offer citizens the chance to vote in their States to advance pro-life positions, whereas Ms. Harris is committed to a national government mandate for abortions.

President Trump by his actions was the ***most active President in the history of the White House in protecting the sanctity of life***. His pro-life stand resulted in progressive media labeling him as "divisive" and "polarizing."

Once elected, President Trump promptly reinstated and expanded the **Mexico City Policy**, preventing $9 billion in aid to fund global abortions and **ensuring** U.S. taxpayer dollars do not fund programs of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilizations. This international policy had first been **created** during the Reagan Administration and continued through subsequent Republican Administrations.

He was the **first sitting President** in history to speak at a March for Life rally.

At his 2019 State of the Union address, he set a precedent in the history of modern America when he spoke against abortion, **saying**: *" Let us work together to build a culture that cherishes innocent life. And let us reaffirm a fundamental truth: all children – born and unborn – are made in the holy image of God."*

President Trump worked to prohibit federal funding for elective abortions; allow employers with religious or moral objections to be exempt from Obamacare reproductive healthcare requirements; **cut off** funding for the U.N. Population Fund, associated with China's ethical violations of forced abortions and sterilizations; and issued guidance to enforce the requirement that taxpayer dollars not support abortion in Obamacare exchange plans.

The National Right to Life documented his **record on life**, and his statement that reverence for life is "*the first, and most important, of our 'unalienable' rights*."

For voters looking to cast their ballots for the candidate that will most enable God's work to continue, Mr. Trump is undeniably the only option for life.

In Part 6 , the candidate's actions as civil leaders were tested. How well did each follow what the Bible calls them to do in as public servants maintaining law and order, and honestly fulfilling the job called upon them?

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See No Evil, Hear No Evil…

OCTOBER 10, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CONSTITUTION

By J. Jeff Toler for Shenandoah Christian Alliance **j.toler@sca4christ.org**

- ***My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.*** —James 1:19

What would we say should be the objective of civil society in a prosperous and healthy nation? It *should* be to procure for her citizens, at the very least, whatever they require for the necessities, the conveniences, the accommodation of life, and, in general, whatever constitutes happiness… as in "Life, liberty and the pursuit of…"

We can certainly add to these, the peaceful possession of property, a method of obtaining justice with security, and finally, a mutual defense against all external violence. Source:

From this list alone, it should be easy to form a fair idea of the perfection of a state or nation: everything in a healthy, just, properly functioning society must aspire to promote and protect—at a minimum, these objectives or goals.

For further consideration, as if we need it, Google AI provides the following:

> **Accountability**—The government is responsible to its citizens for its actions.

Transparency—The government is obligated to share information with the public, especially about how taxpayer dollars are spent and the actions of political representatives.

Effective governance—The government should have a framework of policies, processes, and structures to fulfill its obligations.

Risk management—The government should manage uncertainty to reduce the negative impact of challenges and take advantage of opportunities.

Maintaining infrastructure—The government should develop and regulate infrastructure to improve connectivity and networks for people, businesses, and trades.

Delivering municipal services—the local government should provide basic services that meet basic human rights.

Other obligations of a good government ought to include:

- Equality
- Citizen participation
- Free and fair elections
- Protection of human rights and the environment
- Control of the abuse of power
- Rule of law and due process

So, how do we explain why these ideals are barely observable—much less obvious—in America anymore?

What more could we say of the current state of affairs with our state and national leaders? Any Federal Election year is important, but this one is especially urgent. The campaign language from one side of the political sphere is talking incessantly about the other candidate as being a threat to democracy. And so, these basic ideas just listed—concepts our nation's founders carefully considered—have been lost in the shuffle from out-of-control rhetoric.

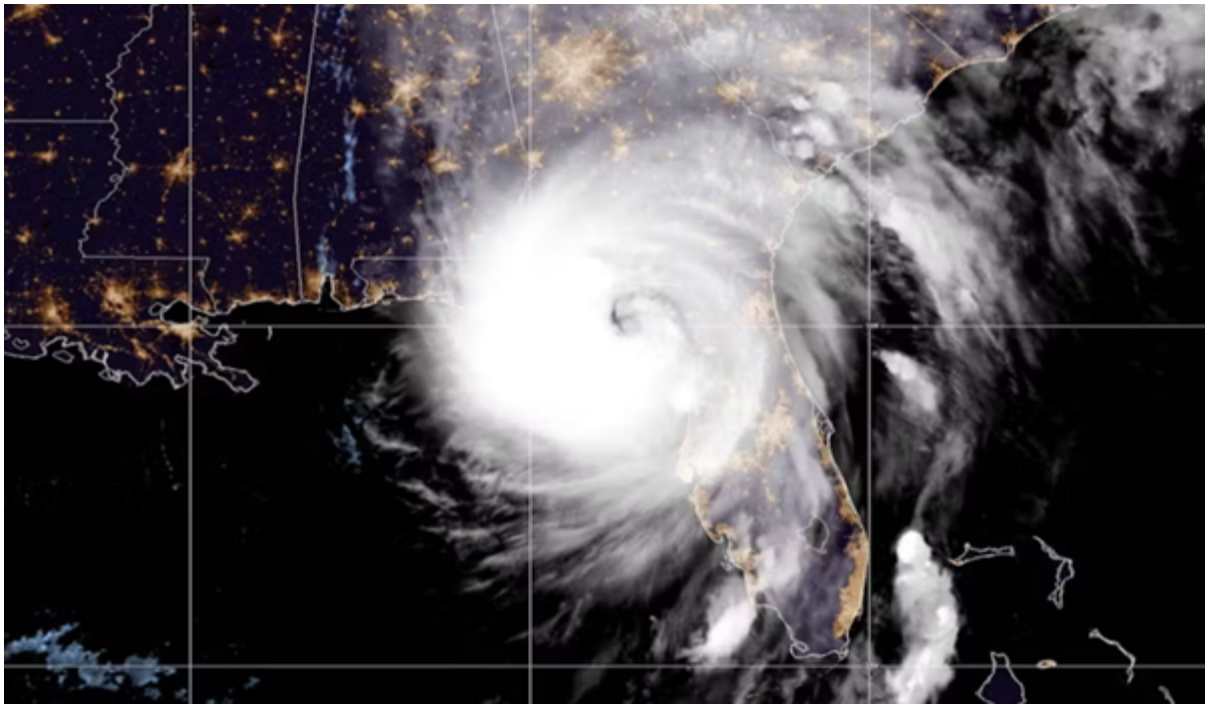
There are plenty of people, with infinitely bigger platforms than mine, who contend this is not only unprecedented, it's extraordinarily dangerous.

And yet, we seem to be taking it all in stride. The truth is this: it's evidence of desperation for those who want to hold on to power. Why would anyone believe we can trust such people to govern our lives? Why don't we seem to care?

This, as they say, is a tell: when things will be almost impossible to resolve at the ballot box alone —especially since the ballot box has become an anachronism.

I can cite two examples from personal observations just this past weekend, which reveal how bad the American soul and psyche have been wounded. For civil society to survive, it will require the most urgent care if we are to remain one.

Technically, the first observation is not, by definition, personal. It involves the news of hurricane Helene that devastated a massive area in south eastern US. But the surprise, for me at least, was just how destructive and deadly it would become.



Cary Mock, writing for *The Conversation*, reported, "At least 230 people died across Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia as Helene flooded towns, destroyed roads and bridges and swept away homes." For a complete assessment of the disaster read the entire article:

The disaster was certainly record breaking, but the really bad news was what America learned about FEMA, (Federal Emergency Management Agency) established to help people recover and rebuild from such disasters.

First, we discovered FEMA is all but bankrupt. Second, we discovered this is the agency tapped to pay for transporting millions of illegal migrants into our country and then relocating them. As the saying goes, "Who knew?".

This is, or it certainly should be, considered the worst scandal of our time. To make matters worse, by the time you are reading this, Florida will again be suffering the brute force of hurricane

Milton.

My second observation is equally as important, but for another reason. America is more divided than any other time in history. At least since the Civil War. There are two competing worldviews, and those embracing them are diametrically opposed to each other.

One side employs politics as a source of power. Pure and Simple. The other side eschews political power in favor of individual liberty, private ownership, and limiting government. But this much is clear: politics, for either side, is unavoidable.

> ***"Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."*** —Luke 12:53 NKJV

Case in point: My family and I went to the St. James Court Art Fair in Louisville this year. It's a wonderful opportunity to see and explore some really wonderful artwork and crafts. It's always very popular in the community, and it draws thousands.

While there, I happened upon one artist whose work really impressed me. When she approached me, we entered into a conversation. When she learned I was once an artist, she asked me what I'm doing now. "I'm a writer." I said. "What do you right about?" She asked. "The culture." I replied.

Clearly alarmed, she drew back, and told me, "Oh no, I'm not into politics!" As she turned away, I politely pressed her further, and discovered she had very strong political opinions for someone claiming to not be into politics. I discovered that she was very liberal, very feminist, and hated Fox News. All in less than two minutes.

I'm thinking she's definitely into politics.

Conversely, I know all too well that many Christians are "not into politics." And like their counterparts, they won't talk about it either.

Until they do.

Politics in this day and age is inescapable. And like it or not, we must be able to talk about it. Why? Because politics affects policy. Because policy affects people. Because people matter to God. Because we are made in His image and He loves us.

The secularists know that Christians aren't engaging in these conversations, or for that matter in their civic responsibilities… like voting according to their faith. They seemed satisfied with that.

In truth, voting is not a sacrament. It's a right and a privilege. And it's been violated.

For the Christian looking for a way to open up a conversation about faith in God—if that's your desire—then talking about the culture is far more effective than talking about the weather or sports. Don't worry, often times, people *want* to talk to us.

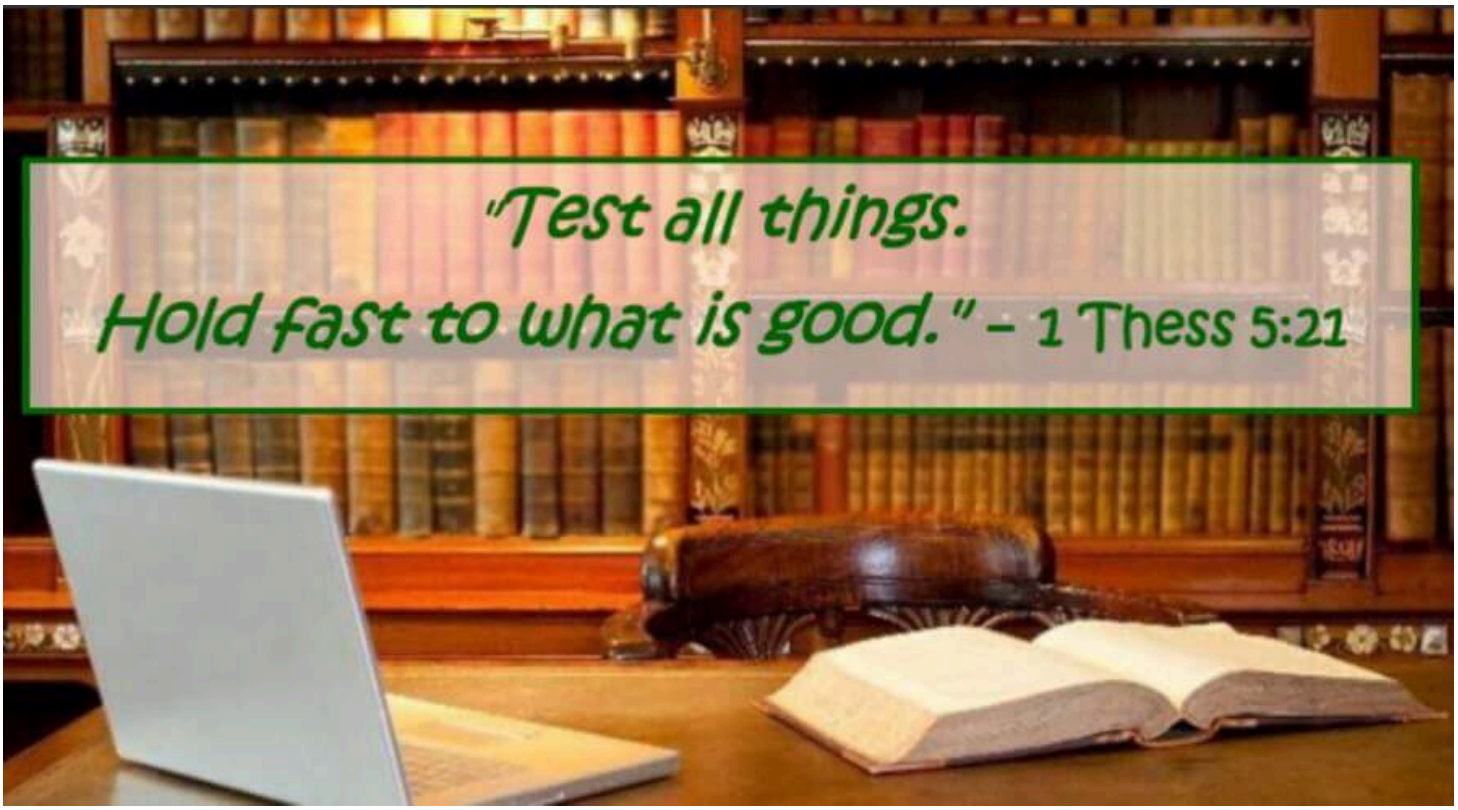
My encounter was all too brief because of the crowds—it was *very* crowded—and also because she was already talking to another visitor who entered her booth.

But, I have her card. She remains on my heart, so I will aim for another conversation. Please pray that we have one.

Photo by **Paulette Vautour** on **Unsplash**

Part 3: Religious Freedoms and Rights of Conscience –

OCTOBER 10, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: ELECTION DISCERNMENT, EUGENICS, FAITH ON THE BALLOT



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Looking at the Presidential candidates in light of biblical teachings

By Sandy Szwarc, BSN, RN, retired emeritus
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"Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil,
but living as servants of God." – 1 Peter 2:16

"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good,
for those who are called according to his purpose." – Romans 8:28

"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean
from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." – Hebrews 10:22

"It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery." – Galatians 5:1

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." – 2 Corinthians 3:17

My journey into election discernment started with the crucial issue for Christians: freedom of religion. It didn't take many examples to realize that Ms. Harris' *removal of protections for religious beliefs* from her commitments to Americans appeared quite intentional.

As Senator, Ms. Harris had sponsored the **Do No Harm Act** in 2019, *to* ***decimate the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) law that protects religious consciousness clauses for churches, doctors and Christians***. Her "tendentious reading" of the First Amendment free exercise of religion means nothing more than you are free to pray in your home and the church door isn't locked, explained moral theologian and attorney, Kenneth Craycraft. Ms. Harris believes the government can force you to do things that go against your religious beliefs and put severe restrictions on religious exercise.

The Biden-Harris administration ***rewrote, redefined and essentially removed religious freedom protections that had become national and foreign policy*** under President Trump when he had established the **International Religious Freedom Foreign Policy** in 2020.

- This Trump policy reaffirmed *religious freedom as America's first freedom and a moral and national security imperative – as in our U.S. Constitution*. It specifically condemned discrimination on the basis of religious identity or belief, and applied that protection to all agencies, departments and governmental policies. It directed the U.S. government to adopt the "countries of particular concern" (CPC), countries on the Special Watch List, and any other countries that have engaged in or tolerated violations of religious freedoms, as identified in the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (**USCIRF**) report, and to develop comprehensive action plans and support international religious freedom efforts.

The USCIRF is an independent federal agency that researches religious freedom conditions around the world and has made policy recommendations to the President, Secretary of State and Congress for more than a quarter century. The USCIRF **reported** that after taking office in January 2021, the **Biden-Harris administration** ***had removed religious freedom as a foreign policy priority***. Instead, they'd merged it with human rights, using the UN Human Rights Council as an observer.

The UN Human Rights Council has a long sordid history. The Council of Foreign Relations reviewed its history and **reported** that, like the Commission on Human Rights that came before its reorganization, it has earned a failing grade from a broad range of groups, including human

rights advocates, international legal experts and democracy activists. Its anti-Israel stance is another chief criticism. President Trump had made the decision to quit the UN Human Rights Council in 2008 and the Biden-Harris administration rejoined it in 2o21.

Speaking for the Biden-Harris White house in a March 2021 **press statement**, Secretary Antony Blinken repudiated the Trump administration's commitment to religious freedom (and the First Amendment) as "unbalanced views" saying that other human rights were just as important. The new administration adopted "universal rights" instead and mandated equal protections for people no matter "*whom they love or any other characteristic*." His speech focused on Islamophobia and violence against Muslims, discrimination against LGBTQ persons and racial and ethnic minorities; and cyberattacks, harassing dissidence or spreading "disinformation."

Finally, the Biden-Harris administration added access to "reproductive health care" (abortion) as a fundamental right. It also resumed support for the eugenics population-control program, **UN Population Fund**, under the guise of supporting "*women's health and equity*."

Nowhere in the administration's announcement was there a single mention of churches, Christianity or any religion.

After taking office, Ms. Harris and Mr. Biden failed to select an ambassador or fill key positions dedicated to religious freedom at the State Department and National Security Council, prompting the USCIRF to **call out** the Administration.

The State Dept. **says** that under Biden-Harris, **U.S. policies on human rights** now follow the UN's Universal Declarations of Human Rights and other international agreements, and defends against racial and gender justice and LBGTQ rights. U.S. policy under Biden-Harris also renewed its commitments to invest in world democracies and online anti-discrimination protections. Under Freedom of Religion, the State Dept. linked to its International Religious Freedom Report which carefully redirected freedom of religion to *legal limitations* against intolerance or discrimination that constitute and affront to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Under the **IRFR** report, freedom of religion should *"contribute to the attainment of the goals of world peace, social justice and friendship among peoples and the elimination of ideologies or practices of **colonialism** and racial discrimination*." The UN's definition of "colonialism" isn't geographic, but social and ideological. It's directed against free nations, notably the U.S., and encompasses gender and economic equity, racism, greenhouse gas emissions and use of fossil fuel.

The week before Secretary Antony Blinken was schedule to meet Nigerian heads of state to sign a $2.17 billion development agreement (in addition to the $5.5 billion given the African nation in 2019), **according** to the State Department, the Biden-Harris White House removed Nigeria from the list of countries identified by the USCIRF as a CPC. The Commission's February 2021 **Fact Sheet** on Nigeria had emphasized the seriousness of the religious persecution in the very first sentences:

> "Violent Islamist groups based in northern Nigeria remain some of the **deadliest and most formidable** jihadist groups operating in the world today. Estimates suggest that conflict with these groups has **killed more than 37,500 people** since 2011."

An **analysis** by Grace Melton, Heritage Foundation's senior associate for social issues at the UN, reported that the new policies under the guise of human rights will threaten religious freedom at home and abroad and that Ms. Harris and Biden's policies illustrate prejudice *against* faith and tradition. And, in fact, their policies did result in escalating violations of religious freedoms across the U.S. and world.

The USCIRF report found violent Islamist groups have made a resurgence in recent years with organized violence across the region. The USCIRF issued **a statement** disappointed that the State Dept. hadn't adopted its recommendations in designating countries that are the worse violators of religious freedom. It was especially displeased with the State Dept.'s removal of Nigeria from its CPC designation. The latest State Dept. **Religious Freedom Designations** still does not include Nigeria.

The annual USCIRF reports have continued to list China among the top of their list of CPC countries – which **currently** includes Burma, China, Cuba, Eritrea, Iran, Nicaragua, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Saudia Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, India, Nigeria and Vietnam – for the worst violations of religious freedom in the world.

Its **2019 report**, *which had led President Trump to establish the International Religious Freedom Foreign Policy*, for example, stated religious freedom conditions in China had continued to deteriorate, noting *the Communist government had created a high-tech surveillance state, utilizing facial recognition and artificial intelligence to monitor religious minorities*. They reported:

- an estimated 900,000 to 1.8 million Muslims have been detained in more than 1300 concentration camps in Xinjiang,
- Chinese authorities had raided or closed down hundreds of Christian churches, arresting congregations and imprisoning pastors,
- Bishops were harassed and detained for refusing to join the state-affiliated church association; local governments were paying informants for information on underground churches,
- Buddhist monks and nuns were imprisoned and tortured, and
- thousands of Buddhist residents had their homes demolished.

The latest **2024 USCIRF report** found religious freedom conditions in China have deteriorated even further, writing:

> "The government intensified the implementation of its multifaceted "sinicization of religion" policy, demanding that all major religious groups obey the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and its ideology and policies. Sinicization requires groups to follow the CCP's Marxist interpretation of religion, including by altering religious scriptures and doctrines to conform to that interpretation. Authorities demolished and forcibly modified Christian churches and Muslim mosques forced assimilation of local populations that threatened their religious and cultural identities… implemented its new Measures for the Management of Religious Activity Venues, further restricting religious freedom."

The report went on to document unimaginable conditions and abuses including imprisonment, forced labor, arrests, forcibly taking children from their parents, torture, and countless deaths. This administration's **backing away** from advocacy for religious freedom around the world has been called out by policy and human rights advocates as the massacres, humanitarian crises and the targeting of Christians around the world continue to escalate.

Attacks against churches here in the U.S. have increased 800% since 2018, according to a disturbing Family Research Council **report** issued in February. From 2018-2023, there were over 700 vandalism attacks, 135 arson-related attacks, 32 bomb threats, 22 gun-related incidents, and a myriad of other attacks, assaults, and threats — all against churches. *Last year saw the most hostility against churches than any of the previous five years.*

Since that FRC report, Ms. Harris has made no public statement in response. Violence has continued to escalate. Even pastors, their families and homes have been targeted by assassination attempts over recent weeks and months, pastors **shot in the head** or their homes **riddled with bullets**.

The Committee for Religious Liberty **reported** that there have been at least 346 incidences of arson, vandalism and other destruction of Catholic Churches in the U.S. since May 2020.

Yet last year, she and Biden ignored **their own** U.S. Department of Homeland Security, which had specifically **warned the Administration** of a "heightened threat environment" resulting from the divisive climate of "racial and ethnic minorities," LGBTQIA events and the caustic nature of government facilities and personnel. According to the reports on record, the DHS said, *this Administration has fostered the violence against churches, demonizing Christians and harsh treatment of pro-life advocates, while recommending pro-abortion activists who identify as transgender get no jail time for violent attacks on churches and church employees.*

A Subcommittee on National Security, the Border and Foreign Affairs Subcommittee **hearing** on *Faith under Fire: An Examination of Global Religious Persecution* on October 25, 2023, found the

Biden-Harris administration ***has been largely silent on religious persecution*** around the world and a number of their policies had emboldened hostile anti-religion groups. They **found** religious persecution is actually a major and growing problem, with about *360 million Christians globally enduring high levels of persecution and discrimination for their beliefs*. The most vulnerable have been placed in the worst conditions, yet, they found, ***the administration has been funding and aiding the very regimes that are practicing some of the most draconian violence against people because of their religious beliefs.***

The Committee on the Judiciary and the Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of

the Federal Government has been **investigating** the FBI after it had issued a memo categorizing traditional Catholics as "radical domestic terrorists" based on their religious beliefs, under the guise of tackling the threat of domestic terrorism. The FBI memo authorized the surveillance of faithful Catholics, choir directors, priests and churches and subjected them to actionable FBI investigations, intimidation and searches.

There are countless examples of the weaponization of the Department of Justice and Federal agencies against pro-life advocates under the Biden-Harris administration. Armed Federal swat teams have burst into homes to arrest pro-life pastors who'd prayed on the sidewalk outside an abortion clinic, such as Mark Houck, who was removed from his home in chains and **threatened** with eleven years in prison and $350,000 in fines before finally being **acquitted** of all charges the following year after a **five day trial**.

As U.S. Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito **said** at the2022 Notre Dame Religious Liberty Summit, religious liberty protects domestic tranquility and has often fueled social reform. "*Religious liberty is under attack in many places because it is dangerous to those who want to hold complete power*," he said. "*If religious liberty is protected, religious leaders and other men and women of faith will be able to speak out on social issues,"* he said. *"People with deep religious convictions may be less likely to succumb to dominating ideologies or trends, and more likely to act in accordance with what they see as true and right. Civil society can count on them as engines of reform."*

Mr. Trump had consistently shown himself to be a strong supporter of religious freedom. "*America is a nation of believers, and together we are strengthened by the power of prayer*," he **stated**.

- While in office, President Trump signed an executive order in support of faith-based and community programs, ensure religious liberty protections under the law. In 2017, he signed his executive order "**Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty**" and also **created** a new **Conscience and Religious Freedom Division** at HHS to protect rights of conscience and moral convictions in healthcare services. The rights of healthcare workers to not be required to do things that violate their consciences, such as euthanize an elderly or disabled patient or perform an abortion, is a fundamental aspect of the ethical practice of medicine. As acting HHS Secretary Hargan said, "*President Trump promised the American people that his*

administration would vigorously uphold the rights of conscience and religious freedom. That promise is being kept today. The Founding Fathers knew that a nation that respects conscience rights is more diverse and more free, and OCR's new division will help make that vision a reality."

- President Trump repeatedly marked the importance of prayer at public events, and has continued to throughout **this campaign**. He was the first President to address the **March for Life rally**. He reversed the Obama administration policy to allow churches to receive crucial disaster aid in times of crisis. And, he supported religious freedom in the courts, backing the rights of a baker to follow his religious convictions.

- Trump **supported** Louisiana's new law that the Ten Commandments be hung in every public school classroom.

- In response to the 2019 USCIRF recommendations, President Trump had not only established the **International Religious Freedom Foreign Policy**, he also enacted **key U.S. Policy** The State Department added a special section on Xinjiang and convened the second Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom of world and religious leaders, where President Trump met with victims from China. That October, he imposed restrictions on Chinese implicated in the mass internment of Uighur Muslims and violent abuses that had been deemed "crimes against humanity." Throughout 2019, under President Trump U.S. governmental agencies provided funding to organizations *pr0moting religious freedom* in China.

In contrast to Mr. Trump, I wasn't able to find an example of Ms. Harris promoting freedom of religion and speech while in office. Her Bible citations were typically associated with progressive ideologies and social justice, and at odds with conservative traditional beliefs, **noted** *Premier Christianity*.

Religious freedom really is America's *first* freedom. It's the moral and fundamental imperative of our U.S. Constitution. On this issue, the words and deeds of the candidates reveal very different worldviews. Only one candidate has exhibited the truth.

*In **Part Four**, the next important Christian issue to test, as the bible tells us to do, examines the candidates' adherence to Biblical teachings concerning LGBTQ+ rights.*

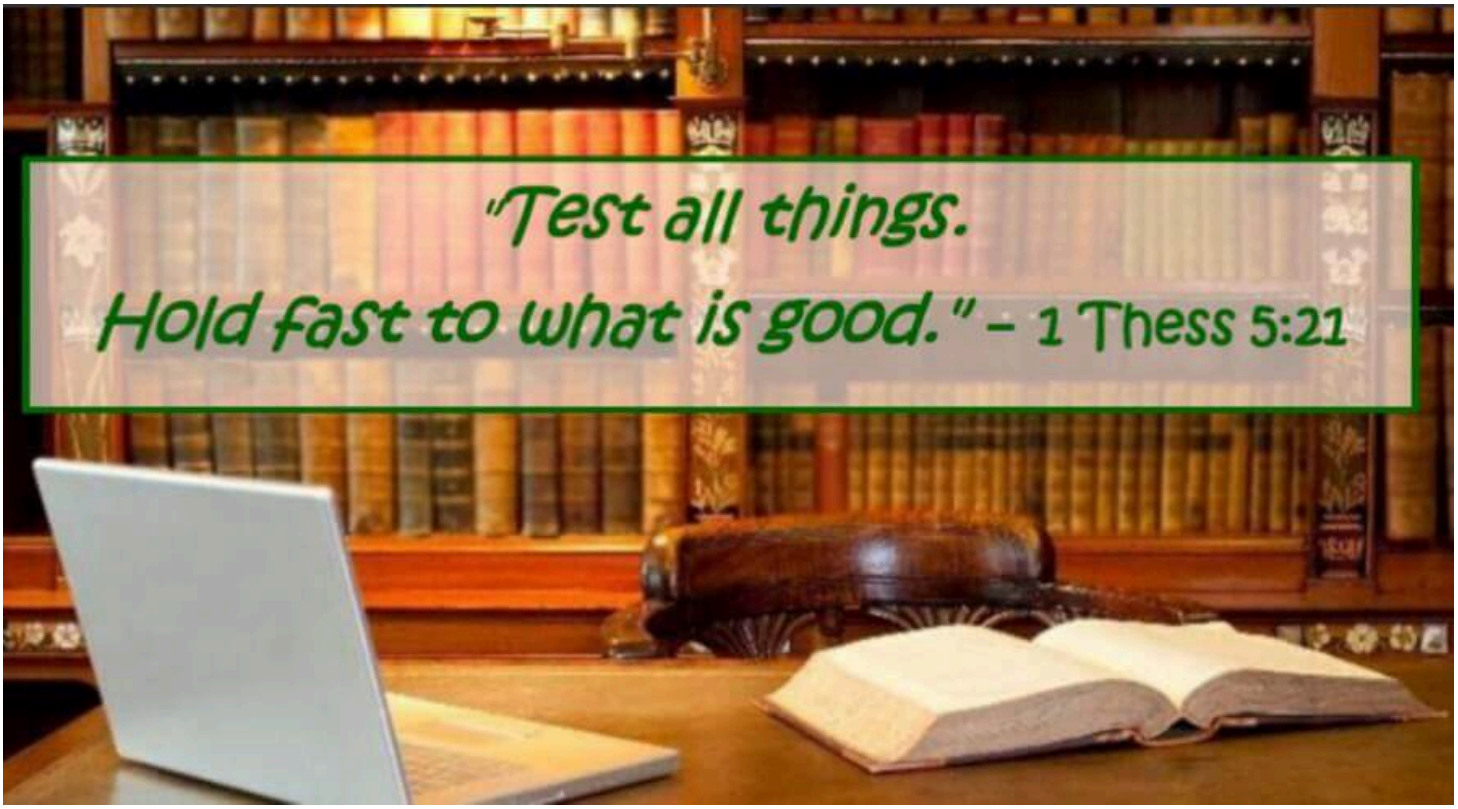
Faith on the Ballot Series:

Christian, read and share Sandy Szwarc's Faith on the Ballot Series, examining the Presidential candidates in light of Biblical teachings

Part 1: **Trusting Jesus in Making the Right Choice**
Part 2: **Beginning the Discernment Journey**
Part 3: **Religious Freedoms and Rights of Conscience**
Part 4: **Scripture and LBGTQ+ Rights Policy**
Part 5: **Living our faith at the voting booth – Life and Abortion in Scripture**
Part 6: **God's Word on crime and abuse of office in public servants**
Part 7: **Border Walls and Sovereignty of Nations in Scripture**
Part 7: Continued: **What's the truth of a border crisis?**
Part 8: **Scripture on Taxes and Government Spending**
Part 9: **False Doctrine of Climate Change**
Part 10: **The Spiritual Battle for our Country – Growth of Evil**
Part 11: **The Spiritual Battle for our Country – Their world vision**
Epilogue:

Part 1: Trusting Jesus in Making the Right Choice –

OCTOBER 9, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: FAITH ON THE BALLOT



Originally published September 19, 2024

Examining the Presidential candidates in light of Biblical teachings

By Sandy Szwarc, BSN, RN, retired emeritus
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This upcoming Presidential election is the most important one in my lifetime. I can't remember an election that will so clearly decide the direction for our Country and if we can hold onto it. It's impossible to ignore that our country has been in moral decline and, tragically, become a culture of death, immorality and darkness. I see many Christians like me grappling with how to vote because neither candidate is ideal, perfect, or sinless.

Of course, only one man has ever been perfect, Jesus. But something happened in a few short minutes on the night of August 22nd that changed everything. It was as if Jesus was shining down and guiding Christians in how to make the right choice.

The night, Kamala Harris became the 2024 Democrat Presidential nominee. **Her acceptance speech had a glaring omission that went through the heart and soul of every Christian and person of faith.** Yet, who was listening carefully and caught it?

> "…And so on behalf of the people; on behalf of every American regardless of party, race, gender or the language your grandmother speaks; on behalf of my mother and everyone who has ever set out on their own unlikely journey; on behalf of Americans like the people I grew up with, people who work hard chase their dreams and look out for one another; on behalf of everyone whose story could only be written in the greatest nation on earth, I accept your nomination for Vice President of the United States of America." – Kamala Harris, August 22, 2024

Her speech was roughly taken from our Nation's founding document, the **Declaration of Independence**, which formed the guiding principle of America, based on Judeo-Christian values that our Creator made all men equal:

> "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of happiness."

More specifically, her speech writer incorporated the **Civil Rights Act of 1964** which guarantees equal protection under the law for every American "*without discrimination or segregation on the ground of race, color, religion, or national origin*."

In fact, that exact phrase appears 37 times in the Act. But the Civil Rights Act *includes* ***the very word that Ms. Harris conspicuously removed from her speech*** *when describing* ***the Americans*** **she** ***will work on behalf of*** *regardless of… That word was:*

"religion"

People of faith were excluded from Ms. Harris' commitment to the American people.

That was my wake up call.

It alerted me to what I believe was an obligation to turn to God's teachings to show me the way to the **truth** and what is right. I knew in my heart that I needed do the hard work that Jesus calls us to do. Discernment. Would it be even possible as a Christian to vote for Ms. Harris?

> "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth." John 17:17

There are **dozens** of warnings in the Bible about being careful not to follow falsehoods, calling upon believers to test all things against the teachings of Scripture. Throughout both the Old and New Testaments, Jesus told believers to use discernment and make wise choices, not to lean on their own understanding, but to look for truth.

> "Test all things. Hold fast to what is good. Reject every kind of evil." – 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22
>
> "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind,
> that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good
> and acceptable and perfect." – Romans 12:2
>
> "Whoever speaks the truth gives honest evidence,
> but a false witness utters deceit." – Proverbs 12:17

What to do?

I am sharing my journey in election discernment in hope it's of help to other Christians. I wanted to follow God's teachings as well as I could. To begin to understand what Jesus would want me to do, took me first to our country's founding documents and to the Bible.

Turning to the Bible

There was broad agreement among the **Founding Fathers**, regardless whether they were all Christians, although most were, that the Bible was essential for nurturing the civic virtues that give citizens the capacity for self-government and that are necessary for a republic form of government to succeed. It promotes the principles of wisdom, justice, dignity, virtue, and goodness. They understood that without a national morality a representative republic form of government could not survive. As John Adams **once wrote**: "*The Bible contains the most profound Philosophy, the most perfect Morality, and the most refined Policy, that ever was conceived upon Earth. It is the most Republican Book in the World.*" It was after Pastor Peter Muhlenberg's famous sermon that the fight for American liberty began and the Constitutional Convention would be held.

The Bible was the most frequently read and **cited book during** America's founding era and played a major role in the establishment of our country. It could actually be seen as the fourth founding

document. The Declaration of Independence expressed the soul of the new Country, establishing the moral, spiritual, rational, political and legal grounds for its founding. Each sentence **came from** the Bible.

The Constitution laid out the fundamental features of our country's representative republic form of governing. While the authors made no actual mention of God in the Constitution, Judeo-Christian **concepts** – of covenant, sovereignty, limited government, consent of the governed, social contract, unalienable rights, separation of powers, checks and balances, federalism, rule of law, due process of law and representative government – all came from the Bible.

And the **Bill of Rights** – which laid out the essential principles of human liberty and rights given to all people from the Creator – came from the Bible. First among those rights was the **First Amendment**: **freedom of religion** to believe and practice our faith without interference from the government; the **freedom of speech** and a free press and the **right of people to assemble** and petition to the government. The Founding Fathers understood that religion, speech and assembly were essential for a free and sovereign country. Totalitarian rulers understand this, too, which is why these are the key freedoms they try to destroy.

That's why the Bible matters. If we fail to understand the Bible and its role in our lives and the soul of America, we will lose the sense of who we are, where we've come from and what we can become.

I discovered there is one primary question for Christians to answer before placing a vote.

In studying Scripture, I learned that, as Christians, we bear a responsibility ***to vote*** *for government leaders* ***who make it most possible to do God's work*** and share the Good News.

I realized it was more than just a matter of picking the lesser of two evils. That became key for me. Countless times in Scripture, God used pagan rulers to move his people to faith – pagans sympathetic to God's people and who enabled people to do God's work, despite the sinfulness of the pagan rulers themselves. Nehemiah and Artaxerxes come to mind. We certainly do find ourselves in a lost world today. How can we as Christians know the *best leader to nurture God's work* and what do in the face of overwhelming division?

"Let every soul be subject unto the ***higher powers****. For there is no* ***power*** *but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."* – Romans 13:1 *The original Greek text is ἐξουσία (exousia) and appears over 100 times in the New Testament. It is mistranslated in some English translations to "government authorities.

> "God reigns over the nations."– Psalm 47:7-8
>
> "Do not become the slaves of men." – 1 Corinthians 7:23
>
> "A ruler who lacks understanding is a cruel oppressor, but he who hates unjust gain will prolong his days." – Proverbs 28:16

I found help in my decision by better understanding God's covenant with his people that was established in the first five books of the Old Testament and found throughout the entire Scripture. As part of his "**Dominion Covenant**," God established four earthly governments that he delegated specific responsibilities to each of the governing authorities (individual, family, church and civil).

God's Dominion Covenant and the Ten Commandments became part of the founding governing **principles** in our U.S. Constitution. Civil rulers are God's servants and are instructed by God to uphold His law and act as God's avenger and carry out His wrath on wrongdoers and punish evil (Romans 13). The Covenant reminds Christians that God is the **ultimate authority** and we are held by God's law. No other laws of man can supersede God's laws.

Civil leaders may not commandeer God's authority. God recognized that, left unchecked, worldly leaders descend into tyranny, subjecting people to oppression and injustice as they set themselves up as the higher authority, a false God. Hence, when civil governmental leaders stop upholding God's law, they make *the State* God. That's where another scriptural principle was helpful for learning what God instructs Christians to do when our civil leaders and governments depart from God's law.

The **Doctrine of the Lesser Magistrate**, developed during centuries of tyranny against Christians and churches, **teaches** that God approves of obedience to His laws, in defiance of tyranny. When civil authorities depart from God's laws by making immoral or unjust laws or decrees, the "lesser magistrate," or lower ranking civil authority, is obligated to refuse and intervene to protect the people, their freedoms and property. The duty of people is to rally behind the lesser magistrate when he takes a stand against a tyrannical and unbiblical civil ruler.

I was taught we are held by God's law, always. It is absolute. Our duty is to do the right thing in the eyes of God, to understand and stand up to tyranny, and fight against evil. Doing nothing, looking the other way, and failing to act (vote) is not an option.

So, my work began. Given both candidates have failings and both have had one term in office to compare, I searched for the strongest evidence of their actions while in elected offices and how closely each adhered to the oath of office, the Constitution, and the job the people elected

him/her to do. Most importantly, how well they upheld God's law. Actions speak louder than words, as the saying goes, so I focused on what they had actually done, not what they might have said they'd done or might promise now. Would one excel as showing by their deeds a willingness to sacrifice and lose everything to do what he/she felt was morally right for the Country?

I began my journey in discernment trying to learn about Ms. Harris's actions while in office in light of Biblical teachings, since her acceptance speech had left Christians in the dark. In **Part Two**, I uncovered disturbing evils that have been working to keep facts from Christians trying to learn the truth.

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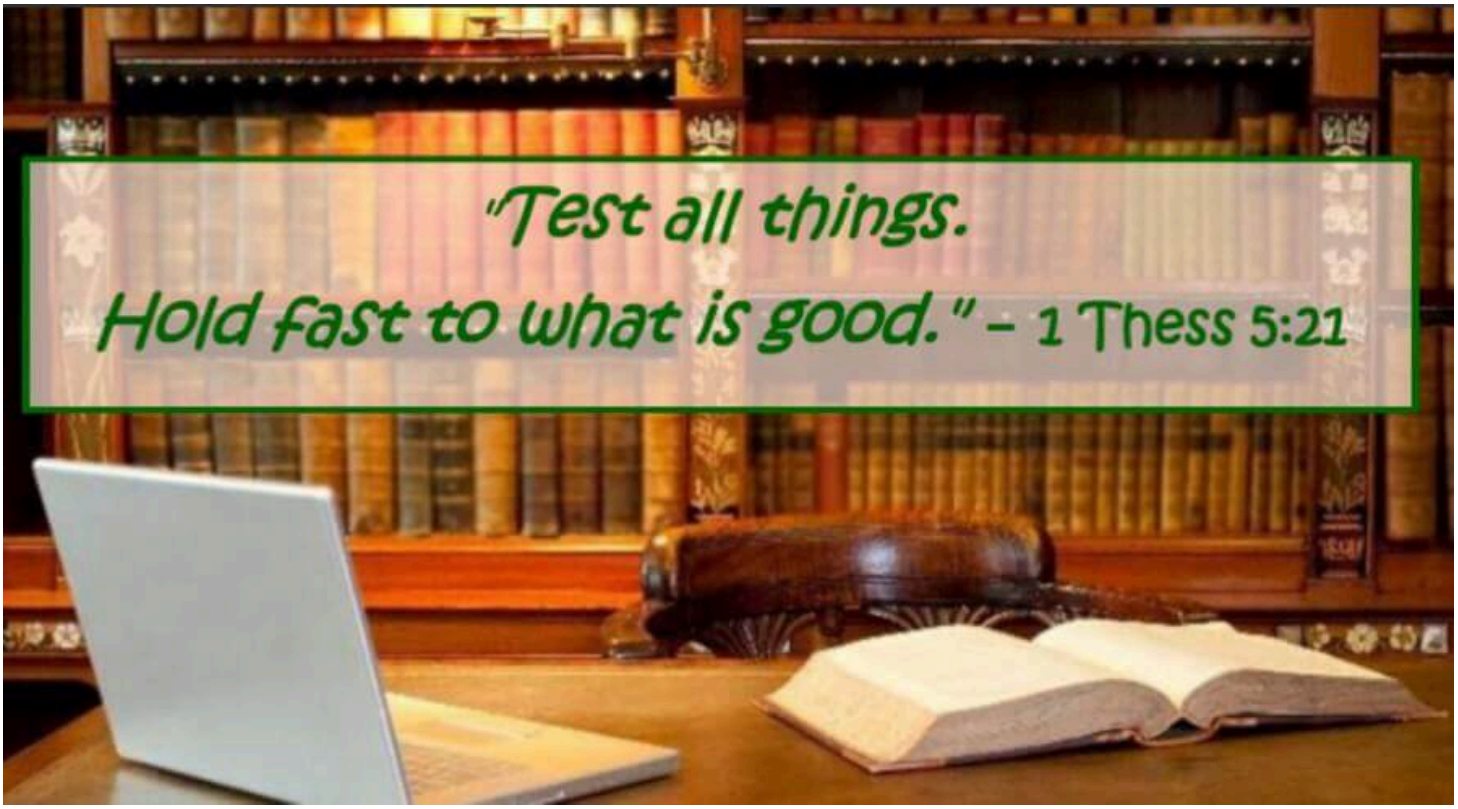
Epilogue:

Part 2: Beginning the Discernment Journey

OCTOBER 9, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: ELECTION DISCERNMENT, FAITH ON THE BALLOT



Originally published September 20, 2024

Examining the Presidential candidates in light of Biblical teachings

By Sandy Szwarc, BSN, RN, retired emeritus
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> "Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity." – Titus 2:7
>
> "Whoever speaks the truth gives honest evidence, but a false witness utters deceit." – Proverbs 12:17

God instructs us to use discernment and make wise choices, not to lean on their own understanding, but to look for truth. But he never promised His way would be easy!

It proved more challenging than I realized to learn objective facts about Ms. Harris or Mr. Trump in trying to make the most Biblical voting decision. I learned why. And those reasons went against everything the Bible taught about telling the truth, openly and honestly.

> "These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts." – Zechariah 8:16
>
> "Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body." – Ephesians 4:25
>
> "Let no one deceive you with empty words." Ephesians 5:6

Decades ago, the entire media was commandeered by globalists, nowadays most notably George Soros who's among the most powerful and most radical **anti-God** activist donor on the planet. Soros has spent more than **$32 Billion** building his power base, not only funding radical progressive causes, candidates and **District Attorneys**; but especially, news media and front groups, like his Open Society Foundations and **Arabella Advisors**.

One of the wealthiest people on earth, billionaire globalist, Bill Gates, has also spent over $300 million to influence every segment of media and academia, as was **documented** from Gates Foundation donor records.

America First Legal learned that Mr. Gates and Mr. Soros had also **collaborated** on massive projects to censor free speech during election periods. More unfathomably, along with the world's wealthiest and most influential billionaires, they are now pursuing "**philanthrocapitalism**" – defined as: *for-profit investing in progressive socialist agendas **by the ultra-rich** to control and create a world of coercive dependency by the masses (the people), while appearing philanthropic.*

These two examples don't begin to describe the scope of wealthy outside influences, foundations, government agencies and nonprofits influencing public information, which has been endlessly documented and confirmed for years in government documents and by independent researchers. ***Virtually everything we hear, read or watch has been funded by unelected elite billionaires and is disinformation spun for political and marketing purposes, not about honestly imparting facts.***

Last year, a massive investigative report was **released** by the nonprofit, Media Research Center, that was **praised** by Constitutional lawyer Marc Levin and others. The report, ***George Soros: Propaganda Powerhouse***, revealed Mr. Soros has taken ***control of media in virtually every continent and language on the planet.*** Just between 2016-2020, Mr. Soros funded $131 million to 253 major journalism/media groups, including all of those "*fact-checker*" groups, and the most powerful media conglomerates (i.e. mainstream media) and **journalists** across the globe.

Mr. Soros has also funded **a media group** dedicated to global Big Tech efforts to censor internet and social media, attack "disinformation" in every issue that conflicts with globalist interests (including scientific and medical research surrounding abortion, Covid-19, climate change, etc.), and specifically target conservative and faith-based groups labeling them as "hate groups" to "protect democracy." The success of these Soros-led efforts has been well recognized. The Bible is now considered "hate speech" or a "thought crime," **said** Pastor Rob Pue in a recent *Wisconsin Christian News* commentary.

Legacy media stopped being objective, balanced or truthful long ago. Media bias and restrictions on free speech have been **well-documented** and the steady movement towards increasingly radicalized liberalism has been going on for years. In fact, by 2021, U.S. media ranked ***dead last in the world*** for trustworthy reporting and freedom of the press. This First Amendment right has never been more threatened, with **growing attacks** on free speech, calls for censorship and speech controls, purging and retractions of dissenting views, and the weaponization of speech to protect what the government deems "disinformation."

More than **$80 million** was *exclusively directed by Soros in a campaign against Donald Trump* for the 2024 election, calling on over 200 groups to implement policies on their media platforms to "protect democracy worldwide." ("Democracy" is the code word for *collectivism*, not as in our republic, **explained** the *Independent Sentinel.)*.

Media Research Center just released an in-depth **investigation** into Soros-funded corrupt politicians and prosecutors, after submitting 48 freedom of information public record requests. Disturbingly, it found that the *Biden-Harris administration is the most powerful group* ***working with Mr. Soros,*** with Soros lawyers even embedded in its administration.

Eye-opening media revelations

So, when I Brave Searched online (the world has **recognized Google** internet search engine cannot be trusted) for false or misleading statements by Mr. Trump, the anonymously-written Wikipedia repeated the claim from *Washington Post* of 30,573 untruths while in office that had gone viral (few held up to facts when examined by multiple objective sources)…while there was no similar page for Ms. Harris.

It feels like 99% of everything in media for the past decade has been spun anti-Trump, making it impossible to learn objective facts or gain balance and perspective. Not surprisingly, I learned that this perception has been repeatedly confirmed by news critiques.

- Even board member Jerry Pierce, Jr. of the left-leaning Washington Media Group, wrote more than four years ago about the media's hatred of Trump and how every major outlet was spinning every story against Trump. "*While watching a non-mainstream television news program, a strange thing happened, they were reporting the news! When I say news, I mean facts,*

no opinion," he **wrote**. "*I then changed the channel to CNN and MSNBC and the entire vibe was different. The seemingly single-minded message was immediate, clear, and constant; 'Trump is wrong, Its Trump's fault…*"' He concluded that many in media "*have gone from journalist to political activist*."

- Media Research Center comprehensively tracks news bias and **reported** in 2020 that during the entire four years of the Trump presidency, the media demonstrated a concerted effort to tear down this President and "*jettisoned its last professional restraints to become active opponents of the President of the United States*." Their report gave countless examples. On each issue, the coverage was spun 89% to 95% negative, while accomplishments – such as promoting religious freedom, record-setting economic gains, and historical peace agreements – were virtually ignored.

- Even progressive literary critique, Anis Shivani, **wrote**: "*It has become rank heresy in liberal circles to define Donald Trump as anything but the second coming of Hitler, or at least Mussolini. Fascist or ethno-nationalist motives are evoked to explain Trump's appeal to the white working class. Yet, during Trump's first presidency, no new major wars were started, a first for any administration since the onset of the national security state 80 years ago…. Trump was not a fascist when in power. He refused to exercise dictatorial powers when Covid offered him a rare opportunity to do so. His anti-elitist America First movement is essentially the same as what used to be called isolationalism during both World Wars, boasting a legitimate intellectual pedigree going back to the founding of the American republic*." He said the awakening really going on is the raging battle between "*American Firsters indisposed towards globalization and all that it brings in its wake, versus a neoliberalism that has emptied itself of any persuasive content except a hypocritical identitarian one.*"

- By September 1, 2024, Media Research Center **found** the media bias against Trump, as well as his supporters, had continued relentlessly. Yet, news media insisted it wasn't bias, MRC reported, because neutrality was considered not an option when it comes to Trump as it would appear to give him legitimacy.

- Online **clips** of anti-Trump communications and the ratcheting up of disturbing **violent verbiage** stoking fear and hatred against Mr. Trump have raised concerns of growing divisiveness and worries of where it could lead.

It was especially hard to find objective information or critical analyses of Ms. Harris. And since she's assumed the Presidential candidacy, I couldn't find a single live, candid interview from her with the press or public or anything that hadn't been scripted, tele-prompted, and staged. Even the *New York Times* **wrote** on August 8th about her unusual refusal to talk to the news or answer

any questions, and *Fox News Digital* **reported** on August 26th that she'd gone 36 days without sitting for an interview or giving a formal press conference. In other words, the only side we're getting is marketing and scripted emotional appeals. Concerns of media bias were compounded when the close personal ties between Ms. Harris and her husband with ABC News were **revealed**.

Differentiating sophisticated marketing from objective and factual information is a hard part of the work of discernment. Ahead of the 2020 election, Ms. Harris began laying the groundwork with her own web and digital social media campaign focused **on pop culture** and **Gen Z**, according to reporters. Ms. Harris spent massive amounts **to build** her Democratic power base and **influencers**, "looking for progressives ready to run innovative and unique digital campaigns." Within one day after being named the Presidential candidate, her TikTok posts got a **reported** 14 million views each and raised **$100 million** in the first 72 hours. The youth arm of the DNC has become a veritable "**meme factory**" to make her appear more "relatable" and "like she's one of us."

Targeting white liberal college-educated young women, the **Hysteria** podcast created by a Democrat advocacy consultant and former Obama staffer, came up with the "Weird campaign" against Mr. Trump. "This is working because you know what? They're F-ing weird," **said** the host. I was unable to find any serious, thoughtful discussions of issues, but lots of bad language. They currently have 242,000 subscribers and link to the Democratic PAC **Vote Save America**. Time will tell if young women voters will understand the seriousness and responsibilities of voting for the Commander-in-Chief of the world's leading free nation. I pray they do.

It turns out, I learned we can't trust anything we hear to be real. For Christians who value honesty and teach our children to tell the truth, this realization showed me how important it was to learn to discern what was true from false, and to follow the Biblical warnings to test and verify everything so as to not be misled.

So began my research for verifiable information on a few of the key issues for Christians when entering the ballot box this election. **Part Three**, examines freedom of religion, itself…since protections for religious beliefs were so visibly absent from Ms. Harris' pledge to Americans. America's First Amendment freedoms proved to be the most at stake in this election.

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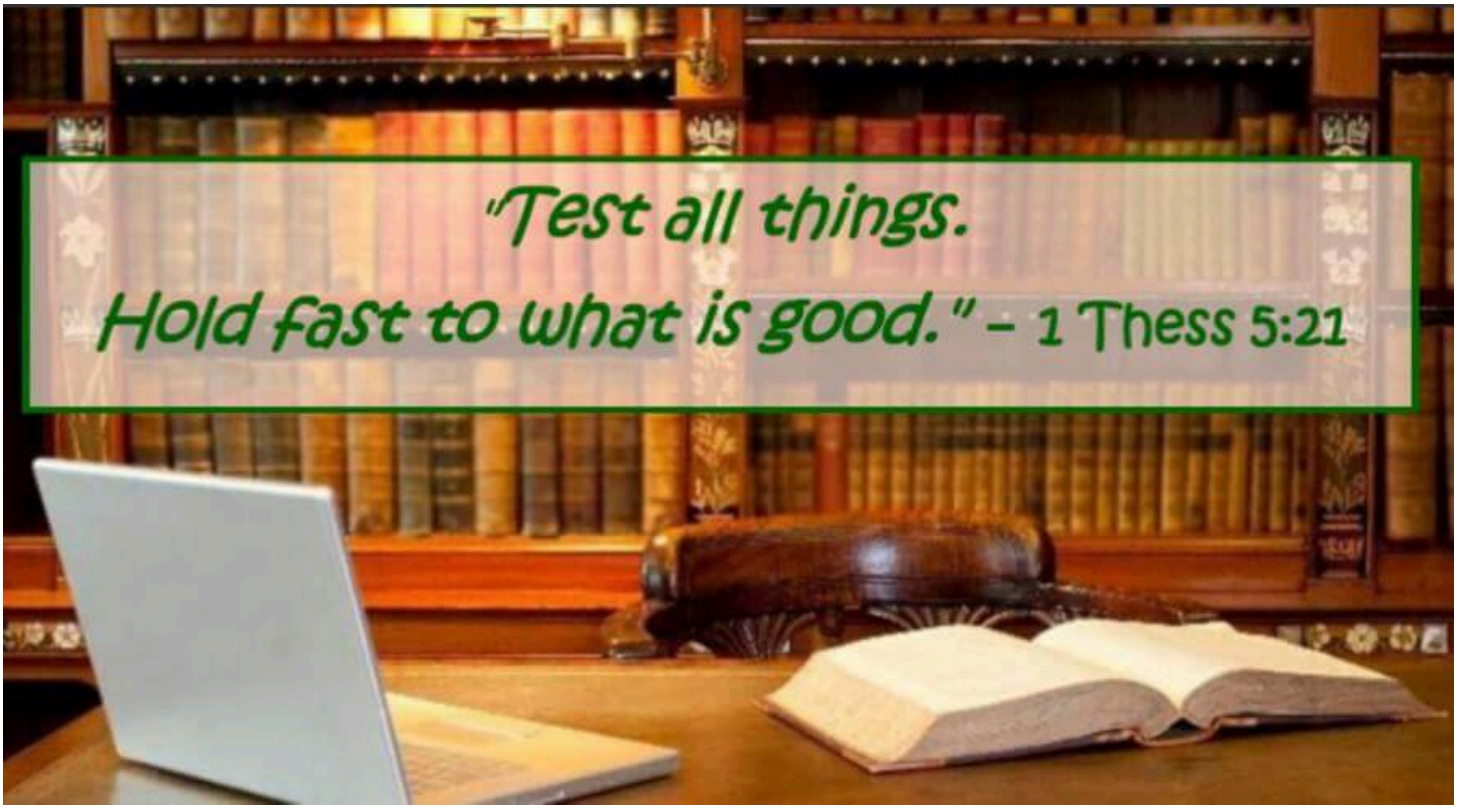
Epilogue:

Epilogue – Following Jesus' Teachings as We Vote

OCTOBER 9, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: FAITH ON THE BALLOT



Examining the Presidential candidates in light of biblical teachings

By Sandy Szwarc, BSN, RN, retired emeritus
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> "The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe." – Proverbs 29:25
>
> "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." – Romans 8:38-39
>
> "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." – Isaiah 41:10
>
> "Having believed, you were **marked in Him with a seal**, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of t*hose who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.* (Ephesians 1:3-14)

Thank you for following along with me on this journey of discernment. I learned a lot in researching the Presidential candidates' deeds and words in light of Biblical teachings. It opened my eyes to things I'd never known and helped me rethink things I'd once thought were true. I hope it has been of help to you, too.

The facts showed more powerfully than I might ever have imagined, that this election is the most important one in my lifetime if we are to save our Country, our faith, and our Constitution. Jesus' teachings guide us to what He would want us to do.

We are at a crossroads at this moment in history: whether we will continue to be a free and sovereign nation or succumb to the evils of an anti-God, anti-life, and anti-free global world governance.

Yet, currently *104 million Americans of faith don't plan to vote!*

In **a study** just published by Cultural Research Center, 99% of church-going Christians said the candidates positions on the key issues in this series will affect who they vote for.

That same survey found, however, that ***fewer than half of churches and pastors talked about the teachings of the Bible on these same issues***. Abraham Lincoln **said** the Bible is "the best gift God has given to man" and he often turned to its reason when making moral decisions.

As Christians, it's up to us to do the right thing, as warriors for Christ and for good. **The Bible matters** and is the soul of our Country. It teaches that we are to read, test all things, learn and share the truth. By testing we may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:2)

This critical election calls for each and every one of us to Vote, with **the Bible in one hand** and Jesus' teachings in our hearts.

Seal of Hope

I wanted to close by sharing this message of hope from Jesus that helped me not become overwhelmed as we are surrounded by so much evil in the world.

Jesus taught us not to fear, as fear is the work of Satan and evil men. He also reminded us in Scripture that He has marked his true believers with a seal which is promised to protect us through to the end. We can hold in our hearts his promise to his faithful.

I pray Christians will follow Jesus' lessons to practice discernment as diligently as they can, help others to hear the good news, and follow his Word with all their heart. That will be the saving grace for our Country and for God's people everywhere. Let us pray for America, for our leaders, churches, children, and the future. And never give up the hope that Jesus brings.

> ***"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sins and will heal their land." – 2 Chronicles 7:14"***

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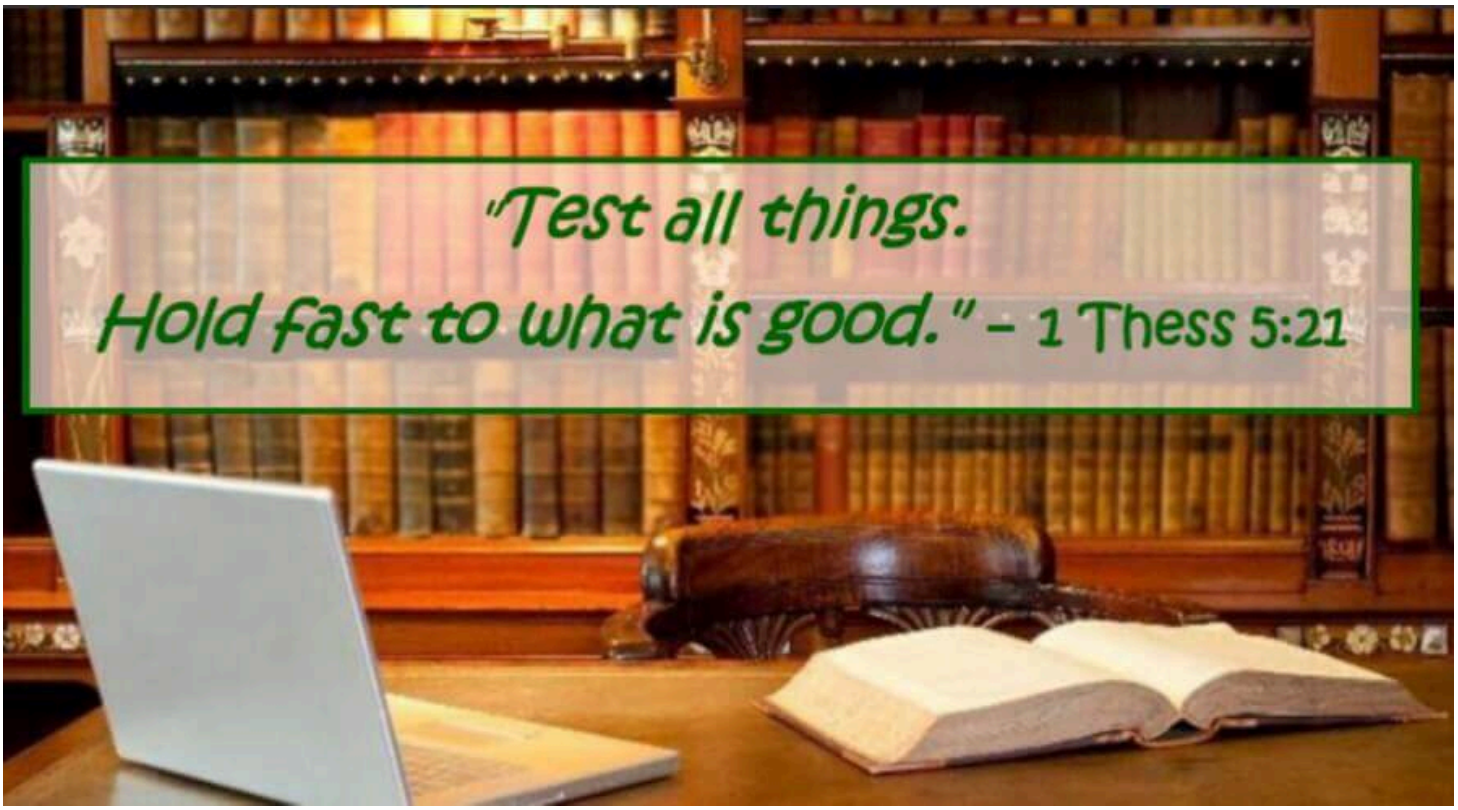
Epilogue: **Following Jesus' Teachings as We Vote**

Part 11: The Spiritual Battle for our Country – Their world vision

OCTOBER 8, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: FAITH ON THE BALLOT



Examining the Presidential candidates in light of biblical teachings

By Sandy Szwarc, BSN, RN, retired emeritus

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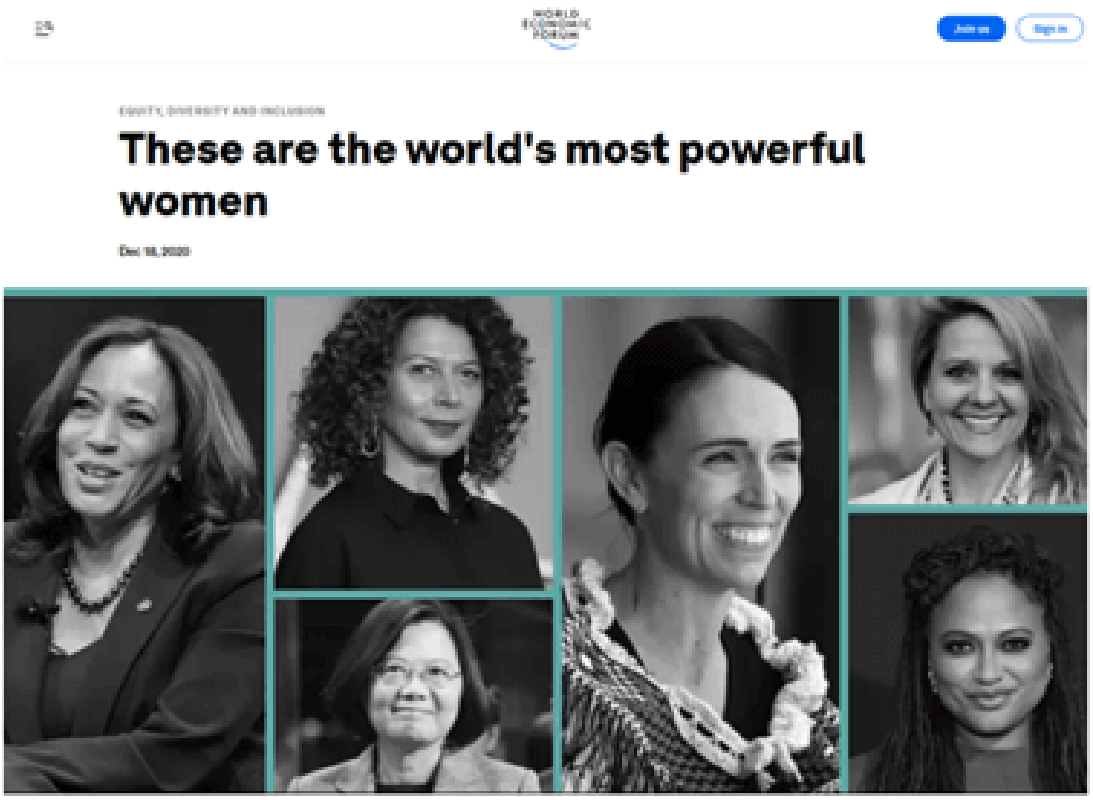
> "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. Our soul waiteth for the Lord:
> He is our help and our shield." – Psalm 33:12,20
>
> "Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others.
> But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known
> also to your conscience." – 2 Corinthians 5:11

Decades of organized efforts to remove God from our culture and replace His teachings with globalist ideologies have effectively brought our country to this brink. Continuing the examination of this spiritual battle, *there was one discovery that changed everything and made me understand that is election would decide if we will be able to preserve our Country and our First Amendment to practice our religion and freely speak the truth.*

On December 18, 2020, ***the World Economic Forum named their top five most powerful women in the world.*** Ms. Harris was listed third on a list that included the Chancellor of Germany and the President of the European Central Bank. T*hey ranked her global importance over that of the President of the European Commission and Melinda Gates with the Bill & Melinda Gates foundation!*

Kamala Harris is considered the third most powerful woman* global *leader!



WEF had published **articles** before she'd run for office in 2019, complimenting her as the first woman District Attorney in San Francisco, the first woman Attorney General in California, and voicing "has the time finally come for a female U.S. President?" After she was elected VP, WEF again featured her, **writing** how the election result offered hope for "we the people" to build a better future. They called her words "so potentially transformative" and important for progressives fighting for social justice. Simultaneously, the WEF author maligned outgoing President Trump for alienating and terrifying, and being divisive.

What actions has Ms. Harris taken that would place her in the spotlight of the world's top globalist organization?

As I came to see, Ms. Harris ***has personally launched a number of global initiatives,*** all of which appear to be responding to and garnering the approval of the recognized leaders of the global order movement. ***In fact, she has been working in lockstep with them.***

Throughout Ms. Harris' term in office, she has supported and expanded WEF and UN initiatives both globally and in our country, and worked in lockstep with globalists.

In Part 7, we already examined **Klaus Schwab at the WEF working side-by-side with Ms. Harris to advance her Call to Action for the Northern Triangle of Central America**. We also looked at George Soros, another WEF globalist member, her ties and **work as a prosecutor**; and his funding of illegal immigration and specifically for Haitians, which Ms. Harris followed with immigration initiatives she created.

Mr. Schwab went on to ***announce*** *the WEF would convene and leverage its Fourth Industrial Revolution Network* and facilitate partnerships *in support of Ms. Harris*. On May 26, 2022, at the WEF meeting at Davos, Mr. Schwab **introduced** new ESG initiatives to make significant commitments to VP Harris' Call to Action to companies and social enterprises for Northern Central America, *bringing together 150 CEOs to align their corporate strategies with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and ESG principles*.

But the story is much larger. On the World Economic Forum, **Schwab issued his** ***Global Gender Gap Report 2020*****.** Subsequently, on October 22, 2021, Ms. Harris and Biden **announced** the first ever *National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality*, **writing** that America has never fully lived up to the ideals of equality. However, this new policy **was actually a worldwide** ***global initiative*****,** calling for a "**whole-of-government**" effort in partnership with "*foreign governments and multi-lateral organizations, and non-governmental actors.*"

The White House strategy included: reinstating funding to the **United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA)**, expanding Obamacare and expanded health care *globally*, and supporting a federal Constitutional "right" to abortion.

- President Trump had ended funding to UNPFA in 2017 after multiple investigations had uncovered unimaginable human rights abuses. VP Harris has *never* acknowledged the well-known human rights abuses associated with UNPFA.
- I had **written about** the "heart wrenching, disturbing and soul-searching news" in 2008. Uyghur Human Rights Project **reported** in 2008 that, according to China's official Tianshan Net, population control policies in Xinjiang had resulted in the **forced abortions of about 3.7 million babies over the last 30 years**.
- The **genocide and human rights abuses with UNPFA** continued to be **reported** more than a decade later. An **investigation** on UNPFA in China by the Population Research Institute, and **another** investigation in China and India by Cato Institute, found massive atrocities

targeting hundreds of millions of minorities and poor, forced sterilizations and abortions, punishments and imprisonment, and horrific personal stories from the victims.

That same day, the Biden-Harris White House also issued a "**Proclamation on United Nations Day**," proclaiming their success as *the world's largest financial contributor to the UN* in supporting global initiatives (most also reversed President Trump's actions) including:

1.) restoring membership in and funding for the World Health Organization,

2.) rejoining the Paris Climate Agreement,

3.) $15 billion funding of the global Covid-19 response including donations to **COVAX** (directed by the **GAVI Vaccine Alliance**), and

4.) affirming their support for the United Nations and the UN Charter and its **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**.

In March 2023, Ms. Harris further advanced Schwab's calls for gender equity and to close "the digital divide…and advance gender equality" in Africa, when she personally **released the** "*Fact Sheet: Vice President Harris Launches Global Initiatives on the Economic Empowerment of Women, Totaling over $1 Billion.*" It stated *"the Vice President i**s** announcing a series of investments and initiatives from the U.S. government and in response to her call for investment from the private sector and philanthropic community.*" (Translation: the philanthocapitalists at the World Economic Forum.)

This was Ms. Harris' project, too.

United Nations is the globalists

The UN has been the world body that carries out the globalist agendas since it officially began on October 24, 1945. While it's *funded by U.S. taxpayers*, the UN initiatives violate the U.S. First Amendment, Christian values, and the national sovereignty of the U.S. and all free nations.

William Federer, expert on the U.S. Constitution, the First Amendment and America's heritage, reported **the little-known history** of the UN Charter. It was founded to create a world of civilized order and bring world peace. But since then, there've been 150 wars with 100 million casualties and the use of violence for political gain has become *more* widespread in the past decade. The founding Secretary-General was Alger

Hiss, later convicted as a Soviet agent, and another Soviet spy became the senior editor of *Time Magazine* to disseminate fake news propaganda.

The ***world's worst violators of human rights*** were on the UN Human Rights Council, which removed any mention of God or the Creator from the Universal Declaration Of Human Rights (UDHR).

The 57 Islamic countries rejected the UDHR entirely and formed their own Organization of Islamic Cooperation reaffirming sharia law in two OIC documents that placed all rights and freedoms in non-Muslim countries "subject to the Islamic Sharia" law. This resolution limits free speech of non-Muslims and enforces the *suppression* of free speech and religion. The very act of saying "Jesus is the son of God" or that "Israel is the Jewish homeland" is enough to be called "discriminatory," "defamation of religion" and "incitement to violence," **explained** Federer.

According to the OIC, western freedom of speech is to blame for the "perpetuation of Islamophobia," **reported** Gatestone Institute.

After closed door meetings with OIC, referred to as the "**Istanbul Process**," then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton "***enshrined our commitment***" to the UDHR and support of the OIC-sponsored "16/18 implementation," which prohibited *any speech insulting to Islam, as part of universal human rights*.

Global Shariah law was thus established, with the agreement of the U.S. government. There was no vote by the people of the United States.

This is the origin of the focus on "Islamophobia," a nebulous concept invented by the **Muslim Brotherhood** in the 1990s, **according** to Gatestone Institute. Americans may remember when the Obama-Clinton administration excused the Benghazi killings **blaming a video** found "insulting to Islam;" and their failure to **investigate** Islamic-related terrorist groups had been **attributed** to not wanting to offend Muslims. "The future must not belong to those who slander the prophet of Islam," President Obama **told** the UN General Assembly on September 25, 2012.

To celebrate its 75 year anniversary, the new futuristic UN 2.0 was launched at its virtual *Summit of the Future* on September 22 – 23, 2024.

It fast tracks the finalization of the UN's agenda.

At the Summit, their global "**Pact for the Future**" agreement was to be signed, which outlines the "*transformation of global governance.*" The President of the General

Assembly **said** that the Pact will ***"lay the foundations for a sustainable, just, and peaceful global order – for all peoples and nations."***

- It encompasses a Global Digital Compact, Declaration on Future Generations and reaffirms commitment to complete the **three pillars** of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement by 2030. The SDG goals alone are estimated to cost U.S. taxpayers more than **$196 billion every year**.
- The Pact includes 56 Actions and multiple compacts and objectives to strengthen the UN global partners' governance over everything in *private and civil society,* on the planet, and beyond into space.
- You will need your globalist detector rings to decode the doublespeak and understand the meaning of terms like *transforming global governance, mandated intergovernmental processes, strengthen international cooperation for the environment*, and *compliance with our multilateral agreements*.
- Buried in the Pact, for example, is its "global shocks" response (Action 54) first outlined in a UN **Policy Brief**. Anytime the UN Secretary General decides there's a global shock of any type affecting more than one country ("climate emergency," supply chain emergency, pandemic or black swan event) it would activate UN authoritative mandated responses, with no standards or restrictions specified.

UN 2.0 will authorize "Our Common Agenda" that is a complete global socialist manifesto. It calls for: universal basic income and healthcare; ***net zero emissions*** by 2050 and no coal use; carbon pricing; transforming food systems for sustainability and "fairness;" universal human rights that includes the human right of internet access; gender equity; international tax system; connect all people on the planet digitally with oversight and accountability by the UN for discrimination and misinformation; regulate artificial intelligence; promote digital commons for the global public good; global governance of "global public goods;" create a "fairer" multilateral debt and trading system; **transform education** to indoctrinate children on globalist ideology, track career paths and labor markets outcomes for youth, and form a youth in politics index; empower the WHO, a global vaccination plan, "global health security and preparedness," and universal health coverage.

It all perfectly aligns with Ms. Harris' policies throughout her years in office.

Unbelievably, on September 22, 2024, the UN world leaders **adopted** the **56-page** *Pact for the Future* by consensus, with only seven countries not going along. The U.S. was NOT one of the countries that stood against the globalists. A last minute effort by a small group to add an amendment to prohibit the UN from intervening in any matter that is in a nation's sovereignty and private interests, was rejected.

Celebrating the Pact for the Future, the Biden-Harris Administration released a **Fact Sheet**, touting its tireless commitment to the UN.

***

Ms. Harris has been surprisingly involved with the UN. On December 15, 2022, at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, VP Harris chaired a "Leaders Summit Working Lunch on Multilateral Cooperation," **announcing** more new global initiatives. She ***affirmed her commitment to the UN and African Union founding documents*** and to be "*more inclusive and responsive to global institutions, build a strong and sustainable global economy, foster new technology and innovation, strengthen health systems and prepare for the next pandemic, tackle the food security and climate crises, support democracy and human rights.*" She issued a White House **briefing**, outlining plans to invest at least **$55 billion** for Africa as part of her global initiatives.

The Biden-Harris White House had signed an **Executive Order** on January 21, 2021, ***reversing*** *President Trump's decision to withdraw from the World Health Organization*, as their Administration began the work on "***a path to global citizenship for the U.S.***" and plan to ***invest one-third of all U.S. development assistance*** **to be dedicated to global** ***health initiatives*****.**

WHO's ***Pandemic Agreement,*** first introduced on December 7, 2022 and supported by the WEF, *would give WHO sweeping, legally–binding, worldwide powers over every national government and over every individual, in the event it declares another "pandemic."* WHO also proposed amendments to its International Health Regulations (IHR) that would give it more *authority to track, quarantine, force vaccinate, and censor speech during any WHO-declared pandemic*. Earlier that year, WHO had also issued abortion guidelines stating abortion rights would continue even during global health crises.

- Mises Institute **explained**, it is "One Health" and ignores the core principles of democratic governance.
- The Heritage Foundation Issue Brief **stated** the texts being developed by WHO and the IHR would harm U.S. interests. According to the U.S. Constitution, any international agreement requires supermajority approval by the Senate, which the Senate **reaffirmed** in the "No WHO Pandemic Preparedness Treaty Without Senate Approval Act." The President can't simply make international treaty agreements. But that hasn't stopped the Biden-Harris Administration.

WHO's Pandemic Agreement, with its power grab of nations' sovereignty, failed to gain the support of free countries and didn't pass in June. So WHO has **extended** negotiations until next May 2025. Even Britain **refused** to sign onto the WHO global pandemic treaty.

However, on April 16, 2024, the Biden-Harris Administration **announced** its "Global Health Security Strategy" in support of WHO and **to *make the U.S. a leader for driving global action towards WHO and IHR goals*.** Skirting the U.S. Constitution and required legislative votes, they stated their plans to "*further accelerate country implementation of the International Health Regulations and contribute towards achieving the G7 Pact for Pandemic Readiness Global Health Security Agenda targets.*"

In the event the pandemic treaty fails to pass, it appears the U.S. government plans to get the job done itself, Sharyl Attkisson **reported**.

These examples show a Presidential candidate with clearly conflicted interests, not devoted to the United States at all, but to global leaders and ***fully on board with their global governance agenda***.

Rereading VP Harris' speeches and briefs with each of her global initiatives, *I was unable to find positive mentions of our country or her being proud of America. Virtually all of the initiatives she's personally led and promoted have been globalists' agendas.* **It genuinely feels like a vote for Ms. Harris is a vote for the totalitarian globalists at the UN and WEF… not for President of the United States.**

President Trump stands alone

President Trump, on the other hand, as we saw in Part 10, is not one of them. He is not spoken of favorably by globalists at WEF or the UN. In fact, they've been quite contemptuous of him. President Trump admittedly made mistakes during his Presidency, but on this issue he has demonstrated that he gets the bigger picture.

In order to create their "New World Order" and power grab, globalists have to bring down America. Why? Because a nation whose citizens follow Biblical principles, believe in individual freedom, think for themselves, are self reliant, work hard, and love their families, neighbors, churches and country, won't willingly give it all up and turn themselves over to global monarchs.

President Trump surprised the world by making a bold decision to go to Davos, Switzerland and **speaking to the WEF** at their exclusive annual meeting on January 23, 2018. It was the first time a sitting U.S. President had gone to Davos since 2000. Then, he also surprisingly took the podium at the **UN General Assembly** on September 25, 2018.

In his speech addressing Schwab and WEF, **President Trump said**:

> "Yet despite all of the cynics, I have never been more confident in America's future…For the first time in decades, we are no longer simply concentrating wealth in the hands of a few. We are concentrating and creating the most inclusive economy ever to exist. We are lifting up Americans of every race, color, religion, and creed… The American Dream is back — bigger, better, and stronger than ever before. No one is benefitting more than America's middle class."

With every paragraph, President Trump **voiced** his pride in our Country, optimism for the future and boldly stood up for our Country's national sovereignty:

> "A nation's highest duty is to its own citizens. Honoring this truth is the only way to build faith and confidence in the market system. Only when governments put their own citizens first will people be fully invested in their national futures. In the United States, we are building an economy that works for everyone, restoring the bonds of love and loyalty that unite citizens and powers nations. Today, I hold up the American model as an example to the world of a working system of free enterprise that will produce the most benefits for the most people in the 21st century and beyond. A pro-worker, pro-citizen, pro-family agenda demonstrates how a nation can thrive when its communities, its companies, its government, and its people work together for the good of the whole nation."

Yet, he specifically demonstrated how nationalism was not isolationist. He talked about working together with countries while still preserving and respecting the national sovereignty of each other. Then, he went after globalist's fearmongering:

> "This is not a time for pessimism; this is a time for optimism. Fear and doubt is not a good thought process because this is a time for tremendous hope and joy and optimism and action. But to embrace the possibilities of tomorrow, we must reject the perennial prophets of doom and their predictions of the apocalypse. They are the heirs of yesterday's foolish fortune-tellers — and I have them and you have them, and we all have them, and they want to see us do badly, but we don't let that happen. They predicted an overpopulation crisis in the 1960s, mass starvation in the '70s, and an end of oil in the 1990s. These alarmists always demand the same thing: absolute power to dominate, transform, and control every aspect of our lives. We will never let radical socialists destroy our economy, wreck our country, or eradicate our liberty. America will always be the proud, strong, and unyielding bastion of freedom.
>
> In America, we understand what the pessimists refuse to see: that a growing and vibrant market economy focused on the future lifts the human spirit and excites creativity strong enough to overcome any challenge — any challenge by far. Above all else, we will forever be loyal to our workers, our citizens, and our families — the men and women who are the backbone of our economies, the heart of our communities, and the soul of our countries. Let us bring light to their lives one by one and empower them to light up the world."

Speaking to a less than receptive audience at the UN the following September, again his theme was America, its support of countries around the world, work for peace, and respect for national sovereignty. He closed by saying:

> *"America is governed by Americans. We reject the ideology of globalism and embrace the doctrine of patriotism. " Patriotism, sovereignty and optimism filled his remarks again: "We believe that when nations respect the rights of their neighbors, and defend the interests of their people, they can better work together to secure the blessings of safety, prosperity, and peace. Each of us here today is the emissary of a distinct culture, a rich history, and a people bound together by ties of memory, tradition, and the values that make our homelands like nowhere else on Earth. That is why America will always choose independence and cooperation over global governance, control, and domination. I honor the right of every nation in this room to pursue its own customs, beliefs, and traditions. The United States will not tell you how to live or work or worship. We only ask that you honor our sovereignty in return."*

President Trump stood up for our Country as no President I've watched in my lifetime has ever done. He has shown his willingness to risk everything for our Country –

- Lose the money he'd earned as a businessman (losing **a third** of his net worth while in office, and never taking a Presidential **paycheck**);

- Endure endless prosecutions as Biden-Harris **weaponized** the Department of Justice against him (which Supreme Court justices have opined was **unconstitutional**) and against thousands of **American** supporters who were simply attending a Trump rally;
- Undergo incessant **name calling**;
- Bear **violations** of his social media accounts;
- Withstand the **targeting** of 111 attorneys associated with Trump, attempting to disbar and discredit them;
- Endure FBI and DOJ **raids** and trashing his home (which Constitutional lawyers opined were **illegal** and **unconstitutional**; and
- Even risk his life, as the world **witnessed** with the assassination attempt on his life on July 13, 2024. He wrote that night to Americans:

> "Thank you to everyone for your thoughts and prayers yesterday, as it was God alone who prevented the unthinkable from happening.
>
> We will FEAR NOT, but instead remain resilient in our Faith and Defiant in the face of Wickedness. Our love goes out to the other victims and their families. We pray for the recovery of those who were wounded, and hold in our hearts the memory of the citizen who was so horribly killed. In this moment, it is more important than ever that we stand United, and show our True Character as Americans, remaining Strong and Determined, and not allowing Evil to Win. I truly love our Country, and love you all…"

Illegal election interference shows just how serious the efforts are to stop Mr. Trump from being elected. A **Press Release** was issued jointly by the ODNI, FBI and CISA *on August 19th* about Iran's efforts to interfere with the elections. It included known recent activities to compromise his campaign, involving online theft and illegal disclosures. A July 9th **news release** from ODNI warned the public of Iran using social media platforms to promote their false narratives on Gaza and Trump, in order to influence the election and stoke discord and undermine confidence in our democratic institutions. FBI officials **said** on September 6th that Iran's cyber operations targeting Trump are likely still active. A second joint agency **Press Release** on September 18th confirmed Iran had hacked Trump's campaign email and stolen confidential material and has been releasing it to U.S. media and to Biden's campaign in June and July. The stolen confidential documents had been **leaked to** *Politico, New York Times* and *Washington Post*.

Mr. Trump has demonstrated a willingness to lay down his life and everything he has to try and save the country. By his actions, President Trump has shown his true heart and what he holds fast. ***With literally historical efforts trying to stop him, he has not waivered on that.***

After studying the massive international powers working not only against him, but also against all Americans, patriotic citizens, and Christians, what **President Trump said** after they'd tried to impeach him in 2019 now makes sense: *"In reality they're not after me. They are after you. I'm just in the way."*

While media scoffed at that, a prominent WEF member revealed this past January just how correct it was to WEF. **Yuval Noah Harari** openly **said** that if Trump is elected, "*it will likely be the death blow to what remains of the* ***global order****.*"

- Harari went on to share his views that nationalism leads to war and global government brings peace. His latest book, *Lessons for the 21st Century,* promotes his view of scientism (which he calls secularism) and equates religion with fake news. "*When a thousand people believe some made-up story for one month – that's fake news. When a billion people believe it for a thousand years – that's a religion.*"

Never in my lifetime have I seen the globalists come together and devote such massive efforts – stopping at nothing – to bring down and block one man running for President and leader of the free world. They clearly see him as a menace to their totalitarian plans.

I can't imagine a better example calling for the **Doctrine of the Lesser Magistrate**. Under that doctrine, the duty of Christians is to rally behind the lesser magistrate when he takes a stand against a tyrannical and unbiblical civil ruler.

Recent news may have made the voting decision hard for some Christians. ***I went back again to the key question for Christians when selecting between imperfect civil leaders: which one will most enable Christians, and all people of faith, to practice their religion and share the Word?***

It's clear now. I don't think that our choice is even close.

In closing, the Epilogue shares Jesus' message to Christians when faced with evil.

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Part 10: The Spiritual Battle for our Country – Growth of Evil

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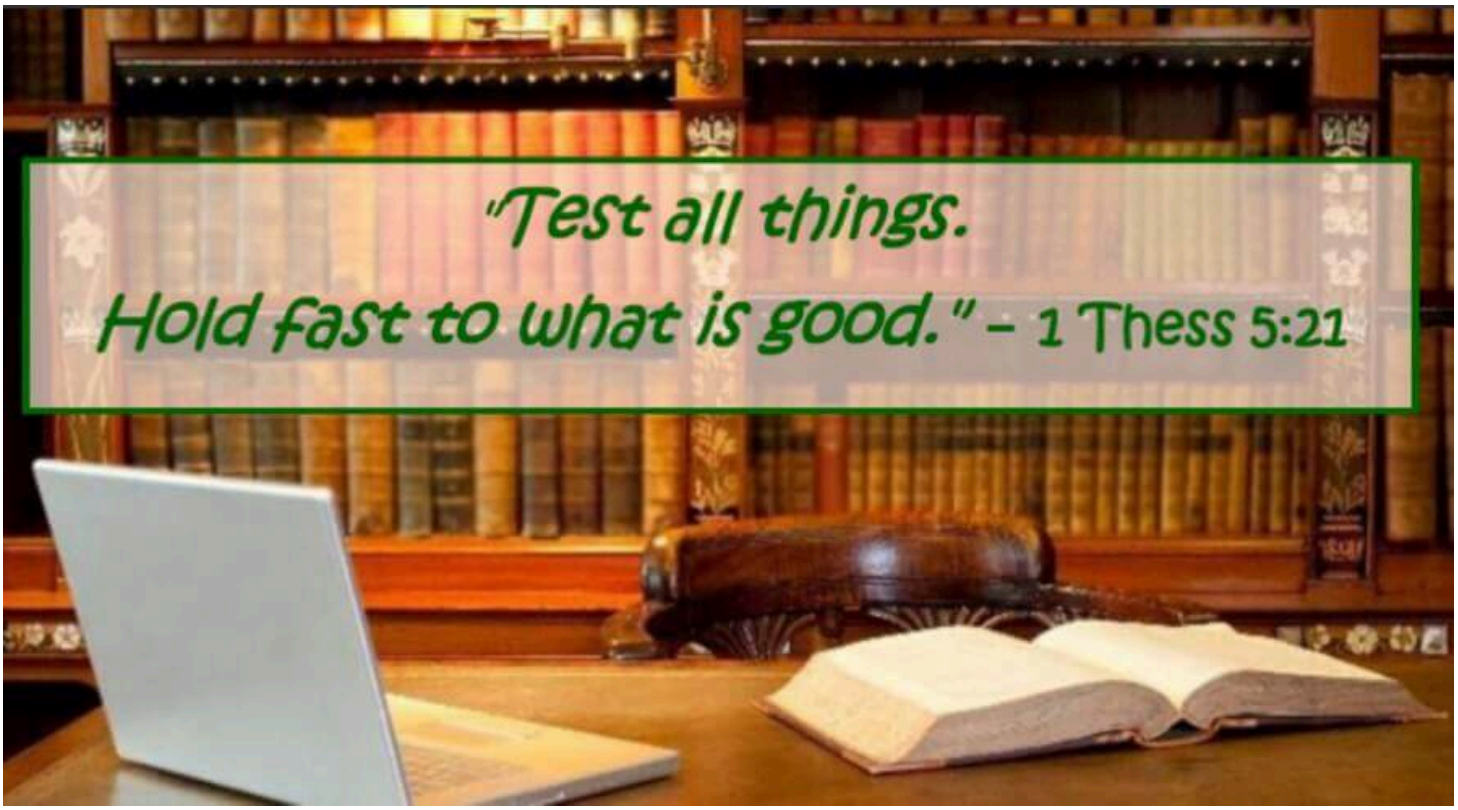
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: EUGENICS, FAITH ON THE BALLOT



Examining the Presidential candidates in light of biblical teachings

By Sandy Szwarc, BSN, RN, retired emeritus
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> "Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them." – Ephesians 5:11
> (The word elegchō means censure them, show them to be wrong.)
>
> "For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light,
> lest his works should be exposed." – John 3:20
>
> "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." – John 1:5
>
> "For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie
> and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth
> but have delighted in wickedness." –2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

My journey in discernment showed to me that we are in the midst of a spiritual battle for our souls and for our Country like never before. ***There was one discovery that changed everything for me and made me realize, in the pit of my stomach and the bottom of my heart, that this election was the most critical one in my life if we hope to preserve our Country and our faith.***

The Bible teaches us to shine light on evil and, in John, Jesus teaches that evil hides in darkness. People doing wrong don't want us to know the truth and do everything possible to keep it from us, including censoring information and destroying those who might speak honestly. The vehemence of those attempts of deception and repression also helps us recognize when something isn't right and good.

Jesus taught believers to expose harmful ideologies and unrighteous acts of the scribes and Pharisees, calling them hypocrites six times in Matthew 23 alone. God also told Christians we are to **expose** false teachers, be warriors for Christ, defend the faith, and protect the innocent and vulnerable. So, I must share with your what I learned.

The greatest enemies of totalitarians and globalists are truth and light.

What is globalism?

Globalism is essentially the vision of a one-world government run by a select group of elite. There is a difference between *globalism in its global rule vision*, and *globalization* of working together, international trade of goods and services, and caring about peoples around the world, helping the poor and missionary work. The Bible helped me understand globalism in a way I never had before. If it becomes a reality, it is exactly everything Scripture warned *against.*

The modern globalism movement has been evolving for well over a century. Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, has currently positioned himself and WEF as a commandant in the one-world order plan. His vision for the future is leading the world to global totalitarianism.

WEF is an **international organization** of the world's most politically powerful and wealthiest business capitalists. While the entire class of billionaires are only 0.00004% of the global population and total only about **2,781 people**, WEF members are the elite among those. The top 25 members and BlackRock have a combined *$20 Trillion in assets* – more than the GDP of every nation in the world except the United States.

WEF is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland with offices in New York, Beijing, Tokyo, San Francisco and Mumbai. The upper elite members are invited to its annual meetings at the Swiss ski resort of Davos. **According to** WEF's archives, these exclusive meetings were named Davos after Harvard University political scientist, **Samuel P. Huntington**, who coined the term "Davos Man." Huntington defined Davos Man as a "*a global elite, a minority, who have little need for national loyalty, view national boundaries as obstacles that thankfully are vanishing, and see national governments as residues from the past whose only useful function is to facilitate the elite's global operations.*"

WEF laid out its plan in 1997 and has been quite open about it. Professor Schwab **defined** globalism as: "*an ideology that prioritizes the neoliberal global order over national interests.*"

Translation: ***Globalism is a belief that eliminates countries and the best interests of sovereign nations to impose a new global rule of liberal/progressive ideologies controlled by an elite group of capitalists to benefit themselves and grow their sphere of control.***

Schwab and WEF have been frank about their agendas, discussions, ideology and master plans to reshape the world. Everything is shared on its public website, in books and articles, and broadcast interviews. Yet the **conflicted media** has successfully relegated it to "conspiracy theory" for decades. Labeling someone a "conspiracy theorist" is a quick way to shut down any discussion. That's also been an effective technique used by the globalist-funded media to deter much of the public from learning what's really going on, and to suppress and censor free speech talking about it.

They might have been able to keep most of the populace unaware of their goals longer if they hadn't overplayed their cards with Covid-19.

Still, to focus on WEF alone, as concerning as it is, would miss understanding the full story. Globalism is bigger and goes back much farther than 1971, the year WEF was founded by German engineer and economist Schwab. It's a fight for our souls, our faith and everything in life that Americans and all free countries cherish.

The globalists are more accurately called "**oligarchs**," which refers to tyrannical or despotic rule by a small elite wealthy group that achieves political and social control of finance and banking, energy, food, health, personal identities and information, critical industries, infrastructures, education, technology, communications, and every aspect of peoples' lives. They've commanded control ***primarily through the United Nations,*** a massive entity run by its General Assembly which sets policies, along with its other **main governing bodies**, multiple **agencies** (including World Health Organization, World Bank Group and World Trade Organization), and **organizations** with it, government partners and nontaxable foundations they fund.

The sheer level of malevolence, deception, and extent these oligarchs have been willing to go to advance anti-human, anti-God, anti-family ideologies and grow their financial and political empires and sphere of control is so unthinkable, it's not surprising they were able to keep the information from the vast majority of Americans for nearly a century. Fear, war and social upheaval, pandemics, starvation, genocide and eugenics, false planetary crises, economic collapse, propaganda – nothing is out of realm to bring the world to their vision of a Marxist-like totalitarian control under these stakeholder capitalists, as Seamus Bruner, Director of Research at the Government Accountability Institute has **investigated**.

"*Communism/Marxism/Socialism/Progressivism/Liberalism is from the same fountainhead,*" **wrote** Pastor Glynn Adams in a poignant alert to Christians, churches and pastors. "*Their god is a big, repressive totalitarian government. It is the very opposite of our constitutional form of government. That should wake the church up! We are acting like we want bondage more than freedom!*" Christians, free entrepreneurial markets ("capitalism") and our Constitution are hated by the Progressives, he said, who want people dependent on a big repressive government that lures people with free stuff. But all that free stuff comes with a price. Control. And much worse. The globalists hope a naïve populace won't understand history… Stalin murdered 25 million people, Mao Zedong massacred 65 million, and Communism/Marxism/Progressive ideologies by whatever name is used have failed every single time and place they've been tried.

It is impossible to make a Christian case for socialism or Marxism or fascism or any tyrannical regime by any book or teaching in the Bible. Social justice and **Marxism** are contrary to **Christianity** and **Bible study**.

The beginnings of global totalitarianism ideology, regardless of what's called – global order, one world order, globalism, oligarchy, whatever – is actually as old as civilization.

Plato (427-347 B.C.) in ancient Greece was the earliest designer of collectivism and the "welfare state." His complex **philosophy** held that an ideal government had two classes, aristocratic rulers and those they govern, and that the aristocratic class were born with

special qualities that were passed down through the ruling families. Under Plato's socialized nationalism concept, labor was under the state's management, property was held by the state, and all production was nationalized.

In contrast, America is a nation of free people where the ***state is a servant of man.***

Fast forward more than millennium to scientism, an ideology that began with French philosophers Henri de Saint-Simon (1760-1825) and Augustine Comte (1798-1857) who believed that all truth, knowledge and understanding of the world comes from science. Only elite scientists and intellectual academics were believed to hold special knowledge that was not understood by ordinary people.

Scientism gave rise to technocracy in the 1930s in which technocrats imagined a materialistic utopian society where they, the elite experts, would be in control. From these philosophies evolved Friedrich Nietzsche's master-slave morality (who originated the term "God is Dead"), Karl Marx's communism, Giovanni Gentile's fascism, and all the other variations of ***collectivism and totalitarianism where individuals are subordinated to the state.*** This is a greatly simplification of the long sordid, controversial, disturbed and convoluted history of these **false ideologies** and their progression to totalitarian globalism.

The ultra-wealthy, international financial bankers, capitalists and aristocratic families that embraced these ideologies saw themselves as governing the world. The one world utopia they envisioned was not the "nation under God" that Christ blesses in the Bible.

These ideologies had another thing in common: ***God did not exist.***

More troubling, the early wealthiest industrial capitalist families in America (Rockefeller, Carnegie, Ford) all supported and funded **population control** and **eugenics**. The Rockefeller Foundation, established in 1913 to advance "social change," actually helped **establish** Germany's eugenics program and **funded** programs tied with Adolph Hitler and Josef Mengele. John Rockefeller, III, **established** the Population Council **in 1952** as a eugenics program to reduce the world's population. His Population Council **philanthropy and population mission** was quickly joined by the Ford Foundation and other powerful ultra-wealthy **foundations**, the early globalists.

As hard as it is to believe, **eugenics** is an actual globalist agenda. The Population Council, and its vast **partners**, has been a major influence behind **70 years of globalist agendas and its goals were adopted as part of the UN's sustainable development goals (SDGs): climate change, environmental justice, gender equity, and reproductive rights.** They anticipated the populace would actually believe their false ideologies – climate change, environment, social justice, gender equity and reproductive rights – and never imagine they were simply to further their culture of death.

- This is the same Population Council that held the license to manufacture Mifeprex, also known as the abortion pill, in the U.S. and got the FDA to ***approve it*** for chemical abortions in 1996, under "accelerated approval for restrictive use," even though the Population Council failed to provide randomized controlled clinical trial evidence for safety and efficacy, as ***required*** by Federal Statutes. (It still hasn't to this day.) Early ***leaders*** in the abortion and reproductive health movement were openly ***eugenicists*** and made ***no secret*** that their goals were targeted against minorities and poor, society's undesirables, and "useless eaters."
- Every additional person on the planet increases carbon emissions, **states** Population Matters, and "*if we are to succeed in preventing the worst effects of climate change, we must take action to address population size.*" As Dr. John Gideon Hartnett at Bible Science Forum **wrote**: "We are the carbon they intend to eliminate."

Globalist ideologies have yet another thing in common: **anti-life**.

One-world leaders have done everything possible to malign, name-call, twist the U.S. Constitution, revise history, cast doubt and depart from Scripture. ***Globalists have openly admitted that only two key groups of people can stop them from their goal of taking global power:***

Bible-believing Christians, and patriotic Americans

National sovereignty and free democratic republics are the enemy of those who want to take that from the people. Christians who hold to biblical teachings are the enemy of those who preach false doctrines and want us to follow false ideologies.

Globalists have made no secret that Mr. Trump is not one of them.

The World Economic Forum **wrote** in their 2016 Agenda papers how they were taken by surprise, had missed the mark in under-appreciating the strength and resiliency of American religion after the "election surprise" when President Trump was first elected. Their "blind spot," they **wrote**, was misreading a decline in Americans identifying with specific religions, with loss of faith. They'd also mistakenly dismissed what they called "flyover territory," but learned 21 of those 27 states had voted for President Trump. Their advice to secular investors was not to ignore religion.

Perhaps, that helps to explain the rise of fake purported Christian groups campaigning for Biden and the more recent ones for Harris, such as **Evangelicals for Harris**. That's a for-profit campaign of environmentalist Rev. Jim Ball, who's become a veritable **one-person** news feed. Jesus reminded us in Matthew that not everyone who talks of him are his followers and recognized by Him.

> "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven,
> but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
> On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name,
> and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?'
> And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me,
> you workers of lawlessness.'" – Matthew 7:21-23

Then there's the new movement against "Christian Nationalism." Historian William J. Federer **explained** that the term "Christian Nationalist," is a recent made-up term meant to be derogatory towards Americans. Nationalism is about country, which is the opposite of globalism and that won't do. It's really that simple. It used to be called patriotism and Christian patriotism was something past Presidents of both parties once encouraged, he said.

The term actually didn't show up until Donald Trump entered politics, which explains why it's primarily used to denigrate President Trump supporters and call them names. Now, anyone white, Christian and patriotic is made out to be a threat. Those proud of the exceptionalism that America once was and know that, on balance, America has been a source for good in the world, are now marked as "white supremacists" or "Christian nationalists."

"*It's exceptional because God is the one who is significantly blessing America because of its presumed Christian roots and its ongoing allegiance to God*," said **Professor Sean McDowell** during a recent Biola University Talbot School of Theology **podcast** discussing Christian Nationalism. Now Christian patriotism is being equated with "right wing extremists" who are racist, sexist and just all-round deplorable.

One such effort of maligning American patriotism is called "**Christians Against Christian Nationalism**." It's a project of Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty. BJC has a **platform** indistinguishable from that of **Freedom From Religion Foundation**, a tax exempt **organization** that says it works as a state-church watchdog and "voice for atheism and agnosticism." BJC's efforts have included opposing crosses and the Ten Commandments in public spaces, filing amicus briefs against a baker for following his religious beliefs and against President Trump's White House for restricting illegal immigration, and leading efforts to organize over 100 denominations and some 5,000 faith leaders to exclude political discussions in houses of worship and charitable organizations. BJC itself takes donations claiming it's a tax-exempt religious organization.

One of the main nonprofits fighting *against* anti-religion and anti-American freedom groups is **Alliance Defending Freedom**.

America has had support from around the world, brave men of faith who've been willing to sacrifice everything to shine the light on globalism. Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò was one of the early ones speaking out and he suffered harsh consequences as a result, and was excommunicated by globalist Pope Francis. Archbishop Viganò wrote **a message to Americans** at Christmastime in 2021, saying:

> "Be proud of your identity as American patriots and of the Faith that must animate your life. Do not allow anyone to make you feel inferior just because you love your homeland, because you are honest at work, because you want to protect your family and raise your children with healthy values, because you respect the elderly, because you protect life from conception to its natural end. Do not be intimidated or seduced by those who propagate a dystopian world in which a faceless power imposes on you contempt for the Law of God, presents sin and vice as licit and desirable, despises righteousness and Morality, destroys the natural family and promotes the worst perversions, plans the death of defenseless and weak creatures, and exploits humanity for its own profit or to preserve power.... so also today your commitment to the moral rebirth of the United States of America –one Nation under God — will have the blessing of Our Lord and will gather those who govern you around you. Amen. May God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America."

Many have recognized what has been going on and the dangers America and the free world face. **But one discovery made me understand that this election may be the last hope for our country.**

This critical issue continues in Part 11.

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Part 9: **False Doctrine of Climate Change**
Part 10: **The Spiritual Battle for our Country – Growth of Evil**
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Epilogue:

Part 9: False Doctrine of Climate Change

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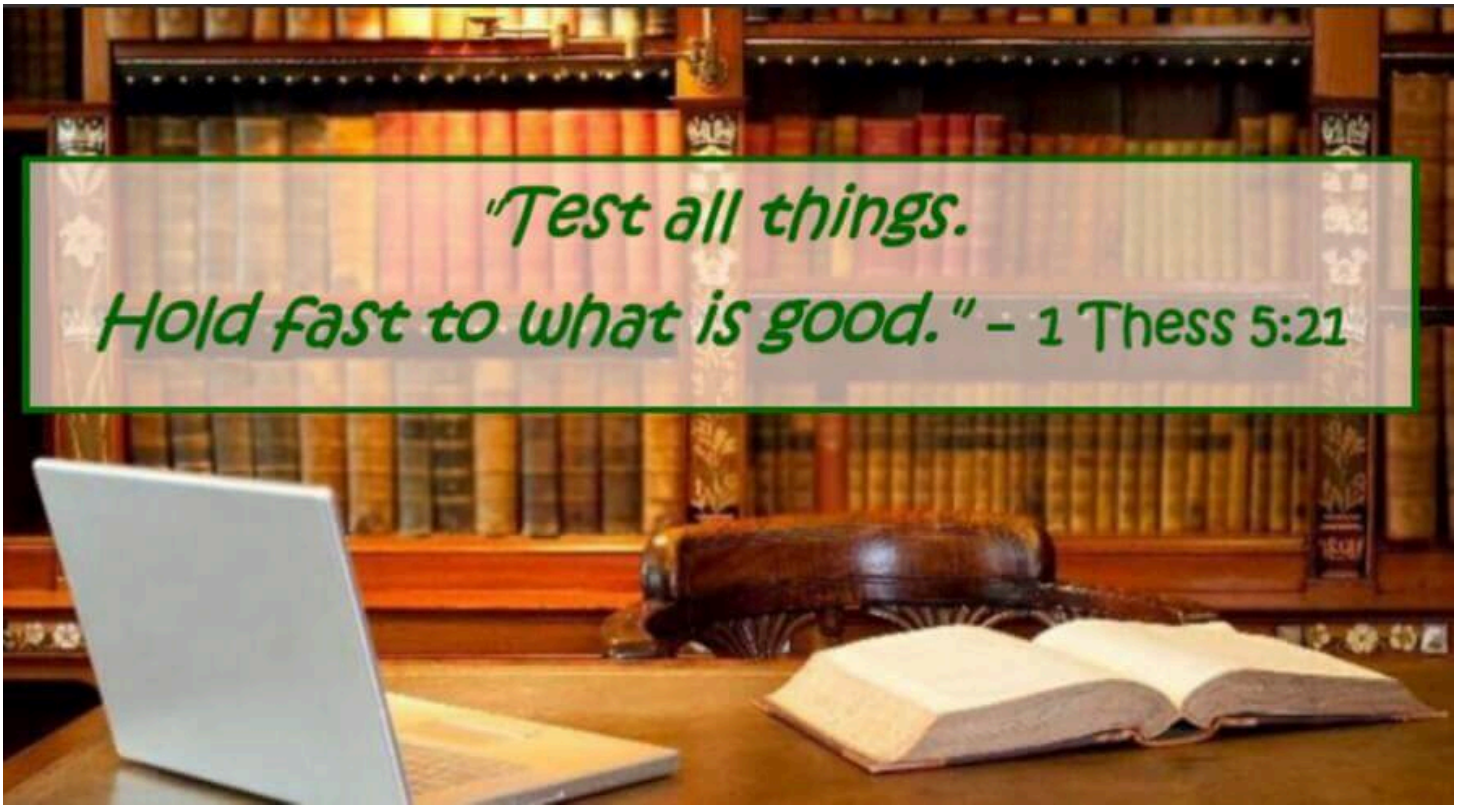

Examining the Presidential candidates in light of biblical teachings

By Sandy Szwarc, BSN, RN, retired emeritus
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> "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth…every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." – **Genesis 1**
>
> "While the earth remains (until Jesus returns), seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease." – Genesis 8:22
>
> "I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." – Genesis 9:11
>
> "Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything." – Genesis 9:3

Scripture teaches us that God is sovereign over all of creation and declared His creation "good." His design was and is perfect and complete. God's miraculous creation precisely balanced the elements, gases, **carbon dioxide cycle**, and all things vital for all life on earth. The element carbon is present in everything on, in, under and over the planet… including in us. God also created a gas that's vital to all life. **Carbon dioxide** is essential for all living, growing plants on the planet.

False teachers preach that this life-giving gas is actually *deadly*, and that God's design was inferior and depends upon human rulers to intervene to save a fragile planet.

"Climate Change" is a doctrine that worships a false idol, **the earth**. It is everything the Bible warned *against.* It attempts to lead Christians from the foundational truths of our faith.

"Climate Change" was made up to deny God and create a globalist utopia

A group of multi-billionaire globalists and atheist followers of eugenics came together at the Masonic lodge on David Rockefeller's estate in Bellagio, Italy, to found the **Club of Rome** in 1968. The **Club of Rome** was the **vision** of an Italian industrialist, Aurelio Peccei. They commissioned a report – ***The Limits to Growth*** – created by young scientists at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (**MIT**) who designed *a computer model* to support their claim that the planet's limit of growth had been reached 50 years earlier, due to human activity that had disrupted "global equilibrium." They claimed that all human activity (industry and agricultural development) would have to be controlled through global enforcement of "sustainable development" and "zero-growth" to save the planet.

The Club's findings were presented at earth summits in Moscow and Rio de Janeiro in 1971. While the study's findings were scientifically bogus, they would double down on them, exaggerating their claims with each subsequent 17 publications. Their 1991 report, *The First Global Revolution,* declared "*the common enemy of humanity is man*."

They had latched onto the population growth ideas from philosopher **Reverend Thomas Malthus**, who had predicted in 1798 that the population would exceed natural resources, and result in widespread famine. His theory denied Biblical teachings that God provides for his people. Instead, he *feared* humanity was to struggle for existence. His theories would help develop other non-Biblical theories of natural selection and social Darwinism.

Malthus turned out to be very wrong. God did provide and His plans for His people showed a future that Malthus hadn't even considered or imagined possible. As human ingenuity, scientific progress, and industrialization brought progress, *even with population growth,* living standards increased, productivity soared, more food was produced efficiently, people had opportunities to raise out of poverty, health and life expectancy *increased*, and infant mortality dropped.

But God's truth, and scientific facts, would not do. The globalists were intent on using radical environmentalism to serve their purposes. They used fear to falsely claim human activity, especially by industrialized nations and the use of fossil fuels, would double the earth's carbon dioxide concentrations and create "global warming," bringing calamity, rising sea levels and widespread drought.

The solution they fabricated was heightened *depopulation* efforts, especially in underdeveloped countries and of minorities, by even more severe mandatory enforcements to squelch agriculture and food production, drastically reduce use of fossil fuels, and reduce industrialization. *Their plan was intended to create so much human suffering and unrest, destabilize societies and economies, it would leave nations vulnerable and more ready to accept global leadership.*

The concept of "climate change" came out of that early Rio Earth Summit and was created by the long-time foundation director of the globalist World Economic Forum, **Maurice Strong**, who also founded the **Earth Charter**. The **Earth Charter** was the globalists' blueprint for a new society and became the United Nations' sustainable development goals. This new eco-socialism, combines aspects of Marxism, socialism, and radical environmentalism. They preached **pantheism**, the environmental green movement that worships nature as a supreme idol and divinity. Their **climate agenda** envisions a complete transformation of the world economy, dismantling free market business ("capitalism") and replacing it with socialist ideologies. But Mr. Strong revealed the real goal was anti-human, writing in his

autobiography of the desire to collapse industrial society and cause death by starvation of two-thirds of the human population.

Both legitimate scientific experts and biblical scholars agree: **Anthropogenic** climate change (related to "**human activity**) is a false ideology that is not supportable by **credible scientific evidence**. There remains no observable, repeatable science of a climate crisis and **dire predictions** have proven **false** for nearly half a century. It's a manufactured crisis and even radical **environmentalists** have apologized for their error and **retracted** their **environmental** ideas.

The idea that God failed to design a planet to provide for man and his creations denies the Bible and Jesus' teachings. God said in Genesis 9:7: "*And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it*."

God filled the earth with inexpensive, energy-dense, stable and reliable **fuel** vital for human existence, progress and to alleviate poverty and suffering. The amazing hydrocarbon fuels in the earth's crust are evidence of His grace on people. God provided the most abundant **energy source** on the planet, with **more than 250 years** of coal still available to humans. The next most abundant fuel on the planet, natural gas, is even more efficient. Oil and natural gas, as scientists are increasing studying, may not all be "fossil" fuels formed "hundreds of millions of years ago, either. **According** to the **abiotic theory**, increasingly being **considered** and researched by **scientists**, these fuels may even be **renewable**.

Electricity has been indispensable in improving human life and people's welfare. Climate change policies **most hurt the poor**, as **Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation** reported in its ***Call to Truth, Prudence and Protection of the Poor***.

"*A Christian worldview acknowledges the presence of a creating and sustaining God,*" said Cornwell Alliance in a comprehensive paper for pastors and churches, "**Cost of Good Intentions**." It **reported** that just complying with the Paris climate accord will push over 3 million people into poverty, on top of the billion around the world who still don't have access to electricity for basic human needs like clean running water, refrigeration, modern medical care and heat.

The climate change ideology goes against God's greatest commandment: "*You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.*" – Mark 12:31

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God made man with an intellect, an ability to think and reason, and warns us throughout the Bible to practice discernment and test all things, and not to rely on our own understanding. He gave all

of us the capacity to learn discernment – that is simply calm reasoning and critical thinking, also called the **scientific *method*** (as opposed to "science"). Knowledge and common sense are not exclusively reserved for academics.

Biblical discernment refers not only to Scripture, but to all things in our lives today.

It was precisely through practicing discernment – studying Scripture *and* researching independent, objective, verifiable information in order to separate sound scientific evidence from false information found in popular media – that many people have been able to see the lies, untruths, fake and junk science, and false claims.

Fear Not

One of the simplest ways to recognize untruths is when we are led to feel afraid. Fear is a tactic of wrongdoers and those trying to sell us on something that is not good, right or truthful. Scaremongering is not used by legitimate and objective scientists, doctors, or anyone following the scientific method of testing all things, exploring different ideas, and helping to bring people out of poverty and suffering.

God warned us to "fear not" about **365 times in the Bible**. God clearly thought it was an important guidance for us!

So, all of that scaremongering – surrounding such things as global warming, **climate change** and fossil fuel energy, radical environmentalism, and over-population – has been used, just as God warned, by false teachers who have ulterior purposes and *want to lure us down a dark agenda*.

Few Christians or Americans would feel it is following Jesus's teachings to use heartbreaking human tragedies and the suffering of **natural disaster** victims, such as of Hurricane Helene, to **scare people** that a "*climate crisis is more urgent than ever*." **Not only it is an example of fear being used for political gain, but it's a false ideology.** National Hurricane Center and Central Pacific Hurricane Center **data** clearly ***does not show increasing hurricanes*** striking the U.S. since records began in 1851. Nor does **globa**l tropical cyclone activity support increases in extreme weather and climate events.

Even school kids know there's been no increase in the number of **hurricanes** around the world. God's teachings help children learn the truth and not to fear or be hurt by scares.

Ms. Harris has been devoted to the UN's climate change agenda throughout her career.

In examining the Presidential candidates, Ms. Harris is **known for** her vehement opposition to fracking and critical view of oil companies.

- **Fracking** is a process of extracting oil and natural gas from shale rock that goes back **to 1862**. It's **not new** or without **safety testing**; but horizontal drilling techniques **increased** production 40% since 2006, reduced the environmental impact on the land, and cut natural gas prices in half. Currently, **two-thirds** of the natural gas produced in the U.S. is through hydraulic fracturing.

Her opposition to fracking was so strong that as California Attorney General, before leaving her position, **she'd even *sued the Obama administration for permitting fracking*** off the Pacific coast. In an announcement of her lawsuit she **stated**: "*We must take every possible step to protect our precious coastline and ocean*."

At a Presidential Town Hall televised by CNN last year, she strongly reiterated her **support** for banning offshore drilling. She **told the national audience** that "*there is no question I am in favor of banning fracking*" and would take executive action on "day one" to ban fracking on all public land and move to have Congressional action to prohibit it on all private lands.

Last month, CNN **reported** on her track record as "*a tremendous champion on climate and environmental justice*," including suing oil companies and investigating Exxon for its role in "climate change disinformation."

While Senator in 2019, she **co-sponsored** her Green New Deal, saying: "*Climate change is an existential threat to our country, our planet and our future…we have a shrinking window to take drastic action to cut carbon emissions and make meaningful change to save our planet.*" She *issued her own* **$10 trillion plan** to achieve "**net zero** carbon emissions by 2045." It was more radical than the plans from progressive Democrats. She proposed the U.S. have 100% carbon-neutral electricity by 2030 and all new passenger vehicles to be zero-emission by 2035.

As Vice President, *Ms. Harris issued* **a statement** at the Secretary of War Suite in October 2021 in support of the UN's climate agenda, and repeated frightening claims of drastically lower sea levels and the critical need to reduce energy emissions. She *introduced her new agenda* along with Biden's Build Back Better, to reduce emissions 50% by 2030, and prioritize electric vehicles and green energy.

Even school children know that melting Arctic ice **does not raise sea levels** and that most of Antarctica has **actually cooled** over the last 40 years. Jesus teaches his children not to fear.

She personally gave another **briefing** on August 1, 2022 on the threat of climate change, citing recent floods, forest fires and hot weather to support a climate crisis. She added that the National Hurricane Center had briefed her on "extreme weather fueled by climate change." With that, *she announced* ***$1 billion*** in spending on "climate resilience" projects in 343 towns, cities and counties around the country, promising the grant projects will create good union jobs, and that the White House has already committed to doubling that to **$2 billion** next year. She added they'd already invested ***"tens of billions of dollars*** *to put more electric vehicles on the road*" and **$65 billion** for electric grid and transmission infrastructure to support wind and solar.

There continues to be no evidence that climate policies have had or even could have significant effects on the climate. Just last week, researchers from several European institutions analyzed 1,500 climate policies implemented in 41 countries since the turn of the century. They **reported** in the journal *Science* that 95.8% failed and the meager effect of the remaining policies result in bankruptcy, untold suffering for people, increase poverty rates and homelessness, are environmentally destructive, and destabilize the power grid.

> **FACTS.** The results of Ms. Harris' environmental policies have been felt by Americans. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' July 2024 report stated **electricity prices have *increased* for all urban consumers, 4.9% since just one year ago.**
>
> Statista **reports** that, under Ms. Harris, the retail price for ***electricity averages $12.72 cents/kwh, the highest in a quarter century***.

Last December, Ms. Harris spoke at the *United Nation's* ***COP28 in Dubai*** *where she pledged* ***$3 billion of U.S. tax dollars*** towards the globalists' Green Climate Fund. **According to** *UN Climate Change News*, COP28 marked the end of fossil fuel and completed implementation of the Paris Agreement. The highly **controversial** COP28 is estimated to cost between ***$110 trillion to $275 trillion – 2.6 times the entire global GDP*** **for 2023**, **according to** *Forbes*.

The World Economic Forum explained that under the UN agenda, food production will be especially impacted by the regulations slashing emissions. In response, the UN globalist stakeholders **created a coalition** to create a **new "sustainable" food system** with a **$10-$20 billion** commitment.

In April 2024, Ms. Harris **announced** the communities chosen to get money for climate change projects from her **$20 billion Inflation Reduction Act** which *she'd personally ensured pas*sed.

Last month, she and Biden issued their *Environmental Justice* agenda, showcasing 24 federal agencies getting **over $600 Billion** between 2022-2027, *along with massive new regulations, environmental laws, and environmental justice reforms*. The effects for American consumers are yet to come.

VP Harris has taken personal ownership of the most detrimental, unsound, costly, and unbiblical global initiatives in the name of "climate change" ever imposed on Americans.

A coalition of climate change groups with the **Environmental Defense Fund** recently **announced** a new massive $55 million advertising campaign for Ms. Harris.

President Trump, in contrast, had introduced an energy independence policy, promising taxpayers ***relief*** from Obama's *Clean Power Plan – 2,658 pages of regulations* that imposed higher energy costs on American families and businesses for meaningless climate benefits, **according** to an analysis by the Former Deputy Direct of the Thomas A. Roe Institute.

President Trump said Obama's Clean Power Plan *cost up to $39 billion a year* and "*increased electricity prices in 41 States by at least 10%;*" and was opposed by 27 States, 24 trade associations, 37 rural electric co-ops and 3 labor unions.

Trump's White House **reported** that air quality was even cleaner under his energy independence initiatives, which demonstrated that energy production *and* environmental stewardship is possible. EPA government **data** shows that to be true, reporting improved air quality on nearly every measure and all air pollutant emissions showing significant declines during his Administration.

> **FACTS.** Retail electricity prices were stable throughout the Trump Administration, averaging ***$10.52 cents/kwh***, **according** to Statista.
>
> Trump era electricity prices were about ***20% lower than they've been during the Biden-Harris Administration***.

At a December 19, 2017 Trump White House press briefing, it was **reported** that 22 regulations had been rolled back for every new one, ***saving taxpayers over $8 billion***. President Trump approved the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines, instructed EPA to end the war on coal, and opened up ANWR to responsible energy exploration.

> **FACTS.** Gasoline prices during Trump's Presidency averaged $2.57, gallon, **according** to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.
>
> The **average price of gas** to date during the Biden-Harris Administration is $3.61/gallon – that's ***40% higher than during Trump's Presidency.***

President Trump was the first President in over 70 years to actually achieve "what every President since Nixon had promised: Energy Independence," **headlined** *Investor's Business Daily* on December 7, 2018.

- The simplest way to measure energy independence is if the U.S. exports more energy than it imports. By this metric, *the U.S. actually did achieve energy independence for the first time in 2019 under President Trump,* **according** to U.S. Energy Information Administration.
- The Biden-Harris Administration has attempted to keep those import numbers looking good and lower skyrocketing gas prices, *but did it with a sleight of hand by* ***releasing more than 180 million barrels of crude oil*** *from the nation's* ***Strategic Petroleum Reserve****, not by production*. This sudden drop in the nation's oil reserves bring it to the lowest level seen since 1983, **according** to the EIA.

Trump's White House stated he led an **energy revolution**, eliminated unnecessary burdensome rules and regulatory mandates that encumbered energy production and raised costs for consumers. **That proved true, too.** Columbia Climate School **counted 100 environmental rules** that had been reversed, revoked or rolled back under Trump's Administration, calling it an unprecedented legacy. American consumers and businesses were able to keep more of their money rather than it go to climate change special interests.

By trusting and following Jesus' teachings, we know that God's design is perfect. The Presidential candidates are widely different in their trust of God and Biblical teachings.

Part 10 examines the biggest issue of the election, the spiritual battle for our Country.

Faith on the Ballot Series:

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Part 1: Trusting Jesus in Making the Right Choice
Part 2: Beginning the Discernment Journey
Part 3: Religious Freedoms and Rights of Conscience
Part 4: Scripture and LBGTQ+ Rights Policy
Part 5: Living our faith at the voting booth – Life and Abortion in Scripture
Part 6: God's Word on crime and abuse of office in public servants
Part 7: Border Walls and Sovereignty of Nations in Scripture
Part 7: Continued: **What's the truth of a border crisis?**
Part 8: Scripture on Taxes and Government Spending
Part 9: False Doctrine of Climate Change
Part 10: The Spiritual Battle for our Country – Growth of Evil
Part 11: The Spiritual Battle for our Country – Their world vision
Epilogue:

Part 8: Scripture on Taxes and Government Spending

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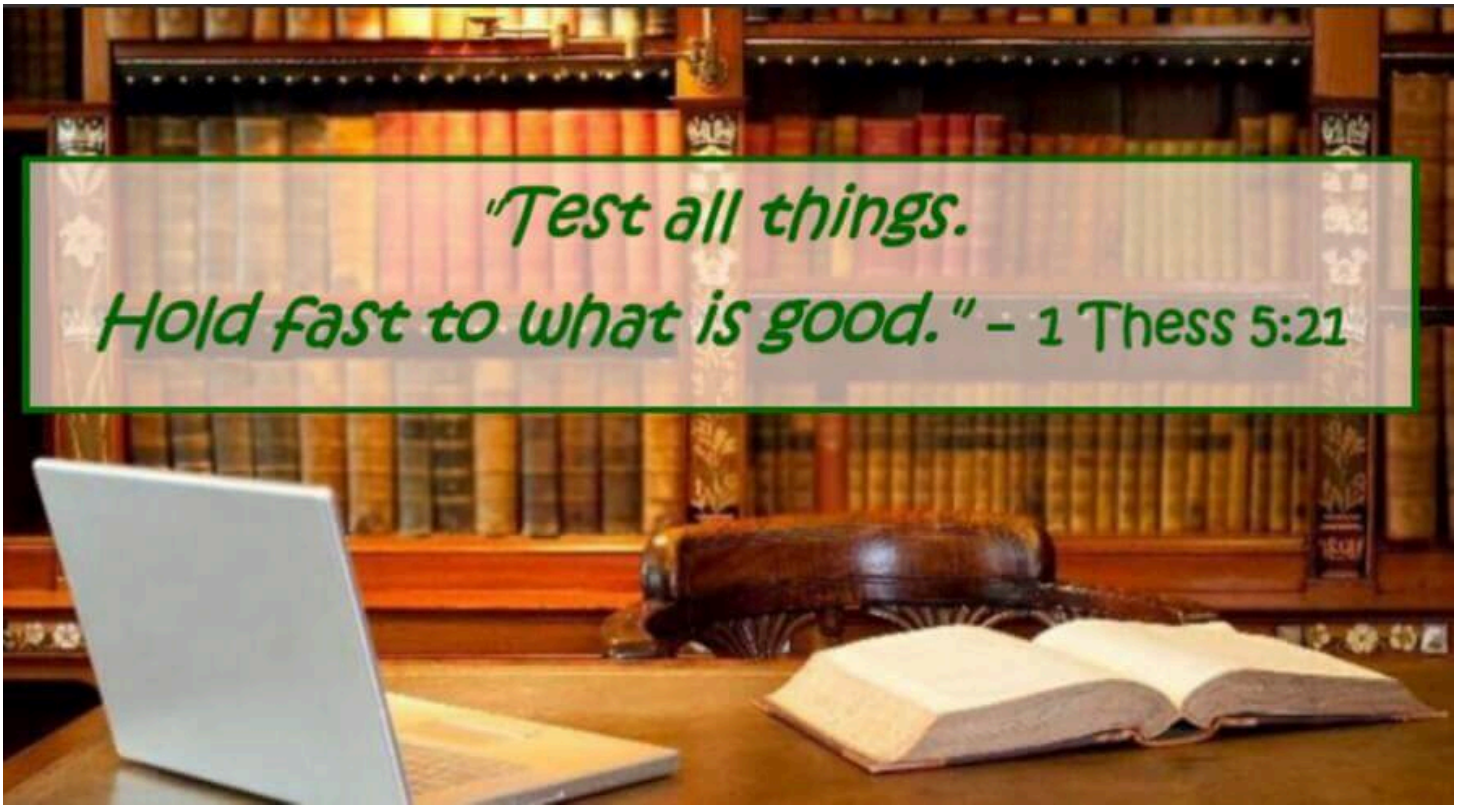

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> "A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord." – Leviticus 27:30
>
> "Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce." Proverbs 3:9
>
> "Everyone who is numbered, from twenty years old and over, shall give the contribution to the LORD. The rich shall not pay more and the poor shall not pay less than the half shekel, when you give the contribution to the LORD to make atonement for yourselves. You shall take the atonement money from the sons of Israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting." – Exodus 30:14-16
>
> "If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat." – 2 Thessalonians 3:10
>
> "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." – 2 Corinthians 9:7
>
> "Let the thief steal no more, but rather let him be industrious, making an honest living with his own hands, so that he may be able to give to those in need." – Ephesians 4:28
>
> "Watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Matthew 16:6

God blessed his people with civil leaders who are God's servants and given the primary role of carrying out God's wrath on wrongdoers, protecting the people from crime and evil enemies within its borders and beyond. A second role of rulers in scripture is to collect taxes to pay for its God-ordained work on our behalf, but not to acquire wealth for themselves (Deuteronomy 17:16-17).

Jesus taught that we are to "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God" (Mark 12:13-17). And while we are to pay taxes, Jesus also specifically warned his people to be wary of the gifts and benefits that civil leaders will try to seduce them with (the "leaven") to follow the wrong path. These perks lead people to become more dependent on the State, not on Jesus.

The average working American is taxed 24% of their income by the Federal government and up to another 13.3% by the State; and on top of that are local taxes, licenses and fees, property and sales taxes, taxes on savings accounts and investments, etc. People can keep only the leftovers of their labor, to tithe to the church, support their families, and do God's work. Taxes have grown well beyond the 10% for government services, as in Numbers 18:21-28, and many times more than the Lord's tithing.

The Bible says the first fruits of our labor are God's and are holy to the Lord. But today, governments seize taxes far beyond Biblical tithing and for functions that God did not authorize civil governments to do. In doing so, the State is put ahead of God and is assuming God's authority. Our difficult role as Christians is to support rulers who most follow God's teachings and account for people's money wisely and honorably.

Key Administrative Role in Federal Taxes and Spending Regulations

In examining Ms. Harris, I learned she *has* ***personally held the key to federal taxes and spending regulations*** *during her term as Vice President.*

The Vice President of the United States also serves as the president of the Senate and casts the deciding vote anytime there is a tie. ***VP Harris has cast the most tie-breaking votes of any VP in the history of our country,*** according to **Ballotpedia**.

She was the deciding tie-breaking vote and personally accountable for the largest federal spending, largest federal deficit and inflation in our country's history … and did it through falsehoods.

On February 5, 2021, her vote resulted in the passage of the $1.9 Trillion Covid-19 economic relief bill. But that paled compared to the tie-breaking vote she cast for the **"Inflation Reduction Act" on August 7, 2022**. The Act was intentionally deceptively named. It wasn't about reducing inflation. ***It actually was the biggest climate change legislation in history.***

The Act gave massive subsidies to the green energy industry and for 22 consumer "tax credits" for green energy technologies associated with zero-carbon goals, while also mandating climate agenda items like electric vehicles, heat pumps, solar-wind and battery plants, and consumer products down to what light bulbs, washing machines and stoves people will be allowed to use. The regulations cover 30% of new home construction. The Congressional Budget Office had falsely **claimed** the Act she saw approved would reduce the deficit by an estimated $90 Billion through 2031.

The Biden-Harris White House **sold the** Act to Americans with promises it "will lower costs for families…reduce the deficit and ask the largest corporations to pay their fair share." Seniors on Medicare were promised their prescription drug costs would go down because drug companies will be required to negotiate prices, and their drugs costs under Medicare Part D would cap at $2,000 per year.

The Act included **$80 billion** in additional funding to the IRS over ten years, which the Biden-Harris White House **told the public** was about "fairness" and enforcing tax compliance among the wealthiest tax evaders. The Act also imposed complicated new tax regulations and tax increases on companies and investors. *Ms. Harris failed to reveal that the Act included a new IRS program to* ***monitor workers' tips*** *so they could be taxed.*

Nothing about The Act was biblical, reasoned or true. Americans certainly have not seen **the U.S. debt falling** on the Debt Clock! Federal spending, the budget deficit and national debt are all soaring upward so fast, it's hard to see the numbers. Even NPR **reported** the ***Federal deficit had nearly tripled in the first nine months of 2023 and was nearly double that of a year earlier.*** President of the Committee for Responsible Federal Budget questioned how anyone could possibly think this was sustainable.

Inflation is solely the creation of government and no one else, **explained** the famous economist Professor Milton Friedman. **Only government** can print money and create money out of nothing, has control over the money supply, and can excessively spend public money that it doesn't have.

By every objective measure, Americans have been hurt by higher inflation. Everything costs more and money isn't worth what it once was:

- **Average monthly expenses** for American households, **according** to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, *increased 9.1% between 2021-2022*. ***Inflation increased the living costs*** for the average couple $7,800 and for the average family ***$9,339*** *more, in that single year alone.*
- American households are increasingly falling behind in **bills and total** ***debt*** *is at an all-time high*, **according** to the Federal Reserve. The average unpaid balance on each credit card, alone, is $6,501.
- The **job market** has been poor under her Administration. U.S. companies added the *fewest number of jobs since 2021*, **according** to August ADP Research Institute job reports. Wage growth also saw the lowest levels since 2021.
- The percentage of adults 25-54 not in the **workforce** are historic highs, with*142 million more people without job*s in August compared to the year before, **according** to Bureau of Labor Statistics (Table A-1).
- **New jobs and employment growth primarily went to immigrants**, about 75% of all job growth in the U.S. since 2019 has gone to foreign workers. *S. born employment declined and is lower than five years ago,* **according** to BLS Employment Situation Report and Center for Immigration Studies.

By March 24, 2023, Goldman Sach **reported** *the tax credits in Harris' Act alone will cost about* ***$1.2 Trillion – three-times more than had been claimed***. It found Democrats had used "accounting gimmicks" and that the Act "*may go down as one of the greatest confidence tricks on taxpayers in history*."

The Tax Foundation's **report of the Act's first year** found the new complexities in the tax code were so hopelessly convoluted, complicated and unworkable, payments for both the minimum tax and stock buyback tax are on hold until the IRS issues can be figured out. It found that the Act is leading to *skyrocketing budgetary costs, approaching $1 trillion* the next decade. By May, *energy credit costs were already double original estimates*. Worse, the manufacturing production credit,

modified energy credit and electric vehicle costs had all *more than quadrupled!* The Tax Foundation said recently *proposed mandates by the Environmental Protection Agency* (EPA) will *push cost estimates even higher*, and add another $210 billion in tax revenue losses, $136 billion from EV credits and $74 billion from battery production. The Act can only worsen deficits.

The Tax Foundation concluded that the problems with the Act are so daunting and inflation reduction "most clearly off course," it's unclear it can even be salvaged.

I want to point out an insidious part of the Act that was *specifically aimed towards seniors*. The Act actually gutted Medicare to fund electric vehicles and other green deal subsidies. The new **mandate**, called the *Drug Price Negotiation Program*, is really ***a price-fixing scheme on prescription drugs***. Its legality and Constitutionality have resulted in at least **nine lawsuits**, while support for the price-fixing scheme comes from progressive academic and nonprofit foundations. Under this controversial program, the government will select drugs from a list of drugs in Medicare Part B and Medicare Part D to apply price controls, with the number of drugs increasing each year (ten drugs targeted in 2023, another 15 in 2025, etc.).

The Tax Foundation explained that compulsory lower government payments for drugs provided through Medicare will reduce investments by the pharmaceutical industry in research and development, meaning fewer new drugs will come on the market. But that's not the full story.

The Act promised to keep Medicare drug premiums low for seniors, but it only gave *the appearance* of the government not raising drug prices. In actuality, it simply shifted the costs to the insurance companies managing Medicare Part D benefits, who will have to find a way to absorb or pass those **higher costs** on to seniors. According to the Committee for Responsible Federal Budget, *the Act was designed to hide **huge increases in monthly premiums for Part D plans** until after the election*, which are ***expected to triple by 2025***.

To continue under drug price fixing, **most insurance companies** are increasing "prior authorization" requirements to push patients to cheaper therapies and away from medications that can be most effective or safe for them. Other companies are stopping offering Part D altogether – 100 plans disappeared in 2023 and fewer than half survived this year. Mutual of Omaha was planning on **dropping its** Medicare Prescription Drug Plan next year, which could leave another 200,000 seniors to fend for themselves.

Since Obamacare, Medicare benefit coverages have been continually **cut and capped**, *as designed*. Seniors are forced onto *government-managed* Medicare at age 65, only able to waive Part A if they forfeit all of the Social Security benefits they've paid into their entire working life. And old-fashioned private PPO *health insurance* is illegal to offer and unavailable to anyone age 65+. So the only way to avoid Medicare Part B is to self-pay, an option only possible for the ultra-wealthy. And anyone who doesn't enroll in Medicare Part B immediately when eligible at age 65+ is hit with a *lifetime* penalty.

Several years ago, the government began ***bundling* Medicare payments**, which means the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) gives a lump sum of money to pay the doctor and hospitals for a given procedure (like **hip and knee replacements**) or diagnosis (like **cancer**). Providers are incentivized to not care for the sickest patients and to cut costs and treatment options to keep their costs down and maintain profits. That leads to lower quality of care for the very people who most need *medical* care.

Besides massively increased government regulations, mandated clinical care guidelines, and reporting requirements for Medicare, providers are paid increasingly less under the government managed care program. Another 3.37% reduction in Medicare physician payments went into effect this year. Last month, AIER **reported** that Medicare has cut reimbursements to doctors by 10% just in the past decade (they aren't adjusted for inflation, either). It's no wonder, seniors are **increasingly** finding **fewer doctors** want to accept Medicare.

In August, Fidelity Investment Group issued its **2024 retiree healthcare cost estimates**. All of the healthcare costs that Medicare doesn't cover (premiums, drugs, dental, vision, hearing, etc.) are left to retirees to manage. Fidelity's research reported that a 65-year-old retiring today can expect to spend $165,000 on health care in retirement, a 5% increase from last year and *more than double the estimate from 2002*.

Ms. Harris has supported government managed health care throughout her career. While California AG, in 2011 she filed an Amicus Brief in **support of Obamacare**. She established strict government conditions for California hospitals and required them to certify participation and compliance with Medicare and Medi-Cal mandates and uphold all compulsory critical services, including ***requiring "reproductive services …without restrictions or limitation."***

Six failing Daughters of Charity Health System hospitals in California went up for sale in 2015. Ms. Harris placed conditions on the purchase that prospective buyer, Prime Healthcare Services, said were "**onerous and unprecedented**." After concluding Ms. Harris' conditions were **so burdensome and restrictive** that it would be impossible for any buyer to operate and save these hospitals, they ended up backing out of the $843 million sale. **Verity Health Systems**, a secular nonprofit **owned by** billionaire Patrick Soon-Shiong, agreed to operate the hospitals, but by 2018 it had filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection facing $175 million/year losses.

Ms. Harris personally campaigned on compulsory **Medicare for all** and government-managed **universal health coverage**. Healthcare should be a right, she has repeatedly said. Under her plan, private health insurance plans would be *allowed a role*, but only as providers under government-controlled Medicare guidelines. She and Biden also just **announced** plans to expand health coverage care for about 100,000 illegal immigrant children next year.

In doing the work of discernment, I could find no objective evidence to support Ms. Harris' vision of government-managed healthcare for all. Nor is it found in Scripture or part of God's covenant

with his people. Government-managed health care is not a God-authorized role of civil government.

President Trump's actions while in office were the opposite those of Ms. Harris.

On taxes, President Trump ***passed the largest tax reform package in history*, $3.2 trillion in *tax cuts, across every sector***. Did it actually help regular Americans and middle class families or just the rich?

Everyone! Examining actual IRS tax data after Trump's 2017 tax cuts, the Tax Foundation **found** that **everyone benefited with significantly lower taxes**. By increasing the standard deduction, IRS returns were also simplified, slashing the numbers of people at every income level itemizing, trying to find ways to lower their tax bills.

President Trump followed the Biblical and anti-Marxist concept of helping people gain independence and work to enable them to elevate themselves out of poverty and dependency on the government. During his first term, media condemnation was relentless against his efforts, such as his HUD Secretary, Dr. Ben Carson's attempts to clean up and **reform** social programs, such as Obama's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing **regulations**. His launch of a new **Envision Center Initiative**, to try and help bring Blacks and minorities up **out of poverty** and help HUD-assisted households become self-sufficient, was labeled racist.

As *Wall Street Journal* **reported**, President Trump inherited a slowing economy with widespread recession concerns. ***Yet, his tax cuts and reductions in regulations resulted in hundreds of companies increasing wages, salaries and benefits***; while gross domestic product nearly doubled within the first two years. In 2017 alone, he "*rolled back twenty-two regulations for every one new regulation, saving taxpayers over $8 billion and liberating America's economy from the grip of bloated government*," **said** his press secretary Sarah Sanders. The economic boom and lower corporate taxes most benefited low- and middle-class households, including a disproportionate number of Blacks whose incomes grew more than whites, according to the WSJ.

Everything he did was labeled by media and his opponents as **racist**. So, it was surprising to learn that President Trump had **worked closely** with black leaders, like Scott Turner at the America First Policy Institute, to develop policies that would help minority communities realize their dreams. Mr. Turner described a few examples in *Capital Matters* of how blacks benefited: record low poverty rates; 1 million lifted out of poverty between 2016-2019, and black home ownership increased 47%. President Trump's agenda included:

- The Tax Cut and Jobs Act that created nearly 9,000 opportunity zones with zero capital gains taxes on long-term investments, and raised $75 billion for underserved communities in the first two years enough to create about 500,000 jobs.

- Criminal justice reforms and the First Step Act that gave nonviolent offenders chances to reenter society as productive, law-abiding citizens.
- Historical Black Colleges and Universities Initiative which gave faith-based educational institutions equal access to federal support, and the Future Act for Pell Grant program, and other legislation for academic scholarships.

Were blacks really better off during President Trump's Administration? I ran the numbers.

During the first three years of Biden-Harris' administration (2021-2023), **median incomes** for blacks (alone or mixed race) households went from $54,660 to $56,880. Adjusted for **inflation**, ***black households saw their real incomes* DROP *$4,585.00 during the first three years of Biden-Harris Administration.***

In contrast, during the first three years of President Trumps Administration (2017-2019), **median incomes** for these same black households went from $48,930 to $54,460. Adjusted for **inflation**, ***black households saw their real income* INCREASE *$3,427.00 the first three years of his Administration.***

That's a difference of $8,011.

On healthcare, President Trump took a hard stand against Medicare-for All, saying:

"We have to reject the socialist model that rations care, restricts access, slashes quality, and forces patients onto endless waitlists. Instead, we believe in freedom. We believe in choice. We believe in the highest standard of care in the world — anywhere in the world."

President Trump appears to have realized that the universal socialized-like model of healthcare and the massive bureaucracy will take time to redirect and do in a way that protects and cares for the truly needy, widows, children, disabled and elderly. Every powerful corporation and stakeholder, from Pharma to healthcare management companies to public health agencies, fought him on any changes, as was wildly evident in professional and consumer publications throughout his administration and to this day.

Still, he eliminated the Obamacare individual mandate and signed the first-ever executive order making it a federal policy to protect patients from pre-existing conditions denials of coverage.

He promoted more choices for individual health insurance, helped employers offer less expensive plans, and allowed the importation of cheaper prescription drugs from Canada.

The other changes in health insurance, Medicare Advantage and Part D plans, and health savings accounts, tweaked government regulations, but in a single term of office were unable to significantly lessen the federal government's grip on healthcare.

Healthcare policies are inordinately complicated. Some of his greatest weaknesses were in medical science and health decisions; the advisors he placed his trust in; and the agency bureaucrats he empowered. But objectively, on balance, his weaknesses pale compared to the consequences seen in the enormous expansion and continuation and doubling down of government health mandates that followed under Ms. Harris.

Part 9 examines the candidates' actions on God's creation, our world. Did their energy policies follow and honor Jesus' teachings?

Faith on the Ballot Series:

Christian, read and share Sandy Szwarc's Faith on the Ballot Series, examining the Presidential candidates in light of Biblical teachings

Part 1: **Trusting Jesus in Making the Right Choice**
Part 2: **Beginning the Discernment Journey**
Part 3: **Religious Freedoms and Rights of Conscience**
Part 4: **Scripture and LBGTQ+ Rights Policy**
Part 5: **Living our faith at the voting booth – Life and Abortion in Scripture**
Part 6: **God's Word on crime and abuse of office in public servants**
Part 7: **Border Walls and Sovereignty of Nations in Scripture**
Part 7: Continued: **What's the truth of a border crisis?**
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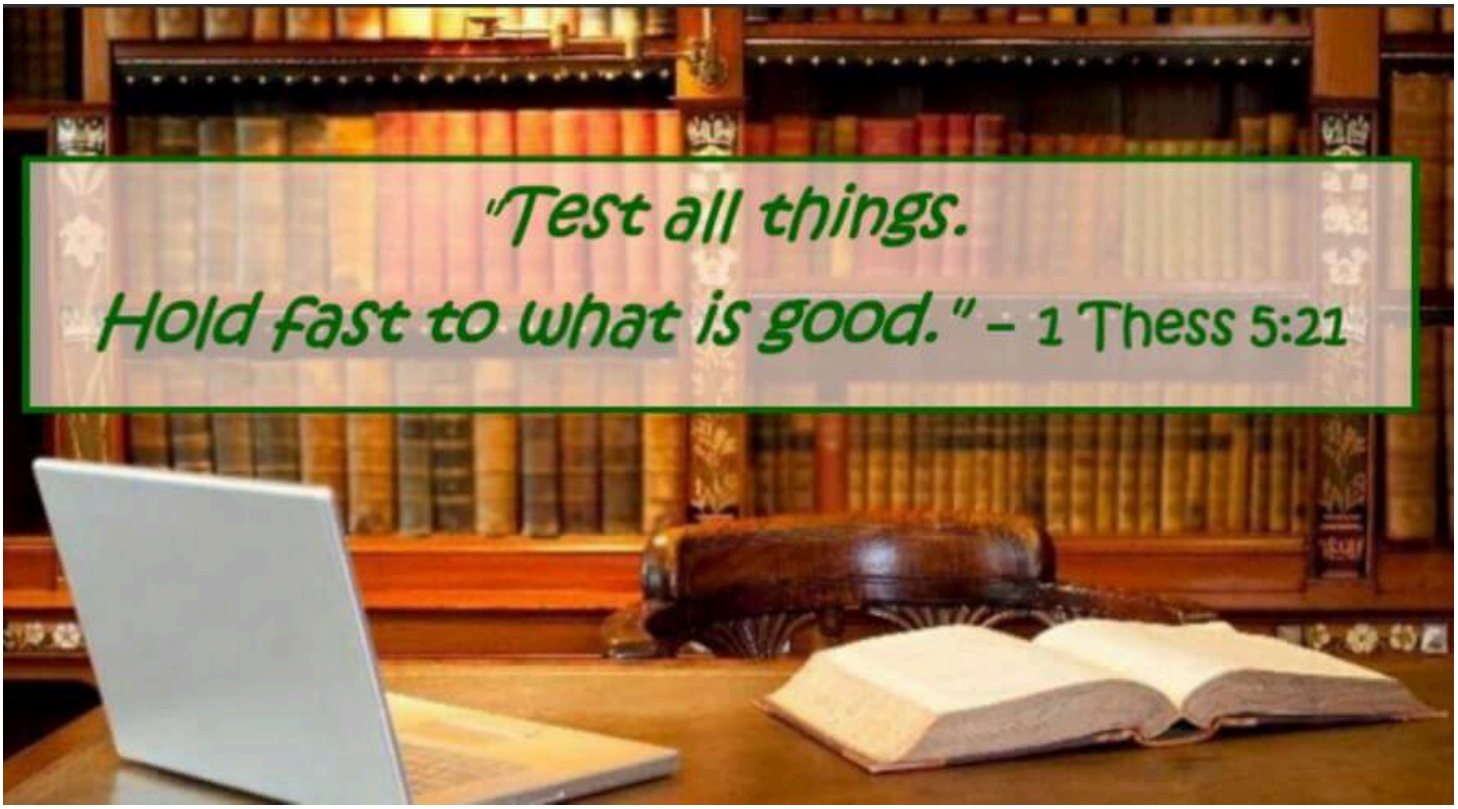
Part 10: **The Spiritual Battle for our Country – Growth of Evil**
Part 11: **The Spiritual Battle for our Country – Their world vision**
Epilogue:

Part 7: Border Walls and Sovereignty of Nations in Scripture

SEPTEMBER 30, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: FAITH ON THE BALLOT



Examining the Presidential candidates in light of biblical teachings

By Sandy Szwarc, BSN, RN, retired emeritus
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> "And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place." – Acts 17:26
>
> "You have established all the boundaries of the earth." – Psalm 74:17
>
> "Violence will not be heard again in your land, Nor devastation or destruction within your borders; But you will call your walls salvation, and your gates praise." – Isaiah 60:18
>
> "You shall not move your neighbor's boundary mark, which the ancestors have set, in your inheritance which you will inherit in the land that the Lord your God gives you to possess." – Deuteronomy 19:14
>
> "Meanwhile our women and children will live in fortified cities, for protection from the inhabitants of the land." – Numbers 32:17
>
> "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." – 1 Timothy 5:8
>
> The word "boundary" is found at least 15 times in describing the perimeter of Judah. – Joshua 15

Jesus' teachings are surprisingly firm in his regard for borders and national sovereignty. Americans are blessed to be living in a country whose Founding Fathers believed in a government of the people, and reflected Biblical principles in our U.S. Constitution.

Our Constitution is firm in recognizing that citizens and our elected representatives in Congress have absolute and total power over **immigration**, and complete authority to decide whether aliens may enter or remain in the country. Our laws are not made by the executive branch or by Executive Orders.

The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 (INA), which Congress has amended several times, is the public law that establishes the provisions of immigration law in our country, including governing how executive branch agencies may regulate behavior.

In examining the Presidential candidates in light of these Biblical teachings, it was only possible to know what they truly stood for by going to their actual record.

Ms. Harris' support of* illegals *and decriminalization of* unlawful *border crossings goes back more than a decade.

While San Francisco District Attorney, she initiated and ran a **city program for felons** that included criminal illegal aliens, to train them for jobs they were not legally able to have. It's not known how many illegals were part of the program before it was exposed. Harris **refused to seek the death penalty** for an illegal alien from El Salvador and an MS-13 gang member with previous arrests as a juvenile (city authorities had failed to turn him over for deportation) after an especially gruesome murder of a father and his two sons.

As California Attorney General, Ms. Harris had issued **a bulletin** to state and local law enforcement agencies of potential liabilities if they voluntarily complied with federal ICE agencies. She instructed the law enforcement professionals that they may only detain an individual if they obey a list of California conviction criteria. She told the press that an illegal immigrant is not a **criminal** and she would continue to refuse to uphold Federal immigration laws.

While Senator, Ms. Harris **stated** multiple times in **media** that she would never support a border wall, calling it a "medieval vanity project." In 2019, she co-sponsored **Federal legislation** to end deportation of illegal aliens and support sanctuary cities; while also revoking Trump's order "Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the U.S.."

Senator Harris was also given an **F- Grade** by **NumbersUSA** for her opposition to border enforcement and amnesty measures.

During a Senate confirmation hearing, Ms. Harris *compared Immigration and Customs Enforcement to the Ku Klux Klan*. Ahead of their inauguration, the Biden-Harris Administration **announced** their plans to open the border, giving the welcome invitation to millions of illegals, caravans and traffickers.

Terminology - A Few Basics

Alien: By federal law, any person who is not a citizen or national of the U.S. is an alien.

Illegal Alien: Any alien in the country without legal status is most commonly called an illegal alien. (Sometimes, they're also called unauthorized alien or undocumented alien; rarely in immigration laws they are referred to as illegal immigrant, undocumented person, illegal entrant, etc.)

Lawfully Present: A "lawfully present" illegal alien is NOT the same as having legal status. Illegal aliens said to be "lawfully present" include: those the government has

now deferred deportation for a period of time, given Temporary Protected Status (TPS), or Parole. *They do not have legal status and are still illegal aliens.*

Asylum: Those who cross the border illegally, or are already in the U.S., who request asylum are illegal aliens and remain illegal until their cases are adjudicated, which legally can only be done on a case-by-case basis and can take years. Some aliens who come to the U.S. legally on visas to claim asylum can be "legal immigrants." *Fewer than 5% of aliens are true asylum seekers*, **according** to the Center for Immigration Studies.

Gotaways: Illegal aliens seen to have entered the country illegally but evaded law enforcement or Border Patrol are called "known gotaways." In addition, there are untold number of "unknown gotaways."

Visa Overstays: Those with nonimmigrant visas, given temporary residence status for a specific period of time (for example, tourists, businesses or students), who violate the terms of their visas and stay are illegal aliens. Visa overstays account for as much as 40% of illegal aliens in the U.S., according the DHS.

Criminal Alien: An illegal alien who has been convicted of a **felony** or two or more misdemeanors and taken into custody is a criminal alien.

Refugee: A refugee has a specific **legal** meaning. Under Federal **law**, a refugee is someone *outside* the U.S.; of special humanitarian concern; who demonstrates persecution or fear of persecution due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group; has not resettled in another country; and is admissible to the U.S.. Once their case is approved, they undergo a medical exam and are eligible to come to the U.S.; are given a green card work permit and may apply for permanent residency after one year. Only 230 actual Haitian "refugees" were admitted to the U.S. last year, **explained** the *Ohio Register*.

Harris Took the Lead on the Border

As is well known, on March 24, 2021 ***Ms. Harris was specifically assigned the lead role in the White House Administration to stem migration on the southern border,*** *work with "nations to accept returnees and enhance migration enforcement at their borders," and be* ***the point person on immigration issues.*** In accepting the position, she gave her commitment that she "will enforce the law." The White House brief didn't specify what law she would enforce.

When VP Harris took on the assignment to address the **root causes** of migration from Central America, the public didn't realize the actual intentions in her border initiatives were to advance the global sustainable development and climate change programs of the United Nations and

World Economic Forum… calling for open borders and global governance – the opposite of U.S. national security and sovereignty.

Two months later on May 27, 2021, VP Harris personally issued her **call to action**: *"Fact Sheet: Vice President Harris Launches a Call to Action to the Private Sector to Deepen Investment in the Northern Triangle."* It called upon the world's largest corporations, international financial institutions, and NGOs to partner with government to support people in the Northern Triangle: Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

Her **strategy** included economic opportunities to address inequities and systemic social change to bring democracy; promote progressive taxation, empower women and address LLGBTQ+ inequities, sustainable development to address climate change and food insecurity, ensure stronger response to Covid-19 and other pandemics, increase education and health, develop security forces and law enforcement and policing, and embrace green energy and technology. No one questioned how these globalist ideas had anything to do with securing our border and enforcing Congress' immigration laws.

Tent Partnership for Refugees

Among the "public-private" partnerships supported in Ms. Harris' Call to Action initiative was **Tent Partnership for Refugees**. Under this scheme, a coalition of **over 200 of the largest multi-national corporations** agreed to guarantee jobs to massive numbers of migrants from *Haiti, Venezuela, Cuba, Afghanistan, Ukraine and Nicaragua,* over U.S. born workers.

Thirty-three of America's largest employers **signed up** on September 21, 2021. The Biden-Harris administration State Department signed **an official MOA agreement** with the Tent Partnership for Refugees on December 14, 2022.

- The program originally was sold to the public as helping the Afghans who'd assisted the U.S. government or were employees, and had been left after the U.S. withdrawal and Taliban takeover, had been taken to U.S. military bases or airlifted out to other countries. These refugees were given Special Immigrant Visa's (or SQ/SI parolee status for Visas still being processed) and legally authorized to live and work in the U.S., as well as given a path for citizenship and **other benefits**.

- Today, however, the *smallest group* in the tent program are actual refugees; most are now "**humanitarian claims**" and given temporary 2-year legal status and authorization to work in the U.S.

- When Tyson joined the Tent Partnership and went to its New York intake system earlier this year looking to hire 52,000 migrants given legal work status under the program, Americans learned of the enormity of the project. **A reported *181,400 migrants had come through in just the past two years.***

VP Harris didn't come up with this initiative alone, nor does it appear she was working for the American people. That very same day, Klaus Schwab ***spoke alongside VP Harris*** to the globalist members **at the World Economic Forum in Geneva**. He promoted Ms. Harris' call to action for "inclusive and sustainable economic development opportunities" in the Northern Triangle of Central America.

Another WEF globalist member, George Soros, who's pushed for open borders, has invested **$500 million** for illegal immigration since 2016 alone. That's in addition to the **$18 billion** he moved in 2017 to his pro-democracy foundation. In November 2021, after Ms. Harris' call to action, Soros specifically funded **$1.3 million** towards ending U.S. deportations of Haitians, legal services for Haitians, and changing immigration policies at the southern border. Soros' money went to **Haitian Bridge Alliance**, UndocuBlack Network, Black Alliance for Just Immigration, and Black LGBTQIA+ Migrant Project.

By June 8, 2023, VP Harris personally announced **new strategies**, expanding global private-government partnerships to the eastern Caribbean, specifically Haiti.

She herself **agreed** to a new U.S.-Caribbean Partnership To Address the "Climate Crisis" (PACC 2030). For Haiti, in addition to $53.7 million to Haiti for humanitarian aid, her lengthy project invested an initial $20 million for green energy and climate change businesses, $15 million for climate disasters, $5 million for climate change national security and millions more in various climate change programs. Ms. Harris also described her role in World Banking actions to address global climate change development, low-carbon investments, and international climate change infrastructure, such as the U.S. supported **$100 million** International Bank loan to Barbados in 2023. She also committed American taxpayers, for example, to lend up to **$21 Billion** through the International Monetary Fund for sustainable climate change programs.

Executive mandates

The first 100 days in office, the White House under Ms. Harris' immigration management took ***94 executive actions on immigration***, Migration Policy Institute **reported**, including:

- reduced enforcement of immigration laws and ICE removals; ICE arrests were cut over 60% and detentions by two-thirds in the first month in office.
- terminated travel and visa restrictions;

- ended Trump border policies such as the **Public-Charge Rule** which evaluated renewals of green cards and temporary visas on whether the illegals would likely to become public charges (dependent on government benefits);
- made 323,000 Venezuelans and 1600 Burmese eligible for Temporary Protected Status (TPS), with work permits and protection from deportation for 18 months;
- restarted the program to bring in Central American children of illegals given paroled or refugee status;
- ended the **Remain in Mexico program** and let in an estimated 25,000 active cases;
- *quadrupled the ceiling for "refugee" admissions to the highest numbers in thirty years*; and sped resettlement initiatives;
- halted border wall construction along the southern border;
- increased immigration benefits;
- introduced a groundbreaking legalization package and "pathway to citizenship" of an estimated 11 million illegals;
- directed the Secretary of Homeland Security and U.S. AG to take all legal actions to reinstate and fortify DACA; and **more**.

On January 20, 2021, in another example of an Executive Order, the White House also **revoked** the Muslim ban and the African ban for immigrants; and revoked two Trump admission programs with vetting and heightened screening for Visas and other immigration benefits; claiming they were Islamophobic and racist. The call to action went out to Muslim and African illegals with **resources** and free legal services.

Promptly on February 4, 2021, by **Executive Order** the Biden-Harris White House ordered the U.S. Refugee Admission Program to expedite applications for "humanitarian" status, engage private and public sponsorship of refugees and partner with resettlement agencies to issue Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) programs for Iraqi and Afghan migrants.

On March 27, 2024, the Soros-funded Haitian Bridge Alliance along with 481 Soros-allied organizations **petitioned** the White House calling for extending TPS status of Haitians. That June, the Biden-Harris administration **announced** 18-month extensions and re-designations of TPS for up to 309,000 illegal aliens from Haiti in the U.S. Its new policy was entered into the **Federal Register** on July 1st and extended TPS for Haitians until February 3, 2026.

Two Harris-Biden **Executive Actions** in June 2024 gave legal protections to about 500,000 families and about 50,000 noncitizen children of undocumented immigrants who'd entered the country illegally, allowing them residency status without needing to leave the country.

Newly Created and Rewritten Immigration Policies

In trying to make sense of these immigration actions, which have not abided by the Constitution or Jesus' teachings and have made illegal immigration worse, I learned that these were her own creations and revisions.

Not Congress. Not by the vote of the people.

Parole. Under her, the Administration instituted extensive new parole programs for illegals: Central American Minors Parole Program (implemented in April 2022); CHNV parole program created specifically for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans (implemented between October 2022 and January 2023); and a "family unification process" for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Columbians (implemented in July 2023).

"Parole-on-place" was created out of thin air and was an abuse of the parole authority established under federal law (Section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act), **explained** FAIR (Federation for American Immigration Reform). Granting parole *en masse* was done unconstitutionally, without Congressional approval and circumvented Congress. It prioritized illegal aliens over Americans, legal immigrants and the rule of law. The parolees' paper applications are approved in about a day and bypass usual health checks, criminal histories, in-person interviews with an immigration office, and numerous other paperwork required of those immigrating into the U.S. legally.

By August 1st, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) had recorded at least 2.6 million total paroles under this Administration, including the illegal aliens paroled and released into the United States by ICE, Border Patrol, CBP, OFO, and CHNV.

Under the special CHNV parole program she created, *Haitian, Cuban, Nicaraguan and Venezuelan illegal aliens are flown directly into the country, "paroled" and released inside the country*. None of those admitted through CHNV are legally permitted to enter the country under federal law, **according** to DHS documents. They are inadmissible, not eligible for visas, and have no legal status," **said** FAIR.

By the end of August, the CHNV parole program had flown in nearly 530,000 Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans and granted them "parole."

This new **CHNV program** has been letting these single men **illegally enter** the U.S., according to DHS. The DHS Inspector General also found these illegals ***were not being vetted as claimed***. *Members of violent prison gangs and illegals with histories of violent crimes, drug and arms trafficking, kidnapping, and cartel members **were being let in***.

Media reported to the public that this new parole **program** was court upheld to allow "a limited number of migrants" up to 30,000 each month – but *in actuality 4.5-times more illegal aliens were paroled*….and all in violation of federal law.

Even more troubling, FAIR **uncovered** the parole program had massive fraud. The wide variety of accepted paperwork to show illegal residence is "easily forged and nearly impossible to verify." In fact, FAIR **found** *over 100,000 fake applications* had been filled out by a set of serial sponsors, with the same social security number, who'd each completed twenty or more forms.

TPS. "Temporary Protected Status" (TPS) was another program significantly rewritten and broadened under Biden-Harris. In 2021, it extended new temporary protected status for about **309,000** Haitians here illegally, and enabled Haitian illegals already here to re-apply under the new designation.

TPS illegal aliens are immediately eligible for green cards, free public schooling, and health care. "Haitian parolees are immediately eligible for all major federal benefits programs on the same terms as legal permanent residents," **said** FAIR. They can get: Medicaid, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP food stamps), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Federal Student Aid.

Pew Research Center **estimates** that **1,187,230** illegals are in the U.S. under TPS eligibility. As of June 2024, 16 countries were designated for TPS, **according** to American Immigration Council.

Refugees. On June 20, 2024, the Biden-Harris White house released a **Fact sheet** celebrating its "*rebuilt U.S. Refugee Admissions Program*" that let in over 100,000 migrants this year alone, ***the most in three decades***, and its "whole-of-government" efforts to rebuild the resettlement network; triple the number of DHS "refugee officers;" invest in a resettlement network bringing the total number of local resettlement offices to more than 350; and launch a "Welcome Corps." Thirteen states were the **top resettlement states** getting over 2,000 illegal aliens each so far in 2024.

Reforms to the 1996 welfare laws have steadily expanded the government benefits available to illegal aliens, as the National Immigration Law Center **reviewed**.

"They're Eating the Geese"

The impact on local communities when large numbers of migrants granted temporary lawful status are resettled was recently illustrated in the town of Springfield, Ohio. With a population of 59,000 residents, this small town had a reported influx of 15,000 to 20,000 Haitian migrants. It was only after the Presidential debates, that it became "a story" that reached national awareness.

Unknown to the rest of the country, the good people of Springfield have been trying for two years to welcome and accommodate the migrants, with little support from the government. Any small community would be strained to have their population rapidly balloon by 25% to 33% in migrants with poor job skills, many in poor health, and all with a very different culture, **said** FAIR. Especially a relatively poor town like Springfield, where the median household income was barely half the national average to begin with, said FAIR.

- At the March 12, 2024 **City Commission Meeting**, citizens spoke of the security and safety concerns over the past two years, and multiple accounts of "pretty horrid things happening to domesticated animals.. and stuff in the park." The City Manager acknowledged at the recorded meeting being aware of the complaints.

- City leaders **traveled to** Washington, DC in April to meet with the White House Administration and legislators to discuss public safety concerns and problems of overwhelmed schools, transportation, housing, and healthcare systems. A full third of the babies being born at the local hospital were Haitian.

- On July 8th, the City Manager wrote **a letter** to their Senators in Washington, D.C., describing the housing crisis brought by the Haitian migrants in Springfield. The City Mayor had also held a **press conference** on July 12th saying the companies had not told them of their plans to bring in huge numbers of Haitians, leaving the city unprepared with housing, city services or public safety personnel.

- The City of Springfield published a **FAQ** on the issues the city is facing.

- Growing tensions among residents resulted in citizens speaking out at City Commission Meetings on **July 30th** and again at the **August 27, 2024**, complaining of rising crime, car crashes (including a school bus crash that killed a young child) by Haitians driving without licenses, squatters trashing homeowners' property, and leaving elderly residents in fear.

- Governor DeWine sent in **state troopers** on September 10th, to help the overwhelmed police department. He also allocated $2.5 million in State money to care for the migrants, putting the blame on the Biden-Harris White House for allowing this initiative without a plan in place.

- An **investigative report** also on September 10th by *The Federalist,* released police recordings and reports of Haitians stealing geese from neighborhood ponds to eat.

- Senator J.D. Vance reported that their office had received **many inquiries** from Springfield residents voicing problems surrounding the influx of Haitian migrants, including pets and wildlife being abducted. "My constituents have brought approximately a dozen separate concerns to me, ten of them are verifiable and confirmable," he **told CNN**. "…y constituents are telling me firsthand that they're seeing these things…All I have done is surface the complaints of my constituents, people who are suffering because of Kamala Harris's policies."

- Still, the realities for communities with large influxes of illegal aliens, either paroled or given temporary status under Harris' programs, didn't come to national attention until the Presidential debate. In his typical hyperbolic-style, Trump commented on reports of Haitians eating pets and "this is what's happening in our country and it's a shame."

- The media and Ms. Harris instantly, in lockstep, labeled his claims as **baseless** and false, an "**outlandish internet theory**," and **racist**. ***Mainstream media dismissed the issue without investigating or reporting on the concerns of the townspeople or the immigration policies behind the concerns.***

- Subsequently, almost immediately, independent **news** began reporting first-hand accounts from **residents** and even the local **car mechanic** with viewpoints from residents and Haitians; all **despairing** their small town was "falling apart." The latest **investigative report** of the complex issues, by independent journalist Julio Rosas, interviewed a resident who had been with the community group of concerned residents that had grown to 1,900 in a month and a half over the summer. They said they've tried to voice their concerns but have been called racists and hateful, and ignored.

- The residents were given a voice on September 19, 2024, when they were invited to a town hall meeting coordinated by Vivek Ramaswamy, who grew up in the area. Ten-times more residents signed up than the facility could accommodate, but the event was recorded by the local news and **posted on YouTube**. The impassioned discussion went on for over 1 ½ hours and is the most insightful, productive and positive to date.

- The few facts that have been made public clearly and understandably paint a picture of a town in distress. FBI reported a dramatic increase in crime since 2020, in a town that already had a **violent crime** rate 135% over the national average. During the two years between 2021-2023, ***vehicle thefts*** *increased 51% and*

shoplifting *went up 112%,* **according** to the local news. Clark County reported the ***Medicaid*** *rolls have skyrocketed nearly 8-fold since the fall of 2022*; local **rents** increased a 14.6% from May 2022 through 2023 and have skyrocketed since then, well over national average; and this year, **wages** have dropped and **unemployment** is increasing faster than the national average, as **reported** by Federal Reserve reporter **Howard Schneider** with Thomson Reuters.

- As FAIR **wrote**: "*Understandably, residents of Springfield have grown weary of bearing the social and fiscal burdens of uncontrolled illegal immigration, and political leaders at all levels of government who ignore or demean their pleas for it to stop.*"

Americans trying to learn what's really going on at the border, as well as in Springfield, have to get past the massive **conflicted media** with its **trusting news** collaborations (funded by **Democracy Fund**, **Knight Foundation**, Gates Foundation, Soros, and others) that spin disinformation. Soros and these disingenuous news outlets have been intent on confusing the public with misinformation claiming the Haitians migrants are legal, knowing that few consumers understand the Constitution, role of Congress and the Executive branch, or immigration law. They're a source for the unbalanced **stories** of how the Haitian aliens are revitalizing the economy and creating a vibrant community in Springfield.

Worse, these disinformation groups have been fueling anti-Trump divisive **claims** of racism and bomb threats in the Springfield community. Upon investigation, *every bomb threat has been a hoax*, **said** Governor DeWine, **without "any validity at all.**" Rumors that threats are being fueled by President Trump or JD Vance are also untrue, said state and local officials. Many are coming from overseas and made by those wanting to fuel discord, Gov. DeWine **told** the media. He added:

"It's been a mess. And frankly, the Biden administration has not done a very good job in regard to the border. So when Donald Trump brings it up, or when JD Vance brings it up, or a candidate for U.S. Senate brings it up, it is a legitimate issue. I have a job though in regard to people who are here legally in Springfield and a community that people are making comments about them. I have an obligation to speak out."

Why would Soros media be so intent on trying to deflect attention and de-legitimize reports of concerns over the illegal immigration crisis in Springfield? The issue has brought awareness that **not just Springfield**, but communities across the country are being overwhelmed with illegals being released by Harris' policies. But it may be bigger than that.

The City of Springfield openly **published** on its webpage that *temporary protected aliens* ***legally qualify*** for financial assistance, health and nutrition benefits, employment and education services, and housing benefits with most of these benefits administered through the Clark County Department of Job and Family Services. Not only that, but as part of its benefits registration

process, ***the Department is required by state law to provide voter registration forms to every applicant***, regardless of illegal status or citizenship. The forms are available in English and Spanish.

While Ohio voters overwhelmingly **approved** an amendment prohibiting voting by non-citizens in 2022, no effort has been made to stop the practice of handing out voter registration forms to illegals. The Ohio Secretary of State found nearly 600 non-citizens had voted last year or earlier this year and is **actively** working to ensure legal voting.

It is not known how many of the millions of illegals have been given voter registration cards or how many will vote in this election.

In researching government and independent sources, the truth of our borders and immigration policies emerged. ***Part 7 continues*** *with "What's the truth of a border crisis?*

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Part 2: Beginning the Discernment Journey
Part 3: Religious Freedoms and Rights of Conscience
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The Unified Feel Theory and...

SEPTEMBER 14, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The Spirit of Babylon

To view in your browser: **https://mailchi.mp/sca4christ/understanding-the-times-17881799**
By J. Jeff Toler for Shenandoah Christian Alliance **j.toler@sca4christ.org**

- ***O daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed, Happy the one who repays you as you have served us! Happy the one who takes and dashes your little ones against the rock!*** —Psalm 137:8-9

The Unified Field Theory in particle physics, is an attempt to describe all fundamental forces, and the relationships between elementary particles, a particle (such as an electron or proton) that is smaller than an atom and does not appear to be made up of a combination of more basic things, in terms of a single theoretical framework.

In physics, forces can be described by fields that mediate interactions between separate objects.

The world of politics is developing another theory.

In the politics of this generation, there is a peculiar and unexpected theory, or idea, now being proffered in the campaign coverage of this election. It's something which both the Democratic

party and the talking media, want to promote. They are calling it "a new vibe." A feeling. Yes—heavy sigh—a vibe.

I think it's entirely possible to say we have gone down the road called politics as far away as we can from the original definition of politics as, "the science of governance; that part of *ethics* which consists in the regulation and government of a nation or state, for the preservation of its safety, peace and prosperity." The politics practiced today by many is the worst form of vulgar politics.

It's not that we need to take a different approach to politics. We need instead to approach politics entirely differently.

Politics is nothing like it once was in this country. Even the rest of the world is seeing the change in us—especially the last three years. To the discerning, we are becoming Babylon.

We think of Babylon as a place, which it certainly was. The location of the city described in the Bible still exists today. It's now known as Al-Ḥillah, Iraq, roughly 50 miles south of Baghdad. The ruins of Babylon are today, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Babylon is incredibly ancient—much like sin itself. The Bible says the Tower of Babel was built in the land of Shinar, and thought to have been a territory in south Mesopotamia. Others say Shinar was actually in northeastern Syria, and that the Tower of Babel's remains are in the Upper Khabur River triangle.

"In fact," writes **Chad C. Ashby**, "*Babel* is a transliteration of the Hebrew word בָּבֶל ("Ba-bel"), while *Babylon* comes from the Greek Βαβυλῶνος ("Babylonos"). In all 233 occurrences of *Babel* in the Old Testament, it is translated *Babylon* in Greek. Moreover, both the ancient Babel in Genesis 10-11 and the more recent Babylon of Daniel's day are said to be located in the plains of Shinar. —Gen. 10:10; 11:2; Daniel 1:2

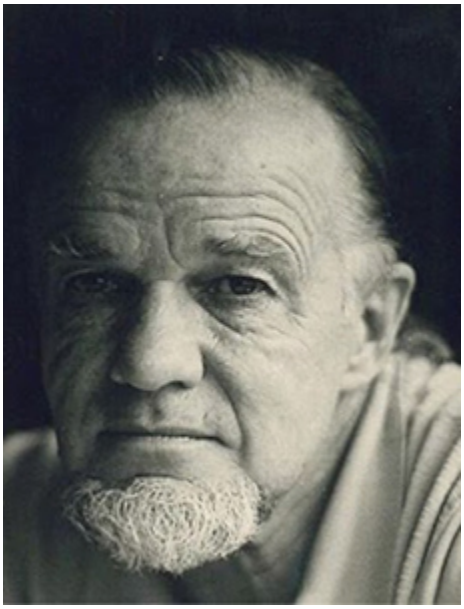
But Babylon is much more than an ancient city.

In the Bible, the name Babylon is also a metaphor for the Godless powers in this world. "The rise and fall of Babylon is proud. It's rebellious. It doesn't need God, and it's shameless. It corrupts the innocent. It mocks virtue. It cancels the truth. It's obsessed with power, and we feel helpless because it will not be stopped. It rises, and it rises, and it rises as every worldly weapon we raise against it seems to fail."

God did not place the Prophet Daniel there by accident, anymore than Babylon was an accident. All we need to know and understand is that we are living in Babylon right here and now. To those

who think we are living in chaos, it's because we are if we understand that Babylon represents the spiritual forces of evil.

If they are honest, the American people will confess they have never seen anything like the times we now live in. Extreme situations will not only produce extreme reactions, opinions, and behavior; those who believe think they can survive disaster, will just retreat or make excuses.



Francis A. Schaeffer

"Since personal peace and affluence are so often the only values that count with the majority, politicians know that to be elected they must promise these things. Politics has largely become not a matter of ideals—increasingly men and women are not stirred by the values of liberty and truth—but of supplying a constituency with a frosting of *personal peace and affluence*. They know that voices will not be raised as long as people have these things, or at least an illusion of them." —**Francis A. Schaeffer**, **How Should We Then Live?: The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture**

The of night Tuesday, September 10, offered a glimpse of how it could play out.

There will be no shortage of post-debate debate. We want to know who "won." We'll talk about the "zingers" and the barbs, and the stumbles, convincing ourselves these are the things that matter. Really? Do they?

The future should not be determined by debates or polling. Why should they matter? It's not about politics. It's about the culture and the spirit of Babylon that politics has ushered in.

If enough people want to place their trust in a politician who promises what should have already been delivered after four years, but never was, then those people will determine our culture and future.

While such a day has yet to happen for western civilization, Babylon, the place, was ultimately destroyed. Repeatedly. For two thousand years, and after continual looting, it lies in ruins. But, just like they say in the monster movie, ***"it lives!"*** The culture of Babylon is the result of the spirit of Babylon. Throughout recorded history, that's all that has ever really mattered.

- ***For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*** —Ephesians 6:12

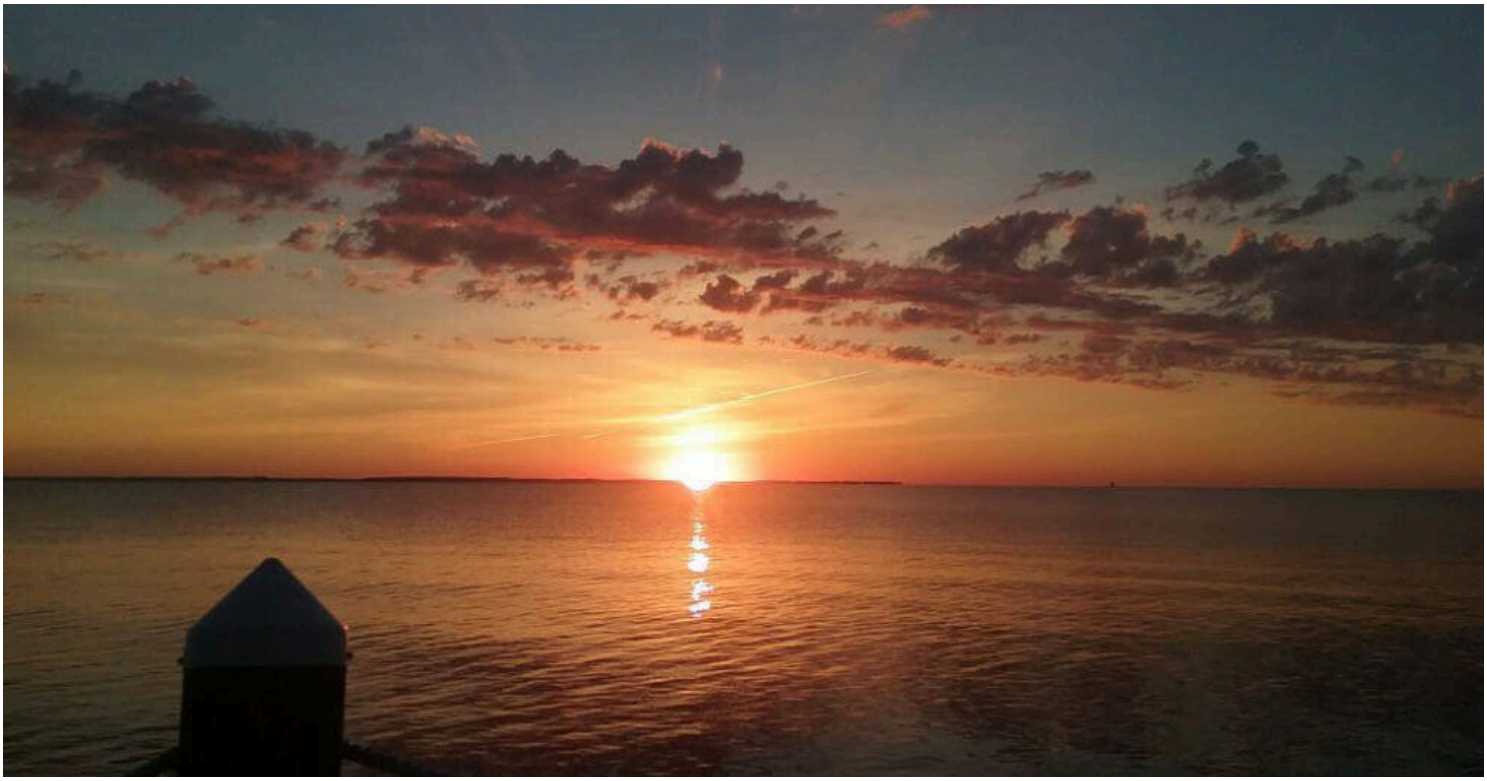
People today—more than any other in history—will only rely on their feelings. Feelings explain why we worry about micro aggressions and school shootings. We worry if we're racist. We even worry if we have tampon dispensers in the boy's bathrooms. It's a vibe don't you know.

It should be easy to answer this, "Are you better off now than you were four years ago?" But, even if you're happy as a Babylonian, it doesn't end well. John the Apostle writes:

- ***"Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns. The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries. The name written on her forehead was a mystery: Babylon the Great, the mother of prostitutes and of the abominations of the earth. I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God's holy people, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus."*** —Revelation 17:3–6

Hurricane Idalia Aftermath – A Biblical Perspective

SEPTEMBER 5, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW



As Hurricane Idalia sweeps across Florida and the southeastern United States, the devastating aftermath leaves communities grappling with loss and destruction. From a Biblical worldview, natural disasters like this serve as a stark reminder of the fragility of human life and the immense power of God's creation. This perspective calls believers to reflect on their faith, the purpose of such events, and the appropriate Christian response in times of crisis.

The Power of God's Creation

The Bible often speaks of God's sovereign control over nature. In Psalm 46:1-3, we read, "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth gives way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging." This passage reminds us that despite the chaos and destruction that natural disasters can bring, God remains in control. The raw power of hurricanes, earthquakes, and other natural phenomena reflects the majesty of the Creator, who governs the forces of nature according to His will.

A Call to Compassion and Action

In the wake of Hurricane Idalia, the immediate response of the Christian community should be one of compassion and action. The Bible teaches us to "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). This call to love and support our neighbors in times of distress is an essential part of the Christian faith. Churches and Christian organizations can mobilize to provide relief, whether through financial support, volunteering, or prayer.

The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) is a timeless example of how we should respond to those in need. Just as the Samaritan showed mercy to the injured man, Christians are called to extend help to those affected by the storm. This is not only a demonstration of Christ's love but also a powerful witness to a watching world.

Reflecting on the Bigger Picture

While hurricanes and other natural disasters can seem random and inexplicable, the Bible offers insight into the bigger picture. Romans 8:22-23 speaks of creation groaning as it awaits redemption: "We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time." These groanings remind us of the brokenness of our world, a result of the Fall, and the hope we have in the ultimate restoration of all things through Christ.

Natural disasters should prompt us to reflect on our mortality and the transient nature of life on earth. They remind us that our ultimate hope is not in the things of this world but in the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. As we respond to the immediate needs of those affected by Hurricane Idalia, let us also consider our own spiritual readiness and the importance of sharing the Gospel with others.

Conclusion

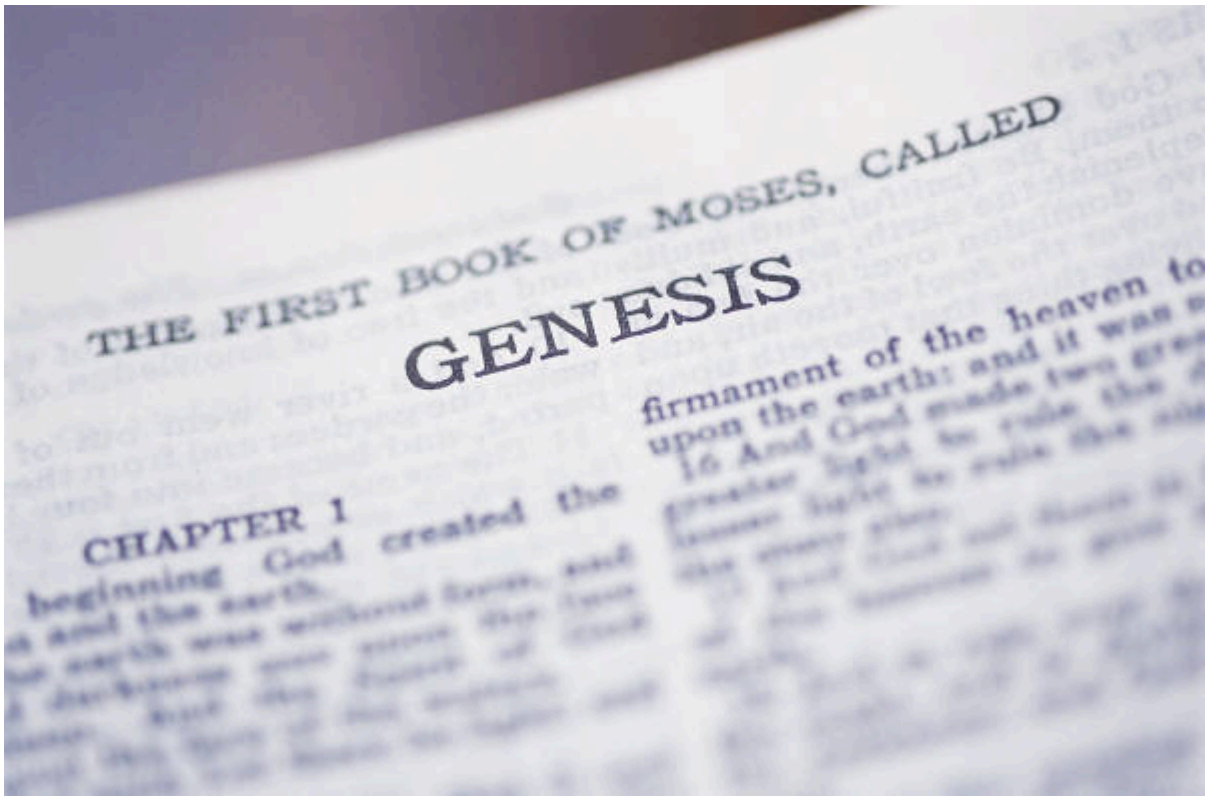
Hurricane Idalia's aftermath challenges us to respond with compassion, faith, and a renewed focus on eternal truths. As we assist those in need, let us also remember the power and sovereignty of God over all creation. In the midst of tragedy, the Christian response should be one of love, action, and a steadfast hope in the promises of God.

References:

- Psalm 46:1-3, ESV
- Galatians 6:2, ESV
- Luke 10:25-37, ESV
- Romans 8:22-23, ESV

Back-to-School Season – Maintaining Biblical Values in a Secular World

SEPTEMBER 5, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, TRADITIONAL FAMILY VALUES



As September rolls in, children across the nation head back to school, marking the end of summer and the beginning of a new academic year. For Christian families, this season brings not just the usual preparations of buying school supplies and setting schedules, but also the challenge of maintaining Biblical values in an increasingly secular educational environment. This blog post explores how Christian parents can equip their children to navigate this landscape while staying true to their faith.

The Importance of a Strong Biblical Foundation

Proverbs 22:6 instructs, “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it.” This verse underscores the importance of instilling Biblical principles in children from an early age. As they return to school, whether in public, private, or homeschool settings, the foundation laid at home is crucial for their spiritual development. Christian parents must ensure that their children understand and embrace the truths of Scripture, enabling them to stand firm in their beliefs.

One way to reinforce this foundation is through regular family devotions and discussions about how the Bible applies to everyday life. By engaging in open conversations about faith, ethics, and morality, parents can help their children develop a strong, personal relationship with God. This spiritual preparation is essential as they encounter various worldviews and philosophies in the classroom.

Navigating Secular Curriculums

In many public schools, curriculums are designed to be neutral or secular, often excluding religious perspectives. This can create challenges for Christian students who may feel isolated or pressured to conform to the prevailing cultural norms. However, Romans 12:2 offers clear guidance: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

Parents can help their children navigate secular curriculums by encouraging critical thinking and discernment. When controversial topics arise, such as evolution, gender identity, or moral relativism, it is important to discuss these issues from a Biblical perspective at home. Providing children with the tools to respectfully engage in these discussions while holding fast to their beliefs is key to their spiritual resilience.

Creating a Supportive Community

Another vital aspect of maintaining Biblical values during the school year is fostering a supportive Christian community. This can be achieved through involvement in church youth groups, Christian clubs at school, or homeschooling co-ops. Hebrews 10:24-25 reminds us, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

Being part of a community where Biblical values are shared and upheld can provide much-needed encouragement and accountability for both children and parents. It also offers opportunities for children to form friendships with others who share their faith, which can be a source of strength and comfort in challenging situations.

Conclusion

The back-to-school season is an important time for Christian families to reaffirm their commitment to Biblical values. By laying a strong spiritual foundation, equipping children to think critically about secular teachings, and fostering a supportive community, parents can help their children navigate the challenges of the school year while staying true to their faith. As

children grow in their knowledge and love of God, they will be better prepared to shine His light in a world that desperately needs it.

References:

- Proverbs 22:6, ESV
- Romans 12:2, ESV
- Hebrews 10:24-25, ESV

Separation of The Church from Israel: Part 1 The Significance and the Early Church

SEPTEMBER 3, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: ESCHATOLOGY

Ongoing series, previously:

- **Israel's Covenants and the Kingdom**
  - **The Beginnings and Foundations of Israel's Covenant**
  - **The Establishment of Israel's Kingdom and the Messianic Promise**

The Significance of Israel in God's Kingdom

God's Covenant with Israel

God's first and only covenant nation is Israel, and He called them His "firstborn son." Israel is the only nation He sovereignly chose to reveal Himself to, not a giant and mighty nation, but so insignificant they appeared to be nothing more than a small, powerless family. It says, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth" (Amos 3:2); "The Lord did not set His love on you

nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples" (Deuteronomy 7:7, NKJV).

Dispensational Theology and Israel

Most discourses on dispensational theology either ignore or marginalize the national significance of Israel as it relates to God's Kingdom and focus on ecclesiology, the study of the church, which it views as entirely separate or different from Israel—Dispensationalism. Any reference to Israel is mainly for studying church history, prophecy concerning Jesus, and eschatology and the end times, including the return of Christ. There are several reasons for this, stemming from improperly understanding how God's Kingdom will unfold—Amillennialism versus Premillennialism. And a general lack of causality between the natural and heavenly realms and, consequently, the physical and spiritual interconnectedness of Israel and the church.

The Spiritual and Physical Foundation of God's Kingdom

Most Christians view God's Kingdom as exclusively spiritual, and any inclusion of a natural Kingdom, if mentioned at all, is relegated to an unregenerate group that has not been born again or resurrected. However, to fully understand God's Kingdom, we must embrace Israel as its physical and spiritual foundation and understand God's progressive work through interwoven, overlapping, and continually interconnected yet distinguishably separate dispensations (periods) of personal and national redemption for the Jewish people, to which the church and the nations are eternally bound.

Israel's Role in the Fulfillment of Prophecy

In other words, the church cannot fulfill, even in part, nor will it see God's Kingdom purposes completed without the redemption of Abraham's natural descendants and their return to the land God promised to Abraham. Every prophecy concerning Israel will and must come to pass, with no exceptions. And any theology that does not recognize the specific intentionality of God's word toward the Jewish people denies the very fabric of His eternal Kingdom.

The Origin of the Term 'Jew'

It was not until after Israel's return from Babylonian captivity that we see the first mention of the Jews in the Bible (the second book of Kings), which describes the fall and captivity of Judah. These descendants were called Judeans (Yehudim, יְהוּדִים), descendants from the Tribe of Judah that settled that land around Jerusalem known as Judea. Around B.C. 538, during the time of Ezra, a remnant of these Judeans returned after seventy years from Babylon to rebuild the Temple.

Terminology in the New Testament

Hence, the word Jew is derived from the Hebrew word Yehudah (Judah). In the New Testament, the terminology varies concerning the Jewish people. Jesus was called the King of the Jews and the King of Israel. And the Apostle Paul referred to the Jewish people as Hebrews, Israelites, Jews, and those of the circumcision. There are several plausible explanations for these variations, the most likely being that the ten northern tribes were never restored after the Assyrian captivity. Therefore, most of those living in Israel during the time of Jesus were Judeans and Levites, and a small number of Benjamites that had returned after the Babylonian captivity.

Israel and the Early Church

The Jewish Identity Today

Today the Jewish people are exclusively referred to as Jews or are said to be Jewish, whether they practice the religion of Judaism or not. The rabbis consider a Jew to be any person born of a Jewish mother or who has undergone conversion to become a proselyte, according to Halachah (Jewish law). Those who are citizens of Israel are officially called Israelis, and the majority, but not all, are Jewish. While Israel in the Hebrew scripture is called a "nation" (goyee, plural goyeem in Hebrew), the church in the New Testament is always referred to as the "ecclesia" (from the Greek ekklēsia). It means "a gathering of those summoned" or "the assembly of citizens in a city-state."

The Doctrine of Israel

This teaching on the Doctrine of Israel will focus on the Bible's theological and eschatological aspects of Israel and the Jewish people (the natural seed of Abraham) and their physical and spiritual connectedness to the church and the nations—Christ's Kingdom. You will find references to ancient Biblical Israel, modern-day Israel, future redeemed Israel, and the descendants of Abraham that have received Christ as their Lord and Savior, a saved remnant of the Jewish people in this current dispensation called "the church age." And you will find references to the Gentiles (other nations apart from Israel) and the church comprised of believing Jews and Gentile Christians. All these references are for one purpose, to understand Christ's Kingdom and the church's connection to Israel and the Jewish people.

A Focus on Theology, Not History

You will not find a discourse on Israel's Biblical and modern history except where necessary to support the theological narrative. And you will not see references to Palestine as the term does not have national significance as it was merely a territorial identification. The name Syria-

Palaestina was given to the Roman province of Judaea in the early second century A.D. during its occupation of Israel, and the Greeks used Palestina for the entire region during their occupation.

Dispensational Relevance and False Theologies

Historical elements, if included, are for dispensational relevance or to reveal how false theologies emerged that diminish or invalidate God's promises for Israel. The objective is to present a complete picture of God's Kingdom that explains how God's workings with the Gentiles are part of His overall plan of one gradual and continuing dispensation to redeem Israel and all nations through the church, ultimately subjugating the entire creation to Jesus, which the church will receive as an inheritance in Christ. As the Lord declared, "Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession" (Psalm 2:8).

The Early Christian Era

Early Christianity, or Paleo Christianity, is the historical era of Christianity from Pentecost through the First Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325. Jesus was a Jew, as were all twelve of the Apostles, and His testimony as Christ confirmed that He came to fulfill all the promises made to the Hebrew patriarchs and the nation of Israel. Hence, early Christianity was an offshoot of Judaism. This early church comprised mainly Jewish leadership and was closely connected with Jewish centers throughout the diaspora.

The Expansion of the Gospel

After the stoning death of Stephen, believers in Jerusalem faced intense persecution, and many sought refuge in cities like Damascus and Antioch, joining Gentile converts and Jewish believers who were preaching the Gospel to predominantly Hellenist Jews and their neighboring Gentile communities. The church at Antioch later became the launching place for many missionary journeys that brought the Gospel to the Gentile nations. And within a few hundred years, thriving church communities were well-established in Asia Minor, Europe, Western and Northern Africa. Edessa became the center of Syriac Christianity which spread to Mesopotamia and, to a small degree, India.

The Jerusalem Council and Early Church Governance

The early church wrestled with many issues relating to the observance of the Law of Moses, including circumcision and the Lord's Sabbath and feasts. Paul rebuked Peter, saying, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?" (Galatians 2:14). But the early church ultimately resolved these complex issues through a congregation of apostles and elders. At the Jerusalem Council in the Book of Acts (around A.D. 50), it says, "The apostles and elders came together to consider this matter" (Acts 15:6). And their

conclusion is written and clear: “To lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality” (Acts 15:28-29). Jews and Gentiles were free to live amongst each other in a universal community of believers, neither obligated to lose or relinquish their cultural heritage. The universal (Catholic) church was born.

Ongoing series:

- **Israel’s Covenants and the Kingdom**
  - **The Beginnings and Foundations of Israel’s Covenant**
  - **The Establishment of Israel’s Kingdom and the Messianic Promise**
- **Separation of the Church from Israel**
  - The Significance and the Early Church
- Reconnecting the Church to Israel
- God’s Kingdom and the Restoration of Israel

The Fourth Watch: A Christian Imperative in Dark Times with Vigilant Prayers

SEPTEMBER 1, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: TRUSTING JESUS

The Fourth Watch: A Biblical Understanding and Its Relevance Today

The "fourth watch" concept in the Bible is deeply significant. It relates to divine intervention, spiritual warfare, and the importance of vigilant prayer. The "fourth watch" refers to the time between 3:00 AM and 6:00 AM, according to the Roman division of the night. This period, often described as the darkest part of the night, is also the time just before dawn—a powerful metaphor for hope and deliverance. This discussion explores the biblical significance of the fourth watch, its role in spiritual warfare, and the relevance of intercessory prayer for ourselves, our families, communities, and nation. A list of prayers follows the following article.

Biblical Significance of the Fourth Watch

Jesus Walking on Water

One of the most notable references to the fourth watch is found in Matthew:

> "And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea." (Matthew 14:25, KJV)

This event occurs after Jesus has spent solitary prayer on a mountain. Meanwhile, the disciples struggle against a storm in the Sea of Galilee. As they battle the wind and waves, Jesus approaches them, walking on the water. His appearance during the fourth watch symbolizes His power to bring peace and deliverance amid fear.

The disciples, terrified at first, think they see a ghost. But Jesus reassures them:

> "But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." (Matthew 14:27, KJV)

This passage highlights the importance of recognizing Jesus' presence, especially during the darkest hours of our lives. Just as He came to the disciples during the fourth watch, He comes to us in our times of greatest need.

Deliverance of Israel

Another significant reference to the fourth watch is found in Exodus:

> "And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians." (Exodus 14:24, KJV)

Here, "the morning watch" is synonymous with the fourth watch. This passage describes the moment when God intervenes to deliver the Israelites from the Egyptian army. As the Egyptians attempt to follow the Israelites through the parted Red Sea, God confuses their forces, leading to their destruction.

This event underscores God's perfect timing in bringing deliverance when all seems lost. Just as He acted on behalf of the Israelites during the fourth watch, God acts in our lives precisely when we need Him most.

The Importance of Spiritual Warfare

The fourth watch is often associated with spiritual warfare—when spiritual activity is heightened, and the forces of darkness are active. Jesus emphasized the importance of vigilance during the night watches:

> "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning." (Mark 13:35, KJV)

This call to "watch" is about spiritual alertness. The fourth watch, being the last watch of the night, is a critical time for prayer, guarding against the schemes of the enemy.

Spiritual Warfare and Vigilance

The apostle Paul describes the reality of spiritual warfare in Ephesians:

> "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Ephesians 6:12, KJV)

Paul's description reveals that our battles are spiritual, not merely physical. The "rulers of the darkness" are mainly active during the night hours, making the fourth watch a vital time for prayer.

In spiritual warfare, prayer is our most potent weapon. Just as soldiers guard themselves during the night watch, believers are called to intercede during the fourth watch, countering the enemy's plans with prayers of faith, protection, and deliverance.

The Role of Intercessory Prayer

Intercessory prayer—praying for others—is a powerful expression of love and faith. The Bible offers many examples of intercessory prayer, and the fourth watch is a significant time to engage in this practice. When the world is quiet, this period offers a unique opportunity to focus on prayer without distractions.

Intercession for Ourselves

During the fourth watch, we are encouraged to pray for our spiritual protection and growth. This is a time to seek God's guidance, wisdom, and strength to overcome the day's challenges ahead. David, in the Psalms, speaks of seeking God early in the morning:

> "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." (Psalm 63:1, KJV)

Praying during the fourth watch allows us to align our hearts with God's will before the day begins. It is a time to put on the "whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:11) and prepare ourselves to stand firm against the temptations and trials that may come.

Intercession for Our Families

Our families are often the closest and most immediate mission field we have. Praying for our family members during the fourth watch is a way of covering them with God's protection and blessings. Job, for example, regularly interceded for his children:

> "And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually." (Job 1:5, KJV)

Job's diligence in interceding for his children is a powerful example. As we pray during the fourth watch, we can ask God to guide, protect, and bless our family members, helping them grow in their faith and walk with Him.

Intercession for Our Communities

Beyond our immediate families, the fourth watch is a time to pray for our communities, neighbors, friends, and local church. The Bible encourages us to pray for others, bearing one another's burdens:

> "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." (1 Timothy 2:1, KJV)

By praying for our communities during the fourth watch, we invite God's presence into our neighborhoods and churches, asking Him to bring revival, healing, and unity. These prayers can also address specific needs, such as the salvation of those who do not yet know Christ or the strengthening of those struggling.

Intercession for Our Nation

Finally, the fourth watch is a powerful time to intercede for our nation. Praying for our country is essential in a world that often seems to be in turmoil. The Bible instructs us to pray for those in authority so that we may live peaceful and godly lives:

> "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." (1 Timothy 2:1-2, KJV)

As believers, we stand in the gap for our nation, asking God to guide our leaders, protect our freedoms, and bring about His purposes. The fourth watch is an ideal time for this kind of prayer, as we seek God's mercy, wisdom, and intervention in our nation's affairs.

Relevance of the Fourth Watch Today

In today's world, the concept of the fourth watch is more relevant than ever. We live in a time of great uncertainty, with challenges that can often feel overwhelming. The fourth watch reminds us that God is present and active, even in the darkest hours, and that our prayers can profoundly impact us.

Spiritual Awakening

The fourth watch can be seen as a metaphor for spiritual awakening. Just as the dawn follows the night, the fourth watch symbolizes the hope and renewal that come after difficult times. This message is particularly relevant in a dark and uncertain world. Believers are encouraged to seek God during the fourth watch, trusting He will bring light and deliverance in His perfect timing.

Encouragement in Troubling Times

The examples of Jesus walking on water and God's deliverance of Israel remind us that God is in control, even when circumstances seem dire. These stories encourage us to hold onto our faith, knowing God works on our behalf, even when we cannot see it. The fourth watch is a time to draw near to God, seeking His peace and guidance amid life's storms.

Call to Prayer

Finally, the fourth watch serves as a call to prayer. In a world with constant distractions, the early morning hours offer a unique opportunity to focus on God and seek His presence. By dedicating this time to prayer, we can align ourselves with God's will, intercede for others, and prepare ourselves for the day ahead.

Conclusion

The fourth watch holds deep significance in the Bible, representing God's divine intervention, the importance of spiritual warfare, and the power of intercessory prayer. Its relevance today cannot be overstated, as it offers believers a powerful reminder of God's presence and a call to prayer in the darkest hours. Whether praying for ourselves, our families, our communities, or our nation, the fourth watch is a time to seek God's guidance, protection, and deliverance, trusting He will bring light to the darkness and hope to the world.

Intercessory Prayers

Prayers for Oneself

Prayer for Spiritual Growth

> "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." (Psalm 51:10)

Heavenly Father, I come before You, asking for a clean heart and a renewed spirit. Help me to grow in Your grace and knowledge, becoming more like Christ each day. Remove any sin or impurity that hinders my walk with You. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit, guiding me in truth and righteousness. I seek to know You more deeply and to live a life that glorifies You. Amen.

Prayer for Guidance and Wisdom

> "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him." (James 1:5)

Lord, I need Your wisdom and guidance in my life. I am faced with decisions and challenges that I cannot navigate on my own. Please grant me the wisdom that comes from above, pure and peaceable, full of mercy and good fruits. Lead me in paths of righteousness for Your name's sake. I trust in Your perfect will and seek to follow Your direction in all I do. Amen.

Prayer for Strength and Protection

> "But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one." (2 Thessalonians 3:3)

Dear Lord, I ask for Your strength and protection as I face the trials of this day. Strengthen my faith, that I may stand firm against the attacks of the enemy. Cover me with Your mighty hand, guarding my mind and heart against fear and doubt. Let Your peace, which surpasses all understanding, guard my heart and mind in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Prayers for One's Family

Prayer for Unity and Love

> "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins." (1 Peter 4:8)

Father, I lift up my family to You, asking for unity and love to abound among us. Let Your love be the bond that holds us together, covering over any offenses or misunderstandings. Help us to forgive one another as You have forgiven us, and to walk in humility and patience. May our home be filled with Your presence, reflecting the love of Christ in all we do. Amen.

Prayer for Protection and Safety

> "The Lord will keep you from all harm—He will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore." (Psalm 121:7-8)

Lord, I pray for Your protection over my family. Watch over our coming and going, keeping us safe from all harm and danger. Surround us with Your angels, guarding us in all our ways. Protect us from illness, accidents, and any plans of the enemy. Let our home be a place of refuge and peace, where Your name is honored. Amen.

Prayer for Salvation and Faith

> "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." (Acts 16:31)

Heavenly Father, I pray for the salvation and spiritual growth of each member of my family. May each one come to know You personally and trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Strengthen our faith, and help us to grow in our relationship with You. Let our family be a light to others, testifying to Your goodness and grace. Amen.

Prayers for One's Community

Prayer for Revival and Spiritual Awakening

> "If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)

Lord, I pray for revival in our community. Stir the hearts of Your people to humble themselves, seek Your face, and turn from sin. Pour out Your Spirit upon us, bringing spiritual awakening and renewal. Let Your gospel be proclaimed with power, transforming lives and drawing many to Christ. May our community be known for its love for You and for one another. Amen.

Prayer for Peace and Justice

> "Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper." (Jeremiah 29:7)

Father, I pray for peace and justice in our community. Let righteousness prevail in our neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces. Guide our leaders to make decisions that honor You and promote the well-being of all. Help us to be peacemakers, working to resolve conflicts and promote unity. May Your justice roll down like waters, bringing healing and restoration to our community. Amen.

Prayer for the Vulnerable and Needy

> "The righteous care about justice for the poor, but the wicked have no such concern." (Proverbs 29:7)

Lord, I lift up the vulnerable and needy in our community. Provide for their needs, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual. Raise up people who will care for them, showing Your love and compassion. Help us as a community to be mindful of those who are hurting, and to reach out with the hands and feet of Christ. Let us be a beacon of hope and help to those in need. Amen.

Prayers for One's Nation

Prayer for Leaders and Authorities

> "I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness." (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

Heavenly Father, I pray for the leaders and authorities of our nation. Grant them wisdom, integrity, and a heart to serve the people. Guide their decisions, that they may govern justly and promote peace and righteousness. May they seek Your guidance in all matters, and may their leadership lead to the flourishing of our nation. Amen.

Prayer for National Repentance and Revival

> "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." (Proverbs 14:34)

Lord, I ask for repentance and revival in our nation. Turn our hearts back to You, that we may forsake sin and pursue righteousness. Heal the divisions that plague our land and restore us to a nation that honors You. Pour out Your Spirit, bringing revival across our country, so that many will come to know You as Lord and Savior. Amen.

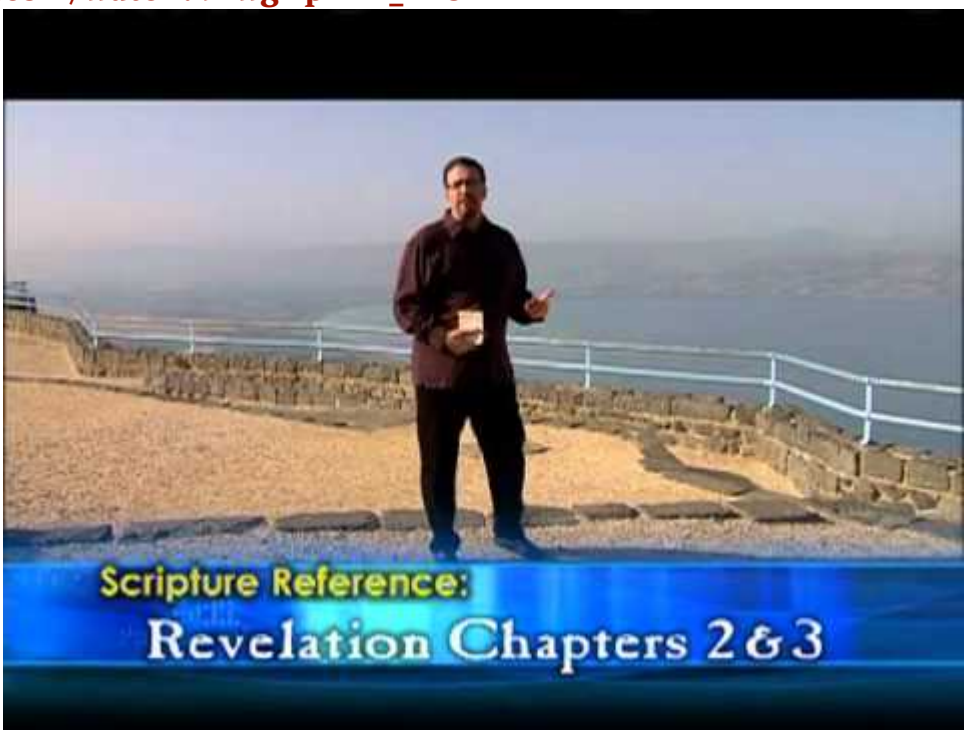
Prayer for Protection and Peace

> "The Lord gives strength to His people; the Lord blesses His people with peace." (Psalm 29:11)

Father, I pray for Your protection and peace over our nation. Shield us from threats, both internal and external, and grant peace within our borders. Strengthen our military and law enforcement, giving them wisdom and courage to protect and serve. Let Your peace reign in our hearts and in our land, that we may live in safety and security under Your care. Amen.

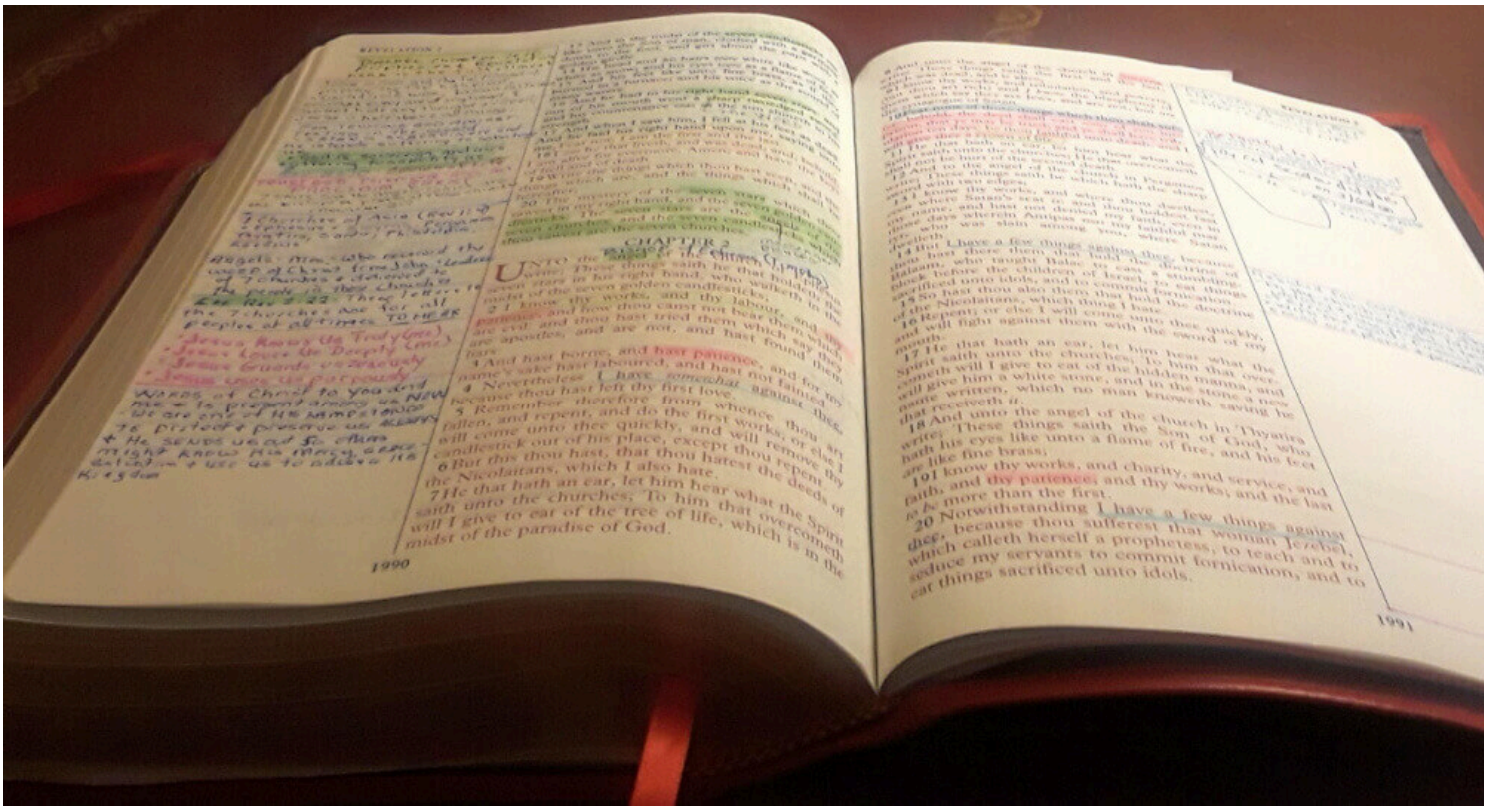
These prayers, rooted in Scripture, offer a way to intercede for oneself, one's family, one's community, and one's nation with confidence, knowing that you are aligning your requests with God's Word.

The Mystery of the Fourth Watch
https://youtube.com/watch?v=wgXpkkX_n48



Building Strong Walls of Faith in a Compromising World: Rooted in Divine Love and Humility

AUGUST 21, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



In the book of **Nehemiah**, we see Jerusalem being fortified with **broad walls**: "And they fortified Jerusalem unto the broad wall" (Nehemiah 3:8).

These walls were not just physical structures; they represented strength, security, and a clear separation from outside dangers. **Charles Spurgeon draws on this image** to remind us that, as believers, we are part of a spiritual city—the New Jerusalem—that needs its own broad wall of protection. But instead of bricks and mortar, our walls are built from nonconformity to the world around us, all resting on the firm foundation of divine love and humility.

The Challenge of Standing Apart

Maintaining that separation from secular influences can feel like an uphill battle in today's world. The lines between what's sacred and what's secular have become increasingly blurred. Practices and values that once were clearly distinct for Christians are now often seen as normal or even desirable. Whether it's the entertainment we consume, the conversations we engage in, or the lifestyles we emulate, the world's influence is pervasive, and it's easy to start blending in.

Yet, this blending in is not without consequence. When we start to look and act just like everyone else, we lose the distinctiveness that God has called us to. Spurgeon warns that if the Church becomes too much like the world, it loses its power and purpose. It's like tearing down the protective walls that were meant to keep us safe and set apart for God's purposes.

Building the Wall of Nonconformity on the Foundation of Love and Humility

So, how do we build and maintain these spiritual walls? It starts with a conscious decision to live differently—to align our lives with God's standards, even when they go against the grain of society. But this commitment must be rooted in something deeper than just a sense of duty; it must be grounded in divine love and humility.

Love is the foundation of our faith, the very reason we seek to follow God's commandments and resist the pull of worldly desires. But true love is impossible without humility. Humility reminds us that we are not building these walls out of a sense of superiority or self-righteousness, but out of a deep love for God and a desire to honor Him with our lives. It's about recognizing our need for God's grace every day and being willing to submit our lives fully to His will.

These walls of nonconformity, built on the foundation of love and humility, are not restrictive but freeing. When we choose to live by God's commandments and resist the pull of worldly desires, we find that we are not confined, but actually living in greater freedom. Like those who stood on Jerusalem's walls and could see far beyond the city, when we stand firm in our faith, we gain a clearer perspective on life. We see beyond the temporary pleasures of this world and focus on the eternal joy that awaits us.

A Personal Commitment

Living this way isn't always easy. It requires daily humility to keep our hearts, minds, and actions aligned with God's will. But it's worth it. Maintaining this separation from the world helps us stay true to who we are as God's people. It keeps our witness strong and our lives in step with His purpose for us.

In a world that constantly pressures us to conform, let's commit to building these walls in our own lives—not walls that shut people out, but walls that protect our hearts and minds from the influence of a world that's often at odds with God's ways. And let's remember that all of this is grounded in love—the love that God has for us and the love we are called to show to others. But to truly love, we must be humble, recognizing that without God, we can do nothing.

By doing this, we're not just preserving our faith; we're living in the freedom and joy that comes from walking closely with God, rooted in His love and strengthened by humility. Let's stand firm in our faith, keeping our spiritual walls strong, our hearts humble, and our focus on the Lord. It's in

this place of separation and love that we truly find the freedom to live the life God has called us to.

Personal Prayer of Loving Obedience

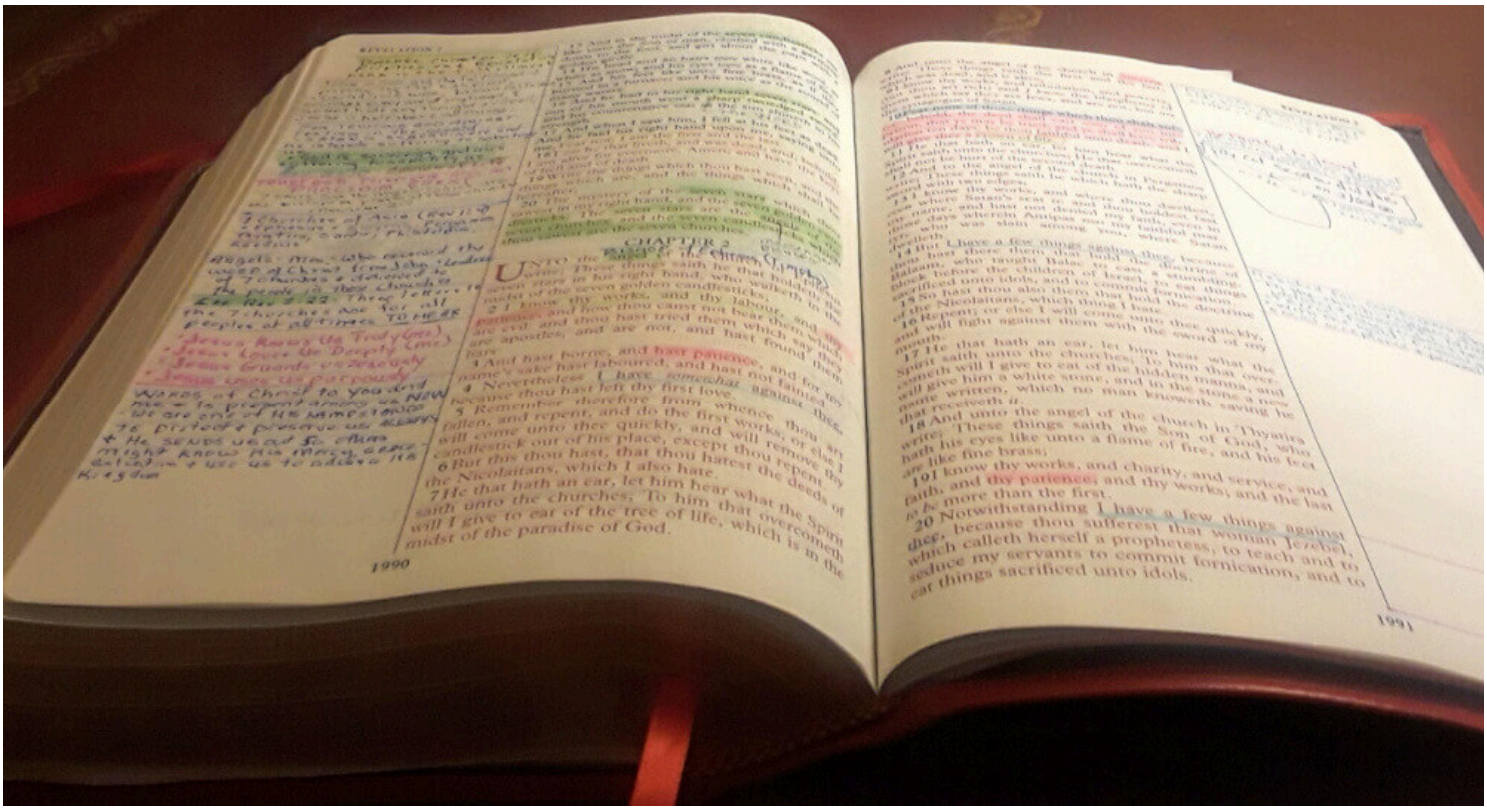
Heavenly Father, I come before You with a heart full of love and gratitude for Your unending grace and mercy. I ask for Your strength and guidance to build strong spiritual walls in my life, rooted in Your love and grounded in humility. Help me to stand firm in my faith, resisting the pull of worldly influences, and to walk in obedience to Your commandments. May my life be a reflection of Your love, drawing others to You, and may my heart remain humble, always aware of my need for Your grace. Lead me, Lord, in the path of righteousness, that I may honor You in all I do. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Reference: **Charles Spurgeon Morning and Evening**

Further Reading: **Christian Love**

Returning to Biblical Roots: Addressing Modern Church Challenges

JULY 30, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: GODLY RELATIONSHIPS, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Discover why George Barna advocates for a return to biblical roots and the need for authentic discipleship in today's church.

In today's rapidly changing world, the Church faces numerous challenges that threaten its foundation and mission. George Barna, a prominent Christian researcher, recently highlighted the urgent need for the Church to return to its biblical roots. This shift is essential for fostering genuine discipleship and ensuring the growth of a biblical worldview among future generations.

The Modern Church Structure

Barna argues that the current structure of many churches, with their extensive programs and elaborate buildings, is not aligned with the New Testament model. He states, "The local church, as we've created it, is man-made. It's not in the Scriptures". Instead of focusing on these external elements, Barna emphasizes the importance of investing in individuals and building them up spiritually.

Discipleship and Spiritual Education

A key aspect of returning to biblical roots is prioritizing discipleship and spiritual education, especially within families. Barna urges believers to recognize the role of parents as the primary spiritual leaders of their children. He states, “Our primary focus needs to be on children and growing their biblical worldview”. By doing so, the Church can raise a new generation of believers who are deeply rooted in their faith.

The Role of Artificial Intelligence

Another pressing issue is the rise of **artificial intelligence** (AI) and its impact on the Church. Barna warns that while AI can offer convenience, it also poses significant risks to the authenticity and depth of spiritual teachings. He encourages church leaders to be cautious about integrating AI into their ministries and to focus on genuine, spirit-led teaching.

The Path Forward

To address these challenges, Barna advocates for a radical return to biblical principles and the empowerment of parents as spiritual leaders. He believes that this approach is crucial for the Church to thrive and maintain its influence in an increasingly secular society. Barna’s **call to action** is clear: “We either will put up or shut up. And I would suggest that we put up”.

By embracing a return to biblical roots and focusing on authentic discipleship, the Church can navigate the challenges of the modern world and continue to fulfill its mission.

What is Freemasonry: Exposing the Deception

JULY 27, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: FREEMASONRY, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Many people shroud Freemasonry in mystery and misunderstanding. They view it as a benign fraternity or a charitable organization. However, as Mondo Gonzales of Prophecy Watchers and Billy Crone reveal, there are deeper, more sinister aspects to this secret society. This blog post delves into their discussion, exposing the hidden dangers of the organization and its implications for Christians.

*(See the Virginia Christian Alliance's Post: **Freemasonry's secret rituals exposed in viral video published by undercover Catholic journalist**)*

Luciferian Lies of the Lodge | Billy Crone
https://youtube.com/watch?v=LAT6G1_bw3w

Luciferian Lies of the Lodge | Billy Crone (YouTube Channel **LINK**)

What is Freemasonry?

To understand what Freemasonry is, Billy Crone begins by describing it as "Satan's secret society." This is not merely a sensational claim but one rooted in the organization's own practices and beliefs. Freemasonry is not just anti-God; it is openly satanic, with rituals and teachings that directly oppose Christian doctrine.

Albert Pike, a prominent figure in the organization, explicitly stated that Lucifer is considered a god within the group. Pike's writings reveal a desire to establish a Luciferian order, which includes the orchestration of world conflicts to prepare the way for this new order. These revelations are not fringe theories but are documented in Freemason literature.

The Allure and Deception of the Cult

To fully grasp what Freemasonry is, one must recognize how it often presents itself as a community-focused, benevolent society. This façade is what makes it so appealing and dangerous. Many Christians are unaware of the cult's hidden threats, often dismissing concerns as conspiracy theories. However, the rituals and oaths taken by members are anything but benign.

In the first three degrees of the organization—the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craftsman, and the Master Mason—initiation rituals include secret meetings, blindfolding, and taking bloody oaths. These oaths often involve gruesome penalties for revealing secrets, such as having one's tongue cut out or throat slit. Such practices starkly contrast with the transparency and openness advocated by Jesus Christ.

What is Freemasonry in the Church?

One of the most troubling aspects of understanding Freemasonry is its infiltration into the Christian church. Freemasons include many pastors and church members, and they sometimes conduct Masonic rituals within church buildings. This blending of the organization and Christianity is deeply concerning because the two are fundamentally incompatible.

One such aspect is that the organization promotes a works-based salvation. This directly contradicts the Christian doctrine of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Furthermore, the secretive nature of the cult and its satanic underpinnings make it a dangerous influence within the church.

The Deeper Degrees and Their Dangers

As one progresses through the degrees of the organization, the rituals and teachings become increasingly occult and blasphemous. For example, at the seventh degree, they introduce members to a false trinity: Jahbulon, a composite of Yahweh, Baal, and Osiris. This perversion of the Christian Trinity is a clear indication of the cult's deceptive nature.

In the seventeenth degree, members receive a secret password believed to be necessary for entering eternity: "Abaddon." This name, found in Revelation 9:11, refers to a demon from the pit of hell. These teachings illustrate the satanic inversion present in the cult, where they present what is evil as good

The Organization's Influence and Reach

The influence of the organization extends far beyond individual lodges. Notably, it has various branches, including the Scottish Rite, the York Rite, Prince Hall Freemasonry, and the Shriners. Each of these branches has its own rituals and requirements; however, they all share the same core of false teachings.

For instance, the Shriners require members to pledge allegiance to Allah and Muhammad as their prophet. This requirement, in particular, highlights the syncretistic nature of the organization, which blends elements from various religious traditions to create a false unity.

The Call to Christians

For Christians involved in the cult, the call is clear: repent and leave the organization. The teachings and practices fundamentally oppose the gospel of Jesus Christ. Participation in such a group endangers one's spiritual well-being and contradicts the faith professed by believers.

Conclusion

What is Freemasonry? It is not a harmless fraternity or a simple charitable organization. It is a cult with deeply occult and satanic roots. The rituals, oaths, and teachings are incompatible with Christianity and pose a significant threat to the church and individual believers.

Billy Crone and Mondo Gonzales issue these warnings, which should not be taken lightly. Therefore, Christians must be vigilant and discerning. By rejecting the allure of Freemasonry and standing firm in the truth of the gospel, believers can protect themselves from this cult's deception. As the Bible says, 'The truth will set you free' (John 8:32).

Furthermore, embracing this truth means rejecting the deception and darkness of Freemasonry and living in the light of Christ.

References:

1. **"Freemasonry: Satan's Secret Societies Exposed" by Billy Crone** – This book delves into the occult practices and beliefs of Freemasonry, providing detailed evidence and testimonies. **Link to the book**

2. **"The Deadly Deception: Freemasonry Exposed by One of Its Top Leaders" by Jim Shaw and Tom McKenney** – This book is written by a former high-ranking Freemason who reveals the secret rituals and oaths of the organization. **Link to the book**

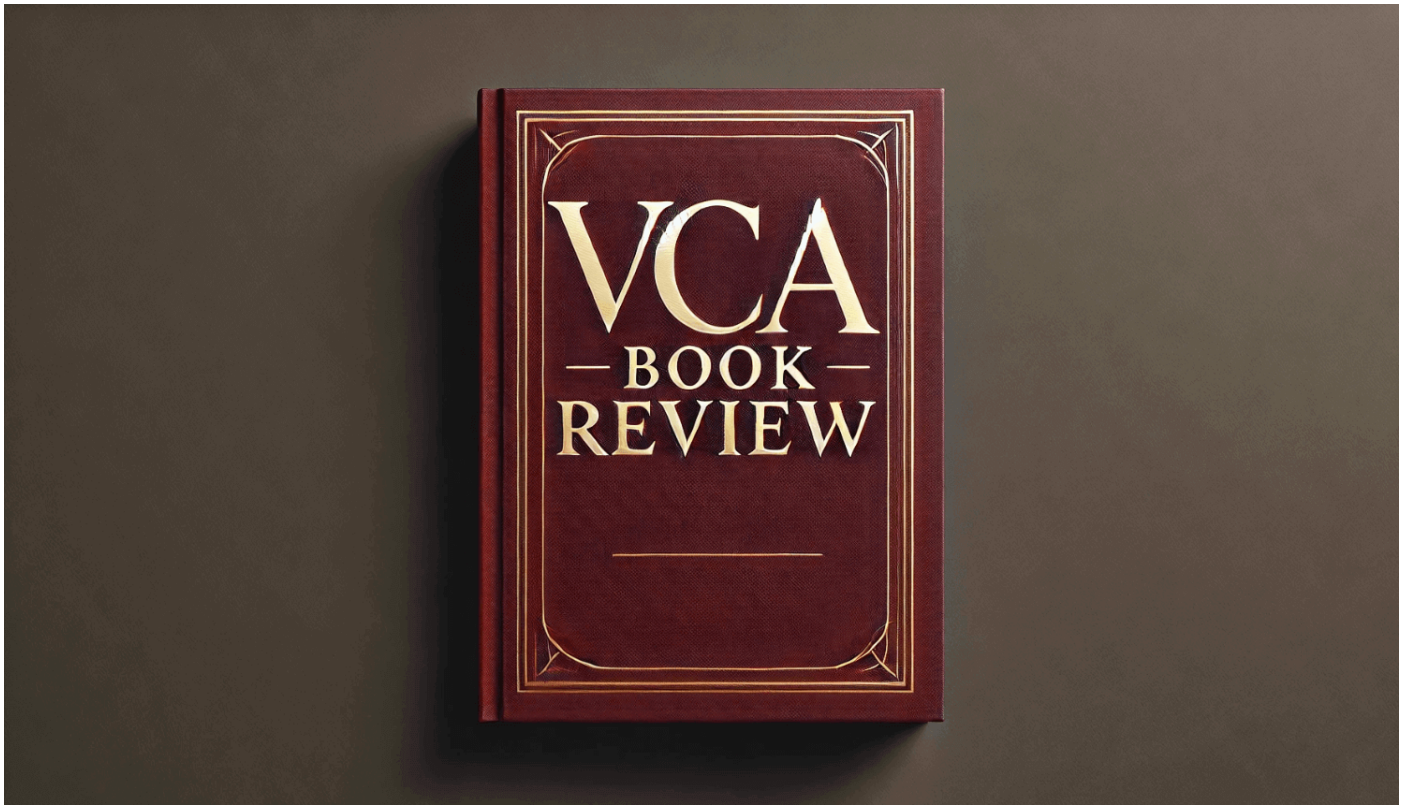
3. **GotQuestions.org – "What is Freemasonry and what do Freemasons believe?"** – This article provides a Christian perspective on Freemasonry, explaining its history, beliefs, and why it is considered incompatible with Christianity. **Link to the article**

4. **"Freemasonry: A Revealing Look at the Spiritual Side"** – This resource examines the spiritual and occult aspects of Freemasonry from a biblical standpoint. **Link to the article**

5. **Documentary: "Freemasonry: From Darkness to Light" by Jeremiah Films** – This documentary explores the hidden aspects of Freemasonry and its influence on society. **Link to the documentary on YouTube, 34 min**

Book Review: “Thy Will Be Done: When All Nations Call God Blessed” by Ron Kirk

JULY 24, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNCATEGORIZED
TAGS: GODLY RELATIONSHIPS, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



An Inspiring and Imaginative Exploration of a World Redeemed and Transformed by Christ

Genre: Christian Literature
Target Audience: Christian adults and young adults seeking depth for their faith

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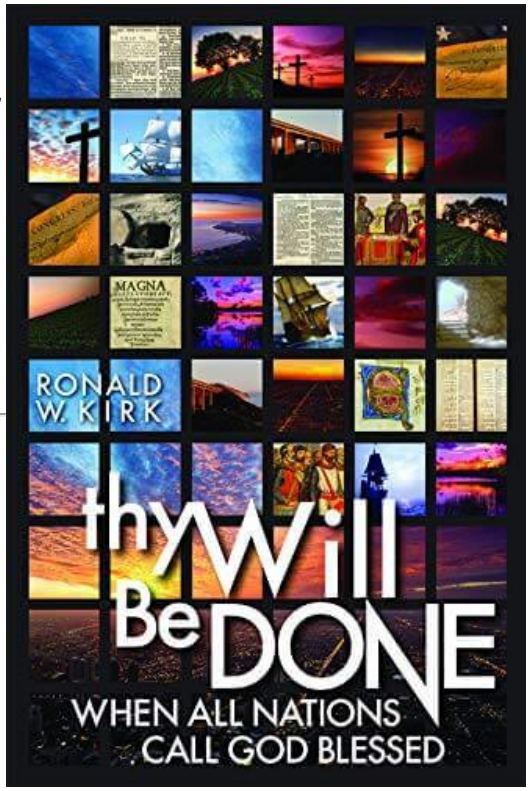
Brief Synopsis

“**Thy Will Be Done: When All Nations Call God Blessed**” by Ron Kirk offers an inspiring and imaginative exploration of a world redeemed and transformed by Christ. This book serves as a Biblical guide to the life foreshadowed in Christ’s model prayer. Far from being a foolish utopia, Kirk provides a powerful depiction of a sinful world being redeemed and transformed by Christ, as suggested by the prophets. Drawing from a lifetime of Biblical study, this extended essay provides practical guidance on how to love God and love man in every aspect of life.

Key Themes

- **Universal Application of Scripture**: The book emphasizes the relevance of Biblical principles in all areas of life.
- **Christian Liberty and Love**: Kirk provides insights into Christian ethics, justice, and nobility.
- **Implications for Various Spheres**: The application of Biblical principles extends to individuals, families, churches, businesses, industries, societies, sciences, and arts.
- **Education and Schooling**: Kirk offers guidelines on Christian education.
- **Tithing and Philanthropy**: The book underscores the importance of giving and charity.
- **Rest and Recreation**: It balances work with rest and pleasure.
- **Government by the Holy Spirit**: The role of the Holy Spirit in civil government and personal governance is explored.
- **Practical Steps**: The book details steps to achieve this transformative vision.

Unique Selling Points



Ron Kirk's book stands out for its comprehensive application of historic Biblical theology to the modern world. It speculates on what the Kingdom of Christ might look like on earth when Christians fully embrace and apply their kingdom calling in Christ by faith. This vision is not just theoretical but backed by historical examples and practical advice.

Notable Reviews and Endorsements

- **Jay Dangers**, Founder and Director of New Hope Uganda, praises Kirk's teachings and their transformative impact on his life and ministry. He emphasizes the book's potential to influence future generations profoundly.
- **George Grant**, Author, Educator, and Pastor, commends the book for challenging Christians to believe and live out the Gospel in every aspect of life. He advocates for Christ's blessings to reach "as far as the curse is found."

Main Message

The world cries out for an imaginative yet realistic Biblical guide to the life foreshadowed in Christ's model prayer. "Thy Will Be Done" offers a powerful vision of a sinful world redeemed and

transformed by Christ this side of eternity, as suggested by the prophets. This extended essay, fueled by a lifetime study of the Bible's prescriptions for loving God and loving man, provides practical guidance on how Christians can grow as salt and light in the world.

Memorable Quotes

"What is the Kingdom of God? It is Christ's comprehensive rule over every area of life and living among men. It comes when men take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ in every possible particular, from personal practice and habit, to the greatest spheres of civil relationship and economic endeavor. The Bible defines it."

"The accomplished Christian community will possess to a high degree the qualities of accomplished Christian individuals. The qualities that characterize the mature individual Christian are exactly those required for a free and just community."

Conclusion

"Thy Will Be Done: When All Nations Call God Blessed" by Ron Kirk is an inspiring and essential read for Christian adults and young adults seeking to deepen their faith. It helps readers understand the practical implications of living out the Gospel in every aspect of life. This book powerfully calls believers to embrace their kingdom calling and work towards a world redeemed and transformed by Christ. Let us hasten the day!

Purchase Options:

> **Thy Will Be Done**

The Establishment of Israel’s Kingdom and the Messianic Promise

JULY 20, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Part 2: Tracing Israel’s Journey: From Abraham to Christ, a Story of Faith, Promise, and Redemption

The Covenant with Moses

Israel left Egypt, journeyed from Elim, and came to the Wilderness of Sin between Elim and Sinai. Here, God made a covenant with Israel, giving them His Law, His calendar to keep His holy convocations and assemblies, and the service of the priesthood for provisional atonement. While conditional and having blessings and curses attached, this covenant provided crucial foundational stones for God’s eternal Kingdom. The Law provided God’s moral standard, revealing His perfect and Holy nature as Judge and King, and the Law gave Israel its civil standards by which they could judge and govern God’s people according to His justice and righteousness.

The Establishment of the Priesthood and the Tabernacle

God's blessings in the covenant would set Israel high above all the nations of the earth, they would be blessed beyond measure, and God would make them a blessing to every nation. Israel would prevail and ultimately destroy every enemy, and she would be set apart as a Holy people unto the Lord. Their provision would be in abundance, even the wealth of the nations would be theirs to inherit, and Israel would be the head of God's Kingdom authority, meaning they would have governing power over every nation.

In other words, the Kingdom of God was promised to Israel and even belonged to them, provided they would love God and obey His commandments, a test of their faith and devotion towards Him. Paul acknowledges six Kingdom blessings in the Book of Romans that God promised Israel, saying, "My countrymen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises." And he affirmed the foundation of Israel, the Patriarchs, from whom Christ came and is now over all creation, saying, "Of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen" (Romans 9:3-5).

The Lord declared to Israel, "You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6), another Kingdom promise. But the children of Israel complained and rebelled against God in the wilderness. When Israel committed idolatry against the Lord, including the sin of the Golden Calf, it was the sons of Levi that stood with Moses. And specifically, it was Phinehas, Aaron's grandson, who rose with a javelin in his hand and speared to death an Israelite man and Midianite woman who had committed harlotry and idolatry in the camp of the Israelites. The Lord established the priesthood, covenanting with Levi and later one of his sons, Aaron, to make provisional atonement for Israel. We read:

"Then you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you, That My covenant with Levi may continue, Says the Lord of hosts. My covenant was with him, one of life and peace, And I gave them to him that he might fear Me; So he feared Me And was reverent before My name" (Malachi 2:4-5).

"Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 'Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal. Therefore say, 'Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel'" (Numbers 25:10-13).

The Time of the Judges and Kings

Israel was established as a theocracy. The Levites were called to teach and administer God's Law to the Jewish people, including the Laws of atonement for sin. The name Levi (לוי), derived from Hebrew, means "attached to me." Levi can be used as a first name. Similarly, the Hebrew word for prayer, tefillah, also means "to connect." Therefore, we see a correlation between praying to God and serving Him as His priest. Prayer is critical for renewing our connection with God and petitioning Him for our needs and provision.

However, the priest's primary responsibility in serving God was to bring the Jewish people close to Him. The priests were to attach themselves to the Lord through intimate prayer and service and attach Israel to the Lord by interceding and administering their sin offerings, making atonement and peace with God. This service unto the Lord was so that all Israel would become a kingdom of priests unto the Lord. Just as the Levites were attached to the Lord, thus, all Israel will be the Lord's Heritage through their Messiah and High Priest.

Moses was instructed to construct a Tabernacle, called the "Tabernacle of meetings," to officiate the priestly offerings, commanding the Israelites to build a copy of the heavenly image. The Tabernacle sat at the center of Israel's encampment in the desert—three tribes on each side, including the half tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, and the Levites and sons of Aaron camped in the middle. The head of each encampment carried a unique flag. Our early Sages taught that the banner of Reuben featured the figure of a man, and the flag of Judah had the picture of a lion. The flag of Ephraim showed an ox, and Dan's was decorated with the image of an eagle. These four symbols appeared in the faces of Cherubim, seen by the prophet Ezekiel, and also appeared in the four living creatures found in the Book of Revelation.

In Ezekiel's vision, we see the Cherubim in the midst and around the throne of God while the Seraphim stand and fly above it. It is not that God has set angels to be higher than Himself, but this vision shows that He is at the center of all things that are heavenly and earthly. The Seraphim, therefore, minister to the angelic realm, while the Cherubim minister to the earthly realm. On this basis, we can understand the profound significance of the camp of Israel. The Cherubim and the Tabernacle that Israel built is the chariot that carries the manifest presence of God, and the nation of Israel—the army of the Lord—is God's escort; each person within their tribe encamped around the Tabernacle holding their unique banner of the Lord.

The Eternal Kingdom

Seeing God's throne on high, His feet touching the earth and resting upon a chariot of angels surrounded by an immeasurable host of God's people, it is easy to visualize the poetry of God's love for Israel. The journey of Israel from the time of Abraham, through the establishment of the priesthood and the Tabernacle, and into the time of the judges and kings, sets the stage for the

ultimate fulfillment of God's covenant through Christ. As Israel continues to play a central role in God's redemptive plan, we look forward to the complete restoration and reign of His Kingdom.

SOURCE: **HOUSE OF DAVID MINISTRIES**

1. Ongoing series:

    - **Israel's Covenants and the Kingdom**
        - **The Beginnings and Foundations of Israel's Covenant**
        - **The Establishment of Israel's Kingdom and the Messianic Promise**
    - **Separation of the Church from Israel**
        - The Significance and the Early Church
    - Reconnecting the Church to Israel
    - God's Kingdom and the Restoration of Israel

NEO-Marxist Sexual Activists Exposed: Voddie Baucham's Analysis and Warning to Churches

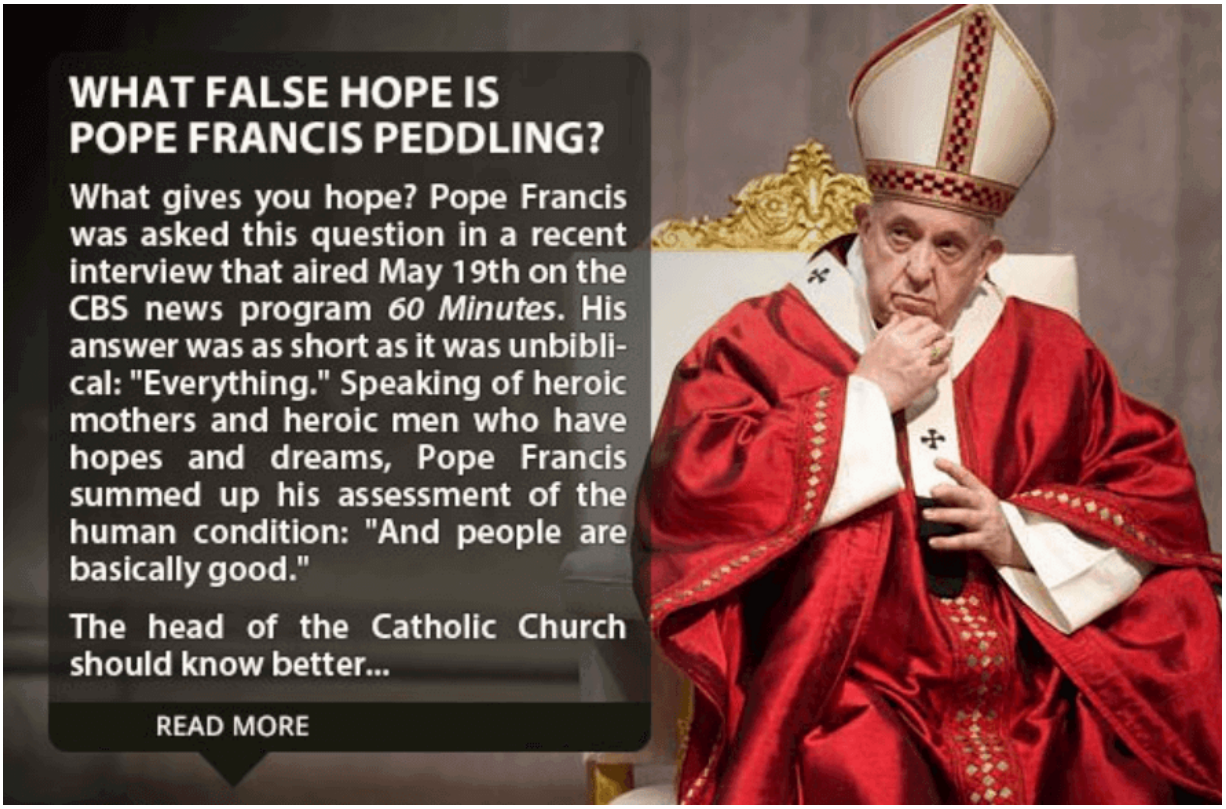
JULY 17, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Alex Newman

Alex Newman, journalist and LibertySentinel.org CEO, engages with pastor Voddie Baucham in a profound discussion on the cultural and ideological battles facing America today. They delve into Baucham's new book, ***It's Not Like Being Black***, which challenges the equating of LGBTQ issues with the civil rights movement. The conversation also explores the impact of neo-Marxist ideologies on Western civilization, the role of the church, and how Christians should respond to government overreach and societal pressures. Baucham offers a robust defense of American values and the importance of family-driven faith in combating these cultural shifts.

The False Hope of Pope Francis

JUNE 17, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRIST IN PROPHECY



Tim Moore | Christ in Prophecy

Pope Francis was asked this question in a recent interview that aired May 19th on the CBS news program *60 Minutes*. His answer was as short as it was unbiblical: “Everything.” Speaking of heroic mothers and heroic men who have hopes and dreams, Pope Francis summed up his assessment of the human condition: “And people are basically good.”

It is one thing for a politician to appeal to “the better angels of our nature,” as President Lincoln did in his first inaugural address on March 4, 1861. Obviously, he was trying to strengthen bonds of national unity in the face of looming discord. But the head of the Catholic Church should know better than to make such statements in denial of Catholic tradition and the clear teaching of Scripture.
In direct contradiction to Francis’ claim, Paul wrote, *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”* (Romans 8:23). Citing Psalm 14, Paul also observed, *“There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who seeks for God; all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one”* (Romans 3:10-12).

God's View of Mankind

This realization of true human nature was originally recorded by the Lord God. As Noah offered a sacrifice upon leaving the Ark, God said to Himself, *"I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done"* (Genesis 8:21). Tragically, mankind has found a way to twist and pervert even the rainbow God that marked His covenant with mankind (Genesis 8:8-17). Far from hopeful, mankind's natural state would render us hopeless. Left to our own devices and dependent upon our own efforts, we are condemned from the outset. But God gave us the Blessed Hope.

The same Psalm of David that Paul cited begins with this bleak observation: *"The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; there is no one who does good"* (Psalm 14:1). But by the end of that short Psalm, David has centered his hope on the Messiah—God's own promise of deliverance from sin. His final verse opens with this great verse of anticipation: *"Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion!"* (Psalm 14:7).

Like King David, I am a Zionist, because I too am awaiting the coming Jewish messiah who will reign on Mount Zion in Jerusalem in the prophetically regathered and reestablished nation of Israel. The deception being embraced by the world and casually affirmed by Pope Francis, which denies these historic, biblical, and prophetic promises to Israel, is another of Satan's lies.

Christ-Centered Hope

We have the blessing of hindsight to know that the salvation of Israel already did come out of Zion, and not only for Israel. God's Anointed One—His Messiah—came for Jew and Gentile alike. *"There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved"* (Acts 4:12). He is our Blessed Hope and offers us assurance that *"there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus"* (Romans 8:1). But for those who reject Jesus Christ, there is no hope, for the wrath of God abides on them (John 3:36).

If Pope Francis is right in claiming that "people are basically good," what need do they have for a Savior? Their flippant, if unspoken, response to Jesus' offer of salvation is essentially, "I'm good."

Anyone engaged in evangelism can tell you that there are two types of people who are most resistant to the Gospel: one, those who have bought into the lie that they are too wicked to receive salvation, and two, those who believe they are good enough and therefore do not need salvation. Francis has lumped the entire human race into that second category!

As a confessional Protestant, Evangelical Christian, I can attest that much Catholic doctrine and dogma has departed from orthodox Christianity. Catholic teaching has traditionally recognized the depravity of mankind and our need for a Savior. Pope Francis, in accordance with his practice

of muddying clear teaching and contradicting biblical truths, has undermined the very core of the Gospel.

Pope Francis may peddle a false hope that was eagerly received by CBS reporter Norah O'Donnell, but Jesus Christ offers Himself as the Way, Truth, and Life that leads to eternal salvation. To cite the Apostle Paul once again, *"Let God be found true, though every man be found a liar"* (Romans 3:4).

SOURCE: **LAMB AND LION MINISTRIES**

‘What Makes a Man?’ Christian Coalition Publishes Statement on Godly Masculinity

JUNE 5, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

S.A. McCarthy | **The Washington Stand**

While Pride Month is busy promoting homosexuality and gender confusion, a coalition of Christian men is proclaiming a doctrine of biblical masculinity. On Monday, the men’s chastity and marriage ministry Promise Keepers led a number of other Christian organizations and individuals in **issuing** “A Proclamation on Godly Masculinity,” which “seeks to establish where leaders and pastors nationwide fall in their position on masculinity, femininity, gender roles and most specifically, Godly masculinity and the role of men in our culture.” The “Proclamation” clarifies God’s design for masculinity, what masculinity is (and is not), and what men are called to do.

Speaking to Family Research Council President Tony Perkins on Monday night’s “Washington Watch,” former Major League Baseball player-turned-entrepreneur David Benham — who, along with his brother Jason, was one of the co-authors of the “Proclamation” — **explained** that Satan “does not want men to be godly men, biblical men, to embrace masculinity as God designed it.”

David Benham answers "What makes a man?"
https://youtube.com/watch?v=K6ICXbq5OCM

“The reason why masculinity is controversial in 2024 is because the world system has set itself against the very design and the image of God for manhood,” he explained. “And so what the world system has done is it elevates perversion and greed and promiscuity and dominance and chauvinism. And then it flips it around and calls its own invention toxic.” Benham further clarified:

> “When the church forsakes its conscience and we don’t train up men to be biblical men, to lay their lives down, and then men turn around and use the same power and strength God has given us to stand against injustice — men are using it now to perpetrate evil, to be greedy, to be chauvinist, to dominate, and to do all kinds of evil around this world. And so in the absence of good men, evil men have risen. And that’s where we find this issue with toxic masculinity and all these things that we desperately need to set straight with good male leadership.”

The “Proclamation on Godly Masculinity” **explains** that “maleness (masculinity) and femaleness (femininity) are essential to building God’s world according to His purposes. The combination of masculinity as expressed by men and femininity as expressed by women reflect the image of the Creator and thus are wholly perfect.” Due to sin, “a man departs from the Godly masculinity in which he was created,” and that “can lead to a multitude of destructive outcomes such as exploitation of others, the pursuit of feminine traits, passivity in the face of injustice and/or oppression of those who are weaker.” But since Christ is God become man, “He is the best embodiment of both humanity and masculinity. By believing in Jesus as God who died and came back to life, and repenting of sin, a person is restored in their relationship to God.”

Thanks to the redemption purchased by Christ’s blood, the statement explains, men can fulfill their masculine purpose “as perfectly demonstrated in the man, Jesus Christ.” The redemption and restoration offered in Christ afford men the opportunity for sanctification, which is deepened as they “deny their sinful desires, pray, study Scripture, and actively look to serve others. They begin to live in the identity their Creator intended. Their desires align with God’s will, causing the peace, joy, unity, and power that Jesus promised to become reality.”

Benham explained that it is necessary to define the terms of Godly masculinity, saying, “We have to define what a true biblical man is. What is manhood? What is masculinity?” The proclamation he co-authored explains that masculinity is “the eternal foundational value present in men who live out the identity, order, and purpose that gives meaning to their lives as God intended.” It necessitates practicing servant leadership, exercising authority in the home and submitting to the authority of God, and living a life of self-discipline.

Godly men are called, the statement reads, to be peacemakers, to act with courage, to promote justice, to display controlled strength, to practice interdependence, and to exercise biblical

conviction. “Being a peacemaker requires healthy, humble, and gracious confrontation,” the proclamation explains. “A man is not called to be a peacekeeper, simply trying to keep the peace at all costs. Sometimes, being a peacemaker requires personal risk — confronting the wicked for the sake of the innocent.”

As David pointed out, “In today’s culture, leadership is often associated with dominance. … It’s your way or the highway. That’s not the type of leadership we’re looking at. The type of leadership that we define in Scripture is the leadership of Jesus Christ, the servant leader who sacrificed himself for us, who laid his life down. And that’s truly the essence of biblical masculinity,” he emphasized, “is that a man is tasked, number one, to provide and to protect, to lay his life down, to be the first line of defense. … Thank God for all those moms who are out there doing wonderful things, especially in the absence of good men. But men are tasked with that responsibility. And so now, during Pride Month, especially, now is a time to clearly define what a man is.”

As the declaration explains, “All people experience fear, but courage is standing boldly for Truth anyway.” “Because of the unique call to men to defend and protect, masculinity requires an extra measure of courage. It must come from the core of a man’s character.” It continues, “As the leader in the war against Satan, man has a unique role in confronting injustice, the primary indicator of God’s enemy’s presence and effect.” To do this, men must learn to control their strength, using it “to protect the innocent, defend the oppressed, and stand for justice.”

Interdependence, the proclamation clarifies, is a sort of teamwork among men. “Because of their call to lead, each man must understand his strengths and limitations, recognizing his need to work in relationships and teamwork with others.” The document continues, “Wisdom understands the call to work with others as a team to rescue as many people as possible from sin and bring them to the gift of forgiveness in Christ.”

Finally, the proclamation states, biblical conviction “is a belief that is not negotiable. A man of God refuses to relent on his biblical convictions, no matter what it costs him.” Echoing St. Paul in Philippians 3:8-10, the document concludes, “A man of God considers money, fame, security, and admiration worthless compared to the immeasurable value of standing for Truth, no matter the cost.”

Men can visit **WhatMakesAMan.org** to sign the proclamation and “demonstrate your commitment to godly masculinity.”

SOURCE: **THE WASHINGTON STAND**

Why Pastors Must Preach on Political Issues (and Historically, They Did)

MAY 13, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Alex McFarland

The anti-Christ, anti-morality, anti-biblical worldview-ers are applying a very old tactic to accomplish what years of protesting did not: Domination via intimidation.

Why outmaneuver your foe politically or confront them in the arena of ideas when you can label and libel them into submission? The shock and block technique has silenced the American Church.

In the third grade, I remember kids twisting other people's names into playground slurs. "Eleanor smelleanor," "Billy-vanillee," and "Icky Vicky." Today's phobia-hater-ists have mechanized the process: They manufacture terms out of thin air: "Transphobic." "Cisgender." "Non-binary." "Omni-gender," *et al.*

Name-calling and sophomore sophistry have, sadly, supplanted productive, good-faith discourse. Each side's tropes and trolls *de jour* are circulated via complicit media. Social media-tize and viralize the newly minted phrase until people hear it enough, think they know what it means, and use it. Finally, weaponize it against a group you want to demonize: "Blank-a-phobe!" "You whatevermyidentityis-hater!"

Result: Silence. It's schoolyard bullying 101 with a social justice spin, and it's worked on the church.

Using that strategy, believers in equal opportunity became "racists." DEI and ESG replaced initiative-based advancement. Conservatism became a derangement syndrome. Arson and looting became "mostly peaceful protests" and "reparations." Believing in biblical morality became "phobic." Daring to express an opposing opinion became "disinformation." Expressing support for someone who isn't being investigated for Chinese Communist Party money laundering or doing cocaine in the White House made you a MAGA extremist.

The most egregious categories to which one could descend were Conservative, Constitutionalist, or (*Gulp!*) Christian. The first two are constant targets, but when the focus group noted that 63 percent of the population are "Christians," an idea emerged: Disparage an entire group using their own name. Christians — literally Christ followers — became "Christian nationalists."

It worked. Christian pulpits went silent. Denominations rewrote their beliefs. Believers stopped engaging in biblical discussions. The timid began calling themselves "people of faith" instead of Christians.

What must a pastor do?

Christian leader, you represent our nation's best hope and solutions. You — and your timeless, biblically informed beliefs — are *not* the problem.

First, stand unashamedly on biblical values. You are the solution, not the problem. Expect to be opposed. When you are, stand taller and speak louder. Teach that absolute truth exists (John 14:6). Declare that "God hates sin!" (Proverbs 8:13). Post, preach and encourage your people to profess biblical truth with moral clarity.

When you encounter opposition, and you will, do not mistake loud for legitimate. Never confuse rant with right. State plainly that "Pride" is still a sin: *"Pride goes before destruction…",* and taking pride in sin only multiplies the punishment *"…and a haughty spirit leads to a fall."* (Proverbs 16:18).

Know that you are in good company. Patriotic advocates of truth and moral clarity have included the brilliant (Antonin Scalia), eloquent (William F. Buckley, Jr.), and media-savvy (Rush Limbaugh). Clergy before you, mindful of the religious freedoms at risk, stood on truth (Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, Dr. Alveda King, Father Frank Pavone, Franklin Graham). Now, it's your turn.

The Ephesians 6 spiritual is becoming tangible. The "father of lies" is hosting the 11 o'clock news. The socialists, globalists, and other -ists want to obliterate biblical absolutes and enshrine "norms." Today's social warriors endorse things that would horrify FDR and JFK. Know that they're not the enemy, only his mouthpiece.

This is our moment, practically, morally, historically, and biblically. When the salt stings, the wounded will shriek. Expect it. When the Light reveals the rats, some will run, others will resist. Embrace the resistance.

This is an Ezekiel 44:23 hour: "Teach My people the difference between the holy and the common and show them how to distinguish between the unclean and clean."

"Sir, we are completely surrounded!" The soldier cried. The general surveyed the battlefield and smiled, "Finally…we have them exactly where we want them. Attack in all directions!"

*For more, check out Alex's free guide, "What to look for in a Church," which can be accessed **here**.*

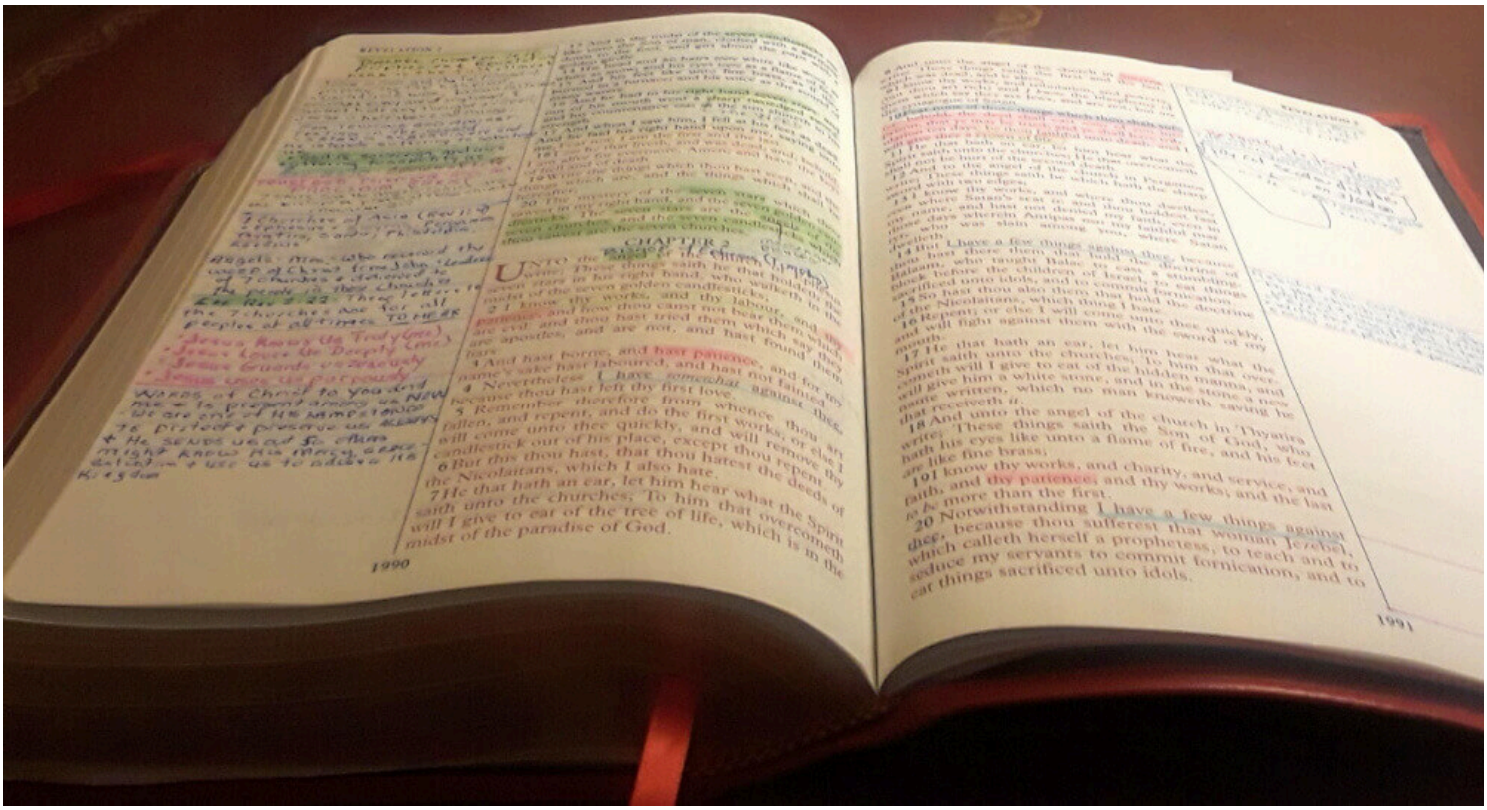
SOURCE: **ALEX MCFARLAND**

Alex McFarland

Alex has preached in over 2,200 churches throughout North America and numerous more internationally. He also speaks at Christian events, conferences, debates, and other venues to teach biblical truths and preach the gospel.

We Don’t Need to Know Why Something Is Happening or What God Is Doing If We Know Who God Is

MAY 13, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Sarah Holliday | **The Washington Stand**

Pastor and theologian Paul Washer **believes** there are four primary pillars to the Christian life: Knowledge of the truth, faith in what is true, joy, and obedience. For Washer, these are not merely related to each other, but they’re inseparable, with each leading directly to the next. It is knowledge of the truth, paired with the faith that says, “I believe this is true,” that leads to inexpressible joy and obedience to how God calls us to live.

When we read Scripture, we’re actively engaging in the pursuit of knowing who God is and what He has decreed for His people. Time in the Word shows us what God has done as well as what He will do. In my brief life thus far, I’ve experienced seasons far from the Word and time in prayer, as well as seasons of craving to be in it as much as I can. Unmistakably, however, is the remarkably life-changing impact increased time in the Word and in prayer has had in my life — the exact same impact I believe every believer would experience, should they, too, increase their time with our Lord.

When looking back on my time in high school, and even before, I often describe those years as when I was a "lazy Christian." I believed in Jesus as my Lord and Savior, I knew I was a sinner "washed clean by the blood of the Lamb," as they say, but scarcely did I take the time to dig deep into what that meant. Scarcely did I take the time to get to know this God who sacrificed His one and only, perfect Son for *me.* Scarcely did I fall on my knees and praise God for this unmerited grace, mercy, and gift of salvation, because scarcely did I bother to meditate on its richness.

Thus, it's no surprise that I often fell apart at the seams when life threw a curve ball my way. I, like many, quickly cried out, "Lord, why? Why is this happening?" In many cases, it was instinctual to resort to this inquiry when left feeling confused or flustered. But as I reflect now, I can't help but wonder: How much did asking *why* actually help me?

Do I believe it's inherently bad to question God? Not necessarily. We're curious creatures, us human beings, and utterly finite. We're often left unsatisfied when wrestling with the matters of life because of how little we actually know. But we want to know, right? Which is why we ask. It's why I asked. I've been prone to feeling restless until I could get an answer. Largely because, without an answer, I would ponder as many outcomes as I could possibly fathom, analyzing these hypothetical outcomes and reasonings to the point of losing sleep or concentration as a result.

And yes, those cycles were about as maddening as they sound. And so, no, I do not believe it's inherently wrong to ask questions. And if you're prone to asking God for answers to why something is happening, certainly, it's clear by now I've been in your shoes.

But again, how often does asking God "why?" actually serve as a benefit, specifically when God does not answer us right away (as is often the case)? In my experience, if we're not careful, it is this question that can easily open a gap that allows doubt, fear, anxiety, and anger to seep through. By asking that question, we too easily allow ourselves to form a pessimistic outlook on any potential answer He could give us. We think, "I don't deserve to be going through this." Or "It's not fair. I just want this to end." But what do you do, beloved, when it doesn't end? What do you do when the pain, confusion, or struggle persists far longer than you expected it ever would? If to ask God "why?" is all one can do, then I don't believe one is setting themselves up well to "rejoice always, pray without ceasing," and "give thanks in all circumstances," as Scripture directs us to do (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18b). So, then, what does set us up well?

As Washer would go on to say, we need to be able to know the difference between the truth and a lie. Moreover, we need to actually believe the truth, as opposed to believing a lie, for "believing what is true will always lead to joy." And how do we do this? By knowing who God is. Because, I am of the conviction that knowing God is far more significant than knowing "why" when we're met with adversity.

It is knowing God and what He has promised that allows us to say instead, "God, I don't know why. But I trust you." Do you see how vastly different those perspectives are? When I would ask God

“why?”, it was often followed by other questions, such as: “Where are You? Do You even care? What is the point of this?” And with each question I barked, the more dismayed I would be. But the more I know who God is, the more my prayers have (and perhaps yours, too) shifted to something like this:

God, these circumstances do not make sense. But Your Word says You are good. I feel lost and helpless. But Your Word says You are my rock and shield, that nothing will truly overcome me, and that the lost are not truly lost, but found in and by You. Lord, I do not know why this is happening, but I trust in Your sovereignty, goodness, and perfect will. There is purpose in all that takes place. Because You say You are the Great I AM, and that “for everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.” Because You are a loving Father, I will trust that You are with me, and that You will never leave me nor forsake me. This Your Word promises; this my lips repeat; this my heart chooses to believe. Lord, I do not know why, but I know You.

Whether you choose to ask God “why?” or not, I implore you to prioritize the recollection of this truth: The good shepherd does not abandon His flock. Not even one sheep is capable of straying from the firm embrace of the shepherd. He loves His sheep, and His sheep know His voice. He lays down His life for them. Through His death and resurrection, we have faith built upon the blood of the Savior who laid down His life for us. For *you*. Dearly beloved, how could a Savior who willingly died for you, taking upon all guilt, shame, and sin for your benefit, also be a Savior who abandons you amid trial? He isn’t. He will not abandon those whom He loves.

Truly, without having trust in God’s divine providence, that He truly is working out all things for the good of those who love Him, how can we have any hope in the hardship? We must equip ourselves with unfailing truth. In the trial, when we can do nothing but wait patiently and expectantly for the Lord to reveal the purpose, we must find peace simply in Him and who He is rather than in having answers because of us and who we are.

I beseech you, be not a people with minds set on earthly things of the flesh. Do not be a people focused on what you want, and what you want now. Be a people, redeemed and regenerated, bought by the precious blood of Christ, who focus on heavenly things and He who is worthy. For the One who is sent from the Father is above all things. His ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts higher than our thoughts. Rest in His sovereignty. Rest in His providence. Rest in His power. Rest in His steadfast love. Rest in His name. Rest in Him

SOURCE: **THE WASHINGTON STAND**

Patrick Wood explains link between global 'One Health' Initiative, Gaia Worship and Technocracy

MAY 11, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: SATANIC, TECHNOCRACY

Some say the coming one-world religion will be Islam. Others say it will be a blended version of the three "Abrahamic" faiths — Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Any of these theories could turn out to be the correct one, but I think Patrick Wood, editor in chief at **Technocracy News and Trends**, deserves to be heard regarding another possibility. He just released a new article about the fast-spreading earth worship-based **One Health Initiative**, which is supported and promoted by the United Nations World Health Organization, the Rockefeller Foundation and World Economic Forum all the way down to our state and local healthcare systems. He connects all the dots in the excellent article below, while including helpful graphics and a video.

This is something all Christians need to be aware of.

By Patrick Wood at *Technocracy.news*

The First Amendment starts with, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Congress has largely been asleep as forces with the Administration have proliferated "One Health" policies that seek to merge man and the earth

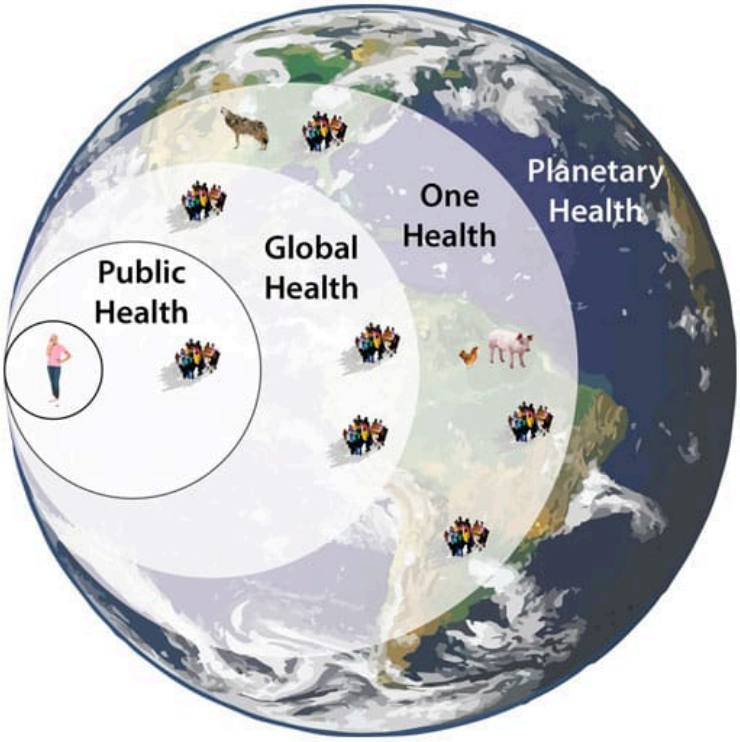
into oneness. However, this is an age-old religion associated with paganism, Wicca, and Gaiaism, and it needs to be called on the carpet for what it is!

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) defines One Health as:

> "One Health is a collaborative, multisectoral, and transdisciplinary approach — working at the local, regional, national, and global levels — with the goal of achieving optimal health outcomes **recognizing the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment.**"

Another 19 Federal agencies are wrapped into the One Health mantra, having been sucked into the "whole-of-government" vortex created under the Clinton administration. Because of the myriad regulations created to enforce it, states, counties, and cities are steeped in it.

The pictorial below depicts a minuscule man relating to public health, global health, one health, and finally, planetary health. Since the planet is sick, mostly by the actions of man, it needs to be healed, resuscitated and made whole again.



Gaia Worship, Wicca and Paganism

One occultic **site explains:**

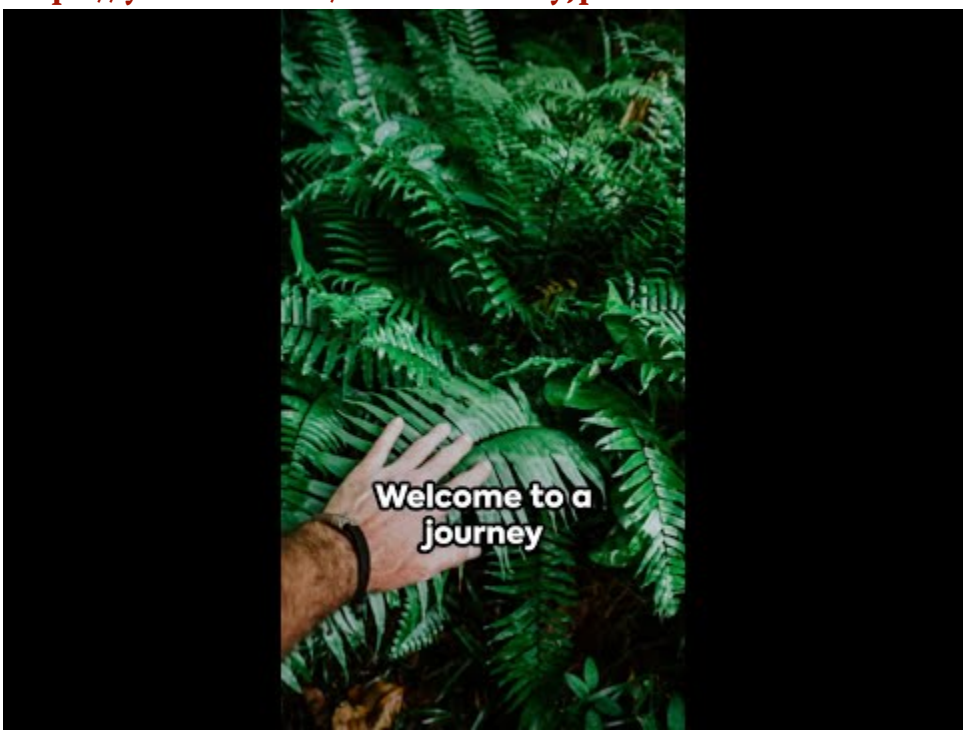
> "**Gaianism** is an earth-centered philosophical, spiritual, holistic, scientifically-rational, opinion that shares expressions with various religions such as earth religions and paganism while not identifying exclusively with any specific one.
>
> "Practitioners of Gaianism are called "Gaians", or sometimes Gaianists. Followers typically approach the philosophy with the perspective that we should **honor the earth, reduce or soften the human impact on the earth, and be respectful of all life on earth**. The latter perspective is extended to all forms of life such as plant, animal, or human, and followers will often try to maintain a close relationship with the planet."

Another site dedicated to Wicca **states**:

> "In a world buzzing with technology and fast-paced living, reconnecting with the profound energies of the earth has become more important than ever. One fascinating facet of this connection is the concept of Gaia, a deity embodying the Earth itself in various spiritual traditions."
>
> **Gaia: The Earth Mother**
> "Gaia, often revered as the Earth Mother, symbolizes the interconnectedness of all living things. Drawing inspiration from ancient Greek mythology, Gaia is the primal goddess who birthed the Titans and gave life to the world. In modern contexts, Gaia is embraced by practitioners of various spiritual paths, including Wicca and Paganism, as a representation of the Earth's nurturing and life-giving essence."
>
> **The Spirit of Gaia in Wicca**
> "For Wiccans, Gaia is an elemental force intricately woven into the fabric of their beliefs. The reverence for nature and its cycles aligns seamlessly with the Wiccan wheel of the year, where practitioners celebrate the changing seasons and honor the Earth's bountiful gifts. Gaia's presence is palpable in rituals that emphasize grounding, connecting with the land, and fostering a harmonious relationship with the environment."

In Paganism, **"human beings are seen as part of nature, along with other animals, trees, stones, plants and everything else that is of this earth."**

https://youtube.com/watch?v=YteyJpu521k



James Lovelock, Technocrat

The "inventor" of Gaiaism was scientist James Lovelock (1918-2022), a climate alarmist who pictured the earth as a living organism. He was also a Technocrat who **stated** **"We need a more authoritarian world. We've become a sort of cheeky, egalitarian world where everyone can have their say it may be necessary to put democracy on hold for a while."**

Two scholars at the **University of Westminster** continued,

> **"This threat of eco-authoritarianism is often linked to a rising tendency towards technocracy, which suggests that decisions should be left to those with relevant scientific and technical expertise: this, it is implied, will speed up decision-making and generate more effective green outcomes."**

New State-mandated Religion

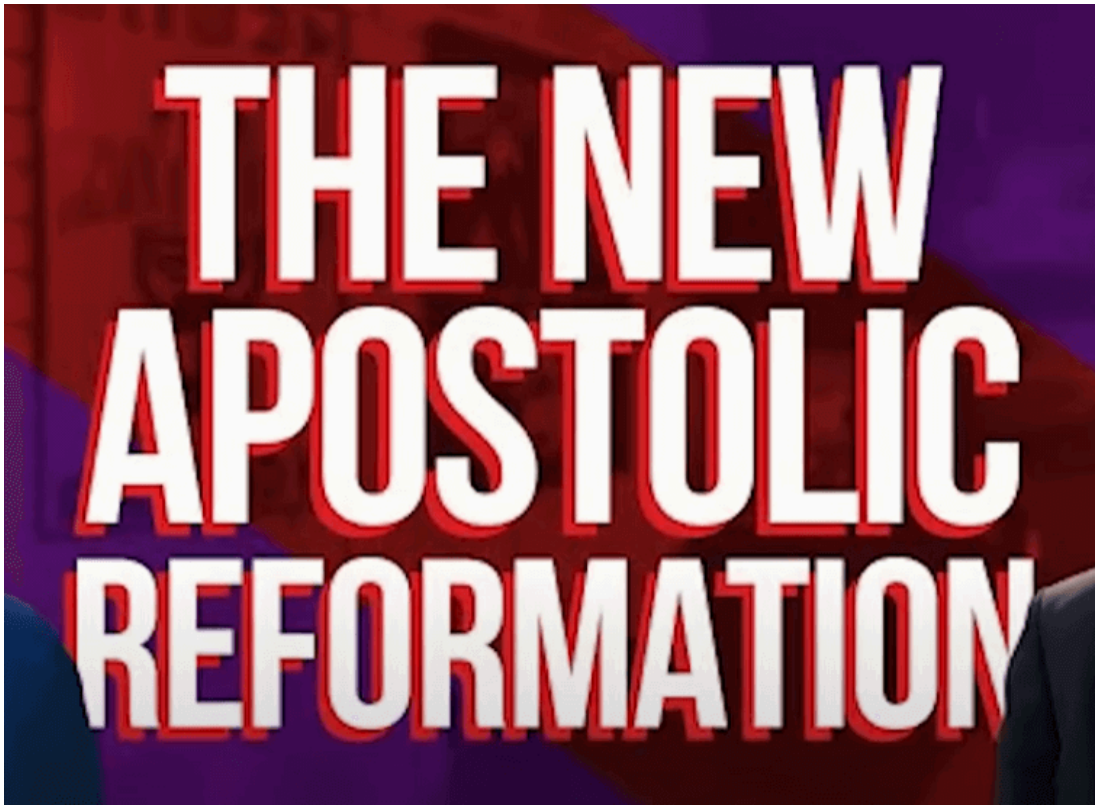
Since One Health has been crammed down our throats by the government, it is safe to say that a new state-mandated religion has been declared. The final proof is this: just try to criticize it (especially if you are a Christian) and see where it gets you.

Patrick Wood

Patrick Wood is a leading and critical expert on Sustainable Development, Green Economy, Agenda 21, 2030 Agenda and historic Technocracy. He is the author of Technocracy Rising: The Trojan Horse of Global Transformation (2015) and co-author of Trilaterals Over Washington, Volumes I and II (1978-1980) with the late Antony C. Sutton

Beware of the Wolves! – Holly Pivec and Doug Geivett

MAY 10, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Jan Markell talks to Holly Pivec and Doug Geivett for the hour about the continuing wreckage of the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) which is nothing less than reckless Christianity. Many former NAR members say Bethel and Hillsong music snagged them and drew them in. The theology is also Kingdom Now—Heaven is going to come to earth!

Beware of the Wolves! – Holly Pivec and Doug Geivett
https://youtube.com/watch?v=5mN1iyYHOSs

Message Resources:

https://www.hollypivec.com/

https://www.markhenryministries.com/

Follow Jan on: Olive Tree Ministries: **https://bit.ly/3g5qxbY**

Rumble: **https://bit.ly/395DxMC**

YouTube: **https://bit.ly/2Wt9jMA**

HisChannel: **https://bit.ly/39EH6tU**

LightSource: **https://bit.ly/3qnosgl**

Oneplace: **https://bit.ly/3oo5cNG**

Gab: **https://bit.ly/2MzQ9my**

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Are You Prepared to Hold Fast to Your Decision to Follow Christ?

MAY 6, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Sarah Holliday | **The Washington Stand**

At the 2024 March for the Martyrs, held in Washington, D.C. in honor of persecuted Christians, a unique perspective was raised. If not unique, then certainly something seemingly underdiscussed. While considering global Christian persecution, event speaker Christian Trimino asked the question: What about the American church? Are we prepared, should persecution come our way?

About making tough decisions, Trimino raised a prominent point. Overseas, where being a Christian can be a death sentence, believers face one of the most complex decisions almost daily: To be spared from torture by renouncing the faith, or to choose to follow Christ no matter the cost. But before looking deeper at this concept in America and what Trimino had to say, let's look at some facts and statistics.

The number of persecuted Christians is **increasing** rapidly. In four short years, the persecuted went from roughly 265 million in 2020 to **365 million** in 2024. That's a lot of people murdered, imprisoned, tortured, and beaten for their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. According to **Open Doors US**, one believer is killed for their faith every two hours, which equates to roughly 5,000 Christians per year. For those who aren't killed, Open Doors reports, so far in 2024: "4,125 Christians were detained without trial, arrested, sentenced or imprisoned, 3,906 believers were abducted, more than 3,200 Christians were raped, sexually harassed or forced to marry non-Christians, 42,849

followers of Jesus were physically or mentally abused, and nearly 300,000 Christians were forced to leave their homes, go into hiding or flee their country of origin."

These statistics are truly staggering.

Can you imagine how excruciatingly painful it must be to decide to follow Christ while being held at gunpoint by a terrorist? How about if your family got kidnapped, and the only way to freedom was to renounce your faith? How would you be able to think if your church is ransacked by angry God-haters killing anyone who refuses to back down from their faith? And yet, when you hear the testimonies of those who suffer unimaginable persecution, it's a death sentence they bear with joy because of the glorious beauty of their eternal reward. For believers who have nothing, it's all the more blatant that with Christ, one has everything.

Christians, no matter where, need to be able to make this kind of tough decision. But what Trimino said got me thinking. As he put it, Americans seem to be in a position where we're decreasing opportunities to make tough decisions. The young influencer emphasized our society has seen numerous technological advances in recent years. From the comfort of our homes, we can order food, groceries, and just about anything you can think of. Our phones allow us to get in touch with people next door or across the world in an instant as well as consistent access to all kinds of information. We've created these easy pathways while increasingly losing the practice of making hard choices. But perhaps some clarification is in order.

We do make tough decisions here in America. The difference is, we often associate tough decisions with temporary, worldly outcomes. Take job prospects, for instance. What we're going to eat, wear, or do the next day will often occupy our conscience. What school will we or our children attend after high school? What's the best way to manage our finances? These are all reasonable, thought-worthy quandaries that require decision making. But these are First World problems, ultimately affecting our life on earth. What I want to discuss are the tough decisions of faith, affecting us into eternity.

Really, when observing the harsh persecution around the world, we shouldn't merely be overcome with grief but understand their reality, at any moment, could be ours as well. Of course, the American church *is* being attacked, and I can't help but wonder if *we* are prepared to stand up for Christ no matter the cost.

While the average American Christian is not being imprisoned for their faith or worrying if they'll survive until tomorrow, we do have tough decisions to make that carry immense weight. I wonder, have you thought about your response to someone coming to you saying they're going to undergo gender transition surgery? What about the woman who's convinced babies in the womb have no value and plans to seek an abortion? What about the person from high school who's on the verge of committing suicide because they see no point in life?

I could list several additional circumstances in which we would have an incredibly difficult decision to make. It's easy to think, "I would just share the gospel with them!" But then my question is, are you ready to follow through on that? Are you committed and equipped to tell this person caught up in LGBT ideology that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life? Are you ready to share with the expecting mother her baby is made in the image of God with inherent dignity and value? Are you ready to tell that former classmate their life has purpose in Christ? Beloved, are you ready to share all the reasons Scripture gives for why these things are true, and do so in love?

I'm aware I've raised a plethora of questions, but I have another. Are you ready to be hated for standing firm in your faith for Christ? I pray you are, because Jesus made clear in Matthew 10:22, "You will be hated by all for My name's sake." But if you're prepared for this opposition, then you're preparing yourself to be the person who speaks the name of Jesus in the lives of those who truly, truly need to be saved from the world and from themselves.

Following Jesus is the best decision we could make for our eternity, and yet, that decision for Him also often leads to challenging decisions during this earthly endeavor. We *need* a church in America willing to stand on the entirety of the Word of God in *every* person's life. Ultimately, any time we compromise or are unwilling to trust the Lord and stand firm, it's another incidence where we may look back and ask ourselves, "Did I really believe in the promises of this faith? Did I really believe this truth was the only way to eternal life?" If so, why would you keep that to yourself? How could you ever renounce it?

Jesus said this shocking statement in Matthew 7:22-23, "On that day many will say to Me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'" For those who stand firm until the end, keeping their faith in Christ alone, you'll never hear those words. But I believe the wake-up call for us is to not allow the "workers of lawlessness" in our lives to go on without at least hearing the truth from our lips, regardless of opposition.

Don't get me wrong: It's not your responsibility to save someone. If you do stand firm and share the truth yet see no fruit in the lives of those you shared it with, that's no reason to feel like any kind of failure. You and I both know it's God — and God alone who saves. But we're responsible for being bold, because once we move from this life to the next, there's no turning back.

As such, whether in America or not, *all* believers will inevitably face the decision of choosing the Lord or the world. Are you prepared to hold fast to your decision?

SOURCE: **THE WASHINGTON STAND**

‘Darkness Doesn’t Stand a Chance’: A Great Multitude Takes Part in 2024 National Day of Prayer

MAY 4, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: SATANIC, TRIBULATION

ben Johnson | **The Washington Stand**

Millions of Americans gathered nationwide to observe the National Day of Prayer on Thursday and to repent for timidly failing “to dispel the darkness and bring light throughout” every cultural institution of the United States.

Tens of thousands of events took place nationwide to mark the 73rd annual National Day of Prayer (NDP), as Christians of every background folded their hands, closed their eyes, and raised their voices to Heaven in unison. Celebrations were capped off by a **90-minute-long** official rally led by National Day of Prayer Task Force President Kathy Branzell and Pastor A.R. Bernard in Washington, D.C. The speakers focused their prayers and intercessions on this year’s theme, “Lift Up the Word — Light Up the World,” taken from **II Samuel 22:29**, which reads: “You are my lamp, O Lord; The Lord shall enlighten my darkness.”

Throughout the year, the NDP calls on Christians to pray for **seven areas of influence** in American society: government, military, media, business, education, church, and family. Each

group felt the power of intercession at the D.C. gathering.

Enjoying news and commentary from a biblical worldview?

Stand with The Washington Stand by partnering with Family Research Council.

Family Research Council President Tony Perkins prayed for the family. After asking God to "forgive us for departing from Your design and rejecting the truth" proclaimed by Jesus in **Matthew 19**, he noted that God "at the beginning made them male and female … and the two shall become one flesh" that ought not be separated. "Father, this morning, I pray that we may return to Your divine plan, where the home is the cradle of virtue, love, and respect, as children would once again be seen as a heritage from You, the fruit of the womb." Perkins's words came days after the Biden administration announced the **lowest birthrate in U.S. history**. Once children are born, godly parents must teach the scriptures "diligently to our children, and may we talk of them when we sit in our houses, and **when we walk by the way**, and when we lie down, and when we rise up." Instilling biblical morality in children assures "the blessing of God would be upon subsequent generations," said Perkins, praying in Jesus's Name.

Senator James Lankford (R-Okla.) also highlighted the Bible's pivotal place in our personal, and national, spiritual formation. Old Testament pilgrims coming to Jerusalem would sing the Psalms of Ascent (**120-134**), he said, including the verse, "I lift up my eyes to the hills. Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, Who made Heaven and Earth" (**Psalm 121:1-2**). Senator Lankford previously encouraged Christians "to pray and to get together in small groups, to be able to pray on their own in quiet, private places, and to be able to do publicly sometimes" on **Wednesday's episode** of "Washington Watch with Tony Perkins." Believers, could "pray more than we complain" and "ask God to be able to change our own hearts as he's working on the hearts of other leaders in the nation."

The Bible has life-changing power, said Bernard, noting the hope and consolation it offered him and millions of others in their most excruciating trials. "That's the Word we preach. That's the Word we speak. That's the Word we live. That's the Word that came to us and changed every one of us," he said.

When the Bible is joined to prayer, "darkness doesn't stand a chance," said Branzell.

Glenn Sheppard of International Prayer *Ministries* prayed against the murkiest elements of American society, "for building our barns of wealth at the expense of godly obedience and biblical stewardship," for choosing to "speak politically correct at the expense of losing the voice of the prophet, and "for embracing half-truths, obvious lies of the enemy, and ignoring Your word that calls sin what it is: sin." Above all, he implored God's mercy on America "for sacrificing the lives of over 65 million unborn children on the altar of personal choice."

“May we never forget that righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people,” prayed **Chaplain of the U.S. Senate** Barry Black. He asked that the Almighty would “protect our freedoms” and guide political leaders to “seek You so that they may learn not how to get their own way, but how to take Your way.”

Dion Elmore, **vice president** of the National Day of Prayer, prayed for members of the armed forces and law enforcement officers. **Geoff Eckart**, founder of the national youth ministry **Never the Same**, prayed for God to shine His “grace throughout our schools,” and especially that Christian teachers “would light up these places of education … with their life, with Your word alive and burning within them.” He asked that “racism would be gone” and schools would teach all people to live in harmony.

Dianne Ogle of Areté-Executive Women of Influence, prayed for business leaders, “from entrepreneurs and small businesses to large corporations and board directors, from frontline employees to” CEOs to “repent of all pride and envy and greed and gossip, jealousy, selfish gain, divisiveness, unethical pursuits, deceptive plans, or anything that keeps us from Your holiness.” She encouraged all business leaders to become “workplace, marketplace missionaries” and to work at “a pace and cadence” that removes the temptation to treat work as an idol.

Troy Miller, president and CEO of **National Religious Broadcasters**, prayed “fervently for the arts, for the media, for entertainment, for those who use their talents and gifts to complete, inspire, entertain, and inform us, asking that they use their influence to “build up and edify and beautify Your bride, the church.”

This year’s D.C. event had an international character, featuring a visit from the Israeli Embassy’s **deputy chief of mission**, Eliav Benjamin, “We know that you represent a people who are in great pain — in great distress in this moment,” said Bishop Robert Stearns of **Eagles’ Wings Ministries**, referring to Israel’s ongoing war with Hamas. He invoked the providence and protection offered by the Lord, stating “though Israel is surrounded, it seems, on every side with enemies, she is much more surrounded by” God.

But the National Day of Prayer has long had a global reach. The 2023 broadcast reached 110 million Americans and **600 million people** in 195 countries, according to the organization’s 2023 Impact Report — not including **43,000 National Day of Prayer rallies**. This year’s event also undoubtedly reached “a great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and peoples, and kindreds, and tongues” (**Revelation 7:9**).

The National Day of Prayer was **codified in law** on April 17, 1952, when President Harry S. Truman (D) signed **Public Law 82-324,** which requires the president to “set aside and proclaim a suitable day each year, other than a Sunday, as a National Day of Prayer, on which the people of the United States may turn to God in prayer and meditation at churches, in groups, and as

individuals." Former President Ronald Reagan fixed the annual event's date as the first Thursday in May by signing **Public Law 100-307** on May 5, 1988.

The Christian event continues to demand the attention of politicians from both parties. President Joe Biden observed the themes of the event in his **2024 presidential proclamation** on the National Day of Prayer. "Scripture tells us to rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, and be constant in prayer," **wrote** Biden, as he asked Americans to treat one another with "honesty, decency, dignity, and respect." California Governor Gavin Newsom (D), who engaged in a **pitched public battle** with **Rev. David Jeremiah** over COVID-19 church lockdowns and attempted to prevent Christians from **singing in church**, issued a **proclamation** hailing his state's commitment to "inclusion" and to live together despite "every conceivable difference." Far-left Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson (D) **prayed** "for real community safety" and "real investments" in the city's finances, both of which have remain dismal.

On the other side of the aisle, Speaker of the House Mike Johnson (R-La.) **posted** a photograph of himself "praying that God will continue to bless America." At the state level, Alabama Governor Kay Ivey (R) celebrated with an **official proclamation** saying Alabamians "unite our hearts and voices in personal prayers and public gatherings" with "fervent praise, repentance, love, and humble intercession for our neighbors and our nation."

Not all observers appreciate the existence of the nationally-recognized day of prayer. Right Wing Watch, a project of the well-funded liberal pressure group **People for the American Way**, complained the National Day of Prayer featured **unspecified** "dominionist rhetoric and Christian nationalist speakers." **The Satanic Temple** held a **nationwide campaign** to counter the event. "The National Day of Prayer is unconstitutional and un-American," **asserted** the Freedom From Religion Foundation. The secular-progressive organization filed a lawsuit to abolish the National Day of Prayer, which **failed** in 2011. "The 'psychological consequence presumably produced by observation of conduct with which one disagrees' is not an 'injury' for the purpose of" the court, **ruled** the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Regardless of any legal status, Christians nationwide gathered once again on Thursday outside **state capitols**, **city squares**, **public parks**, even inside **public high schools** to unite in prayer. Liberty University President Dondi Costin **prayed** for God to "restore order, restore peace" to "college campuses today, which are in a state of chaos, and Former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson headlined a **prayer rally** in in Lake Charles, Louisiana, where he shared his testimony of how hours of "reading, praying, and contemplating" God's Word caused him to realize "the reason I was so angry was because I was so selfish." Dr. Carson **endorsed** "legislation that guarantees the right to life for all American citizens, including those still in the womb" in his new book, "The Perilous Fight: Overcoming Our Culture's War on the American Family," which will be released this month.

Rev. Franklin Graham of Samaritan's Purse **released a video** reminding everyone of the true meaning of the event. "Our country is in a real mess. And we see the hatred that is on our college campuses, the hatred that is around the world: Jesus understood hatred. They nailed him to a tree," said Graham. "The greatest need this nation has right now is for changed hearts," he said, as he led viewers to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Ultimately, every National Day of Prayer event teaches Christians to deepen their dedication and consecration to Christ, said Branzell. "Prayer is caught, not taught," said Branzell. "That means that we learn how to be prayer warriors. We learn how to pray by praying with other prayers. And that's what you've done today."

In Washington, the 2024 National Day of Prayer rally closed as Christians joined together in reciting a **liturgical prayer composed** by Branzell:

2024 National Prayer

> "Jesus, we profess our faith in You. You are the Light of the world, and in You there is no darkness. For You are our lamp, O LORD, and our God who lights our darkness. Forgive us for fearing and focusing on the darkness around us instead of being filled with faith and shining like the city on a hill You have called us to be. Forgive us for the times when we have been the absence of light, allowing darkness to dwell in America. Lead us forward to dispel the darkness and bring light throughout the Church, Family, Education, Business, Military, Government, and Arts, Entertainment, and Media.
>
> "We are saved by grace through faith, released from the darkness that once held us captive and now free to walk in the newness of life in You. Light dispels darkness and exposes what is hidden and wicked, so we commit to rise and shine! For by You, Lord, we can take courage to run against the enemy, and by our God we can fight the good fight and keep the faith as living lampstands in our communities and country. We fear no evil for You are with us.
>
> "Lord, Your way is perfect, You lead us on paths of righteousness for Your name's sake. Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Your Word is Truth, instructing and inspiring us to live in the abundant life You gave when You saved us from the death and destruction of the enemy. Fill us with Truth as we read, study, and live Your Word.
>
> "God, You are a shield for all those who take refuge in You. As we abide in You and Your Word abides in us, we take up our shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God and run boldly into the darkness to Lift Up the Word and Light Up the World! In the Mighty name of Jesus we pray, amen!"

Tony Perkins's prayer for the family read in full:

> "Father, we thank you for the family, which is by Your design. It wasn't something we created or stumbled upon. You created it. We thank You for moms and dads who, in following Your design and Your instruction, have and are nurturing their children, teaching them to know You and to follow You. Father, we do ask You that you would forgive us for departing from Your design and rejecting the truth, as Matthew 19 records the very words of Jesus: 'Have you not read that He Who made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, for this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So, then they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate.' Father, this morning, I pray that we may return to Your divine plan, where the home is the cradle of virtue, love, and respect, as children would once again be seen as a heritage from You, the fruit of the womb. And I pray, let Your word be lifted up in the homes of America again. As Moses recorded in Deuteronomy regarding Your commandments, may we once again teach them diligently to our children, and may we talk of them when we sit in our houses, and when we walk by the way, and when we lie down, and when we rise up.
>
> "May we speak of the eternal truths of Your word, and may we live them out — as we've heard this morning, the living Word of God. And let the instructions of the Apostle Paul found in Ephesians 6 guide us once again: 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and your mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with you, and that you may live long upon the Earth. And you fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and the admonition of the Lord.' Today, we pray for those fathers that they would be the spiritual leaders of their home, courageous men who will follow the Lord and lead their families in doing the same. And Lord, we pray that You would reestablish Your design for family in America again, following Your words and Your ways, that the blessing of God would be upon subsequent generations. We pray all this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

SOURCE: **THE WASHINGTON STAND**

Appeal to Heaven April 29, 2024, A. D.

MAY 3, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNCATEGORIZED
TAGS: 1607 FIRST LANDING

Watch and listen to entire event recording the above "**Appeal to Heaven**" from April 29th, 2024, Governor's Office @ the Patrick Henry Building, Capitol Square, Richmond, Virginia

Bob Marshall, past General Assembly Member 26 years

> "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."
> .

Think about that! Not only does our Creator heal us as individuals, but He is willing to heal our entire land if we but ask Him and follow his Commandments!

We must remember that Satan is the Father of Lies who relied on subtlety in the Garden of Eden. Yes, our Declaration holds that all men are created equal. But not all behavior is equal in God's sight. And the Ten Commandments are not the Ten Suggestions!

The Bible says that people of faith are called to "walk as children of light…and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness." .

In a representative democracy (a republic), we the people are the government. In a market economy, we the people are the economy. Ordinary citizens must make it clear to our elected representatives that we are tired of the policies that are bringing more death and destruction to America and to our world, whether by promotion of war, or abortion or sodomy around the world,

or open borders that allow countries to empty their jails, or policies that promote more crime, or even inflation that makes it harder for people to put food on the table or gasoline in their cars.

In America, Government officials, receive their elected or administrative offices from the people. But such authority derives from our Creator to benefit the people, not harm them!

Now our Savior decided that He loved the world He created, and His people who were the Crown of His creation. And even when Adam and Eve turned away, He did not destroy us or the world He had created, but sent His only Son to redeem the world. Why?

Because He loves us and would rather go after one lost sheep! He did not make us robots, he gave us free will to love or reject Him. But rejection of Him and His ways does not bring personal happiness or fulfillment but the exact opposite! He calls us His children, and wants what is best for us and even provided for us His intelligible, written directions!

So our calling as people of the Book is to show that same, magnanimous and incredible love to our families and our neighbors at the one-on-one personal level and to benefit others at the larger level, to secure peace and justice for our children and grandchildren and others.

Taking part in civic or political action, then, is an extension of the admonition "to Love our Neighbor as ourselves." Do we love our neighbor by legalizing debilitating mind and body destroying drugs? Paying taxes for and promoting abortions, promiscuity and immoral lifestyles across the world? Encouraging pornography and transgender policies in our government supported schools? Waging War after War?

Legalizing personal vices is not the right path to public happiness.

Unfortunately, the ever-growing secular state which seeks to hide or ridicule the Creator's plan for His children substitutes the false God or Idol of human Government as the savior of mankind through the promotion of sodomy, abortion and the culture of death and unjust predatory wars which contradict Christian beliefs, teachings and practice.

If the secular state can go after President Trump with such vengeance, charging him with crimes even outspoken Democrats consider bogus, it is understandable that the Biden Administration can prosecute Eva Edl, an 89-year-old-woman, who was interned in a Yugoslavian Communist Concentration Death Camp in the late 1940's. Her alleged crime? Violating the "Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act," authored by the late US Senator Ted Kennedy.

The FACE Act prohibits the use of force, obstruction or property damage intended to interfere with "reproductive health care services." Sidewalk pro-life counseling and prayer for women facing abortion hardly constitutes the use of force, obstruction or property damage. Yet, this 89-

year-old woman (and she is not the only one) is suffering from unjust prosecution via the FACE Act.

And how killing a child before birth is considered "reproductive health care services" is beyond me! Even the Obama Administration defined applicants for Childrens Health Insurance to mean "an individual under the age of 19 including the period from conception to birth."

Will all those who adhere to Biblical values face the same fate, for not complying with the atheistic government "religion."

Our First Amendment was added to the Constitution to protect the God-given freedom of conscience of religion. It is worth protecting but is definitely under attack!

The Apostle Matthew relates the parable of the wheat and the chaff after good seed was being sewn with weeds. When asked if the owner wanted his helpers to remove the weeds that were growing next to the wheat, he said, no because the wheat will be uprooted as well. "Let both grow together until the harvest…"

Our job as we remain in the vineyard, for however long the good Lord wants us here, is to proclaim from the rooftops that there are higher moral laws that trump evil laws and policies. We must always speak and act with charity, for no one knows the day nor the hour that we will be asked to give an accounting to our Creator of our life here on earth.

Be assured that the Redeemer of the World is always with us, and waiting to heal us and our land if we but call upon Him and adopt His ways.

Just watching the moral collapse of America is not an option for persons of Faith if only because there are no "safe" zones.

The Declaration of Independence affirms that: "All Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed …"

And since the Founders of America placed a "firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence," to establish America, we, their descendants should also seek protection from Divine Providence to preserve and restore America.

Personal Virtue and National Happiness

America's Founders believed that the moral virtues of citizens played a direct role in the happiness of citizens and the Nation.

Our First President, George Washington, in what has become known as his (September, 1796) Farewell Address, echoed Jefferson's sentiments regarding the link between personal and public morality and resulting national happiness:

> "Can it be that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! Is it rendered impossible by its vices?"

On September 17, 1789, the last day of the Philadelphia Convention, Benjamin Franklin, signer of the Declaration of Independence and delegate to the Constitutional Convention from Pennsylvania, urged fellow delegates to support the final draft of the Constitution despite his serious reservations. Franklin, speaking from written notes, stated:

> I confess that there are several parts of this constitution which I do not at present approve, but I am not sure I shall never approve them. . . . I agree to this Constitution with all its faults, if they are such; because I think a general Government necessary for us. . . . I doubt too whether any other Convention we can obtain, may be able to make a better Constitution. For when you assemble a number of men to have the advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble with those men, all their prejudices, their passions . . . and their selfish views. . . . It therefore astonishes me, Sir, to find this system approaching so near to perfection as it does. . . . Thus I consent ... to this Constitution because I expect no better, and because I am not sure, that it is not the best.

Pope St. John Paul II also addressed the question of legislative imperfections:

". . . When it is not possible to overturn or completely abrogate a pro-abortion law, an elected official, whose absolute personal opposition to procured abortion was well known, could licitly support proposals aimed at limiting the harm done by such a law and at lessening its negative consequences at the level of general opinion and public morality."

Handling Supreme Court Decisions you disagree with.

Abraham Lincoln in his Second Inaugural Address noted:

> "The Almighty has His own purposes. 'Woe unto the world because of offenses for it must needs be that offenses come but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh.'"

In June, 1857 before his election as President in 1860, Lincoln distinguished between compliance with Supreme Court decisions and giving them respect based on whether decisions were unanimous, given without bias, based on legal public expectations, and uniformly and steadily enforced by government departments which relied on correct historical facts.

Lincoln noted the 1857 *Dred Scott* decision failed this test, "…it is not resistance, it is not factious, it is not even disrespectful, to treat it as not having yet quite established a settled doctrine for the country."

The *Obergefell* decision, in my judgment, also fails Lincoln's test.

Before *Obergefell*, the Supreme Court consistently, uniformly and unanimously treated marriage as a unique relationship between one-man and one-woman.

1. In *Reynolds v. United States* the Supreme Court ruled that marriage was limited to one man and one woman and prohibiting polygamy did NOT violate the First Amendment's Free Exercise of Religion Clause.
2. The Congress affirmed traditional marriage by *conditioning western territories entrance into the Union by requiring polygamy prohibitions in the* constitutions of Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Utah thus affirming marriage as being comprised of one man and one woman.
3. The US Supreme Court ruled, "… A husband without a wife, or a wife without a husband, is unknown to the law."
4. Two Minnesota men who applied in 1970 for a marriage license were denied since Minnesota restricted marriage to "persons of the opposite sex." They appealed to Minnesota's Supreme Court which cited the *Loving v. Virginia*Supreme Court case, "there is a clear distinction between a marital restriction based merely upon race and one based upon the fundamental difference in sex." They appealed but the US Supreme Court stated, "The appeal is dismissed for want of a substantial federal question," while upholding the lower court's decision that the two men had no right to marry each other.

Democrat members of the General Assembly have introduced resolutions to repeal the 2006 Virginia voter approved One Man, one Woman Marriage amendment. Please share this legal history to defend real Mariage when the General Assembly Democrats get around to voting on this policy.

America and War

During America's Civil War, it is reported that Abraham Lincoln was asked if God was on his side. He answered, "Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side…my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right."

Regarding the War in Ukraine, it never needed to happen.

The political and military neutrality of Ukraine had been accepted by the United States, Russia and Great Britain in the **1994 Budapest Memorandum** as part of establishing a nuclear non-proliferation agreement which provided that the three Powers would "respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine … to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine.

Our prayers should never cease asking God the Father to intercede for peace *and for the violence and destruction to stop*. It is not the politicians who will be serving on the front lines but young people who did not seek out war. French Prime Minister, Georges Clemenceau, at the close of World War I, stated, "War is too important to leave to the generals." If that is true, and I think it is, then, Peace is too important to leave to the politicians.

As citizens we have the moral right and civic duty to pray and fast for peace. When the disciples of Jesus were perplexed that they had failed to cast out a particular demon from a possessed young man, Jesus responded, that, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting" (Mark 9:29).

As for the official position of the United States regarding foreign entanglements in wars, George Washington warned Americans right from the first:

"Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all—religion and morality enjoin this conduct…. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other…."

It is hard to disagree with the statement attributed to Benjamin Franklin, that "There never has been a good war, or a bad peace." But far more importantly, Christians should recall the Beatitude Christ gave us: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Mt 5:9).

The Jewish Feast of Passover (Updated)

APRIL 27, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRIST IN PROPHECY

Also click on these to learn more

- **Memories of Passover with Avi Mizrachi**
- **Memories of Passover with Mottel Baleston**
- **The Feast of Passover with Richard Hill**

Explore the Jewish Feast of Passover and its prophetic significance with guest Richard Hill and hosts Tim Moore and Nathan Jones on the television program, Christ in Prophecy!

Air Date: April 20, 2024

Deep Dive with Dave Bowen

Let's take a deep dive into the biblical significance of the third day with Dave Bowen!

The Biblical Significance of the Third Day
Dr. David Bowen
Teaching Evangelist, Lamb & Lion Ministries

Have you ever wondered why Jesus was in the tomb for three days? Why not a week? Why not an hour? Why three days?

I believe the answer to that question is found in the Bible. Throughout Scripture the third day contains much significance:

- The third day is associated with a **special divine activity.**
- The third day is a **day of restoration.**
- The third day is a **day of rescue.**

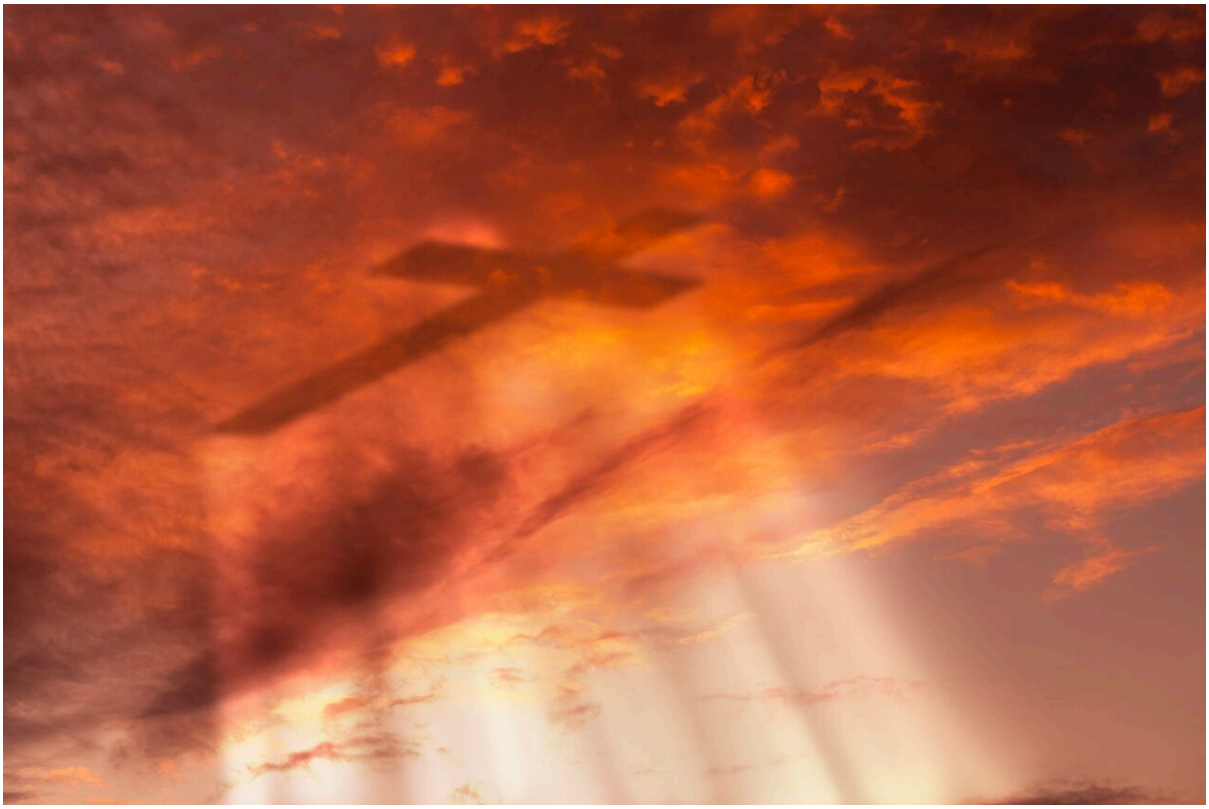
Therefore, the "third" day represents a day of significance, restoration, and rescue. And, in the Old Testament, the third day is the moment when an event attains its climax. It is repeatedly the day when a situation is completed or fulfilled.

Let’s look at the following examples.

READ FULL ARTICLE ON LAMB AND LION MINISTRIES

The Resurrection of Jesus Is the Most Important Event in History

APRIL 1, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNCATEGORIZED



Tyler O'Neil | **The Daily Signal**

Christians around the world commemorated the most important event in our faith's history this past Sunday, but the Resurrection of Jesus isn't just important to those who believe a Nazarene who walked the earth 2,000 years ago is the Son of God. The secular world's history also turns on this pivotal event, which inspired so much progress that we take for granted today.

Christianity turned the values of the **Pagan Roman world upside-down**. The Romans considered the early Christians subversives—many called them "atheists" because they didn't worship any pagan gods—and put them to death for refusing to worship the emperor. After some emperors adopted the faith, Emperor Julian attempted to revive paganism, but lamented that the Christian ethic had transformed the empire.

"It is their benevolence to strangers, their care for the graves of the dead, and the pretended holiness of their lives that have done most to increase atheism," Julian wrote to a pagan priest of Galatia in 362 A.D. Those who believed in the Resurrection established the first hospitals, and

Christianity spread rapidly during Roman plagues, as pagans fled the cities, but **Christians stayed and tended to the sick**, risking death but saving souls.

Rodney Stark, a now-deceased social sciences professor at Baylor University and author of the book "The Victory of Reason: How Christianity Led to Freedom, Capitalism, and Western Success," **told PJ Media in 2017** that without the Resurrection, "we would still be in a world of mystery and probably in a world of repressive empires."

"Remember, at the dawn of history, people didn't live in really tiny countries. They lived under huge, huge empires, nasty ones," the professor added. He argued that Christianity historically has been the driving force behind limited government, science, capitalism, the abolition of slavery, medicine, organized charities, and more—and that Christianity would have been impossible without the belief in the Resurrection.

According to the four Gospel narratives, Jesus' followers were quick to abandon their rabbi after his excruciating and humiliating death at Golgatha. Something convinced the same Peter who denied Jesus three times to later go to his own painful death saying that Jesus is the Messiah. In I Corinthians 15:17, the Apostle Paul wrote, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins."

1. Universities and Science

While many consider **faith and science** to be inherently incompatible, Stark noted that Christianity provides the worldview that makes science comprehensible.

"In the rest of the world, it's thought that the universe is far too mystical to be worth thinking about," much less experimenting on, Stark explained. But "in the West, the universe was **created by a rational God**, and consequently it runs by rules and, therefore, it makes sense to try to understand and discover the rules."

Christians believe that a rational God created an ordered cosmos and created human beings in his image, enabling them to think his thoughts after him.

Modern universities grew out of the cathedral schools of the Middle Ages, and a bishop near the university at Paris made a surprising move in 1277. The bishop condemned certain ideas as anathema, among them the idea that the universe is eternal and could not have been different. These ideas, promulgated by the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle (whom both the Muslim world and the university students held in extremely high regard), discouraged experimentation. If mere deductive reasoning could reveal the full truth of the cosmos, then there was no need to examine the world to test different hypotheses.

By condemning this idea, the bishop paradoxically helped free science from the shackles of Aristotelian thought.

2. Free Markets

It is hard to overstate just how **wealthy modern Americans** are in comparison to most human beings throughout history. Inflation is rising and it is increasingly difficult to afford a home, but Americans still enjoy the conveniences of indoor plumbing, heating and cooling, rapid transportation, refrigerators and microwave ovens, and endless options for learning and entertainment via the internet and electronic devices.

The term capitalism may be controversial, but the free market complexity that unleashed this jaw-dropping prosperity and innovation deserves respect and protection. While the German sociologist Max Weber famously traced capitalism back to the "Protestant work ethic," Stark found an earlier source—**the Catholic monasteries** in the Middle Ages.

Catholic monasteries set up a complex network of lending at interest, and they also changed the narrative on commerce. "In almost all known societies at that time, commerce was degraded. It was thought to be nothing a gentleman would have any connection to," Stark explained. Yet "Christian theologians, who had taken vows of poverty, nonetheless worked out that commerce was legitimate."

The growth of complex markets took centuries, and some of it did tie in to darker chapters of world history.

3. The Abolition of Slavery

In one form or another, **slavery appears** in almost every human society, and if slaves ever succeed in overthrowing their masters, they often turn their former masters into slaves.

"It was only in the West that a society has ever overcome slavery, except when it's forced by outside forces," Stark said. Christianity inspired the "only civilization that has ever discovered within itself that slavery is immoral and gotten rid of it."

Medieval Europe first eliminated slavery, often in fits and starts, and occasionally returning to the practice through trade. Slavery and the slave trade returned in force during the Age of Exploration, but in the 1800s, abolitionists such as William Wilberforce and Harriet Beecher Stowe led Britain and America in abolishing chattel slavery outright.

Abolitionists like them drew deep inspiration from the Christian belief that all humans are made in the image of God, and they deeply believed in the Resurrection of Jesus.

The New Testament does not require Christians to outlaw slavery, but outlawing slavery is the logical conclusion of key Christian doctrines. The Apostle Paul urged Philemon to free his former slave Onesimus. Paul also wrote to the Galatians that, when it comes to the grace of God in salvation, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

4. Limited Government

Most Americans today have no concept of how united religion and government have been in world history. In ancient Egypt, Pharaohs claimed to be gods on Earth, and in ancient Mesopotamia, kings built large temples to their gods in part to maintain their legitimacy. The three-generation Kim family in **control of North Korea** perpetuates the idea that the supreme ruler *is* god.

Christianity wrested ultimate power away from political rulers, teaching that God held the ultimate authority. St. Augustine divided the world into the "City of Man" and the "City of God," emphasizing the independence of the life of faith and service from the concerns of power and everyday life.

Civil society grew and flourished because Christians believed both in helping the poor and in working together outside of government institutions. According to David Brooks' 2007 book "**Who Really Cares**: The Surprising Truth About Compassionate Conservatism," conservatives in strong families who attend church and earn their own paychecks are most likely to give to charity.

While Jesus famously told his disciples to pay taxes to the government, he also drew an enormously important distinction. "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's" (Mark 12:17) didn't just mean "pay your taxes." It also meant that Christians—who are made in God's image as coins were made in Caesar's image—owe their ultimate loyalty to God, not to the state.

The early settlers to America and the Founders employed these principles in government. The Declaration of Independence grounds Americans' right to revolt from Britain in "the laws of nature and nature's God." **The First Amendment forbids** Congress from making any law "respecting an establishment of religion or abridging the free exercise thereof," not because religion is unimportant, but because religion is *far more important* than the government.

This separation marks Christian civilization apart from the despotisms of the ancient world and from the communist and fascist totalitarianisms of the 20th century. Civil societies exist in other parts of the world as well, but Christianity provides a unique justification for subordinating state power to other concerns.

Does All This Suggest the Resurrection Is True?

These and other benefits of Christian civilization extend far beyond those who believe in Jesus' Resurrection, and these benefits do not erase the many sins and deceptions perpetrated in the name of Christianity over the centuries. However, they do illustrate the side-effects of faith in Jesus, which calls Christians to become the "salt of the Earth" and the "light of the world."

If the Holy Spirit is working in Christian churches, the blessings of this faith will spill over to those who do not accept the Gospel.

These blessings are exactly what we should look for, supposing the Resurrection is true.

The Resurrection of Jesus Is the Most Important Event in History
https://youtube.com/watch?v=eEfpZVVOm9A

SOURCE: **THE DAILY SIGNAL**

Tyler O'Neil is managing editor of The Daily Signal and the author of "Making Hate Pay: The Corruption of the Southern Poverty Law Center."

Holy Week Review: Day by Day

MARCH 24, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Easter comes and goes year after year, but should it be merely an annual event? What happened DAY BY DAY from Palm Sunday until "Easter"? Take time to see the following short videos that cover that time period.

Palm Sunday:

In this video, we begin a week-long study on the final days of Christ. By Friday, Jesus will be crucified, but truly His last days were no less difficult. Through this video series, I hope that we can all grow closer to His heart and truly understand the suffering of our Savior.

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

Monday: Day of Authority

After entering Jerusalem for the final time the day before, Christ accomplished two notable acts today; He cursed a fig tree and He cleansed the temple. In this video, we try and understand the implications and the purpose of those actions.

https://youtube.com/watch?v=dvgCoQlBQwQ

Tuesday: Day of Debate

On Tuesday during the final week of His life, Jesus spent the entire day debating the religious leaders of the time, but try as they might, they were unable to find anything they could use to arrest Him so that they could turn Him over to the authority of the governor.

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

Wednesday: Day of Silence

On a day known as the Day of Silence, not many things are recorded that Jesus said, but the actions of two others surrounding Jesus were meticulously recorded. In this study, we look at those two people and their differences.

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

Thursday: Day of Agony

Tonight, Jesus is betrayed by one of the twelve. Judas would betray the Son of Man with a kiss on the cheek and Jesus would be dragged before the Sanhedrin in chains. But before that, He shares one last meal with His friends.

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

Friday: Day of Victory

Today is known as Good Friday, today Jesus was nailed to the cross taking our place and trading us His righteousness for our sins. Through the knowledge of what happened to Him today, may our hearts grow closer to His and may we come to a true understanding of the impact of our sins.

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

Resurrection Sunday

In this study, we remember the triumphant resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Savior of mankind. The importance of this historical event cannot be understated. It is because of the resurrection that any of us have the hope of the same.

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

America Needs a Worldview Checkup! Take the Test Patriot! What is Your Worldview?

MARCH 7, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

America Needs a "Worldview Checkup."

Dear Patriot,

We all know this. But it must start with the Church. After all, it is the Church that is charged with building a godly culture, not D.C! We, God's people, are to be the salt and light for having a righteous culture.

How can we get a "checkup" to be sure that we are biblically equipped to be salt and light?

What is your worldview on:

Politics, Economics, Education, Religion and Social Issues?

Fortunately, such a checkup exists, found at **Worldview Check Up** (www.worldviewcheckup.org). This is from our friends at **Nehemiah Institute**. It only takes about 20 minutes. There is a small fee, $17.76 per user (good American number!). This is being done by churches across America.

The Virginia Christian Alliance is your Ambassador of this service
Use your discount code **AMB112** in the checkout process to get the discount.

Follow these steps:

1. Go to: **www.worldviewcheckup.org**

2. Click the **Start Here** button and read about the exam (PEERS Test), then click **Get Started Now.**
3. Enter your discount code **AMB112** in the checkout process to get the discount.
4. Complete the Profile section, then start the exam, total of 70 statements Read carefully, then select answer. **Agree** or **Disagree**.

As soon as you finish, you will get a popup Scorecard, TOTALLY confidential. No one, not even staff at Nehemiah Institute sees individual answers or results.

Then, if you find this to be a useful tool, promote it to you congregation. All of us need a worldview checkup.

IMPORTANT!

At the bottom of the Scorecard, it shows which statements were incorrectly answered identified by a **red box** with a "D" inside. Many of the statement numbers will be in **BOLD**. That means there is a professionally-developed Position Paper giving biblical instruction on why the statement should be marked **Agree** or **Disagree**. Just tap on the bold statement number to bring up the Position Paper. WorldviewCheckup is both an assessment and training program, all for around $15 with an Ambassador discount code AMB112.

Both the Scorecard and the Position Papers may be saved or printed.

The Scorecard Report also includes a list of all 70 test items for your review.

Three key benefits for doing this:

1. You get a comprehensive Scorecard on your worldview position, by the only professionally-validated worldview measurement instrument in existence.
2. Teaching papers written by biblical scholars (read Why Believe Nehemiah tab).
3. You will be better equipped to engage the battle on the worldview shift in our nation.

If any questions, you may contact Nehemiah Institute at 800-948-3101.

How Evildoers Weaponized Music and Entertainment Against God & You

MARCH 6, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

WARNING | WARNING

"Viewer discretion is advised"
SATANIC IMAGES AND SOUND ARE DEPICTED IN THIS EPISODE

Diabolical evil has infested every cultural sector imaginable including the music industry, Hollywood, and even sports, explains The New American magazine's **Alex Newman** in this episode of **Behind The Deep State**. In fact, numerous leading figures in these industries have even spoken publicly about how they made a literal deal with the devil in exchange for success, fame, money, and more. It's in the Super Bowl, the Grammies, and even in the music that is played endlessly on TV and radio. The impact of this evil on Americans and humanity is enormous.

Related Articles:

How US Intel Agencies Manipulate Media & the Public

The War of 2024 – Part 1 (1 Thessalonians 5:14-22)

FEBRUARY 21, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The War of 2024 - Part 1 (1 Thessalonians 5:14-22)
https://youtube.com/watch?v=W8_9QVOWiq4

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Introduction **15:04** –

1. Against The Truth **23:55** –

2. Against The Facts **42:26** –

3. Against The Faith **46:54** –

4. Against The Church **53:05** –

5. Against The Marriage

Jack Hibbs is the senior and founding pastor of Calvary Chapel Chino Hills, based in Southern California, the Founder & President of Real Life ministry, and a nationally syndicated TV & Radio host.

You Will Own Nothing…

FEBRUARY 16, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: GREAT RESET, WEF

Say those who own everything

By J. Jeff Toler for Shenandoah Christian Alliance **j.toler@sca4christ.org**

- ***Prepare your outside work, Make it fit for yourself in the field; And afterward build your house.*** (Proverbs 24:27)

The question, "what is truth?" has been successfully answered. It was answered millenniums ago. The Greek word for "truth" is *aletheia*, which refers to "divine revelation" and is related to a word that literally means "what can't be hidden." Should we be giving any serious consideration to someone who says, "Your truth is not my truth?" The short answer is no. The truth we're talking about is the true truth. Christians should know that we have a personal relationship with this truth. God—in the person of the Jesus Christ, says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." is the very truth that can't be hidden, denied, or defeated.

Knowing the truth as divine revelation allows those who can trust in something more than their eyes or ears, have a distinct advantage over those who deny the *reality* of divine revelation. Using our God-given diffuse authority should encourage the informed believer to warn of the abuse of concentrated authority. One feature of that abuse is the loss of transparency.

Christians who know the truth when the rest of us don't, have the responsibility and the obligation to speak truth to power.

I believe that too many of us today are ignorant—even oblivious—of the reality we are facing.

We're expected to process an unprecedented flood of information, but we have not availed ourselves of the opportunity to fully *know the truth*, only trusting those who control the narratives. We think we know who to believe, but do we really? For Christians, there is no excuse to allow others to live in darkness—like the prisoner in the cave of Plato's "Republic."

Ultimately, the truth will set us free eternally, but while we're still here, how *now* shall we live without truth? Take for example this story:

In reviewing the book, "Against the Great Reset," edited by Michael Walsh, and available on **Amazon**, **Darryl Cooper** reveals this truth: In 2016, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Danish Social Democrat Member of Parliament, **Ida Auken**, was advertising her vision of centralized property ownership. In the essay she predicts, "You'll own nothing, and you'll be happy." It is unlikely to be a coincidence that in the same year, the **World Economic Forum**, (WEF) published a video to extol its Great Reset program, using those very words. The video, "The Great Reset," went viral that same year, and this was how many of us heard the phrase for the first time. In a hilarious display of irony, **The Anti-Defamation League**—hoping to demean and silence anyone alarmed by the video—then campaigned to denounce "The Great Reset *Conspiracy*" on a web Page that *still* features a screenshot from the WEF's very same video, "The Great Reset" where it appeared big block letters. See:

As the saying goes, you just can't make this stuff up.

Auken (pictured) and the WEF is very serious about depriving ownership to people who want to own things—like homes, cars, and businesses for example—and who might object to anyone trying to prevent them from doing so. Specifically, people in America object to *collectivism*. It appears that the word collectivism is quietly and subtly being redefined. The online editors of Indeed weigh in with, *"Collectivist culture is when a community focuses on the group's needs by working together as opposed to focusing on individual needs. A common example of a collectivist group*

is a family. Families typically work together to help each other survive and thrive." Hopefully there is more to a family than that definition.

Traditionally, this has been the accepted definition: *"Collectivism is a political theory associated with communism. More broadly, it is the idea that people should prioritize the good of society over the welfare of the individual."*

Going further, the definition states, *"In a collectivist system, power should be in the hands of the people as a whole, not in the hands of a few powerful folks. Collectivism is the opposite of individualism. Ideally, in a collectivist society, decisions benefit all the people. This is a difficult idea to put into practice, as seen in the attempted collectivist society of Soviet communism."*

Simply put, with communism and collectivism, individual property rights really can't and usually don't exist. What does scripture teach us about property and investing?

- ***"For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money."*** (Matthew 25:14-18 ESV)

There are two important aspects of this parable that some might miss. The first is, for the two servants who were given more than the third servant, it was likely their desire to invest the talents —*each worth the equivalent of 20 years of wages*—because the master believed his trust in them garnered their love and respect enough to *act as if the talents were their own*. The servant who resented his master and hid the treasure, deserved his scorn and harsh judgement. Good stewardship and investing can be seen as biblical. The other, more subtle clue for our purposes here is Marx's appropriation of the phrase, "…to each according to his ability," when he wrote, *"**From each** according to his ability, **to each** according to his needs,"*

Jack MacPherrin, writing in the **The Epoch Times**, details how large national banks have been granted property and ownership rights over our own property rights with a cynical take on collectivism. *"Under UCC Article 8, protected creditors of securities intermediaries-such as the world's largest banks-are given priority ownership to security entitlements if they use customer assets as collateral. What this means is that if your broker were to go bankrupt, the broker's secured creditors would be given priority over what you thought was your security entitlement. You would become an "unsecured creditor," and your claim to your securities would be at the very back of the line. In the*

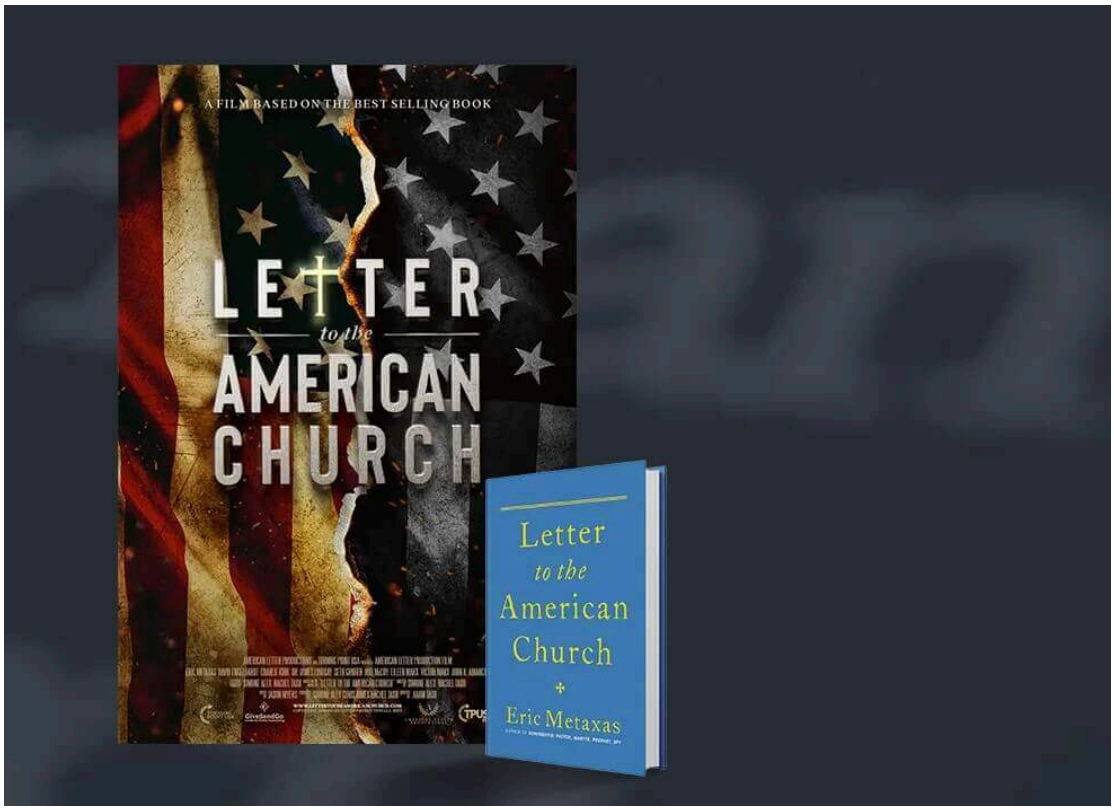
event of a wide-scale financial crash, millions of investors could lose everything to those secured creditors." Millions of small of small investors will lose their life savings while the big bankers are protected through bad legislation.

This is the granular reality of the divine revelation of "what can't be hidden." There is no excuse to live in a dark cave… unless we don't know that's where we are. The light of the divine revelation is the truth; the truth in the here and now—the light that leads to paradise. The truth may well be that these are days of Noah and the days Elijah, who will come, ***"…to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers."*** (Malachi 3:24) While we are here now, our children, our family, our friends, our nation must see what the political leaders and wealthy oligarchs are doing to keep all of us in the dark.

WePhoto by **Frames For Your Heart** on **Unsplash**

Letter to the American Church: Documentary, with Interview

FEBRUARY 11, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



SILENCE IN THE FACE OF EVIL IS ITSELF EVIL

A Film Adaptation Of The Best Selling Book

A film adaptation of the best-selling book, "Letter to the American Church" written by Eric Metaxas. The film lays out the parallels between early 1930's Nazi Germany and other totalitarian regimes with what is happening in America today and how the church has been mostly silent facing this evil. Eric and several leading conservative voices of today, explain how cultural Marxism has taken over America, including the church.

This film is a wake-up call to the church to stand up and speak out against the evil that is manifesting in our country.

Our cast gives practical examples on how to take action and turn our country back to freedom, liberty, and ultimately, God Himself.

TRAILER

"Letter to the American Church" Trailer
https://youtube.com/watch?v=vXHUMUER6gA

INTERVIEW | John Amanchukwu | Letter to the American Church

John Amanchukwu shares an update on his work and his message in Letter to the American Church.

FULL DOCUMENTARY AVAILABILITY

From New York Times best-selling author Eric Metaxas comes a riveting new film challenging audiences to take a stand, speak out, and take action in the face of evil. “Letter to the American Church” is a documentary adaptation of Metaxas latest book of the same name.

Eric guides audiences through the striking similarities between the church in Hitler’s early 1930’s Nazi Germany, the political regimes of Mao and Stalin, and modern day America and her church. The historical and present parallels are unavoidable and grim.

One man bravely and boldly spoke up in 1933 to warn the German church of the impending doom from the Nazi regime. His name was Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The majority of the church of his time chose not to listen or take action, therefore Hitler continued his reign of terror, death, and destruction. For the last 100 years, Marxism and communism has continued to evolve and spread throughout nations, slowly and silently infiltrating America.

Join Eric along with Charlie Kirk, Dr. James Lindsey, John Amanchukwu, David Engelhardt, Rob McCoy, Seth Gruber, Victor and Eileen Marx and other leading voices in a movement that is sounding the alarm to a sleeping American church and God's people everywhere.

Metaxas delivers a chilling clarion call to the Body of Christ to be modern day "Bonhoeffers". If the church does not wake up from her slumber to clearly understand Marxist doctrine, the tactics that are used to manipulate her into compliance with it, the national and international leaders and corporations who are promoting it, and which direction America is headed in, we will most certainly experience the same fate of previous totalitarian regimes.

Audiences will see that silence in the face of evil is itself evil. Metaxas and his colleagues agree that this is the hour of the American church.

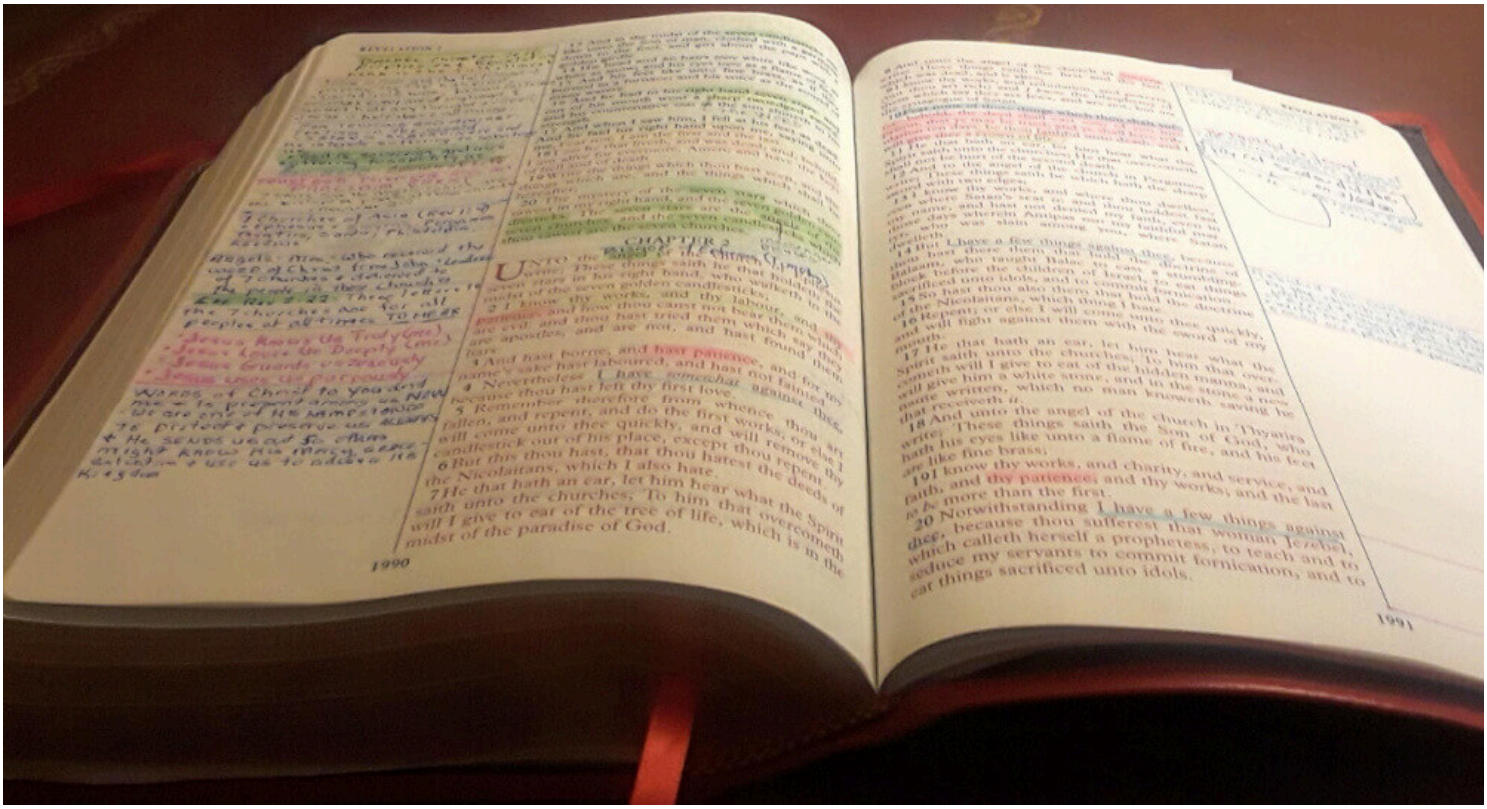
Official website: https://lettertotheamericanchurch.com

For purchasing DVD, please visit https://lettertotheamericanchurch.myshopify.com.

For any screening requests, please visit the official website https://lettertotheamericanchurch.com for more information.

4 Biblical Ways to ‘Counter the Deception’ Rampant in Modern Media

FEBRUARY 9, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, TRADITIONAL FAMILY VALUES, TRIBULATION



Joshua Arnold | **The Washington Stand.**

“Even the AP is acknowledging that there is deception” in modern media, **said** Family Research Council President Tony Perkins, host of “Washington Watch,” on Wednesday. Perkins referenced an Associated Press headline published on January 31, which read, “Grave peril of digital conspiracy theories: ‘What happens when no one believes anything anymore?’” That’s “a very profound question,” said Perkins, but he added that the AP failed to “get to the real problem and the source or the solution.”

The nearly 3,000-word article “focused on bloggers and others using the internet” to spread or adopt conspiracy theories, said Perkins. With a predictable skew toward right-fringe conspiracy theories, the article featured everything from QAnon and 2020 election claims, to government complicity in the Maui wildfires and the Sandy Hook school shooting.

On one hand, technology is a tool that cuts both ways, Perkins acknowledged. “Today’s technology … has benefits such as allowing you to watch or listen to ‘Washington Watch’ on a device you

carry in your pocket. It also allows the false prophets to amplify their message with what today we might call conspiracy theories or fake news," he said. David Closson, director of FRC's Center for Biblical Worldview concurred. "Someone can fire something off on social media and it can make it around the world … before there's even a chance to do a fact check."

On the other hand, "the legacy media is a part of this problem," Perkins argued. "The reason susceptible" to conspiracy theories is "because were the first ones that rejected truth and therefore set the stage for these conspiracy theories to prosper." As the media becomes less trustworthy, they are shocked to find a corresponding decrease in people trusting the media.

"The media and journalists of all stripes really have had such a casual relationship with the truth," agreed Closson, "or worse, … even suppressed legitimate news." On some networks like CNN, he said he can't even trust "the premise of some of their arguments when the previous segment, you know, they're using preferred pronouns." At The New York Times, staffers **complained** internally that an article on detransitioners created "a hostile work environment for the queer people who work here." Readers will surely recall their own encounters with mainstream media outlets choosing narrative over news.

People eschewing the legacy media for alternate sources of information represents an existential crisis to those outlets, and they have responded accordingly. Last month, a Washington Post analyst known for favoring false narratives over true ones **concluded** that ordinary Americans shouldn't do their own research. Ironically, the study he relied upon actually demonstrated that the cottage industry of **fact-checking has become so subjective** that fact-checkers agree on what is disinformation less than half the time.

The AP article, which extended a multi-part series on the rising threat of conspiracy theories, noted with alarm that the increase in conspiracy theories corresponds to a decrease in authority, institutions, and the mainstream media. "And even when they fail to convince people," they wrote, "the conspiracy theories embraced by these groups contribute to mounting distrust of authorities and democratic institutions, causing people to reject reliable sources of information while encouraging division and suspicion."

"When you have a breakdown in authority … especially in media, … you sow the seeds on fertile ground for these conspiracy theories to thrive," Closson warned. He pointed to a 2023 Gallup poll which, for 11 out of 16 public institutions they asked about, found "the lowest level of confidence that had in 40 years."

"We live in a time when people simply don't trust institutions," said Closson. "Nor should they, given where we are," Perkins argued. "When you have people denying the revealed truth that is so fundamental — male and female, the institution of marriage … these people are not worthy to be trusted or followed."

Closson pointed out that conspiracy theories and misinformation have been around for a long time, "really since the beginning of time," beginning with the serpent in the garden. "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" the serpent said to Eve (Genesis 3:1). There, the serpent challenged the truth of God's Word, "sowing doubt, sowing confusion," said Closson, and Adam and Eve swallowed the lie. "Ever since then, we've lived in some sort of a post-truth world."

However, Closson added, conspiracy theories seem to be gaining more traction now because of America's culture-wide rejection of truth. "Even in our churches, we're not immune from these things," he lamented. He cited research FRC commissioned in 2023 that found "48% of regular church goers say that they don't believe in absolute moral truth, … a basic tenet of a biblical worldview."

"Deception comes when we depart from truth," Perkins responded. He cited Paul's warning to the Thessalonians about the age of lawlessness, which would bring "all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12). "We should take that as an indication that these latter days are going to be filled with deception," said Perkins.

Perkins and Closson identified four ways that Christians should respond to the epidemic of deception poisoning America's media, public discourse, and even the church. In a refreshing contrast to America's prevailing buffet of lies, they served up courses of hearty, wholesome truth — all of which were grounded in God's infallible Word.

1. Don't Be Led Astray

The Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24-25) opened with Jesus's disciples asking him to teach them about "the sign of your coming and of the end of the age" (Matthew 24:3). Jesus answered, "See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray" (Matthew 24:4-5). Paul, having learned from Jesus, later issued similar instructions to the Thessalonians, "Let no one deceive you in any way" (2 Thessalonians 2:3). In other words, the latter times would feature many anti-Christ deceivers peddling counterfeit gospels, and Jesus wanted his followers to be on their guard.

These instructions from our Lord were the "first words out of his mouth," Perkins noted, after quoting the passage. "You see, Jesus warns his followers to be on guard against deception and those who will peddle deception. … So, repeatedly he says, 'Don't be deceived.'"

Jesus had already warned his followers against deception. "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves," said Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount

(Matthew 7:15). Closson quoted these words and added that Jesus gave "a litmus test" by which to recognize false teachers: "You will recognize them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). He endorsed applying this litmus test to "the people reporting the news. Let's recognize them by their fruit."

In a culture of confusion and lies, Christian, don't be led astray by false teachers.

2. Don't Be Alarmed

Jesus proceeded to instruct his disciples, "See that you are not alarmed" (Matthew 24:6). Jesus foretold wars, calamities, persecutions — intense trials that could throw Christians off-balance. Nevertheless, Jesus instructed his followers that these things must happen, preparing them beforehand to remember that God is sovereign over all things.

Paul repeated this instruction, too. "Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come" (2 Thessalonians 2:1-2).

"We should not be surprised," said Perkins, who quoted from Matthew 24. "Jesus warned us over and over … that this was going to occur."

3. Return to the Truth

Christians must also "go back to the truth," as an antidote to the epidemic of deception, said Closson. "We need to stand on God's word …, which is our ultimate source of truth" (see John 17:17). "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

"We should put our confidence in that which does not change," Perkins agreed. He added, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever . The Word of God does not change." Jesus also said this on the Mount of Olives, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away."

Perkins applied this truth to the moments in which we're tempted to believe a lie, especially one that questions God's Word ("Did God really say?"). Our response, he said, should be, "'Well, wait a minute. Let me check. Let me go back to the source.' … You go back to the source. That's how you counter the deception."

Perkins argued that American Christians should use their access to the source of truth to counter the deception of the evil one in the public square. "We have the ability, here in the United States, to use the freedoms that we still have to advocate for others. We have the ability to expose these

things that are occurring in the end times that Jesus warned about," he said. "He said they were coming, I think, to prepare us so that we could stand against the evil." Invoking Matthew 24:12, "Because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold," Perkins urged, "We have to act on legitimate information we have, so that we can be the salt and light that allows the gospel to go forth."

4. Use Discernment

Countering error with truth is not always simple, which is "why we need discernment," said Closson, "today more than we have ever needed it." When Jesus first sent his disciples out into the world, he told them to "be wise as serpents and innocent as doves" (Matthew 10:16), he quoted. Additionally, Jesus quoted the greatest commandment in the law, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your *mind*" (Matthew 22:37).

Using discernment is easier said than done, but Perkins and Closson discussed several helpful tips for evaluating the news:

A. Pause and Pray

"The first step that I would take when I see something on the social media or the news, is just take a pause," said Closson. "There's the impulse that we like to know everything at once. In a social media age, we're used to getting our news instantaneously. And so I think we need to slow down. We need to pray."

"You don't have to be the first one to pass on," Perkins concurred. Because here's what happens when you do that. Most of these are exposed within time. If you're associated with that, you lose credibility among your friends."

So, counseled Perkins, "Resist this temptation to forward it on or to post it or embrace it. … Pray over it. Just have discernment."

B. Read Critically

Second, "Don't believe anything you see just because you see it in print," said Closson. Perkins put the same concept in different words, "Be careful what you read online. Be careful about just forwarding something on" without considering first if it's true.

As part of this step, Christians should compare what they read in the news to what the Bible says, Perkins advised.

In the same discourse, Jesus predicted, "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. … Then they will deliver

you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. … And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray" (Matthew 24:7, 9, 11).

"When you hear those things happening," we know that "the Scripture says, 'Yeah, those things are going to happen,'" said Perkins. "So, we can say, 'Well, all right, this lines up with what Jesus said was going to be happening. Let's go the next step and validate and verify the source.'"

C. Corroborate Information

"It's always good to corroborate. If you see something on social media, don't just assume it's true," Closson said. "Don't forward the email to a friend. Don't forward the post, but corroborate it. Go to some valid news organizations."

Closson recommended Family Research Council's own news organization, The Washington Stand, noting that it has "a whole team of reporters" dedicated to "coming at from a biblical worldview." This means that they are "trying to connect it to Scripture, trying to connect it to facts, objective truth, things that are reportable, things that can be verified."

Perkins suggested a "rule of thumb" that "anything you see that is detached from a specific, reliable news or organizational site like The Washington Stand, … don't trust it if it's not connected to a site that it can be verified."

One way to find reliable news is to "get as close to the source as you can," said Perkins. "That's why we bring you the actual news makers. We go right to the source. We're not, you know, reporting on what someone else said." That's one reason why social media is an unreliable place to peruse the news; it's far removed from the source.

D. Be Honest

Everyone is liable to make mistakes. This is even easier in a rapidly changing news environment, where first reports often turn out to be wrong, misleading, or at least lacking critical information. The question is, how do we respond when we make mistakes?

Perkins exhorted "Washington Watch" listeners to be honest. "I do my very best to make sure that everything we say here is validated and it's true," he said. "And, if we do get something wrong, I'm going to take ownership of that, and I'm going to correct it when we find out."

"So," Closson summarized, "prayer, discernment, corroborating objectivity — all of these things, I think, ought to mark a Christian as they take in, read, understand, and share the news." Christians should speak the truth in love, which means we should not be led astray or alarmed, but stand firm on the Word of God, the only infallible source of truth. To accurately handle the Word of truth

amid a culture of deception, Christians must navigate with all discernment, never losing sight of him who is “the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6).

SOURCE: **THE WASHINGTON STAND**

Abandoning The Tower of Babel

JANUARY 19, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

We must realize we are wandering

By J. Jeff Toler for Shenandoah Christian Alliance **j.toler@sca4christ.org**

Although Nietzsche got a lot of things wrong, on occasion, he nailed it: *"The weakest are the ones who most undermine life among men, who most dangerously poison and question our trust in life… They monopolize virtue now, these weak and incurably sick men, there is no doubt about that: "we alone are the good, the just." This is the way they speak… As if health, good constitution, strength, pride, the sense of power were in themselves marks of depravity… There is among them a plethora of vindictive men disguised as judges, whose mouths continually secrete the word "justice" like a poisonous saliva… The will of the sick to display any form of superiority, its instinct for secret paths which lead to a tyranny over the healthy—where is it not to be found, this will to power of the weakest!"* (Frederich Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals)

If this passage seems to resonate with you, perhaps it's because it's describing the condition of America's social construct. That is to say its sociological, ontological, and its communication theory and practice… the national narrative.

In the May 2022 issue of the Atlantic, **Jonathan Haidt** (pictured) writes the following, *"What would it have been like to live in Babel in the days after its destruction? In the Book of Genesis, we are told that the descendants of Noah built a great city in the land of Shinar. They built a tower 'with its top in the heavens' to 'make a name' for themselves. God was offended by the hubris of humanity."*

- ***But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. The Lord said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other." So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.*** (Genesis 11: 5-9 NIV)

Haidt then writes, *"The text does not say that God destroyed the tower, but in many popular renderings of the story he does, so let's hold that dramatic image in our minds: people wandering amid the ruins, unable to communicate, condemned to mutual incomprehension."* (Haidt, J. (2022, May. Why the Past Ten Years of American Life Have Been Uniquely Stupid. *The Atlantic*)

This is the supreme irony of our present day and age: we believe our technology is mastering the immense power of the internet, we are still wandering, and still mutually incomprehensible. To Haidt, at least, Americans have become "uniquely stupid."

We are both at once the principal consumers and chief content creators of our own insatiable appetite for social media.

Without "we the people," the social media industry would be consigned to operate in a manufactured vacuum; an obvious fakery not to be taken seriously. But social media is just too serious a business to leave it to chance or allow it to have little influence. So our "Masters of the Universe" (MoTU) devised a very clever, if not crafty, strategy for its creation and infinite promulgation. Thanks to the psychologists employed by them, they figured out years ago that giving and receiving "likes" on Face book, for example, will stimulate a small dose of dopamine—the "feel good" chemical in our brain. We are barely aware of what we are doing, which doesn't require a psychologist to tell you is a significant factor in addiction.

This feature provides both gratification and a form of power. It's in this that the irony should be so painfully clear: we believe that by engaging in dialog—not discussion mind you—we are creating affirmation and association. Instead, we have built the new Babel. Do we think God will let us get away with it once again?

For just one example, is it our notion that our society has devolved to the point where antisemitism has re-emerged, (or come out of the closet where it was always hiding) or, are we where we are because it's no longer necessary to hide it? Antisemitism, like racism, and the entire list of the new cultural hegemonies didn't just happen, they were orchestrated.

Lyndon Johnson (pictured) rolled out **The Great Society** nearly 60 years ago. I was in High School, as was Donald Trump. And Joe Biden? He was already learning the fine craft of grifting. What's happened since then? A decade ago, Project 21's **Jerome Hudson** said, *"Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty produced a reality that is horrifyingly different than the one he probably hoped for. Instead of providing a mere safety net for families in need, it effectively replaced the virtues of work and self-reliance with an avalanche of welfare programs nurturing the poor. These welfare programs foster defeatism, disincentivize two-parent homes and set ablaze an American underclass now seemingly trapped in a never-ending cycle of poverty."*

I'm not as charitable as Mr. Hudson. I remember LBJ, and I find it very hard to believe he actually hoped he was helping. He wanted to advance overly broad, far-reaching government controls. He was about power. Ironically, all the social, educational, and welfare programs that are failing us now were created in that era, and largely by him.

"told the American people that they must accept "greater government activity in the affairs of the people," little did they know how destructive a bargain they were making. In 1965, the Great Society's "War on Poverty" began a massive infusion of federal tax dollars and involvement into pre-K and K–12 education. It also created new taxpayer-underwritten student loans and grants for the general public to attend college. Since then, federal taxpayers have spent $2 trillion on K–12 education alone—to say nothing of the billions spent annually on student loans and grants."
My hope and prayer is that in the coming months there will be an awakening; that we will see a movement by God among His people. That we will abandon our towers and deceit and turn to Him for forgiveness and redemption.

We will see soon enough. For now, remain steadfast and pray.

Photo by **Sean Whelan** on **Unsplash**

The End of the Beginning…

JANUARY 5, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

or the beginning of something else

By J. Jeff Toler for Shenandoah Christian Alliance **j.toler@sca4christ.org**

"If something cannot go on forever, it will stop" *– Herbert Stein*

- ***For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:*** (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

Who hasn't heard the expression, "*Just when you thought things couldn't get any worse…*" quickly followed by any example of something that just got worse? The idea that things couldn't get any worse is simply laughable. It doesn't require a genius, a psychic—or even a cynic—to know things can certainly get worse. Of course they can get worse, as anyone one of who has lived long enough will testify. The issue is not a question of inevitability, but of how willing we are to prepare for it.

Oddly enough, many who predicted the year 2023 could only get worse after 2022 might have been somewhat relieved, if they really think about it, insofar as it really wasn't *as* bad as it might have been… it could have been much worse. That may be due in large part because 2021 and 2022 were so very, very awful.

Murphy's law is an adage or epigram that's typically stated as: "*Anything that can go wrong will go wrong.*" In some formulations, it's extended to "*Anything that can go wrong will go wrong, and at the*

worst possible time."

Technically, as it turns out, Murphy wasn't the first one to have made this observation. In 1866 **Augustus De Morgan,** a British mathematician, wrote that "*whatever can happen will happen.*" The only real difference in the two quotations is the degree of cynicism.

We shouldn't be limiting ourselves to mere adages and epigrams when considering what's really happening. Instead, we must see the bigger picture.

As I pointed out in an earlier essay, the world is heading for a great upheaval this year. I'm not the only one who thinks so. For most people, there has been a sense of something not quite right about our lives anymore. Something unpredictable, something portentous even, which again, I alluded to just last week. I'm reminded of this line from **"Macbeth"** by **Wm. Shakespeare,** *"By the pricking of my thumbs, Something wicked this way comes."* Admittedly, that may be laying it on a bit thick, but most of us can understand the "signs of the times" in which we are now living.

Very recently, I discovered someone who is describing this postulate in ways to help us better identify and understand. His name is **Jonathan Pageau**, (pictured) and he is an Orthodox Christian. Many of his podcasts can be found here: His podcast, "The End of the World" however, can only be accessed within the **DailyWire**. Unhappily for some, it resides behind a paywall, but content like this is actually worth the monthly subscription, and so I can heartily recommend it. Try it. You can cancel at any time.

Pageau makes some very important observations in his first installment, aptly titled: "State of Chaos." I say aptly because chaos is precisely what's happening. We're now living in chaos. All of our basic conventions of thought; the social, cultural, and institutional constructs that have survived the twentieth century, have begun to spin and fly apart. When people can no longer hold on to meaning, tradition, values, or even basic truths, it is probably because great civilizational change is happening.

More than this, it's even happening *to* us. The introduction to his series reads, *"The carnival of chaos has managed to supplant the traditional, rational world. The wheel of cohesion that keeps*

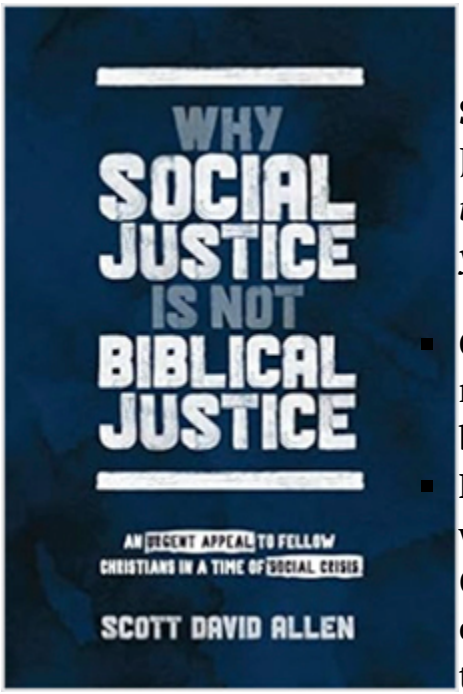
society together is breaking down spiritually, culturally, and mentally."

He begins by identifying, "*the breakdown of religious thought, the breakdown of the national narrative, even the mental breakdown of people around … these are symptoms of the end of something."*

Pageau explains that our lives are lived in "little worlds" and that this is always the way things have abeen. There is a beginning and an end to every world in and of every life. It would seem that when we notice the things beyond us that have always provided cohesion for us individually and collectively—are now shaking our trust in them, we take notice.

For example, Pageau wonders, *"Why is it that in the movies, girls are beating up guys—non-stop—for the past ten years?"* This simple observation is just one part of the overall gestalt of the myriad of identities—and identity confusion that seem to literally engender (pun intended) endless permutations.

We can honestly say that little, if anything, is sacred anymore. And I will maintain that this is at the heart of the chaos: the loss of what has always been considered sacred and holy. Indeed, even among the holy men of God, there is confusion and incoherence. The past year (or so) included a number of examples of which **"social justice gospel"** pastors and teachers are promoting messages that embrace many of the artifacts of a secularist culture—as if the gospel needed a prefix of any kind other than Christian.



Scott David Allen, author of "Why Social Justice Is Not Biblical Justice" writes, *"Conformity to God's moral standard as revealed in the Ten Commandments and the Royal Law: "love your neighbor as yourself."*

- **Communitive justice:** (as relating to community) living in right relationship with God and others; giving people their due as image-bearers of God.
- **Distributive justice:** impartially rendering judgment, righting wrongs, and meting out punishment for lawbreaking. Reserved for God and God-ordained authorities including parents in the home, elders in the church, teachers in the school, and civil authorities in the state.

And so it is, while some people are altering—even *transmogrifying* their bodies to become distortions—even monsters—of the *imago Dei*, the Holy is being cheapened and adulterated with

false teaching, heresy, and something secularists are so fond of vaunting: *inclusivity*.

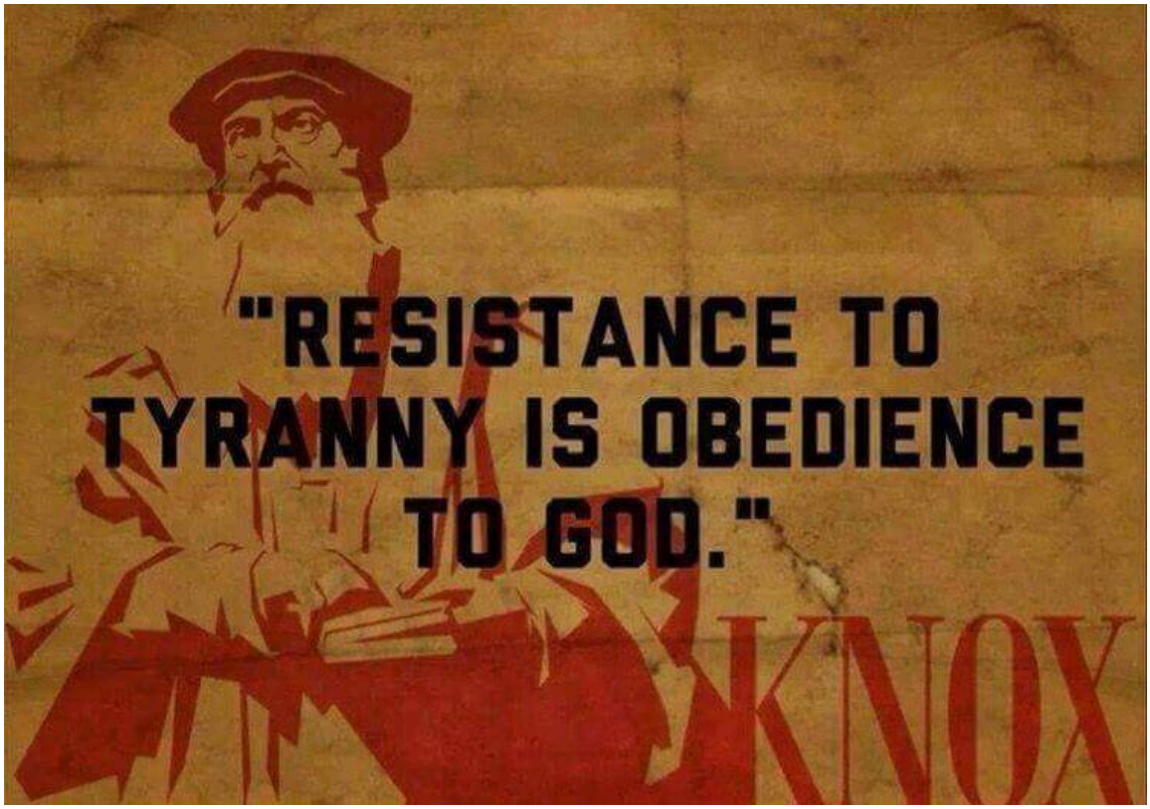
This last point is extremely important in understanding and confronting chaos and those who facilitate it.

- ***"For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord's people."*** (1 Corinthians 14:33)

Photo by **Frank Albrecht** on **Unsplash**

The Great Resist

JANUARY 1, 2024
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: GREAT RESET, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, TRIBULATION



Those of us who believe we are charged by the Lord to be "watchers" on the wall look at the acceleration of stage-setting for prophetic fulfillment as a wondrous thing to behold. There can be no missing the reality that we are fast approaching the dénouement of the Age of Grace.

No recent development has been more significant than the movement toward establishing a New World Order. A specific element that is most troubling within that movement is termed "the great reset."

This term, defined within the title of a book by the same name, means the globalization of the entire world—those who intend to establish a world under a single governmental rulership must, in their view, not be thwarted. The very existence of the planet depends upon their being able to achieve their goals—goals encapsulated within what they call Agenda 21 and now Agenda 30. This "agenda" means they must accomplish all their shaping of this global order no later than the year 2030.

These would-be globalist masters don't see the things developing as we do by looking at them through the prism of Bible prophecy. While we see things advancing toward Antichrist's regime at an amazing and frightening pace, the globalists, such as author of the book, *The Great Reset,* see

things as being slowed and inhibited by forces they must eliminate. That is, they must eliminate those like *us,* for example. And by "us," I mean both we who are Christians pointing out their evil, and this nation, the United States of America, whose people have been steeped in basic liberty and God-given rights from a Judeo-Christian foundation for almost three centuries.

America is the single most powerful hold-up to Agenda 30 and the Great Reset. This nation, the most materially blessed in history, will not "go gentle into that good night," as Dylan Thomas would have it. We won't easily be made to ride bicycles, stay within fifteen-minute cities, and eat bugs instead of the foods we love, like the Great Resetters and their agenda insist we should do. There will be major pushback for as long as the nation exists as it is presently comprised.

Of course, the American, liberty-loving/enjoying constituency is under constant attack by the powers and principalities of Ephesians 6:12, both demonic and human. And that luciferian cabal is determined to take down America and eliminate all opposition to their agenda. These minions call the opposition they face "the retreat from globalization." The following excerpt gives more detail of Klaus Schwab and his cohorts' determination to change things so their neo-tower of Babel can be built, free of opposition.

> Klaus Schwab and Theirry Malleret's book *Covid-19: The Great Reset* identified "the global governance free fall" as an existential challenge, and if we do not collaborate, "we are doomed."
>
> "Nation states make global governance possible (one leads the other)," the book states. "The more nationalism and isolationism pervade the global polity, the greater the chance that global governance loses its relevance and becomes ineffective. Sadly, we are now at this critical juncture. Put bluntly, we live in a world in which nobody is really in charge."…
>
> Kristalina Georgieva suggested "concentrating on the areas where, without working together, we are doomed." The examples she gave as "we are doomed" without globalization were "climate change," the "green transition," and debt…
>
> The authors don't explain why there is a need for an "individual reset"; they simply assumed it was a consequence of the Covid "pandemic." However, as they did throughout the book, they used collectivism as a tool of social control. "If, as human beings, we do not collaborate to confront our existential challenges (the environment and the global governance free fall, among others), we are doomed," they claimed…. The rise of nationalism makes the retreat of globalization inevitable in most of the world – an impulse particularly notable in the West. The vote for Brexit and the election of President Trump on a protectionist platform are two momentous markers of the Western backlash against globalization," the two authors wrote. ("Klaus Schwab wants to stop the retreat of globalization and global governance with a new form of globalization and global governance," Rhoda Wilson, Expose-news.com 12/19/23)

As the writer of the article further writes:

> As we have said before, the term "the common good" and its ugly sister, "the greater good," represent collectivism, which is found in socialist, communist, and fascist movements. These movements use "the common good" as a tool for social control.

This is exactly what we see happening within the American political process today. The incessant drive to bring about a Marxist collective system is at the heart of the attempted Great Reset being foisted by the human minions, assisted by the demonic of Ephesians 6:12, in my studied opinion.

I heard a senator speaking before the Senate chamber the other day. I like what he said, although I'm almost certain he didn't realize the true import of his statement.

He said something like: "Instead of the un-American Great Reset, we need the Great Resist. We must resist this attempted Marxist-type tyranny."

The Great Resist is precisely what is given within God's Word as opposition to Satan and his minions' attempts to bring to power the man of sin, Antichrist, and his regime of horrors.

> "And now ye know what that might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only who now will until be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" (2 Thessalonians 6-8).

We who know the Lord Jesus for salvation are part of the Great Resist. Pastors, listen up! Don't resist the Great Resist. To resist the Great Resist, you are aiding and assisting those who want to bring about the Great Reset.

Preach Bible prophecy—and from the pre-Trib view. Jesus is about to intervene in the wicked affairs of humankind. The Rapture, according to all the signs and signals of the coming Tribulation raging in every direction, is about to disrupt life on planet Earth!

For those who haven't done so, here is how to be prepared, thus be assured that you will go to Jesus Christ when He calls all believers to Himself in that stupendous moment of rescue from this judgment-bound earth.

> "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:9-10).

SOURCE: **PROPHECY LINE**

This is the Place Where We Belong

DECEMBER 23, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

We traveled a lifetime to get here.

By J. Jeff Toler for Shenandoah Christian Alliance **j.toler@sca4christ.org**

"Nostalgia is a file that removes the rough edges from the good old days." (**Doug Larson**)

Since May of 2020, I've written about the challenging, often heartbreaking, certainly deteriorating culture here and abroad; the affairs of both Church and State. I write about what I see and hear in our schools, the courts, the halls of Congress, and the state houses. I read carefully and listen closely. I spend a lot of time writing about marriage, the family, our communities, the worldview praxis of Marxist/secularist theory and its war with the Kingdom of God. (The what?)

In these times there is no lack of subject matter—no dearth of controversial topics and their impact on us. But I will say this: even though by now I might have degreed in political science or sociology, I still won't claim I'm an expert.

I matriculated to **Art Center College of Design**, which has consistently ranked in the top 15 art schools in the world.

I had little or no interest, much less desire, to spend my time thinking about the things I now write about each week. This is not to say I wasn't paying attention to the culture I lived in, it's just

that my focus was on developing my talent and skills in marketing and advertising to the culture that existed then.

Art Center was, and still is, a very competitive, very disciplined environment. My student days there were very intense. I was, at best, an average student in high school, and so I never dreamed I would one day advocate for a good education.

Upon reflection, I think God always had different plans for me than I did. I also think I was, and perhaps still am, fighting Him all the way. Perhaps I have tested God and found that among His character and attributes for which I should be most grateful is His patience. Have you thanked God for Him being slow to anger? For being kind and Gracious? I confess, I do.

I remember once seeing this very wise message on a bumper sticker: "No matter where you go in life, there you are."

Where does God want us to be? What does He want us to do? When asking a friend and fellow worship leader how to know what God thinks regarding my career trajectory, he quoted to me this: ***"He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."*** Here is a truth: If we *do what* he wants for us, we will *be where* he wants us.

Many years later, I now understand why this verse brought me such peace. The long road didn't take me to some earthly destination; some fabulous success, or a rich payoff. That's okay. I'm

already living in the best place anyone can be on this earth: The Kingdom of God. It's in His Kingdom that makes every other stronghold look alien and unsatisfying. I am where I am because I have journeyed long to be here.

It is this Kingdom that brought God to earth: To establish it here, so we may live in it and be strong in faith, and know real joy. Yes, He came as a little baby as we came into the world, but it was He who would split time in two.

Life and work experiences in and of themselves don't describe, much less shape, our lives as much as what we learn on the journey about ourselves and our relationship with God. When God is willing to come to us, be with us, and love us; these things—these experiences—are shaped by our response to Him.

Now we see that so many have lost the innate appeal, attraction, and affection for a newborn baby. Why have the newborn become disposable? For that matter, why is life itself no longer sacred and precious for this generation's "thought leaders" and philosophers? The answer is this: the new intellectuals have no idea where they are, what they are doing, and where they are going. This is why Jesus came into this world as a baby: so all may see and hear.

The name of Jesus in Greek is *"Ἰησοῦς"* (pronounced "Iēsoūs"). The Greek name Ἰησοῦς is a transliteration of the Hebrew name *"Yeshua"* (יֵשׁוּעַ), which means "Yahweh saves" or "Yahweh is salvation." Yahweh is the best approximation of the revealed Hebrew name of God, YHWH, which translated means "He Who Makes That Which Has Been Made." Immanuel means "God with us." This name is who Jesus *is*, but not His *given* name. This name for a little baby would become the the name to which everyone will one day bow. The wonder of the Christmas story is but a part of the complete story His life—it's meaning and it's purpose—of His birth, His death, and the eternity he opened up for the faithful.

Could God have offered salvation and righteousness to His beloved any other way? Perhaps, but it's unimaginable. Everything God does is perfection. It's we who tend to mess it up. And so we need forgiveness.

My life, as unremarkable as it may be to some people, is still very important to God. My journey and my purpose will likely mean very little to others, but God finds me important enough to send me my Savior as a little baby. I did not need to just imagine Him as a person, I love Him as a person and worship Him as God in the flesh. He is, "Fully God, fully human."

"Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod? When you kiss your little baby, You kiss the face of God?" (From "Mary, Did You Know" by **Mark Lowry**, pictured). Listen here:

Let's not mince words. The world right now is in serious crisis. It certainly has been before, but these present times *seem* different. My grandmother told me the second world war was dreadful. Many, she said, thought Hitler was the Antichrist. She wasn't convinced because she knew her Bible well. She knew there were many religions, but Satanism wasn't one of them. She would be amazed that Satan's image would appear in the rotunda of a statehouse. Though many predict these are the end times, still, the Bible says He will come like a thief in the night—when no one is expecting Him. Israel was expecting the Messiah for hundreds of years.

- ***When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.*** (Luke 2:17-20)

This Christmas offers us, once again, the miracle of Jesus' birth. This same Jesus who will one day judge the nations.

Merry Christmas to all!

What if Jesus Had Never Been Born?

DECEMBER 16, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

His Birth — The Greatest Story Ever Told — Our Destiny

This Weekend on Valley Radio, Dec. 16-17,

with Pastor Todd Pruitt, or Online HERE Anytime

There is no doubt that Christmas is the most celebrated season of every year, with its beautiful lights and decorations, wonderful music, great food, tinkling bells, gift exchanges, colorful parades, and touching displays of Baby Jesus in a manger!

But it's so easy to take it all for granted, and that is what our Crossroads program is all about this weekend as we take on the big question from a challenging book by the late D. James Kennedy entitled *"What If Jesus Had Never Been Born?"*

To help answer that question, Pastor Todd Pruitt from Covenant Presbyterian Church here in Harrisonburg breaks it down for us in seven different ways, as we repeat our program from last year.

1. Jesus' Birth: The Immaculate Conception and the Incarnation

We begin with Jesus' birth. It's all recorded in the Gospel of Luke beginning with Angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary that she was going to have a baby, even though she had never had a relationship with a man. In addition, Gabriel said the baby would be called Jesus, the Son of God.

On top of that, the Gospel of John reports that "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us as the only begotten Son of God" But how could Jesus Himself later claim that He was one with God the Father, and that the Father was in Him and He in the Father. How could this be, fully man and fully God?

No one else could or ever would make that claim, and it's not surprising that religious leaders of the day charged Him with blasphemy and deserving of death on a cruel cross.

Finally, however it happened and whatever it meant at the time, why is it still such a big deal more than 2000 years later, so that even our calendar is divided before and after His birth, BC and AD!

2. His Redeeming Life

So we move on to explore the purpose of His life, His death, and His resurrection. For example, what does it mean in John 3:16, that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, and that whoever believed on Him shall not perish but instead will have everlasting life."

How can it be that belief in Jesus would give anyone eternal life? Or that Jesus could later take on the power of God to forgive and to redeem men of their sins?

3. His Miracles and His Mission

In addition, we must go on to explore the purpose of His three years of public life that included His Miracles, His Mission, and His Message.

Regarding His Miracles, how could He turn water into wine, heal the sick, raise the dead, feed the multitudes, walk on water, quiet the storms, and then Himself rise from the dead? Was it out of simple compassion for those who were suffering?

Or was it part of His Mission to prove His divinity and His power as the Son of God? Or maybe it was simply to call attention to His Message of Love for all men and to highlight His offer of Salvation from sin and for eternal life with Him in heaven?

4. His Ministry and His Global Impact

Finally, what impact, if any, did His ministry have on the world and on the pages of history over the past 2000 years? Alternatively, what would our world look like today if He had never been born or if His church had never existed?

For example, what about the vast network of Christian hospitals and relief organizations that were established by His church? Or the corresponding network of Christian schools that have grown over the centuries in so many countries? That includes the early schools in America where even our colleges and universities were established to train young leaders for service in their churches and in the development of our country.

Beyond that, what about the great cathedrals, the incredible art of masters like Michelangelo, and the beautiful music of Johann Sebastian Bach that he created solely for the glory of God or, in his words, "Soli Deo Gloria".

And what about the great work of Christians like William Wilberforce who led the drive to abolish slavery in Great Britain, or about the wisdom of our early clergymen and the Founding Fathers who built America on Judeo-Christian values and Biblical principles, and many others.

As Dr. Kennedy concluded in his book, "The Church has made more changes for the good than any other movement or force in history."

5. Our Worldwide Rebellions against God

Sadly, despite this proven record of Jesus' positive influence on the world throughout this 2,000 year period, a hateful group of detractors still insist today that Christianity has been and continues to be a negative force in the world, and demand that its voice be silenced and removed – just as Jesus was attacked in His day.

However, the historical record shows that where Christ is not recognized and where God is not glorified, tyrants have left a trail of blood across the landscape.

For example, in the last several centuries alone, some 125 million people were killed by godless dictators like Josef Stalin in the Soviet Union (40), Adolf Hitler in Germany (15), and Mao Tse-Tung in China (70). Over 100 million others were also killed in WWI and WWII.

So that is a clear answer to our big question: "What If Jesus Had Never Been Born?" Very simply, if left unchecked, we would have a world of ruthless dictators who create rivers of blood in their personal pursuit of power and in their rebellion against God.

6. Our Personal Rebellions and National Challenges

But it's not just about other leaders in distant lands. We also need to recognize what happens in America when we turn our own backs on God and reject Jesus' call on our own lives.

— For example, we too have blood on our hands from the more than 63 million babies who have been aborted in America since the Supreme Court decision on *Roe v. Wade* in 1973.

— And we too are witnesses to the growing sexual immorality fed by pornography which, like cancer, leaves a trail of ruined men, exploited women, broken marriages, damaged children, disease, crime, and violent death.

— We have also redefined God's beautiful design for marriage to now include same-sex relationships. And we too face growing attacks on our Christian beliefs and on our religious freedoms just as Jesus, the prophets, and the disciples also did in their day.

— Bluntly stated, it is a situation that Dr. Kennedy likens to the pagan cultures that existed before, during, and after the time of Christ, and which rejected God in favor of their own idols of wood and stone or, in our time, in favor of our own personal idols of power, prosperity, and popularity.

7. Our Need of a Savior

This all brings us back to Christmas, when God sent His Son into the world, not to condemn the world but that the world through Him might be saved. It is a clear recognition that we too are in need of a Savior.

We too can claim the promise that Jesus gave that we could be saved from a life of slavery to our sins here on earth and for a life in eternity with Him if we confess our sins and believe on Him. It's a decision that affects both our earthly well-being and our eternal destinies.

So that is why we celebrate the birth of Jesus as we do, joyfully and thankfully, every day and every year. It's a celebration of how Jesus, His disciples, and His Church have turned the world upside down over the past 2,000 years, and how He continues to call all of us to Himself. *Laus Deo*.

Crossroads at Christmas: Where Faith and Culture Meet

For more on all of this, please join Rita and me with our special guest Pastor Todd Pruitt this weekend for a repeat of last year's program on the big question: *"What If Jesus Had Never Been Born?"*

It will air on WBTX (1470 AM and 102.1 FM) today (Saturday) at 4:00 p.m. and again on Sunday at 7:30 a.m., followed by WSVA (550 AM and 92.1 FM) at 8:30, ESPN (1360 AM and 106.9 FM) at 9:00, and on WNLR (1150 AM) at 11:30. If you miss the broadcast and would like to listen again, you can also listen online by clicking on the Crossroad's menu shown on our home page at **www.valleyfamilyforum.org**.

Crossroads is almost entirely listener supported, and we deeply appreciate your prayers, your encouragement, and your financial support. If you would like to help, please send your check to Crossroads at PO Box 881, Harrisonburg, 22803. All donations are tax-deductible.

Thank You and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year

Finally, on behalf of the entire Crossroads Team and with appreciation for our radio hosts, our sponsors, and our other supporters and many listeners, we hope you have a Very Merry Christmas and a Time of Worshipful Remembrance and Joyful Adoration for Jesus Christ and what His Birth means for us today, and as we prepare for the coming New Year.

From Dean, for the Crossroads Team, with Thanksgiving and Praise.

Working and Walking Together, We Can Make a Difference for God and Country

“Joy Canceled” for Christmas; Menorah Lighting Controversy & A “Religious Takeover” in Hanover

DECEMBER 13, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

This week, Candi and Victoria check out an absolutely inconceivable moment captured on a college campus and how that discourse has impacted Virginia’s politics. Plus, good news from Hanover County!

"Joy Canceled" for Christmas; Menorah Lighting Controversy & A "Religious Takeover" in Hanover

https://youtube.com/watch?v=gP4pGAnzlPo

Living up to “Christian” This Christmas

DECEMBER 13, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNCATEGORIZED

Jordan Chamblee | **The Stand**

When my wife and I named our first baby, we drew from a well of various family names. We limited ourselves to family names not just because we liked the way they sounded, but also because they had a deeper significance and meaning to us. Some names sound strong, some sound pretty, some sound old-fashioned, and others sound biblical. Parents tend to choose names that fit the person they want their child to grow up to be.

This proves equally true for groups, including the early church. One name they called themselves was “*the followers of the Way*” (**Acts 9:2**), summarizing their core identity as disciples of the one true path to God in Jesus Christ. But another name ultimately stuck: Christians. “*The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch*” (**Acts 11:26**). This label defined them by their adherence to Christ.

Throughout history, groups within the faith adopted names highlighting distinctive attributes. The Puritans aimed to purify the church of corruption. The Separatists, instead of reforming from within, separated entirely from what they considered an irredeemable institution. In America, we remember Separatists as the Pilgrims, underscoring how they journeyed to a foreign land to practice their faith unhindered.

The Methodists earned their name early on for their methodical approach to biblical disciplines. Baptists insisted that only believers should get baptized rather than infants. Regardless of the name or its origin story, an underlying meaning and set of assumptions lay attached.

Tragically, over time the name "Christian" has largely lost its meaning. Now qualifiers like "cultural Christian," "born-again Christian," "progressive Christian," and "practicing Christian" attempt to clarify the definition. The occasional fringe group even co-opts the name "Christian" to advance twisted agendas contrary to Christ's actual life and doctrine, breeding further confusion. The only accurate test of one's Christianity remains in examining how one lives.

What is Your Name?

So, what name would an outsider assign your worldview based on observing your life's patterns? What assumptions about your beliefs might materialize? Do your behaviors align with what you profess every Sunday at church? Or does a disconnect exist, hinting at hypocrisy or misaligned priorities between your stated creed and actual conduct? Essentially, does your personal brand match Christianity's?

As we enter another Christmas season and prepare for visits from unbelieving friends and family, what image of our faith will they leave with based on firsthand observation of our celebration? What overall impression of Christianity will interactions with us create in their mind and heart? Will they view genuine followers of Jesus as materialistic, hollow, hypocritical, and shallow? Or might they conclude that lives claimed by Christ possess substantive meaning, moral integrity, and selfless character?

In many ways, the traditional trimmings of Christmas can set us up for such skepticism. Unbelievers expect the frenzy and stress when they visit our homes during December. Feverously heaping piles of gifts feed notions that Christians crave materialism as much as any culture-swept consumer. Sweating over mile-long baking, cooking, decorating, and to-do lists suggests believers, too, surrender constantly to exhaustion and anxiety. We mouth exhortations about goodwill toward mankind while wrestling over politics and grievances with the same unrestrained venom as anyone.

Assessing Ourselves

Yet precisely here lies the opportunity to confront these assumptions. We can showcase patience amid chaos, not because we grit our teeth but rather because God's perfect love reverberates in our hearts, casting out fear and anxiety. We can refuse obsession over hollow materialism this year not through sheer grit but by fixing our eyes on the true Gift given for us that first Christmas morning. Kindness, care, understanding, and compassion can flow readily from us these next few

weeks not because custom demands polite family banter but rather because Christ's Spirit fills and fuels us afresh day after day.

In other words, we have a chance to live out our Christianity authentically instead of merely stating claims about it. To do so requires evaluating our actions this season through the lens of outsiders peering inside. And where we spot disparity between what we say versus what we do, adjustment is required since actions always outweigh words as the true test of what someone believes at their core.

This certainly makes the Christmas gathering more complicated. It means examining every conversation topic we allow through filters like, "Does this reinforce shallow stereotypes an unbeliever might already harbor about Christians?" It means assessing activities and discussion topics based on what they highlight about our values, priorities, and beliefs. It means retraining reflex reactions to annoying relatives to default, less on anger or argument and more on understanding them as souls in need of a Savior, not opponents in need of conquering by superior facts or zingers. And considering even simple logistic hosting decisions like meal options and schedules through the filter of how these impact our ability to meaningfully connect with these divine appointments specially placed before us this holiday season.

A Special Opportunity at Christmas

We certainly do not want to limit this to one season a year. Unbelieving friends and family members likely only remember what they witness when it is consistently modeled, not what briefly gushes forth once annually.

At the same time, something about Christmas specifically spotlights values and beliefs like no other holiday on our calendar. So, while authentic Christianity never confines itself to December, opportunities during this season uniquely capture the observer's attention. Imagery and symbolism point explicitly to the gospel. Carols magnifying Christ's nature, character, and work, strike receptive chords in people's souls this time of year. And substantiating hopes like "*good will toward men*" or "*peace on earth*" with strategic conversations about the Prince of Peace strikes while the iron of human longing glows hot.

Bottom line, Christmas provides occasional Christian acquaintances an annual glimpse inside the meaning, motivation, and priorities marking our entire existence. For some unbelieving observers, brief holiday exposure to siblings or friends may comprise their only firsthand brush with genuine Christianity. What we vocalize, prioritize, and value during this season frames their perception of faith, likely determining whether they ever look closer or turn away forever.

So, with Christmas on the horizon, let's accept the holy calling to become image-bearers showcasing through word and deed what rooted-down discipleship means. As we rub elbows with the watching world this December, may the resonance of Christ within us inspire unbelievers to

hunger more for the joy, purpose, community, grace, and real fulfillment flowing from our Savior into every crack and crevice of our daily lives. And within family chaos ripe for miscommunication may the message of Christ trump all else, steering conversations ever back to the common ground we all share: that two millennia ago Light pierced the darkness to reconcile humanity once and for all to the God of all comfort, restoration, justice, and peace.

SOURCE: **THE STAND**

Progressive Christianity: Why Is It Increasing and What Can be Done?

DECEMBER 13, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL SEXUALITY, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, TRADITIONAL FAMILY VALUES

Sarah Holliday | **The Washington Stand.**

1 Thessalonians 5:6 says, "So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober." Scripture often refers to the dichotomy of being asleep and being awake. While some references to those who are "asleep" apply to those who no longer live on the earth, there are many cases in which those who are "asleep" are very much alive, but they are living apathetic to the truth. Christians, on the other hand, are called to be "awake," alert, and "sober."

We live in a culture rapidly growing apathetic to truth, don't we? However, it's expected for a worldly person who claims no affiliation with religion to live ignorant of the truth. But when the indifference comes from the "church," believers bare a different burden. Despite the message of modernity, the Bible *is* clear on many issues these so-called Christians have chosen to conflate. Their itchy ears have wandered into myths, and they've formed a religion based upon *their* truth, not God's (2 Timothy 4:3).

As The Epoch Times's Chris Smith **reported**, these progressive church policies, or the "wokeness," increasingly entering the church have caused fractures among denominations. The United

Methodist Church (UMC), a Christian denomination, has lost many churches as it embraces LGBT ideology. Another denomination, the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC), has lost two churches (one was voted out) on similar grounds. The Southern Baptist Convention, considered to be the largest U.S. Protestant denomination, "lost one of its largest churches in California because it elevated women into leadership positions," Smith wrote.

In one regard, it's good that local churches are willing to walk away from faulty denominations, or that denominations are willing to part from faulty churches. However, the question remains: Why are these Christians bowing to the world's standards in the first place?

Joseph Backholm, senior fellow at the Center for Biblical Worldview, shared with The Washington Stand, "In one sense this is a new problem, but in another sense it's a very old problem."

As to *why* this is taking place, Backholm explained, "The church has always wrestled with the challenge of being governed by cultural trends rather than the gospel." Even so, it's common for the enemy to adjust his means of attack. In this case, as Backholm put it, "The fact that Marxist theory in the form of 'wokeness' has become the new hotness in some Christian circles is a recent phenomenon in America." But again, while this specific attack may be somewhat foreign to believers, we quickly recognize the same enemy behind it.

Backholm continued, "The first century church struggled with public displays of religiosity, circumcision, and what to do with meat sacrificed to idols, because those were the cultural convictions that conflicted with the gospel." And now, he added, "the cultural convictions that conflict with the gospel have to do with identity, the source of truth, and whether God actually wants us to repent or mostly just wants us to be happy and comfortable."

To a degree, it's that simple. Christian or not, this world is fallen, and no person is fully exempt from the toxic fumes of sin. At least, not in this life.

As the world goes round, we recognize more quickly, as stated in Ecclesiastes 1:9, "What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun." These waves of persecution will continue to crash onto the shores of faithfulness until the Lord returns. And 1 Thessalonians 5:2 states, "For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night." So, even amid persecution, we are to be prepared.

Which leads to a second question: What should Christians be doing to prepare?

Christian author Eric Metaxas wrote in his book, "Letter to the American Church," that "silence in the face of evil is itself evil." He labors the notion that the church is called to stand *against* the culture as we engage in the spiritual fight regarding the principalities and powers of this world (Ephesians 6:12).

As such, Metaxas emphasizes the point that fighting evil does not politicize Christianity as some are concerned about, because **it was never about politics**. While the world and these woke, crumbling churches and denominations may see their beliefs as politically correct, "with the times," and perhaps loving, it doesn't change the fact that God's truth is eternal. It never changes, and it never will. Any church that changes the message to fit the times is preaching a false gospel, and that is not an envious position to be in (Galatians 1:8).

James 1:12a says, "Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial," and there are many means in which we do so.

First, we remember whose side we are on. Christian, you are on the winning team, and "thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57).

Second, we stay fixed on "Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith" in all things, at all times (Hebrews 12:2a). And in looking to Jesus, we must consistently be in God's word, which is truth (John 17:17).

But ultimately, what serves as the foundation for the Christian is the choice we have to make. We must decide how we are going to live in relation to who we are going to live for. And for the Christian, 1 John 2:6 states, "whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked."

Backholm put it plainly, "The solution to this challenge has always been the same." He concluded, "We have to decide whether we're trying to shape our minds around God's word or whether we're trying to shape God's word around our minds. The former produces actual Christianity, the latter produces so-called progressive Christianity."

SOURCE: **THE WASHINGTON STAND**

Sarah Holliday is a reporter at The Washington Stand.

John 10:10 Project World Premiere: THE GREATEST GIFT

DECEMBER 10, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: JOHN 10:10 PROJECT

Since the inception of the **John 10:10 Project**, each December we've produced a video that celebrates the wonder and blessings of the Christmas season. In keeping with this tradition, today we are pleased to premiere **THE GREATEST GIFT**,

This new video was inspired by my recent study of John's gospel. In it, the apostle adds a remarkable dimension to the Christmas story that is often overlooked. The opening verses (1-14) of the first chapter proclaim that Jesus (who entered the world as a human child in a Bethlehem manger) was present–with God the Father and the Holy Spirit–when the universe was created from absolutely nothing.

THE GREATEST GIFT

https://vimeo.com/891656373

The implications of this truth are fascinating and important. The Christmas story really begins long before Matthew and Luke's first century descriptions of shepherds, angels, and a stable. Those beloved events were actually the fulfillment of an eternal plan that God set into motion when He created the heavens and the earth. It was a plan with the power to ultimately save the world from sin with the most glorious treasure we could ever receive. I hope you enjoy **THE GREATEST GIFT** and its message of everlasting redemption and joy to the world.

On behalf of the John 10:10 Project team, have a wonderful Christmas,

“An Extremist Religious Takeover”

DECEMBER 8, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL SEXUALITY, TRADITIONAL FAMILY VALUES

“And extremist religious takeover.” That is how one liberal resident described The Family Foundation’s efforts to give local parents and citizens a voice through its ***Speak Up!*** Hanover team and policy engagement tools.

In another social media post, a resident activist in Hanover decried how our government relations team is providing policy and legal analysis to support parent-centered policies to school board members, all while they cheer on LGBTQ groups and support the ACLU’s lawsuits intended to force the school board into adopting radical transgender policies that, among other things, violate the privacy and safety of young female students. See for yourself.

Since the summer of 2021, The Family Foundation has worked to equip and empower the Speak UP! Hanover team to consistently speak at Hanover school board meetings to help encourage board members to:

- reject the transgender-issue policies published under Northam administration that violated parental rights, threatened the bodily safety and privacy of students, and violated core constitutional protections;

- adopt a bathroom use policy based on biological sex that is consistent with current federal and state law;
- implement the model policies published by the Virginia Department of Education that establish procedures for notifying parents when sexually explicit content is used in the classroom and providing parents an opportunity to request an alternative assignment;
- implement a school library book policy that provides oversight and review of literature in school libraries to ensure students cannot access pornographic materials that hold no academic value; and
- adoption of the **Model Policies on Ensuring Privacy, Dignity, and Respect for All Students and Parents in Virginia's Public Schools.**

We are pleased that the school board listened to members of their community in support of parental rights – not just those who shout the loudest. Let's be clear, the Hanover School Board is enacting policies that reflect the conservative values and principles of a majority of residents who actually don't want woke curriculum and sexually explicit materials presented to their children. If the leftists in Hanover County want to credit The Family Foundation through its Speak Up! Hanover team for helping that to happen, we'll gladly wear that as a badge of honor. That's exactly what we exist to do.

In another social media post, that same resident activist lamented that the Hanover School Board received training from the School Board Member Alliance (SBMA), a separate 501c3 entity that our Founding Freedoms Law Center helped launch, which is aimed at providing school board members guidance on managing the board, enacting policies, and other helpful resources. Again, we're happy to receive credit for helping provide professional advice to school boards. Take a look:

Comments like these about the impact The Family Foundation is having through its Speak UP! Hanover team just goes to show how the light is shining through the darkness. We are having success and making a difference even at the local school board level. And we know that the more successful places like Hanover are at defending parental rights, the more it inspires parents in other localities that could lead to significant pro-family policies.

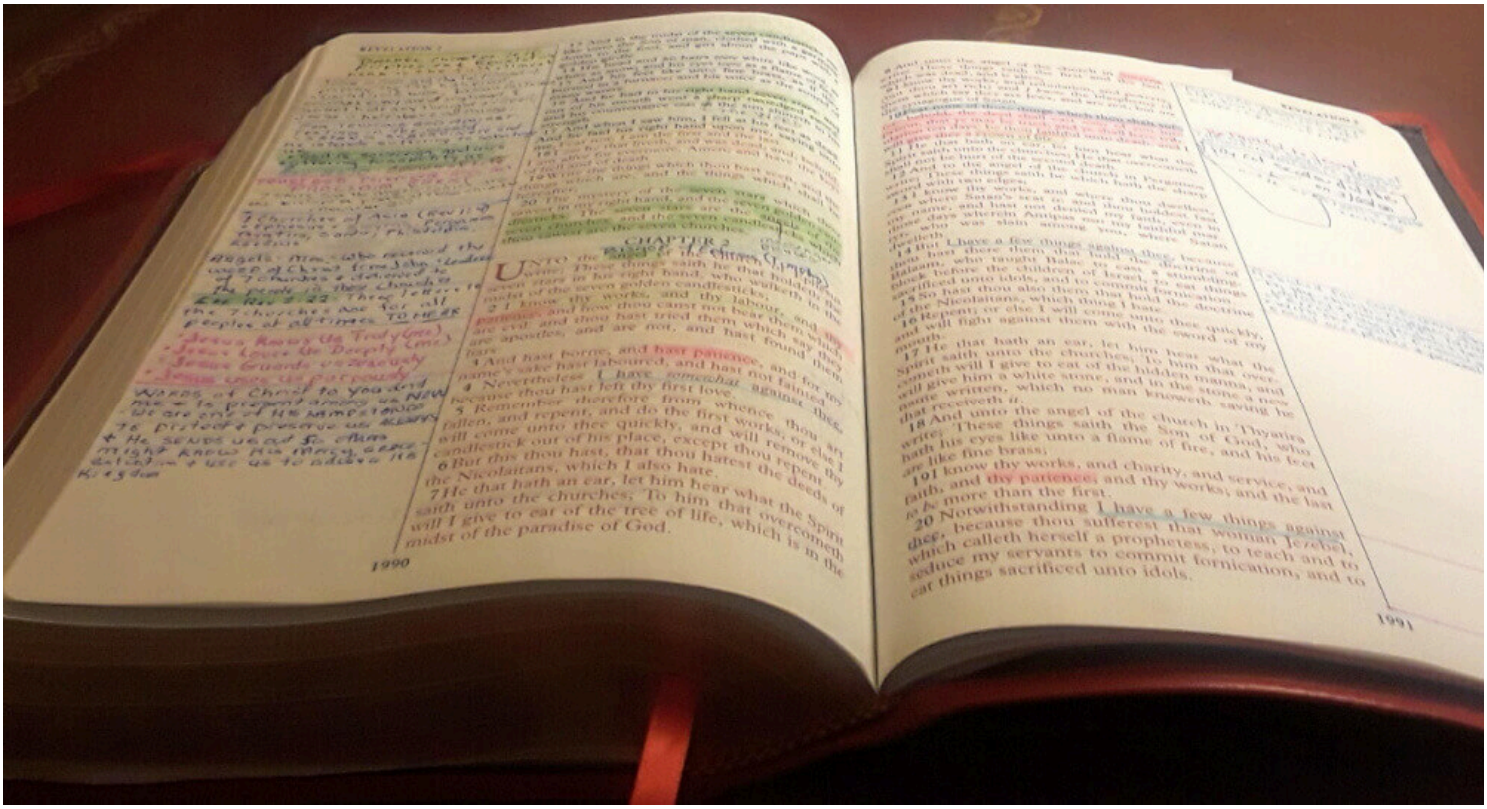
If you appreciate what we are doing at local school boards like Hanover and want to help us make more inroads in left-leaning school boards, please prayerfully consider a significant year end gift.

We need to raise a total of $330,000 by December 31. We reached out to a handful of our generous supporters who believe that we cannot give up, and we have almost reached the first half of $165,000 of the $330,000 year end goal. They have offered to match every contribution made before the end of this year!

If you have questions, please reach out to Marie Edwards, Development Officer, at marie@familyfoundation.org.

Christian Attitudes-Faith, Obedience, Humility and Love

NOVEMBER 29, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



John MacArthur's Fundamental Christian Attitude Series is found on Grace to You website here

Per John MacArthur, the skeleton or framework of the church involves five great non-negotiables:

1. Honoring God
2. Exalting Christ
3. Pursuing Holiness
4. Proclaiming Truth
5. Submitting to Spiritual Authority

These construct the framework and upon that framework, internal systems attach which are the church members and their spiritual attitudes, Christian attitudes and transformed lives. The Spirit of God desires to produce those inner attitudes in each of His children. Faith is the first one. We encourage our readers to listen and make notes on the first one, Faith. You will find PDF transcript, MP3 or "read-a-long" audio.

Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Faith is the First and Foundational

1. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: **Faith** **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-114**
2. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: **Obedience** **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-115**
3. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: **Humility** **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-116**
4. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: **Love** **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-117**
5. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: **Unity** **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-118**
6. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Growth P1 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-119**
7. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Growth P2 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-120**
8. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Forgiveness **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-121**
9. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Joy **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-122**
10. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Thankfulness **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-123**
11. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Compassion **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-124**
12. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Contentment **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-124**
13. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Strength P1 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-126**
14. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Strength P2 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-127**
15. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Strength P3 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-128**
16. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Strength P4 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-129**
17. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Self Discipline P1 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-130**

18. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Self Discipline P2 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-131**
19. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Worship P1 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-132**
20. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Worship P2 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-133**
21. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Worship P3 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-134**
22. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Worship P4 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-135**
23. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Hope P1 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-136**
24. Fundamental Christian Attitudes: Hope P2 **https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-137**

24 Unchangeable Things to Be Thankful For

NOVEMBER 24, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRISTIAN LIFE, THANKSGIVING

Joshua Arnold | **The Washington Stand**.

Events of the past few months have reminded us that much of what we take for granted is not guaranteed — at least, not in this life. Yet there are things we can rely on, which are guaranteed, and which cannot be changed by our circumstances. They cannot be modified or imperiled by war, politics, the stock market, or even a cranky relative. While we thank God for his gifts, let's be sure to include the unchangeable ones.

Scripture describes how Christians enjoy an overflowing bounty of special gifts God has given to us. These gifts come through Jesus Christ, the most precious gift of all, and who "bestow his riches on all who call on him" (Romans 10:12). In passages like Ephesians 1 or Romans 8, Scripture sets forth many gifts and how they overlap and fit together. For instance, the Golden Chain from Romans 8 lists five gifts together:

> "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified" (Romans 8:29-30).

I have endeavored to compile these gifts in a logical sequence, as difficult as that is. This list is by no means exhaustive — if that were even possible (1 Corinthians 2:9) — and it excluded some overarching gifts (Jesus Christ, his substitutionary atonement, God's love, grace, and mercy) to focus on more particular ones. I pray that this list will be a helpful starting point to help you bask in the riches of God's unchangeable gifts to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

With that, here is a list of 24 things we can be thankful for, which are found in Christ and unaffected by the circumstances of life:

1. Election

God "has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places," wrote Paul, "even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him" (Ephesians 1:3-4). God has chosen those who believe in Christ. Without God's choosing, we would still be in our sins, along with the folly, blindness, and wretchedness that accompanied them. God's choosing is evident when Christians believe the gospel not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction" (1 Thessalonians 1:4-5).

2. Calling

"Those whom he predestined he also called" (Romans 8:30). Scripture describes God calling people "to belong to Jesus Christ" (Romans 1:6). This call comes from God, through the proclamation of the gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:13), "in the grace of Christ" (Galatians 1:6). While not everyone who hears the gospel will believe it, everyone who is "called" in this sense will believe; God's calling is effectual because it is "according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). All whom God calls in this way are "called into the fellowship of his Son" and there kept by God's faithfulness (1 Corinthians 1:9). They are "vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory — even us whom he has called" (Romans 9:23-24).

3. The Gospel

The gospel is God's message of salvation in Christ, through which he calls the elect to salvation. Mankind deserved death for our universal rebellion against God's holy law, but God in love sent his Son, Jesus Christ, who lived as a man. He lived a perfectly righteous life, satisfying all the requirements of God's law, but he was mistreated and killed, taking our place as a sacrifice for sins. Then he rose from the grave and ascended to heaven, where he intercedes on behalf of those who believe in him, so that God would count Christ's righteousness to them and so that their sins would be washed away.

When people hear the gospel, understand the grace of God, and know about the hope laid up for them in heaven, this message bears fruit in their lives — sanctification, holiness, and love for God

and others (Colossians 1:3-6). This message "is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes," and "in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith" (Romans 1:16-17).

4. Repentance

Repentance is the response of someone who is convicted by the message of the gospel. It involves turning away from sin and turning to God. When the hearers of Peter's first sermon "were cut to the heart" at his gospel proclamation, he instructed them to "repent and be baptized" (Acts 2:37-38).

Some readers may be surprised by repentance's appearance in a list of God's gifts because it is something we are commanded to do. But the truth is, this too is a gift granted by God; we could never achieve real repentance — which involves a change in the posture of our hearts — apart from God's grace. Thus, later in Acts, believers in Jerusalem respond to the Holy Spirit coming upon Gentiles, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life" (Acts 11:18).

5. Justification

How can a man's sins be forgiven before a holy God? God is "the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26). This refers to God's legal declaration, as Judge of the world, that a person is "not guilty." This declaration of righteousness is not through a man's sinlessness, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), but rather "through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe" (Romans 3:22).

All who believe "are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith" (Romans 3:24-25). Our sins were transferred to Jesus's account, and he paid the full penalty, so that God would extract no further penalty from us; his righteousness was transferred to our account so that we might stand before God without fear.

6. Redemption

This is the heart of the gospel, so it's worth examining multiple facets of this matchless jewel. In addition to securing our justification, Jesus Christ also secured our redemption. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us" (Galatians 3:13). While justification is a legal term, redemption is an economic term meaning to buy something back. We had sold ourselves in slavery to sin, but Jesus bought us back, and the price he paid was his own blood. "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace," wrote Paul (Ephesians 1:7).

We no longer belong to sin but to Christ, “who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works” (Titus 2:14). Jesus’s single purchase is enough to pay the price for every sin we have committed or will ever commit. After he ascended to heaven, Jesus Christ “entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption” (Hebrews 9:11-12).

7. New Life

God justified us, he redeemed us, and he also gave us new life. The Bible describes our sinful state, before salvation, as a kind of death. “You, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him ” (Colossians 2:13). This new life is “not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works,” but “because of the great love with which he loved us” (Ephesians 2:4, 8-9). Paul described the new life, “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

8. New Identity

This new life brings with it a new identity. “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 Corinthians 5:17). Christians have become “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession” — everything Israel was supposed to be and failed to be. This new identity also gives us a new purpose, “that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9). This new identity gives us citizenship in (Philippians 3:20) and unites us with all the other “members of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19).

9. Adoption

Speaking of the household of God, we now get to be a member through “adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 1:5) — a consequence of both election and redemption (Galatians 4:5). This reality reframes our hardships in a wholly new perspective.

> “And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? ‘My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.’ It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons” (Hebrews 12:5-7).

The Lord disciplines not out of anger but out of love, to drive out our sins and prepare us for heaven.

10. Reconciliation

Another way to describe our new standing before God is reconciliation. We "once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds," but Jesus "has now reconciled" us "in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him" (Colossians 1:21-22). We had been at war with God, with no right to expect anything from him except fearful judgment. But now we have a sound basis to come into his presence and claim his forgiveness and mercy.

Reconciliation with God will also transform our relationships with other people. In Christ, we are united to other believers, even those of different heritage, upbringing, and opinions (Ephesians 2:13-16). Regarding unbelievers, we are entrusted with "the message of reconciliation," the gospel (2 Corinthians 5:18-19).

11. Access to the Father

Our changed relationship to the Father through adoption and reconciliation means that we now have access to the Father (Ephesians 2:18) — and not just any access, but "boldness and access with confidence" (Ephesians 3:12). We have the access of a beloved son, not that of a stranger and rebel.

In addition, Jesus now acts as our heavenly high priest, who can "sympathize with our weaknesses" (Hebrews 4:15). Therefore, "we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19). He helps us to "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:22). This is not a guess but a promise, and the one who promised is faithful (Hebrews 10:23).

12. The Holy Spirit

In addition to all the changes in our standing before God, Christians receive a majorly transformative gift: God sends the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, to dwell in us (John 14:26). The Spirit "bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16) inwardly confirming our adoption (1 John 3:24). He regenerates us (Titus 3:5) — that is, he gives us new life. He acts as God seal on, a "guarantee of our inheritance" (Ephesians 1:13-14). More than that, he teaches us about God and his work (1 Corinthians 2:9-10), "helps us in our weakness," and "intercedes for the saints according to the will of God" (Romans 8:26-27).

13. Freedom

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” (2 Corinthians 3:17), in two senses. First, “if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law” (Galatians 5:18). No longer are we subject to a covenant of works by which we cannot be justified, therefore we must not “submit again to a yoke of slavery” (Galatians 5:1).

Second, Jesus Christ “has freed us from our sins by his blood” (Revelation 1:5). By God’s Spirit, we have power to successfully resist sin and even put our sinful nature to death. “For one who has died has been set free from sin” (Romans 6:7). This freedom from sin enables us to “become slaves of righteousness” (Romans 6:18), which means that we “do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another” (Galatians 5:13). This is true freedom, and it is only possible through the Spirit’s work in us, or sanctification.

14. Sanctification

Sanctification is the fruit of the freedom from sin we find in Christ (Romans 6:22). By the work of the indwelling Holy Spirit, we increasingly become “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4) — that is, we become holy like God is holy — which “is the will of God” (1 Thessalonians 4:3-7). The Spirit “train us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age” (Titus 2:11-12). God sanctifies us to prepare us for the marriage supper of the Lamb, when Jesus will be forever united to his bride, the church, who has “made herself ready” and is clothed in “righteous deed” (Revelation 19:7-8).

In one sense, our sanctification requires effort on our part, so we must “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12) But, in another sense, “It is God who works in you” (Philippians 2:13), and “He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6). In other words, the Spirit of Jesus Christ is preparing his holy people for his own enjoyment. “He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it” (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

15. Protection

Jesus also protects his saints from falling back into sin. This occurs concurrently with the process of sanctification, which implies some indwelling sin still remains, although it does not characterize a believer. However, Scripture promises that he is “able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy” (Jude 24). Therefore, “Everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him” (1 John 5:18).

He also protects us from internal sin. “God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it” (1 Corinthians 10:13). So, we can agree confidently with Paul, “The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom” (2 Timothy 4:18).

16. Hope of Glorified, Resurrected Bodies

Regarding that heavenly kingdom, Christians look forward to a bodily resurrection. Even “if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Corinthians 5:1). This hope is based on Christ’s resurrection. “Christ has been raised from the dead, … then at his coming those who belong to Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:20-23). When we rise, the Lord Jesus Christ will “transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body” (Philippians 3:21). Our bodies will be imperishable, glorious, powerful, spiritual (1 Corinthians 15:42-44).

Paul’s insights into this mystery were so surpassingly glorious that he gladly “suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ … that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead” (Philippians 3:8,11).

17. Hope in Christ’s Return

Resurrected bodies are only one of many reasons Christians look forward to “our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13). Christ promised to come again, “not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him” (Hebrews 9:26-28). We are seeking “an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:10-11).

18. Salvation from God’s Wrath

At Christ’s second coming, God will judge all people and nations and pour out his wrath on those who have rebelled against him, but those who hope in Christ will be saved. “God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:9-10), said Paul, appealing to our justification and reconciliation (Romans 5:9-10). He quoted the Old Testament promise, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame” (Romans 10:10-11). Thus, Jude characterized a Christian’s current state as “waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life” (Jude 20).

19. Hope of Eternal Life

In fact, eternal life is exactly what Christians are looking forward to at Christ’s return, for “this is the promise that he made to us — eternal life” (1 John 2:25). In contrast to the death we earned as

wages for our sins, now that we are in Christ we will receive eternal life as a “free gift” (Romans 6:23). This is described in Revelation as eating from the tree of life (Revelation 2:7), a return to the Edenic paradise that existed before the Fall.

20. Future Glory

This eternal life will be characterized by glory. “When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory” (Colossians 3:4). This is a result of God’s effectual calling, for the God of all grace “has called you to his eternal glory in Christ” (1 Peter 5:10). The glory is Christ’s, but it is so overpowering and comprehensive that we get wrapped up in it, too, simply by beholding him. “We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Yet in some measure, the glory is also a reward for the righteous (Romans 2:10). This glory — both God’s and ours — is infinitely weightier than present suffering. Indeed, Paul reasoned that “the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Romans 8:18-19), “for this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison” (2 Corinthians 4:17-18). Praise the Lord!

21. Future Inheritance

Also in eternity, those who are found in Christ will obtain an inheritance, by virtue of their adoption (Galatians 3:29-4:7) and election (Ephesians 1:11). There are ways in which we can store up treasure in heaven (Matthew 6:20), but ultimately it is God the Father “who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light” (Colossians 1:12). This inheritance is variously described as “the city that is to come” (Hebrews 13:14), “new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Peter 3:13) and the right to drink from “the spring of the water of life without payment” (Revelation 21:6).

Most importantly, this is the reward: “I will be his God and he will be my son” (Revelation 21:7). This inheritance “cannot be shaken” (Hebrews 12:28). It is “imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you” (1 Peter 1:4), “where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal” (Matthew 6:20).

22. Future Reign

Those who trust in Christ for eternal life will reflect his glory, share in his inheritance, and “also reign with him” (2 Timothy 2:12). “The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne” Jesus promised (Revelation 3:21). “I will give authority over the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father” (Revelation 2:26-27).

They will receive a “crown of life” (James 1:12) and a “crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8). They will “judge the world,” and even “judge angels” (1 Corinthians 6:2-3). Christians prepare for their future reign with Christ by submitting now, just as Christ submitted, even to injustice.

23. Joy

All these glorious, unchangeable gifts from God are grounds for rejoicing both now and for eternity. “We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings” (Romans 5:2-3), wrote Paul. “In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,” agreed Peter. “Though you do not now see him , you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls” (1 Peter 1:6-9). Again, he counseled believers, “rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed” (1 Peter 4:12-13).

24. Eternal Fellowship with Jesus

Of course, the greatest gift of all is Jesus Christ, through whom all the other gifts are obtained. Paul described Christ’s second coming in electrifying language — angles, trumpet blasts, saints rising in the air — but he ended on the most encouraging and important point of all, “and so we will always be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

Jesus will write his name of those who conquer and “make him a pillar in the temple of my God” (Revelation 3:12). For those who endure, “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore. … For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes” (Revelation 7:16-17). When the new Jerusalem descends from heaven, “prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Revelation 21:2), a voice proclaims:

> “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away” (Revelation 21:3-4).

No earthly circumstances can diminish, dull, corrupt, or even challenge this glorious reality that is awaiting those who believe in Jesus. So let’s thank him for all these things.

All 24 of these unchangeable gifts from God are only available to those who have repented of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ for salvation. As we thank him for these gifts, let’s also remember

that we live in a world full of people who don't believe in him, and who lack the comfort and assurance of these unchangeable gifts. Let's tell them the good news about Jesus so they can believe in him too.

If you've read this far, and you're not a believer, thank you for sticking it out. A Christian is someone who understands themselves to be a sinner, recognizes their need for salvation, and believes in the free gift of salvation offered through Jesus Christ. A Christian is also someone who walks in repentance, forsaking their former sins and devoting their whole life to glorifying the God who saved them. Ask any Christian, and they would be happy to tell you how to become a follower of God. His promises are freely given to every person in the world, if they will believe in him.

SOURCE: **THE WASHINGTON STAND**

Thanksgiving

NOVEMBER 22, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BLESSINGS, GIVING THANKS, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, THANK GOD, THANKSGIVING

Tom Clark

We actually enjoy Thanksgiving
The history of Thanksgiving – how it came to be, and what it means:

In 1620 English settlers arrived in "Massachusetts" from England.
In the fall of 1621 they invited the Indians to join them in thanking God for having carried them through a difficult first year.
The settlers observed Thanksgiving for many years in the interest of promoting faith in Christ.
Until 1682 Thanksgiving proclamations were made, primarily by church leaders, and then by both government and church leaders until after the **American Revolution**.

Following that first observance of "Thanksgiving" there were additional observances:

During the American Revolution the Continental Congress designated one or more days of Thanksgiving each year.
In 1789 George Washington issued the first Thanksgiving proclamation by the new government of the United States. As President, Washington called on Americans to express their gratitude for the

happy conclusion to the country's
War of Independence, and the successful ratification of the U.S. Constitution.
As one who believed in Christ, George Washington encouraged Americans to observe Thanksgiving for two reasons:

1. To focus on God and praise Him for His blessings on the nation.
2. As a way of encouraging people to exercise faith in Christ.

In 1817, New York became the first of several states to officially adopt an annual Thanksgiving holiday.
In 1827, magazine editor and author of "Mary Had a Little Lamb," Sarah Josepha Hale launched a campaign to establish Thanksgiving as a national holiday.
For 36 years she published editorials, and wrote to governors, senators, Presidents and other politicians.

In 1863, at the height of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln fulfilled Sarah Josepha Hale's quest
by proclaiming a national "Thanksgiving Day" to be observed each November.
Lincoln entreated all Americans to ask God to "commend to His tender care all those who have become widows,
orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife" and to "heal the wounds of the nation."
Lincoln declared Thanksgiving should be observed on the final Thursday in November.

Thanksgiving was celebrated that day every year until 1939 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt moved
the holiday up a week in an attempt to spur retail sales during the Great Depression.
In 1941 Roosevelt signed a bill making Thanksgiving the fourth Thursday in November.

This then, is a summary of how Thanksgiving has evolved:
We observe Thanksgiving every November as a standard American holiday.
The original observance of Thanksgiving had a spiritual emphasis and was a pursuit of Godliness.
In our current culture, most people observe Thanksgiving annually, but for many it is not for spiritual reasons.
Many just enjoy a pleasant observance of the material blessings of the nation.
But, if we want to celebrate Thanksgiving as a way of acknowledging God – and of Christ as our Savior –
it becomes a recognition of God's grace toward us.

John 3:16-18 – ESV

16 God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.
18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

Romans 8:1-2 – ESV

1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

These verses help us to understand the idea of faith in Christ and of life in heaven.
Whether we believe in Christ or not, we can enjoy Thanksgiving.
But if we do trust in Christ our Thanksgiving is a celebration of joy in God and His grace toward us.

Read More on Thanksgiving here

Following Religious Freedom Wins, Experts Warn 'Christians Are Going to Encounter More of This'

NOVEMBER 16, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Screenshot/Suffolk Schools/YouTube

In **August**, Virginia resident Angela Kilgore was barred from using the public comment portion of a Suffolk school board meeting to pray. The incident spiraled into weeks of pushback from other residents, the Founding Freedoms Law Center (FFLC), and First Liberty Institute, who argued that it constituted a violation of both free speech and religious freedom.

The Suffolk Public School Board did not respond to the initial letter by FFLC and First Liberty, but after the lawyers' demand letter, the board ultimately **agreed** to let Kilgore pray.

Kilgore reflected on what happened in a meeting on November 9. She said, "I was met with disrespect, humiliated, kicked out." She added that the "standard" seemed to be that the board booted whoever made comments that they didn't like to hear. "In August, I was led by the Holy Spirit to pray for our children, schools, this board," she continued. "he chair … shut me down, but God moved." During Tuesday's meeting, Kilgore was finally able to pray, where she lifted up the school board and the nation.

Free speech and religious freedom were also threatened an ocean away in Finland when Parliament member Päivi Räsänen was charged with hate speech for posting Bible verses and Christian views on social media. After a roughly four-year-long investigation, Tuesday's ruling

ensued from a **second** attempt to censor what state prosecutor Anu Mantila deemed "intolerance toward homosexuality." Räsänen shared that the prosecutor also compared the Bible to "Mein Kampf," a book by Adolf Hitler. But on Tuesday, an appeals court dismissed the hate speech charges.

Both cases resulted in a win for freedom of speech and religion. However, "while we celebrate the good news, every Christian must remain aware of the Left's continuing use of the legal system to persecute those with a biblical worldview," Family Research Council President Tony Perkins said on "**Washington Watch**" Tuesday.

Kristen Waggoner, president and general counsel of Alliance Defending Freedom, added, "Simply being labeled as someone who engages in hate speech, whether you're convicted or not, itself carries a punishment." For Waggoner, this appeal is "a monumental victory," but it does bring awareness to the "rise of global censorship … we face here in the United States as well."

She continued, "I do think it also points out the importance of citizens standing, though." Although many "nations throughout Western civilization have had constitutions or laws that protect free speech religious freedom," she emphasized, "those laws aren't worth the paper they're written on if the citizens become apathetic or don't enforce them." Perkins added, "And if we don't have people in this country willing to stand up when they're challenged or that freedom is infringed upon, we do lose it."

On top of that, "we lose the right of self-government, and we blur the lines with dictatorships and give totalitarian and authoritarian regimes power to silence the truth and silence debate on issues," Waggoner warned. "So, it's a very, very dangerous precedent." However, despite the rising hostility, she said, "I'm hopeful about the state of religious freedom and free speech, because I do think that believers in particular are waking up to the need to stand not only for their own rights, but the rights of future generations."

Arielle Del Turco, director of the Center for Religious Liberty at Family Research Council, commented to The Washington Stand, "These are both great wins for religious freedom. However, in situations like this, the process can itself be the punishment." She added, "imply for praying at a school board meeting or tweeting a Bible verse, there is immense "stress, emotional toll, time, expense, and reputational damage that comes with" such legal battles that "no one should face."

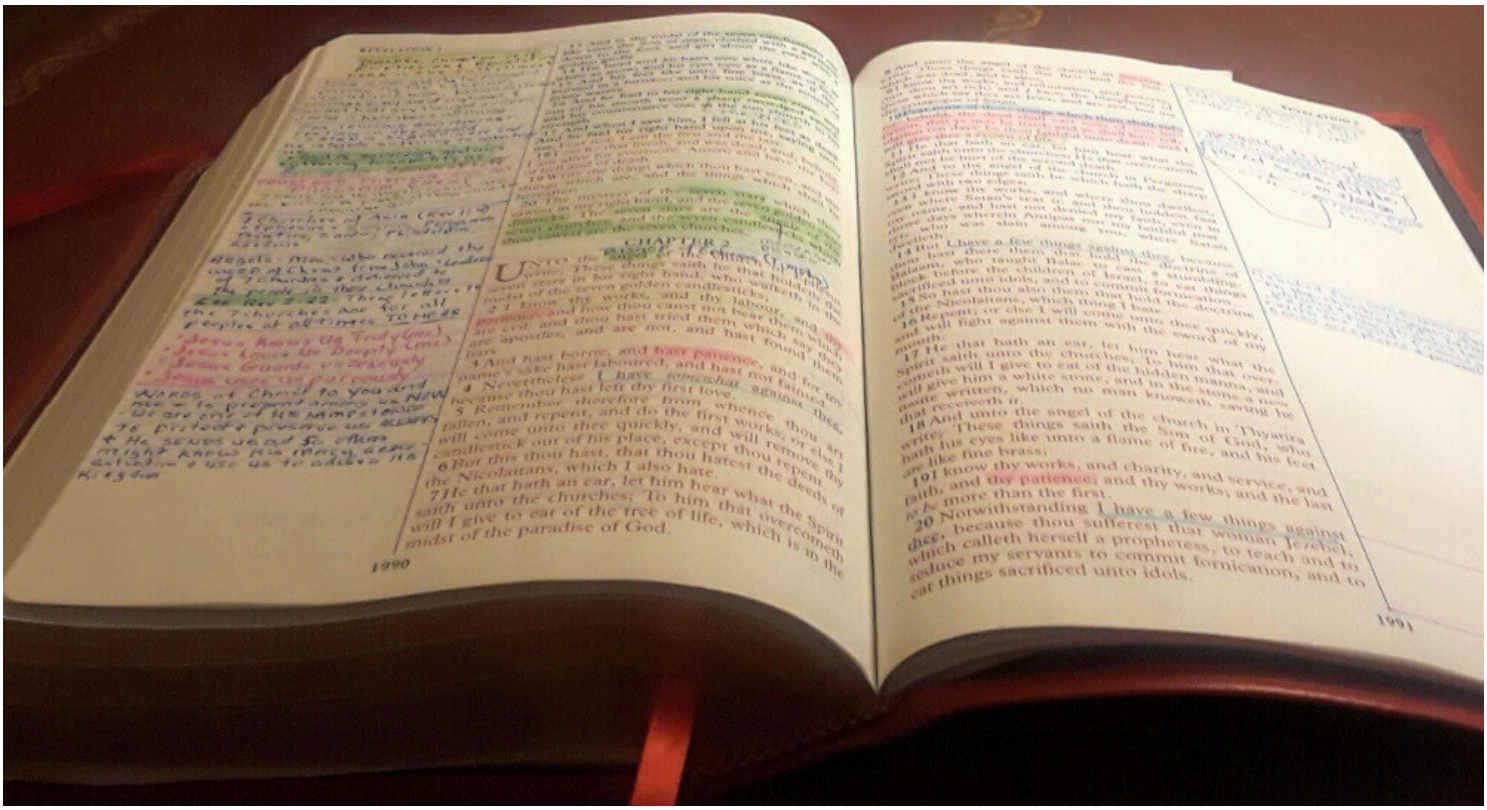
As Del Turco noted, we should be grateful that both Kilgore and Räsänen "ended up with success stories," but "these kinds of headlines can have a chilling effect on other Christians who might be intimidated from living out their faith in the public square." She added that most people would rather avoid being "at the center of a court case."

"Sadly," Del Turco concluded, "Christians are going to encounter more of these situations as the culture grows more hostile to Christian beliefs. We need to ready ourselves and be strong in our

faith so that we do not bend under the cultural pressure to compromise.”

The Believer's Oxygen for Faith: Breathing in Scripture, Breathing Out Prayer

NOVEMBER 6, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Sarah Holliday | **The Washington Stand**

Pastor and theologian Charles Spurgeon once said, "When asked, 'What is more important: prayer or reading the Bible?' I ask, 'What is more important: breathing in or breathing out?'"

I stumbled across this quote and instantly fell in love with it. Why? Probably because it succinctly summarizes the Christian's dependence on both the Word of God and prayer. Why else, you ask? Because this quote gives us something to consider: What *is* the difference between breathing in and breathing out, and how does it apply to the Bible or prayer? Maybe the quote seems straightforward, but I find it worth dissecting.

When you inhale, you are bringing in oxygen, whereas when you exhale, you are breathing out carbon dioxide. I know this is elementary type stuff but walk with me.

Breathing in is essential for getting the oxygen we need to survive. Breathing out is essential for getting rid of the carbon dioxide which, if it were to build up, could cause damage to tissues and organs and prevent oxygen from being delivered to the body. This could result in respiratory

failure, and death could follow if not treated. So, the gas exchange that occurs between inhaling and exhaling is, in short, essential to life.

I would propose that, for the Christian, time in the Word and in prayer is no different, as they are essential to faith.

First, we need to breathe in Scripture, the inspired Word of God. Hebrews 4:12 describes it as "living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword." We know the truth by being in the Word. As John R.W. Stott said, "Christians who neglect the Bible simply do not mature." And this makes perfect sense, doesn't it?

How could you expect to learn more about biology without studying it? How could you get better at piano or soccer without practicing? You can't know the way without looking up the directions, and you can't know God without reading the Word that tells you who He is. Imagine trying to neglect breathing. It's impossible, because you know you can't just stop breathing and expect to live. A Christian should view spending time in the Word similarly.

We need to breathe in Scripture as oxygen for our faith and our source of spiritual life. We have a Father who loves us deeply, but His Word instructs us to be obedient to His commands which leads to eternal life. So, the Bible is not just some nice book we read out of respect for God. No, Scripture is for *us*. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 states, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." There is not a single thing we need to know that the Bible has not already addressed. And if you believe that, then you know just how necessary this book is.

It truly is the oxygen we need as believers to remain faithful through obedience and steadfast through trial. And it is how God speaks to us. This then makes prayer significant, because prayer is how we speak to *Him*. After we breathe in Scripture, we breathe out prayer.

Prayer is just as essential to the Christian as reading Scripture. It reflects our hearts before the Lord and, in a sense, serves as a way for us to breathe out our spiritual "carbon dioxide" — anxiety, fear, anger, stress, or anything weighing us down that, if built up, could cause mental or physical problems, or even distance us from the Lord since they damage our trust in Him. Prayer is our opportunity to lay our burdens down at the foot of the cross, to a God who genuinely cares. Breathing in Scripture is what allows us to know we not only *can* turn to Him in prayer, but He *wants* us to. In Matthew 11:28, Jesus said, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Prayer, I believe, is meant to be just as much a lifeline as Scripture, because it is more than just breathing out "carbon dioxide," but also our communication with *the God of the universe*. The more you understand who God is through the Bible, the more remarkable it becomes that we have such

an easy ability to speak with Him. *Who* we talk to makes prayer a weapon as much as a comfort. Not that prayer is meant to be used out of selfish ambition (which wouldn't glorify God), but we are directly speaking to a sovereign God, the Maker of heaven and earth, who has conquered death itself. Prayer is our opportunity to combat a fallen world by making our requests known to God. It is an opportunity to pray for the burdened and persecuted like those in Israel and around the world.

This is what Scripture says: "Be constant in prayer" (Romans 12:12), "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17), and "continue steadily in prayer" (Colossians 4:2). According to Scripture, prayer is to be constant — kind of like breathing. And I believe the more we breathe in Scripture, the more we can't help but breathe out prayer until it is almost an instinct. We glorify God by being diligent in reading the Bible, and we also glorify Him by coming to Him in prayer.

There are scientific differences between the function of breathing in and breathing out, but it stands to reason that they are undoubtedly inseparable. Just as the gas exchange that occurs between inhaling and exhaling is essential to life, so is the spiritual exchange between reading the Bible and praying to God essential to our faith. The exchange is necessary because Scripture is knowing God and things related to God, and prayer helps deepen your relationship with Him.

Christians who do not breathe in Scripture cut off their lifeline of spiritual oxygen. And not breathing out prayer builds up carbon dioxide, which leaves one vulnerable to sin, and we know that sin only leads to death. This is merely a recipe for spiritual respiratory failure.

Time in the Word or time in prayer is not meant to take place when it is convenient, but as often as possible. Scripture and prayer need to be our first source of comfort, not our last; our first line of defense, not our backup. Every day, if only every moment, we need to breathe in the truth, and breathe out praises, thanksgiving, burdens, and requests.

It's simple. To do this is what it means to be a follower of Christ, because He is the air we breathe and our source of life now and life eternal.

So, if asked, "What is more important: prayer or reading the Bible?" I suppose my only response could be:

"Scripture and prayer are both as necessary as the air I breathe. How ever could I choose?"

SOURCE: **THE WASHINGTON STAND**
Sarah Holliday serves as a reporter for The Washington Stand. She earned her undergrad from Boise State University in Creative Writing and Narrative Arts, as well as a Certificate in Arts and Theology from Reformation Bible College.

Saving US by Restoring Biblical Worldview: Dan Smithwick of Nehemiah Institute

NOVEMBER 6, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The worldview of Americans has rapidly been transformed away from a biblical lens toward a secular-humanist or even socialist worldview and this is true even in the church, according to Dan Smithwick of the Nehemiah Institute.

In this interview on Conversations That Matter with The New American magazine's Alex Newman, Smithwick describes the results of his PEERS test measuring worldview—a test looking at people's views on politics, the economy, society, and more.

What he found is that the biblical worldview is in rapid decline, even among children in Christian schools. Smithwick also provides insight on why and how this trend must be reversed if America and Christian civilization are going to be saved.

(Videos) 11 Reasons and More Why Christians Should Not Celebrate Halloween

OCTOBER 31, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Here is a compilation of videos and articles from various sources on why participation in Halloween glorifies evil and is dangerous to both the child and the adult.

Article Links:

- Halloween Origin: Halloween History and the Bible (**Answers in Genesis**)
- Halloween. Evil or a God-given Opportunity (Ray Comfort–**Video**)
- ## Related Articles
    - **What are the origins of Halloween?**
    - **What is All Saints Day?**
    - **What does the Bible say about ghosts / hauntings?**
    - **Is there activity of demonic spirits in the world today?**
    - **What is All Souls' Day?**

Take It from Someone Who Used to Talk to Satan: Halloween Is a Bad Idea

Take It from Someone Who Used to Talk to Satan: Halloween Is a Bad Idea
https://youtube.com/watch?v=q369iQJ49cY

Halloween 'Opens Demonic Doors': Ex-Psychic's Dire Warning About Spiritual Dangers

Halloween 'Opens Demonic Doors': Ex-Psychic's Dire Warning About Spiritual Dangers
https://youtube.com/watch?v=UIWswhDyQrc

11 Reasons Why Christians Absolutely Should Not Celebrate Halloween by Dr. Jamie Morgan

Dr Jamie Morgan | **Lighthouse Church**

Many Christians celebrate Halloween; some churches and pastors even do. I recently saw a church advertising they were having a “zombie run.” Seriously? God’s house? This pastor does not celebrate Halloween and neither does her church.

In a spirit of full disclosure, when I was a brand-new believer, I allowed my son to go trick-or-treating. Part of the reason was because my husband was not yet saved and insisted we do. The other part was because I didn’t see the harm in it. After all, many Christians I respected did it, so as a new Christian I justified that it must be OK. Right? Wrong!

As I grew closer to the Lord and gained more knowledge of His Word, I began to feel convicted about Halloween. I had thoughts like:

1. God is a God of life but Halloween focuses on death. Should I celebrate a holiday where people decorate their front yards with tombstones?

2. The Scriptures tell us to put away deeds of darkness (Rom.13:12) and that light has nothing in common with darkness (2 Cor. 6:14). Is celebrating a dark holiday something a child of the light should be doing?
3. I had been delivered from fear and panic attacks and knew that fear comes from the enemy. Should I participate in a holiday that has fear as its very foundation?
4. Witchcraft is clearly detestable to the Lord (Deut. 18:10-13). Shouldn't something that glorifies witchcraft (just take a walk through the Halloween store) be detestable to me as well?"
5. Halloween is a sacred, high holiday for Wiccans (the official religion of witchcraft). Is this a holiday Christians should celebrate alongside Wiccans?
6. Is it cute when we dress our kids like the devil (or witches, ghouls, scary characters, etc.)? Isn't it, well, demonic?
7. What if my child dresses in a wholesome fireman costume? Romans 16:19 says that we need to be wise to what is good and innocent of evil. If I let him participate in Halloween, even while dressed as a fireman, aren't I sending him a mixed message by allowing him to participate in a celebration of evil?
8. The Lord said in 2 Corinthians 6:17 (NIV), "Come out from them and be separate … Touch no unclean thing …" Doesn't God want His children to be set apart from the world and from sin and evil? Aren't we supposed to be peculiar people?
9. My extended family thinks it's ridiculous that we not allow our son to dress up for Halloween. Should their opinions matter to me more than God's? Shouldn't pleasing God be my utmost concern?
10. If there is even a question in my heart and mind that it might be wrong, shouldn't that be my first clue? Why would I continue to do so with even a lingering thought that it is wrong?
11. Does Halloween bring glory to God? No! It glorifies the devil!

So as a new believer, saved only two years, I responded to the conviction of the Holy Spirit, repented of displeasing the Lord and put a stop to Halloween. And as a pastor, after observing firsthand the amount of destruction that the enemy brings into peoples' lives when they give him a foothold, I am even more convinced I made the right decision to close the door to the enemy and on this evil holiday.

Setting aside a day to celebrate evil, darkness, witchcraft, fear, death and the demonic brings disdain to God. Period. A Christian celebrating Halloween would be like a Satan worshiper putting up a nativity scene at Christmas while singing, "Happy Birthday, Jesus!" The two just don't go together. Jesus has nothing in common with Satan (2 Cor. 6:14) and neither should we.

So, what did we do instead? Hide in the basement with the lights off? Hustle the family out of the house? No, darkened homes are the enemy's victory! Where does your light shine the brightest … in the darkness!

Halloween is the one day a year when neighbors come to your door expecting to receive something. So give them Jesus! Our family chose to give God the glory and the devil a black eye by reaching out to our neighbors with the Gospel of Jesus Christ! “You are the light of the world … let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matt. 5:14-16, NIV).

So stop justifying why it is fine to celebrate this demonic, worldly, evil holiday. There are no muddled lines or gray areas about it. A committed follower of Jesus Christ should not celebrate Halloween.

SOURCE: **LIGHTHOUSE CHURCH**

Why Christians Absolutely Should Not Celebrate Halloween

OCTOBER 31, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

from **Got Questions**

Due to its decidedly pagan origins, the answer to the question as to whether Christians should *celebrate* Halloween is a **resounding no.**

The answer to the question as to whether can Christians *participate* in Halloween activities without compromising their faith is more difficult. Some Christians participate in Halloween simply by dressing up in a costume and having fun, seeing it as innocent and harmless. Other Christians are equally convinced that any form of participation is sinful due to the fact that Halloween is a satanic holiday established to worship evil spirits and promote darkness and wickedness. So, who is right? Is it possible for Christians to participate in Halloween without compromising their faith?

Halloween, no matter how commercialized, has almost completely pagan **origins**. As innocent as it may seem to some, it is not something to be taken lightly. Christians tend to have various ways to observe or avoid Halloween. For some, it means having an alternative Harvest Party. For others, it is staying away from the ghosts, witches, goblins, etc., and wearing innocuous costumes, e.g.,

little princesses, clowns, cowboys, super-heroes, etc. Some choose not to do anything, electing to lock themselves in the house with the lights off.

Should Christians Celebrate Halloween? | Halloween and Christianity | GotQuestions.org
https://youtube.com/watch?v=x4-SB4LPF-U

Scripture does not speak at all about Halloween, but it does give us some principles on which we can make a decision. In Old Testament Israel, witchcraft was a crime punishable by death (**Exodus 22:18**; **Leviticus 19:31**; **20:6**, **27**). The New Testament teaching about the occult is clear. **Acts 8:9-24**, the story of Simon, shows that occultism and Christianity do not mix. The account of Elymas the sorcerer in **Acts 13:6-11** reveals that sorcery is violently opposed to Christianity. Paul called Elymas a child of the devil, an enemy of righteousness and a perverter of the ways of God. In **Acts 16**, at Philippi, a fortune-telling girl lost her demon powers when the evil spirit was cast out by Paul. The interesting matter here is that Paul refused to allow even good statements to come from a demon-influenced person. **Acts 19** shows new converts who have abruptly broken with their former occultism by confessing, showing their evil deeds, bringing their magic paraphernalia, and burning it before everyone (**Acts 19:19**).

So, should a Christian participate in Halloween? Is there anything evil about a Christian dressing up in an innocent costume and going around the block asking for candy? No, there is not. Are there things about Halloween that are anti-Christian and should be completely avoided? Absolutely! If parents are going to allow their children to participate in Halloween, they should make sure to keep them from getting involved in the darker aspects of the day. If Christians are going to take part in Halloween, their attitude, dress, and most importantly, their behavior, should still reflect a redeemed life (**Philippians 1:27**). There are many churches that hold "harvest festivals" and incorporate costumes, but in a godly environment. There are many Christians who hand out tracts that share the gospel along with the Halloween candy. The decision is ultimately ours to make in the spirit of **Christian freedom**. But as with all things, we are to incorporate the principles of **Romans 14**. We cannot allow our own convictions about a holiday to cause **division** in the body of Christ, nor can we use our freedom to cause others to **stumble** in their faith. We are to do all things for the glory of God (**1 Corinthians 10:31**).

Related Articles

- **What are the origins of Halloween?**
- **What is All Saints Day?**
- **What does the Bible say about ghosts / hauntings?**
- **Is there activity of demonic spirits in the world today?**
- **What is All Souls' Day?**

No one can really rule the world…

OCTOBER 15, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Because the job is already taken

- ***The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us."*** (Psalms 2:2-3)

Every time it's attempted, it eventually fails. Just ask **Alexander the Great**, Genghis Khan, Queen Elizabeth I, Napoleon, The Ottomans, Hitler, Mussolini, Tojo, Stalin, Mao, and, maybe one day, **Klaus Schwab**—he should live so long.

Sure, in some cases their empires lasted for quite awhile, but inevitably, invariably, they have all disintegrated. The world in the days of Alexander and Rome was actually much smaller than now, and brute force, while very effective at first, is also very costly for everybody concerned—including the conqueror. There's always the day coming when it's payback time. Poor Alexander died young—just 32—not from the sword or the arrow that flies, but likely by a bug that nobody could see. For that reason, his death still remains a mystery.

According to the History Channel, **Dr. Katherine Hall**, a senior lecturer at the Dunedin School of Medicine at the University of Otago, New Zealand, theorized in a 2018 article **published in The**

Ancient History Bulletin, what killed Alexander was certainly agonizing, lasting for nearly a week.

He developed a "progressive, symmetrical, ascending paralysis" during his illness. And though he was very sick, he remained *compos mentis* (fully in control of his mental faculties) until just before his death.

Hall argues that Guillain-Barré Syndrome, a rare but serious autoimmune disorder, can explain this combination of symptoms better than the other theories advanced for Alexander's death. She believes he may have contracted the disorder from an infection of *Campylobacter pylori*, a common bacterium at the time. According to Hall, Alexander likely got a variant of GBS that produced paralysis without causing confusion or unconsciousness. (From **history.com**)

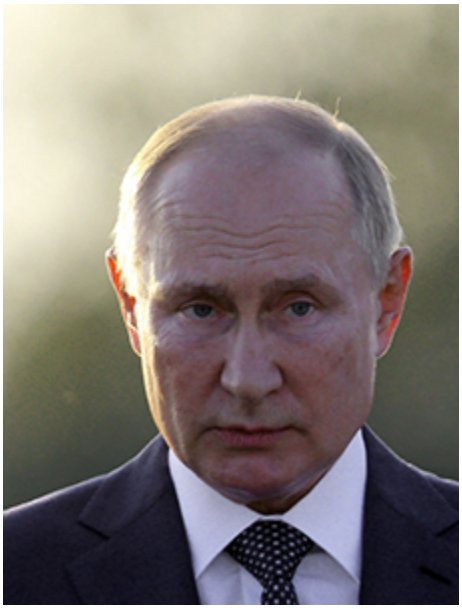
But empires are not the same as world rule. Not really. The only ones that even came close were in an entirely different epoch.

That doesn't mean that everyone has given up trying. You see, the new tyrants think they're coming up with some pretty clever, albeit nefarious, ideas. Sadly for them, like their ancient role models, they will eventually discover who the king of the world actually is. The clue is in His title: the King of Kings.

Victor Davis Hanson, **explained one reason why empires ultimately fail and fall**. He says, " *didn't last very well in Roman times. Romans, being far more practical, they didn't talk about globalization as much as reified it. They made it concrete, but immediately there were voices within Rome that said the further a sovereign nation expands and globalizes, the more difficult it is to maintain the solidarity of the people—the purity of the original founding Concepts. The more we think we were making people into Romans, the more they think they are making us into… people's other than Romans."*

The Soviet Union could not maintain its vast territory and collapsed when confronted with a determined resistance. **Ronald Reagan** somehow understood that. Conversely, **Vladimir Putin** (pictured) so pines for its return, he sees nothing wrong in invading Ukraine to get it back. Therefore he, many would say, is evil.

But what do say about those who would empty the treasury of their own country, without any clear plan for stopping him—spending billions and billions of the people's money in the feeble attempt? Are they evil? Or, simply misguided?



Evil is not a theory. It's a force. It exists in this world today as it always has. To understand this requires an honest and true relationship with our Creator, who gifts us through His Spirit to give us wisdom, discernment, and understanding about transcendent truth. Here is a very good explanation:

"However, evil is not a 'thing' like a rock or electricity. You cannot have a jar of evil. Evil has no existence of its own; it is really the absence of good. For example, holes are real but they only exist in something else. We call the absence of dirt a hole, but it cannot be separated from the dirt. So when God created, it is true that all He created was good. One of the good things God made was creatures who had the freedom to choose good. ***In order to have a real choice, God had to allow there to be something besides good to choose****. So, God allowed these free angels and humans to choose good or reject good (evil)."* (**GotQuestions.com**)

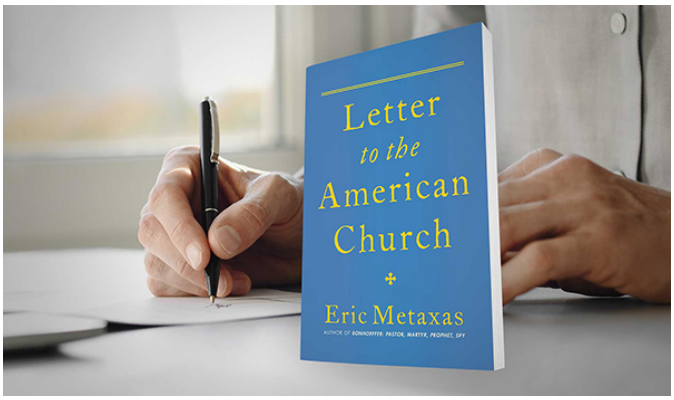
So, is a person who desires to rule the world evil? Arguably, yes, but often as not, it's only evident when they believe they are *justified* in bringing suffering to others in their quest for *personal* gratification, we can say they are filled with evil. Walking among us or speaking to us on our screens, there are people right now who are fully imbibed in evil. Contrary to what Star Wars would have you believe—the force is not with them. It's in them.

There is evil in the here and now; on this earth evil exists. There should be no way believers can make an argument that this is not so. **And yet many who profess a Christian belief** will try and make that argument.

This is why it's necessary to establish a stronger understanding of what the Christian faith teaches, what the scripture proclaims, and what Jesus and His apostles, and by extension all who follow Him today must understand: ***"Many will say, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?'"*** (Matthew 7:22b ESV)

In a time such as this, arguably among the portentous in all of modern history, many of the faithful are beguiled by the false teaching of many popular preachers and teachers. Jesus called such people "workers of lawlessness." Are they evil? Alexander died while attempting to conquer the world, but was he evil for doing so? Or, did God use him to develop a Hellenistic culture for a much larger purpose? What is the purpose of false teaching?

Eric Metaxas, writing about the concept of "spiral of silence" in Chapter Six of **"Letter to the American Church"** (1) recounts the work of **Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann**, who coined the term when she realized why so few, even in the Church in Nazi Germany, failed to speak out against the



evil of Hitler and nazism. She observed, *"When people fail to speak, the price of speaking rises. As the price rises, still fewer speak out… until a whole culture or nation is silenced."* According to Bonhoeffer, Metaxas continues, *"Silence in the face of evil is evil."*

Not speaking out is not being neutral, because remaining silent when knowing the truth, actually contributes to evil.

Metaxas continues, "Contrarily, it follows that those who speak out make it easier for others to speak out. Just as cowardice begets cowardice, courage begets courage."

- ***"Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong."*** (1 Corinthians 16:13)

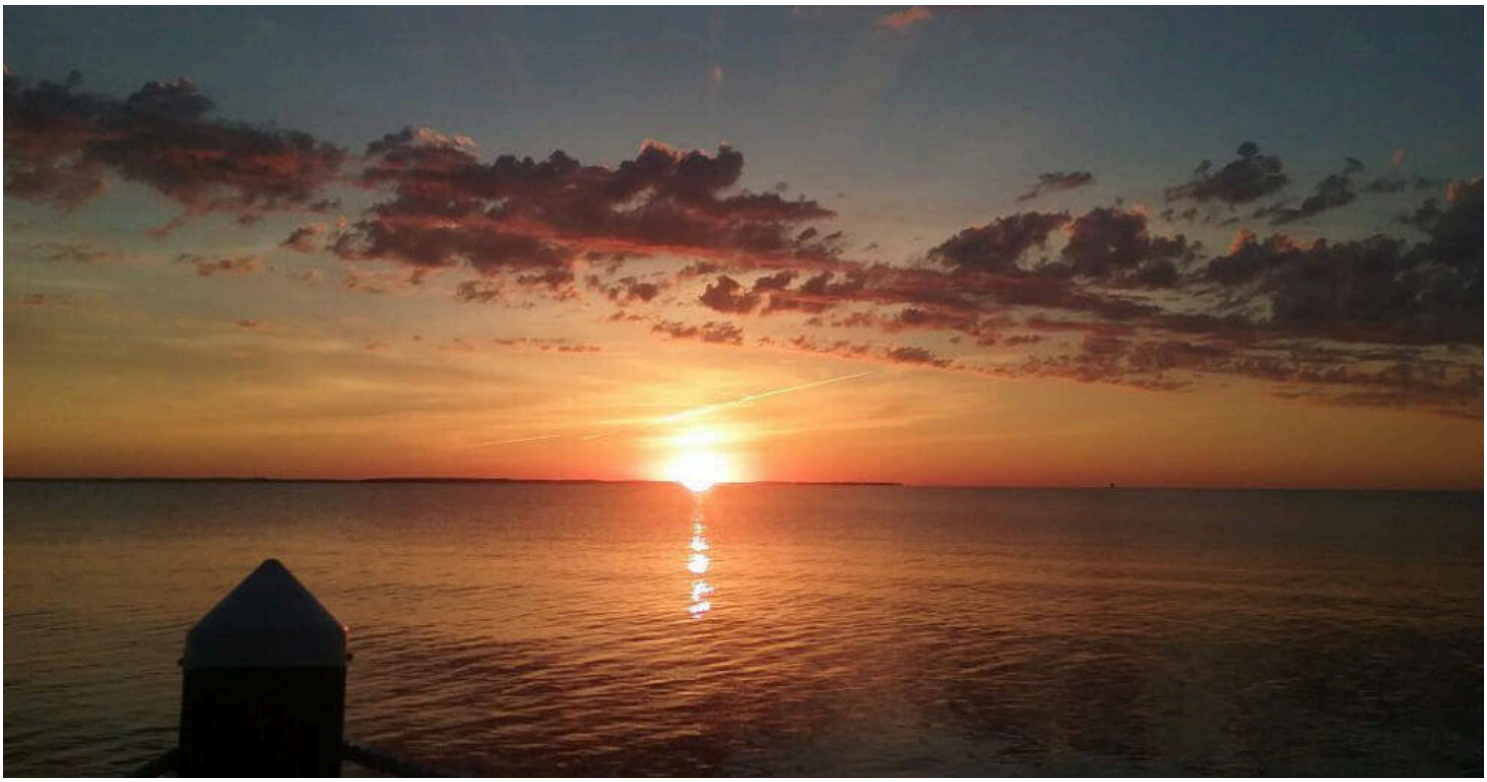
If we preach the idea that, "we are in the world, but not of the world," why would we then be so enamored by the philosophies that are?

Cover Photo from "King of Kings" MGM, 1961

1.Metaxas, Eric. "Letter to the American Church." Salem Books (September 20, 2022)

Pensive, doubting, fearful heart, Hear what Christ the Saviour says;

SEPTEMBER 29, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Christians, we recommend the following hymn and please visit the website. We love scripture-based hymns and songs that glorify God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and lifts His Word to all those who have an ear, and can hear. Faith comes by hearing the Word.

Visit their site and their albums here.

Pensive Doubting Fearful Heart (feat. Emily Deloach)
https://youtube.com/watch?v=YS6InJNEMZo

PENSIVE DOUBTING FEARFUL HEART

- **TEXT: John Newton**
- **MUSIC: Justin Smith**

1. Pensive, doubting, fearful heart,
Hear what Christ the Savior says.
Every word should joy impart,
Change thy mourning into praise.
Yes, he speaks, and speaks to thee,
May he help thee to believe!
Then thou presently wilt see,
Thou hast little cause to grieve.

2. “Fear thou not, nor be ashamed,
All thy sorrows soon shall end.
I who heaven and earth have framed,
Am thy husband and thy friend.
I the High and Holy One,
Israel’s GOD by all adored,
As thy Savior will be known,
Thy Redeemer and thy Lord.”

3. “For a moment I withdrew,
And thy heart was filled with pain,
But my mercies I’ll renew,
Thou shalt soon rejoice again.
Though I scorn to hide my face,
Very soon my wrath shall cease.
‘Tis but for a moment’s space,
Ending in eternal peace.”

4. “When my peaceful bow appears,
Painted on the watery cloud,
‘Tis to dissipate thy fears,
Lest the earth should be overflowed.
‘Tis an emblem too of grace,
Of my cov’nant love a sign.
Though the mountains leave their place,
Thou shalt be forever mine.

5. Though afflicted, tempest-tossed,
Comfortless awhile thou art,
Do not think thou canst be lost,
Thou art graven on my heart.
All thy walls I will repair,
Thou shalt be rebuilt anew,
And in thee it shall appear,
What a God of love can do.

©2012 Justin Smith Music

REFLECTION

This is one of several hymns that Justin Smith contributed to "Joy Beyond The Sadness: Indelible Grace VI." Emily Deloach did a fabulous job singing this – it is trickier than it appears to sing with the control she manages on this track. Other highlights from the recording of this song include getting Jordan Hamlin to add the bgvs since Emily and Jordan are good friends since their days as students in our Belmont RUF group. I also love the groove than Ian Fitchuk laid down on the drums and Kenny Hutson tuned down the low E string on my Danolectro and did some really great electric guitar stuff on this one too. This is an unusual hymn in that most of it is God speaking directly to the singer. In the first verse, the singer speaks to his/her heart saying "Hear what Christ says", and then the rest of the hymn consists of promises directly from God Himself to the believer. John Newton, the author of this text is of course best known for his hymn Amazing Grace, but his letters are a true spiritual treasure as well. Newton excelled at giving spiritual counsel through letters and he puts this wisdom to good use here in this hymn. He is well acquainted with comforting doubting believers and knows well how to speak the sorts of encouraging truths that our pensive, doubting, fearful hearts need to hear.

Are Christians the Troublers of Society?

SEPTEMBER 26, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRIST IN PROPHECY, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, TRIBULATION

Tim Moore: That's the question that has echoed down through the ages since the prophet Elijah showed up at Mt. Carmel and King Ahab bitterly asked him, *"Is this you, you troubler of Israel?"* (1 Kings 18:17). Well, we've come full circle, as many in our society would label Christians as the new troublers of our society. Christians are being accused of holding back the "progress" Progressives believe they are making.

The TROUBLERS Of SOCIETY | Hosts: Tim Moore and Nathan Jones
https://youtube.com/watch?v=rBXWAxrT4aw

Nathan Jones: All throughout the history of the Church, Christians have lived under some kind of persecution. The New World was even founded by Christian Separatists and Puritans who needed to escape religious persecution. Americans have been so blessed since the 1600s to live in a country that historically has stood on Judeo-Christian values. Therefore, Christians in this country have felt safe. But, no longer. Many Christians in the West are not feeling particularly safe anymore. Today's society is instead defined by people calling good evil and evil good, as Isaiah 5:20 warns.

Tim Moore: Even non-Christians have understood that for many years the Christian foundations of America have provided liberty to all. Jewish commentators such as Dennis Prager have spoken about how Christianity has been a very positive influence on society, providing both moral and legal foundations that guide how we interact as a civilization. Prager also warns that as our Judeo-Christian foundations are broken down, the result will be our society pitching over into chaos.

Nathan Jones: Yes, for example, earlier this year, the *New York Post* wrote, "Cat-ears-clad school board member says the district should not hire teachers from Christian university." Washington Elementary School District in Phoenix, Arizona had held a five-year contract with Arizona Christian University for student-teacher placement. One of their three LGBTQ+ board members, Tamillia Valenzuela, blasted the university over its Christian beliefs and said she was disheartened by their relationship with this Christian school. Valenzuela claims she is "a bilingual, disabled, neurodivergent, Queer Black Latina who loves a good hot wing." She champions what the Bible would deem as pagan "values" over biblical morality.

Tim Moore: Christianity being kicked out of schools is not just happening in Phoenix but everywhere. The *L.A. Times* reported how a Los Angeles community had become outraged over a church that had been renting space from a school on weekends to hold worship services. The church had invited a speaker, a lady who had self-identified as gay but had come out of that lifestyle and embraced Jesus Christ. Despite churches meeting at schools being quite legal, the school will now disallow anyone to meet off-hours out of fear of LGBTQ+ activists being upset that the Gospel is being preached on their campus.

Nathan Jones: What kind of craziness denies churches from meeting in schools after hours, but allows satanic groups access? Reminds me of how before the Grammys this year the network CBS tweeted "Let's worship!" knowing a satanic drag song was going to be performed.

Then there's a deputy police commissioner in Queensland, Australia who linked the belief in Premillennialism with terrorism, calling it an "extremist ideology." Christianity is often automatically tied to right-wing extremism these days.

Source of the Hatred

Nathan Jones: A lot of this disdain for Christianity and Christians goes back to what the Bible says in John 3:19, *"And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."* We're back to where man calls evil good and good evil. We've found ourselves in the downward phase in a society where what is good is considered evil, and therefore, Christianity must also be considered evil.

Tim Moore: We're certainly there. Our public officials are turning against Christianity, and it's happening all across the world. The entire world has become increasingly hostile to Judeo-Christian values. This reminds me of what Jesus said in John 15:18, *"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you."* The world loves its sin and so refuses to hear the Gospel.

Living in a Hostile Society

Tim Moore: How do we as Christians thrive and survive in a world that is hostile to our faith? Well, first of all, we keep our focus on Jesus Christ. Trust that Jesus has overcome the world. Knowing this, we do not let our hearts be troubled. Rather, we speak out, acting as salt and light in an increasingly dark place. Until the Rapture occurs, this is our responsibility. We're not to cower and hide, rather we're bold about our faith and are ready to give a defense to anyone who asks why we believe what we do. Our faith is not based on opinion, rather it's based on the Word of God, and that has power.

While we are being faithful in sharing the Good News, we know that life is going to get more difficult for us until the moment of the Rapture. But then, Heaven help those who have not placed their faith in Jesus Christ and so will live into the time of the Tribulation. They will witness the world becoming exceedingly hostile to anybody who would seek to place their faith in Christ.

Nathan Jones: Christians, we are the people who have our fingers in the dam stopping it from bursting. By the Holy Spirit, we Christians are holding back the tide of evil. But, one day soon, when the Lord takes us home, the dam is going to burst, and evil will pour out and deluge the entire world. We don't want anyone to be left behind by the Rapture to endure those horrors, so put your trust in Jesus Christ today.

SOURCE: **LAMB AND LION MINISTRIES**

SEPTEMBER 26, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Even if it means doing something.

In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (2 Corinthians 4:4 ESV)

Marxists may not always be very smart, but most tend to be very committed. Unfortunately, because they are committed to ideologies devoid of any constraints in honesty or decency, their commitment, in time, leads to evil. Two separate, emerging stories, reveal just how impactful that's proving to be.

On September 13, this headline appeared online: **Anti-White Academic Whose Research 'Proved' Systemic Racism is Fired from University for Faking Data**. The story, revealed on **bigleaguepolitics.com**, opens this way: *"An affirmative action academic whose research on systemic racism was widely used to fuel animus against white people has been fired from* ***Florida State University*** *(FSU) for falsifying data."*

Criminology professor, **Eric Stewart**, (pictured) was terminated by FSU when it was discovered that had engaged in "extreme negligence," which is another way of saying he was falsifying data, in his research studies. These same studies were cited by other researchers on **8,500 occasions** according to Google Scholar, a feature of the Google search engine for use by scholars and researchers. Stewart also served as a WEB DuBois fellow at the **National Institute of Justice**. We shouldn't overlook the significance of this last fact considering it a part of none other than our Department of Justice.

Details of the firing include this statement by FSU Provost, **James J. Clark**, who excoriated Stewart, In a **termination letter** dated July 13 *"for the damage his shoddy and irresponsible work has caused to the university and the field in general,"* Clark stated.

"The details of problematic data management, false results, and the numerous publication retractions have negatively affected the discipline on a national level," Clark also stated." *The damage to the standing of the University and, in particular, the College of Criminology and Criminal Justice and its*

faculty approaches the catastrophic and may be unalterable," he added. *"I do not see how you can teach our students to be ethical researchers or how the results of future research projects conducted by you could be deemed as trustworthy."*

Is it unimaginable that Stewart's own racially biased ideology excused him falsifying the data?

Working as a researcher at FSU, Stewart churned through millions in research dollars—collected from unwitting taxpayers. At this point, six of Stewart's articles have been pulled from major academic journals owing to his "erroneous" data. These would include organizations like the **National Science Foundation**, the **National Institute of Justice** and Florida's **Department of Juvenile Justice**. Says the story's author, **Shane Trejo**, *"It sure pays to be a low IQ race huckster in multicultural, diverse America, eh?" But the question remains,*

While there may be a more cultured way of putting it, that's what it is. The enormity of Stewart's fakery is, in fact, stunning considering how it has shaped the national conversation for many years, and triggered an incalculable amount of civil strife and destruction. As huckstering often goes, it demanded the financing from the very victims it was alleged to assist, while managing to widen the rift many Americans might have thought was once beginning to heal fifty years ago. Racist ideology is not only painful, it's evidently never-ending.

But there is something else that is far worse, if you're prepared for it. It's like a revival of something increasingly vile, evil, and malevolent; as old as the Bible itself. It's practice now is every bit as horrible and condemning as it was then. Worse, it's taking place with increasing judicial encouragement.

- ***"The people of Judah have done evil in my eyes, declares the Lord. They have set up their detestable idols in the house that bears my Name and have defiled it. 31 They have built the high places of Topheth in the Valley of Ben Hinnom to burn their sons and daughters in the fire—something I did not command, nor did it enter my mind."*** (Jeremiah 7:30-31 NIV)

Yes, we're talking about child sacrifice—again; another development in the depravity and wickedness that's overwhelming this country. This time the antagonist is none other than the **Southern Poverty Law Center.** (SPLC)

If you have ever wondered about the SPLC and what kind of "work" they actually do, **you must read this story by Philip Zodhiates**. (pictured) In it, he describes what amounts to a nightmare that few could endure absent a deep and abiding faith in God in Christ. Zodhiates has spent three

years in prison for the crime of providing safe transport to a woman named **Lisa Miller** and her young daughter, Isabella—who was being sexual abused by another woman. You see, Lisa had been in a lesbian "civil union" with **Janet Jenkin**s, whom she claimed became very abusive to both her and her daughter. But then, Lisa became a Christian and she left her abuser—with her daughter—to escape the sexual abuse.

The SPLC entered into a contract with the abuser after a Vermont court convicted Zodhiates of "International Parental Kidnapping." They have filed a civil lawsuit that not only will bankrupt him, but may eventually lead to the normalization of adult/child sexual predation—and much worse—with the imprimatur of the American justice system. **The full heart-breaking story is available to read and download**. I would ask you—no urge you—that you read his account, and pray for God's justice for Zodhiates and his family desperately they need to survive the ongoing nightmare that's befallen them; all because he chose to be a "good Samaritan" in a world that's actively plumbing the depths of depravity.

The summer surprise of 2023 was the theatrical release of "The Sound of Freedom," an American **action film** directed and co-written by **Alejandro Monteverde**, and starring **Jim Caviezel**, **Mira Sorvino** and **Bill Camp**. Caviezel plays **Tim Ballard**, a former US government agent who embarks on a mission to rescue children from **sex traffickers** in **Colombia**. The movie's success… grossing more than $210 million on a $14.5 million budget has made it one of the most successful independent films in history. (Source: **Wikipedia**)

Why was this movie a surprise success? In part because it captured the hearts of millions, **who, up until then, had little to no idea** about the extent of child sex trafficking. Well, now that we do, should we do something about it?

We could have been more aware, for example, after it was revealed how financier and political insider **Jeffrey Epstein** was using underage girls as the sexual attraction for dozens of high-ranking politicians, cultural elites, and corporate oligarchs for his own enrichment and influence—most likely using blackmail. His suicide in jail awaiting trial, has yet to be established; it is likely he was murdered. He was the man, you see, who knew too much.

Annual revenues for child-sex trafficking and forced labor total **$39 billion dollars globally each year.** Moreover, It's estimated that annual global profits **for all human trafficking** is about **$150 billion**.

If you missed it, these two current events chronicle what is clearly the nexus of ideology and evil. Statistics on their own can only inform. It's the anecdotes that impassion. What has become of the

passion for our own communities and country?

- ***What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?*** (James 2:14 ESV)

To my way of thinking, if someone offers any ideas on how to lead, guide, and encourage one another, we should listen.

Cover image photo by **Drew Hays** on **Unsplash**

Our Mission to Steward the Earth

SEPTEMBER 22, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL CREATION, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

This article is an excerpt from Stephen McDowell's new book, **Stewarding the Earth, A Biblical View of Economics**

God created man and the earth to be productive, to be fruitful (Gen. 1:11-12, 20-22, 24, 28). After making man, both male and female, in His image,

> God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the seas and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Gen. 1: 28, ESV).

The Hebrew word translated "subdue" is *kabash*, which means "to subdue, subjugate, dominate, bring into subjection." This word is also used in reference to Israel subduing the land of Canaan so it would provide for their needs (Num. 32:22, 29; Josh. 18:1). God placed man in control of His creation as His vice-regent or steward. We are called to subdue, have dominion over, and steward

the earth in order to meet our needs and advance His creation commission. All living and non-living things are under man's dominion.

Our stewardship is further explained in Genesis 2: "then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it" (v. 15). Man's mission was to cultivate the land God gave him. Every tree God created was good for food (Gen. 2:9). To keep trees, to cultivate land, to subdue the earth are actions of good stewardship.

In order to "be fruitful and multiply" we must subdue or control the earth. We are to develop and produce more and better goods from the earth. This is part of the mission God gave to mankind from the beginning. We are also to replenish the natural resources. God created living things such that they reproduce and multiply, making it possible for us to replenish the earth.

God's creation is good because it was made by a good Creator, and the creation reflects the nature and character of the Creator (Rom. 1:20). It is also good because it enables man – God's highest creation – to sustain himself and to progressively advance as he learns how to be a better steward. As man learns how to properly manage God's property, he becomes more and more like God. He becomes a co-creator, taking the original creation material and using his God-given knowledge and talents to make new things that bring about the amelioration of mankind.Chapter 1 of Genesis tells us God's creation is good – "God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good" (v. 31). Natural resources and the earth's productivity are good. God's physical creation is good. That is, material wealth is good. Many religions teach otherwise, and they have suffered from lack of material well-being in part due to this incorrect belief.

God's blessing comes via man's increased productivity using the resources He created in the earth and universe. Material abundance is a blessing of God (Deut. 8:7-10). Disobedience by man brought a curse upon him and the earth seen via hindered productivity (Gen. 3:17-19).

Material productivity is good. It is part of our godly mission. Productive occupations are good. Jesus and His apostles were involved in occupations that produced useful goods and services. Jesus was a carpenter, Paul was a tentmaker, James and John were fishermen. Many of His apostles continued their business while conducting their "religious" work of preaching the Gospel.

Christ Restores Man's Ability to Steward the Earth

This original creation commission or cultural mandate was impacted by the fall of man but it was not abrogated. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they (and mankind in general) lost both their intimate relationship with God and their ability to properly steward the earth. Sin not only separated man from God but also brought a curse and great loss. Man was unable to properly fulfill the cultural mandate.

God's redemptive nature is evident early on. After man fell from what God made him to be and to do, God planned both to redeem man and to restore man's delegated authority and stewardship over the earth. God promised that the seed of woman would destroy the serpent, Satan (Gen. 3:15). Christ was that seed who came to redeem man and reverse the effects of the fall and the curse. He restored to man the ability to fulfill the mission originally given to Adam and also made it possible for man to once again have a personal relationship with God.

The story of redemption unfolds in the various covenants which God initiated with men. The giving of the law in the Mosaic Covenant was also used by God to further His redemptive program. Of course, God's redemptive purpose has found ultimate fulfillment in the New Covenant through Christ, who was slain and by whose blood God has redeemed men for himself "from every tribe and tongue and people and nation" (Rev. 5:9).

The complete purpose of salvation in Christ cannot be understood unless we understand the original purpose of man. Salvation goes beyond getting men to heaven. It includes restoring man to his original position. Christ brought to man the restoration of the covenant he had with God, of the glory he had from God, and of the dominion mandate. Jesus also brought His kingdom rule and reign to all creation. He proclaimed and demonstrated the gospel of the Kingdom (that is, the government, righteousness, truth, and peace of God in all areas of life).

His atoning work also reversed the curse due to the fall of man. The curse affects individuals through death, sickness, and bondage, and in turn also affects all spheres of life. Christ brought redemption to individuals, but also institutions and all spheres of life (including law, government, education, arts, and business). Redemption is as broad as the sweep of sin.

God's desire, as Jesus taught us to pray, is for His kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matt. 6:9-13). We have been redeemed for a purpose. In Christ we have been restored to sonship and are now in a position to obey both the cultural and the evangelistic mandates. With respect to the cultural mandate, God has restored us to stewardship. Through Christ we are called back to God's original purpose—to live in His image and to "be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over … every living creature that moves on the ground" (Gen. 1:28). We have been restored to serving God as his vice-regent over the earth. We have been enabled to steward the earth in accordance with God's original design.

Faith and the Economy

The theology of a people determines their economic condition. The choices men and leaders make come from their view of God and His laws. Man apart from God is lost. His sinful state affects how he thinks and acts. Unregenerate man tends not to recognize the most obvious truths. This is why many people today embrace socialism even though there are no examples currently or in times past where it has worked. It does not bring advancement to man, only lack and bondage.

Economic systems (as well as political, educational, familial, and scientific systems) ultimately rest upon faith, upon a people's theological suppositions. One's theological beliefs determine his worldview (his view of God, man, truth, family, government, education, history and all of life). One's worldview determines his political philosophy, and one's political philosophy determines one's economic philosophy which determines the systems and policies established in a nation. To summarize:

Theology ——>>> W**orldview** ——>>> P**olity** ——->>> E**conomy**

Political philosophy affects economics because the government is the house in which the economy lives. A biblical form of government is essential for the best economic system. The limited but important function of government regarding economic matters will be addressed in more detail later, but simply stated, the role of government is to protect the life, liberty, and property of its citizens. It is to keep the market free and fair. It is to provide a peaceful environment so that man can most effectively steward the earth. President Grover Cleveland explained the limited function of government: "Though the people support the government the government should not support the people."

Government exercises force, while the economic sphere relies upon voluntary cooperation. Eternal vigilance over our government is necessary for economic freedom. Left alone, the tendency is for governmental power to increase. Thomas Jefferson said, "The natural progress of things is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground." As the size and power of government grows, individual liberties are lost. A biblical economic system cannot be maintained without a biblical governmental system.

To learn what a biblical economic system looks like see, **Stewarding the Earth, A Biblical View of Economics**

SOURCE: **PROVIDENCE FOUNDATION**

End Notes

Chapter 1

Strong's Concordance, *kabash* (no. 3533), Wayne Grudem, *Politics According to the Bible*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010, p. 269.

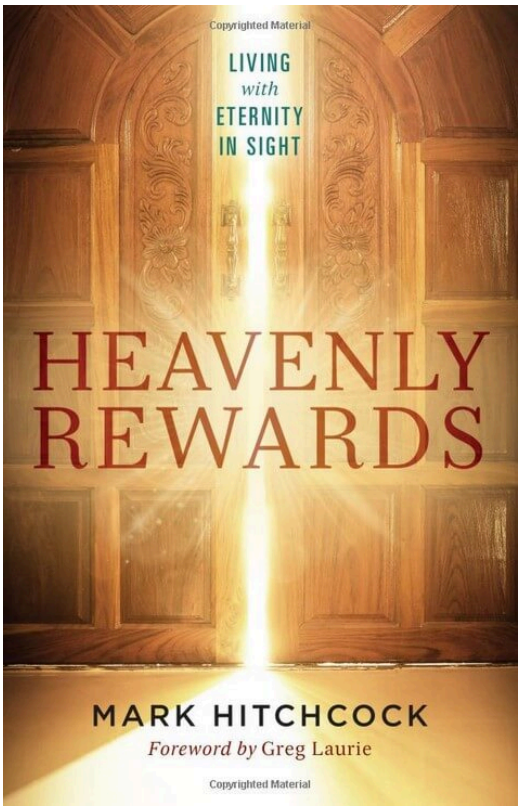
See Stephen McDowell, *The Kingdom of God*, Charlottesville: Providence Foundation, 2012.

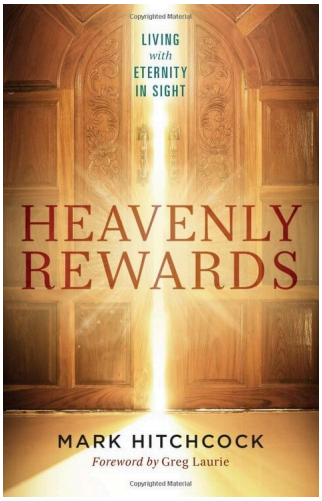
Tom Rose, *Economics: Principles and Policy From a Christian Perspective*, Mercer, Penn.: American Enterprise Publications, 1996, p. 83.

Rose, p. 73.

The Bema Seat and Heavenly Rewards are Real: Are You Living in Light of Eternity?

SEPTEMBER 11, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD





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Reposting from August 31, 2019
Are You Living in Light of Eternity?

See interview by Jan Markel with Dr. Mark Hitchcock below

It's difficult to imagine eternal life. But when you've got only one life and you know there is coming a day when you will stand before God, it's important to consider whether you're living each day like your life depends on it.

If you're a Christian, the good news is God's judgment isn't about determining your salvation—it's about rewarding your faithfulness. Salvation cannot be earned—it's already yours.

In *Heavenly Rewards* you will uncover fascinating truths about how the life you live today determines your life in eternity. You will…

- learn tangible ways you can please the Lord in your everyday living
- discover that your labor and sacrifices are never in vain—God is a faithful rewarder
- see the benefits of living faithfully and enduring through even the most difficult times

Yes, your faithfulness *will* be rewarded. God knows the smallest details of your days, and He wants to acknowledge your every act you've done for Him.

Living well with an eternal perspective really *can* change your life—for good.

Jan talks to **Dr. Mark Hitchcock** about our rewards, and judgment, at the Bema Seat. This determines how we reign in Heaven, the Millennial Kingdom, and in eternity. *It is our "final exam."* **Find his new book in our online store.** Though salvation is by grace, our thoughts, deeds, motives, and more, will still be judged. Find our mobile app at **OnePlace.com**.

Your Final Exam: The Bema Seat – Dr. Mark Hitchcock
https://youtube.com/watch?v=agdaEDVs2i4

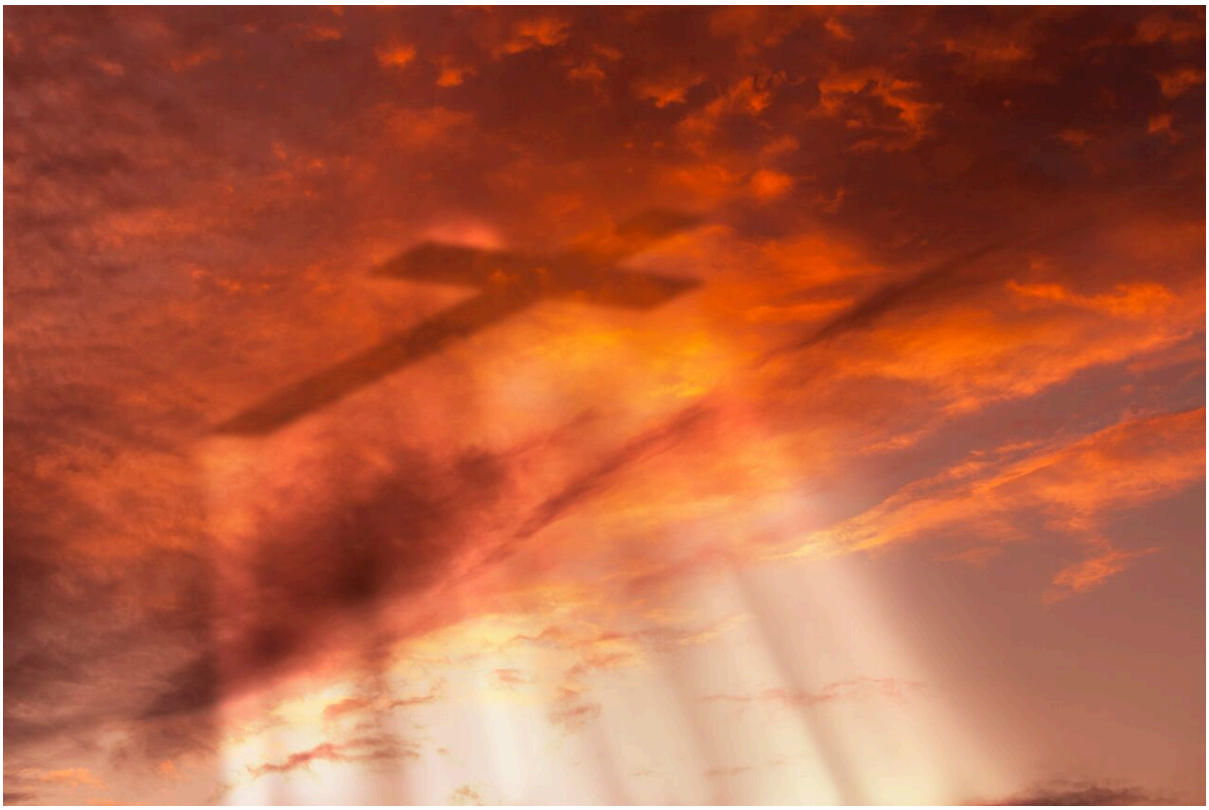
His Sermon last year at Moody Church

Your Final Exam

https://youtube.com/watch?v=9vUWLiQ4X1Q

CityAlight – Jesus, Strong and Kind / Jesus Loves Me (feat. Philippine Survivor Network Choir)

SEPTEMBER 2, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Words and Music by Rich Thompson, Jonny Robinson, Michael Farren, and Colin Buchanan ©2023 CityAlight Music CCLI: 7073327

Visit CityAlight's YouTube Channel

V1

Jesus said
That if I thirst
I should come to him
No one else can satisfy
I should come to him

CityAlight - Jesus, Strong and Kind / Jesus Loves Me (feat. Philippine Survivor Network Choir)
https://youtube.com/watch?v=zS9w_frp674

V2

Jesus said

If I am weak

I should come to him

No one else can be my strength

I should come to himChorus

For the Lord is good and faithful

He will keep us day and night

We can always run to Jesus

Jesus, strong and kind

V3

Jesus said

That if I fear

I should come to him

No one else can be my shield

I should come to him

V4

Jesus said if I am lost

He will come to me

And he showed me on that cross

He will come to me

Chorus

For the Lord is good and faithful

He will keep us day and night

We can always run to Jesus

Jesus, strong and kind

Jesus loves me

This I know

For the Bible tells me so

Little ones to Him belong

They are weak but He is strong

Yes Jesus loves me

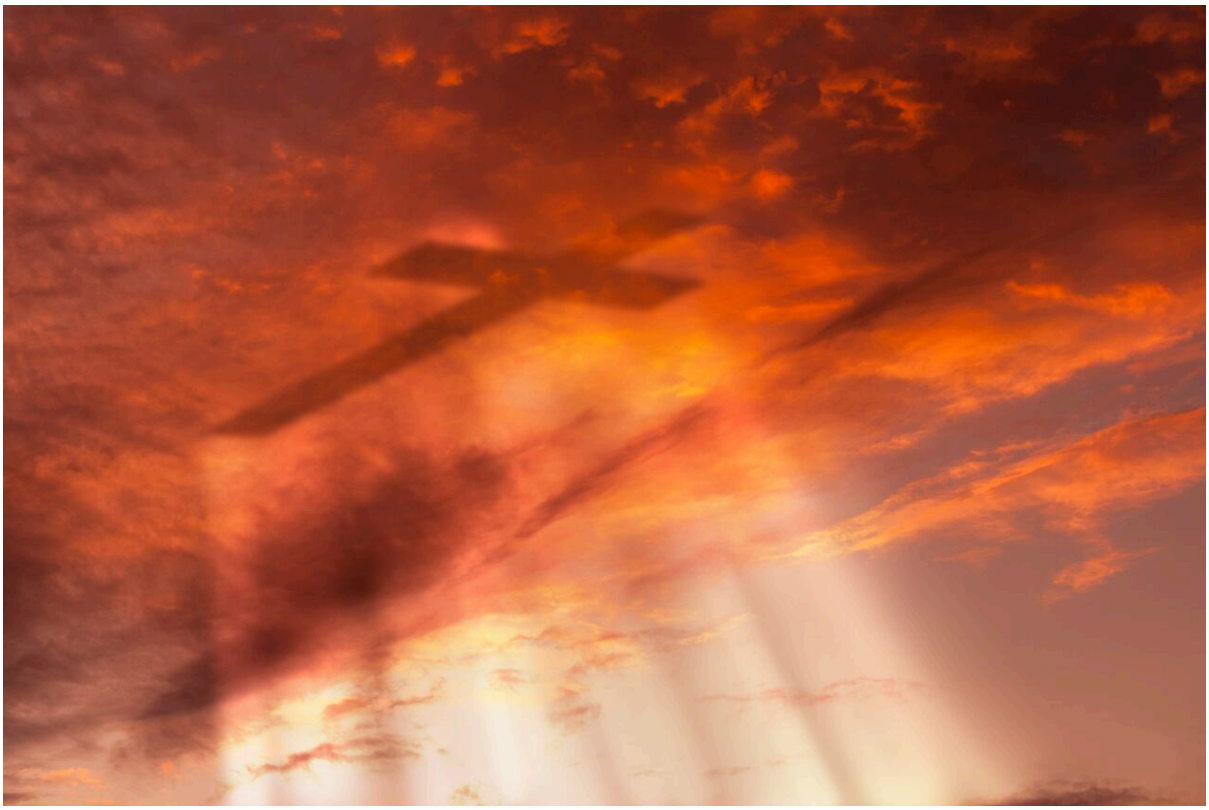
Yes Jesus loves me

Yes Jesus loves me

The Bible tells me so

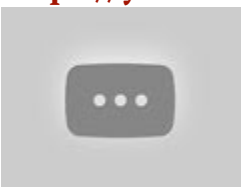
We Warned Many EVANGELICALS About THIS, But They Didn’t Listen – Voddie Baucham

AUGUST 21, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



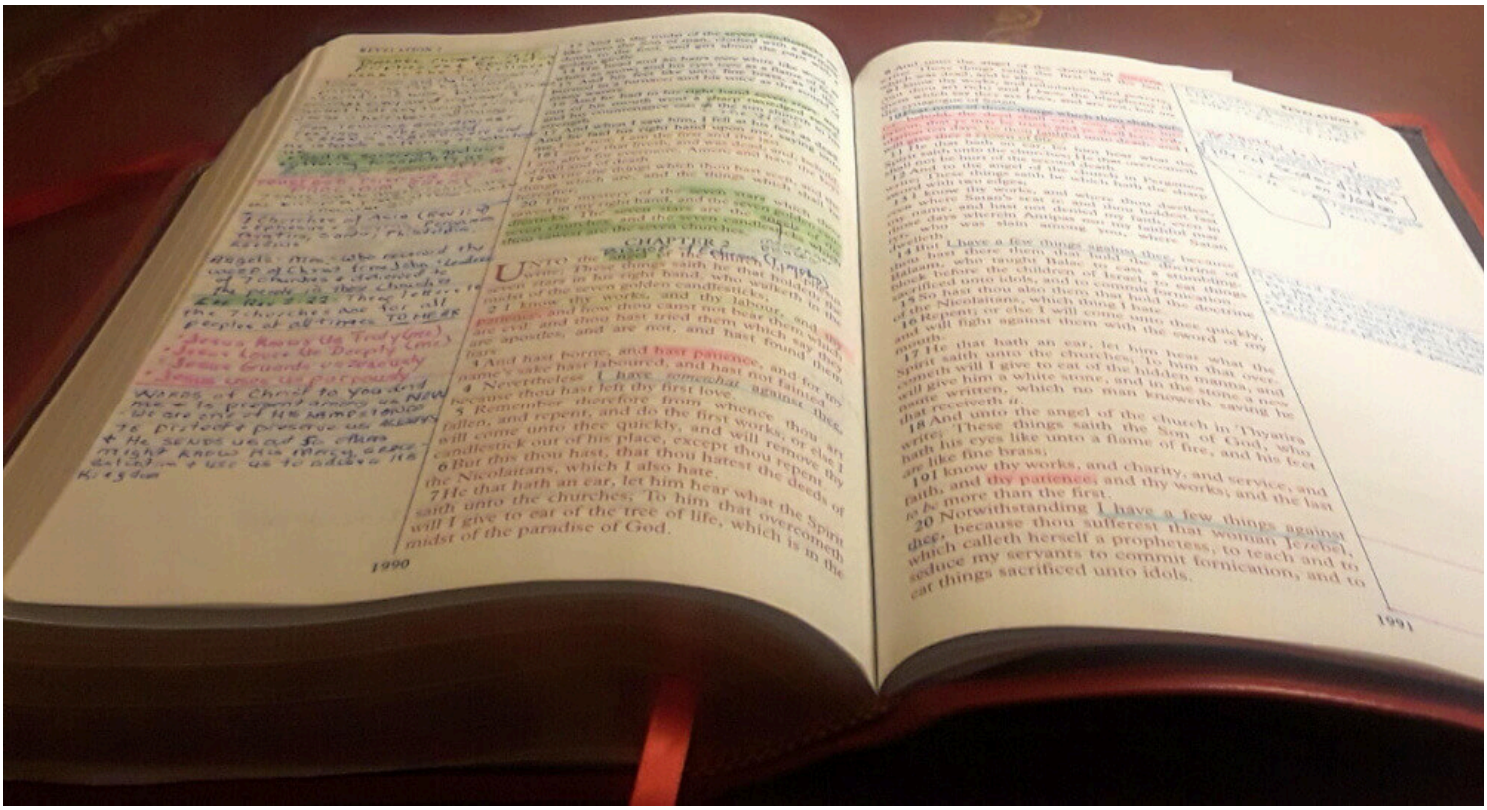
We Warned Many EVANGELICALS About THIS, But They Didn’t Listen. We warned many evangelical Christians about the Papacy’s plot to solidify its ecumenical agenda through Hollywood-backed movies like The Chosen and Jesus Revolution, but most people didn’t listen. Reaction from Voddie Baucham, Jonathan Roumie.

We Warned Many EVANGELICALS About THIS, But They Didn’t Listen - Voddie Baucham
https://youtube.com/watch?v=nxejwTKwDrg



Ben Shapiro loses his first debate!? | Historical Evidence for Jesus being God | William Lane Craig

AUGUST 11, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



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The Names and Nature of God

AUGUST 6, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, BIBLICAL CREATION, GOD, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, TRIBULATION

The Names of God

To understand God's nature, attributes, and works, we begin by studying the names of God. Names are so important to the Lord that He dedicated an entire book called *Shemot* (names), known as Exodus. We read, *"Now these are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt" (Exodus 1:1, NKJV)*. Names have meaning, and they have power. It says, *"Then God said, 'Let there be light;' and there was light" (Genesis 1:1)*, for the Lord God created the universe by His spoken word. And names have authority. We read, *"What a word this is! For with authority and power, He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out" (Luke 4:36)*.

It is said by the rabbis that parents receive a glimmer of divine inspiration when they give their child a Hebrew name. We read, *"Then the angel said to her … Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS " (Luke 1:30)*.

God's name is the most frequently used noun in the Hebrew Bible, occurring over 6,800 times. Of all His names, only three correspond with His essence and are called the "names of essence (*Shemot HaAtzmut*)." These three are the Tetragrammaton (most frequently used 5,321 times), *Yah*, and *Eh'Heh'Yeh*. This first group of names refers to what God *is*, and the second group of names, which we will discuss later, refers to what God *does* and apply to His actions.

The Tetragrammaton also called the "Four-Letter" name of God, is spelled with only four consonants: *Yud*, *Hey*, *Vav*, *Hey* (often pronounced *Yehovah*—יְהוָה). Notice the use of "Y" as there is no "J" sound in Hebrew. An abbreviated form *Yah* is also found in scripture. God's four-letter name is His personal written name, as we discover in Exodus:

"Then Moses said to God, Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them? And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM .' And He said , Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' Moreover God said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations'" (Exodus 3:13-15).

God's Response to Moses and Different Attributes of the Godhead

God's response to Moses is highly enigmatic. Moses has asked a question, but God does not appear to be answering in a way he can comprehend. How can we know and understand God's name with this ambiguous response?

The first thing to pay attention to in these verses is the repetition of the words "God said to Moses (*vayomer Elohim el Moshe*)." Three times the Lord says *Vayomer*, and we need to discover the purpose for this repetition. The Rabbinic *Midrash Exodus Rabba 3:6* helps us interpret this dialogue between God and Moses and its application to the naming of God.

Rabbi Yitzhak says that God's response to Moses is the following statement: "Say to them, 'I am the One Who was, and I am the One Who is now, and I am the One Who will be in the future.'" In contrast, Rabbi Yaakov says God's answer means: "I will be with them now just as I will be with them later." He refined his answer by expounding the following: "Say to them, 'In this enslavement , I will be with them, and they will go into enslavement , and I will be with them.'" He says this explanation offers God's assurance and comfort for His people, Israel.

Rabbi Yitzhak refines his opinion with another explanation by saying *Eheye* is derived from the Hebrew root letters *hey-vuv-hey* with the meaning of "in trouble or evil I will be with them," and translates as "I was broken." Thus, he explains that the Lord is saying to Moses: "Tell the children of Israel that I will be with them in their brokenness and trouble."

However, there is a complication in Rabbi Yitzhak's translation as it does not work grammatically in Hebrew. *Eheye* is a first-person *future* conjugation of either the Hebrew root *hey-yud-hey* or *hey-vuv-hey*, and translated accurately *has* to mean "I *will* be broken," not "I was broken." The rabbis attribute this brokenness to the Jewish people, and to an extent, this is true. But the prophet Isaiah is clear in saying: *"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5)*. It would be one man, not an entire nation, that would atone for the sins of the world.

In conclusion, God is not just providing three repetitive responses to Moses. Instead, each answer communicates a different attribute of the Godhead and aligns perfectly with God's triune nature of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Thus, God is saying to Moses:

1. Tell the children of Israel that **I am their heavenly Father**, and my character is made known by these attributes. We read, *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14)*; *"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation" (Colossians 1:15)*.
2. Tell the children of Israel that ***I am the Holy Spirit***, their comforter, and I will be with them in their trouble and evil. We read, *"I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you" (John 14:18)*; *"The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you" (John 14:26)*.
3. And tell the children of Israel, **I am the Son of God** and "I will be broken" for their iniquity. We read, *"You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified" (Matthew 26:2)*; *"For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us" (1Corinthians 5:7)*.

God's second group of names is divided into His formal and non-formal descriptive titles. God's non-formal titles include merciful, slow to anger, and truthful. His formal titles include *Adonai* (plural) and *Shaddai*. *Adonai* (*Adon* singular) means "God is the Master or Ruler of the creation," and *Shaddai* means "He places limits on it" (*She'amar Le'Olamo Dai*). *Adonai* is used in the Old Testament similarly to the Greek word *kurio* and the English word "Lord." When we call Jesus "Lord," we recognize Him as our Master.

Even though God's name was pronounced as part of daily services in the temple, the sages do not attempt to pronounce any variant of God's name to prevent defilement (the third commandment). However, nothing in the Old Testament prohibits a person from pronouncing the name of God. When Hebrew scholars later derived vowel points for scripture, they assigned the vowel points for "Adonai" to the Tetragrammaton.

Divine Science, Hebrew Alphabet and Ten Numbers

The Hebrew alphabet consists of twenty-two letters that are all consonants, and there are no vowels. The sages tell us that the world was created with these twenty-two letters and ten numbers (one through ten), each letter having a numerical value associated with one of these ten digits, what the rabbis call "Divine science." They believe these letters and their associated numerical values are the primal spiritual forces that effectively created the raw materials of creation.

There is debate about the actual pronunciation of the Lord's name, but there is compelling evidence of pronouncing it as *Hovah* (as in *Ye-ho-vah*). In Hebrew, *Ye* is the future tense of "to be," as in "shall." *Ho* is the present tense of "to be" as in "is." And *ah* is the past tense of "to be" as in "was." Thus *Ye-ho-ah* can mean "who was, who is, and who shall be." This understanding perfectly aligns with God's words, "I am that I am," and Rabbi Yitzhak's translation: "I am the One Who was, and I am the One Who is now, and I am the One Who will be in the future." When we insert the *Vav* (V sound), we get the pronunciation: *Ye-ho-v-ah*.

Many Hebrew names in the Bible contain *Yah* or *Yahu*, which is part of God's four-letter name. For example, Joshua (*Yehoshua*—יְהוֹשֻׁעַ), the Hebrew name given to Jesus. This early Biblical Hebrew name underwent a shortening into the later name of *Yeshua* (יֵשׁוּעַ). The Septuagint transliterated *Yeshua* from Hebrew into Koine Greek in the third century B.C., resulting in *Ἰησοῦς* (*Iēsous*).

From Greek, the name was translated into Latin. Latin has an irregular declension, with a vocative of *Jesu*, accusative of *Jesum*, and nominative of *Jesus*. The modern English name "Jesus" (*ˈdʒiːzəs*) later evolved from the Early Middle English Anglo-Saxon name *"Iesu."* Therefore, the correct name of Jesus is *Yeshua* or *Yehoshua* (anglicized Joshua).

In Hebrew, *Yeshua* means "salvation," while *Yehoshua* has a similar but more personal meaning: "God is my salvation."
Other formal titles for God derived from *Yehovah* are further compounded to include:

- *Yehovah-Elohim* (God of Heaven),
- *Yehovah-Yireh* (God who sees or who provides),
- *Yehovah-Rapha* (God who heals),
- *Yehovah-Nissi* (God is my banner),
- *Yehovah-Shalom* (God of peace),
- *Yehovah-Raah* (God our shepherd),
- *Yehovah-Tsidkenu* (Righteous God),
- *Yehovah-Sabaoth* (Lord of Hosts), and
- *Yehovah-Shammah* (Immanent God).

Elohim (singular *Eloah*) is the first name of God in the Bible (Genesis 1:1) and is used about 2,500 times. Most Orthodox scholars believe the plural nature of *Elohim* reveals God's triune nature. The root *El* means "mighty" or "strong" and is the most commonly used Hebrew word for God, angels, and magistrates.

From the root, *El* derives many additional formal titles for God, such as *El Elyon* (Most High God), *El Olam* (Everlasting God), and *El Shadai* (Almighty God). It also derives many Hebrew names, such as Dani-el, Immanu-el, and the word for God's covenant nation, Isra-el. Metaphorical names for God include *Ha Tsur*, meaning "He is the Rock."

In the New Testament, the name for God is *theos*, and the Word is *logos*. Like *Elohim*, the Greek can mean "God" or "gods." The Greek word for Lord is *Kurios*, and *Kurios* is used similarly in scripture to *Adonai*. *Abba* was the Aramaic word that Jesus used for Father, and in Greek, that word is *Pater*.

God's Names and Titles Describe God

God's names and titles (formal and informal) have meaning and describe His many attributes and characteristics. And because God is the transcendent, infinite, unsearchable, and unknowable One, His names and titles are like garments. They can describe His attributes but in themselves can never fully reveal the hidden essence of who He is.

The Hebrew word *lefanav*, translated "before him," stems from the root *panim*, meaning "face" or "countenance." Therefore, when we pray, *"The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you ; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you*, *And give you peace" (Numbers 6:25-26)*, we are asking the Lord to reveal to us more than His names and titles; we ask Him to reveal His face, the essence of who He is. This countenance we find entirely in the person of Jesus (*Yeshua*), as we read, *"And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14)*.

We are commanded to seek God's face, as it says: *"Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face evermore!" (2 Chronicles 16:11)*. And we require God's names to study scripture and understand His nature, attributes, or works. In doing these two things, we find, *"The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7)*.

The Nature of God

The study of God's nature is complex. How can created finite beings fully understand an infinite God? His nature surpasses our comprehension. It is written: *"Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, Measured heaven with a span And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales And the hills in a balance?" (Isaiah 40:12)*. Thus, it is impossible to know anything of God unless He reveals it.

The Bible does not give us a single description of God's character and nature; even the entirety of scripture and all God's names fall short of defining who He is. For example, individual verses reveal to us that God is Spirit, God is light, God is love, and God is a consuming fire. From the Westminster Catechism, we read: "God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth."

While God is Spirit, even this description fails to communicate God's essence because we surmise that even a Spirit has substance. For example, the wind comprises gaseous molecules, and

electricity is the movement of electrons; all are created elements. But God is the creator; thus, any description of God being Spirit communicates that He is invisible, unseen, undetectable, and unmeasurable. God has no corporeal (human or bodily) form and no created or material substance in Him. God cannot be confined to physical space or dimensions of space and time as He created them. He is the invisible, unsearchable, and eternal God. We read, *"No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him" (John 1:18)*.

However, because God has chosen to reveal Himself through the creation, we find anthropomorphisms (man-like descriptions) within it. For example, specific Bible passages describe God as having eyes, ears, or arms. But God does not need physical eyes to see or ears to hear. Still, God, who made all things, has appeared in a visible form, sometimes even a human one. These appearances are called "theophanies," meaning "visible manifestations of God to humanity." And they do not contradict God's spiritual nature. He can assume any form He desires since He created the physical and spiritual realms.

One essential aspect of God's nature is that He is *one*. Even though, as Christians, we recognize God's triune nature, the Lord's declaration on Mount Sinai was, *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!" (Deuteronomy 6:4)*. And Jesus said, "*The first of all the commandments is: 'HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE'" (Mark 12:29)*. The Apostle John acknowledged God's triune nature but also declared God's oneness by saying, *"For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word , and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one" (1 John 5:7)*.

We must embrace the truths about God's absolute unity regarding His creation and how nothing can exist apart from Him. As Jesus said, *"For without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5)*.

One of our great sages, Maimonides, described the oneness of God's nature in this way: *"God is the Knowledge, the Knower, and the Known. God is the means of comprehension (the Knowledge), and at the same time is He Who understands (the Knower) and is also that which is understood (the Known). This is beyond the capacity of the mouth to express, beyond the capacity of the ear to hear, and beyond the capacity of the heart or mind of man to apprehend clearly. For the Holy One, blessed be He, His Essence and Being, and His Knowledge is all absolutely one, from every side and angle, and in every form of unity."*

Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi expounded by saying: *"God's essence is truly infinite—even higher than the inscrutable level of knowledge that Maimonides refers to. Thus, it is written, 'You have made them all with wisdom,' indicating that God's wisdom is the highest level within all the Worlds. The Holy One, blessed be He, is a perfect unity, without any composition or element of plurality at all ."*

"He and His knowledge are all absolutely one, and knowing Himself, He perceives and knows all the higher and lower beings. One must conclude that His Essence, Being, and Knowledge are all absolutely one, without any composition. Therefore, just as it is impossible for any creature in the world to

comprehend the essence of the Creator and His Being, so it is impossible to comprehend the essence of His knowledge, which is One with God Himself; only to believe, with a faith that transcends intellect and comprehension, that the Holy One, blessed be He, is One and Unique."

Nothing Existed Before Creation except God

Before creation, there was nothing that existed except for God. After creation—*ex nihilo*—we might erroneously assume that something now exists in addition to Him. This addition would effectively change God's absolute unity, as nothing can exist apart from Him. If we recognize how small and insignificant we are to God's infiniteness, how do we continue to believe that we are capable of becoming independent beings that can exist without Him? This idea is implausible, except in our pride and arrogance.

Arrogance is the elevation or consideration of one's independent identity over God's absolute unity, and pride is our disdainful behavior towards Him. God is the Supreme King of kings—and all creation is as nothing before Him and utterly nullified before His Will. He brings life to all and continually brings us into being out of nothingness, and He upholds all things by the word of His power. Thus, our pride denies God's absolute unity, whereby we refuse to surrender to God's sovereignty and refuse to believe that *nothing* exists apart from Him.

The essence of idolatry is that we regard ourselves as independent beings, separate from God's holiness, which is God's oneness and absolute unity. This was Israel's sin against the first commandment, *"You shall have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3)*. It was Adam's original sin when he and his wife ate of the forbidden tree, desiring to make themselves wise like God. Humanity's inherited sinful nature is that we have constantly strived to become our own gods, separate and independent from the *one* true God who created everything.

False Theologies

Idolatry does not imply the outright denial of this one true God. It is idolatry because we think we are independent beings similar to God, separating ourselves from God's holiness and refusing to efface ourselves before Him. Using this false analogy, we compare the work of God—the Maker of heaven and earth—to man's work. And we contrive false religions and theologies about God's existence and nature, such as atheism, materialism, pantheism, polytheism, deism, and dualism.

- **Atheism** denies the existence of any deity, and atheists believe the world has either always existed or evolved by chance. Agnosticism is slightly different as it does not entirely reject a Divine Creator; it merely questions his existence. Materialists deny the presence of a spiritual realm, and their reality is limited to the physical one. In contrast to Christianity, they do not believe in an afterlife, heaven or hell, judgment, or the sinful nature of humanity.

- **Pantheism** is the religion of Hinduism and Buddhism. The term comes from *theos*, meaning "god," and *pan*, meaning "all." They believe God exists within every living and inert material object, and they do not believe in a personal, transcendent God. Specifically, "Pantheism is the doctrine that the universe conceived of as a whole *is* God and, conversely, that there is no God but the combined substance, forces, and laws that are manifested in the physical universe." The ultimate goal of Pantheists is to attain a state of nirvana, a desireless, passionless, and soulless condition. To reach this nirvana, one must live with the correct views, aspirations, speech, conduct, livelihood, right effort, mindfulness, and contemplation. Thus, Pantheism as a religious expression, while it worships a deity, is man-centered, not God-centered.
- **Polytheism** comes from the Greek words *poly*, meaning "many," and *theos*, meaning "god." Polytheists believe in many deities or gods, often associated with the forces of nature and other natural elements, such as rivers, rainfall, agriculture, human passions, constellations, planets, and earthly seasons. The Greek and Roman Empires were primarily polytheistic civilizations that recognized and worshiped multiple gods and goddesses.
- **Deism** comes from the Latin word *dues*, which means "god." Deists believe in an irrational transcendent God who does not control or interfere with creation. To them, God created the universe, created man with no revealed purpose, and then left everything self-sustained by the laws of nature. They deny man's sinful nature and, thus, reject our need for atonement and a redeemer. And they deny the Divine inspiration of scripture, the supernatural, and the miraculous.
- **Dualism** is a doctrine that believes in two opposite and opposing realms, one of spirit and the other of matter. Dualists also believe the world is ruled by two opposing gods, one of evil and darkness and the other of good and light. The Gnostics and Manicheans during post-Apocalyptic times held to dualism, believing that all physical matter was evil and that only the spiritual was good. Another dualistic view teaches that all affliction, calamity, adversity, poverty, and tribulation only come from Satan. And they reject humanity's sinful and fallen condition as contributory to the evil we see in the world.

In contrast to all these false theologies, Christians believe the God of the Bible is a personal, loving, and merciful God, but also a righteous judge that brings forth calamity and indignant judgments. We read: *"Perhaps everyone will listen and turn from his evil way, that I may relent concerning the calamity which I purpose to bring on them because of the evil of their doings" (Jeremiah 26:3)*.

God is Transcendent and Personally Present

The God of the Bible is both a transcendent God who is separate from His creation and, at the same time, a personal immanent God who dwells with His people. And His most personal characteristic is "love," for God *is* love, especially an unconditional love that does not expect

anything from us and transcends our fallen human condition. We read, *"God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8)*. Therefore, love is more than a feeling or emotion. God's love communicates the essence and presence (countenance) of His very being, His nature, towards us. God's presence is tangible.

God is perfect, as Jesus said, *"You shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48)*. God is self-conscious and intelligent and possesses feelings and a will for humanity. We read, *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9)*. All these qualities make Him a personal God who cares for His creation.

Christians do not believe Satan is an equal opposing force to God; he is a created being. While Satan has tremendous power that God has given him but is finite, it is constrained and nowhere close to equal with God. In the Judeo-Hebrew tradition, Satan is subordinate to God, and he can do nothing unless God wills for it to happen. They view Satan as an agent or instrument of God, one the Lord uses to bring His Divine retributions and judgments. Therefore, he is considered God's angel or instrument of His judgment.

Christianity affirms God as the only sovereign judge and king of all creation. We read, *"Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face" (Psalm 89:14)*. In Hebrew, justice and righteousness have the same meaning (*tzedakah*) derived from the root *tzedek*. *Tzedek* means fulfilling duties towards others, particularly the responsibilities imposed on a person based on moral virtues, such as remedying those injured.

Scripturally, justice precedes righteousness. Thus, it appears from the order of God's wording that His courtroom justice comes before His remedy for our injustice, and God's remedy for our injustice establishes His righteousness, enabling Him to extend His mercy. In other words, God's love is an outpouring of Him remedying our injuries by first taking the payment for our debt to sin upon Himself. As we read, *"For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17)*.

Sin, Mercy and Love

Therefore, the Law had to come first, not only to teach us what is sinful but, more importantly, that God's justice would be rendered through it. In the words of the sages: "Justice is the declaration of God's will and our means of serving and approaching Him." And as Christ has fulfilled the Law, His blood and righteousness have become the propitiation, the payment for our sin so that God's mercy (*Chesed* in Hebrew) might go forth. Here, Christianity diverges from every other religion, including Judaism. It is not our self-laboring to redeem ourselves through the Law of Moses but God's work on the cross to make us a new creation in Christ Jesus.

God is merciful and not willing that any should perish. As it is written, *"In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:9-10); For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul (Leviticus 17:11)*.

Mercy (*Chesed*) is God's love and benevolence towards us; translated from Hebrew, it means "His kindness" or "grace." The word denotes the unbound loving-kindness with which God created the worlds and permeated all creation. We read, *"Mercy shall be built up forever; Your faithfulness You shall establish in the very heavens. I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: 'Your seed I will establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations.'" (Psalm 89:2-4)*.

The rabbis explain that kindness was, in fact, the reason for the creation. Since God's "nature" is absolute benevolence and love, He created the worlds so that He would have someone upon whom He could bestow His loving-kindness, as stated, "It is the nature of He who is good to do good."

Amen!

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Shneur Zalman of Liady (Hebrew: שניאור זלמן מליאדי, September 4, 1745 – December 15, 1812, O.S. / 18 Elul 5505 – 24 Tevet 5573), was an Orthodox rabbi and the founder and first Rebbe of Chabad, a branch of Hasidic Judaism, then based in Liadi in the Russian Empire. He was the author of many works, and is best known for Shulchan Aruch HaRav, Tanya and his Siddur Torah Or compiled according to the Nusach Ari. Wikipedia.

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That Long Retreat is Over, Christians in America Must Fight Back

JULY 26, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Eric Martin – July 2023

Christians Betrayed

Christians in America have been betrayed by politicians of the Neo-Marxist Left who hate the foundational beliefs which formed our nation.

They want to obliterate the sacred creed of the Pilgrims, and the thousands of immigrants who followed them. These brave people risked everything to come to a land where freedom of worship was a right. They fled the repressive monarchies of Britain and Europe, and their early churches flourished and went with them across this vast country. The Bible was their mainstay and as Alexis de Tocqueville observed, America became a great nation because its people were fervent Bible-believing Christians.

Morality Lost

Americans sought to embrace the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament, and the Sermon of the Mount of the New Testament. Our laws were based on the principles of morality inherent in the Bible, tempered by the teachings of Christ, who extolled a Father God of compassion and forgiveness. Christianity offered redemption through Christ's sacrifice. It blessed believers with

the hope of eternal salvation, of eternal life. This hope endured through the horrors of the Civil War, and two world wars. It is the bedrock of Christian faith, and is now under attack from the forces of hell, the forces of Woke.

America today is dominated by ruthless globalist elites in politics and business. They control the mass media, finance, the major corporations, and academia. Through their control of the Democrat Party and the electoral process, they control governmental agencies. With political dominance, they deploy the intelligence and security services as their weapons against all who disagree with them. Their agenda is satanic. They are determined to degrade and eradicate the Judeo-Christian civilization which was the driving force of our preeminence in the world. Through their surrogates in the Democrat Party, they enact laws which tear at our national fabric. They know that in order to succeed they need to destabilize the norms which have bound us together. They therefore assault Jewish and Christian morality and the natural order of male and female in the formation of healthy families. As Karl Marx wrote, the destruction of the family is the key to producing chaos, and chaos is the breeding ground of Marxist tyrants! These enemies of the American people are the enemies of the God of Israel, and of the Bible.

Marxist News Juggernauts

The mainstream media barrages us daily with the voices of mayhem and social degeneration. These pompous pundits push abortion, homosexuality, transgenderism, feminism, anti-capitalism, intersectionality, critical race theory, and of course, Black Lives Matter. The talking heads of CNN and MSNBC delight in presenting violent riots by Antifa and BLM as "peaceful demonstrations." As buildings burned in Portland, including a police station where police officers were sheltering, CNN and left-wing media ignored the murderous brutality. Their agenda was to support Antifa and Black Lives Matter because they were the shock troops who would bring law and order and America to its knees. Did the major Christian churches express horror and indignation? Did they urge their congregations to fill the streets and protest these outrages? As we now know, the elites who control the politics and business of the nation also control the churches…

It has been made painfully clear that the Pope, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the leaders of the Methodist, Presbyterian and other major churches are the servants of the New Religion…The Religion of Anti-Christ. They have allowed perverts to make the policy of their churches. The Catholic church is now gay friendly, and the Jesuit Pope's friend who leads the gay charge is a gay Jesuit apostate. Yes, they form a phalanx of sexual deviants' intent on eradicating the Judeo-Christian order. The Church of England will now allow gay marriage and clergy, and the Archbishop of York is campaigning to delete the word "Father" from the Lord's prayer…He says its "…too patriarchal." Madness consumes those who indulge and promote lies, and the devil, as Christ taught, is the father of lies.

Churches Conquered – Call to Christians!

The Protestant churches in Europe are now havens for the LGBTQ-plus fundamentalists. Traditional Christians no longer are welcome in the churches their forefathers founded. As in America and Britain, those who refuse the tenets of Woke are condemned to cancellation, to social isolation. They become pariahs to be despised and exiled. These true Christians in Europe and America are subject to derision and brainwashing. They are constantly exposed to the propaganda of the political and economic machines that now control the churches.

Christianity is now headed for certain extinction…Unless Christians decide to fight, with every means permitted by God, to defend their faith, families and sacred traditions. Christians must now take up their cross, but also the sword, as they did to fight the evil of Nazism, as they did to deliver Spain and the rest of Europe from Islamic rule. Christians have a sacred duty now to be warriors. American Christians must adopt asymmetrical warfare in combatting an entrenched enemy that controls almost every branch of law enforcement. The odds are formidable, but we still have a huge advantage: the American people!

The vast majority of Americans, according to Gallup, Rasmussen and other polls, distrust the government, the media, and the security services. They know that their country has been taken over by abominable and vile traitors. They are revolted by the male perverts who do drag shows for little children, who simulate sex acts before the innocent and psychologically vulnerable. They are enraged at the rioting of BLM and Antifa marauders who burn down the businesses of hard-working people, who sexually assault pastors in the street, and who desecrate the American flag. They are disgusted by the indoctrination of children in the public schools where they are encouraged to transition from their biological gender to any of 100-plus fictitious genders. Americans are ready to revolt, they need leaders who personify the moral and religious beliefs which shaped their great nation. They need YOU!

You are Not Alone!

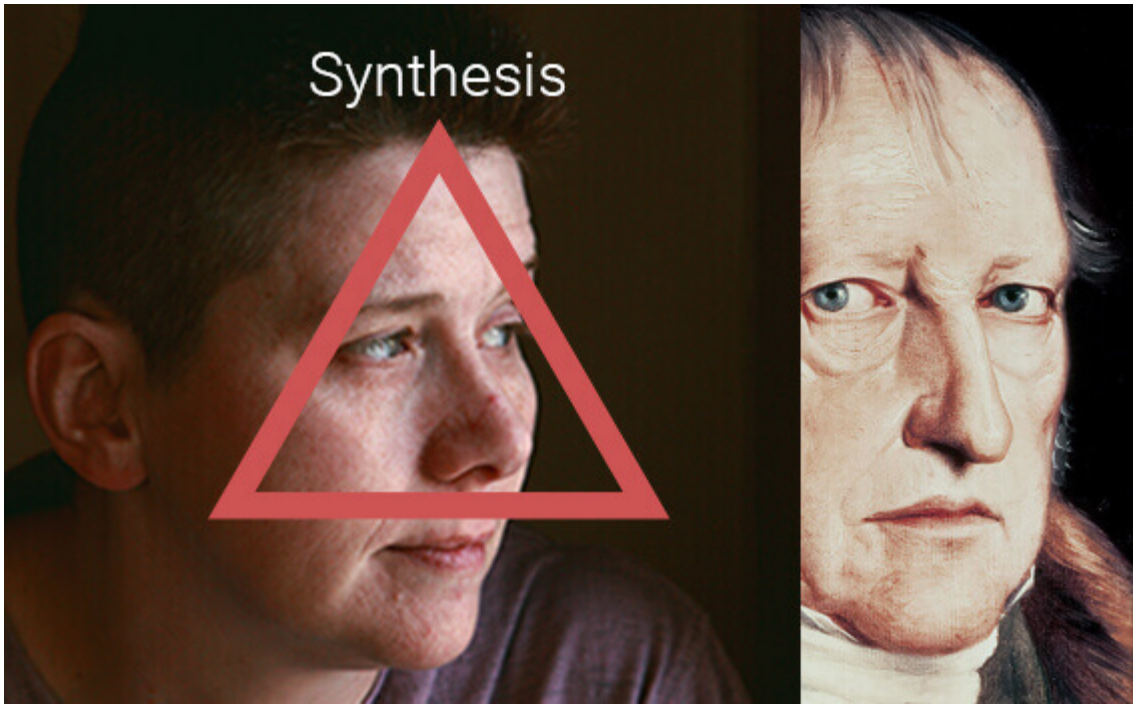
We are not alone. Christian leaders are emerging…The movie “Sound of Freedom,” suppressed by Disney and Hollywood is breaking box office records. Jim Caviezel, Mel Gibson, Tim Ballard, and other Christian warriors made the film to reveal the horrific sexual exploitation and trafficking of children. They dared to challenge the Woke traitors, and the American public supports them! We who serve Jesus Christ can also gain the victory over the satanic forces of woke. We can decide to fight! The long retreat is over and we must go forward now to make America great again…The America built on Judeo-Christian principles.

About the Author:

Eric Martin is a British-born American patriot, who at 79 years of age continues his fight against the enemies of democracy and Judeo-Christian civilization. He was an officer in the Biafran diplomatic corps during the Biafra War of 1967 to 1970 and had close escapes from the Islamic regime of Nigeria and their allies, the KGB. He is a friend of Israel, having volunteered in the Six Day War and has also worked with The Friends of Israel for her security. His first allegiance is to the God of Israel and His People, both Jewish and Christian. In 2007, he was chosen by Israel National Radio to announce the station to the world. He believes that it is the duty of all freedom-loving Americans to fight the Marxist barbarians who are now trying to destroy America—with all means possible.

Truth is Lost Thanks to Hegel | Truth is found thanks to God

JULY 22, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



This week, we are revisiting an earlier essay three years after its publication for an updated analysis.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, **was born August 27, 1770, in Stuttgart, in the Kingdom of Württemberg**, which is now present day Germany.1 He died November 14, 1831, in Berlin. He was a German philosopher who developed a dialectical scheme that emphasized the progress of history and of ideas from thesis to antithesis and thence to a synthesis.

- ***Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight!*** —Isaiah 5:20-21

It is vital to understand that **Hegel's dialectical scheme**2 is not based on any classical, or Aristotelian representational model, which holds that a proposition is true if, and only if, it's obtained in reality.

For example, the sun is shining brightly . Instead, according to Hegel, reality itself is dynamic and changing, and therefore, the usual subject/predicate distinctions must necessarily be qualified. Hegel argued against the binary view that a well-formed, meaningful, and factual proposition

must be true or false (either p or ~p is necessarily true for statements of facts) is rejected for a triadic formula that claims a proposition (p) conflicts with the opposite (~p), a "higher" truth (synthesis or p') that will "mediate" and "resolve" the truth of both. (p) and (~p)

The process must inevitably continue ad infinitum until (p') later conflicts with (~p) resolving into (p.) **In other words, the main idea is to seek consensus, not "true truth"** as Francis Schaffer would say.

Hegel's "dialectical Method" of reasoning is founded on the **syncretistic** idea that conflict and resolution is the way of "truth."3 It's important to understand that for Hegel, there are no absolutes—no real truth, no moral authority. Of course this must also mean there is no allowance or acknowledgement for a Judaeo/Christian God, and therefore by extension, **no allowance for any categorical imperatives that are non-negotiable.** The truth claim, as an injunction, such as "do not murder," or "do not steal," or "do not commit incest," is subject to discrediting, and will be either assimilated or discarded altogether.

For Hegel, and for his followers throughout modern history, everyday reality is subject to a fluid process that should be directed through various techniques of social manipulation, like disinformation, propaganda, and rewriting history, in the effort to move "onward and upward to perfection." Hegel called this the "realization of Spirit," or, the quest for "Freedom."

If an influencer can control the conflict, for example "terrorism versus freedom," he can dominate and control the outcome—the synthesis. In the event there isn't enough conflict to accomplish the objective, the Marxist adherents to the Hegelian dialectic will create and manufacture the conflicts for us. There is a word for this: *diapraxis*. It is an amalgam of dialectic and *praxis*—Greek for practice. Credit for its origination must go to **Dean Gotcher** (pictured).

Three years ago, **Black Lives Matter** appeared almost overnight disrupting major cities with rioting, looting, beatings, and murder. Objections and push-back ultimately led to conflict resolutions that were designed to usher everyone toward "freedom" from racism—with which Americans were already making steady improvements since the **Civil Rights Act**. But freedom should NOT be confused with liberty. Using subversion, protests become the first step in the march for violent insurrection. History will bear this out. Think about it. What was the objective of the Black Live Matter movement? Peace? Brotherhood? Good times? Who really was the spokesman? Where was the organization headquartered?

There are two questions to ask following the summer of 2020 when America was torn apart.

1. If black lives really mattered to people like **Antifa**—and certainly BLM—then why weren't they attacking the abortion clinics in big cities all over America? In 2021 African-American women composed 13.9% of the US population, yet these same women represented nearly 40% of all abortions.

2. If racist police brutality was the reason for the call for eliminating or defunding all police departments, then why was there no protesting the disproportion rate of homicides involving black-on-black Americans at the time? **The record rate is significantly disproportionate** and shows little signs of improving anytime soon.4

- ***There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.*** —Proverbs 6:16-19

With an understanding of the Hegelian Dialectic we can see there is a good deal of connective tissue with the crises that were the viral pandemic and the widespread rioting. But there was another clue to be found if we were looking for it. It was the **Bostock Decision** rendered by the Supreme Court in June of 2020 that **extended protections against employment discrimination to the LGBTQ+ community** under Title VII of the same Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits workplace discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, or national origin.5

Was that decision able to usher in a great effort to administer conflict resolution and consensus mostly through litigation in America like it was expected? Or, did it give legitimacy to sexual lifestyle on the same footing as the immutable traits of race or sex? Worse, did it have any influence on the drive to legitimize transgenderism and the re-emerging threat of pederasty? The answer to all these question is… **a resounding yes**.

While these times look very troubling right now, there are indications that there is hope for pulling out of the tailspin the nation is currently in right now.

The family

School board meetings and city council meetings have become scenes of the kind of honest grass roots citizen protest we are not used to seeing. However ironic, this was due to two important factors, both involving the so-called public schools. First, with the COVID lockdowns, students were forced to stay home and learn remotely. **Statistics now reveal this period has adversely impacted these students**.6 Secondly, parents now saw for the first time what their kids were being taught as fact—racism, and radical transgender ideology. For a sizable percentage of

student's parents, this was shocking. Complicating matters even further, these same outraged parents then became the target of the **Department of Justice**, who viewed them as domestic terrorists. Again, ironically, parents saw this as part of a grand scheme.

The Church

- ***And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*** —Matthew 16:18

There is unavoidable evidence that the institutional churches in America have remained largely quiet and acquiescent concerning the threats to liberty, free assembly, and equality. Why this is so, is difficult to say precisely. But, as the saying goes, figures don't lie. However, this **steady decline in church attendance since the COVID lockdowns**7 is not the true standard for the Church victorious. We are a people, called by His name, who must stand in the gap, **clinging to The Truth.** HIs truth is our strength and our comfort.

As for Hegel, there is no possibility for synthesis with this truth.

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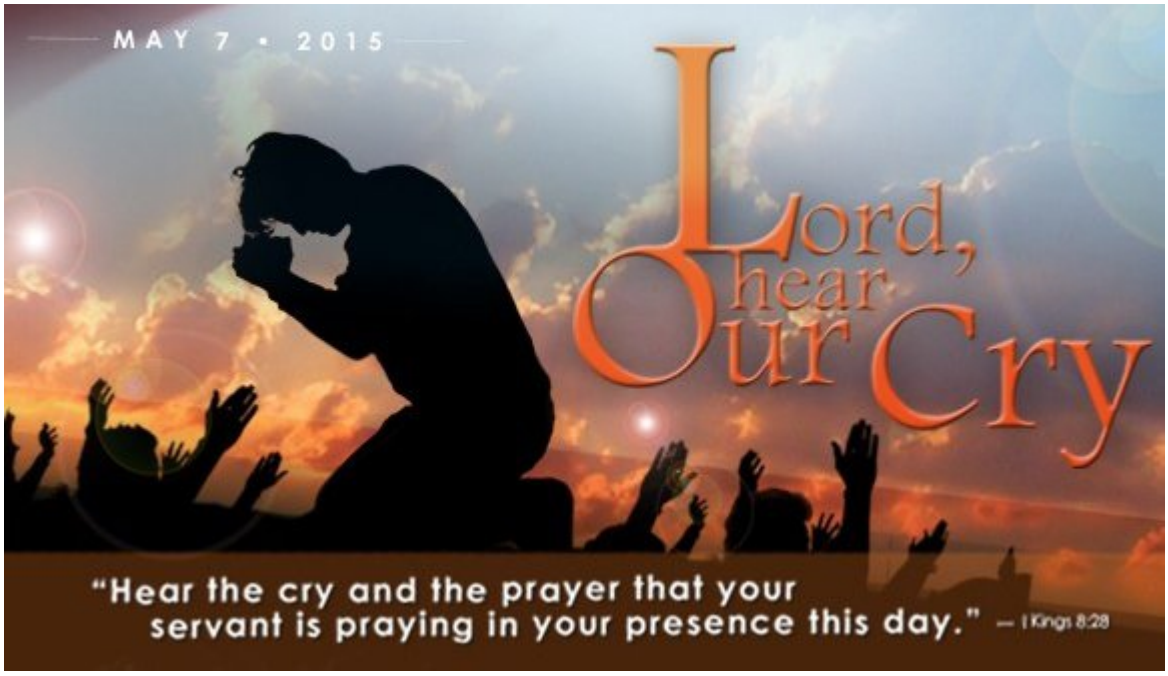
Lord, Teach Us to Pray

JULY 16, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



The Lord's Prayer

We read, *"Now it came to pass, as was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples'" (Luke 11:1, NKJV)*. Jesus's response has come to be known as "the Lord's prayer."

A beautiful declaration that begins with the joy of our heavenly Father, praying for God's soon-coming Kingdom, asking Him for our daily provision and protection, and closing with an acknowledgment of God's sovereign Kingdom, His power, and glory. Matthew gives a more extended version of this prayer that Jesus gave as part of the Sermon on the Mount, traditionally believed to be a hill (called the Mount of Beatitudes) near Capernaum on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

> "In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen" (Matthew 6:9-13).

Memorizing the Lord's Prayer was not the intent

The Lord's prayer has been memorized by millions and is incorporated into liturgical formats in nearly every denomination. But I do not believe that when the disciple asked Jesus to *teach* them to pray, His response would be for them to memorize another scripted prayer along with the hundreds of written prayers compiled over the centuries. The Psalms are equally beautiful in their own right, exulting our Heavenly Father and seeking His protection and provision. For example, we read:

> "O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth, Who have set Your glory above the heavens!" (Psalm 8:1).
>
> "You are my Father, My God, and the rock of my salvation" (Psalm 89:26).
>
> Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom" (Psalm 45:6).
>
> "Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer" (Psalm 4:1). Amen and amen!

No, Jesus wanted to *teach* His disciples to pray, as the disciple asked: *"Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."* And since we do not have any prayers scribed by the Apostle John, we surmise that John taught his disciples to pray differently.

Speak to Him, He will Listen

In Judaism, prayer is God's way of telling His people, "speak to Me, and I will listen." The Hebrew word for prayer is *tefillah* (תְּפִלָּה) which comes from the verb *palal* (פלל), which means "to mediate or judge," *heetpalel* (הִתְפַּלֵּל) meaning to "intercede and to pray." And *leheetpalel* (לְהִתְפַּלֵּל) meaning "to judge oneself."

Thus, prayer is more than wishful expectation. We know *"there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5)*. *"Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26*). As such, we also rightly judge ourselves to pray in faith, believing God hears our prayers and answers them even before we ask; speak to Him, and He *will* listen.

The Service of Your Heart

The Torah refers to prayer as "the service of the heart," an act imbued with love and reverence. It is our primary way of connecting our soul to the divine, a *Kiros* moment when our spirits soar into

the heavenly realm. It is the most elevating and powerful manifestation of the divine radiance that we can experience in our hearts and minds. We read about Jesus the night before His crucifixion, *"Being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:44)*.

From His example, we understand that true prayer must always come from deep within the heart, a "service of the heart," and even more, a "sacrifice of one's very soul." King David prayed: *"Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23-24)*; "*Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Romans 8:27*).

Connect with God so He can transform Your Heart

Therefore, prayer is not about us convincing God of our expectations. Instead, we approach God to connect with our heavenly Father, seeking His conviction so that we desire and choose to do His will, not ours. Rather than praying, "God, do all these things for me." Let us pray, "God, change my heart so that I may accept and follow Your will." Jesus said, *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (Matthew 7:21)*.

The sages tell us this type of prayer "is a form of divine service which works in the heart and on the heart. It is prayed with a loud voice, plainly and simply, whereby we strengthen ourselves as with a strong hand, vigorously with all our might and power against any internal or external obstacle." This service of the heart is called *Kavanah* (כַּוָּנָה) and means "the intention or sincere feeling and direction of the heart." *Kavanah* is a theological concept in Judaism about a worshiper's state of mind and heart, sincerity, devotion, and emotional absorption during prayers. It has been told that prayer, or any other blessing, said without *Kavanah*, is like a body without a soul. Jesus said, *"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things" (Matthew 12:35)*.

Pray in Secret

Jesus prefaced the Lord's prayer with these words: *"But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him." (Matthew 6:6-8)*. We are assured that God knows what we need even before we ask, but we must ask. He said, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:23-24)*.

Prayer is to be Spoken

The Lord's prayer is not a memorized list of our expectations; instead, it is a guide for how we pray, as Jesus said, *"In this manner, therefore, pray."* We choose to come to the Lord, surrendering and offering a grateful heart filled with adoration and exultation. But in this closeness, we also find that God wants us to communicate with Him, even asking for our basic needs.

Therefore, prayer requires physical action. Hence the rabbis say that "the movement of one's lips is regarded as an act, and meditation does not count as speech; thus, one does not discharge his duty by meditation alone. The same applies to prayer; here, too, one must articulate the words. Although prayer is a service of the heart, it cannot be confined to the heart but must be articulated orally."

Our Whole Being Prays

King David wrote: *"All my bones shall say, 'Lord, who is like You, Delivering the poor from him who is too strong for him, Yes, the poor and the needy from him who plunders him?'" (Psalm 35:10)*. Based on this verse, we do not only pray in our hearts, although God hears every though, and we do not only pray with our lips, but we pray and praise God with our whole being, body, and soul. The Talmud acknowledged that God created our physical body to serve Him. The sages tell us:

"Although our prayers are expressed verbally, tefilla (prayer) is meant to be more than a mere recitation of words. Chazal (the sages) created a structure that mandates us to speak our prayers and utilize sight, hearing, and movement as we pray. Prayer is meant to be a full-body experience and a complete immersion into the encounter. When Rabbi Akiva prayed alone, he moved from one corner of the room to another due to his many bows and prostrations (Berachot 31a). Other stories recount how rabbis were so engrossed in prayer that they were unaware of things happening around them. Let us recognize the gift we have in being able to approach the Almighty in prayer. Let us focus on the words we are saying, the sights and sounds of prayer, and the movements we engage to come closer to Hakadosh Baruch Hu (the Almighty blessed be He). Let us ask Hashem (God) to open our mouths in prayer and allow our bodies and souls to come close to Him."

Put on the Armor of Light

In the Hebrew vernacular, the action of prayer (*leheetpalel*) is akin to one adorning himself in prayer, the same as we put on clothing (*lehitchabesh*). And it is akin to one joined in a marriage where the two have become one (*lehitchaten*). Paul said, *"Let us put on the armor of light… Put on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 13:12-14)*. We do not just pray to God; we put Him on our whole being. We also, *"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11)*. I assure you that no armor of God can effectively be worn without prayer, for in prayer God transforms the nature of our heart.

Assemble Together

While Jesus often prayed alone to His heavenly Father, instructing us to go into our rooms, close the door, and pray to our Father, who is in the secret place. We also read that we are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together and to encourage one another. We read, "*When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place" (Acts 2:1)*. There is something precious to God about His people coming together as one family; a public display of our prayers and worship of God.

The rabbis teach, "All the men of Israel associated together like one man." They say: "Just as one man is composed of many limbs, and when they become separated, this affects the heart, for from it, there issues life. Therefore, by genuinely being all like one man, the service in the heart, i.e., prayer, will be firmly established." The primary service in the period just preceding the coming of Messiah is prayer, as Rabbi Chayim Vital (of blessed memory) writes in *Etz Chayim* and *Pri Etz Chayim* . Paul said, *"But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you'" (1 Corinthians 12:20-21)*. When unity is lacking, the service of prayer is likewise imperfect.

United as One

In the Jewish prayers, we say: "Bless us, our Father, all as one with the light of Your countenance," indicating that "the light of God's countenance" can be revealed only when we are "all united as one." This means that divisiveness among God's people affects the divine presence, the "heart" of the Jewish people, and, subsequently, the church. Hence, we read, *"Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered" (1 Peter 3:7)*.

Connect with the *Shechinah*

The task of prayer is to connect our souls with their source in the divine realm, cultivating a real sense of unity within God's family, connecting all souls with the *Shechinah*, God's manifest presence in the creation. This unity enhances the divine service of prayer. Paul said, *"I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (1 Timothy 2:8)*. And when King Solomon dedicated God's Temple, "*Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven " (1 Kings 8:22)*.

God's house was unified in prayer, and, with one accord, all Israel worshiped Him. Then, *"Indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying: 'For He is good, For His mercy endures forever,' that the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue*

ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God" (2 Chronicles 5:13-14).

Amen!

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Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar HaTefillah, ch. 7.

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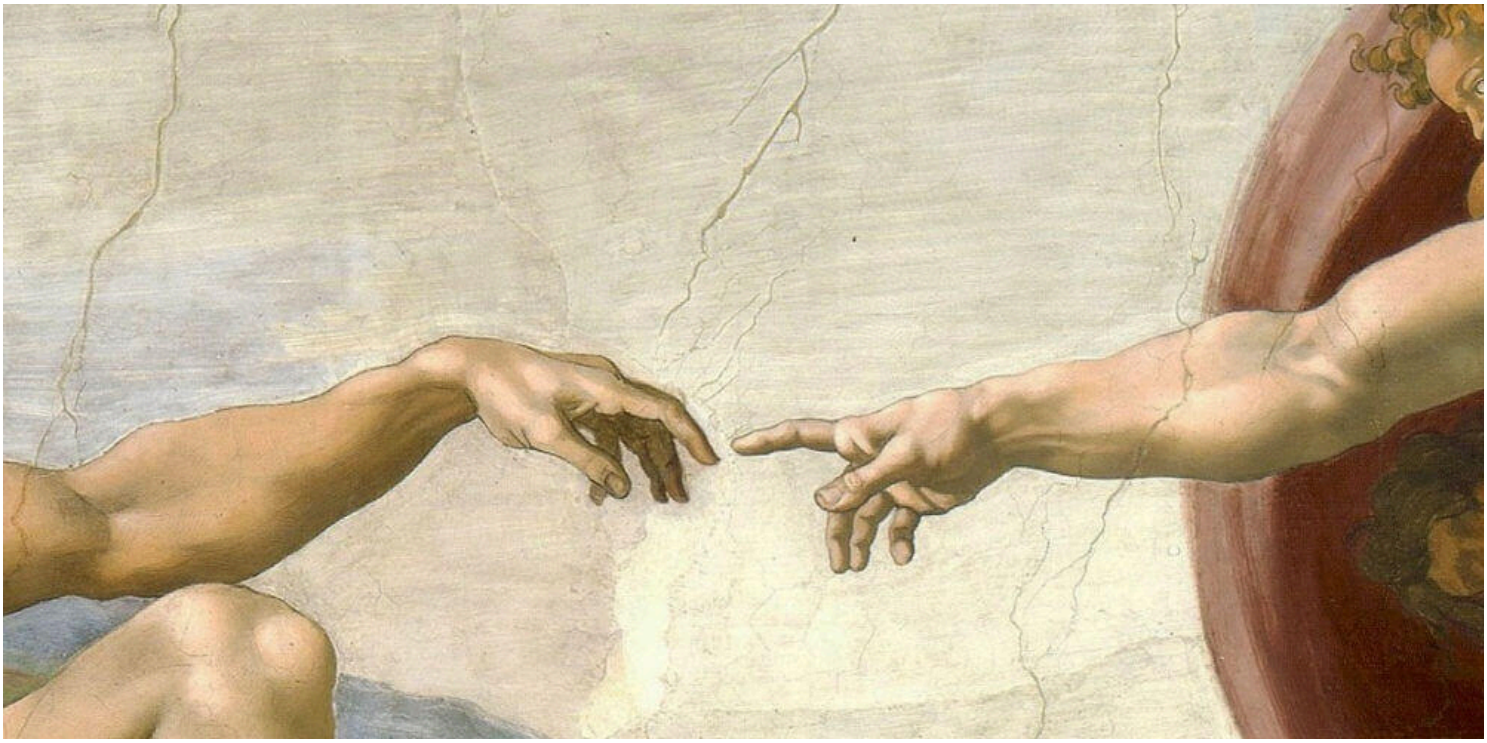
The Fall of Man

JUNE 24, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Man's Primitive Condition

Theologians often discuss the condition of man in the Garden of Eden before the fall. God is all-knowing, so why did He place the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden if He foreknew that man would eat of it? It would seem that God had a purpose for this primitive condition.

All creation was made for man, a garden of exploration that would captivate our imagination, a world that would continually move us to stand in awe of our creator. And so, God made us the caretakers of His creation, to have dominion over His earthly kingdom with the same delicacy and reverence as our creator. "This, in fact, is the whole purpose of man, and the purpose for which he, and all the worlds, both upper and lower, were created: that God should have such a dwelling-place here below — how this earthly abode for God is the purpose of all creation."

Adam was created with basic instincts, needs, drives, and impulses. These are self-preservation, the desire for food, the urge for procreation, the need for acquisition, and the determination to have dominion. Adam and Eve were commanded to be fruitful and multiply. We read, *"A man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24, NKJV)*. While all these passions are good when retained within a Biblical framework, if we are not careful, they can also constitute the "lusts of the flesh." We would be wise to remember that what God created for good, man's sinful nature corrupts and turns towards evil.

Adam was created for companionship and communed with the Lord in the Garden of Eden. The Lord also created a companion for Adam. We read, *"It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him" (Genesis 2:18)*. The word "helper" in Hebrew is *ezer* (עֵזֶר). It is used in scripture to describe aspects of God's character: He is our strength, our rescuer, our protector, and our help. Thus, Eve was not just created to be Adam's corresponding and equal partner. In the words of R. David Freedman, God created woman to be "a power equal to a man." Eve's strength was to provide Adam with a companion and counterpart that would help and strengthen him in every way.

God gave Adam the task of naming the animals and was given dominion over them, and he even called his wife Eve. This work implies that Adam was learning and acquiring knowledge and was created to labor in the Garden. Creativity and accomplishment are essential for personal fulfillment. And we surmise that in God's time and Adam's maturity, he would have been given the understanding of the "tree of knowledge."

As Adam and Eve were created perfect in God's image, we also see them as partakers of God's holiness and righteousness. Often described as "innocence," Adam was created in holiness devoid of evil. We read, *"Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good." (Genesis 1:31)*. And they were created to be eternal beings as they were given the Tree of Life. Death only occurred when Adam and Eve disobeyed God, ate of the forbidden tree, and were banished (divorced) from God's presence in the Garden.

Their sin resulted in shame, guilt, alienation, and death for them and the entire human race. Given the evil and consequent destruction from sinfulness, why would a loving and all-knowing God subject Adam and Eve to this level of temptation in the first place? We read, *"What is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:18-19)*. This raises another question. Adam and Eve, having been subjected to God's presence and His immeasurable love and living in a perfect Garden where every need was provided, why would they have deliberately chosen to disobey Him?

The Bible does not tell us God's reason, so all we have are suppositions based on the totality of scripture. We have some insight into Adam and Eve's motivation, but even their desire to seek knowledge to become equal with God does not fully reason with their ultimate actions—the consequence of death.

Adam and Eve were created with intelligence, emotions, cognitive reasoning, and *free will* or, more precisely, the *freedom* to choose. There is a significant difference. The Lord declared to Israel: *"I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19)*. God provided Adam and Eve the same choices and gave them the ability to disobey Him and eat of

the forbidden fruit. Because without the freedom to choose, there can be no moral accountability. Since we are created in the image of God, He has made us accountable for our decisions and hence His righteous judgments.

God has given us similar choices concerning our destiny as one of two paths, one that leads to eternal life and the other to destruction. We are not given an unbound sphere of decision-making concerning our eternal existence. Jesus warned, *"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matthew 7:13-14)*. We can choose eternal life in Christ or eternal separation from God outside His Kingdom, and this is all.

Adam and Eve were created in God's holiness and with a holy nature. So, again, it seems irrational that they could sin against God. However, being created with a holy nature does not imply they had developed a holy character. That can only happen due to testing in which good choices are made using the intellect, emotions, and cognitive reasoning that God has given us. Hence it is written: *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7)*. Therefore, while man's holy nature came as a result of the creation, man's holy character would only happen as a result of God's testing.

Therefore, we can see the Garden of Eden as more than paradise; it was a place of trial where God could test Adam and Eve's obedience and loyalty to Him. And most significantly, it would try their love for Him because it is impossible to deliberately hurt someone you care about. Adam and Eve's disobedience to God was motivated by selfishness. Hence we read, *"When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise" (Genesis 3:6)*. Their choice was not a moral failing; it was solely one of disobedience motivated by their own desires. Hence, we read, *"Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death" (James 1:14-15)*.

God similarly tested Abraham by simply asking Abraham to offer his only son as a sacrifice, which was a personal request, not a moral one. Moral laws should be obeyed because they are right to follow. For example, God's commandment not to murder or steal. On the other hand, the prohibition of eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil was a law that tested Adam's obedience to God because the knowledge of evil was not yet self-evident. Again, Adam's choice to disobey God was not evil. It was purely an act of willful disobedience that was sinful, but more so, it has resulted in a world filled with evil.

Adam's freedom to choose was necessary for him to develop a mature, holy, and blessed nature, and a loving and all-knowing God would not have subjected him to this test if it were not for his ultimate good. If Adam had obeyed God and resisted the serpent, he would have developed a holy

character and experienced greater blessings and a deeper fellowship with God. On the other hand, God, foreknowing that Adam would disobey Him, already provided a plan of redemption through the incarnation and vicarious death of His own Son. Either way, Adam's testing was necessary and reasonable, given that either choice would lead him to a final state superior to the Garden of Eden. Even now, we are presented with a choice: will we believe in and obey the commands of Jesus, or will we, through a willful act of disobedience, reject God and His gift of salvation?

The temptation of Adam and Eve is attributed to the serpent, who we read, *"Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made" (Genesis 3:1)*. Paul compares the serpent to the deceptions of a false spirit, saying: *"I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received" (2 Corinthians 11:3-4)*.

Many theologians attribute the serpent to Satan, either an incarnation or his possession of a beast of the field. Usually disguised, he assumes the appearance of another being, a benefactor or one able to fulfill his selfish ambitions. Jesus said, *"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it" (John 8:44)*. "While Satan has many followers and deceivers, he is the originator of all lies and deception. We read, *"The great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (Revelation 12:9)*. Therefore, the likelihood is that the serpent in Genesis *is* Satan.

So, what kind of motivation could Satan employ to tempt a holy and innocent being to disobey God? We had already discussed that Adam and Eve were created with certain self-preservation and motivating instincts, and Satan targeted several of these when he spoke to Eve. We read, *"When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate" (Genesis 3:6)*. Nothing about these instincts is inherently evil. However, desire becomes lust when it is contrary to the Spirit of God. John said: *"For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world" (1 John 2:16)*.

The term "world" does not mean the earth; it means the kingdom ruled by Satan that governs the nations of the earth. And the word "flesh" does not mean the body but the whole person's body and soul dedicated to the kingdom of darkness. Paul said: *"You He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others" (Ephesians 2:1-3)*.

While Satan appealed to Eve's natural and motivational instincts, he first had to cast doubt in her mind about the Lord. Satan's opening question, *"Has God indeed said?"* was followed by a statement intended to cast God as a liar or, at least, disingenuous, and not entirely truthful. He said, *"You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:1-5)*. Whether Eve was deceived by doubt, pride, or selfish motivations, possibly, all three played some part in her rebellious decision. And the outcome was a sinful action that led to her and Adam's fall from the Garden of Eden into a subsequent world filled with evil.

The Fall of Man

Genesis chapters one and two describe the creation of man as perfect and holy, Genesis three details his disobedience and fall, and Genesis four through eleven portray Adam's descendants as living with calamity and strife. Humanity retains a thread of its divine origins, but our history of war, perversion, greed, and corruption gives indisputable evidence of our fall. Only by God's intervention through Christ's incarnation, resurrection, omnipresence, and promised return can we find any hope in this world. Orthodox and conservative theologians view the account in Genesis as figurative and literal, not myth or allegory. There is no transition in scripture from allegorical to historical, and Paul made direct parallels between Adam and Christ. An allegorical antitype does not fit a historical fulfillment. And Adam is listed in two genealogical accounts, including those of Abraham and Jesus, and in geographical locations, such as Assyria and the Euphrates.

The fallen condition of man is real and very literal. Despite substantial scientific progress, humanity has not evolved morally, ethically, and socially. And the continual presence of evil in the world suggests a supernatural force that continues manipulating and motivating human activity. Man's fall resulted in God's judgment against the serpent, the man and woman, and the earth. The serpent was humiliated to eat the dust of the earth, the woman to sorrow in pain during childbirth, and the man was to toil to bring forth food from the earth. God's judgment on the land was thorns and thistles, suggesting a lower yield. We read: *"Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field" (Genesis 3:8)*. These became a symbol of evil and Satan's works, as Jesus illustrated, saying, *"You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit" (Matthew 7:16-17)*.

When the Lord descended upon Mount Sinai, He revealed Himself to the Israelites. From the root *sin-nun*, the Hebrew word Sinai means "thorn" or "thorn bush." It is believed that Moses saw a burning thorn bush on Mount Sinai called Mount Horeb (*h'horev*). The Hebrew word *h'horev* comes from the root *h'harav,* which means "to lay waste," "be dried up," and "to

fight." In Hebrew, the words *Sinai* and *h'horev* are synonymous with a dry wasteland filled with thorn bushes. And there is an interesting correlation and similarity between Mount Sinai and the Garden of Eden, which are dichotomies.

When God expelled Adam and Eve from Eden, He placed a flaming sword at its entrance. The Hebrew word for "sword" is *h'herev*. *H'herev* comes from the same root, *h'harav*, and implies "to fight" and "make waste." It also derives from the word *h'horev* (called Sinai), which, as we just learned, also implies "a wasteland filled with sharp thorns." Thus, it is believed that the burning thorn bush Moses saw is a picture of the flaming sword at the entrance to the Garden of Eden.

Again, when Adam and Eve sinned and were expelled from the Garden of Eden, they brought a curse of thorns and desolations (*h'horev*) upon the creation. On the cross, and wearing a crown of thorns, Jesus took upon Himself our curse of thorns (*h'horev*). We read: *"And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head" (Mark 15:17)*. The immediate consequence of the fall was a sense of shame. They had lost their innocence, covering their nakedness with fig leaves. The knowledge they gained from the tree did not make them divine, only fear, and alienation from the Lord. And the fatal consequence of the fall was death and permanent separation from God. Their knowledge of evil now only gave them an understanding of the consequence of their sin against God. And without the tree of life, disease and mortality would enter the creation.

The Lord told Adam: *"For in the day that you eat of you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17)*. And after Adam ate of the forbidden fruit, the Lord cursed Adam, saying: *"In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19)*. Death had now entered the creation. In the Old Testament, only Enoch and Elijah escaped death. And in the New Testament, only those who are taken up in the Rapture escape it. Jesus raised several people from the dead, as did Elijah, and we assume these people later died again.

These incidents recorded in scripture seem to contradict the writer of Hebrews, where he said: *"It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27)*. But Jesus told us: *"He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death" (Revelation 2:11)*. This statement implies there are two deaths, the first is physical, and the second is eternal. Jesus referred to the first death as "sleep," telling His disciples to *"make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping" (Matthew 9:24)*. Some have taken this verse out of context, suggesting that our bodies and souls will sleep until the resurrection. However, Paul said, *"We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8)*.

Paul's clarity in this matter affirms that when a person's physical body dies or goes to sleep, their soul separates from the body. If that person is a believer in Christ, their disembodied soul will be with Jesus forever. We have passed from death to eternal life, and our souls will be reunited at the

first resurrection with a new, glorified, incorruptible physical body. We read: *"For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:21-22)*; *"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6)*.

But if the person is not a believer, their soul will go to the place of the dead, Hades (*Sheol* in Hebrew), until the final judgment. Then their soul will be resurrected at the end of the Millennial Kingdom (the *second* resurrection), and if their names are not found in the Book of Life, their body and soul will be thrown into the lake of fire (Hell), the second and eternal death. Hell is also called the "lake of fire" and "the place of outer darkness." Jesus warned, *"Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28)*.

There is no biblical justification for purgatory. This Roman Catholic doctrine describes a place or state of suffering inhabited by the souls of sinners who expiate their sins before going to heaven. In stark contradiction, Jesus told a parable about a rich man and a beggar named Lazarus. Both died. And while the beggar was comforted in Abraham's bosom, the rich man was tormented for lack of water. His thirst signifies he was spiritually separated from God, a form of spiritual death but not eternal death. While the rich man could see Lazarus and the angels with him, a chasm separated them. Even with all his cries for mercy, Abraham said: *"Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us" (Luke 16:26)*.

The rich man had no second chance or purgatory, and his fate was sealed. And contrary to what some believe, the second death is not vaporization into nothingness. No, it is a condition beyond imagination or comprehension. Fear God, for it is written: *"If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name" (Revelation 14:9-11)*.

Oh, how pitiful is our fallen, sinful condition? The Psalmist declared: *"You have set our iniquities before You, Our secret sins in the light of Your countenance. For all our days have passed away in Your wrath; We finish our years like a sigh. The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years, Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knows the power of Your anger? For as the fear of You, so is Your wrath. So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90:12)*.

Man's Potential

Despite man's fallen condition, Isaiah prophesied God's lifting the curse and removing the thorns from the creation. Thus, *"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us…" (Galatians 3:13)*. He has now laid waste (*h'harav*) our sins and has called all men to repentance. Jesus has fulfilled the Law given on Mount Horeb (Sinai) and freed us from its condemnation leading to death. And in the same mountain (earthly kingdom) of *h'horev*, which is a wasteland filled with thorns, He has fought against (*h'harav*) our adversaries with a flaming sword (*h'herev*).

We have been given a second chance and the opportunity to be part of a new humanity and Christ's eternal Kingdom. Adam corrupted human nature through his disobedience and rebellion. Christ redeemed mankind by taking on human nature and, in perfect union with His divine nature, lived a sinless life in perfect obedience to His heavenly Father. We have now been given a new nature, Christ's nature, and daily, we defeat the old sinful ways through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. And we experience continuous renewal and refreshing.

Paul said: *"Put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:22-24)*; *"Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day" (2 Corinthians 4:16)*; *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2)*.

In Adam, paradise was lost, but in Christ, heaven on earth will be restored. In Adam, all humanity faces sin and death. In Christ, we have been freed from the dominion of sin and death and given a new eternal life and fellowship with God. Christ's atoning works on the cross have provided peace and salvation for all who believe. We have the hope and promise of the resurrection and a perfect Kingdom. In Christ, we are members of His body, a new creation, and one new humanity. Even now, we have Kingdom authority to minister in the Name of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit. We are the redeemed of the Lord, surrendered to Christ, and witnesses to every nation of God's love and salvation for all humanity.

Amen!

Genesis 1:28, 2:19-20.

Ephesians 4:24. Colossians 3:9-10.

Genesis 2:16-1, 3:3, 3:24.

Psalm 14:1-3. Romans 3:10, 3:23, 5:12-21.

Revelation 16:7.

Genesis 3:15,3:21, 4:4. 1 Peter 1:18-20.

2 Corinthians 11:14.

Genesis 3:14-15. Isaiah 14:12-15. Ezekiel 28:12-15.

2 Peter 2:10. 1 Timothy 3:6. James 1:5-8.

Romans 5:12-14. 1 Timothy 2:13-14. Job 31:33. 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45.

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John 1:11-13. 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Mark 16:19-20. Matthew 16:19, 18:18. Luke 9:1-2. John 5:24. Romans 6:11. Ephesians 2:1-6.

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Genesis 1:28.

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Genesis 3:8.

Countering BlackRock & “Woke” ESG with “Biblical Investing”

JUNE 23, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BLACKROCK, ESG

Countless Americans are invested in companies that are polluting the culture and even supporting the killing of unborn babies in abortion, but there is an alternative, explains Timothy Plan chief Art Ally in this interview on Conversations That Matter with Alex Newman. Timothy Plan, which has billions under management, works to screen out the “most evil” companies from its funds, allowing Christians to avoid investing in firms that wage war on them and their values.

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mind knowing that you have invested with integrity.

Beware the Righteous Among Us

JUNE 16, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

This is how the experiment ends.

> **"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness."** (Matthew 23:27 ESV)

Do you remember **Michael Savage**? He was a real character. Actually, he still is, doing what celebrities do after a public broadcasting career has ended: podcast. His ***Savage Nation*** syndicated radio program was discontinued by Cumulus Media and Westwood One in 2021, finishing a 27-year run that began in 1994. Savage inflamed his audiences with his wild, and angry, over-the-top rhetoric. He was an exemplar of "shock talk" radio for his wild, militant "conservative" political views. Eventually, he went too far, and the UK lowered the boom on him, permanently banning him from entering their country.

I remember something I once heard him say, *"The Left is suffering from a mental illness. You have to be insane to be a leftist."* Even then, I thought he was on to something. I believe it all the more so today. But why? How did this happen?.

The mental illness of Leftism seems to be flourishing only because so much of society is enabling the "righteous."

How much time is actually spent even attempting to analyze how deep and wide the cultural crisis we are really in? No matter how much news and information you or I might consume, it's not enough to explain the madness. This is the result of two important factors: One, many have no recall of what our societies were like in mid-century America, and two, we have little time or appetite for deep thinking and inquiry. The last seventy years have steadily devolved into something that is now become a form of madness. There is a name for it: **Mass Formation Psychosis—the madness of crowds.**

Recently, I heard a fascinating analysis from one of my favorite cultural pundits, **Andrew Klavan**. (Pictured) I recommend you watch and listen to the episode on **YouTube**: "**How America Went Mad**."

"I see a country that has gone nuts. Our lawmen no longer believe in enforcing the law. Our newsmen no longer believe in reporting the news. Judging by the fact that they shut down our churches because they were so afraid of death, our priests no longer believe in God and the resurrection. This isn't because they've come up with something new. It's not because they're doing something so brilliant that we've never seen it before. They call it progressivism, but… they've just gone back to a very old delusion. Because of that delusion they cannot tell the difference between … and the reality of the… world."

Klavan takes great care in explaining how "we the people" believe we are electing the "chosen" people—obeying the chosen people—who, supposedly are qualified to lead and lecture. This is not because such people are the protectors of liberty, or of justice, or of decency. No, not at all. It's because they manage to convince a lot of other people that they *deserve* to have power over us. And of course, it's all for our benefit.

This is how we've become subservient to the elites who suffer the pathology of "extreme self-righteousness." This is no benefit to free men and women; to our families, our children, our communities… our country. This pathology has been perfected and practiced for so long, that the obvious seems undetectable. Could at last the sane among us are *now* starting to see it, admit it, form up, and turn and confront the problem? So, what exactly *is* the problem? Christians of all people should know this: **No one is righteous.**

> 10 There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: 14 whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15 their feet are swift to shed blood: 16 destruction and misery are in their ways: 17 and the way of peace have they not known: 18 there is no fear of God before their eyes. 19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. (Romans 3:9-19 Authorized KJV)

We hear talk about double standards and slanted news and views. But does it seem there's something we *aren't* hearing? Often, instead of bold, fiery messaging we might get **tepid responses from the pulpits of our houses of worship if anything at all**. Odd that, knowing how much liberty matters.

The indictment of a former President of the United States knows no precedent. Whatever we might say about **Donald Trump**, it's at once heart-breaking and exceedingly sinister. It's proof that the insanely "righteous" Justice Department, is **using its power to destroy the very thing they are sworn to uphold: equal justice.** It's not just about one man standing in the way of the priests of righteousness, it's about us—losing our right to govern ourselves by the grace of God, by the only righteousness that can exist on this earth—imputed to us by Christ alone. That message, my friends, can actually get me cancelled.

In this world, the state wants to be your mother, and men want to be women. The rescuer is arrested for his courage. **Equity is in fact, an adulterer, stealing from one man to satisfy the desires of "righteous" man. If things don't balance out, the self-righteous will just tip the scales, or rewrite the rules.**

The woman hating, child stealing, race obsessing, power lusting righteous pretenders are not all that, and they never can be. The teleology of the self-righteous is only about short-term power. There is no good ending because they will not believe things will end at all. This is power that they just can't grasp, because Christ holds the power, and we are His Church. If He's made us more than conquerers, why not suit up for the battle? (**Ephesians 6:11-18**)

- > And I tell you, you are Peter , and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades (the powers of the infernal region) shall not overpower it . (Matthew 16:18 Amplified Bible, Classic Edition)

Church, there's no time to be timid. Remember, no matter what else happens, we win. **Consider the definition of grassroots**. It's the exact of opposite of the Uber-righteous elite. It's not that hard for grass to grow; good soil, water, and regular feeding, and it will spread everywhere. Look for the grassroots organizations in your community, and see how you can be a part. There are too many opportunities not to be a part of the grassroots.

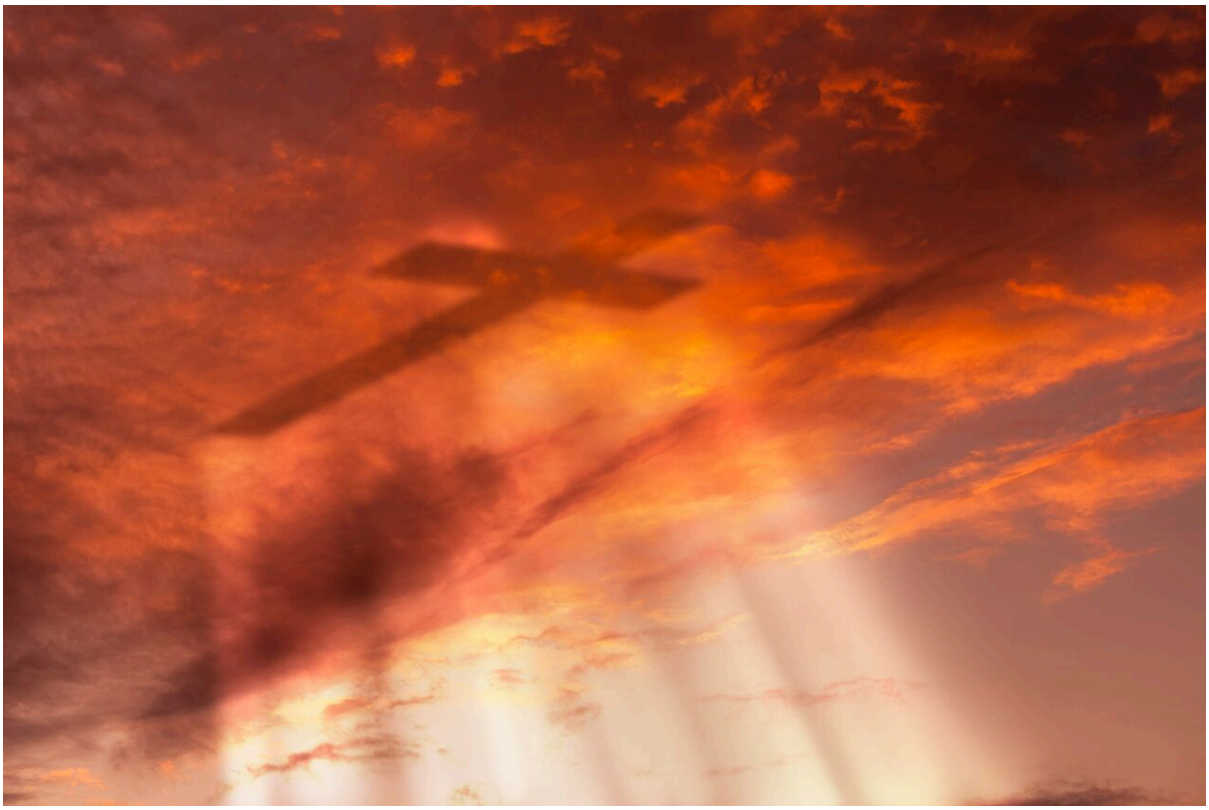
Grass, rocks and armor. It's odd how these basic artifacts are so confounding to the priests, the acolytes, and proselytes of the self-righteous elitism of our day and age. When you think about it, it's almost seems insane how well it will work to defeat them.

Ben Franklin, when asked about this new political experiment said, "It's a republic, if we can keep it." Well, I hope we remember that, but I think some may be asking, "I forgot, who's Ben Franklin?" Well, he might have been a liberal, but he wasn't self-righteous.

Photo by **Sergey Fediv** on **Unsplash**

VIDEO: All Hail the Power: Satan is on the Move, What is a Christian to Do?

JUNE 6, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



VIDEO: All Hail the Power

SATAN IS MAKING A LAST-MINUTE PUSH BUT HE CAN'T COMPARE WITH THE POWER OF JESUS CHRIST WHO OVERCAME THE WORLD AND THE DEVIL. THAT'S WHY WE ALL HAIL THE POWER OF JESUS' NAME. THIS WAS AT OUR RECENT UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES MEETING WITH BILL KOENIG, MICHELE BACHMANN, PASTOR MARK HENRY, AND JAN MARKELL MAY 11. THIS IS JUST A 10-MINUTE CLIP.

All Hail the Power
https://youtube.com/watch?v=VT-Rtf-uCxs

Message Resources:

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Mormons at Your Door, What do You Say?

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CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
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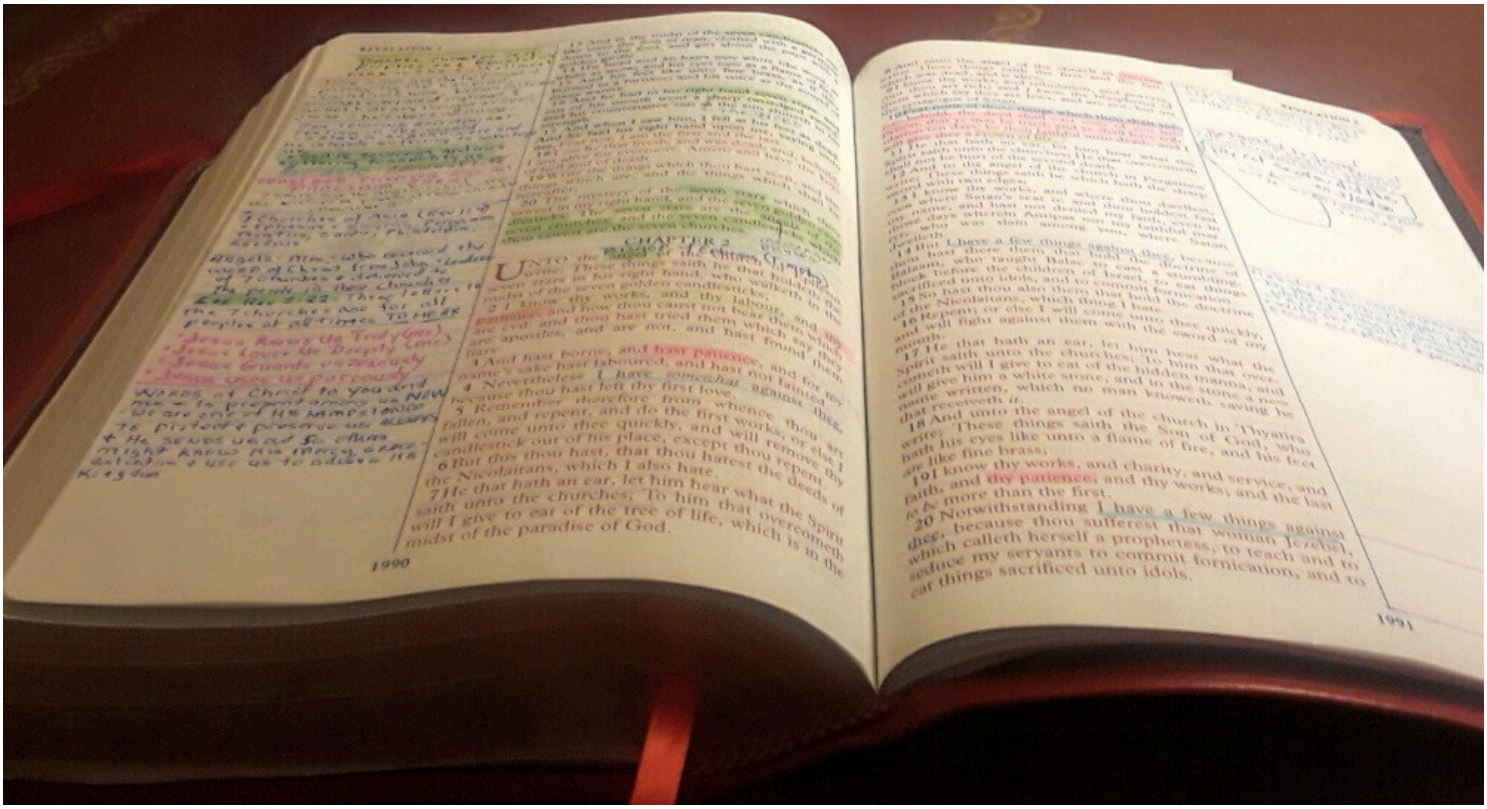

Irrefutable Proof that Joseph Smith Was a Fraud: Why Mormonism is Not Christian

One of the most prolific spiritual signs of the end times that point to the soon return of Jesus Christ involves the increasing appearance of false christs and their cults (**Matthew 24:5**,**11**,**24**). A cult is a counterfeit religion that practices deception to present a likeness to the original. Adherents claim to be genuine Christians while redefining biblical doctrines involving God, Jesus, and salvation to reduce their chances of detection and increase being accepted as authentic Christianity.

One of the most notorious and successful of these religious counterfeiters was Joseph Smith, Jr. (1805-1844), founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS), better known as the Mormons. With nearly eight million followers today, the LDS Church continues to grow at an exponential rate, even some 180 years after Smith's death.

However, the cult of Mormonism stands precariously like a house of cards, easily toppled by two simple and unarguable facts: Smith's immoral character and his many false prophecies. To know what these are is to gain spiritual discernment and so not be duped by a false christ

"masquerading as an angel of light" who was in truth a *"false apostle and deceitful worker"* (**2 Corinthians 11:3-4**,**13-14**).

Smith's Immoral Character

Many historically documented accounts of Joseph Smith's character demonstrate a lifestyle of immorality and debauchery that lie in stark contrast to the biblical man who lives in holiness and obedience to sound biblical doctrine.

Smith's own testimony reveals him to be a serial liar. He claimed at the tender age of 15 to have been visited by "two glorious personages surrounded with a brilliant light which eclipsed the sun at noonday," whom he identified as "the Father and the Son." God Himself supposedly taught young Smith to despise Christian creeds, consider denominations as abominations, and believe that the Bible had been corrupted and so in need of restoration.

Three years later, Smith next claimed that an angel named Moroni directed him to a hill called Cumorah near the village of Manchester, New York to find hidden golden plates. There he would also find the Jewish high priest's Urim and Thummin stones, and by looking through these stones, he could translate the plates from ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics into English. Coincidentally, Smith just happened to find these artifacts right near his home.

To substantiate his discovery, Smith deviously qualified three witnesses — Oliver Cowdery, Martin Harris, and David Whitmer — as those who could testify to the existence of the plates while Smith kept them out of sight from the world during his time translating. Nobody but these four could have viewed the plates, for Smith revealed that the angel Moroni had conveniently returned and delivered them back up to Heaven before anyone else could have a look. These witnesses' wretched moral character makes their testimonies completely dismissible. Both Whitmer and Cowdery were later charged by their fellow Mormons as thieves and counterfeiters, and Harris eventually admitted that he never had really laid eyes on the plates, but instead gazed upon them through his "eyes of faith."

What Smith claimed to have translated were the written words of a man named Mormon who had been a descendant of a Jewish exilic pilgrim to the New World named Lehi. Once Smith had finished "translating" the golden plates into the *Book of Mormon*, he then revealed that John the Baptist had appeared to him to ordain him into the Aaronic priesthood. Now commissioned, Smith launched his new religion — Mormonism — on April 6, 1830, and quickly began amassing followers from people who had become disenfranchised by traditional Christianity.

When it came to leading his new followers, Smith behaved more like a gang leader than a shepherd of God. Anyone who spoke out against Smith's false teachings was attacked with a vengeance. In one historic account, Smith hired two Mormons to kill a man who had been outspoken against his teachings. In another historic account, Smith claimed he had a vision from

God that told him that "the redemption of Zion must come by power," and so amassed an army of 200 Mormons to march on Independence, Missouri, where he was summarily routed. Smith's army, called the Danites, was described as "a band of murderers whose vile misdeeds were later written in blood on the blackest pages of the history of Mormonism." Because of their treasonous actions, Missouri Governor Lilburn W. Boggs ordered General Clark to treat the Mormons as enemies who "must be exterminated or driven from the state, if necessary, for the public good" for "their outrages are beyond description." Porter Rockwell, chief of the Danites, was described as "a powerful man physically, with a mind of narrow perceptions, intense convictions, and utterly depraved motives," who had been charged with close to one-hundred cold-blooded murders.

Polygamy and pedophilia also demonstrated Smith's contempt for God's moral law, especially **Genesis 2:24** which defines marriage as being between one man and one woman for life. Smith claimed divine revelation to justify his acts of polygamy, having amassed a collection of some 33 known wives, some as young as 14 years old. This lurid behavior led the townsfolk of Kirtland, Ohio to tar and feather Joseph Smith and his friend, Sidney Rigdon. Polygamy so defined early Mormonism that Smith's successor, Brigham Young, even went as far as blasphemously claiming Jesus Christ was a polygamist who had been married to Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, as well as to Mary Magdalene.

Wherever Smith and his followers went they sowed discord and violence, even among themselves, eventually causing the Mormons to be forced out of Ohio, then Missouri, settling in Illinois, before later finally being pushed west into Utah. While in Illinois, Smith ordered his followers to burn down the *Nauvoo Expositor* newspaper for publishing the horrors of Mormon rule and practice. This act of arson led to Joseph Smith's arrest. An angry mob stormed the jail where he was being held and shot Smith and his brother Hyrum. For supposedly being a divinely appointed prophet of God, Smith died like the criminal he was on June 27, 1844.

For all of his supposedly divine proclamations, Smith proved to be a lying, thieving, violent, sexually immoral miscreant who clearly did not live a life as the Apostle Paul preached, *"worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God"* (**Colossians 1:10**).

Smith's Many False Prophecies

The LDS Church made the following admission concerning their founder's personal claim of being a divinely appointed prophet of God:

> By nearly three million persons in many lands, Joseph Smith is today held in remembrance as a Prophet of God. The virtues and achievements of his followers stand as a monument to his divine calling. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has its foundation in the revelations he received, the sacred truths he taught, and the authority of the priesthood restored through him.

Within this foundational LDS statement lies Mormonism's "Achilles' heel" in that the authority of the Mormon priesthood and the validity of their doctrines rest entirely on Joseph Smith's claim to be an inspired prophet of God. That means that should Smith have ever pronounced any prophecy that turned out to be false, he would end up violating Moses' litmus test of 100% accuracy in determining whether a message had been truly spoken by the Lord or not (**Deuteronomy 18:21-22**). Mormonism's own *Articles of Faith* admits to as much stating, "If his claims to divine appointment be false, forming as they do the foundation of the Church… the superstructure cannot be stable." *Cold Case Christianity* author J. Warner Wallace proves the superstructure to indeed be very unstable by providing just a few of the many false prophecies made by Joseph Smith which prove that he had indeed failed Moses' test:

1. Joseph Smith made open-dated prophecies, such as when he predicted in 1835 that, "The coming of the Lord, which was nigh — even fifty-six years should wind up the scene" (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, 182).

2. He made several self-fulfilling prophecies, such as when he claimed the Lord instructed him not to translate any more until he had arrived in Ohio. (*D&C* 37:1).

3. Smith made conditional prophecies, such as when he stated that if the people of Ohio repented they would not be severely judged by the Lord (*D&C* 40:16-18).

4. Smith even went as far as to make close-dated, unconditional prophecies, such as when in 1832 he prophesied that an LDS temple would be built in Independence, Missouri within his generation. Almost 200 years later, no temple has ever been built, especially during Smith's generation, forcing the LDS leadership to admit this prophecy never came true. (*D&C* Section 84).

5. Smith also made several fanciful prophecies, such as when in 1837 he proclaimed that the Lord had told him that the moon was inhabited by men and women who looked like the people of the earth, that they lived up to a thousand years old, stood nearly six feet tall, and dressed uniformly like Quakers (*The Oliver B. Huntington Journal*, 1881).

Conclusion

It takes little effort to prove that Joseph Smith's claim to being a divinely called prophet of God was fraudulent. First, Smith's own ungodly and immoral character would cause even the most

ardent hedonist to blush. Second, his failed prophecies fall well short of Moses' test in determining a false prophet.

Many more pieces of evidence could be presented that discredit Mormonism. For example, Smith obviously plagiarized the *Book of Mormon* from other sources such as the Bible as well as a novel written earlier by a minister named Solomon Spaulding. Some 3,000 "revisions" were made to Joseph Smith's writings by the LDS church over the subsequent decades. The many historic and linguistic claims Smith made were in time proven to be utterly fictitious, if not ludicrous. The evidences go on and on. Such plentiful arguments should cause Mormons to express serious doubts as to the legitimacy of their false religion and so stop them from walking blindly down the steps leading away from God.

As Evangelical Christians, we must reach out to Mormons in love while armed with the sword of the Word and these facts which prove Joseph Smith was a fraud. In doing so, we confirm that Mormonism cannot be a valid expression of Christianity but rather remains as another wide road that lures lost souls to eternal separation from God in a place of torment.

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‘Woke Jesus’: How a ‘Doctrine of Demons’ Is Infiltrating Christianity

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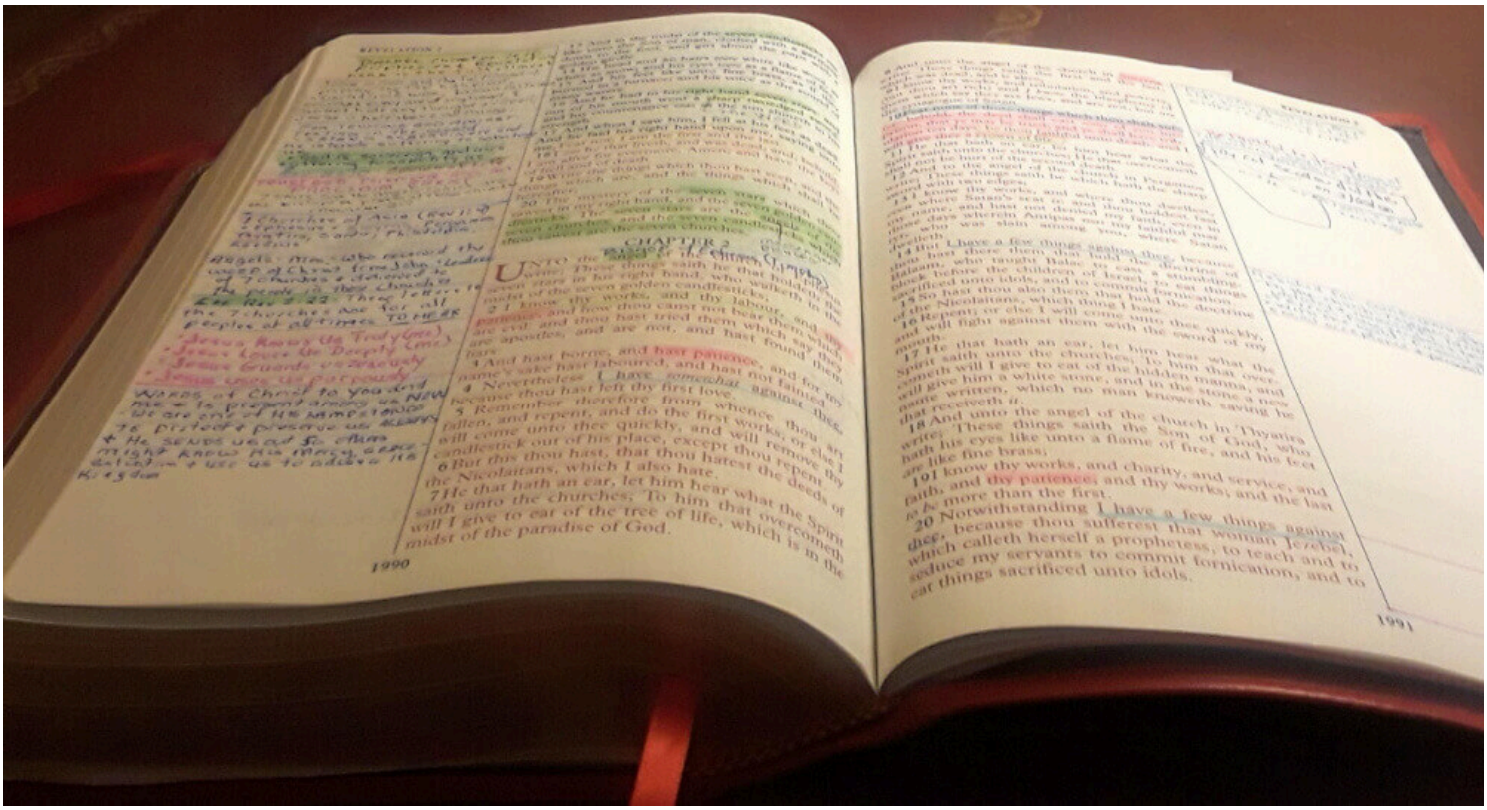


Tyler O’Neil | **Daily Signal**

ORLANDO, Fla.—A “doctrine of demons” is **invading Christian churches** across America, twisting the Bible to advance leftist ideologies that divide people, warns a pastor and author of the book “Woke Jesus: The False Messiah Destroying Christianity.”

“I think it is a doctrine of demons,” Lucas Miles, pastor of Nfluence Church in Granger, Indiana, told “**The Daily Signal Podcast**” at the National Religious Broadcasters Convention in Orlando on Monday. “I mean, its intention is to divide people.”

He warns that “woke Christianity” or “progressive Christianity” or “the Christian Left” boils down to a false version of the faith, tracing back to a Marxist substructure” that reframes the faith in terms of oppressors and oppressed.

“**But wokeism, it’s antithetical** to Christianity,” Miles said.

He recalls seeing the website for the Black Lives Matter movement, which promoted transgender activism and the abolition of the nuclear family.

“I don’t know how any Christian could be on the side when you look at a gay parade or a trans parade that’s happening and ever look at that and say, ‘That looks like an event that’s promoting righteousness or holiness,’” Miles said.

Not only does the leftist perspective often advocate for the erosion of the nuclear family and the **promotion of LGBT lifestyles** that conflict with the moral teachings of Scripture, but it robs Christianity of proper discipleship.

Miles argues that wokeism removes the ability to suffer for Christ. Since Christians will spend eternity in heaven, where there is no suffering, “I only have my lifetime to offer obedience to Him and faithfulness in the face of persecution.” **But woke Christianity** “removes persecution for the sake of Christ because persecution, according to wokeism, is always based upon my socioeconomic status, my skin color, my country of origin, my sexual preference, my gender, immigration status, all of these things.”

Woke Christianity also “robs us of the ability to offer forgiveness,” he adds. “There is no such thing as redemption or forgiveness, because the other group is always classified as the oppressor.”

“When you look at Scripture, it talks about not punishing people based upon the acts of their parents or the acts of their ancestors,” Miles noted, referencing verses such as Ezekiel 18:20.

He laments that “we have such an increase in biblical illiteracy in the church that most people can’t recognize” that these ideas are actually rejections of what Scripture teaches.

Miles encourages the church to truly study woke ideology, critical theory, and critical race theory, in order to “wrap our minds around it and untangle these doctrinal fishing lines,” **so Christians can** “clearly stand on knowing confidently we’re on biblical grounds to be able to say, ‘This is unbiblical, and here is why.’”

The author pastors a church based near South Bend, Indiana. He recalls the impact of then-South Bend **Mayor Pete Buttigieg**, who went on to become a presidential candidate and secretary of transportation under President Joe Biden.

“It wasn’t the national conversation that inspired this ,” Miles says. “It was really what was happening locally.” He says people “laughed at” him when he predicted that Buttigieg would run for president.

“Pete did something that I believe that no other presidential candidate has fully done before,” the pastor noted. “We’ve seen presidential candidates talk about their faith. We’ve seen them thank God for things. We’ve seen them even pray. Pete would exegete passages on the campaign trail.” (“Exegesis” refers to the careful reading of Scripture, focusing on specific words to tease out a deeper meaning.)

“He’s breaking down passages, using them, really, as, in many ways, sort of propaganda for his various views,” Miles says. “And so, I believe that there was actually a turning point with him. I’m not going to say that Pete was single-handedly responsible for giving life to the Christian Left, but I think he was a major inspiration for a lot of people on that side for that reason, because he would build these arguments about why Jesus was a refugee, so, therefore, we need open borders and illegal immigration.”

Miles recalls briefly interviewing Buttigieg years ago, and he cites Buttigieg’s father’s past in translating the Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci. He noted that Buttigieg “did a lot of things to clean up the immediate downtown” in South Bend, “but you go outside of the area at all, and the city’s probably the worst it’s ever been.”

Listen to the **podcast below** or read the lightly edited transcript:

Tyler O’Neil: This is Tyler O’Neil, managing editor at The Daily Signal. I am joined by Lucas Miles, a pastor, host of the show “Church and State with Lucas Miles,” and author of the new book “Woke Jesus: The False Messiah Destroying Christianity.” Thanks so much for joining me.

Lucas Miles: Thanks for having me.

O’Neil: So, Lucas, can you walk us through how the Left aims to subvert Jesus? I’ve seen Democrats claim Jesus was a radical, a refugee, even transgender. What’s going on?

Miles: Without a doubt, there’s a concerted effort that seems to be picking up a lot of momentum in recent years of the Left’s redefining of Christianity, re-imagining Christ, what he looks like, what his nature is, and, of course, outside of a biblical worldview.

But I think it’s important that people understand that this isn’t necessarily a new phenomenon. That this, in my book “Woke Jesus,” I go back to as early as the 1700s, after the Enlightenment, during the post-Enlightenment period, the world was at a different place and actually a very similar place than it is today where there was a paradigm shift.

And so for the first time there was an elevation of man’s intellect over this idea of faith. And so logic and reason, the scientific method, Darwin, all these things, Hegel, all of these sort of new machinations, if you will, of man became the paramount.

So the church was in a dilemma. It had to find a way to make Scripture stay relevant. And they did that actually by wrongly, but probably with good intention, they did it by minimizing the divinity of Christ and uplifting his humanity.

And that's the same debate we have today, is, is Jesus just a great human example and a human witness that promotes a social gospel—and at times a socialist gospel—or is he truly divine? Of course, the Christian answer is, he's both, but that has certain implications.

So what we're seeing today and what I write about in "Woke Jesus" are the various iterations of Christ that we see presented and now financed by the Left. And that's what makes this different than just what happened in the 1700s.

The 1700s I think, in many ways, was a natural discourse of theology in the conversations. What we see today is the monetization and the funding of a woke gospel in order to divide the church so that the Left can really weaken the evangelical vote in this country, win elections, and gain more power.

O'Neil: So how would you define or explain this woke gospel?

Miles: Yeah, so, if you're talking to somebody who is an adherent to it, they would say probably something like, although it would be much more complex than this, that wokeism is a higher awareness or increased sensitivity to the systemic oppression of various demographics, whether that be people of color or people based upon their gender or sexual preference, or something like that.

The way that I would describe it, first off, I think it is a doctrine of demons. I mean, its intention is to divide people. It's a Marxist substructure that really lines it and this idea that there's an oppressor and oppressed and that everybody's divided in these categories. So whether we're talking about critical race theory or critical queer theory, these are attributes of the woke gospel.

And I think what woke Christianity or progressive Christianity or the Christian Left, it can go by all these different names, it's important to understand that there's a spectrum.

We have some individuals that have maybe some theological imaginations or leanings toward some of these doctrines. And then we have all-out activists that are really leftist operatives within the church. And I think it's important to give recognition to that because our response to those different groups is different.

Somebody who's truly a believer that's maybe embraced a social justice message because they think it's going to be the best thing to help the world, I'm going to respond to differently than a leftist infiltrator into the church that's trying to create a bunch of havoc.

And so we utilize grace and truth, which are obviously very, very strong Christian principles and values that we hold to in order to walk our way through this. But wokeism, it's antithetical to Christianity. And I think one of the things that's important to point out is that one of the greatest

problems with wokeism, from a Christian standpoint, is it robs us of the ability to be able to suffer for Christ.

As believers, one of the only things that we can give to the Lord on this side of heaven that we can't give to him for eternity is glory in the midst of persecution and suffering. There will be no persecution and suffering in heaven. I only have my lifetime in order to offer obedience to him and faithfulness in the face of persecution during this life.

But wokeism removes persecution for the sake of Christ because persecution, according to wokeism, is always based upon my socioeconomic status, my skin color, my country of origin, my sexual preference, my gender, immigration status, all of these things. So that's driving why people are being persecuted. It's a very self-focused, man-focused view of persecution and suffering, and it never gives credence to being able to suffer for Christ.

And the other thing it does is it robs us of the ability to offer forgiveness. There is no such thing as redemption or forgiveness because the other group is always classified as the oppressor and the wokeism would teach you, or whether we're talking about other iterations of it, things like black liberation theology would teach you to never be nice or graceful to your oppressors, which, of course, goes against the Christian gospel as well.

O'Neil: So do we have in wokeism this sort of bifurcation of black queer theory, "Oh, Jesus was a black LGBT person," or whatever, and perhaps Hispanic queer theory? Are there different versions and they grab different parts of Jesus? Or is this all one thing that you're saying?

Miles: I think that you could probably best explain this as a Hydra or you have the giant octopus sea monster that we're all experiencing a different tentacle of the same thing. And so oftentimes these groups don't even know that they're part of the same kind of body of belief or structure.

But we saw this I think early with . BLM comes out on the scene, you start having corporate donations to them, you go on their website—like many Americans. And what I saw was that they were committed to basically a dismantling of the nuclear family. And then you go down the list a little bit more and you see that they're committed to supporting black trans rights.

And very quickly I think BLM, which, from my vantage point, has done virtually nothing to help disadvantaged people in urban neighborhoods or people of color, what it has done more than anything is it very quickly started, it kind of opened the door for this trans revolution that we've seen. I think that really came out of the BLM movement in a lot of ways.

So these groups oftentimes will sort of hijack each other. They'll fight for the top of the food chain. They all want the same thing and that is a dismantling of this Western way of life.

Marxism never encourages fixing something. It doesn't look at something and go, "How can we improve this?" That's a capitalist framework. What Marxism does is says, "Let's burn it to the ground and the phoenix will arise out of the ashes." And I think that that's the goal of all these different groups.

And so are critical race theorists or black liberation theologians or critical queer theorists or the TikTok pastors that are wearing the rainbow scarfs, are they all part of the same group? I don't think that they think are. I think they probably think that they're friendly with one another, but I think that there is a greater school of thought and that is critical theory in general that is driving all of them.

It makes it very difficult to combat because even though they are unique in each of their focus and messaging for us on the other side of this that are trying to stand for truth in a biblical worldview, they do produce, whether they even realize it, sometimes a very united front against truth and reason and Scripture and these things that we see today. So it's definitely an interesting time to be alive.

O'Neil: Yeah. And we've touched on a few of the issues where there's clear disconnect between the Christian Gospel and the modern woke view, transgender ideology. Where are some of those conflict points and then what encourages some of these people to reexamine and actually come to an understanding of the Gospel?

Miles: Yeah, absolutely. So let's say that we look at an issue like the issue of gender. The Bible is very clear that there is male and female, that marriage is male and female. And so we could go through a whole series of Scriptures over that.

The LGBT community, you will hear arguments about a 1948 translation of Scripture and that this word we used for homosexuality, *arsenokoitai* I believe is the word, was not used prior to that time period. And when you really understand what happens here, this word that we see that's translated from the Greek into this word for homosexuality is a word that Paul essentially made up.

And he took two words from the, I believe it was the Septuagint, that he put these together and sort of created this compound word and it's essentially a word that implies "those who lay with other men."

So even if you just went to that passage, that's not the only passage there. So we could have an argument about that passage, but you still have to deal with all the other places in Scripture where it talks about fornication and evil in these days.

And I don't know how any Christian could be on the side when you look at a gay parade or a trans parade that's happening and ever look at that and say, "That looks like an event that's promoting

righteousness or holiness."

So that's one issue.

We could also talk about something, we saw this during the COVID pandemic, for lack of a better term—I know that we'd probably rather think of it as a plan-demic in many ways—but this thing that happened, what we saw is that for the Left who's known for pushing this idea of separation in church and state against Christians—

So anytime somebody prays in the Senate or at a football game, somebody's going to, on the Left, is going to say, "No, no, no. What about separation of church and state?" But all of a sudden the Left was the one promoting the idea, "Well, what would Jesus do in this situation? Wouldn't Jesus love his neighbor by getting the vaccine and wouldn't Jesus be vaccinated?" And so we started seeing this push and I think a lot of Christians struggle to go, "What does Scripture offer to this?"

And so I point to two places. We look at something like what in theology, what's known as sphere sovereignty that God has given—there's an order to creation, that he's given kings and rulers authority over their nations and their sovereign borders. He's given fathers authority over the family. He's given elders and pastors authority over the church. He's given all of us individual authority over our own body and that we see that in the form of free will.

And we could have theological discussions about that. But regardless of which side of the free will debate you're on, I think that everybody would acknowledge that there is a sphere of sovereignty over your own physical body.

That's why we have laws that if you violate somebody's body or you harass them or you abuse them in some way, that that's against the law. Why? Because you're violating their sphere of sovereignty.

So there's all sorts of theological arguments against these different iterations that we see in wokeism, from the vaccine to even separating people based upon race and color or even the conversation about reparations for something. This is when you look at Scripture, it talks about not punishing people based upon the acts of their parents or the acts upon on their ancestors.

And so there are so many ideas that are being presented today as "this is what Jesus would do" or "this is this biblical position" that anybody who has any biblical sense whatsoever should easily be able to spot those. The problem is that we have such an increase of biblical illiteracy in the church that most people can't recognize it.

So what I've done in this new book, "Woke Jesus," I actually quote Irenaeus, who was an early church father, in the start of the book. And he wrote a book called "Against Heresies" trying to defeat Gnosticism, an early heresy that came against the church in the—he wrote at 180 A.D. And

he said the reason why the first-century church was not able to refute Gnosticism is they didn't understand it fully.

And I believe the same is true today. Unless we start understanding wokeism, critical theory, critical race theory, critical queer theory, and we see it as more than just, "Well, that's not true"—Why is it not true?—and really be able to wrap our minds around it and untangle these doctrinal fishing lines that we can really clearly stand on knowing confidently we're on biblical grounds to be able to say, "This is unbiblical and here is why," until the church is able to do that, I think we're going to continue to run into this and have a hard time getting past it.

O'Neil: … When you go up against this left-ward twisting of Christianity, it seems as though many of the institutions in our society are tilted in that direction where they're constantly pushing the Overton window on reparations, on these claims from the Left on transgenderism, in particular. I can't see a Reuters or an AP article that ever cites criticism of "gender-affirming care." It's just always assumed that, "Oh, all the hospitals, all the medical organizations support this." How is it preaching into this void, saying, "No, Jesus doesn't support all this stuff that seems to be pushed down upon us"?

Miles: Yeah. I think that we have to continue to fight this battle on multiple fronts. And of course, we want to do whatever we can.

If there's a media outlet that will let me go on and talk about these issues and they'll give it an honest shake, I'll do it. I don't care who it is, I'm going to go on there and really be able to offer my best defense. I believe that's the position that the Lord has me in.

Now, am I aware that there's certain media outlets that are never going to give this time of day or even certain—whether it be government organizations or other leading foundations or or whatnot that are going to be at the front of moving a lot of these things along? There are powers that don't want this message to get out there, and they don't want people to realize that the emperor has no clothes and to have the confidence to start admitting it.

They're not looking for that. But I think that there are places that are, and so we have to celebrate those.

I think that the conservatives and Christians are also doing a great job of creating new platforms to be able to get the word out and to be able to really gather their own audiences.

I'm encouraged by many of the apps that are popping up that are conservative-friendly, and there's danger in that because a lot of the app platforms are governed by left-leaning companies and individuals.

So it always is a dance and dangerous. Even having a book like this on Amazon, you always wonder, like, Amazon, they can pull the plug whenever they want. Thankfully, they haven't. And I appreciate what I see to be at least still some sort of a value there to allow books to breathe regardless of content, and which I'm certainly for.

I think that the other aspect of this is that we as Christians, we have to recognize that this is, it's not just a physical battle, that there's a spiritual aspect to this as well.

And I talk about this later on in the book. And I think that for us to get through this, it can become very depressing, very overwhelming very quickly when you realize how much you're up against in this whole equation. It's not even just secular platforms. There are Christian groups that don't want this message to go out. And that's where a lot of my work and writing has gone.

So we have to remember why we're doing this, that ultimately, it's not about me getting canceled, it's not about this fight that I'm trying to carry on. It's really about the Lord. And I think that that's what moves me and motivates me every day to get up and if I can win somebody over and really help them to be able to see this.

I just had a woman come up to me and she watches my show "Church and State" and she said, "Are you Lucas Miles?" And I said, "Yes." And that doesn't happen every day to me. But I talked to her and she goes, "I escaped communism." And she goes, "I watch your show every single time it's on." And she goes, "I just want you to know how much it means to me that you are bringing the truth to this that most people don't realize and they're not aware of."

Those sort of things really keep me going in the face of so much opposition that's truly out there.

O'Neil: And where are you a pastor? Where's your congregation at?

Miles: Yeah. So, my church is called Nfluence Church … and it's right outside of South Bend, Indiana, a suburb called Granger, Indiana, just about 10 minutes from the University of Notre Dame. And we like to think we're the center of the nation because we have the two highways that run east and west and north and south throughout the whole country, across about a mile from my church. So Indiana, … that's been home. But we're on the road a lot. We're doing events around the country. Lots of different ways to get connected with us and people can find all that and more on my website at **lucasmiles.org**.

O'Neil: So did a certain former mayor lead you to consider writing these books?

Miles: Yeah. So, it's funny. People always ask me, because I haven't been in the political conversation forever—I really started probably ramping up 2012, 2013, 2014, and we started getting bolder. And it wasn't the national conversation that inspired this. It was really what was happening locally.

And Mayor Pete , who obviously his regime was built in South Bend, I started warning about him probably as early as 2012. I started talking to people about, "Hey, this guy's going to make a run for White House. He's doing all these things." And people laughed at me early on about it. And we knew the history of his dad's involvement in translating Gramsci and all these long history of critical theory ties with Pete and his family.

And I know Pete, he might claim that he doesn't know me, I've been around him. I interviewed him for Chamber of Commerce years back and we've had a little bit of interactions together over the years.

But it was a wake-up call just to see, if you go to downtown South Bend, there's aspects where you saw that Pete did a lot of things to clean up the immediate downtown, but you go outside of that area at all and the city's probably the worst it's ever been. Our crime is up. I mean, it's just a disaster. And what we're seeing now is it was kind of really a guy that Pete knighted to take over. It's been a Democratic-run city for I think 50, 60 years.

So I'm working with some local people hoping to change that as much as we can and really trying to do our part. But yeah, there was definitely some inspiration there.

O'Neil: Yeah. Because I thought, during that presidential cycle, hearing him constantly like he took his faith seriously, and yet he would twist it every time, and "life begins with breath" and all this—

Miles: Yeah. So, this is the one—and I've talked about this a lot. I've not heard a lot of other people actually other than you notice that and mention that. Pete did something that I believe that no other presidential candidate has fully done before. And we've seen presidential candidates talk about their faith. We've seen them thank God for things. We've seen them even pray.

Pete would exegete passages on the campaign trail. And so he's breaking down passages, using them really as—in many ways—sort of propaganda for his various views. And so I believe that there was actually a turning point with him. I'm not going to say that Pete was single-handedly responsible for giving life to the Christian Left, but I think he was a major inspiration for a lot of people on that side for that reason because he would build these arguments about why Jesus was a refugee, so therefore we need open borders and illegal immigration.

And Jesus—now I saw something the other day on TikTok. It was a guy who said that Jesus was most likely either gay or transgender because he wore a tunic. And that's a lot like a dress, so therefore he was a crossdresser.

And it's just these—but I think there's probably young people out there that hear this and they go, "Oh, yeah, so insightful." But when you understand history, these are ludicrous, they're asinine

ideas. But we are winning people over because I think that they have tapped into Marx and others of just the useful idiot sort of framework.

They are taking advantage of people based upon pulling on their heartstrings, giving them these propaganda pieces. And I think that when you take the time to really talk to somebody, they get educated about the policies, they start seeing the impact.

I've traveled all over the country, I've been in countries that are controlled by dictators and corruption and everything else. And you see those things and you realize that, "You know what? America's a pretty good place to live, but there's some people I think that are going out of their way trying to damage that."

O'Neil: Yeah. Do you see any tie with woke Jesus and the deconversion stories we've been hearing?

Miles: Yeah. Yeah. I think this issue of deconversion is a major, major topic, and I think it's going to probably become even more so in the years that come.

People have gone through a lot of church hurt. I call it post-traumatic church disorder. And I don't say that to belittle it. They've gone through some really damaging things.

I think the height of legalism that we saw probably when I was a kid did a lot of damage to people and there wasn't—in the balance of grace and truth, it was a high truth side and very little grace. And then the pendulum swing, it swung now to this high grace side with very little truth and in some ways it's swinging back.

And now we have this polarization where we have a group over here that's high grace and a group over here that's high truth and sometimes they're both missing aspects of this, and so sometimes it feels a little lonelier in the center there.

But I think this deconversion thing, we have to keep our eyes on this. I think that it really requires—there's a biblical concept to deconversion kind of, it's called repentance. And repentance is, I get rid of my old ways of thinking and I embrace his ways of thinking and I turn away from all the ideas that I've held that are contrary to him.

The problem is, with deconversion, they're going from one belief that they held, which was oftentimes wrong, to another belief that they hold, which is oftentimes wrong. And neither group is ever taking the time to go, "What does Scripture really have to say about this?"

I believe that we can look to the Lord, we can look to Scripture. It is a book that is God-breathed, that's inspired, it's authoritative. It is the word of God and it's useful for every single aspect of my life. And so my passion is to help young people and really people of all kinds to be able to come

back to the word of God as first place. And I think we can get rid of a lot of this kind of nonsense that's out there.

O'Neil: Yeah. Well, thank you so much, Lucas. Where can the people follow you?

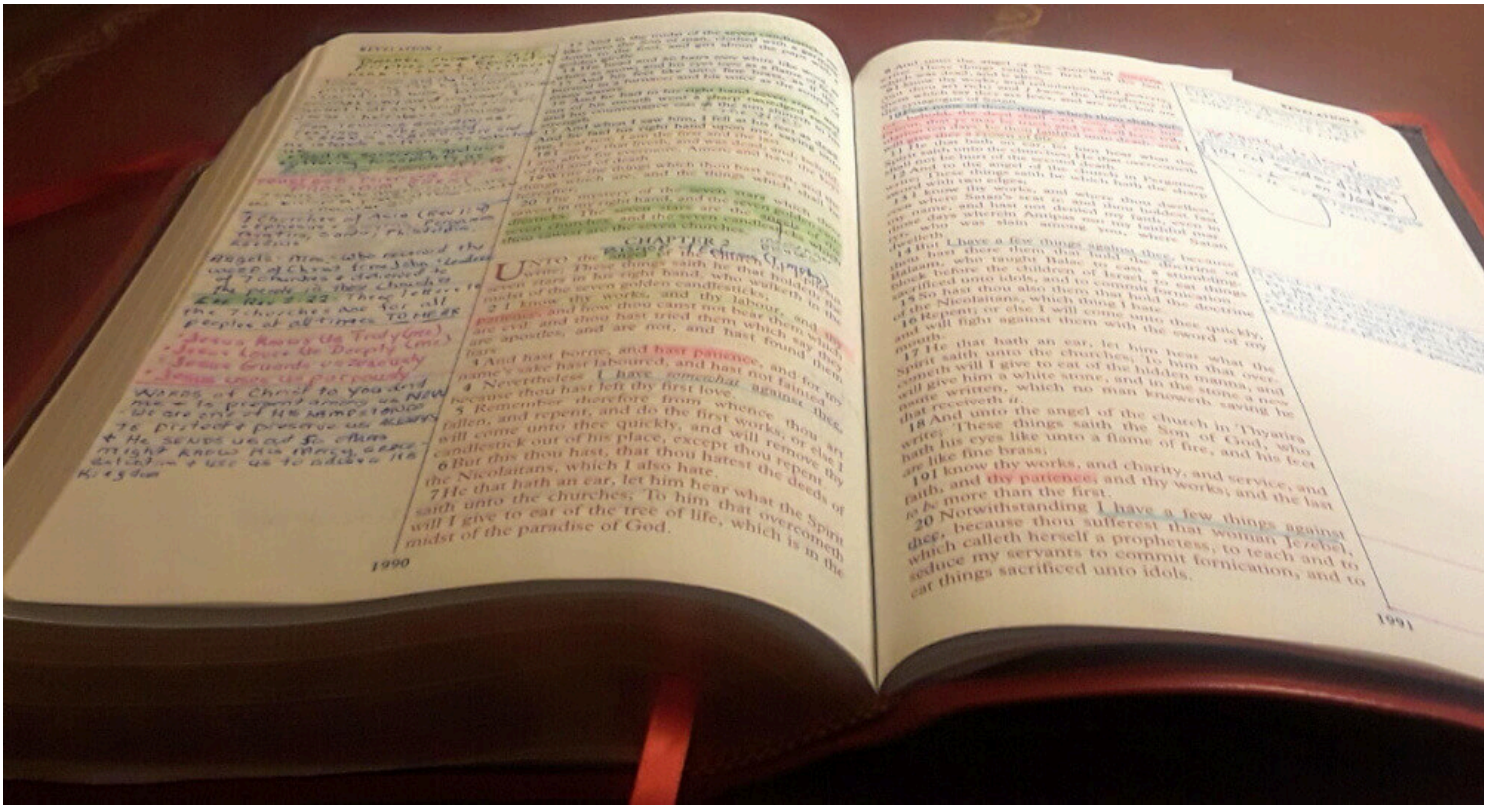
Miles: Yeah. They can head over to **lucasmiles.org** and find out more about me. If they're interested in booking me for a speaking event or grabbing a copy of my book, my new book "Woke Jesus" is available on Amazon or wherever else books are sold. We just this morning hit No. 1 new release in one of the bigger categories. So I was super excited to see that happen. But appreciate the support and your time.

*Have an opinion about this article? To sound off, please email **letters@DailySignal.com** and we'll consider publishing your edited remarks in our regular "We Hear You" feature. Remember to include the url or headline of the article plus your name and town and/or state.*

The post 'Woke Jesus': How a 'Doctrine of Demons' Is Infiltrating Christianity appeared first on The Daily Signal.

Anti-Bible Attack Dogs

MAY 26, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, PROPHECY



At this late hour at the end of the age, it's obvious to anyone who's truly attuned to God's Word and is watching as instructed by the Lord (Mark 13: 37): Christ's call in the Rapture must be very near. Proof includes that Heaven's enemy has, it is clear, unleashed the "attack dogs" against God's Holy Word.

Those "hounds of hell" have chosen a well-known animal-activist entity, whose name by reputation seems nonthreatening while Satan moves forward with his devilish plan. And it seems quite sad, because the organization has done, I presume without knowing very much about it, at least some level of good through its services.

Again we see the rapidly growing—and I believe intrinsically evil—AI technology coming to the forefront of society and culture. Those who are determined to insinuate their controlling, bullying influence have chosen to, through AI, directly attack the Word of God.

The following illustrates that the attack dogs have been unleashed in a major way:

Once again, the Left is trying to appropriate the Bible for its own political purposes, this time with the help of artificial intelligence.

Yes, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals last week published a rather milquetoast rewrite of the book of Genesis entitled "The Book: PETA's Version of the Creation Story."

The result is inherently offensive, occasionally a tad funny, but ultimately rather underwhelming…

PETA—or the AI, which I'm convinced probably provided the best bits of this dilapidated drivel—decided to be slavishly derivative, repeating original locations and keeping the rough structure of Genesis, while simultaneously scrapping the main theological message of the story and the major plot points that give the inspired Word its emotional heft.

In this incredibly sanitized version of the Bible, Cain isn't a murderer, Nimrod stops being a hunter, Hagar is a chef, a dog takes the place of Isaac on Mount Moriah and there is no sacrifice, Pharaoh's butler and baker both live, and Pharaoh's dreams involve vegan preaching, not the famine responsible for reuniting Jacob's family. Somewhere between the AI and the wokescolds at PETA, basic details got lost.

For instance, Rachel dies in childbirth with Joseph, rather than with his younger brother Benjamin (Genesis 35), and Benjamin miraculously appears as an elder brother to Joseph. Cain—still the villain of the story—sacrifices animal flesh to God while Abel sacrifices plants, which represents a reversal of the biblical story in which Abel sacrifices his prized sheep. PETA might as well have made Abel the villain, especially since it decided to scrap the murder, anyway.

Most of the main characters—who have rather tremendous flaws in the original version of Genesis—are all morally spotless priests of the vegan religion here, preaching the virtues of soy and almond milk. They go from place to place, spreading the gospel of treating animals like people, and occasionally the animals speak on their own accord. (At one point, camels decide among themselves to teach the uneducated humans, but then decide just to travel with them, instead.)

Joseph's brothers still decide to kidnap and sell their brother out of jealousy, but they also wouldn't dare harm a goat to dip his multicolored coat in goat's blood. Instead, they use beet juice. Yes, they contemplate murdering their own brother, but God forbid they touch an animal…

It seems that whoever at PETA rewrote Genesis lost interest after the first few chapters, letting AI do the rest. ("PETA Teams Up with AI to Rewrite the Bible, Tyler O'Neil/Daily Signal, May 16, 2023)

Some would view all this as drivel, as the writer puts it—just tongue-in-cheek fun-poking. But the God whose Son paid the price for all the sin of the world in the most horrific, humiliating way imaginable, I must believe, finds little humor here.

Neither is the serpent's intention tongue-in-cheek. He wants to steal truth from and destroy every human being. He fully intends to do so in part by deceiving humans into thinking that neither he nor God even exists. Destroying the veracity of God's Word is one of the chief ways he is trying to achieve his plan of destroying the human race.

Jesus is *the Word*.

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. (John 1:1–4)

Jesus said that, despite all of the devils' attempts to destroy those who follow the Lord, we shouldn't fear or be distracted. He, Jesus, has overcome the world (as well as the flesh and the devil).

Satan and all of Hell's attack dogs will never destroy the Word of God. We have our Lord's promise.

> Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. (Matthew 24: 35)

SOURCE: **PROPHECY LINE**

Only Obedience to God on Education Can Save U.S.: Alex Newman at First Landing 1607

MAY 17, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: 1607 FIRST LANDING, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Despite the covenant created between those first settlers in 1607 and God, Americans turned their backs on Him when they decided to allow godless government to educate their children in defiance of the Bible's clear admonitions, explains Alex Newman during his speech at the **First Landing 1607 Project**. Only obedience can restore the United States, he added.

The event was about re-dedicating America to God, remembering the first settlers to arrive in Virginia 416 years ago who formed a covenant with God upon arrival. At the First Landing ceremony in 1607, under the leadership of Rev. Hunt, the English Christians dedicated the new land to Christ and asked Him to use it to spread the Kingdom of God worldwide.

"We do hereby dedicate this Land, and ourselves, to reach the People within these shores with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to raise up Godly generations after us, and with these generations take the Kingdom of God to all the earth," declared Rev. Hunt after months of traveling on ships to arrive in America, where they planted a large cross on a hill.

"May this Covenant of Dedication remain to all generations, as long as this earth remains, and may this Land, along with England, be Evangelist to the World," Hunt added. "May all who see this Cross, remember what we have done here, and may those who come here to inhabit join us in this Covenant and in this most noble work that the Holy Scriptures may be fulfilled."

Speaking to hundreds of God-fearing patriots including top military leaders and fellow speakers such as Glenn Beck and Michelle Bachmann, Newman said obedience to God on the education and discipling of children would be a precursor to any restoration of the nation. He also explained that true liberty can only exist in a Christian society.

Other **speakers included** historian Bill Federer, Father James Altman, scholar David Barton, author Dr. John Diamond, Congressional Wives Prayer Breakfast founder Nancy Schulze, Rev. Jack Stagman, author and speaker Donica Hudson, Virginia Christian Alliance founder Don Blake, and more.

The event was livestreamed to hundreds of thousands of viewers around the world in 72 languages.

Watch the whole event here:

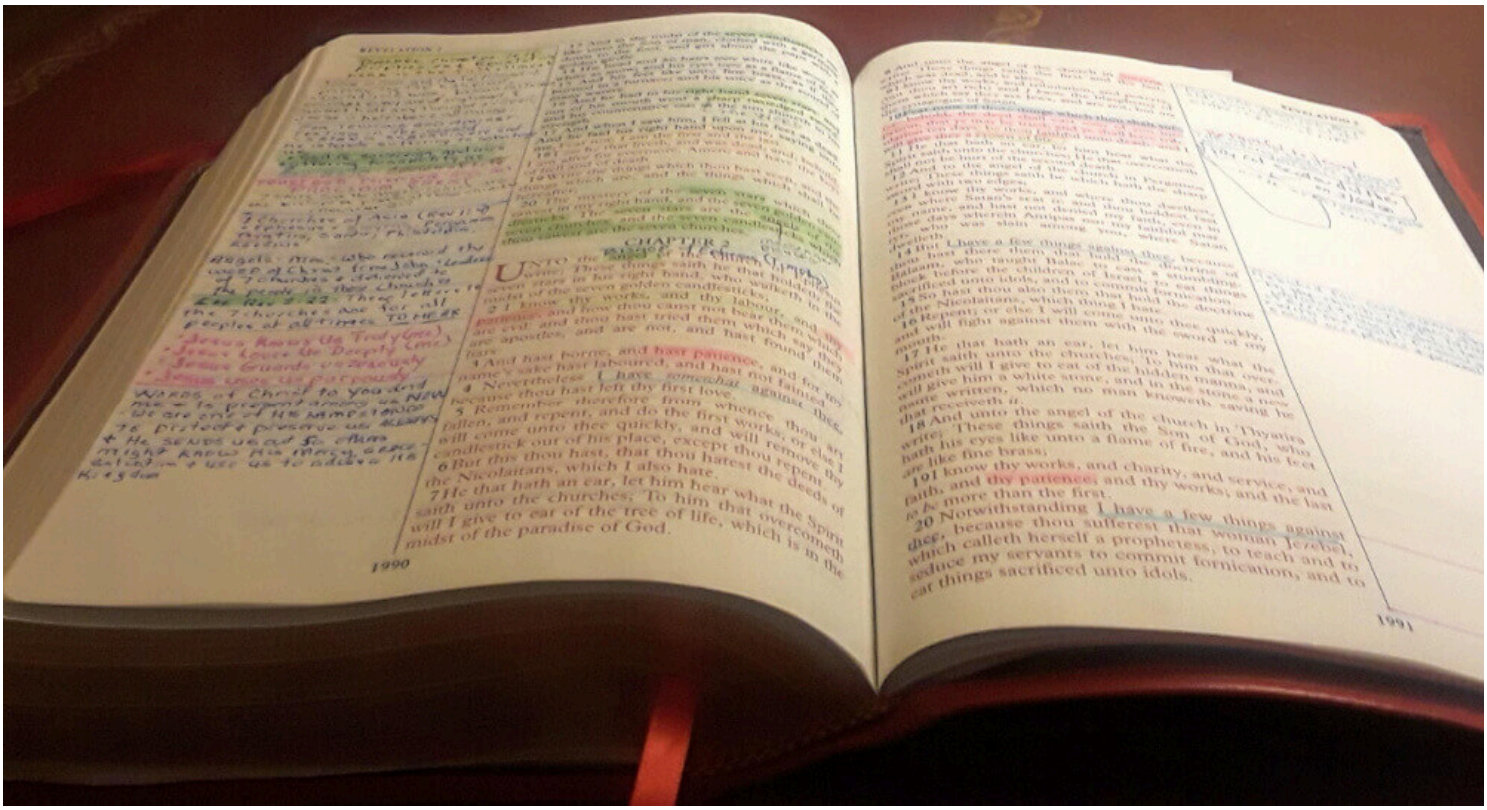
https://vimeo.com/818538554

First Landing 1607 Project 4/26/23 Main Event Stream from **His Freedom** on **Vimeo**.

SOURCE: **THE LIBERTY SENTINEL**

Question: “Why is it important to believe in biblical inerrancy?”

MAY 13, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



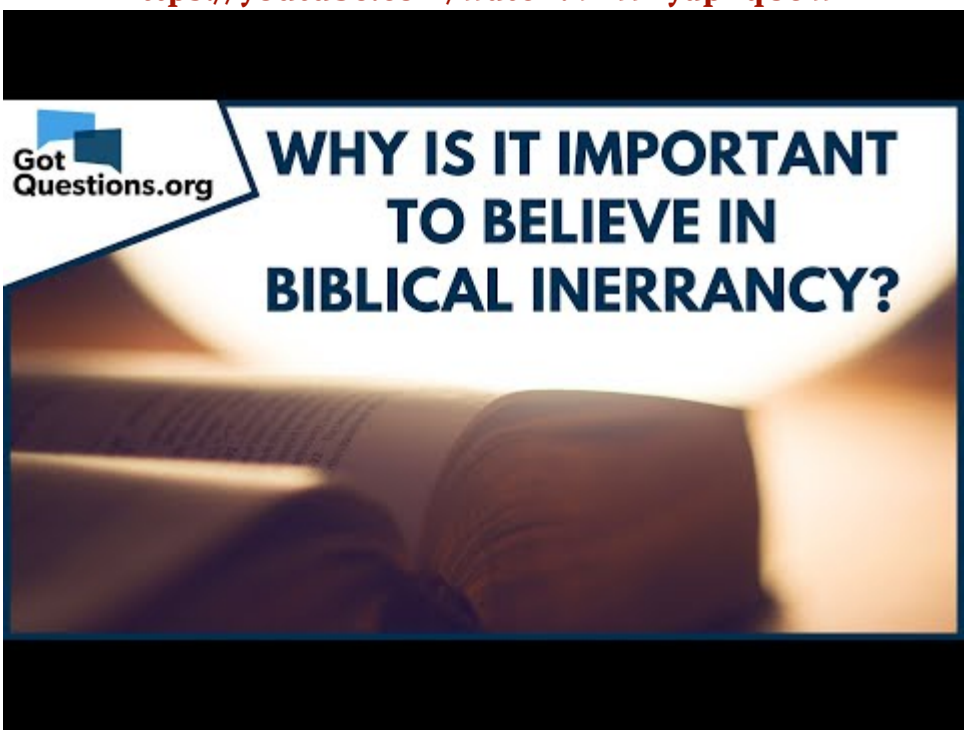
Got Questions **Website**

We live in a time that tends to shrug its shoulders when confronted with error. Instead of asking, like Pilate, “What is truth?” postmodern man says, “Nothing is truth” or perhaps “There is truth, but we cannot know it.” We’ve grown accustomed to being lied to, and many people seem comfortable with the false notion that the Bible, too, contains errors.

The doctrine of biblical inerrancy is an extremely important one because the truth does matter. This issue reflects on the character of God and is foundational to our understanding of everything the Bible teaches. Here are some reasons why we should absolutely believe in biblical inerrancy:

Why is it important to believe in biblical inerrancy? | GotQuestions.org

https://youtube.com/watch?v=WkyapPqU5wI



1. The Bible itself claims to be perfect. "And the words of the Lord are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times" (**Psalm 12:6**). "The law of the Lord is perfect" (**Psalm 19:7**). "Every word of God is pure" (**Proverbs 30:5 KJV**). These claims of purity and perfection are absolute statements. Note that it doesn't say God's Word is "mostly" pure or scripture is "nearly" perfect. The Bible argues for complete perfection, leaving no room for "partial perfection" theories.

2. The Bible stands or falls as a whole. If a major newspaper were routinely discovered to contain errors, it would be quickly discredited. It would make no difference to say, "All the errors are confined to page three." For a paper to be reliable in any of its parts, it must be factual throughout. In the same way, if the Bible is inaccurate when it speaks of geology, why should its theology be trusted? It is either a trustworthy document, or it is not.

3. The Bible is a reflection of its Author. All books are. The Bible was written by God Himself as He worked through human authors in a process called "inspiration." "All scripture is God-breathed" (**2 Timothy 3:16**). See also **2 Peter 1:21** and **Jeremiah 1:2**.

We believe that the God who created the universe is capable of writing a book. And the God who is perfect is capable of writing a perfect book. The issue is not simply "Does the Bible have a mistake?" but "Can God make a mistake?" If the Bible contains factual errors, then God is not omniscient and is capable of making errors Himself. If the Bible contains misinformation, then God is not truthful but is instead a liar. If the Bible contains contradictions, then God is the author of confusion. In other words, if biblical inerrancy is not true, then God is not God.

4. The Bible judges us, not vice versa. "For the word of God…judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (**Hebrews 4:12**). Notice the relationship between "the heart" and "the Word." The Word examines; the heart is being examined. To discount parts of the Word for any reason is to reverse this process. We become the examiners, and the Word must submit to our "superior insight." Yet God says, "But who are you, O man, to talk back to God?" (**Romans 9:20**).

5. The Bible's message must be taken as a whole. It is not a mixture of doctrine that we are free to select from. Many people like the verses that say God loves them, but they dislike the verses that say God will judge sinners. But we simply cannot pick and choose what we like about the Bible and throw the rest away. If the Bible is wrong about hell, for example, then who is to say it is right about heaven—or about anything else? If the Bible cannot get the details right about creation, then maybe the details about salvation cannot be trusted either. If the story of Jonah is a myth, then perhaps so is the story of Jesus. On the contrary, God has said what He has said, and the Bible presents us a full picture of who God is. "Your word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens" (**Psalm 119:89**).

6. The Bible is our only rule for faith and practice. If it is not reliable, then on what do we base our beliefs? Jesus asks for our trust, and that includes trust in what He says in His Word. **John 6:67-69**

is a beautiful passage. Jesus had just witnessed the departure of many who had claimed to follow Him. Then He turns to the twelve apostles and asks, “You do not want to leave too, do you?” At this, Peter speaks for the rest when he says, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” May we have the same trust in the Lord and in His words of life.

None of what we have presented here should be taken as a rejection of true scholarship. Biblical inerrancy does not mean that we are to stop using our minds or accept what the Bible says blindly. We are commanded to study the Word (**2 Timothy 2:15**), and those who search it out are commended (**Acts 17:11**). Also, we recognize that there are difficult passages in the Bible, as well as sincere disagreements over interpretation. Our goal is to approach Scripture reverently and prayerfully, and when we find something we do not understand, we pray harder, study more, and—if the answer still eludes us—humbly acknowledge our own limitations in the face of the perfect Word of God.

For Further Study

The Big Book of Bible Difficulties by Geisler & Howe More insights from your Bible study – Get Started with Logos Bible Software for Free!

Heavenly Hatred?

MAY 8, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Those who see God as a grandfatherly teddy bear who sits in Heaven and smiles tolerantly down upon imperfect human beings often argue that God is love and would never send people to an eternity of torment. Most in this category would agree with Pope Francis that even atheists will eventually go to Heaven.

When considering today's world, while wickedness is on the rise and is the order of the hour, the fallen mind, it can be reasoned, might be justified in reaching such a conclusion. Wickedness pervades societies and cultures around the planet. Those who perpetrate heinous activity seem to get away with their iniquitous behavior. God in Heaven seems to the "God is love only" crowd to be forgiving of all evil—even if repentance isn't forthcoming.

"A loving God couldn't send even the Adolf Hitlers and Mao Zedongs to a place of punishment such as the Bible describes" is the mantra. Although such beastly humans are subject to earthly retribution, the retribution is only temporary. The person's spirit is ultimately absolved of all sins. This is the religiosity behind many in the matter of good vs evil.

"God is only love; that such a deity could harbor no hate" is at the heart of this earth-centered theology.

Of course, those who hang onto this view want no heavenly governance for the most part. They want to be free to do what is right in their own eyes. They don't want to answer to a deity for their

own sins. They will make it to Heaven because a loving God could never send them, or anyone, to the Hell described in the Bible.

And they must at the same time view the Bible as a book that is flawed at the very least—not the Word of God (at least, not of their version of God).

Because they declare that God can't hate—that He is only love—they must deny that the words of the Bible aren't the Truth—the very words of the Living God.

You might disagree with my analysis of the type of things God hates, but I thought these are matters we're all familiar with. Here is why they must deny the Bible to be God's Word. This is how the writer of Proverbs puts it:

These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him.

- A proud look,
- A lying tongue,
- Hands that shed innocent blood,
- An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations,
- Feet that be swift in running to mischief,
- A false witness that speaketh lies,
- And he that soweth discord among brethren. (Proverbs 6:16–19)

If there is a God who punishes sin with eternal fire in Hell, there is a world full of people at this moment who will not make Heaven without repentance. Let's look at some of the sins we should be thoroughly familiar with, since we're inundated with such wickedness at an exponentially increasing rate.

"A proud look"

We remember the actress who held up a performance award she had just won and told Jesus to do something in the most vulgar of terms. Hollywood types and politicians of the anti-God, ideological left often display such prideful blasphemy.

"A lying tongue"

A president—despite absolute, even scientific, DNA evidence—lied that he had never had sex with a young woman, and had only his hand slapped for the lie to a forum before which lying supposedly brings severe punishment.

Additionally, another president continues to have ongoing lies perpetrated against him from opposition politicos, entertainers, and even mainstream news organizations. The Russian

collusion hoax continues to haunt our eyes and ears, with other lies just as egregious making their way to the forefront of the crooked election processes of our day.

"Hands that shed innocent blood"

Can there be any among us who are truly innocent other than babies in the wombs of their mothers? Yet their blood continues to be shed by the millions every year in America and around the world. Laws are made just to secure the right to commit this most wicked practice and those who practice abortion as "the right to choose."

"An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations"

In considering this thing that God hates, we think on the desires of those who want to do wickedness to the youngest of children through exposing them to evil, transvestite, and other sexual perversions. One political party is now controlled by those who want to teach these perversions in classrooms and even to change the genders medically of children while declaring parents who oppose such activity as anarchists. The FBI has joined in the pursuit of such parents who seek to protect their children.

"Feet that be swift in running to mischief"

Black Lives Matter (BLM) comes immediately to mind. Its followers have done billions of dollars in damage to private and public properties—have even burned churches, such as setting on fire the church known as the church of the presidents in Washington, DC.

These and other rioter-organizations, like Antifa, have burned entire portions of inner cities and blocked off certain areas as "off limits" to police.

These, funded by the evilist of globalist minions, run swiftly to any *mischief* that arises.

"A false witness that speaketh lies"

We recall a Supreme Court nominee who, in the recent past, was subjected to a woman who, it was proven, falsely accused the nominee of sexually assaulting her and other young women many years previous.

Justice Clarence Thomas also went through such false accusations at his hearings, with the current president of the United States, when he was a US senator, leading the false accusations in what has become known as a high-tech lynching.

"And he that soweth discord among brethren."

For me, this is manifest in those who claim to be of a political party, but run to left-leaning forums, particularly mainstream "progressive" panels such as *The View* and TV programs at networks, and tell the anti-America, anti-God hosts what they want to hear. This is all to get air time, while throwing their fellow party members under the proverbial bus because of hatreds they hold.

Some would say this is only politics and doesn't fit God's condemnation in this sense, but, as I say, to me personally, this is one example of this type of wickedness God hates. I certainly hate it, at any rate.

God is a God of love, absolutely. But He is also a God who is perfectly righteous. He is patient concerning His judgment, but His patience is not without limits. He hates sin in any form and will ultimately destroy it.

With all the wickedness, the evil, we see all around us, we must ask: Is the Lord of Heaven about to bring all of this anti-God activity to an end?

And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. (Jude 1:14–15)

Before that great judgment, Jesus said the following will happen:

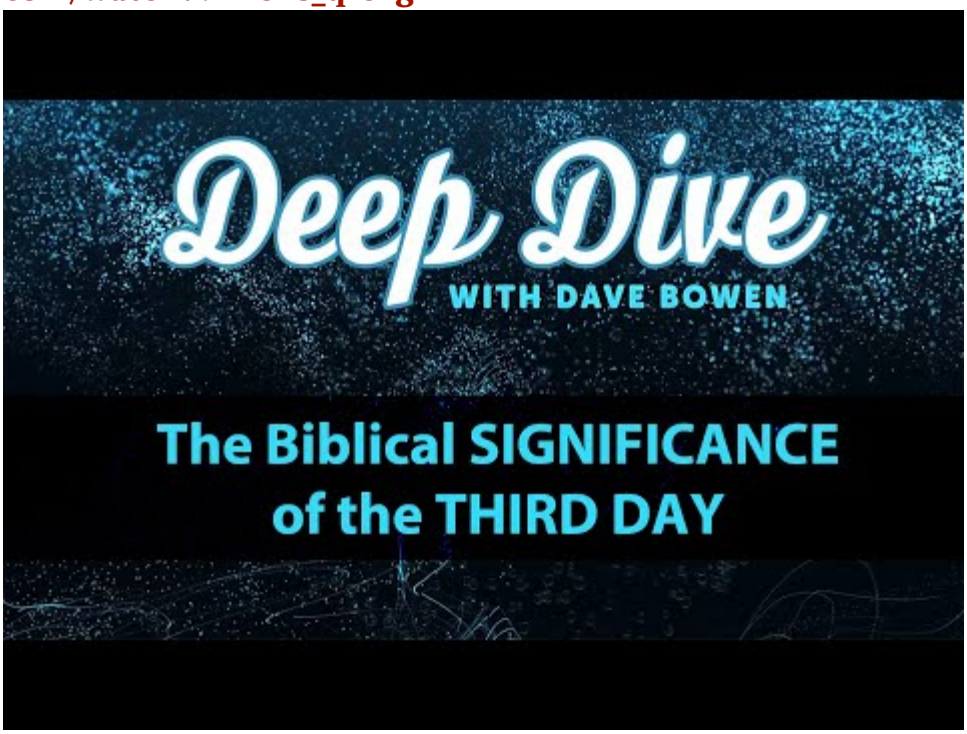
And when you see all these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your head, for your redemption draws near. (Luke 21:28)

The Biblical SIGNIFICANCE of the THIRD DAY | Teacher: Dave Bowen Christ In Prophecy

APRIL 9, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRIST IN PROPHECY

Let's take a deep dive into the biblical significance of the third day with Dave Bowen! CHRIST IN PROPHECY EPISODE The Jewish Feasts of Unleavened Bread and First Fruits –

The Biblical SIGNIFICANCE of the THIRD DAY | Teacher: Dave Bowen
https://youtube.com/watch?v=Ii32s_q-c1g



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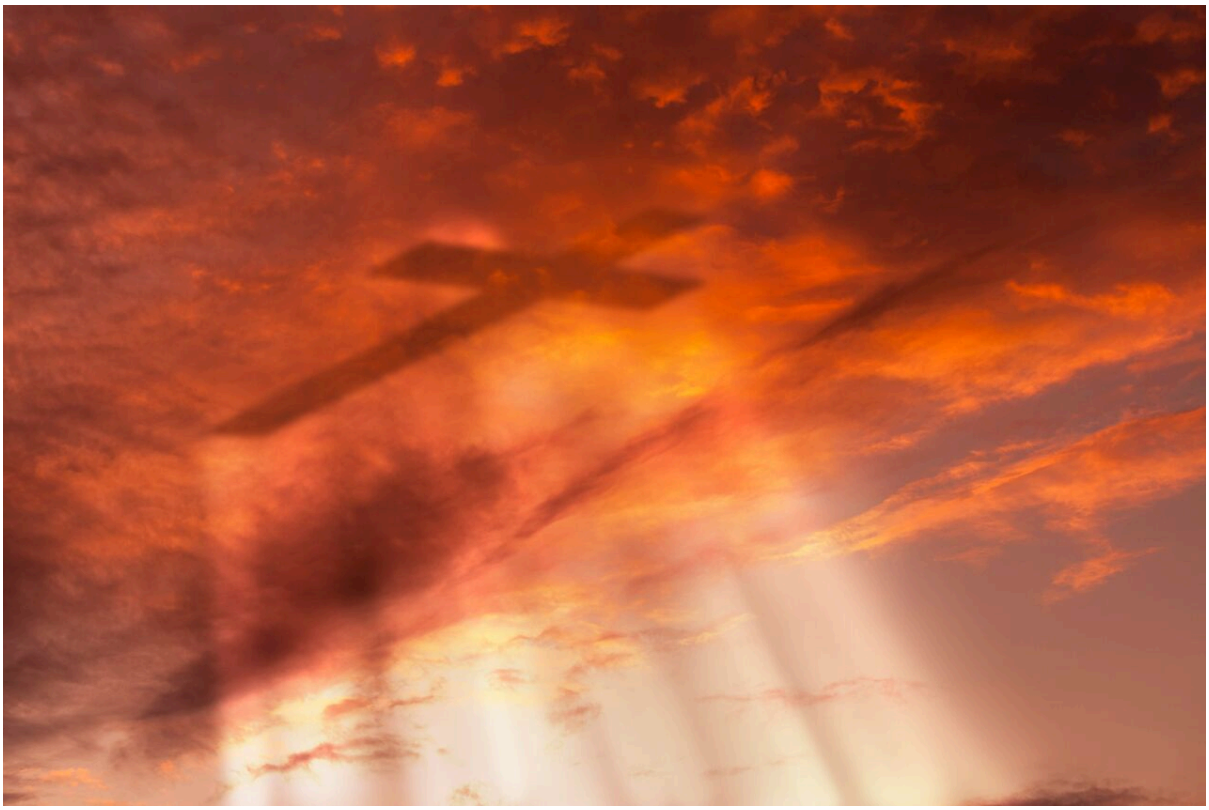
God’s Own Commentary on the Cross – John MacArthur

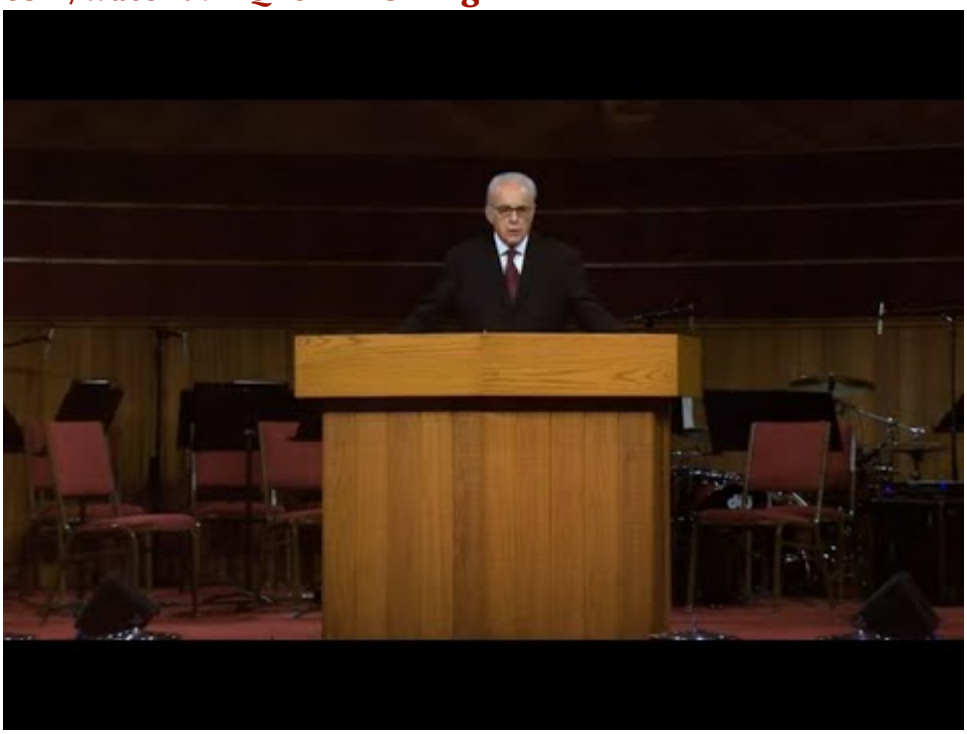
APRIL 9, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Before we come to the Lord’s Table tonight I want to draw your attention back to Matthew 27, and this will be a kind of meditation to prepare us for our time together in the Lord’s Table. I want to look in particular at just one brief section and that starts down in verse 45. **Matthew 27:45**. Let me read these verses to you.

“Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’ And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, began saying, ‘This man is calling for Elijah.’ Immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink. But the rest of them said, ‘Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him.’ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.”

God's Own Commentary on the Cross
https://youtube.com/watch?v=lQ16RhKOMHg



We are all familiar with the account of the gospel writers about the death of our Lord, and all four writers give us an account of it. We know about the experience of our Lord on the cross and things leading up to the cross. That is to say, we know the narrative and we know the history. And even though there were, according to historians, about thirty thousand people crucified in the same era in the land of Israel only Jesus is known. Thirty thousand people were crucified by the Romans, we only know one name.

Why is it that the crucifixion of Jesus is singled out for worldwide importance? Why is that? Well, most people know the answer, at least superficially they know the answer. They say because He died to save sinners from eternal wrath and punishment in hell. He died to save sinners from their sin and divine punishment. Most people know that, most people are aware of that.

And certainly there are many passages in the Bible that tell us that, explaining the significance of His death. These familiar words from the Old Testament, Isaiah 53, "Surely our griefs He Himself bore, our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him." We understand what Isaiah's saying: He died in our place.

Romans chapter 5, the apostle Paul says that, "He demonstrated, God demonstrated His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5 that, "He, the Lord, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." These are all explanations of the theology of His death, that it was substitutionary, that it was a sacrifice for sin, that He was God's chosen sacrifice, and that God was satisfied.

Hebrews 10, for example, says that, "In His death He perfected forever those who are sanctified." So in His death, on behalf of sinners, He brought them to eternal perfection. First Peter 1 says, "We were not redeemed with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish and without spot." **First Peter 2:24**, "He bore in His own body our sins on the cross." Or **1 Peter 3:18**, "He died, the just for the unjust." Revelation even tells us in the fifth chapter, when we get a glimpse of heaven that this Lord Jesus was the sacrifice for sin that purchased our salvation. So whether we go to Isaiah, or whether we go to the Epistles written by Paul, or whether we go to those written by Peter, or even were we to go to John, we would find explanations of the meaning of the death of Christ.

But it fascinates me that we don't have to wait to get to the Epistles to understand the meaning of the cross. Though that's where we usually go, and that is certainly why they were written, the historical narrative that I just read to you by itself provides the meaning of the event. In fact, the historical narrative is full of revelation from God as to the meaning of the cross, so that even the people there at that hour before the Epistles were ever written could see exactly what was

happening in the plan of God's redemption; and I want us to look at the features in the account that I just read that reveal God's own commentary on the cross while it was happening.

There are a number of things that explain the significance of the cross. Let's go back to verse 45 and see the first one. And this is God giving us at the very time of the narrative the meaning of it. Verse 45, very simple statement: "From the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour." Now this is the first divine act, supernatural darkness, supernatural darkness. This is not natural, there is no human explanation for this, this is a divine miracle, and as such, is a divine commentary on what is happening there.

Now remember, the Son of God claimed rightly to be the Light of the world, John chapter 8, verse 12, "I and the Light of the world; whoever walks in Me will not walk in darkness." He is the Light that comes into the world, John begins his gospel that way, and all who are in Him are in the Light. We have fellowship with Him in the Light, John says in his Epistle.

So our Lord was identified as light, the light of knowledge, divine knowledge, and the light of virtue, divine virtue. But from the sixth hour to the ninth hour, darkness. That would be twelve noon to three o'clock in the afternoon Jewish time. **Mark 15:25** says He was actually crucified the third hour, that's 9:00 AM in the morning. So for three hours, He has been hanging on the cross, suffering physically, suffering physically, and certainly emotionally.

During those first three hours He said three things. First thing He said is to those who had crucified Him and were standing around the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," **Luke 23:34**. And then He said to the thief who said, "Would You remember me when You come into Your kingdom?" He said, "Truly this day you will be with Me in Paradise." Also Luke 23, verse 43. And then the third thing He said in the opening three hours was to Mary and to John. He said, "Woman, behold your son; son, behold your mother," and He was giving His mother into the care of the apostle John, as recorded in **John 19:26** and **27**. So the only thing that broke the silence in the first three hours were those three statements. Each of them is a statement of grace, grace to offer forgiveness for His executors, grace offered to a thief to bring Him to heaven, and grace offered to His mother and His disciple John. Only words of grace broke the silence.

Then comes the second three hours, and it begins at noon when essentially is at its zenith, and it is a shock, because that second three hours begins with darkness falling on the land. The word *gē* in the Greek could mean the earth. It could mean simply darkness covered the planet. It was already dark on half the planet; perhaps darkness covered the rest as well.

Roman historians Phlegon and Tertullian actually wrote about this strange darkness that came over the earth. There's a document called "The Report of Pilate to Tiberius," and in that report it notes that the emperor was aware that in all the world on a certain day, from noon to three o'clock everyone had to light a lamp. God just may have turned out the lights.

Now God had interfered with the sun on other occasions. Joshua 10, the sun stood still, which wasn't the sun standing still, it was actually the earth ceasing to rotate. In 2 Kings 20, the sun on the dial moved backward. And in **Exodus 10:22** and **23**, the plague of darkness swept across Egypt. So there were times when God took control miraculously of light and darkness.

There is no explanation for this on a human level or a physical level. **Luke 23:45** describes it this way: "The sun was darkened." Here it simply says, "Darkness fell." But the definition that Luke gives us is this: "The sun was darkened." Actually, the term is *ekleipō* from which we get eclipse.

Now this wouldn't be a natural kind of phenomenon because Passover was in the middle of the month, and the month was always a new moon, and by this time, the moon was full. This was supernatural darkness. Why? Somebody suggests, "Well, God was throwing a veil over the suffering of the Lord Jesus." It's been also suggested that this is an act of divine sympathy, as if God is weeping and it's the darkness of sorrow. Others have said it's a divine protest. What was God saying by the darkness? Darkness in the Scripture is a symbol of judgment. It is a symbol of judgment.

Again, going back to Isaiah chapter 13, I'll just give you a few illustrations, there are many. We read this in **Isaiah 13:9**, "Behold, the day of the Lord is coming, cruel, with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate its sinners from it. For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises and the moon will not shed its light. Thus I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity." Clearly, darkness is associated with judgment, and that judgment is the final judgment on the final day of the Lord.

Just a couple of other illustrations. In Joel, again, looking at the future day of the Lord, Joel chapter 2, verses 30 and 31, "I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire, columns of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes." Next chapter and final chapter of Joel, verses 14 and 15, "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon grow dark and the stars lose their brightness."

The next prophet is the prophet Amos who speaks similarly. Amos chapter 5, verse 18, "Alas, you who are longing for the day of the Lord, for what purpose will the day of the Lord be to you? It will be darkness and not light. And then again in verse 20, "Will not the day of the Lord be darkness instead of light, even gloom with no brightness in it?"

And then just the same kind of horrific judgment is spoken of by Zephaniah the prophet, chapter, verse 14, "Near is the great day of the Lord, near and coming very quickly; listen, the day of the Lord! In it the warrior cries out bitterly. A day of wrath is that day, a day of trouble and distress, a day of destruction and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness." Verse 17, "I'll bring distress on men so that they will walk like the blind, because they

have sinned against the Lord." Goes on to say He will make a complete end, a terrifying end of sinners. Now what we learn from those passages is that judgment is accompanied by darkness, by darkness.

God's salvation is light, God's judgment is darkness. And it's not just an Old Testament concept, listen to the words of Hebrews chapter 12 and verse – let's see, we'll pick it up at verse 18. "For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind." That was describing Mount Sinai as you remember from back in the book of Exodus, that the mount of judgment was a mount of darkness. So terrible was it that Moses said, "I am full of fear and trembling."

Second Peter chapter 2, verse 4, "For God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment." And one final text from Revelation just to make the picture complete, chapter 6, verse 12: "I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became blood; and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind." Verse 17, "The great day of the wrath of the Lamb has come. Who is able to stand?"

The darkness shows us God's wrath is operating in the death of Christ. God is saying by the darkness – you can go back to the chapter in Matthew 27. God is saying by the darkness that the cross is a place of divine judgment, and that divine judgment is falling on that very person hanging on that cross. And to make it very simple, God only judges one thing and that is sin. So this is divine wrath unleashed against sin. And what makes this so unique is the one hanging on the cross is sinless. But God has imputed the sins of His people through all of redemptive history to His Son.

First Corinthians 15:3, "Christ died for our sins." He was made sin for us, as I quoted earlier. **First John 4:10**, "The Son was sent to be the atonement for our sins." So what you have in the darkness is essentially a massive expression of divine wrath and fury as God pours out the same kind of wrath promised in the day of the Lord, only He pours it out on His Son. The moon goes dark, the sun goes dark, the stars are put out; so the first commentary by God on the cross is supernatural darkness; and what it tells us is the Lord Jesus is being punished by God in a massive way for sin. And because He had no sin, He had to be punished for someone else's sin.

A second thing that is an amazing commentary by God is in verse 46: "About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'" This is another act by God. First, He makes the earth dark. Second, He separates Himself from the Son of God. This happens in the ninth hour right at the end of the darkness.

As the darkness ended, so did the life of our Lord. The fury of God is almost spent, but the horror of the experience was not just the wrath of God, it was the absence of God. And Jesus cries with a loud voice; actually the word means He screamed. Six hours of agony, three of those hours in the darkness as He was bearing the fury of God against all the sins of all who would ever believe through human history. But as the sin-bearing judgment comes to its conclusion, He gathers all His strength and screams the deepest agony of His holy heart, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" And He quotes in saying that **Psalm 22:1**, messianic psalm.

The cry reveals the separation from the Father that He was experiencing. He was not separated from the nature of the Father, but He was separated from fellowship with the Father. When He said that, the mockery that had already been going on at Calvary reached a new level. Verse 47, "Some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, began saying, 'This man is calling for Elijah.'" Look, they knew Psalm 22. They knew the messianic promise, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" This is just malicious sarcasm. The people knew that the Old Testament promised Elijah also was to come before Messiah, according to Malachi 4, so they mock Him on the notion of the joke that He thinks He's the Messiah. And at this point Jesus says, "I thirst." That fulfills **Psalm 69:21**.

In response to that cry, verse 48 says, "One of them ran, took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink." Gave Him a drink of cheap wine, probably the kind the soldiers had. But the rest of them said, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him." This is sarcasm, this is mockery, this is scorn. And here you have the second profound, divine commentary by God on the death of His Son, and it is this: God must separate Himself. He must forsake Jesus, because God is holy, and Jesus is carrying all the sins of His people to the cross.

This is what hell is, just as hell is the separation of the sinner from God, Jesus is experiencing hell, bearing our sins, separated from God, fellowship broken; and Jesus longs for that fellowship to be restored. The point of the separation is to prove that Jesus was bearing sin. God would never have separated from Him if He hadn't borne our guilt. Separation proves that our sins were placed on Him. Even as He bears the curse for His people, He longs for it to end and fellowship to be restored to the Father.

So by the supernatural darkness, God tells us this is judgment; and by the separation He tells us that Christ is actually bearing sins and is being punished. Then there's a third commentary from God in verse 50: "And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit." The darkness is dispelled and light begins to be restored, and Jesus screams out again, *kraxas* is the word. He screams with a loud voice, still strong, still strong. People lingered on crosses for days before they were basically asphyxiated by the inability to push themselves up and breathe. Jesus still has plenty of air, air enough to scream with a loud voice. He was not going to slowly die like other victims, He was not going to die by exhaustion or blood loss or asphyxiation.

And what did He cry? “It is finished!” He cried with a loud voice, “It is finished!” in John 19. And then said, “Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit,” and yielded up His breath. He dismisses His own spirit. He sent His own life away into the presence of God by His own will. **John 10:18**, “No one takes My life from Me, I lay it down by Myself.”

Such a quick death. Mark 15 says Pilate was shocked; people didn’t die that soon, and particularly someone like Jesus who would have been the epitome of what manhood would be – sinless, therefore strong physically in a way we wouldn’t even be able to comprehend. A divine miracle here is that cross didn’t kill Him, the Romans didn’t kill Him, the Jews didn’t kill Him; He willingly gave up His life. So what you have at the cross is divine judgment on sin, and you have sacrifice that is willing. He bore our judgment, took our guilt, and died willingly out of love for us.

There’s a fourth commentary: “And behold,” – verse 51 – “the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.” In the darkness, you see judgment; in the separation, you see sin and guilt; in the willingness to give up His own life and yielding it up by His own will, you see divine love and sacrifice. Here in verse 51 you see satisfaction. Was God satisfied, is the question, with the sacrifice of Christ? Did He accomplish what the Father wanted Him to accomplish? Did He successfully accomplish a substitutionary death in which He took on our guilt, and God judged Him for our sins. Did He do it?

Verse 51 is the answer: “The veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.” Thirty feet wide and thirty feet high, four inches thick, and Josephus says horses pulling against each other couldn’t tear that curtain. That curtain barred people from God, right? Who could go behind the curtain, the Holy of Holies? Only the high priest once a year. And before he went in there, he had to make sure that he offered a sacrifice for his own sins. The way to God was barred. But when Christ died, God ripped the curtain top to bottom to show it wasn’t done by any human being. God ripped it from top to bottom because Christ’s death satisfied God’s requirement and opened the way into His eternal presence for all who come through Christ. And there’s no more Holy of Holies, and there’s no more barrier, and there are no more sacrifices, and there’s no more priesthood.

Imagine this happens at 3:00 on Passover in a crowded temple. The curtain rips from top to bottom and the Holy of Holies is exposed, the very symbol of the abode of God. No more temple, no more Holy Place, no more Holy of Holies, no more sacrifice, no more priesthood. Why? The way to God was thrown wide open by the sacrifice of Christ; and that robber’s den, that temple, would soon be reduced to rubble. And that is why the writer of Hebrews in chapter 10, verse 19 says, and these are welcoming words, “Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God,” – listen to this – “let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience, our body washed with pure water.” If we have been cleansed, not by

a laver or some kind of animal sacrifice, but if we have been cleansed by Christ we can walk right into the presence of God. God then at the cross by ripping the curtain declares that Jesus has provided full access into His presence.

And there's a fifth part of this scene that gives divine commentary on the event, verse 51, "The earth shook, the rocks were split. The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many." Final astonishing, divine act at the cross, the final interpretation of the death of Christ by God is that it made possible our what? Resurrection. Physical, bodily resurrection came through the cross, and God gave a preview of it by raising the dead who didn't show up publicly until Christ was raised, because He was to be the firstfruits.

I'm glad we have Isaiah, I'm glad we have Paul, I'm glad we have Peter and John to explain the cross. But God explained the cross while it was happening. The wrath of God against sin is seen in the darkness. The holiness of God in turning away from sinners is seen in the separation. The love of God is seen in the self-sacrificial death of God incarnate. The satisfaction of God is seen in that the Holy of Holies is thrown wide open, and no priest is ever needed again. And finally, the hope of eternal resurrection is seen in the sudden raising of the saints. This is God's commentary on the cross; what an incredible scene it was. Let's bow in prayer.

Father, we are again amazed and stunned by the wonder of Your divine revelation. We are so enriched by these realities. Your word literally overwhelms us with its truth and its power. Now Lord, as we think about the cross together, we know You have said that we are to remember this. We are to do this little ceremony in remembrance of You. We are to take the cup to be reminded of the blood that was shed for us, the bread to remind us that the body of Christ was given in our place. We have been instructed to not only look at the cross and consider its meaning, but to look at our own lives, our own hearts, and examine ourselves so that we don't come in an unworthy way to this Table.

There were some people who did that in Corinth and You actually took their lives. There was mockery at the cross; there can be no mockery at Your Table. We can't come in a hypocritical fashion, we have to come soberly; thankfully, yes; grateful, yes; joyful, yes; but also honest by saying to You, "If there's anything in our lives that dishonors You, Lord, take it out. Forgive it and remove it." That's our prayer as we share in this Table.

Gimme That Old Time Ideology

MARCH 10, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: WOKE, WOKENESS

But be careful with who you believe.

- ***"O Lord, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. In your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand you."*** (2 Chronicles 20:6)

The leftist truly believes he is compassionate. Except toward the unborn, young adults, and children. With them things get a little murky. But I would ask, how does compassion for a certain people group elicit no revulsion for laying hold of the juvenile in that group for butchery and mutilation to gratify its collective identity or cause?

It's becoming apparent, ever so gradually, that people are coming close to resisting, pushing back, on the continual assault on their peace of mind—**their inner life as it might be called**—against all that the leftist ideologues are pushing.

In her abstract from, "**Political Alienation and Societal Unease: Two Sides of the Same Coin?**" we read this by author and researcher, **Dr. Eefje Steenvoorden**, of the University of Amsterdam:

"Discontent with politics is high, political participation is low, and politicians meet cynicism about their intentions. But does political alienation stand alone, or is it embedded in a broader sentiment of disaffection: societal unease?"

The answer should be obvious, but it's not. One thing is becoming increasingly apparent: since its publication **ten years ago**, Steenvoorden's perceptions about societal unease may have possibly reached the tipping point, and this is not necessarily a bad thing.

"Across western societies, a negative view on the state of society is often discussed. The French call it 'malaise,' the Germans 'Unbehagen,' and the Dutch and Flemish 'maatschappelijk onbehagen,' but they all but point to the same phenomenon, a discomfort with the direction society is heading."

Just possibly, European peoples by now should be more accepting of social and cultural conditioning; perhaps owing to their long history of imperial rule and regime change, than Americans seem to be. But in some in places like Italy for example, with the recent, surprising election and appointment of Prime Minister **Giorgia Meloni** belie that notion. She is the leader of the Brothers of Italy, a national-conservative and right-wing populist political party, and now the country's largest after the 2022 general election. Meloni is famous for her victory celebration speech in which she declared. *"I am Giorgia, I'm a woman, I'm a mother… I'm a Christian!"*

While it's much too soon to make reasonable predictions about western civilization's future conservative trajectory, Italy could be a bellwether. Writing in the very leftist magazine, **The New Yorker**, **Isaac Chotiner writes**, *"Meloni, who has previously expressed admiration for Mussolini, ran a campaign based on anti-L.G.B.T.Q. and anti-immigration themes, while promising continued support for Ukraine. She is likely to govern with two other right-wing leaders: Matteo Salvini, the Putin-admiring former Interior Minister, and Silvio Berlusconi, the Putin-admiring former Prime Minister."*

The contradictions found with Christianity and admiration for a former brutal fascist dictator, or a Soviet thug who savagely attacks Ukraine are difficult to understand, because they can't be explained from a purely political perspective. At this point, I think it's instructive to ponder something very instructional: why the Roman Empire was ultimately defeated. In simple terms, it was because of Christianity—not just political power change alone.

Power is shifting again now, as it has many, many times down through the ages.

Once again, the western world is experiencing change, and the power structures in place are morphing into something the "old guard" is not well prepared to cope with, much less manage.

Baby-boomers have held the reigns of power for two full generations. They are slowly fading away—weaker, both mentally and physically. In some ways Mr. Biden is emblematic of this crucial point. The few political leaders remaining in their seventies, will exit the world stage very soon now. Some will defy the odds, but all will have to address the **grumblings by younger politicians**

to move on. Of course, even the younger wannabes will need to **prepare for being in the receiving line as well**.

Personally, I think the real power play is going to come from somewhere else. Not nations and nation states, not the leaders of the world, free or otherwise, but from an otherwise hidden—and extremely insideous cabal: **the culturally ideological masterminds with concentrated wealth**.

I will have to confess, I don't feel terribly envious of the super-rich. There have always been plenty of rich people getting even richer for a long time now, and I accept that. Besides, how many of us really dream of being super-rich? I would be comfortable with being, well… comfortable. But, how much do any of us really know about the truly wealthy, and more importantly, those who control the world's money? We ought to, because these people have more control over us in some way or another, than we know. All of us should be concerned about such people, and what they are doing with the power their wealth has afforded them.

Right now, the leftist super-rich are pulling, tearing, and reweaving completely the fabric of society—all societies—everywhere. Many politicos have already become **attenuated** by the intellectual reconstruction of our culture by the very powerful, super-rich as they embrace wokeness, (whatever that means at the moment) gender ideation, critical theories, critical justice, ESG, and more. Even now they are hatching further schemes to manipulate the people to conform to their idea of "the way things ought to be."

One of the most interesting, if not astonishing, insights I have ever heard recently about the rich and powerful comes from **Andrew Klavan**. (pictured) Go to: **Rebel With Your Life | Ep. 1120**. It's very compelling. I think you should see and hear his what he is saying. He claims much of the intellectual fervor for transgenderism—which is a form of **metamorphosis**—has been proffered and articulated by a people group—all the while piteously injuring them—**who fall within the spectrum disorder of autism.** Yes, I was astonished at first too, **but check out the link, "Rebel With Your Life"** and pick it up at 14:21.

Among the autistics, **those with Aspergers* can possess great intellect**, and their "disability" compels them to arrange things and ideas, often in astonishing ways. According to Klavan, **Prof. Yuval Noah Harari**, whose book, **"Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind."** is such a man.

Klavan has heard Harari speak, and identifies him as autistic—specifically with Aspergers. he attributes to him a lack of awareness of other people's "inner life" by citing the following: *"Harari once said, '**it's only the myths of our society that assign Sapiens with a uterus,'** as he calls women". have a unique feminine role. Should they have unique role if their inner lives are the same as everybody else, or if they don't have inner lives at all?"*

Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, along with many other important—and very wealthy and influential people, both share something in common: they admire Harari very much, **and they both have Aspergers**. Christians, by the same token—the same people who brought an end of the Roman Empire, also have something in common: a love and fealty to **Jesus Christ**, and an intimate awareness and a love for one another's "inner life."

There is more to be said of this epochal phenomenon, and I am committing to make every effort to share more of what I understand in the future. Keep this in mind though: while the enemy of our inner is very determined, God, who lives in us vanquish him completely.

> **Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God, and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love. For you will render to a man according to his work.** (Psalm 62:10-11)

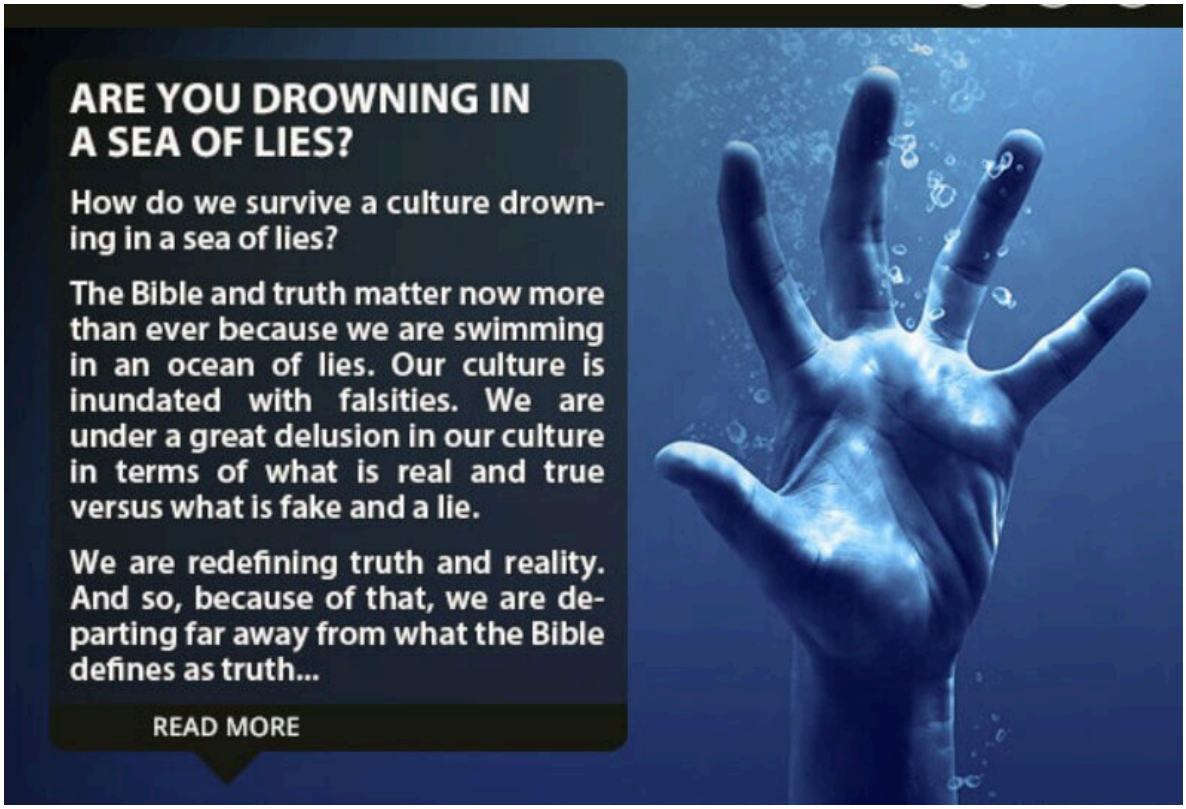
Photo by **Markus Spiske** on **Unsplash**

Drowning in a Sea of Lies

FEBRUARY 22, 2023

CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, UNCATEGORIZED

TAGS: BIBLE, BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW, CHRIST IN PROPHECY, CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW, END TIMES, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



How do we survive a culture drowning in a sea of lies?

Tim Moore: To help us navigate through all of the lies our culture has been throwing at us, we've asked **Jeff Kinley** of the **Prophecy Pros Podcast** to help us answer this question. Jeff recently made a presentation about the priority of prophecy in the Last Days and why Bible prophecy matters more than ever which will be quite pertinent to this discussion.

Jeff Kinley: My main point is that the Bible matters more than ever. Truth matters now more than ever because we are literally swimming in an ocean of lies. Our culture is inundated with falsities. We are under a great delusion in our culture in terms of what is real and true versus what is fake and a lie.

DROWNING in a SEA of LIES | Guest: Jeff Kinley
https://youtube.com/watch?v=oaiRCqIKB9Y

The Greek word for truth — *alitheia* — to the ancient Greeks equaled reality. So, to them, truth was something that was to be equated with what actually is real in life.

But, what we are doing now in our culture is redefining truth and reality. And so, because of that, we are departing far away from what the Bible defines as truth. Therefore, I want to calibrate people's minds back to the Scriptures and so say, "Hey, this is what we believe!" That is my message.

Nathan Jones: If you've ever watched the TV show "Stranger Things," it presents this alternative realm, what the characters call the Upside-Down. The Upside-Down is a mirror universe, though a very dark version of our own. Well, just in the last ten years or so, I feel like our society now lives in the Upside-Down, where evil is called good and good is called evil. Men can become women and women can become men. Men can now supposedly give birth. Oh, we are living in such crazy times!

Jeff, what do you think is Satan's strategy behind this cultural shift into darkness?

Jeff Kinley: A couple of things.

- Number one, what we are experiencing is the cause-and-effect relationship due to mankind rejecting God.

We can read about this in Romans 1 where the passage reveals that if we reject the truth of God as the Creator and His right to rule in our lives, then the Scripture says that our thoughts will become futile in our speculations and our hearts will become darkened. So, there's kind of this natural cause and effect when it comes to rejecting the truth.

- And, secondly, it has always been Satan's ambition to be worshipped. He wants to rule the world.

We know that he will accomplish some of that during the coming era of the Antichrist. But, all the way back to Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, Satan boasted about how he wanted to be worshipped. He began that goal with man in the Garden of Eden when trying to deceive Adam and Eve, and he was successful all the way through Nimrod and the Tower of Babel. Now, today, we are living in an age of deception which will quickly devolve into Satan forcing people to the point where they have to eventually accept his Antichrist through a long delusion, one I believe that we are currently just getting under.

Steeling our Minds

Tim Moore: With all of this truth decay, as I call it, here in our society, how can Christians protect themselves, their children, and their grandchildren? How can we steel our minds to know exactly what truth is and not morph into the very deceived thinking that the world has fallen under?

Jeff Kinley: We have to calibrate our understanding by God's truth. Truth and God are never separated. God's truth is a reflection of who He is and His perfect character.

So, when Christians say they really want to know God, and they wish to be connected to Him and be spiritually intimate with Him, they've first got to know God's truth. A clarion call needs to be made today in the Christian Church to get back into the Bible. Pulpits need to get back into the Bible. Christians need to get back into their Bibles.

According to Barna's research, only 14% of Christians are reading their Bibles every day. That's indicative of where we are as a Church. When you think about it, if we didn't eat every day, after a time we would become physically weak. Well, that is what is happening to us spiritually.

So, my advice would be, the number one thing we can do to avoid being deceived is to become an expert in the truth of the Bible. In that way, we can guard ourselves against the lies of our culture.

Nathan Jones: We discover the truth by reading our Bibles because our Bibles are inspired by Jesus Christ who is *"the way, the truth, and the life,"* as **John 14:6** describes.

Jeff Kinley: Absolutely! Discernment begins by reading the Bible. When we read the Bible, it reads us back. Go and study your Bible, because the deeper you dig, the more spiritual gold you are going to mine.

Encourage Each Other

Tim Moore: We are witnessing our nation and culture becoming more and more secularized and paganized. The prophet Jeremiah wrote to the exiles living in Babylon a message of encouragement. Likewise, how can we encourage believers in Christ to commit to the Word of God and the Christian worldview? How can we encourage others through this era of deception that has descended upon our society?

Jeff Kinley: One of the important things we have to do as Christians is to stay connected with one another. **Hebrews 10:25** says, *"not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."* Christians need to be encouraging each other. Sure, we can encourage our own hearts, for as King David in **Psalm 130:5** said, *"I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word I do hope."* But, we also need the encouragement of others.

It's also very encouraging to see other Christians taking a stand for Christ out there in the marketplace. They're living unapologetically for God, being bold, and being confident. Having a clear view of their own lives in Christ empowers the rest of us. It's almost like when you used to play sports. If you played with someone who performed a little bit better than you, that often made your game better. Being around Christians who are on fire for Christ can really up your A-game. Become that bold person. Be that kind of person who is living their A-game so that others will be attracted to Jesus Christ. Mutual encouragement goes a long way in living with hope during deceptive times.

Tim Moore: From my time in the military, we talked about having mutual support, whether it was two aircraft flying together or a company of soldiers working together. The Apostle Paul talks about believers running a race, and he also uses military language in that we are to sharpen one another. One of my favorite proverbs, **Proverbs 27:17**, concurs, *"As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend."*

Nathan Jones: To summarize what you advised then, Jeff, Christians need to stay connected with other believers. We need to be an encouragement to others and also let them encourage us back. There are to be no "lone wolf" Christians, so we should not forsake assembling together in church and in Bible studies and other fellowship groups. In doing so, we can best survive a culture drowning in a sea of lies.

SOURCE: **LAMB AND LION MINISTRIES**

The ASBURY REVIVAL! | 10 Days of 24hours Non Stop Hosts: Tim Moore and Nathan Jones

FEBRUARY 20, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRIST IN PROPHECY

What's happened at Asbury University?

Is it a true spiritual revival? Find out with hosts Tim Moore and Nathan Jones of the Lamb & Lion Ministries evangelism team as they provide their Prophetic Perspectives (292).

ASBURY, Ky. (**NewsNation**) — After almost 10 days of 24-hour worship, a revival at Asbury University ended with Sunday's last public evening service.

Dr. Kevin J. Brown, the university's president, said he is trying to balance the incredible moment happening at the school with the needs of the students and their academic experience.

While the final public event service was at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, public worship will continue in the afternoon until Wednesday. **Read more**

Worship service inside Hughes Auditorium at Asbury University.
Image courtesy: Asbury University

The ASBURY REVIVAL | Hosts: Tim Moore and Nathan Jones
https://youtube.com/watch?v=wqWt7uZP5h8

SALVATION What Must I Do to Be Saved? – **https://christinprophecy.org/articles…**

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SUMMARY What's going on at Asbury University? Is it a true spiritual revival?

Who's Responsible for This Mess?

FEBRUARY 20, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Don't ask, you wouldn't believe me

According to psychiatric research, among the general population of the world, **roughly 1.2% of are psychopaths**. So it would seem, unless you don't get out much, that you could be rubbing shoulders with one nearly any day of the week. But no worries though, *"It could be worse… it could be raining."* (**Marty Feldman**, from "Young Frankenstein")

In stark terms, more than one in a hundred seems pretty concerning, if not outright disconcerting. But not all psychopaths are the type who would stare into your bedroom window late one night. Hollywood may prefer those who kill and rape, but those people are but a small percentage among the cohort of psychopaths here in the US and around the world. They could just as easily be your neighbor, your manager, or someone you work with, or (probably) someone you voted for, or listen to on CNN—*or even CBN*. Yes, evidently psychopaths can be even be found in the high places of your church's association or denomination.

There has actually been a study that identifies "the psychopath capital of the world." **Not too surprisingly that place is the nation's capital itself, Washington, DC.**

In his book, "**The Psychopath Epidemic**," author, entrepreneur, and businessman **Cameron Reilly** identifies not only the character traits of psychopaths, but how everyone else, whether they realize it or not, actually enable them to flourish, at least for a season, either because we do not

recognize them in time, if at all, or too many of us fear the consequences of resisting the psychopath or the culture that creates and nurtures him.

So then, what is a psychopath? He—more often than she— is someone displaying observable, but often ignored telltale signs.

"Having a close relationship with someone with dark ***tetrad*** *personality traits—****narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychopathy, and sadism****—is tough to say the least."*

"As well as being ***selfish****, they appear to be* ***devoid of empathy*** *for anyone around them,* ***including their closest family members****."* (From **sciencealert.com**)

If this sounds like someone you know, don't be so amazed. After all, one out of a hundred are pretty good odds in any situation.

Once we begin to view our leaders as potential psychopaths, it makes it easier to question their decisions. But there is then this complicating factor: most people are easy prey for propaganda. This is the favorite tool of psychopaths who acquire and maintain power and control. **Propaganda is not really anything new**.

In the modern political sense: *"dissemination of information intended to promote a political point of view"* dates from World War I, and was not originally pejorative—implying bias or to be deliberately misleading. But during the Second World War, propaganda became the *de facto* tool of **Josef Goebbels**—an extraordinary example of a psychopath—for keeping the German people opiated to the horrors **Hitler** visited upon them. (**Extracted from Etymology Online Dictionary**)

This then, leads us to an important key to understanding the increasing breakdown of our social and cultural construct. **According to French philosopher and sociologist** **Jacques Ellul**, Most people are easy prey for propaganda:

"Because of their firm but entirely erroneous conviction that it is composed only of lies and 'tall stories' and that, conversely, what is true cannot be propaganda. But modern propaganda has long disdained the ridiculous lies of past and outmoded forms of propaganda. It operates instead with ***many different kinds of truth—half truth, Limited truth, truth out of context****."* (Emphasis added)

This is because we have been conditioned to believe what we believe and limit our options out of a reaction to information overload. It hampers our ability to make smart decisions even to the extent of life-saving. **The Information Overload Research Group** calls this "foxification" or "data smog."

But we are not talking about spending too much time on the computer—although that is certainly a factor—we are talking about our slow and steady entrapment by the oligarchy—the plutocracy—found in every culture, every social group, in every part of this world. We become victims to deception. And in every culture in every part of the world, the choicest victim is a child—or any who think like a child. Although we may come to know God with childlike faith, maturing in faith is critical, and we must put our childhood behind us.

- ***When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put aside childish things.*** (1 Corinthians 13:11)

According to **Reilly**, (pictured) *"Propaganda has become so ubiquitous, sophisticated, and disciplined during the late 20th and early 21st centuries, that someone coined new term for it: **'propagenda.'** Propagenda is the act of creating an environment in which only a specific range of topics are allowed for discussion."* ("The Psychopath Epidemic" p120)

This of course explains why we are told every social ill and injustice is due to racism or homophobia.

We are preparing the formula for the disaster that is waiting for us. It requires an influx of psychopaths and an abundance of weak people willing to be governed. Most people are unconscious of it, but they are usually drawn to the politically powerful. Psychopaths are usually drawn to power without conscience. Combine that dynamic with rationalizing ignorance, and you will get the slow and steady, inevitable march to tyranny. It's only a matter of time.

- ***But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase*** (Daniel 12:4).

One day the book of Daniel would be unsealed—and opened—for all the world to see. It means the eyes of men, women, and even children running back and forth from one Bible verse to another—one chapter to another, as they read the words of the Lord that had been sealed. This parallel verse that makes it clearer:

- ***For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him*** (2 Chronicles 16:9).

The Two Americas as World Views Collide Grammys and the Super Bowl

FEBRUARY 17, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Thoughts on the clash of worldviews at the Grammys and the Super Bowl.

Last Sunday was Super Sunday, and country singer Chris Stapleton **brought players and viewers alike to tears** with his **soulful performance** of our national anthem ahead of Super Bowl LVII.

But prior to Stapleton's rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner," the woke corporate leadership of the National Football League also chose to feature actress/singer Sheryl Lee Ralph **performing** the so-called "black national anthem," the 1905 tune "Lift Every Voice and Sing."

Could there be any more disheartening evidence that America is two countries now: not black and white, but Left and Right? Yes, the NFL has included this obsequious nod to the corrosive Black Lives Matter movement prior to every game of the 2022 season, but the Super Bowl was the biggest pop culture event of the year, with a viewership of more than 113 million and an international audience. We just broadcast a clear message to the world, as well as to our own citizens, that black Americans are apparently so disenfranchised here that they have a separate national anthem, because "The Star-Spangled Banner" apparently applies only to whites.

Darrell B. Harrison, a Biblical counselor and the Dean of Social Media at Grace to You, the media ministry of John MacArthur, nailed it on Twitter:

Not found

> The **@NFL** is making a huge mistake, in my humble opinion, by having "Lift Every Voice and Sing," what has traditionally been referred to as the "black national anthem," sung at the **#SuperBowl**. What more divisive message could be sent than to suggest we're a nation of two anthems.
>
> — Darrell B. Harrison (@D_B_Harrison) **February 9, 2023**

Division, of course, is the point. This ugly lie being sold to our young people and to minorities by the anti-American Left is designed not to confront and heal any racial divide, but to exacerbate it and to "rub raw the resentments" of the purportedly marginalized, to quote the radical strategist Saul Alinsky.

READ MORE

Phantoms of the Opera

FEBRUARY 9, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

A Parable of Christ's love to liberate people from darkness

Recently my wife and I had the privilege to go to New York for our wedding anniversary and saw the Phantom of the Opera. We wanted to see it before it soon leaves Broadway after over 35 years. Besides the excellence of the show in itself, I discerned a powerful spiritual parable (even if you cannot see it live, it is available now as a movie).

I will try to explain through the lyrics of each song in the paid subscriber section below, recognizing that the writer of the lyrics was not intending to communicate the message that I discovered (and thus some incongruities are there). The parable, as I see it, is about two unbelievers and the power of Christ's love to overcome darkness.

Everything in art does not have to have spiritual meaning to have worth, but the best art is that which resonates with reality. With real life situations that we face as humans in a fallen world. The Bible itself gives many stories that are real, sometimes in graphic detail that may require some careful explanation for children. Some of those stories do not mention God at all. Such is the story of Esther. God is nowhere to be found in the entire book. But it is inspired by God, nonetheless.

Also in the Bible are parables. Fictitious stories that have real human and spiritual value. Jesus used parables often to teach.

There are many great modern movies made by Christians today that are overtly spiritual and meaningful. But there are often works of art Christians make that are more indirect. Sometimes unbelievers produce art, music, film, drama, literature, poetry and other media that speaks truth, even if not religious. There is a common grace from God that allows humans to use their talents for strengthening beauty and morality in society. Of course the same talents can also bring corruption.

When Jesus said to go and make disciples of all nations in the Great Commission (Mt 28), He also spoke of national signs that would follow. In Mark 16 He said that we should see the nations who believe to "speak with new tongues." The disciples who heard Jesus speak of this, would almost certainly connected the idea with the story in their Hebrew scriptures of the story of Babel. In Genesis 11 a message was spread among the people that sounded good, but really was dangerous to the people. Their leader Nimrod used seductive messages to manipulate the people and centralize power so that the Bible identifies him as the first to establish a "kingdom" on earth (Gen 10:10). This corruption of government was due to one language through which his messages spread. So God stops his scheme by making them speak new tongues, new languages that effectively decentralized everything into smaller language groups and cultures.

Jesus was telling us that we all have "Nimrods" in our nations today that have messages that sound innocent to most people but are corrupting culture and harming humans beings. If we do our job, we will help citizens in our societies to speak in new ways – to speak messages and ideas, rooted in God's word, that overcome those bad messages.

In other words, we must transform the thinking and messaging of culture in order to disciple our nation. This is done by getting a Biblical worldview to the next generation through schools, and to the current professional leaders through adult educational institutions, and to all people in society through art, media and mass communication. To do this well, we have to translate Bible ideas into non-religious language.

Now, back to my observation on the message of the Phantom of the Opera. You may not agree with my interpretation of the lyrics, but if interested, please subscribe to see what I think is profound message of how the church is called to love the world and to liberate them from darkness.

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Mark Beliles & friends' TransformNation Substack. History. Culture. Religion. Politics. Government. And how they all intersect. Biblical best practices for discipling nations & transformation of society.

Academy Hides Jesus in Chapel after Antichrist Complaint

FEBRUARY 1, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: ANTICHRIST, JESUS

A massive painting of Jesus walking on water will no longer be visible at the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) in New York after an advocacy group complained about the artwork," **reports** ChristianPost.

In a Jan. 10 letter addressed to USSMA Superintendent Vice Admiral Joanna Nunan, anti-Christ complainer Mikey Weinstein, founder of the , issued a "demand" that Nunan "expeditiously remove a massive, sectarian painting illustrating the supremacy of Jesus Christ" from the Elliot M. See Room inside Wiley Hall, which serves as an administrative building at USMMA.

According to Weinstein, MRFF is representing 18 midshipmen, faculty, staff and graduates in their appeal to the Kings Point academy. The USSMA is not under the Defense Department but rather the Department of Transportation under Secretary Pete Buttigieg, who was also copied on Weinstein's initial email.

The 10-foot by 19-foot painting titled “Christ on the Water” depicts an image of Jesus and merchant seamen adrift in a lifeboat “presumably after being torpedoed in the Indian Ocean during World War II,” according to a USMMA spokesperson.

Also known as “Jesus and Lifeboat,” the piece was painted in 1944 by U.S. Maritime Service Lt. Hunter Wood to hang in the chapel built at the USMMA Basic School in San Mateo, California.

When the San Mateo campus closed in 1947, officials say the painting came to the Academy, and was installed in its current location, which served as the Academy’s interfaith chapel from 1942 to 1961.

The American Merchant Marine Museum has custody of the painting and holds it as a heritage asset under the USDOT Maritime Administration (MARAD).

Calling the artwork a display of “sectarian Jesus supremacy,” Weinstein noted the room in which the painting is hung is used for various administrative meetings, disciplinary hearings and other events.

SOURCE: **PRAY IN JESUS NAME**

Social Justice “Religion” is NOT Christianity, Warns Christian Author

JANUARY 24, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: APOSTASY

The social-justice movement is a religion with its own saints, holy books, seminaries and doctrines that is inherently opposed to Christianity on multiple levels, Christian author and filmmaker Jonathan Harris said in an interview on **Conversations That Matter** with The New American magazine’s Alex Newman.

Harris, who has extensive theological training and has written books about the issue, called on Christian leaders to see through this, but warned that this false religion is even infiltrating conservative evangelical seminaries.

Even the Southern Baptist Convention is falling victim, he said. Harris, who hosts his own podcast called Conversations That Matter, also gives his thoughts on the proper role of the church in the culture and political realm, as contrasted with the “woke” view advocated by social-justice warriors.

That’s My King! S. M. Lockridge

JANUARY 18, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The Bible says He’s a Seven Way King

Do You Know Him? Do You Know My King? Do You?

Correction of typo in the video He’s the cardinal (not carnal) necessity of spiritual religion.

➤ Speaker(s): S M Lockridge

➤ Original Sermon(s): **https://www.sermonaudio.com/saplayer/…**

➤ Music: 1. 13 Hours Ending Scene Music 2. Out In The Cold – Josh Leake

➤ Footage: Copyright Free Content from Storyblock & FILMPAC, A.D Bible Series and Videos from Youtube ➤ Edited By: Robin Måhl

“THAT'S MY KING!” EXTENDED VERSION - S. M LOCKRIDGE 1970's
https://youtube.com/watch?v=VwQqQkdn_5Q

Christian Nationalism vs Christians Transforming Nations

JANUARY 6, 2023
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Some statements on this have been recently published for our consideration.

Mark Beliles
VCA Founding Advisor Board Member
In recent years there has been much attention in the media to the danger of Christian Nationalism. Some of it is due to the prominent influence of Christian leaders in American politics, with careless language and actions that deserve criticism. But much of it is due to deliberate strategy by pagan globalists to intimidate believers to stay quiet and inactive in public policy. (A recent document on Christian Nationalism is available for paid subscribers. It was signed by over 400 leaders.)

The name of my substack blog (and my Twitter) is TransformNation. The whole idea is based on the mission given to Christians by Jesus at the end of the Gospels. In Matthew 28:18-20 (NKJV) Jesus said to "…go and make disciples of all the nations…" This meant that Israel alone was not their mission. And that salvation alone was not enough. It meant saving souls in the nations, of course, but then bringing the nations themselves into alignment with the discipline or beliefs and practices that God had established. The great Bible commentator Matthew Henry said of this verse 400 years ago that it meant to "make the nations Christian nations."

This comprehensive idea of discipling nations has always been normative in Christian thought until the last century or so, when many church leaders began to narrow their focus. The term "nationalism" only began about 200 years ago. It was used originally in a positive way but gradually became used often to speak of something unhealthy. As a result, now when Christians speak and work for national transformation, it can seem like something inappropriate or even dangerous. We admit that in two thousand years of church history, there have been errors in the application of this mission. From this we must learn, and do better, but not retreat from the challenge.

A very recent document was drafted by some American Christian leaders regarding Christian Nationalism that has some helpful viewpoints for consideration. I have attached it below.

Nationalism – A Christian Statement

WE BELIEVE that nationalism is a biblical concept in the sense of nations having defined borders and identities, as mentioned by Paul in Acts 17 and by Moses in Deuteronomy 32. God sets national borders and governments and authority spheres for a purpose. WE ALSO BELIEVE in the positive value of respecting national borders and national authority, in contrast with an international one-world government. At the same time, WE REJECT as unbiblical the belief that America is a uniquely chosen nation, similar to Old Testament Israel being the chosen nation of God. (Although God has used the USA in various ways to bless the world with humanitarian aid and military support, and although the Church of America has sent out missionaries worldwide, in the New Testament, Jesus, as the King of kings and Lord of lords has a special assignment for every nation, tribe, kindred and tongue represented on the earth.) WE ALSO RECOGNIZE that there is a dangerous and unhealthy form of "Christian nationalism," one that speaks of a potential Christian uprising against the government or hints at the use of force to advance God's kingdom. WE CATEGORICALLY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY DENY any affiliation with or connection to that form of Christian nationalism. Because WE BELIEVE that God made one human race expressed through different ethnicities and races, all of which deserve dignity and respect as His image bearers, WE REJECT all ideologies and movements claiming ethnic or racial superiority. WE DENOUNCE calls to violent, armed resistance in the name of Christian nationalism or as an alleged means of advancing the cause of the gospel. WE REJECT the triumphalist, top-down, take-over of society as part of a so-called "dominion mandate," also noting that we do not know of any major Christian movement that espouses such a top-down, take-over mentality. WE REJECT the merging of Christian identity and national identity, as if the Kingdom of God and our particular nation were one and the same.

In contrast, WE BELIEVE the biblical way to influence society is by living the cruciform life in which believers lay down their lives in the service of others, resulting in human flourishing for the glory of God. This can include Christ-like engagement in every sphere of society. And WE DO BELIEVE that Christians have as much right as any other group to have their voices heard in the

public square and to influence society, functioning as the salt of the earth and light of the world, and we encourage such activities as good citizens of our various nations and as part of our sacred calling. WE BELIEVE that Christians should seek to make a positive impact on every aspect of society, including education and media, along with politics, and that by acting on gospel principles, whole nations can be changed. WE BELIEVE that Christians should be politically informed, should exercise their right to vote, should hold elected officials accountable, and when called by God, should run for political offices themselves.

BUT WE SEE IT AS SPIRITUALLY DANGEROUS IF/WHEN…

1. We wrap the gospel in the American flag (or any national or state flag).

2. We equate our country with the Kingdom of God.

3. We confuse patriotism with spirituality.

4. We compromise our ethics to keep our party (or leader) in power.

5. Our church/denomination/ministry becomes an appendage of a political party.

6. We put more trust in earthly methods than in spiritual methods.

7. We marry the cause of Christ to the cause of a political party (or leader) as if they were one and the same.

8. We become as vulgar and rude as the candidates we follow.

9. We look to the White House or any branch of government in any nation more than to God.

10. We make a human being into a political savior.

11. We equate loyalty to God (which should be unconditional) with loyalty to a party or political leader (which should be conditional).

12. Our prayers and our prophecies become politically partisan.

FINALLY, WE CONCLUDE BY CONTRASTING THE KINGDOM OF GOD WITH EXTREME NATIONALISM: • The Kingdom of God prioritizes the advancement of the gospel. Extreme nationalism prioritizes the advancement of its ideology even at the expense of the gospel. • The Kingdom of God produces loyalty to Christ above all else. Extreme nationalism produces loyalty to one's nation above all else. • The Kingdom of God raises the banner of Jesus above all else. Extreme nationalism raises the national flag above all else. • The Kingdom of God promotes the interests of God above the world. Extreme nationalism promotes the interests of one's nation

above the Kingdom. • The Kingdom of God views the world through a biblical lens. Extreme nationalism views the world solely through a geopolitical lens. • The Kingdom of God is dependent upon neither an earthly kingdom nor an earthly ruler but upon Jesus as the King of kings (Revelation 19:16). Extreme nationalism is dependent upon both the ideology of an earthly nation and its ruler. • Followers of the Kingdom of God are passionate about a Christ-centered global awakening. Adherents of extreme nationalism are focused primarily on a political/ideological awakening. • Christ-followers are primarily identified with the Kingdom of God. Extreme nationalists derive their primary identity from their nation. • Christ-followers derive their primary value from being children of their heavenly Father (Romans 8:14-17). Extreme nationalists derive their primary value from being citizens of their country.

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By Mark Beliles · Launched 9 days ago

Mark Beliles & friends' TransformNation Substack. History. Culture. Religion. Politics. Government. And how they all intersect. Biblical best practices for discipling nations & transformation of society.

Powerful message to President Biden from Jonathan Cahn (The White House Apostasy)

DECEMBER 29, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, PROPHECY

America is in a most precarious position while leaders in government take the nation in a direction directly opposite from godliness. That wicked direction is much like Paul outlines following Romans 1: 28. Rabbi Jonathan Cahn presents a message we sense is commissioned by Heaven.

Please listen to that Message.

Jonathan Cahn's Prophetic Message II to Joe Biden (The White House Apostasy)
https://youtube.com/watch?v=MqCdG-TEtvI

Isaiah 5:20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

A Grandparents Christmas Discipleship Project

DECEMBER 15, 2022
CATEGORIES: CURRENT TOPICS, OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, CITY OF DAVID, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Editor's note: This is applicable to parents as well

By **Joseph Parker**
Dir. Outreach & Intercession/ Radio Host

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord (**Luke 2:11**).

Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the rules —that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it, that you may fear the Lord your God, you and your son and your son's son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long. Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey (**Deuteronomy 6:1-3**).

How encouraging, uplifting, and inspiring it is for believers to take time to read, meditate, and think about the beautiful, glorious, and grace-filled narratives we know as the Christmas stories.

They are found in Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2.

What a great tragedy it is that so many children have never read the Christmas narrative or Christmas story.

Here is a project specifically for grandparents during the Christmas season.

Let each of your grandchildren know that you would like for them to do the following for you: call you every day for eight days during Advent or the remaining days of December. And during each call, read a part of the Christmas narratives out loud.

Here is one possible reading plan you could use. For children who are eight years old or older, read Day one – Matthew 1; Day two, Matthew 2; Day three, **Luke 1:1–20**; Day three, **Luke 1:21–37**; Day four, **Luke 1:38–56**; Day five, **Luke 1:57–80**; Day six, **Luke 2:1–20**; Day seven, **Luke 2:21–38**; Day eight, **Luke 2:39–52**.

For children, younger than eight, you might simply have them read shorter passages that you select from these same chapters in Matthew and Luke. Or you may even choose to have them read the same passage each time.

Let them know that you will give them one dollar, five dollars (or whatever figure that you prayerfully come up with) each time they call you up and read for you.

For many a grandchild that isn't particularly motivated to read, the money prize has a strange way of suddenly causing them to all of a sudden become highly motivated.

Why is a project like this such a fruitful one? Allow me to share with you several reasons.

- The Word of God is Jesus and Jesus is the Word of God.
- When our children and grandchildren read the Word of God, they are spending time listening to and fellowshipping with Jesus. And for many a child, a grandparent doing this kind of project may be the only person in his or her life that is having them to read the Word of God out loud to them.
- There is nothing in all of the world that will bless and nourish their lives more than the powerful Word of God.
- Grandparents can have one more excuse to call and spend time in conversation with their grandchildren.

After they begin this reading project, I would suggest you begin to mail the prize money the same day that they start reading for you.

One way to do this is to see to it that you mail eight checks made out to your grandchild eight times.

Why do it this way instead of sending one check at the end of the project?

Your grandchild will receive eight different gifts instead one. And receiving each gift/reward can increase the excitement for the grandchild.

Picture your grandchild saying "Mom, did the mail come yet? Grandmother is sending me some money today for reading about Christmas."

Imagine the grandchild opening the envelope and saying "Here's my money from Grandad! He must think reading about Jesus and Christmas is important."

And imagine your grandchild doing this for eight days coming up to Christmas, getting more excited about getting their mail than the day before.

Obviously, the great blessing to our grandchildren is not the money. It is having the eternal Word of God planted in her or his heart and mind.

Every grandparent can choose to do this project however they want to. You can certainly adjust the details however you wish. That's entirely up to you.

This is simply a fun way to carry out a Christmas discipleship project that can have eternal fruit in the lives of your grandchildren.

What do you say, grandparents? Are our grandchildren worth the fruitful and fun effort?

Sure they are!

SOURCE: **THE STAND**

SPECIAL EVENT! Thursday, November 17 in Henrico: Intersectionality of Christian Faith and Politics

NOVEMBER 17, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, PANDEMIC

SPECIAL EVENT

"Intersectionality of Christian Faith and Politics"

Thursday, November 17, 2022, 6pm – 8pm

Lighthouse Baptist Church

5608 Staples Mill Rd, Henrico VA 23228 Bruce Wells, Pastor

Presented by The First Amendment Inc.

2022 Fall Fundraiser

Should Christians, Pastors and Churches Be Engaged in Politics and Government?

Dear Friends & Patriots:

Join us for our **first Fall Fundraiser in 3 years**! This year's fundraiser will host a timely panel discussion **about the progressive removal of Christian faith and the 1st Amendment from public life**.

We're excited to host a distinguished panel of guests who will explore the "**Intersectionality of Christian Faith and Politics**," because the reality is **we must live under both God's law and man's law!**

PANEL MODERATOR: Rev. Craig Johnson, CEO & Founder, The First Amendment, Inc.

GUEST PANELISTS:

- Virginia Delegate, John McGuire
- Mrs. Tywanna Hampton, Founder, God's Ballot
- Mr. Donald Blake, Chairman & President, Virginia Christian Alliance
- Pastor Mark Jenkins, Associate Pastor, Berea Baptist Church
- Pastor, Dr. Steve Parson, Sr., Richmond Christian Center
- Pastor, Bruce Wells, Lighthouse Baptist Church

WHEN: Thursday, November 17, 2022, 6pm – 8pm

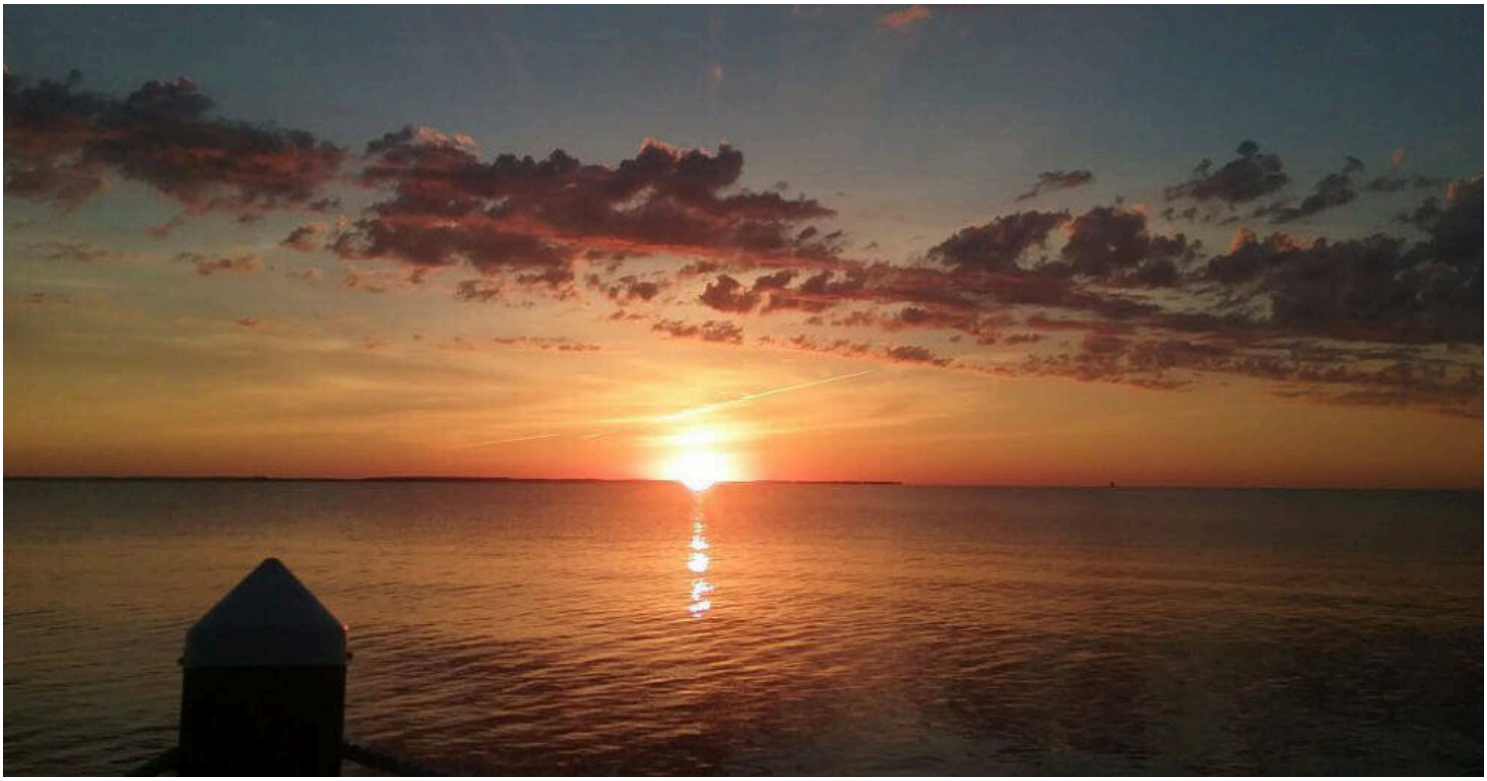
WHERE: Lighthouse Baptist Church, 5608 Staples Mill Rd, Henrico VA 23228 Bruce Wells, Pastor

WHY: In this post-pandemic and inflationary time, TFAI needs your support to continue its fight against tyranny, evil, and ungodliness. Your support will also help upgrade our resources for stream-lined efficiency with broadcasting the needed message of Truth as we continue our educational advocacy of American freedom and constitutionality.

Please RSVP to Miss Tara Blaszkiewicz at Tara@thefirstamendmentinc.com **by Monday, 11/14/22, or call 804.399.7332.**

Dwell on These Things: Philippians 4: 4-13

NOVEMBER 15, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, VIRTUE



While under house arrest in 62 AD, the apostle Paul wrote a letter to a church in the Roman colony of Philippi. He was no stranger to adversity. Yet, instead of collapsing under the weight of difficult circumstances, Paul discovered supernatural peace and joy. His inspired words (recorded in Philippians 4: 4-13) come alive in this unforgettable devotional video. It is a message that has never been more relevant.

https://vimeo.com/768158696

DWELL ON THESE THINGS from **The John 10:10 Project** on **Vimeo**.

Philippians 4: 4-13

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. 5 Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.
God's Provision

10 I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. 11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. 12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

==========

Further, what if you had no arms or legs? Imagine that for a bit. See this man's short take on Philippians 4:13

Nicholas James Vujicic is an Australian American Christian evangelist and motivational speaker born with tetra-amelia syndrome, a rare disorder characterized by the absence of arms and legs. For this 41 year-old, founder and CEO of the non-profit organization, Life Without Limbs, the most important thing in life was to understand why God made him without arms and legs.

Verse of the Day – Philippians 4:13 | NickV Ministries
https://youtube.com/watch?v=T102oL0z1CM

See more on

> **Nick Vujicic – Inspirational Christian Evangelist**

Watch Free NIFENTO – New Heidi Baker Documentary | Love in the Midst of Mozambique's War of Terror

NOVEMBER 12, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

NIFENTO the new documentary from Iris Global featuring Heidi Baker:

Filmed against the backdrop of an unknown war in Mozambique, NIFENTO documents Heidi Baker's fight to see love win against all odds in the midst of terrorism, chaos, and torture of the innocent.

Can love really overcome such darkness?

When invaded by radical terrorists who are burning down villages, beheading, and violently murdering civilians, how does the Church in the midst of these tragedies respond?

Heidi Baker, co-founder of Iris Global, has been living in Mozambique, Africa for over twenty-five years. Since 2017 her home province has been overcome by war. When Heidi's friends and family shared their concerns for her safety, asking her to consider leaving, Heidi's response has always been, "Why should I leave behind the ones I've raised and disciplined; those I love? They can't leave, so why should I?"
Filmed by two missionaries, James and Jessica Brewer, NIFENTO is a film that showcases the grim

reality of war and terrorism in northern Mozambique. It features stories from families who are experiencing it firsthand and the response of Iris Global who is working hand in hand with the local church.

Striving to be the hands and feet of Jesus in one of the poorest nations in the world, Heidi and her team have faced cyclones, floods, famines, extreme poverty, and now terrorism.
The conflict has ravaged the region resulting in over 800,000 people fleeing from their homes and becoming internally displaced.

In the midst of radicals who continue to set villages ablaze, behead civilians, and torture the innocent, the question remains: Can love really overcome such darkness?

NIFENTO ("LOVE" in the Mozambican language Makua.)

NIFENTO - New Heidi Baker Documentary | Love in the Midst of Mozambique's War of Terror
https://youtube.com/watch?v=yPdKJQgBP4k

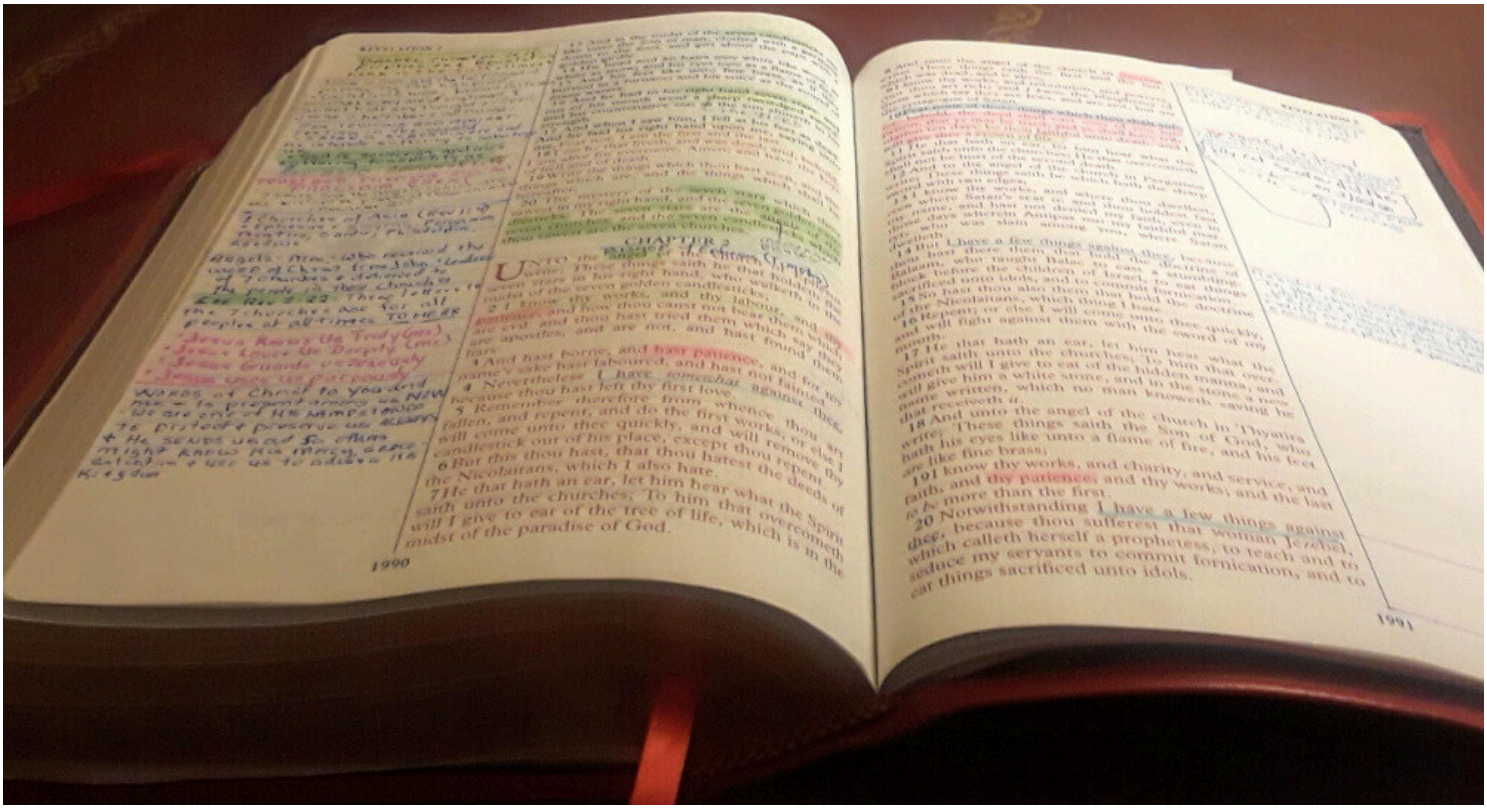
A film by BREWER CREATIVE | Presented by IRIS GLOBAL Directed and written by JESSICA BREWER | Editor JAMES BREWER Featuring HEIDI BAKER AND WILL HART | More information at **https://Nifento.com**

Located in East Africa, Mozambique is one of the poorest nations in the world. Over the last two decades, they have endured cyclones, floods, and now terrorism.

Beheadings, murder, rape, and religious persecution are among the horrific acts continuing to plague the region.

Sharing the Gospel in a Hostile Society

NOVEMBER 12, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, TRUSTING JESUS



by **Liz Abrams** | Answers in Genesis

How Christians can communicate truth in a polarized world

Two recent news stories highlight the fact that ideological disagreement can be dangerous—even deadly. A conservative teenager was run over and killed by a liberal man who thought he was doing the world a favor through his actions. And a pro-life canvasser was shot as she left the house of a liberal couple who disagreed with her activities.

Christians are commanded to take the message of the **gospel** everywhere and to everyone. This means at least some Christians will be called to share the gospel in contexts that can become very hostile or even dangerous. This is even more the case in a society where words one disagrees with are equated with physical violence (and thus a physically violent reaction can be justified in the mind of the offended person). In these situations, we have to take extra care to exercise discernment.

First, people should prayerfully consider with trusted counsel whether to engage in evangelism in hostile environments at all. **Jesus** said, “Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your

pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you" (Matthew 7:6). This means that there are at least some situations where we can evaluate the risk and conclude the risk is unwise. There are so many avenues for evangelism—for every street preacher that shares the gospel in front of an abortion mill, there's a need for someone to minister in a nursing home. Environments that can turn physically dangerous aren't inherently more virtuous. And some environments can turn unexpectedly dangerous, so extra steps should always be taken to communicate the gospel clearly with grace and in a way suited to the environment (e.g., getting to know the people in the area or any challenges you may be facing) while taking steps to ensure safety for all involved.

Second, Paul says, "If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all" (Romans 12:18). His statement implies that sometimes it's not possible and sometimes it doesn't depend just on you. An evangelist can share the most grace-filled gospel message since the apostles walked the earth, and someone may still get unreasonably offended and react in an inappropriate way. That's not the messenger's responsibility. We should communicate our message so that if someone gets offended, it's by the message itself, not anything obnoxious about our manner of presenting it.

Find Common Ground

No matter how different someone may seem from you, they are a fellow image-bearer, and you have something in common with them! If someone feels like you can identify with them and their struggles, they are more likely to listen to what you're saying. That's why, for instance, those who have repented of committing the **sin** of abortion can have powerful abortion-mill evangelism opportunities, while ex-cons can be particularly effective in prison ministry.

We can find common ground even with people who are entrenched in sins that they use to identify themselves, because we are sinners who have been forgiven, and we are extending the message of that same forgiveness to them.

In today's identity-driven world, a personal story can be particularly powerful. So if you have a story of how **God** has delivered you, sharing that can be a good tool to get someone comfortable with the idea of needing deliverance so you can address their need for salvation.

Get People Ready for Discomfort

People are sometimes mocked as "snowflakes" if they are easily offended, but the reality is that schools, media, and the overall culture are creating people who are increasingly insulated from anything that could mentally challenge them or hurt their feelings. When children are continually told they are special, deserve anything they aspire to, and have the right to define their own truth,

identity, and how others view them, it's not surprising they don't react well to being told that they are sinners in need of God's grace (as we all are).

When engaging with people who are likely unfamiliar with being challenged in this way, it's helpful to deal with any emotional impact of the conversation up front. Starting by affirming their value and setting expectations can be helpful. For example, "The **Bible** teaches that we are created in God's image, so that means that you, as an image-bearer, have inherent value and worth. So even though we may disagree with each other on some foundational things, I really want to understand what you're saying and for you to understand what I'm saying. Are you interested in that type of conversation?"

Some people who aren't used to engaging with ideas they find distasteful may respond immaturely and emotionally. It is particularly important that we don't respond in kind. Because we are representing Christ, we should hold ourselves to the highest standard. Sometimes we can help people process their discomfort and proceed in a productive way: "I understand that you disagree with what I'm saying. However, I've been respectful to you. Can you tell me why you disagree with what I've said?" If they aren't able to do that, it may be time to at least temporarily disengage: "I think at this point the best thing to do is take a break. Can we talk about this again at a future time?"

The above may seem like we're tiptoeing around people's emotions, but that can be appropriate at times. Getting people ready to hear things that are challenging for them can be a good first step if they are overly emotional or it seems like they are not used to being intellectually challenged (a sad indictment of our educational institutions!).

Do Not Compromise Biblical Truth

As much as we can try to take into account people's discomfort with biblical ideas that run counter to their thinking or lifestyles, we cannot compromise or change what God's Word says. For instance, we can be sensitive while communicating the Bible's teaching about marriage to an unmarried couple who are living together or to a homosexual couple that the state has declared to be married, but we cannot shrink away from the reality that both situations are unbiblical.

It can seem unkind to tell someone something that we know is going to be uncomfortable to them. It seems like slapping someone in the face to tell them that something they love is unacceptable to God. But in reality, the sin that they love is *killing them*. Not only do many sinful behaviors have negative consequences in this life, but if the person does not repent and dies in their sin, they will spend an eternity separated from God in hell. The ultimate unkindness is to value our own comfort too much to share the truth with others. Ezekiel 33 even indicates that believers are held accountable if we fail to warn others about God's judgment of sin. But we can't stop there. The whole reason for showing people their sinful state is to point them to the Man

who lived without sin that is able to forgive and save us from our own sin, offering us, instead, blessed eternal life with God.

We also have to be able to defend biblical truth. It is common for unbelievers to have a stock list of reasons why they don't believe the Bible, and not coincidentally many of these objections are answered in articles on the Answers in **Genesis** website. If someone responds to your gospel message with, "Well, how did Noah fit the animals on the ark," it's best to give a sufficient answer to show the Bible is true, but then continue to share the gospel. It's no good for a gospel presentation to be completely derailed into a discussion of how there could be day or night before the sun and whether the similarity of mammalian forearms means we evolved from a similar ancestor.

People Still Need the Gospel!

It can be tempting to say that it is not worth the challenge of sharing the gospel with people who will probably ridicule us and may even attack us. But the gospel answers some of the fundamental struggles in today's society regarding identity, meaning, and truth. There is nothing more amazing than seeing people go from hostility to trusting Jesus as the Holy Spirit works in their hearts. And of course, we must obey the Great Commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19–20).

SOURCE: **ANSWERS IN GENESIS**

You May Also Like

One Nation, Under God, Not So Indivisible

NOVEMBER 10, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW, CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The Christian is a son of God and is not to stand aside from the field of battle for the moral souls of their "neighbors" they are commanded to LOVE

You may have noticed something recently in the almost exhausting rhetoric that has our atheist, progressive friends clutching their pearls—even the biological women in fact.

It seems Christians—perhaps even those like you and me—have a lot of the chattering-class ideologues all in a lather about our obsession both with Christianity and our nation. On their own, these things are bad enough, but taken together it spells nothing but trouble for the most easily upset.

If you don't believe me, stop right here and Google the terms: **Christian nationalist**, or **Christian nationalism**. If you experienced trouble in finding a cogent, persuasive definition, you're not alone. No one really can because, well, **there doesn't seem to be any good definition**.

As I write this, much of America is wondering what happened to the "Red Wave" we were told was coming. **Steve Elliot** of **Grassfire** writes, *"Joe Biden did far better than every president back to*

Ronald Reagan (and probably beyond) in their first-term midterm election. The party in power usually gets "whacked" at the incumbent's halfway point. Not this time. Shocking, right?"

"Well, for most leftists, "Orange Man Bad" and abortion "rights" outweigh 10% to 20% real inflation, a crumbling stock market, open borders, rising crime, the trans/woke insanity in failing public schools, a broken economy, and two years of our rights being taken away. ***The core left is hard core.*** *They aren't going to move. They'll even vote for a Senator who can't speak coherently at rallies, never held a real job, and lived off his parents until he was almost 50!"*

The question is, why haven't Christians been more influential in shaping the electorate in the mission field of America's political and educational power centers?

Because we have been conditioned not to!

If Americans yearn for the kind of hoped-for, non-violent outcomes with a return to normalcy, **why is the Christian Nationalist moniker considered a pejorative?** If not only the candidates who reflect our values, but what about the ballot initiatives limiting or even banning abortion? I pointed out in last week's article that mid-term elections are usually a referendum on the incumbent party's job performance—and this one is perhaps the worst in history. So what explains the 2022 election results?

It takes a lot of wide-eyed gas-lighting from the most venal political spoke's people—like the White House press secretary for example—to have an excuse or a denial for every colossal failure of the current administration with such sincerity. There is very little evidence from any period in history, where a nation is this sharply divided, its leadership so obviously corrupt, and this incompetent. You would think that with only the most tepid participation from Christian "thought leaders" people would be hearing a lot more from Christian Nationalists. But we aren't. That's because the case can be made that there really aren't many such people. The rare exceptions though, have a lot to say.

Dr. Voddie Baucham, Jr., (pictured) joined author and cultural commentator **Allie Beth Stuckey** on her Relatable podcast in an Oct. 24 episode on YouTube, titled **"Christian Nationalism Sure Beats Progressive Globalism**. "You can read the review by **Jessica Lea** in this article appearing in **ChurchLeaders.com**

"*I remember it seemed like things started to get traction, right, in terms of people waking up to the problems with this whole* ***social justice*** *movement,"* said Baucham. *"People started to speak up, you*

know, and speak out and all of a sudden, the folks on the other side, I think, got a little nervous. And then they started going, 'Yeah, well what about this Christian nationalism?'"

Cultural Marxists have employed the tactic of marginalizing their political opponents for generations. The late **Saul Alinsky**, author of "Rules for Radicals," developed 13 rules for putting the enemy, who in his case means us Christians who love our country, on the defensive. He said, "*If you push a negative hard and deep enough it will break through into its counter-side; this is based on the principle that every positive has its negative.*"

Concerning Christians, Alinsky really had no idea who he was dealing with, though we might give him some credit for trying. The problem really, is how easily some Christians will take the bait, and try and deny they are Christian nationalists. But wait, is Christianity bad? Is loving our nation bad?

Baucham asked rhetorically, *"If you don't want Christian nationalism, what other kind of nationalism do you want? Right? Do you want, you know, secular nationalism, Muslim nationalism? Or if it's not the Christianity that's the problem, is it the nationalism that's the problem? If we don't want nationalism, what do we want? Do we want globalism? You know, no thank you, please."*

Stephan Wolfe joined **Jon Harris** in this YouTube episode of **Conversations That Matter**: "**Defining Christian Nationalism**." Wolf is the author of "**The Case for Christian Nationalism**" available on **Amazon** in paperback and Kindle. This book is a conversation that will inform a lot of deep, persuasive thought about making crucial distinctions between principle and prudence. Definitions need to be made and openly discussed among believers who are serious about the Kingdom of God here on earth.

The "Big Eva" elites and the progressive media complex want you to think that Christian nationalism is hopelessly racist, bigoted, and an idol for right-wing Christians. Few "experts" actually know what nationalism is—and even fewer know what could make it Christian.

Biblical Christianity neither implies nor includes "Christian nationalism." Christians are obligated to individually submit to the will of God (**Romans 12:1**) and to support one another along those lines (**John 15:12**). In practice, this means advocating for government actions consistent with a Christian worldview. (**Proverbs 14:34**).

Too many people, including Christians—especially Christians—should know that the Kingdom of God is not of this world. But make no mistake, **it is presently *in* this world; otherwise it would be the end of the world.**

Elections matter, but the elect matter so much more, having an ***"…inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."*** (1 Peter 1:4-5)

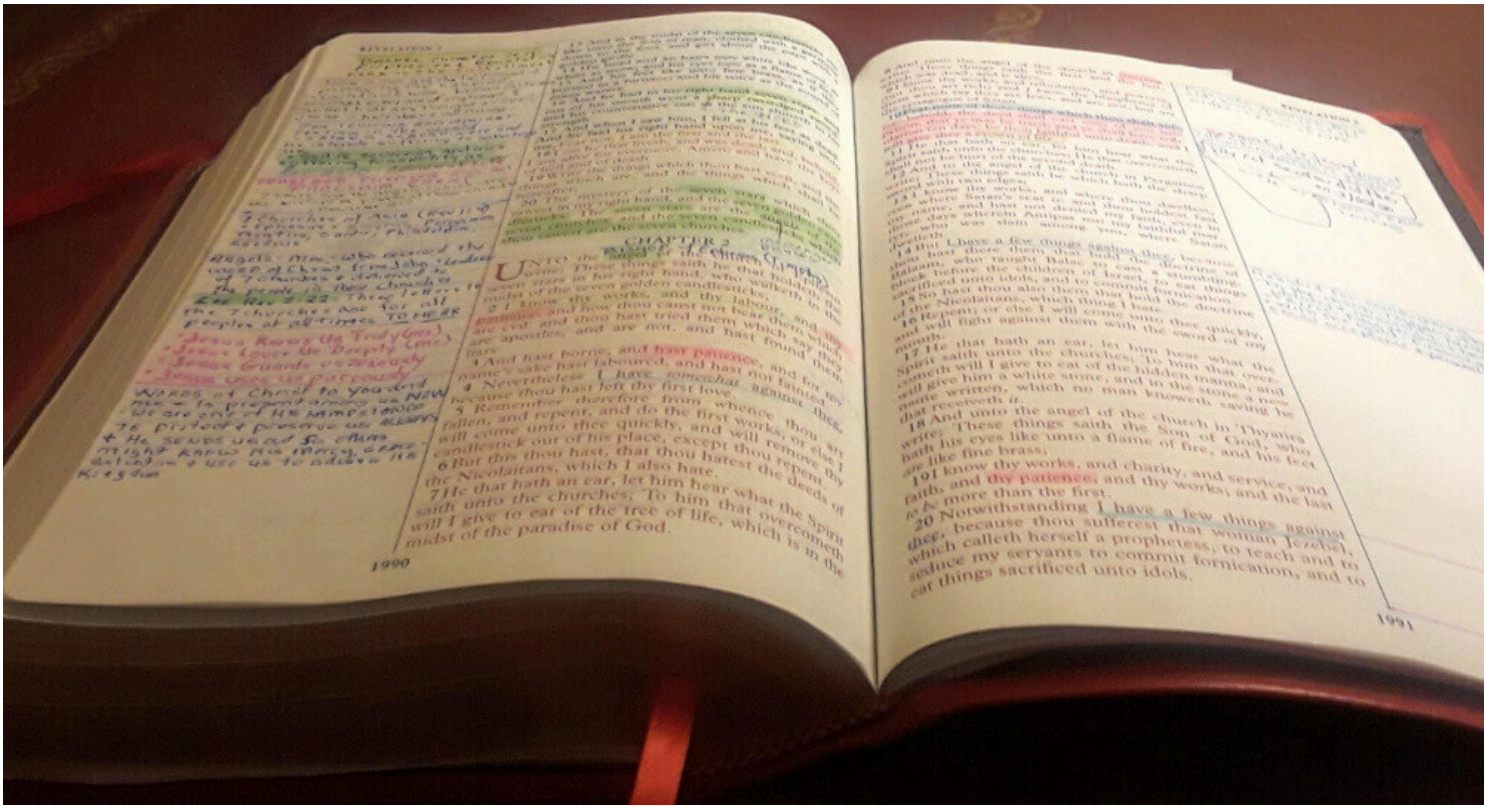
Be strong, be blessed, and be not afraid. Because there is still much to do, believers have been given a commission to do it

Armor of God
https://youtube.com/watch?v=Y70iWOqg0R4

LET YOUR FAITH
BE LIKE A SHIELD,
AND YOU WILL BE ABLE TO
ALL THE FLAMING ARROWS
OF THE EVIL ONE.

Pastor Explains Why Jesus Wants Christians to Vote

NOVEMBER 7, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Would Jesus vote? America's Pastor explains why Christians are called to vote.

Todd Starnes talks with Robert Jeffress

When election season rolls around, Christians tend to go to one of two extremes. For some, the election becomes all-consuming. It's all that matters. The fate of the nation hangs in the balance with every vote cast.

Others view the election with distaste. They do all they can to avoid and ignore it. It seems too messy, too far from the purity and simplicity of Jesus.

Click here to download Todd's free podcast – now with more than 1 million listeners.

We have to ask ourselves: Is there a better way? Should Christians vote? Would Jesus vote?

LISTEN-

The Todd Starnes Show

Sports Reporter Loses Job Over Tweet She Wrote — Wh

59:46 / 1:54:28

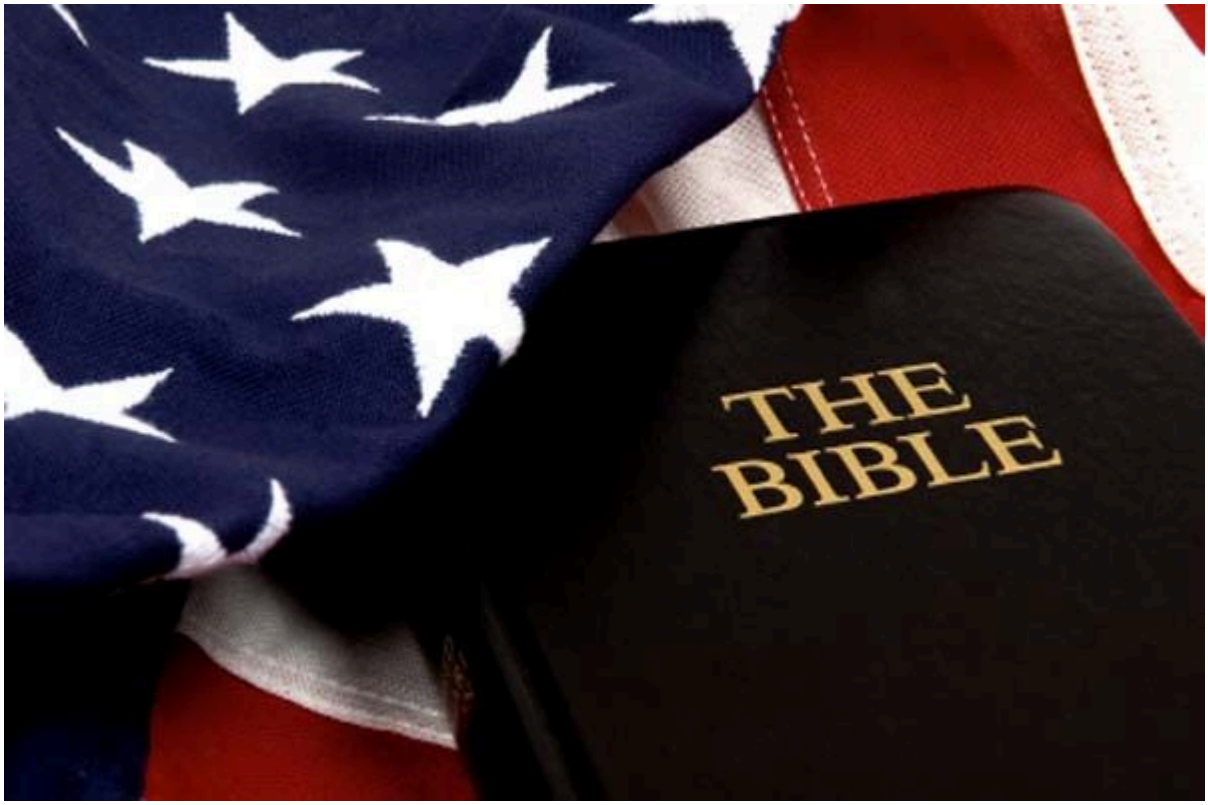
Jesus gave direction for how Christians should relate to politics and culture in the Sermon on the Mount. He told us to be His salt and light (Matthew 5:13–14). As “salt” in the world, Christ calls us to influence our culture rather than isolate ourselves from it.

Remember, salt was a preservative In Jesus’ day. It couldn’t prevent the decay of meat, but it could delay the decay. Christians should preserve the spiritual and moral fabric of society, wherever God has placed us.

CONTINUE TO FULL POST

Truth bomb: “Quiet Man” drops live prayer of repentance at Albemarle County School Board meeting

OCTOBER 18, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



“Public comment” at the October 13 **Albemarle County School Board** meeting was full of impassioned observations and collective angst.

But, amidst all this, there was a refreshing pause in the acrimony. Among a litany of speakers on such topics as “family leave” and “the propriety of **pro-transgender** t-shirts in the classroom,” an unassuming man stood up to publicly pray over the meeting and the Schools’ community. Most **School Board** and audience members alike seemed oblivious to God’s power being called down upon them.

A few in the crowd smiled knowingly, while dour-faced others— after catching-on—hid their faces in **fearful shame** or resisted the Word by flourishing “Protect Trans Kids” placards.

The resistors expressed visible relief when the prayer was completed, and the meeting went on as though nothing extraordinary had transpired.

But it had.

Read the Quiet Man's prayer of repentance for Albemarle County Public Schools:

"Quiet Man" prays over Godless Albemarle County School Board meeting
https://youtube.com/watch?v=vQxIQtMswTU

TRUTH BOMB
"QUIET MAN" PRAYS OVER
ALBEMARLE COUNTY
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 13, 2022
RESERVED

I just come before the Lord of heaven and earth today as your humble servant.

We petition you today that your will be done on earth and in Albemarle County, just as it is in heaven.

I come before you and your courts of heaven, asking for your justice, not man's justice, be served in Albemarle County in the public schools.

I hereby take my mantle of spiritual authority as a father of County students, an Albemarle County community member.

And I say, Father, God, I invite you back into our schools. And I pray that all students, all races, rich or poor, would come to understand their true identity in you.

We repent on behalf of a fatherless nation, and I stand as a repentant father, and as we see the fatherlessness has caused such confusion in our youth.

We pray for the protection of our county, teachers, our School Board, our parents, students, bus drivers, people that work in the cafeteria. Everybody.

Let our schools be a place of learning and enlightenment. And that our students will no longer be used as pawns in political battles.

It is now time for us adults and leaders to lead and guide our youth into all truth in the fight for the eternal souls of our children.

Let's work together. Let us stop the bickering and the "us against them" mentality, and fault-finding.

Our students deserved to be listened to and not coerced into an agenda.

Let all of us work together. Thank you.

END

SOURCE: **ROB SCHILLING SHOW**

The Schilling Show
"Where the News is Made!"℠
Newsradio 98.9 and AM 1070 WINA
Charlottesville, VA
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On Being Rapture Worthy

OCTOBER 10, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Author's note: *With most every indicator of the advance toward the Tribulation era in view upon the prophetic horizon, Christ's call to the Church stands brightly against the darkening gloominess. Thus it is time to again consider what God's Word has to say about being Rapture ready–to be worthy of Christ's call to that great event.*

This article, written some years earlier, stands more than ever as a reminder of the fact we might at any moment appear before our Lord to give an account for our lives spent here on this fallen planet.

On Being Rapture Worthy

Lately, emails and articles I've been receiving are trending toward the thought that Christians not living exemplary lives as believers will miss being taken in the Rapture of the Church, should they not be fully "repented up" and ready to go. These will be "left behind," as the LaHaye and Jenkins novel title puts it. First, it is perhaps best to consider what is meant by the "exemplary life" in terms of prerequisites for making it to Heaven in the Rapture.

Those who insist that one must be living the exemplary life usually frame that as "living a life of holiness" or "living righteously." By this, I presume they mean for the most part that one must be doing "good works" rather than living life in the "broad way" along which the pedestrian world moves. I would, of course, agree that the born-again believer in the Lord Jesus Christ should be

doing exactly that every day. There's no question that God's Word calls us to that model for life while upon this fallen planet.

However, the question is now raise—and it is closely akin to the question raised whenever the declaration is made that one can lose one's salvation: At what point does one "lose" his or her salvation? What particular "sin-point" is reached that causes the salvation meter in Heaven to go "TILT," removing the sinner's name from the Lamb's Book of Life? Or, for our purposes here, at what point does one sin enough to be taken off the list of those who hold tickets into Heaven, who will be lifted to be with Jesus Christ in that millisecond of time known as the "twinkling of an eye" when Jesus calls: "Come up hither!" (Revelation 4:1–2)?

Those who believe that the names of the redeemed can be removed from the Lamb's Book of Life, of course, use the following Scripture as one that prove their position is true: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Revelation 3:5).

This is proof, say the "conditional security proponents," that one's name can be removed from the Book of Life. But, let's have a closer look to examine whether this is true.

Those who hold that believers' names can be erased from this blessed Book of Life insist that the born-again must "overcome" sin. In their belief dictionary, this means we must stay sin free—that is, either live above sin or stay continually "repented up" in order to keep our names in the Book.

They miss the point entirely as to who actually does the overcoming. It isn't the believer who overcomes all sin, but the Lord Jesus who died in order to take sin away from those who believe so that we are no longer separated from God the Father in the eternal sense. This is seen, for example, in the following: "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4-5).

It is simple belief in the Savior who takes away the sins of the world that makes us overcomers. We still sin and come short of the glory of God, but His precious blood shed at Calvary covers all of our sins—past, present, and future. We overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil–all sin in this earthly sphere—only by belief in the only begotten Son of God (John 3:16). Our overcoming is only through God's great grace, through faith. We can never overcome by our own power.

When we sin, we break fellowship with our Lord, but we never break the eternal, family relationship. We do the following to take steps toward making right the sinful break in fellowship that we have caused. First, we must realize and admit that we are not sinless, because repentance cannot truly be made unless we confess that we have sinned. Upon such confession and repentance there is given blessed remedy: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,

and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8-9).

God's Word shows us that our salvation and our ability to overcome is totally based on what Christ did for us and our faith in Him alone. This brings us to the matter of being "Rapture Worthy."

Going to Christ when He calls, as Paul outlines in 1 Corinthians 15:51–55 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, and given by John in Revelation 4:1–2, is a salvation matter. We know that from the overall gospel message and from the total context of God's dealing with His family. Remember when Jesus prayed that beautiful prayer to His Father, as the Lord faced the cross (John 17)? Read it again, and you will see that it is absolutely clear that born-again believers are forever secure in the Father's hand, based upon what Jesus did on the cross.

We know with absolute certainty that we are once and forever in God's family because of the words of the One who created all that exists: "My Father, which gave me, is greater than all; and no is able to pluck out of my Father's hand" (John 10:29).

Paul confirms that the Rapture is a salvation matter as follows: "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do" (1 Thessalonians 5:9-11).

The Rapture will be Christ keeping us from the hour of temptation or Tribulation (read Revelation 3:10). The Tribulation is the time of God's wrath–to which Paul tells us we are "not appointed." However, there are many who insist that Christians who haven't properly confessed their sins will go through that time of God's wrath (and the entire seven years of the Tribulation will be God's judgment and wrath). These use the following verse to make their case: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36).

The key word they hold forth as relevant here is the word "worthy." Does this word not mean that we as born-again believers must be good enough to stand before Jesus in that raptured throng? Does this word not mean, therefore, that if we fail to live up to God's standards while on this Earth, we will (at some point in God's holy view of what it takes to fall from being Rapture ready) lose our ticket in that translation moment, thus not be taken when the shout is heard, "Come up hither!"?

Like in examining the issue of salvation, in looking at the term "overcoming," we now look at the word "worthy." What does it mean to be "worthy," as given in this Rapture example? Again, the answer is wrapped up in the same name as before: "Jesus." Jesus is the only person "worthy," in God's holy eyes, to be in the heavenly realm.

Remember what Jesus said to a man who addressed Him as “Good Master”? “And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God” (Luke 18:18).

Jesus, the second person of the Godhead, was not seeking to chastise the man for addressing Him in this way. The Lord was confirming through this question that He is indeed God, the only good, the only righteousness. Righteousness is the only ticket to Heaven–either through the portal of death, or through the Rapture. Only through Jesus–being born again into God’s family through belief in Him–can a person enter the heavenly realm.

Jesus spoke to this all-important matter by addressing Nicodemus: “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

God’s Word says about fallen mankind: “As it is written, There is none righteous no not one” (Romans 8:10) and, “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 8:23).

So, Jesus is the only person “worthy” to enter Heaven. It is through Him that any of us are worthy to stand before Him in that heavenly realm. That is the truth found in the Scripture in question.

On a less magnificent scale, the word “worthy” in this passage means that we should be in a constant mindset of prayerful repentance. We should always want to be found “worthy”–cleansed of all unrighteousness, as stated in 1 John 1: 9, so that we will hear our Lord say to us on that day, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:23).

SOURCE: **PROPHECY LINE**

Losing Our Grip, Our Faith, Our Way

SEPTEMBER 16, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Look up, the wind is changing

- ***Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.*** (Luke 10:19 ESV)

The institutional churches, *not to be confused with the Ecclesia*, have been off-duty from the spiritual warfare with which they were assured they would have to contend—if the decline and fall of western civilization is any kind of a barometer.

Why is that?

Why have so many mainstream/mainline churches fallen in line with the the secular culture?

The answer may lie in the fact that these churches, represent an increasing percentage of Christians who do not know enough about the very faith they profess.

That, and the unavoidable fact that Christians are from fallen stock. They are like the sheep of His pasture who, over time, have difficulty knowing His voice. What seems to be the issue with this generation of believers, compared to the faith of our fathers?

> "**A.W. Tozer** asserts that the cause of many of our modern spiritual woes is the loss in today's church of a lofty concept of God. He argues persuasively that the cure lies in our rediscovery of God's majesty. 'What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us,' he writes. 'The history of mankind will probably show that no people has ever risen above its religion, and man's spiritual history will positively demonstrate that no religion has ever been greater than its idea of God.'" (From "**The Knowledge of the Holy**," publisher, Grapevine India, February 2022)

Tozer was the author of over forty books on Christian faith and spirituality, and was editor of **Alliance Life**, the denominational publication of the **Christian and Missionary Alliance**, in whose churches he ministered and preached. He was a man who *never received any formal theological training*, yet this book has become a powerful and enduring resource for an understanding of the essence of God—His holiness. "**The Knowledge of the Holy**" offers a persuasive witness to the concept of God's majesty, and encourages reverent meditation on the essence of God, in providing insight in bringing back spiritual power.

No people has ever risen above its religion, and no religion has ever been greater than its idea of God.

This loss of the comprehension of holiness is no small thing. It's certainly one way to explain this remarkable development as revealed in this **Truth Itself report** published September 7: ***"At Least a Third of Senior Pastors in the US Believe You Can Earn a Place in Heaven by Simply Being a Good Person."*** The idea is so astonishing, I had to read the headline more than once to believe my own eyes. It is supported by this **Cultural Research Center report** at Arizona Christian University. You really must download and save the report.

Truth Itself points to this report from **Christian Today** whose headline reads, "**More than a third of senior pastors believe good people can earn their way to Heaven**." They can do so by simply being a good person. We should abandon the notion, gained from walking by faith, that there is nothing simple about being a "good person." Yet, everybody has their own standards and definition.

The connection between coming in close contact with the holiness of God, and the dismal statistics of this latest report from **Dr. George Barna** (pictured) can be found in this observation:

Dr. George Barna

> "While studying the spiritual behavioral patterns of pastors, it became evident that a large share of them do not have a regular spiritual routine," Barna said. "There was a correlation between possessing biblical beliefs and a consistent regimen of Bible reading, prayer, worship and confession."
>
> "In some of the denominational groupings, a majority of pastors do not engage in those foundational spiritual practices on a regular basis," he added. "Yet, among the pastors who have the most consistently biblical beliefs, there is also a daily routine that incorporates all of those disciplines."

Routine is the key word here.

So now imagine; you and your family—particularly your student children—living in a world relentlessly driving out all remnants of a vital, active Christian life with every manner of perversion that can be conceived, while worshipping under the cover of a church who has wandered away from a biblically driven understanding of Christ. What chance of survival do we really have without this understanding? It is no wonder really, that the Church is **declining in the western world—certainly so in the US**.

The link between holiness and happiness will be found in the areas of our life where we diligently seek the face of God—through prayer, studying the scriptures, and in fellowship with like-minded people. Along the way, we become sanctified so we are of the greatest service to Him by serving

others. We will find our gifting—that miraculous manifestation of the Holy Spirit—placed in our hearts and our minds what we were uniquely, individually designed to do: worship. In other words, there is nothing else that should ever commingle with genuine Christian thought and belief.

Sanctification will not be found among any believer, pastor, or teacher who consider, *"Socialism is preferable to capitalism, and that allowing property ownership facilitates economic injustice."* Researchers consider such ideas contribute to the "increase of cultural and political influence into the church."

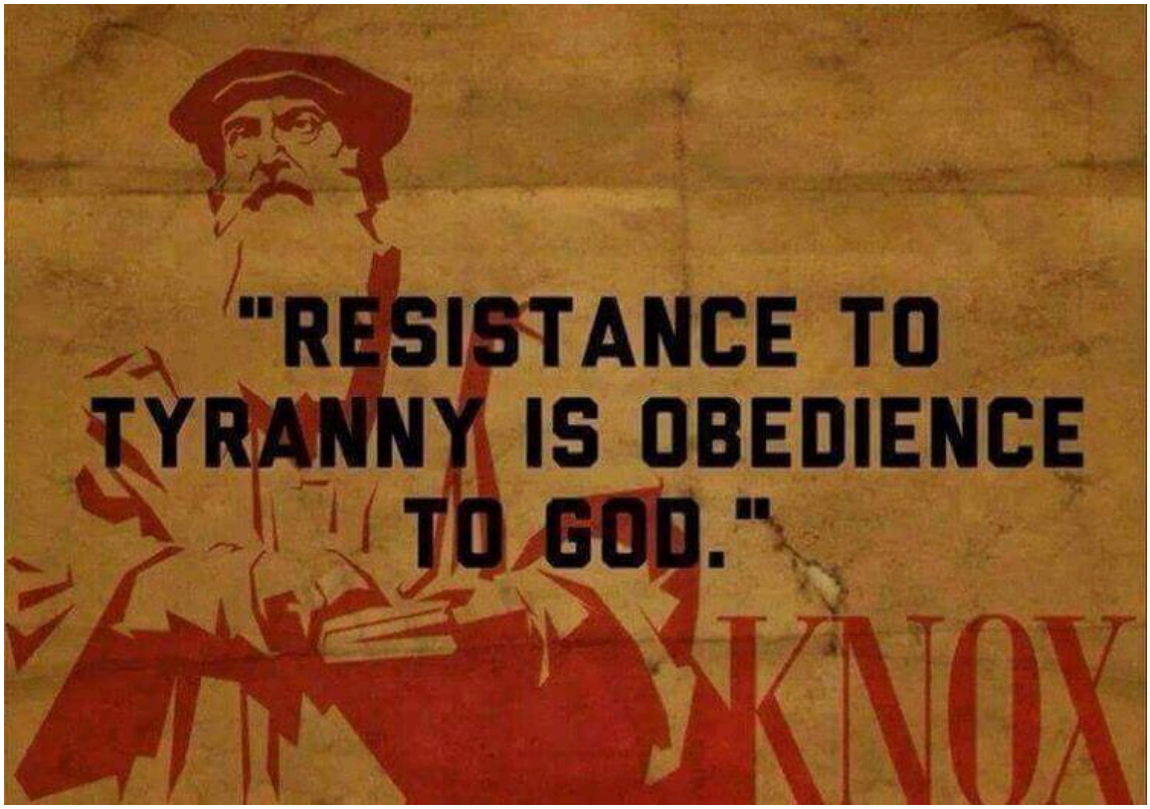
We have said this more than a few times, "We are living in amazing times." Amazing because we are seeing how God is moving—even now—in separating the sheep from the goats, the wheat from the chaff.

If you find yourself in a church where your pastors or teachers cannot say decisively that the God of the Bible does not condone the loss of liberty, property, or the improper use of the delegated authority of government, than pray and consider carefully if such a church is where you should remain in fellowship. The key is to be in one accord—like-minded.

- ***All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.*** (Acts 1:14 ESV)

Do You Know What's Happening?

AUGUST 18, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



There are lots of sayings about the kinds of people living on this earth. Personally, I am fond of this maxim, ***"There are three types of people in the world: people who make things happen, people who watch things happen, and people who ask, 'What happened?'"***

Like sheep, too many people are not seeing what's happening, even when it's right in front of their eyes. Such people become easily fooled by scripted narratives and led astray. They are then *lost* sheep, and need saving from a dreadful outcome.

Another saying is this, ***"Don't matter how much money you got, there's only two kinds of people: there's saved people and there's lost people."*** —Bob Dylan

Yes, that Bob Dylan. Of course he's right. Every Christian believes this to be the absolute truth. It is one of a very few reasons people will cite for placing their fate and faith in Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and King. Even so, there remains some truth to the first bromide. There must be, since we are watching the latest "thing" playing out right before our eyes. **That is, the systematic overthrow of the greatest nation in modern history.** And many sheep can't see it.

When agents of the FBI raided the Florida home of former President Donald Trump at Mar-a-Lago, they based their raid on the purported rationale that they suspected Trump of having mishandled classified information, taking home materials meant for the National Archives: according to *The New York Times*, the search *"appeared to be focused on material that Mr. Trump had brought with him to Mar-a-Lago… Those boxes contained many pages of classified documents."* Trump quickly responded with outrage: *"After working and cooperating with the relevant Government agencies, this unannounced raid on my home was not necessary or appropriate. Such an assault could only take place in broken, Third-World Countries. They even broke into my safe!"*

We should already know there will be "new" information, allegations, and revelations.

The story will play out, day after day, after day. The objective is to keep the ball in the air long enough to drown out any and all reasonable inquiry and rationale. Judgement has already been passed by some in any event—most notably our very corrupt corporate media. We are expected to believe the FBI had a good, solid, legal reason to raid Trump's Mar-a-Lago mansion with body armor and semi-automatic weapons. We must now believe that President Trump is a threat to our national security. **It's also very possible the raid backfired.**

There is another saying: ***"It's all about timing."*** —unknown comedian

There are some problems with this story already. At this writing, it does not appear that they could find anything that would implicate Mr. Trump, much less indict him on the basis of treason, or espionage, or inciting the overthrow of the republic, or even tax evasion. Actually, that last issue was being addressed in a New York City courtroom just two days earlier.

There's no real need to speculate on what this thoroughly corrupt justice department is doing however; according to **Andrew McCarthy**, (pictured) there is a **seven in ten chance Trump will be indicted**. It's at this point we should have grave concerns about the future of America's political and social landscape. It's not possible for America to suffer any further polarization without experiencing incalculable upheaval.

Everyone is asking what all this is really about. Obviously, it's about the January 6, 2021, Capitol protest—also known the as the capitol insurrection. The DOJ is desperate—maybe even frantic—to eliminate any further disruption of the neo-Marxist takedown of the country.

Then there is this saying, ***"A nation of sheep will beget a government of wolves."*** —Edward R. Murrow

All of this brings us to yet another DOJ announcement. If it were possible, this one is even more intriguing. The Biden regime has reportedly launched an investigation into the **Southern Baptist Convention** (SBC) over its handling of alleged sex scandals within the church. On August 12, **The Daily Wire** broke the news with this observation, *"The SBC is the largest protestant faith group in the United States and is among the most politically conservative as 64% of the church's members are Republican, according to a report from Pew Research Center."* Don't let that statistic just pass by you. **Only 64 percent?** I'm sorry, that figure is way too small.

And there you have it, the DOJ—extraordinarily partisan and politically weaponized—is muscling into one of the largest Christian institutions in the US… to do what? Bring justice? Expose a massive problem that lay festering for decades under a rug of subterfuge? Will they—or anyone else—be able to see the hubris in "investigating" behavior for which they hold the patent?

We might also ask, "Who opened the door to the sheep-fold?" The answer is complex, tedious—certainly contentious—and should be obvious. The door was opened from the inside.

Jon Harris' most **recent podcast** introduces yet another cast member to the growing list of social justice advocates—one **Todd Benkert**—now appointed to the SBC's **Sexual Abuse Task Force**. Harris includes remarks revealing his social justice-styled biases. **Capstone Reports affirms Harris' concerns about Benkert.**

I have **written before about Russel Moore.** He was very strategic in **releasing his resignation letter** from the **ERLC** containing not-so-veiled predictions about sexual allegations within the

convention. How many know of Moore's association with **EIT—Evangelical Immigration Table**—which, while not a legal entity, **has long been identified** as associated with the **George Soros** funded **National Immigration Forum?** How many have forgotten that Moore has been a "Never-Trumper" from the jump? Is it okay to mix politics and Church?

There is one more saying:

> "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits."—Jesus Christ (Matthew 7:15-16 ESV)

The sheep of this country would have no fear of wolves if they are the **sheep of His pasture.** These sheep **know their Shepherd's voice**. They should not be asking what happened; and they should not be sitting around *watching* things happen either

Paradigms, Politics and Predictions

AUGUST 12, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW, CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

It's past time we debate why rescuing our children, our communities, and our country from fascist/Marxist ideologies, holds more consequence than "mere" politics. **We should not only be striving for the very *soul of America*, but most especially, urgently striving for all the *souls in America*.**

On the topic of the new "world order," we've charted the course of our future without realizing it was *literally* **manufactured** during the Second World War.

By 1945, America dwarfed the entire world in military might; especially her navy, which became the largest in all of history by an order of magnitude. America's massive economy triggered a new world economy. Nearly eighty years has been more than enough time to believe that globalization could never really end. After 2020, I don't think we have much excuse for believing that any longer.

The world order has been changing for a long time, but now it's changing quickly. Globalization as we now know is hitting its shelf life. It's actually playing out—slowly at first, but eventually in terms of geopolitical timelines—suddenly. A properly informed, attentive Christian worldview includes an awareness to sudden change.

Americans have good reason to be concerned about supply chain interruptions, work force disruption, and most importantly, a shift away from the super-power status we have enjoyed for

decades.

So, what is globalization, and how does it differ from *globalism*? As **pediaa.com** explains, *"Globalism is a broad term we can generally define as an ideological commitment in favor of globalization. It's a view that considers globalization as entirely positive. Moreover, the ideology of globalism is based on the belief that people, information, and goods* ***should*** *be able to cross national borders unrestricted."*

Simply stated, *globalism* is an ideology based on the belief that people, information, and goods should be able to cross national borders unrestricted, while *globalization* is the mechanics of spreading that technology, products, information, and jobs across nations.

For nations that prefer to maintain sovereignty, or nations that survive by stability, globalization is debatable.

Sooner, rather than later, the way things have always been will change, and we will need to adapt..

In "**The End of the World is Just the Beginning: Mapping the Collapse of Globalization**" by Peter Zeihan, Harper Business—June 14, 2022, is now a New York Times bestseller. **Zeihan** (pictured) explains how globalization actually was created. The history is surprising and illuminating. I would wager most people have not given the subject the thought it urgently deserves.

We are seeing signs—in petroleum production, military invasion, shortages in high-tech products—globalization *is* about to collapse, and when it does, from Zeihan's historical perspective, things are going to get pretty grim. He claims that America's explosive economic juggernaut created her preeminence in the world and created hegemonies around the world. If America retreats to some form of isolationism, the loss of her historic strength and international protection will create a vacuum. Globalization, spurred by globalism, created unprecedented prosperity, and even freedom in many parts of the world. Absent globalization, great upheaval is inevitable.

In a **recent podcast interview**, **Doug Wilson** warns us, *"If he is correct about everything than a lot of the world is going to go through a catastrophic time. If he's partially right then it's going to be a tumultuous time, but it' would be good for us to be preparing regardless. lot of the world is going to go*

through a catastrophic time, mission boards, denominations that send missionaries, denominations that have churches overseas, people who've immigrated to the United States who still have family in South Africa, or family in eastern Europe, or family in Brazil, this book is… really good to read."

Without doubt, scripture tells any time man attempts "globalization" it is ruled by wicked, ungodly empires. We should oppose globalization to the extent that we comprehend it to be devised by Satan—the god of this age. (**2 Corinthians 4:4**). **Got Questions asserts**, *"It is interesting to note that man's (and Satan's) final attempt at globalization will include a resurgence of 'Babylon,' which started the globalization effort so long ago,"* (Read **Revelation 18**)

Is this period of globalization—indeed globalization in toto—heralding the final kingdom **Daniel 2:41** prophesied? An interesting case can be made for comparing globalization to an empire. This view should have some traction among premillennialists most particularly.

We are living in the "**brave new world**" in many respects. Christians must address this reality as never before—with a true sense of urgency. The stakes for winning the lost souls through evangelism and discipleship has always been high, but we have to believe time is running out. The season of "Piety in the Skyety" is over.

Running out of time is not just a toss-away aphorism anymore. With Marxist ideologues decimating families, woke insanities overwhelming every institution, the American Christian ought to be rethinking what evangelism and discipleship must look like in this new age. International commerce and travel will be hugely impacted by a collapse of globalization. Wilson believes student mission trips will be out of the question. In this dystopian setting, that seems like a reasonable conclusion.

That is why I believe this new world order will necessitate rethinking how we prepare and equip the peoples of the world beyond our shores; not only with indigenous language Bibles, but with the training and equipping these peoples are pleading for. It would be evangelism unlike anything we have ever seen before. Imagine the possibilities of technology and innovation, imbued with the power of Holy Spirit, arming all peoples with the genuine knowledge of their savior and king. This should be the definition of globalism. I believe one day it will be.

- **And you will say in that day: "Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted.** (Isaiah 12:4)

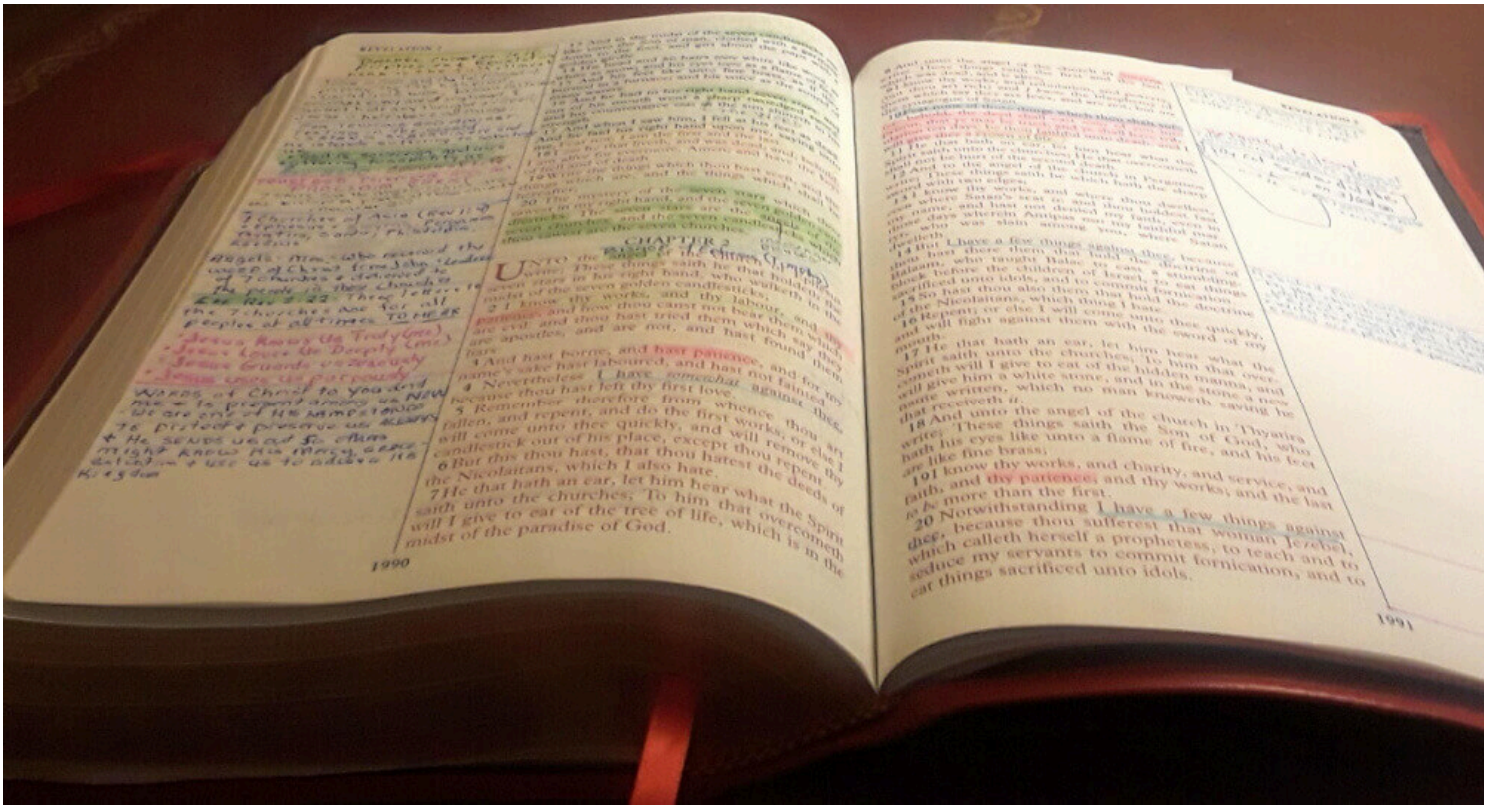
Jesus Christ admonished His disciples to proclaim the message of salvation throughout the world. Making disciples is not an act of patriotism, but it contributes to our nation's continued prosperity, and we must contribute to it any way possible. This is a biblical view of globalism.

- **Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I**

have commanded you. (Matthew 28:19-20)

Love Your Enemies?

AUGUST 9, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



This will be a tough one—for me, at least. The enemies faced each and every hour of each and every day are prolific in dispensing their wickedness. We have looked at their perpetration of evil many times. We have no choice, because it never ends, and we are commissioned from on high to "watch" (Mark 13:37).

This incessant raging against our sense of truth–of what is biblically righteous—evokes human anger, no matter the devotion to trying to be Christ-like in our attitude and comportment.

Now, to get into this just a bit–and I don't want to go too deeply into the weeds—I'll just begin by telling, obliquely, a little about conversations I have occasionally with family members. I say "obliquely" because I don't want them mad at me, so I won't say who.

The conversations sometimes are as early as 4 am. Yes, I'm an early riser, and sometimes, when family members happen to be around at that hour, we discuss things going on in culture, politics, religion, etc. The more adamant among the conversationalists are quite angry at the injustice, the tyranny, the wickedness taking place as we look at the things being reported. To be frank, they often cook up what they would like to see happen to those engaged in perpetrating the injustice,

the tyranny, the wickedness. The punitive creativity is not something I would be comfortable relaying in this forum.

My response to one or the other telling just how they would like this evil to be handled is that that isn't the way a Christian should think. They say things like "I know, Pops, but it makes me so mad I can't help it."

In response to the expressed actions, I say things like, "Do you think Jesus would react that way, even to this level of evil, were He here in the flesh today?"

That usually brings down their heated temperaments, to some extent. They then might retort with something like, "Yes. But He's God and I'm not."

At any rate, the whole matter, I believe, is a valuable exercise in evaluating ourselves in regard to our own dealing with this injustice, tyranny, and wickedness we as Christians endure each day.

We all know about the outrageous acts, issues, and events that afflict us that challenge our temperaments. We've covered all of them so many times in these commentaries.

Those who inflict these evil upon our lives, while we only want to live peaceably, are enemies. We can say this, because they are the tools of the archenemy of God, thus enemies of each of us within God's family who are living on planet earth.

Those who want to break into our lives and steal our tranquility, our peace, and even our children, not even to mention our welfare financially through unfair-to-absurd confiscatory taxation, can be compared to the "thief" in the following:

> "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils" (Luke 11: 21–22).

Jesus, although in the context of prophecy involving watching for the suddenness of the Rapture, further gave, through analogy, warning about being watchful for evil break-ins:

> "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up" (Matthew 24:42–43).

So, it is clear that the Bible instructs believers to be aware of enemies wanting to do us harm. We are told even to be armed in order to protect our households–defend ourselves against harm. But nowhere are we told to hate our enemies. On the contrary, we are told the following through a quite lengthy instruction for how to deal with our enemies. It comes from the Lord, Himself:

> "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6: 27–38).

Now I must admit that I find loving the enemies today who murder babies by the millions, who more and more draw this culture into the cesspool of pedophilia–a thing that has been prevalent in most every civilization at its end—all but impossible. But that doesn't alter the truth that we are told by our Lord that this is what we should do.

He showed that love Himself, we remember, while hanging on that cross on which He died for us. The martyr Stephen did so while being stoned, and the Lord stood from the right hand of God's throne to applaud him.

Apart from the love of Christ–of God the Father—ours would be fate much worse than the punitive actions sometimes concocted in those early-morning sessions to which I referred.

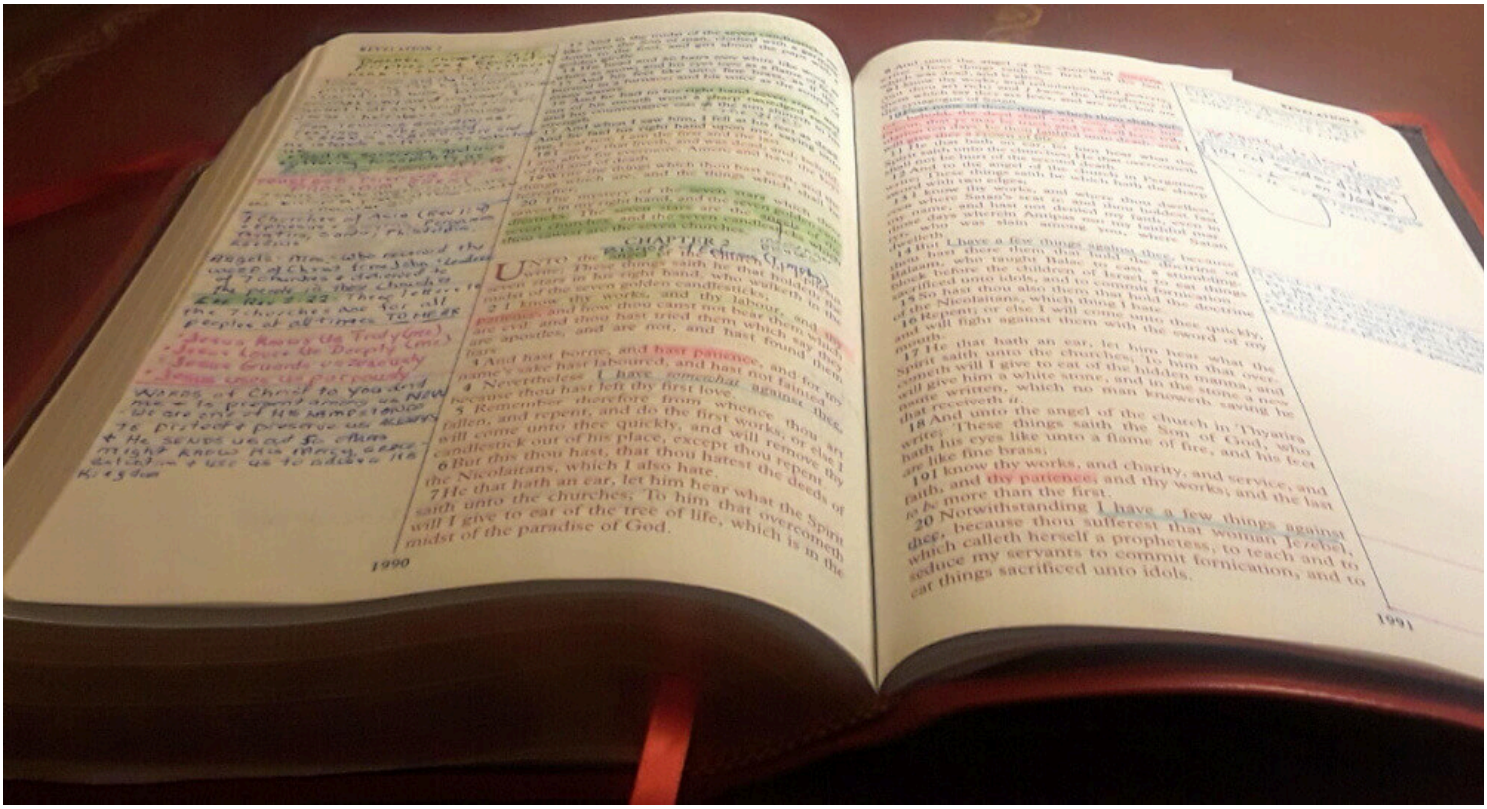
I guess the answer to how to begin to appropriate such love–and we cannot do it apart from the Holy Spirit who indwells—might be found in my friend, the late Dr. Tim LaHaye's, book–*The Spirit Controlled Temperament*. That book, of course, was filled with God's Word in coming to its conclusions.

I should probably pick up that book and read it again.

SOURCE: **PROPHECY LINE**

Our Civic Responsibility

JULY 20, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, PANDEMIC



From Eric Michael Teitelman, urging all that are "in Christ" to be engaged in our civic responsibilty

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, Yeshua:

- **Yeshua told us**: *"My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." (John 18:36, NKJV)*. What a powerful statement. If Yeshua's Kingdom is not of this world, then ours is not either.
- **Yeshua also instructed** His disciples *not* to battle against the kingdoms of the earth, saying, *"Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Matthew 26:52)*. He knew that fighting against the Roman Empire would have proven futile, and that was not His purpose for coming, nor was it ours for staying.
- **In Yeshua's final prayers**, He said: *"I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world" (John 17:15-16)*. Again, Yeshua confirmed that we are not of this world, but He also said He would not take us out of it. Instead, He prayed for our protection. We are *in* the world but not *of* the world.

This implies that we have a purpose for being here. First, and most importantly, to share the gospel, but maybe also to impart a greater civic responsibility. As Yeshua said:

> Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

How do we balance our patriotism for our nation with the Kingdom of God? Some claim that the United States was founded as a Christian nation. Others are declaring that God has an unbreakable covenant with America.

Do these views suggest we should labor to conform this country into God's Kingdom before Christ returns? I do not believe so. This belief is called Christian nationalism. And those who expand this theology to the whole earth are called dominionists. Both are antithetical to scripture.

Yes, the Kingdom of God is a present condition in the believer. However, the Kingdom itself is not established in the earth until Christ returns.

In the book of Revelation, we read:

> Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!'" (Revelation 11:15).

Therefore, the Kingdom is both a present and a future place.

Conversely, does it mean that God will not transform and heal our communities and even our nation if we turn back to Him? Is this our good works that Yeshua spoke about? Quite possibly, and I believe this is an essential part of our civic responsibility. Read the history of the great revivals that have swept this nation and how entire communities were delivered from crime, prostitution, alcoholism, and more.

We are not building heaven on earth as some proclaim. We are leading people into the Kingdom of God by the words we speak from scripture and our actions that demonstrate the love of God. And we have a moral responsibility to God, to submit to governmental authority and uphold His righteous laws and standards for every nation. This is our civic responsibility.

We live in a good nation. It is certainly not perfect, and much of its history is tainted—for example, our mistreatment of the Native Indians and African Americans. And the shedding of

innocent blood through abortion. These sins have stained our soil, and their innocent blood cries out to the Lord for His vindication. And yet, as Americans, we carry a euphoric optimism, one that strives to fix and improve that which is broken. We desire to see justice and live peaceably with all men. We follow the golden rule, which is the Judeo-Christian foundation of how this nation was established—do not mistreat others.

Our founding fathers, men like Benjamin Franklin, knew that self-governance came with tremendous civic responsibility. And this freedom could only be secured if men and women lived according to God's biblical standards. Franklin routinely published sermons from Reverend George Whitefield in his newspaper, the Pennsylvania Gazette. These articles became a source of inspiration for those living in the American colonies. And while not all colonists were Christian, most understood the necessity of civility bound by the Laws of a higher Divine order.

From the study of our nation's history, it is clear that American has never purely been a Christian nation. And yet, the principles of scripture, in large part, became the moral and civic foundation for this great country. This era, greatly influenced by the awakening movements of the 1700s, was highly religious, with Protestant Christianity becoming the predominant faith. Even those who were less religious still held a deep respect for Christianity as a moral and stabilizing influence both in our government and society.

But much has changed over the past several hundred years. We now live in a pluralist society that holds vastly differing views of God and the Bible. And we are quickly becoming an autonomous culture where an individual's independent-rule according to either their secular humanist or religious beliefs compete against other people's views.

The ancient Greeks believed that self-mastery was the ability of each person to become their own master. Plato stated that individuals or groups could not achieve true freedom unless they governed their pleasures and desires.

In biblical terms, this nation is also becoming more like ancient Israel, where it says,

> In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6).

No king implies no God. Indeed, Jesus is *not* the king of this nation to a growing majority of Americans. The government is becoming their god, and secular humanism is the prevailing ideology. In an ever-increasing autonomous culture, even civil law boundaries will begin to break down over time.

As it is written,

> For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way" (2 Thessalonians 2:7).

Notice the difference between self-governance, where society cooperates to democratically elect a government representing the people, versus autonomous-rule where an individual's rights override society's collective needs. Much of this friction has culminated in a two-party political system used by certain special interest groups to advance their policies. All this is contributing to the rapid deterioration and division within our nation.

Another behavioral byproduct of autonomous-rule is the personal offense. "I am offended if you either believe differently than me, or you do not accept that my views are correct." It is the ultimate battle for truth, and my truth can only be validated if it is forced on others. We know that Yeshua is the truth. However, we were never commanded to impose the gospel, only to share the good news.

Pluralism has now broken down, and the response is hatred and anarchy. Yeshua said: *"And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another" (Matthew 24:10)*. As Christians, we must guard our hearts against all of this, knowing what Yeshua has already warned what will happen in the earth before He returns.

Sodom and Gomorrah are often used to represent the epitome of evil.

Yeshua declared:

> Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city! (Matthew 10:15).

Wow! What behavior would have generated such a strong response from the Lord? Yeshua reveals the great sin in the proceeding verse, where He said, *"Whoever will not receive you…" (Matthew 10:14)*. That does not sound so evil. So, why the harsh judgment?

The sages do not associate Sodom principally with idolatry, murder, sexual impropriety, thievery, or corrupt business practices. They use the term *midat S'dom* (translated as "a Sodomite attitude") to describe extreme isolationism. For example, one who says, "What's mine is mine, and what's

yours is yours." As Rabbi Obadiah Bartenura said, "I do not want to give you anything, and I would appreciate it if you do not give me anything"—the rabbinic definition of selfishness.

However, to the conventional mind, this does not sound so evil. These people only desire total independence and isolation. They are saying, "Let me be, and I will let you be." This sounds like the American way—be self-sufficient and pull yourself up by your bootstraps. The definition is the ability to maintain oneself without outside aid, capable of providing for one's own need, and having extreme confidence in one's ability or worth.

Yet, this is not how God created the world to function. He made us so that each person is to receive his or her needs from others, whether emotional or physical.

This is the meaning of the verse, "And He established His *agudah* upon the earth." An *agudah* is a collaboration of individuals, a collective, in which everyone works together, and no person is complete without the other. As it is written, *"And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him" (Genesis 2:8)*.

So, what truly happened to Sodom and Gomorrah?

These two cities and three others formed a large settlement at the terminus of the Jordan River. The river water the land and sprouted lush vegetation. The soil was rich in nutrients and precious minerals—a garden of Eden. It is written, *"And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar" (Genesis 3:10)*.

The evil that Sodom and Gomorrah committed against the Lord was their individualism and lack of hospitality, even hostility towards visitors and strangers. And their behavior only got worse until there was no friendship or camaraderie amongst each other. Their treatment of merchants, transients, the homeless, the oppressed, and the needy became heartless and viciously cruel.

God cares for those who are despised by this world, and His warnings to Israel demonstrates this: *"You shall neither mistreat a stranger nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. If you afflict them in any way, and they cry at all to Me, I will surely hear their cry; and My wrath will become hot, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless" (Exodus 22:22-24)*.

The prophet Ezekiel affirmed the word of the Lord when he said, *"Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy" (Ezekiel 16:49)*.

Ezekiel compared the sins of Sodom to those of Israel. In their opulence and prosperity, they became individually selfish and self-centered, neglecting their poor and needy. They became

autonomous, each man doing what was right in his own eyes, seeking to be free from the obligation of caring for or depending on others. And instead, they lusted after their selfish pleasures and desires.

Does any of this sound like the United States of America? We have a pandemic, and people are forced into isolation. They begin hoarding material supplies. We turn against immigrants fleeing persecution and poverty. We demonize and hate others because they think differently. And as a nation, we have lost any sense of civic responsibility, failing to understand that we are part of an organized society, something much bigger than ourselves—a more extensive, collective element.

Civic responsibility rests in the notion that there is a need to give something back to society and act selflessly for the benefit of the whole. And as Christians, scripture gives us explicit instruction, *"Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others" (Philippians 2:3-4)*. Sodom and Gomorrah are the biblical opposite of how we are not to behave.

We are citizens of the Kingdom of God. But we are also citizens of this nation. Can we balance our patriotism for our country with the Kingdom of God? I believe so.

We are to pray for all in authority, preach the good news of the Kingdom, esteem others more highly than ourselves, and care for the needy, even fighting against injustice as necessary. Again we read, *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16)*.

There is a tremendous spiritual battle over men and women's souls in this nation and the nation itself. Yet *" weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds" (2 Corinthians 10:4)*. And *"We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12)*.

This battle is over truth—that of the Bible or that of the world? And people's actions and behavior will be directed by what they believe. We can only overcome this battle by praying and declaring the truth of the gospel to those who are lost and perishing—declaring, but never forcing lest we act like the disciple who drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

Yeshua said, *"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:29)*. And Paul encouraged, *"If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men" (Romans 12:18)*.

We are in the world but not of the world. Therefore, *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2)*.

We can live as American citizens, voting and praying for righteous leaders to be set over us and fighting against all unrighteousness and injustice perpetrated against the unborn, the widows and orphans, the immigrant, and the poor and oppressed. This is our civic responsibility.

Our allegiance is to Yeshua alone, for earthly kings are merely vessels in His hand to bless or bring His righteous judgment. Therefore, Yeshua told His disciples, *"Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21)*.
And let us always remember to, *"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33)*. For Yeshua declared, *"Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work" Revelation 22:12)*.

Amen!

All Scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Bible (NKJV) unless otherwise noted, Thomas Nelson Inc., 1982.

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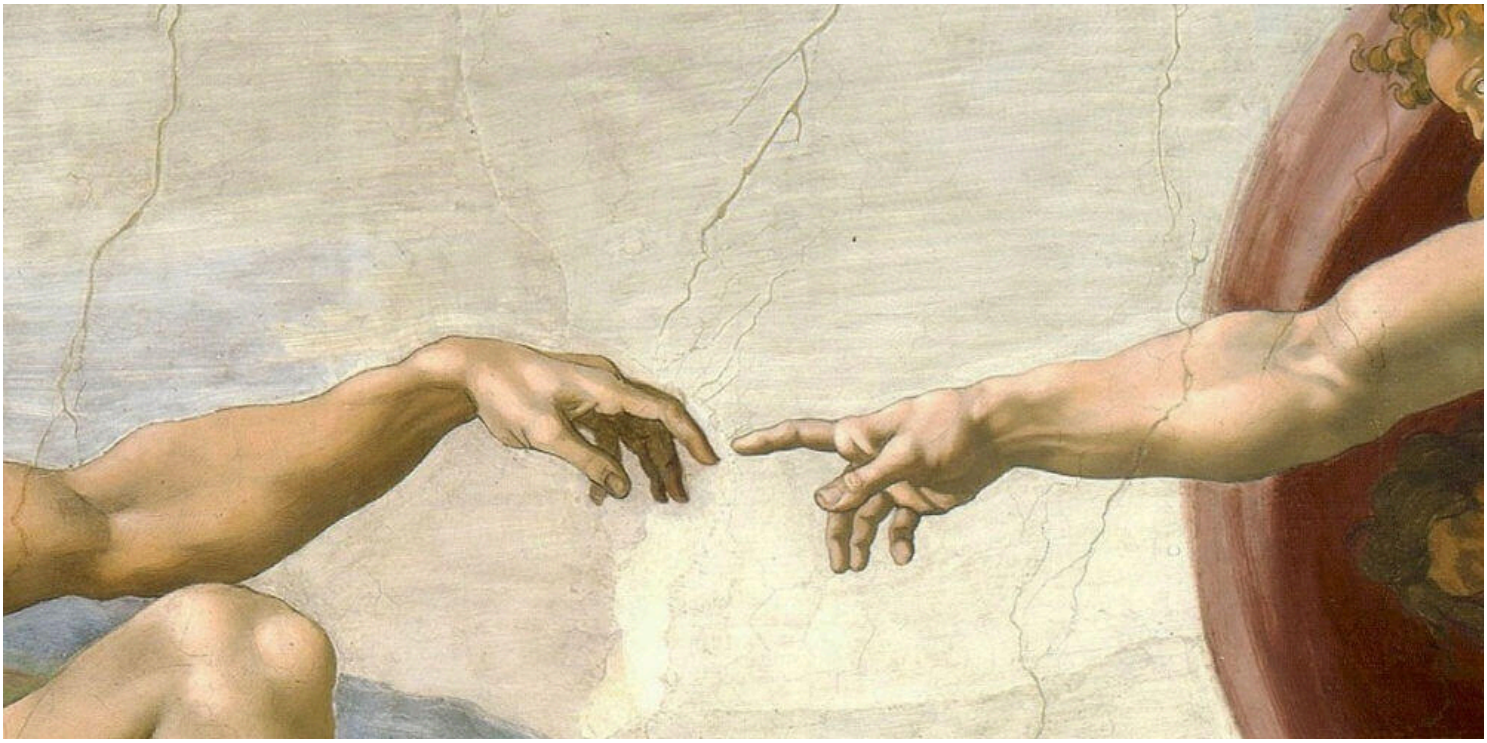
Is God Unfair? No, We are Without Excuse

JUNE 13, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



We think of the heathen of the world in terms of their knowing little to nothing about God's truth with regard to the only way to redemption–to salvation. This brings to the lips of some the accusatory rant that God is unfair. They accuse that He sends people to eternal punishment who have never heard the gospel.

But God's Word tells the following about those in even the darkest regions throughout human history.

> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. (Romans 1:18–23)

In other words, mankind has no excuse because God reveals to all, no matter their uncivilized regions of the world and/or lack of information. God will never be unfair. All have enough inward information to know they need Him. When people instead carve out idols for themselves, they are deliberately rejecting the God who plants in the hearts of His creation called man the innate ability to know Him for their personal redemption.

The same is true of "civilized" heathen. I think of the Hollywood cabal who push God aside. They know Him, yet don't *know* Him—that is, they don't *know* Him as their Heavenly Father. They deliberately ignore and even, in some cases, cast Him and those who are Christians in derogatory roles.

Proof that they are made aware, however, comes through in the films they produce. We remember the Cecil B. DeMille movie, *The Ten Commandments*. It was quite accurate in its depiction of the Exodus account.

In Herman Wouk's *The Winds of War*, the script writers had American naval officer Victor "Pug" Henry say something like, "Mankind is destined to kill each other in war until the Second Coming of Christ."

The Hollywood people are aware that this fictional statement has played out in fact since World War II as murderous conflicts continue to this day. Killing in war is prophetically scheduled to become even more prolific as time moves forward toward Christ's Second Advent. All of humanity's interaction points starkly at Heaven's foretold intervention into the affairs of mankind.

Hollywood was and is thoroughly aware of Jesus Christ and His coming again. They are without excuse.

There are no people on earth more under God's assessment of being "without excuse" than the people of the United States.

There are churches on many corners of most cities. There are means of communications that pour out the gospel message every hour of every day. There are so many Bibles that it is the most published and sold volume ever in America and the world. Yet, it is probably one of the fewest read and studied.

But it is not only America that comes under God's condemnation of being "without excuse." Europe has long ago shut down most of its churches. Many are merely now museums for tourists to photograph while on vacation.

The results of this dismissal of Heaven's authority are blatantly obvious in all the world, not just in our country. As pointed out in recent commentaries, Paul's words tell of the foolhardiness and

results thereof regarding people who turn their backs on the God who created them.

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient. (Romans 1:28)

Can there be any argument of substance against the proof that the Creator has turned this generation of God-deniers over to a "reprobate mind"?

The things we have witnessed in recent years offers evidence that would convict in any sane court of justice.

Government and the ideological left claim everything we do must be to protect the most innocent—the children. Regulations of every sort—in food production, medicine, and other such things—are in large part for children. Proposed gun control is so that the children can live happy and, above all, *safe* lives.

Yet that same government and leftist, hypocritical ideology declares it is their right to slaughter babies by the millions while still in their mothers' wombs.

This, folks, is what qualifies as a prime example of what the God of Heaven calls the "reprobate mind."

And we could go on and on telling things like teaching kindergartners about adult sexual activity, about letting porn-star transvestites who commit the most disgusting acts in film come before children as young as five to teach them about their abominable lifestyles.

So, mankind is without excuse. And all who do not know the Lord Jesus as Savior will suffer eternal condemnation because of their unbelief. Thus, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither was thankful."

You, I—we all are without excuse. We all must come to Christ, for He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No person comes to the Heavenly Father but by Him (John 14:6).

Here is how you can make sure you are not under the condemnation "without excuse":

> That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:9–10)

Apostasy and America

MAY 29, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, DIVERSITY, GOD'S WORD, LGBTQ, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

We who look into Bible prophecy and try to understand things taking place that might have prophetic significance are often accused of approaching all this through an *Amerocentric* prism. That is, we concentrate too much on how it might apply to America.

If we do this—and I concede that we do in much of our analysis—we look through this prism because America, as a nation, is so obviously guilty before God. This nation is the most materially blessed in all of human history. America is also one of the most spiritually blessed, in that the nation was founded on Judeo-Christian principles by men who, if not Christian, at least chose to tether our founding to the unmovable pillars of biblical morality and reverence for human life.

I say America is *guilty* because it takes a very little look into matters to see that we have strayed about as far from biblical precepts for conduct of life as possible.

We've looked at the term *apostasia* lately. I expressed that I believe this term, found in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, might be both a *spatial or physical* departure and a *spiritual or defection from faith* departure. That portion of the scripture is as follows.

> Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition. (2 Thessalonians 2:3)

The term "falling away" here is the word *apostasia* in Greek, the language used to present the New Testament.

While I continue to believe *apostasia* means "spatial departure*,"* certainly students of Bible prophecy, if honest in their analysis of American society and culture, can't but conclude that there has taken place a profound *apostasia,* or spiritual departure, in this highly blessed nation.

We cannot look to American society and culture in general to determine whether it is true that there has been a profound departure from the faith–a spiritual *apostasia*. The vast American populace of any generation has and is now in a lost condition. That is, people who do not know Jesus Christ as Savior are in the great majority. These have not *fallen away,* as prophesied in the 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 passage above. They can't because they have never been in the s*alvation* category; one cannot fall from a position they have never occupied. The only way to fall away is to have once been in that higher position.

Now let's not get confused. We aren't talking about losing one's salvation. Nothing and nobody can snatch the believer from God's mighty hand once they have experienced salvation through belief in the Lord Jesus Christ–God's only way to redemption and Heaven for eternity. (Read John 14: 6 and Romans 8: 38-39).

Apostasia, in the spiritual sense of falling away, or spiritual departure, involves those who have falsely professed Christ as Savior—who have professed only in the faith system of Christianity, but not in Christ, Himself, for their salvation. They have never truly believed in God's one and only way to Himself in the redemption process.

So, in the spiritual sense, America is likely the most notable nation of this last-days falling away or *apostasia*. America has the largest number of *professing* adherents to the *system* called Christendom, but those aren't necessarily a part of the true Christian faith. The question, then, is do we see a movement away from that faith system known as Christendom? The following gives a resounding answer:

> NAPLES, Florida (LifeSiteNews) – A "Christian" church in Florida plans to host on Saturday an LGBTQ "Youth Pride Conference," featuring a drag show and a "sex education" talk by a Planned Parenthood speaker.
>
> The event, which is being run by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), is advertised as "an exploration of LGBTQ issues facing today's youth," "organized by and for LGBTQ students."
>
> The host church, the Naples United Church of Christ (Naples UCC), styles itself as a "progressive church in terms of openness to a wide theological spectrum and the wide variety of lifestyles and orientations in our culture."
>
> In addition to a drag show featuring "local drag queens," the event will hold a variety of talks during breakout sessions, with themes including "Forbidden Queer Literature," "Inclusive Sex Education," with Kathryn Ross, who works for Planned Parenthood, "Coming Out," and "Navigating a Religious Identity." ("Christian' church to host LGBT youth event with drag show, 'sex ed' talk from Planned Parenthood," LifeSite, Rapture Ready News, May 18, 2022)

America has, it would seem, been chosen in a way by God for special purposes, including to be the physical protector of Israel during its rebirth and to the end of this age. Therefore, America has been blessed by the Almighty, from her own birth, with founding fathers who held to godly precepts.

No other nation has been more steeped in the Christian faith than has the United States. Therefore, the Amerocentric view in consideration of whether we can see spiritual defection or *apostasia* in this time so near the end of the Age of Grace (Church Age) is relevant and even essential.

It is sad to consider that our nation might have already lost God's blessings, but we must consider that possibility.

We can, individually, continue to receive our God's blessings by remaining faithful in every way to His high calling–to look to Jesus Christ with all our praise and to look to Him to guide our pathways.

Above all, we must do our utmost to avoid the mistakes of the people God condemns no matter the generation. We see that condemnation in His words through the prophet Jeremiah.

> Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. (Jeremiah 8: 12)

SOURCE: **PROPHECY LINE**

How A Biblical Worldview Can Help Defeat Evil in Politics: Stacy Washington

MAY 2, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

A broader understanding of the Bible and a deeper biblical worldview by self-proclaimed Christians can and must be critical parts of turning the political system around in America,

Nationally syndicated radio host Stacy Washington tells The New American magazine's Alex Newman in this interview for **Conversations That Matter**.

According to Washington, who goes by "Stacy on the Right" and recently released the book "Eternally Cancel Proof," the Bible has answers to all of the contemporary questions and controversies in government and life.

And Christians need to stop compartmentalizing their faith, instead walking out their beliefs and principles in politics, family, and government.

SOURCE: **THE NEW AMERICAN**

Second grade teacher in Virginia sparks movement to get fresh Bibles in schools

APRIL 28, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Louise Secker | **The Lion**

How did an elementary teacher plant the seeds of a worldwide movement to introduce new Bibles in school libraries? Hannah Sailsbury was teaching second grade in Virginia in 2018 when she took a prayer walk around the school, praying for her students, her colleagues, and specifically that Jesus' name would be spoken and heard in powerful ways in the hallways and classrooms. She credits that prayer walk with setting in motion what happened over the next few months.

A few weeks later, a second grader in Sailsbury's reading group checked out a King James Version of the Bible from the school's library and brought it back to the classroom to read. He told his teacher he wanted to learn about God and heaven. Seeing a young child so curious about God that he checked out a Bible sparked an idea.

"We needed engaging Bibles in school libraries," Sailsbury told The Lion during a recent interview. "So we contacted librarians and offered to donate Action Storybook Bibles for free to their school libraries." This particular Bible is a highly illustrated book of Bible stories intended for children.

Within a few months, she had rallied a team of volunteers to donate Action Storybook Bibles to the 38 elementary schools in her county. Then, she decided to take the idea further, launching **Bibles in Schools**, an organization aimed at providing engaging storybook Bibles to any school library that will accept them.

“We saw how students love these Bibles, which are illustrated and resemble graphic novels. And, I saw the ripple effect of that one first Bible – how that Bible went to a home where it was needed. God was really moving through these Bibles young children were reading,” said Sailsbury. “We saw that schools don’t have updated Christian literature. And they need it.”

Hannah Sailsbury, founder of Bibles in Schools.

Today, Bibles In Schools has provided these Bibles to more than 1,500 schools in 43 states and seven countries. The hope is that the school libraries stay in touch, and Bibles in Schools can offer

them Christian literature every year.

“Overall the donations are well received,” said Sailsbury. “Some schools aren’t interested, and that’s fine. But this all started with prayer walking. If I hadn’t been praying specifically to see Jesus in my school, I wouldn’t have seen the significance of my student reading that Bible. I know it’s all God at work.”

Bibles in Schools
https://youtube.com/watch?v=RmiZfQ3Wjp0

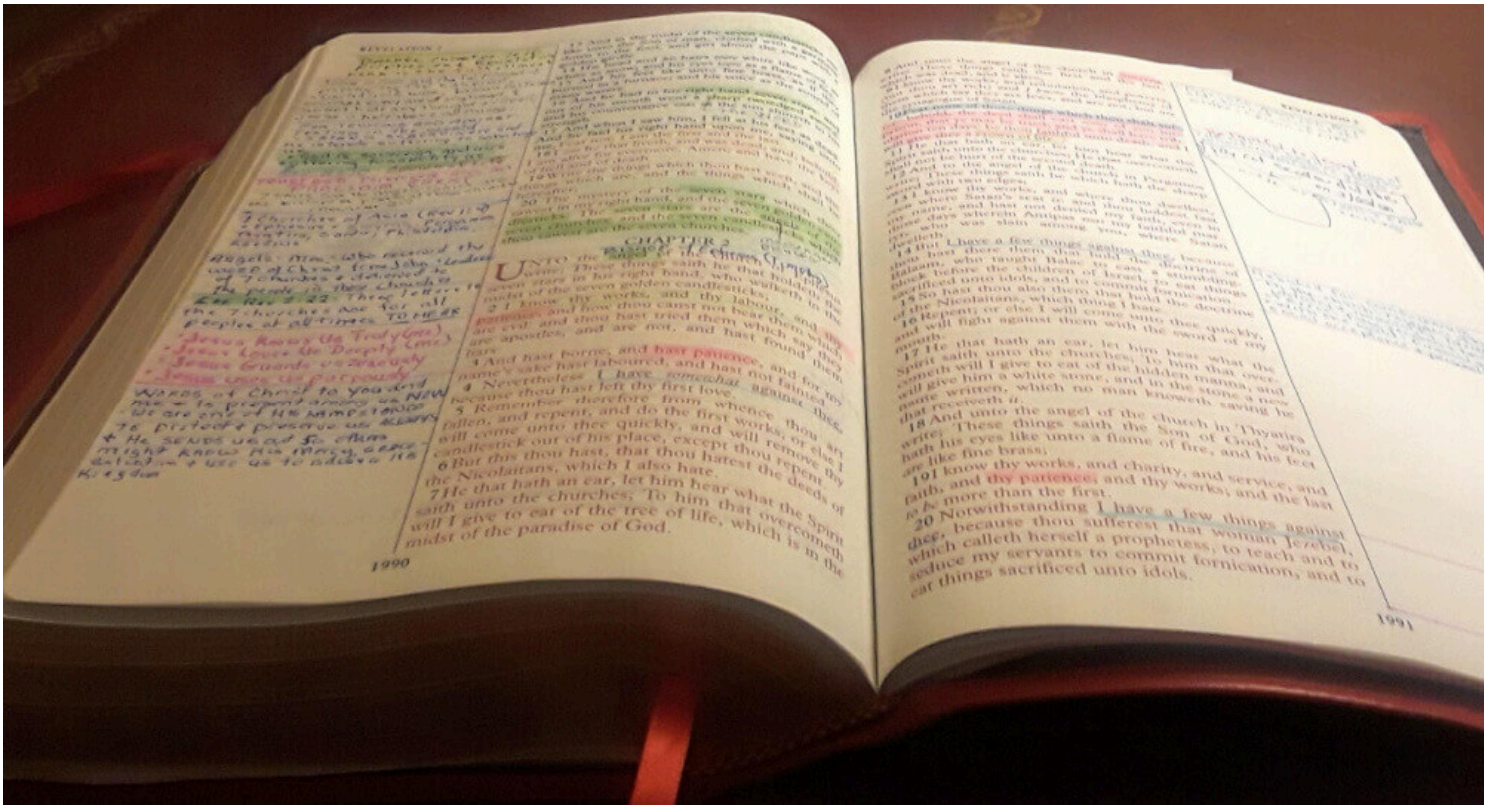
SOURCE : **THE LION**

Louise Secker is a staff writer for *The Lion*. She has worked in nonprofit fundraising and marketing for more than 20 years and served on a number of boards and committees related to health, education, and issues affecting women and children. The mother of three college students, her hobbies include writing, running, and travel.

The Stanley M. Herzog Charitable Foundation's mission is to catalyze and accelerate the development of quality Christ-centered K-12 education so that families and culture flourish.

Salt of the Earth

APRIL 3, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Bill Cook | **America's Black Robe Regiment**

Nature of Salt?

What is the meaning of "salt of the earth?" Was Jesus referring to the flavor enhancing properties of salt when **he said his followers were the salt of the earth**? Taste is important, but in Jesus' time salt was also used as a preservative, a disinfectant, an insecticide, to remove noxious odors, extinguish fire, melt ice, relieve sore throats, and embalm the deceased. Salt is good, but if it loses its efficacy, it is good for nothing.

Why is the Church in the West being trampled underfoot today? Why is Tyranny running roughshod over Christianity in America? Could it be that the salt of the earth has lost its savor? Far from being secure, the Blessings of Liberty, which the Church has largely been taken for granted for the last fifty years, are rapidly being supplanted by the arbitrary dictates of tyrants.

Savorless Salt

Psalm 12:8 says, *"The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted."* When vile persons are elected or appointed to positions of public trust, they threaten the peace and safety of the civil society. The Apostle Paul would agree, for he wrote that those who do not know God (i.e. "the children of disobedience") are incited to action by the "prince of the power of the air" (i.e. the devil), and we know that he "comes only to steal, kill and destroy." (**John 10:10**)

Evidently, when the wicked rule, the salt of the earth has lost its savor.

> *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.* —**Ephesians 2:2**

Saltless Salt Empowers Tyranny

British statesman and philosopher **Sir Edmund Burke** once said, *"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."* If Burke's maxim is true, then voting is a sacred duty. Voluntary failure to vote is damnable, especially in the aggregate. We can't claim to love God and our neighbor when neglect of our most basic civic duty. Not voting empowers those who would rob and ruin our neighbors?

A good shepherd lays down his life for the flock of God. Jesus said, *"One who is a hired, is not the shepherd. The sheep are not his own. The hired hand sees the wolf coming and abandons the sheep. He flees. The wolf then catches and scatters the sheep."* (**John 10:12**) Unwillingness to preach the whole counsel of God is abandonment. Unwillingness to speak the truth because it might cause some sheep to leave is abandonment.

A Word to Shepherds

In his **farewell message to the elders of the Church at Ephesus**, Paul testified of his freedom from bloodguilt. He had faithfully preached the whole counsel of God:

> *I kept back nothing that was profitable to you … for which reason you are my witnesses. My conscience is free from bloodguilt. I have not neglected to declare to you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers. Feed the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood.* —Acts 20:20, 26-28

In his message, Paul insinuated that bloodguilt accrues to failure to address any topic that might be of eternal or temporal benefit.

If a pastor today is unwilling to preach an election sermon, he is unwilling to preach the whole counsel of God. He has abandoned his flock to political ignorance and apathy, tyranny, or worse.

Help fund America's Black Robe Regiment **here**.

A Final Admonition

Presbyterian Minister and Lawyer Charles G. Finney was a central figure in Second Great Awakening. As President of Oberlin College, he wrote an **article** that ran in "The Independent of New York" on December 4, 1873. In the article, Rev. Finney attributed *"frauds and villainies in high and low places, among all ranks of men"* to anemic preaching. He defined anemic preaching as that which did not probe the consciences of men. The great revivalist concluded his article with the following admonition, which sadly, rings true today.

> *"Brethren, our preaching will bear its legitimate fruits. If immorality prevails in the land, the fault is ours in a great degree. If there is a decay of conscience … if the public press lacks moral discrimination … if the church is degenerate and worldly … if the world loses its interest in religion … if Satan rules in our halls of legislation, if our politics become so corrupt that the very foundations of our government are ready to fall away, the pulpit is responsible for it. Let us not ignore this fact, my dear brethren; but let us lay it to heart and be thoroughly awake to our responsibility in respect to the morals of this nation."*

SOURCE: **America's Black Robe Regiment**

Is God judging America? and Why would He?

JANUARY 31, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ *Yeshua*:

Is God judging America? That is a good question, and the answer will depend on what you mean by judging. The definition of judgment is a divine sentence or decision, specifically a calamity held to be sent by God. This leads us to another question: Why would God do this, assuming He is even doing it at all? The answer to this question will also vary depending on our view of God's character. Is God's character benevolent or malevolent, meaning, is He disposed towards doing good, or is He disposed towards doing things that are hateful?

The bible says, *"The Lord is good to all, And His tender mercies are over all His works" (Psalm 145:9, NKJV)*. I think this scripture is clear—God's goodness is bestowed upon His whole creation, which confirms that God shows no partiality or favoritism, as it is written, *"for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:45)*.

The theological term for this is called "common grace" (Reformed Calvinist theology) or "prevenient grace" (Arminian theology). Common or prevenient grace is what keeps all of humanity from descending into the morass of evil that would happen if the full expression of our fallen nature could have total free reign.

Common grace provides the balance in the universe between God's sovereignty as King, and His objective to create mankind in His image with the propensity to choose between right and wrong. *"I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19)*.

Free choice is not the same as free will. Free will implies that we are the master or god of own soul and author of our eternal destiny. This is idolatry in its purest form, which is how Adam and Eve originally fell into deception (spiritual blindness) when the serpent lied to them, saying: *"For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5)*.

Adam and Eve's disobedience to God made them blind because all sin leads to blindness, and this created a generational fall where mankind would now inherit their disobedient and sinful disposition to resist God as King. Therefore, their original sin was not exclusively that they disobeyed God by eating of the forbidden fruit. No, their original sin (of idolatry) was that they desired to become like God and establish independence from God as rulers of their own lives. For it is written, *"So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise , she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate" (Genesis 3:6)*.

And still, this would never be possible, because God is one, and no other gods can occupy His throne or displace His oneness either within or beyond His creation. God's essence and being, which is called "the Infinite One" (*Ein Sof*), fills the whole earth temporally and spatially. Before creation, nothing existed other than God Himself, and after creation, we might erroneously conclude that there now exists something in addition to Him—you and me.

No, there can be no change in God at all, for God does not change. Just as God was alone in His oneness before the creation of the world, so is He alone in His oneness after it was created. Why? Because creation added nothing to God's knowledge or being. His knowledge self-existed before creation, and it is with this prior knowledge that He can know all His creation.

Since the world is completely nullified in its entirety in relation to Him, and can only be wholly united with Him *in* Christ, God is just as alone after the world was created as He was before its creation. Notice we are *in* Christ, meaning we are part of His essence, existing within His physical being, and not independently standing next to Christ occupying our own space that alone belongs to God. Therefore, anything that challenges God's sovereignty or presence in the universe is considered idolatry because it presumes to constitute a change in God's absolute unity over His creation.

Contrary to free will, free *choice* implies that God has given mankind the ability to pick between one of two paths: one that leads to eternal life in Him, and the other that leads to death and

destruction. Free choice also establishes that we will always have one of two masters. Contrary to what some believe, we are not the gods of our souls. Either we submit to Christ who purchased us with His blood, or we will serve the prince of this world, who is called Satan, the one who deceived mankind into usurping our dominion so that he could rule the earth as king in place of God.

Satan is, therefore, God's adversary who stands in opposition to God's sovereignty. And, mankind, created in the image of God, has the same adversary, for it is written, *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8)*.

If free will were an option, God likely would have said something like this to Adam and Eve: "You decide if you want to serve me? If not, that's okay; I will let you live forever and fulfill the selfish desires of your heart so that you can be your own master." The Bible tells us something quite different: *"Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"— therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken" (Genesis 3:22-23)*. Death is, therefore, God's assurance that man would never become his own god.

Paul said it like this: *"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air , the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others" (Ephesians 2:1-3)*. Notice the word used here is wrath, not judgment. We'll come back to that later.

And Yeshua spoke these strong words against the leaders of Israel who were trying to kill Him: *"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it" (John 8:44)*. This verse might sound anti-Semitic to some, but not so. Yeshua was simply acknowledging the evil intent of their hearts, that they wanted to murder an innocent man who spoke truth to them.

We can now summarize the following: God is good, and Satan is hateful. God is light, and in Him, there is no darkness at all, and Satan (who was created as an angel of light), is now the epitome of pure darkness. Everything I have talked about up to this point might seem like a rather long explanation of a rather simple question. However, unless we understand and believe that God is good, then we will never fully understand or accept why God might bring upon any person (or nation) His divine sentence or judgment.

Let us now explore what God's judgment might look like, either individually, or corporately for the church or a nation. It is written, *"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10)*. We can,

therefore, conclude that Satan's judgments (which are evil) bring death and destruction, while God's judgments (which are good) bring repentance and life.

Here is another way to examine God's motivation. Is Satan concerned for our eternal salvation? No. The Lord, on the other hand, is not willing that any should perish. We know that salvation is a gift from God that requires our repentance and turning completely away from our wicked ways. And, humility is the key to repentance. Therefore, we cannot repent unless we first humble ourselves and submit to the one true God who holds the keys of life in His hand, as it is written, *"And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him" (Hebrews 5:9)*.

God's judgments, hopefully, bring about our submission and obedience. If we are unwilling to yield of our own free choice, then God will either allow or create circumstances that destroy our pride and self-sufficiency, always revealing a path to return and draw close to Him so that we might escape our peril.

Listen to the prophet Zephaniah: *"Woe to her who is rebellious and polluted, To the oppressing city! She has not obeyed His voice, She has not received correction; She has not trusted in the Lord, She has not drawn near to her God (Zephaniah 3:1-2). "Therefore wait for Me," says the Lord, Until the day I rise up for plunder; My determination is to gather the nations To My assembly of kingdoms, To pour on them My indignation, All My fierce anger; All the earth shall be devoured With the fire of My jealousy. For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, That they all may call on the name of the Lord, To serve Him with one accord… I will leave in your midst A meek and humble people, And they shall trust in the name of the Lord" (Zephaniah 3:9-12)*. This scripture demonstrates God's heart for Israel, and every nation for that matter—to bring all to repentance.

Scripture likens God's judgment to the kind of discipline a father gives his son, as it is written, *"Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:11)*. God's full wrath and indignation do eventually fall on all who refuse to repent. However, His heart is not to destroy, but to save. Yeshua said, *"Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth" (Revelation 2:16)*.

God's Judgments can come in many forms. For example, God can withhold His rain from the land, or He can bring a natural disaster, or He can bring an invading army. Nothing is withheld from Him, as it is written, *"He makes lightning for the rain; He brings the wind out of His treasuries" (Psalm 135:7). "He also gave up their cattle to the hail, And their flocks to fiery lightning" (Psalm 78:48)*. But the Lord also has another tool in His arsenal.

In the Second Book of Samuel and First Chronicles, we see an interesting story about God's judgment against Israel for her idolatry. It reads, *"Again the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, 'Go, number Israel and Judah'" (2 Samuel 24:1)*.

In the parallel story, we read, *"Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel" (1 Chronicles 21:1)*. These two stories might appear to contradict each other. Was it the Lord or Satan who moved on King David's heart to number Israel? Since God is sovereign over all creation, it was obviously the Lord.

Therefore, Satan is one of many created vessels that God can use to bring about His judgments. So, how are we to know if our tribulations are from God or the enemy? After all, Satan's wrath is handed out liberally to all mankind, especially to those who have been chosen by God—which is both Israel and the church. Satan desires to bring death and destruction. From this, we can begin to understand the Holocaust, and all the persecution against the Jewish people, including a future reign of Satan's terror prophesied in what is called the "time of Jacob's sorrow."

I often hear Christians blame every negative circumstance in their lives on Satan. However, on the flipside, since God is in control of everything, can we also erroneously blame everything on God? You have probably heard someone say something like this: "If God is so good, then why do bad things happen to people?"

My father used to say: "Who told you God is good?" He understood that their statement was rhetorical because I have never heard anyone say, "If God is so bad, then how come good things happen to people?" You see, their baseline presumption is that "God is good."

The answer to why good or bad things happen to people is that we may not always know. For this reason, Yeshua comforted His disciples (the early church) about their future suffering when He said, *"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33)*.

Sometimes, bad things happen to people who are in the wrong place at the wrong time. Yeshua spoke about a wall that fell on eighteen men at the tower of Siloam. The presumption of the Jewish leaders at that time was that if something bad happened to you, it was a result of sin in your life, and God's punishment for that sin.

However, Yeshua drove the point much deeper. He said, "Where these men worse sinners than all the other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? (Luke 13:4). No, we are all sinners deserving of death. The question should have been, why is there death in the world at all? I think we know the answer.

Zephaniah prophesied that God would humble the nation of Israel and leave in her midst a meek and humble people, so we, the church must also accept that we will not always understand God's underlying plan. God is working out His eternal plans with each human being, and we, the church, are to be a meek and humble people who do not question God's motives but trust Him explicitly in everything He does or allows. That is called *faith*.

Paul said it like this, *"Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:26-28)*.

Now, back to our original question: Is God judging America? I believe He is. Why? Because I also believe He loves this nation, and I know He desires to bring all to repentance and ultimately, to salvation. It is written, *"With my soul I have desired You in the night, Yes, by my spirit within me I will seek You early; For when Your judgments are in the earth, The inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isiah 26:9)*. Is Satan also trying to destroy this nation because of all the good that is being done through God's people, including our protection of Israel and our support of the Jewish people? Absolutely, yes.

Satan, who is also called the Prince of the power of the air, has been given a degree of authority over the atmosphere. We can see how he stirred up a tempest against Jesus in the Book of Matthew. *"But He said to them, 'Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?' Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm" (Matthew 8:26)*. Look at all the hurricanes that have hit our country over the past several years. These should serve as a warning or wakeup call.

A meek and humble people do not ignore Satan's power and authority, but in *faith* trust that Yeshua, our Lord, is greater than our enemy. We need to pray and humbly ask that the Lord of the wind and sea calm every storm the enemy brings against us. Even if we believe this nation is deserving of judgment, we should always pray for God's mercy, because we know that it brings no pleasure for the Lord to destroy the wicked, and the Lord desires mercy and not sacrifice.

Jonah got a lesson in God's mercy when Nineveh repented and was spared God's judgment, and so did Yeshua's disciples when they asked Him: *"Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did? But He turned and rebuked them, and said, You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them" (Luke 9:54-56)*.

The Lord likens His protection to a wall or hedge of protection. *"And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down" (Isaiah 5:5)*. When a nation sins against the Lord, His protection is lifted, and the enemy has access to destroy our cities. We need that wall of protection restored to our nation. A concrete wall along our borders will not protect us unless we also have God's spiritual wall of protection.

It is imperative in this coming season, of both God's discipline and Satan's destructive wrath against America, that we pray earnestly for the Lord's protective hand to cover us. Individually, as God's people, we also need to wear His protective armor, ensuring we are repentant of our (old nature) wicked ways, and confessing our sins when we fall short of God's glory.

We must pick up our cross daily and crucify our flesh, which means giving up the selfish nature that desires to become our own god. And, we must fully submit—in willful desire—our obedience to the Lord, who alone orders our footsteps.

Our Lord has instructed us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Yes, and let us also pray for the peace of our cities and this nation, for it is written, *"Seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace you will have peace" (Jeremiah 29:7)*.

"*Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence" (1 Timothy 2:1-2)*. Yes, quiet and peaceable lives so that we may continue to worship our Lord and Savior and share the good news of the gospel in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

Amen!

SOURCE: **HOUSE OF DAVID MINISTRIES**

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Justice, Kindness, and Truth

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CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
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Yeshua said: *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6, NKJV)*. Yeshua is the way to eternal life. That is clear. But what is truth? Pontius Pilot, the governor of the Roman province of Judaea, asked Jesus the same question.

Truth is conventionally defined as "that which is true or in accordance with fact or reality." From a Christian perspective, the gospel is true. That being that we are all sinners and Christ died to pay for our sins. But what is the more profound understanding of truth from a Jewish perspective?

Let me begin with a rabbinic narrative on three seemingly contrasting characteristics—Justice, kindness, and truth. We read:

> "A world built on both kindness and justice could not long endure since these two opposites would clash with each other constantly. Only with the concept of truth (Emet) could the world find its necessary balance. Truth decides when to utilize kindness, when to utilize justice, and when to temper one with the other. When kindness and justice and blended in the proper measure, the result is truth."

Wow! That sounds like a powerful representation of the gospel. If God exclusively demonstrated His kindness towards us, then He has ignored our sin. And if He only showed His justice towards us, then we would continually be subject to His eternal punishment for our sin.

When kindness and justice are brought together, God's truth is demonstrated to us in the form of grace. And Jesus is that grace, for it is written, *"For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17)*. Here the writer has specifically linked grace and truth together. Grace is God's love that He has manifested through His revealed truth—who is Christ. He is the one who has tempered God's justice with His kindness.

Truth is also knowing and doing what is right—God's law—but that is not what Yeshua spoke. Jesus did not go around telling people to follow the law as a means of obtaining God's grace. No, he went around telling people to repent so they could receive God's unmerited grace. Unmerited, because it was Christ who tempered God's justice by taking upon Himself the punishment that we deserved. And more, Jesus bore the full wrath of God, and thus became the way, the truth, and the life. But most importantly, He demonstrated God's truth—that when kindness and justice are blended in the proper measure, the result is truth.

Yeshua is the way, and the way of repentance is what leads us to our Heavenly Father. Yeshua is also the one who atoned for our sins, and this atonement resulted in our justification before God so that we could receive His eternal life.

Now that we have His life, the Lord has called us to restore His house—His Kingdom; for it is written, *"Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In" (Isaiah 58:12)*.

To the Jew first and then to the Greek, we share the good news of the Kingdom with all. This is how God's house grows and His Kingdom advances. We share God's kindness as a testimony to His love and how He delivered us from His strict Justice into His loving arms of compassion and mercy.

Unfortunately, there is presently much division within God's house, fueled by a spirit of pride that has led to ignorance. Paul said, *"For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this*

mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion" (Romans 11:25).

However, the root of this division stems from an identity complex and a wounded spirit caused by our sin and separation from God. This wound, coupled with ignorance, has led to antisemitism and racism, even within the church. There are now thousands of factions and denominations, most of whom are severed from their Hebraic foundation.

How are we, the church, to rebuild the old waste places? How can we raise up the foundations of many generations? We cannot unless we are restored to the truth.

And what is this truth? Only, that the *one* who is called the way, the truth, and the life is a Jewish man. He is the Messiah of Israel and the nations, and He is called the King of the Jews. Those from the nations who have followed His way of repentance now receive His eternal life. They are grafted into the remnant of His Kingdom, Israel.

Paul said you have been grafted into Israel's natural branches, and spiritually, we are already *one*. But in the natural world, God has yet to heal the wound of division in His family. Therefore, God's prophetic destiny is for the Gentile church to reconnect with their Messianic Jewish brethren. This will occur by their repentance from the rejection of both the Jewish people and their Jewish Messiah. *"For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?" (Romans 11:24)*.

Yes, it is their olive tree, and this tree has a Hebraic root and foundation. This does not mean that the Gentiles must become Jews to enter the Kingdom. No, the Gentiles have been joined with their Jewish brethren by being grafted into their tree. Together, we have become *one new man* in Christ and *one* people of God comprised of every tongue, tribe, nation, and people.

Now we are *one*, yet we are diverse. We are all equal, but we are not the same. Israel comprised twelve tribes, twelve separate families, each with their unique gifts and inheritance. But sadly, Israel became divided and later the church also.

As Christians, we must understand that there is no place for division in God's household. There is no tolerance for racism, antisemitism, or injustice in His Kingdom. And those who refuse to accept the truth of scripture may find themselves cut off from the promise of their inheritance. As it is written, *"Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off" (Romans 11:22)*.

Many in this nation are crying out for Justice. Justice for the murder of the unborn. Justice for corruption in our government and the violation of agreements with the American Indians. Justice for the tolerance of poverty caused by centuries of slavery and segregation. And the list goes on.

The secular world is also seeking justice. Their solutions span the political spectrum. They range from far-right libertarianism, liberalism, and utilitarianism to far left postmodern Marxism. All of these secular views conflict with scripture. Why? Because they remove God from the narrative. Each tries to establish boundaries of moral relativism without inserting God's opinion on the issue. But God does indeed have an opinion.

In the story of the Exodus, we learn about a young priest named Phinehas. He was Aaron's grandson and the son of Eleazar—the high priests and Kohanim of Israel. The Aaronic priesthood served as a *type* for the priesthood of Christ. Yeshua's priesthood is per the order of Melchizedek, who is the fulfillment and the *antitype*.

Phinehas was displeased with Israel's sexual immorality with the Midianites and Moabites. He mediated God's justice for Israel by publicly executing an Israelite man and Midianite woman. Gruesome! Yes. But it reveals the ugliness of our sin and the wrath we deserve.

Yet here is the paradox. God made a covenant of peace with Phinehas and his descendants, declaring: *"Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal. Therefore say, 'Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel" (Numbers 25:11-13)*.

How does a covenant of peace result from the execution of a man and a woman? Similarly, how the crucifixion of Christ, Yeshua's public execution, resulted in our everlasting covenant of peace that has now been mediated by the Prince of Peace.

The sages tell us that because of Phinehas's zeal for God's justice and his bringing about peace between God and Israel that he will be the future Elijah, who will herald the arrival of the Messiah. We read that it was a descendant of Phinehas, John the Baptist, who would fulfill this prophecy. As it is written, *"He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17)*.

If John was a *type* and Christ is the *antitype*), has this mantle of peace been given to the church? Are we now to become the repairers of the breach and the restorers of all things of the Kingdom? Are we to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children? I believe, yes.

I am reminded of another story from the Bible, where the disciples wanted to call down fire from heaven to destroy the inhabitants of a community that had rejected Yeshua. But Jesus turned and rebuked them, saying, *"You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them" (Luke 9:55)*.

Was Yeshua a pacifist that ignored human injustice? He was not, and we all know the story of Him turning over the money changers' tables. Yeshua reminded His disciples: *"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'" (Matthew 5:38)*. In other words, Yeshua was saying that God demands justice.

This statement is an idiom, meaning Yeshua did not want us to poke out other people's eyes. Instead, according to the Oral Torah, this law was a directive for monetary compensation to the injured party. As it is written, *"Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants" (Mattew 18:23)*. But even this financial compensation was understood to never fully repair the damage, leaving us in the position of begging for forgiveness from the injured party.

Justice demands God's judgment, and it is the church whom God has placed on the earth to execute these future judgments; for it is written, *"Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?" (1 Corinthians 6:2)*.

How many people today are demanding reparations for past injustice? They cry out: Pay us for the damage you and prior generations have caused us. However, I am reminded that Jesus is the truth. What truth? That God's kindness tempers His strict Justice. And we, the church, must learn the same. As the Lord declared: *"I will leave in your midst A meek and humble people, And they shall trust in the name of the LORD" (Zephaniah 3:12)*.

If there remains injustice in our nation, especially within the church, we must do all possible to rid ourselves of it. But reparations and payment for injustice? It is not the time for the Day of Judgement is not yet upon us. Christ has paid the price for *all* damage caused by *every* sin and rebellious action since the Garden of Eden.

We live in a fallen and sinful world. And yet, there are many occasions for the church to fight for God's justice, even striving until Yeshua returns to establish His perfect righteousness. But this fight for justice was always on behalf of others who were defenseless. Israel was commanded to protect the widows, the orphans, the poor, and the strangers. And we, the church, are likewise required to do the same.

Is there presently in this country injustice against vulnerable and underrepresented people groups? Yes. Shall we call down fire from heaven to consume those who cause injustice? Absolutely, no. Because we, like the son of man, are not being sent forth to destroy men's lives but to save them. We have been sent in the truth—knowing that God's kindness tempers His Justice.

We are *all* sinners deserving of God's punishment, and it is Christ who carries *all* our iniquity. God has called every man to repent and receive His forgiveness. And now, Yeshua has asked that we also forgive others just as we have been forgiven. We know there is no financial compensation that

can ever fully repair the damage we have brought upon God's creation and other people. Only the precious blood of Christ can atone for our iniquity and restore all things.

I believe that Martin Luther King understood this principle as he led many during the civil rights movement in a spirit of love, peace, and reconciliation. There were other leaders at that time, just as today, who believed that fire and wrath would turn this nation.

But let me ask you these questions. Have the carcasses of their gutted buildings been restored? And where are the monuments to these leaders of destruction? There is no one, yet we see Martin Luther King standing tall amid our nations' capital.

What is truth? Yeshua is truth, and we, the church, must become examples of His truth—men and women who have a zeal for God's justice but know that His kindness tempers His wrath. For it is the kindness of God that leads us to repentance.

It is time for the church to rise and shine and to be seen amongst the nations. We will become the repairers of the breach by repenting and allowing God to heal us of all division, racism, and injustice. And the Gentiles must return to their Messianic foundation and become fully grafted members of God's household, repenting of their separation from the Jewish followers of Christ.

In the spirit of God's kindness and truth, we will then turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. Therefore, I continue to pray that the Lord will leave *us*, the church, a meek and humble people in this nation. Yes, it is time for God's truth to prevail and for the church to arise in the spirit of Elijah to restore all things.

SOURCE: **HOUSE OF DAVID MINISTRIES**

House of David
MINISTRIES

The Left Has No Clothes

JANUARY 13, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Frankly, it's not a good look.

By J. Jeff Toler, for Shenandoah Christian Alliance

The Left may not be winning right now, and they're beginning to look pretty foolish. Maybe it's because their plans really aren't so popular after all. Following decades of the "long march through the institutions" the Left should have everything they ever hoped for. In 2021 they managed to occupy both houses of congress and seize the White House. So, is it me, or do they appear to be getting desperate?

The answer may be as simple as this: the Left just doesn't have a plan people really want: their plan to is divide, destroy, and dictate. Maybe now, America is beginning to see the "emperor" has no clothes.

Is The Overton Window Changing?

The Overton Window of political possibility can be explained as the range of ideas the public is willing to consider and accept. It's important because this window is like a barometer, and it may be showing a change is coming; a change the American Left should fear.

"The most common misconception is that lawmakers themselves are in the business of shifting the Overton window. That is absolutely false. Lawmakers are actually in the business of detecting where the window is, and then moving to be in accordance with it." – Joseph Lehman
(from **conceptually.org**)

Today, owing to the mainstreaming of deviant sexual confusion, racism, materialism, and a polarizing cultural hegemony, Leftists are using a corrupt media, weaponized federal agencies, and government/public schools for Marxist indoctrination. Have the Left gone too far? The Virginia gubernatorial upset last November was, by all metrics, the result of pushback from outraged parents of students in government/public schools who finally saw the truth.

From this one incident alone, it is not that difficult to conclude that the Left may have thought they were winning the culture war, and untouchable. But angry moms and dads are not a force they were prepared for. Though by no means cause for a sigh of relief, it is a sign there is room for hope.

So, what do we really mean by "Left and Right"?

In American politics, who are Left and Right? The terms now used in contemporary political discourse originated during **the French Revolution**. Afterward, the **French National Assembly**, delegates who advocated for the revolution sat to the left of the presiding officer, while the conservative supporters of traditional rule sat to his right. Ironically, the French Revolution promoted equality, but in time, the ruling elite emerged to impose tyranny. (From **history.com**)

It's safe to say that only one revolution provided true liberty for the common man: **the American Revolution.**

Lex Rex or Rex Lex?

This is the way of things: people will inevitably be ruled by the law, or by the king—either *lex rex,* or *rex lex*. (The law is king, or the king is law)

Defining terms like liberalism, conservatism, and leftism requires diligence to determine objective answers. Space does not permit even a cursory examination of history, but in essence, the left and right political spectrum in western civilization today can be described this way:

The Left employs revolution to obtain rights-violating ideologies and systems—by force as necessary. The Left includes communism, socialism, fascism/nazism, anarchy, and theocracy.

The Right prefers rights-respecting beliefs and systems through governance—not by force. The right is identified by capitalism, classical liberalism, and constitutional republicanism.

Since the invasion of Marxist doctrine, America, and by extension western civilization, has complicated these terms and definitions, due largely to the success of leftist redefinitions, and through misappropriation. This would explain, for example, why Liberals are often confused with Leftists. But classical liberals have much more in common with Conservatives than Leftists, including free speech, personal freedoms, and the denunciation of racism, to name but a few. Classical Liberals, like Conservatives, prefer to defend religious beliefs.

Dennis Prager explains beautifully the difference between Liberalism and the Left in a famous 2017 **Daily Signal** commentary: **"Leftism is not Liberalism. Here are the Differences."** I have come to trust Prager implicitly. This is a great read.

So, wouldn't it be so much better if everything could be described in simple terms of, "we're right, and they're wrong?" In simple terms, yes, it would. And it can. But it's complicated because not everyone will accept the biblical premises of good and evil, right and wrong, or even up and down. We talk about left and right as if we think everyone agrees with our definition of who, or what is "on the left," and who is "on the right." Many will refuse to listen, and others still will refuse to let us speak.

To make matters worse, it's not that uncommon to hear someone—including a **Supreme Court Justice**—declare something as fact, when in fact, it is not true at all.

This is what desperation looks like in the theatre of the absurd. The effort required to construct, promote, and maintain such a massive mountain of lies, deceit, and prevarication has to be a colossal strain on everyone who participates. But these lies only lead to tyranny.

Still, cracks are starting to appear, and many people can see them. Now is the time to be bold against this tyranny. No aphorism today is truer than this: "Knowledge is power."

- "***But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved."*** (Hebrews 10:39)

Christian Conservatives are armed with knowledge and truth. They know The Plans God has in store. Consider this: before we enter into the fray, we must first repent. Repentance leads to restoration, restoration leads to reconciliation, and reconciliation leads to Godly freedom. **See Joel 2:12-13**

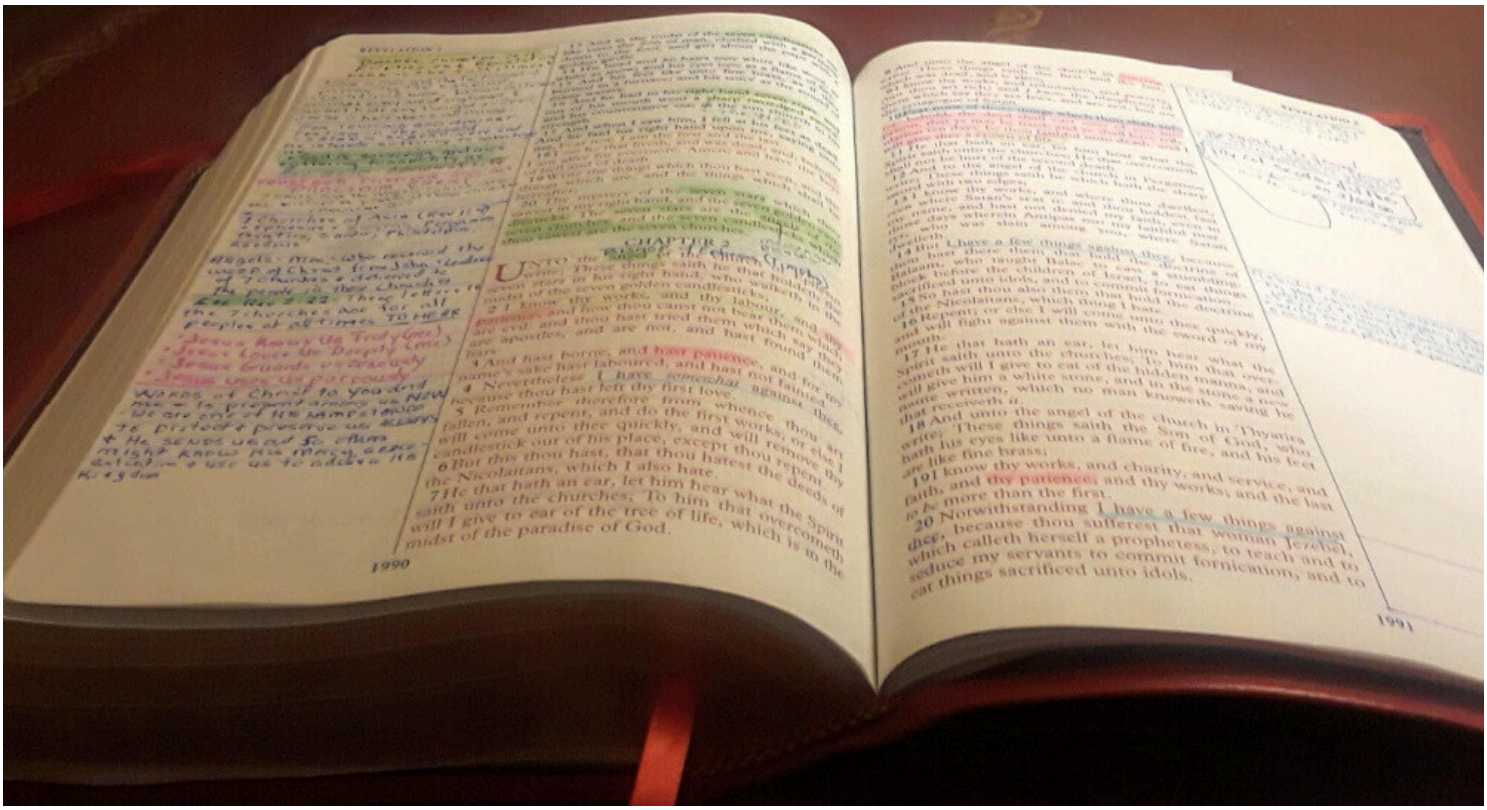
Then remember:

- *"You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood."* (1 John 4:4-6)

Be courageous, be blessed!

Spiritual Fitness: The Lord's Prayer

JANUARY 12, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Dr. Robert Youngblood | **The Stand**

*(Editor's Note: This is the second in a series on spiritual fitness or growing in godliness. For the first part, please see **HERE**.)*

Just a couple of months ago we introduced the Lord's Prayer as a part of the bedtime ritual for the boys who are two and four now. God has powerfully blessed us since doing so.

However, I have learned that R.C. Sproul's statement about the sections of the Bible with the Lord's Prayer as being "the most neglected passages in the New Testament" had been more true in my life than it should have.

(Each slice of his **ten-part series** on the Lord's Prayer lasts about 22 minutes, and after listening to more than an hour, it is as if I've tasted some of the sweetest fruit to nourish the soul – particularly in the section "**Thy Will Be Done**." I had started this blog before discovering these, yet already I am greatly moved by them.)

Anyone who denies prayer as part of being spiritually fit or being fit for the kingdom hasn't paid attention to how often Jesus prayed in the New Testament nor with how often prayers are packed

within the Bible.

The Request

Scripture doesn't tell us which disciple asked Jesus to teach them to pray because it was actually a request.

*"Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples" (**Luke 11:1 NKJV**).*

What didn't Jesus teach?

He didn't say pray what is on your heart.

He didn't say just pray whatever comes to mind.

He didn't teach a prayer focused purely on the person praying and his or her requests.

Do all of these seem in opposition to how prayers occur in American Christianity?

If so, you aren't the only one. "I think we are in the most narcissistic age in the history of the church," Sproul said, "where all the attention is on ourselves rather than on the majesty of God."

What did Jesus teach?

First, He gave some things to avoid.

We shouldn't treasure being seen or heard by others (**Matthew 6:5**). Those who do this have fallen in love with a method instead of the Master. **Matthew 6:6** says we should pray privately and in secret. Then, **Matthew 6:7** says we shouldn't pray with vain repetitions with many words.

Well, this presented some problems for me. I originally learned this prayer while attending church as a child. It was publicly prayed and in unison as part of the service.

However, I noticed something that eased my concerns after I prayed to God while honoring what **James 1:5-6** says.

The prayer starts with "Our." This could possibly indicate we would be praying with others, and/or we are to remember we are part of a family who has God as their Father. Remember, the request was to *"teach **us** to pray."* When my wife and I pray this prayer together as the boys listen, I know God is working on each of us individually and us together.

Glory to God

Jesus created this prayer to glorify God. This rose must smell as sweet to God regardless of the name we give it if we just pray it: the Lord's Prayer, the Our Father or the Pater Noster – Latin for "Our Father" (as dubbed by many Catholics), or the disciple's prayer (as dubbed by some evangelicals).

In a previous blog, "**The God Who Answers Prayer**," I shared that I cringe a little when I hear or read "I believe in the power of prayer." Why? It steals glory from God in a culture with many mini-gods. So, let's give glory where glory is due – to the God who answers prayers and the God who cares.

Even though our requests are sandwiched between parts that glorify God, we see Jesus reminding us of something we all need to know just before starting – especially if we think this prayer is too general in nature to our requests:

*"Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him" (**Matthew 6:8 NKJV**).*

Yet, Jesus made sure to include our requests for the most necessary needs between the parts many don't know we need – to glorify God.

Praying God's Word

Interestingly, Jesus also didn't teach them to **pray Scripture** either – one of the most powerful ways to pray to God. It wasn't that Jesus didn't have examples.

Sproul points out He could have told them to study the Psalms. They are anthems and prayers led by the Holy Spirit. Sproul adds how history proves the Psalms have often been the heart and center of church liturgy when the church has flourished. Lord, please flourish your church today.

Yet, the Lord's Prayer is Scripture for us today, isn't it? Let that one soak in for a while.

The Lord's Prayer is Scripture – God's Word doing God's work. It is living and active. It penetrates and exposes our innermost thoughts, intentions, and desires (**Hebrews 4:12**).

So, even when I was exhausted and frustrated from an extremely long day, regularly praying this affected me more than I want to admit. Yet, to fail to do so would be to withhold glory from God.

Please realize, the Lord's Prayer isn't some weight set where we can do so many sets and repetitions each week to gain spiritual fitness. This isn't checklist Christianity. This is a family

we've been adopted into or grafted into where God is our Father. We should love Him because He first loved us.

Reflecting on God's glory humbled me. Recognizing the sins against me that I had not forgiven shamed me and made me ask for His strength in my heart to obey (**Philippians 2:13 NLT**).

Additionally, and I have to agree, Sproul described the *"forgive us our sins as we have been forgiven"* portion as the most terrifying part of the Lord's Prayer. Think about this:

Do you want God to proportionately withhold forgiveness from you as you do others?

Glorifying God despite the pain

Ray Pritchard of **Keep Believing Ministries** wrote a beautiful piece called "**If God is Good, Why Do I Hurt?**"

He addresses the question we may even be afraid to ask ourselves at the lowest points in life: "Is God good, and can He be trusted to do what is right?" I found Sproul's discussion of "**Thy Will Be Done**" to be very useful here too.

Does this seem to fly in the face of what Jesus said, *"…For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him"* from ***Matthew 6:8 (NKJV)***?

No, instead it points out a place where we can trust God more. These times also point to the part of the prayer we may misunderstand – the part about *"lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."*

Sproul describes this by delving into the Greek meanings of the word(s) and touching on how this also uses a literary technique often found in the Old Testament – parallelism. This is where the meaning is nearly the same but with different words.

It seems the Greek word for temptation is better translated as "test." This better lines up with Scripture saying God doesn't tempt us (**James 1:13**).

The Greek word used for evil here – peirasmos – is the male gender as shown by the ending. Some translations clearly show we aren't talking about an abstract evil – which would have a different ending. Those read *"deliver us from the evil one."*

The gist of it is we are praying for God not to test us, but if we are tested, then we are praying He would be our shield, our protector. Many, including Jesus, faced tests, so for us to not expect them is to ignore reality.

Pritchard shares one man's multi-year battle with cancer where many had prayed for his complete healing. The man began "…pondering his own situation from a new perspective. Which is the greater miracle, he wondered, to be healed from cancer or to be given the grace to stay faithful even if he isn't healed completely?"

Job reprimanded His friends and wife while simultaneously glorifying God when he said, *"Though He slay me, yet I will trust in Him"* (**Job 13:15a**). Pritchard's **writing** expands on the purpose of testing by explaining the three sections found in this verse:

*But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold (**Job 23:10 NKJV**).*

This type of trust confuses the world, but it powerfully glorifies God.

"For thine…"

Within a month of us adding the Lord's Prayer to our evening, God surprised us. Already He had been working on my wife and me in relation to Him and those around us. Imagine our joy when, even as he was playing alone, the oldest spontaneously and clearly said *"for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen."*

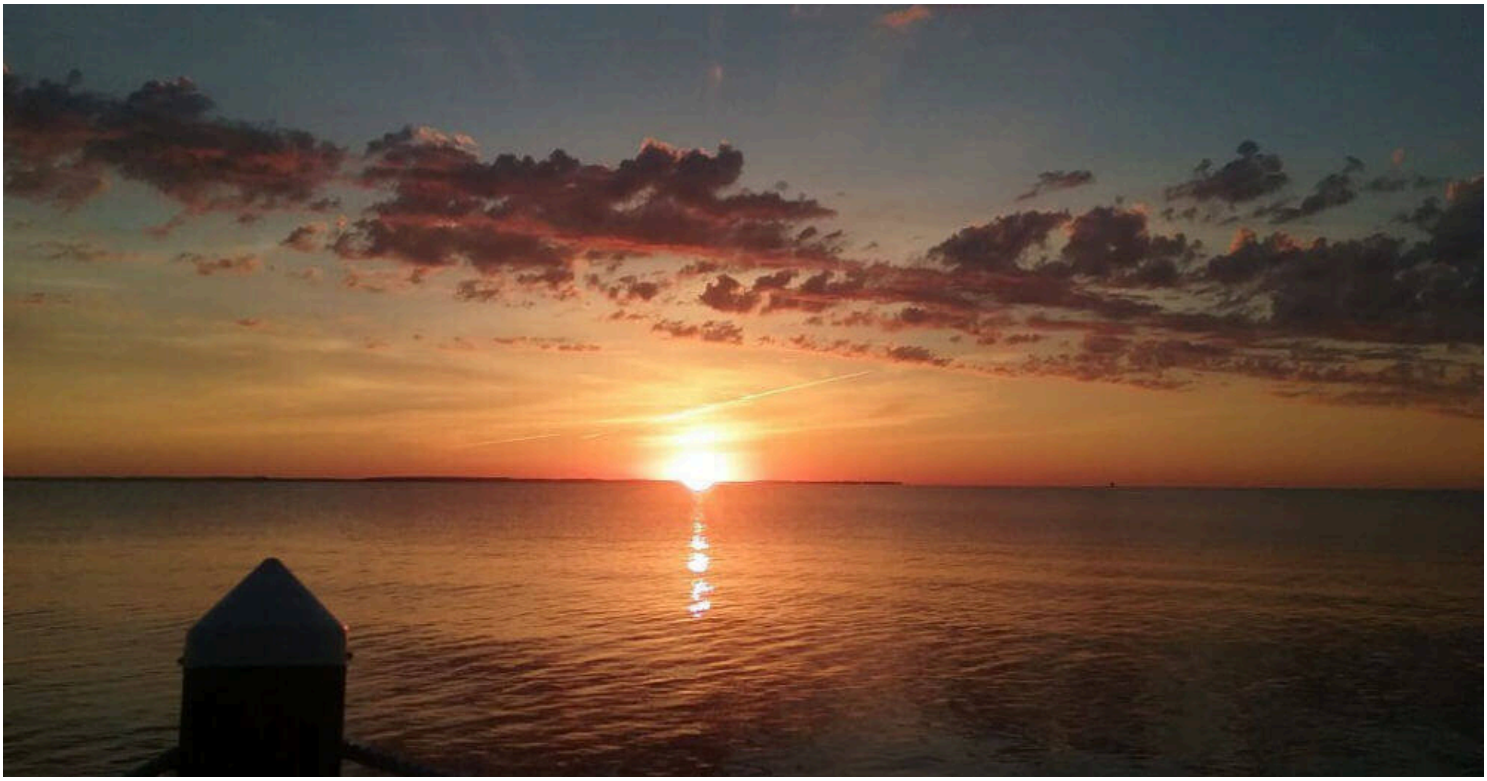
He isn't going to let a rock out praise him! Are you?

Let's give glory to our Father God who answers prayer because He is also the God who cares.

SOURCE: **THE STAND**

Entering the Kingdom

JANUARY 10, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



> We are not *going* to heaven. We will be *entering* the Kingdom. How are they different? Let me explain.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, Yeshua:

The arrival of the Messiah and His death and resurrection is unquestionably the most significant event in human history. Jesus-Yeshua, the Son of God, was born of a woman conceived by the Holy Spirit. He lived a perfect and sinless life, and in God's time, He gave His life to atone for the sins of humanity.

Yeshua was crucified, buried, and on the third day, rose from the grave. Forty days later, He ascended "to heaven" to the right hand of the Father. Ten days after that, God poured out His Spirit upon all flesh, and the church was born. For those who believe, we are promised to be resurrected or raptured at the return of Christ—the next most significant event in human history. We are going to heaven! And for those who reject Christ, they will be judged by God and will go to hell.

What I have described is how most Christians view the Gospel. While there is much truth in this theological viewpoint, it does not present an accurate portrayal of the Kingdom of God. We are not *going* to heaven. We will be *entering* the Kingdom. How are they different? Let me explain.

Going to heaven or hell implies that we will be leaving the earth one day, going somewhere else. If we go to heaven, we end up in an ethereal place in the clouds where we can fly around like angels and relax to our heart's content for eternity. And if we go to hell, we will drop into an abyss at the center of the earth that burns with fire and brimstone to be tormented forever.

Leaving the earth implies that heaven and earth are two separate places or dimensions. But as we read in Genesis, this separation did not exist at the beginning. It is written, *"And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day" (Genesis 3:8, NKJV)*. The division between heaven and earth appears to have come about because of sin. And we know that God will not dwell in the presence of anything unclean or unholy. Therefore, God has concealed Himself from the creation, as we read, *"Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face" (Genesis 4:14)*.

Additionally, let us presume the earth is the natural realm, and heaven is a spiritual one. In that case, *going* to heaven means that we will leave the natural realm and then exist for eternity in a spiritual state. If this is true, then why was Yeshua resurrected into a physical body with flesh and bones?

I find it interesting that Yeshua never said the words "go to heaven." He did say once, *"Today you will be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43)*. But more than sixteen times in the Gospels, He said for us to "receive" or "enter the Kingdom." Most of His discourses and parables were about "the Kingdom of God." And He preached to Israel about it, declaring that "the Kingdom was at hand," meaning God's Kingdom had arrived and is present with us here on earth.

Going to heaven is not the same as entering the Kingdom. The Bible communicates a different narrative than what many believe or understand. Again, Yeshua never said that we were going to *leave* the earth. On the contrary. Heaven is going to invade it. God (incarnate) came from heaven to earth to tell us about His soon-coming Kingdom, and He is returning quickly to establish it—the union of heaven and earth. Thus, He taught us to pray, *"Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10)*.

Yes, for a moment, we will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. But we are not staying there. Yeshua is returning *here*, and we are coming with Him. As we read, *"In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east" (Zechariah 14:4)*. Yeshua will return to the earth *on that day*, and all the saints (the church) will be with Him, here on earth forever.

There is another crucial detail to highlight in this story. Yeshua said, *"I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24)*. Presuming we correlate this statement with the declaration of the Gospel. In that case, we begin to understand that the arrival of Yeshua, the Messiah of Israel, fulfilled God's promise that He would establish His Kingdom through her.

It is written, *"And now the Lord says, Who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, So that Israel is gathered to Him (For I shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, And My God shall be My strength), Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth…' In an acceptable time I have heard You, and in the day of salvation I have helped You; I will preserve You and give You As a covenant to the people, To restore the earth, To cause them to inherit the desolate heritages" (Isaiah 49:5-6 & 8)*.

The reuniting of heaven and earth, hence the restoration of creation and God's Kingdom, began with Israel and culminates with her. Yeshua said, *"We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22)*. And the Apostle John declared, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)*.

Yeshua is the Lamb of God who fulfilled the Law of Moses given to Israel, the law of sacrifice and atonement, and the law of sin and death. Through the Old Covenant, God established His Tabernacle in Israel, providing a temporary covering for sin so that He could dwell with His people. God's presence was concealed within the holy of holies, and yet, for a season, heaven invaded this small portion of the creation.

At the crucifixion, God's presence broke through the veil that separated the holy of holies from His creation. The work of God's atonement was thereby transferred to the cross, where Christ would propitiate for the sins of all humanity. On the day of Pentecost (*Shavuot*), the Holy Spirit was poured out on all flesh, and now for every person (Jew and Gentile) who believes and confesses that Jesus is the Christ, the Kingdom of God has taken up residence in our hearts. The King has come, and now the Kingdom also. But the Kingdom is not fully established on earth, not yet.

We are also reminded that the Gentiles (the nations) have been brought into this continuing and unfolding story of God's redemption for His people, Israel. But the story did not begin with Yeshua. It started with Abraham. We read, *"Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all" (Romans 4:16)*.

Paul said that the promise of the Messiah would come from Abraham through Isaac and Jacob (renamed Israel). Therefore, he said, *"For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the*

glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen" (Romans 9:3-5).

Paul then expands this story of the Kingdom to now include the Gentiles. He said, *"And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree" (Romans 11:17). "That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel" (Ephesians 3:6)*.

The cultivated Olive tree is a picture of the Kingdom of God. It belongs to Israel and now those of the nations who have been grafted into her. At the very heart of God's Kingdom is the land of Israel and His holy city, Jerusalem. This land was promised to the natural descendants of Abraham. While the inheritance of this land has been challenged for centuries, it is arguably one of the best cases for an earthly Kingdom. Otherwise, why would Satan be fighting so hard to resist it? Rabbi Tzvi Freeman made this revelatory statement about this, saying:

"The nations cannot understand why the Jewish people should have a land. 'If it is God and scriptures and heaven that you are all about,' they claim, 'then why do you want a piece of earth? Is God in a place? Will you find God in settling land, in governing a country, in defending it? Make up your mind: Is it heaven you want, or earth?'"

"Those words, perhaps, are never said. They are quiet words, engraved within the human psyche. And they are the bias behind all their contentions with us: We don't belong here, on earth, where they belong, playing by their rules. Because God is in the heavens, and the earth belongs to humankind."

"But this is the mission of the Jewish people: For all to see that the same God in heaven is here within the earth, within all the endeavors of humankind. For there is nothing else but Him. Beginning with that specific, well-defined, very special piece of earth to which our destiny is tied.

What a significant revelation where he said, *"But this is the mission of the Jewish people: For all to see that the same God in heaven is here within the earth, within all the endeavors of humankind."* In other words, God's faithfulness to give the land of Israel to the descendants of Abraham is an absolute truth of God's Kingdom, and it will be established here on earth for all eternity.

We, the Jewish people, are but a mere revelation of God's faithfulness. Thus, our very words testify of who He is, as Yeshua said, *"You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8)*. And it is our irrevocable calling to preach the gospel of Christ and His Kingdom in all the earth.

But the inheritance of land is not exclusively for the nation of Israel. We read, *"Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession" (Psalm 2:8)*.

Christ will ultimately take possession of His entire creation. For it is written, *"The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" (Revelation 11:15)*.

So, here we have returned, full circle—back to the gospel, specifically, the gospel of the Kingdom. This *is* "the good news," that God has come to us. He has visited and redeemed His people, as it is written, *"Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of His servant David" (Luke 1:68-69)*. Therefore, Yeshua declared, *"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15)*.

God is restoring the entire creation to Himself, to the perfect conditions in the Garden of Eden. Day by day, the Kingdom of God is advancing, one heart at a time transferred from the kingdom of darkness into His marvelous light. And once the Kingdom is fully established in the creation, nothing unclean may enter, as it is written, *"But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life" (Revelation 21:27)*.

So, it is not that God sends people to hell. He denies their entry into His Kingdom. And those who are rejected are cast out of the Kingdom to a place outside of the creation. As we read, *"And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 25:30)*.

In the beginning, God created heaven and earth, not heaven and hell, and it was perfect. Hell is more than a place. It is a condition, a state of wickedness that exists within the creation because of humanity's sinful nature. It has become a temporary holding place for those awaiting God's judgment, as we read, *"For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment" (2 Peter 2:4)*. The final judgment is the "casting out" of God's Kingdom of all who reject Yeshua, the King, as it is written, *"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels'" (Matthew 25:41)*.

And yet, even in this dark place, God's presence is still there. As we read, *"He himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb" (Revelation 14:10)*.

Those who unite themselves to Satan's kingdom will also find themselves tormented before the Lamb. As it is written, *"But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8)*.

As Christians, we are called to be followers and imitators (disciples of Christ). We are imperfect people, undeserving of God's mercy and forgiveness, and certainly unworthy of entering His Kingdom. Yet, I am reminded of a powerful story of transformation in the Old Testament—David's mighty warriors, in Hebrew, the *Gibburim* (the mighty ones).

However, these men certainly did not start this way. We read, *"So David left Gath and escaped to the cave of Adullam. Soon his brothers and all his other relatives joined him there. Then others began coming—men who were in trouble or in debt or who were just discontented—until David was the captain of about 400 men" (1 Samuel 22:1-2)*.

Men who were in trouble, in debt, or discontented? That sounds like a group of imperfect misfits to me. Here, David serving as a *type* for the coming Messiah, without even trying or wanting, has attracted an unprofitable group of servants. Yeshua said, *"Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do'" (Luke 17:9-10)*.

Now, this might sound like a rebuke from the Lord, but also listen to these words of our Savior: *"His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord'" (Matthew 25:21)*. Enter where? Enter into the Kingdom of our Lord, where there is immeasurable joy.

Once again, we will *enter* the Kingdom of God here on earth and not leave it. Heaven and earth will unite as one, for it is written, *"Thus says the Lord: 'Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest ?'" (Isaiah 66:1)*.

The house of God is His church, and the place of God's rest is among His people here on the earth, albeit, in time, a "new heaven and earth," "a new creation." For it is written, *"Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God" (Revelation 21:1-3)*.

God has called us to go everywhere and share the "good news" of His Kingdom, not telling people incorrectly that we are *going* to heaven. But appropriately teaching them about the gospel of the Kingdom. That Christ has come, He is returning soon, and we will be joining Him as we enter the Kingdom. As Yeshua said, *"Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work" (Revelation 22:12)*.

And what is our reward? Undeserving and unprofitable servants that we are. The Lord has promised to give each of us a portion of *His* Kingdom inheritance. These are the kingdoms of this world that are presently under the realm of darkness. As we read, *"I will give you the treasures of darkness And hidden riches of secret places, That you may know that I, the Lord, Who call you by your name, Am the God of Israel" (Isaiah 45:3)*. Therefore, let us serve the Lord without ceasing in this present age, and in the age to come, let us enter the Kingdom together as *Gibburim*, mighty men and women of valor.

Amen!

SOURCE: **HOUSE OF DAVID MINISTRIES**

House of David
MINISTRIES

All Scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Bible (NKJV) unless otherwise noted, Thomas Nelson Inc., 1982.

Zechariah 13:1-2.

Luke 24:39.

1 Thessalonians 4:17.

Romans 9:3-5.

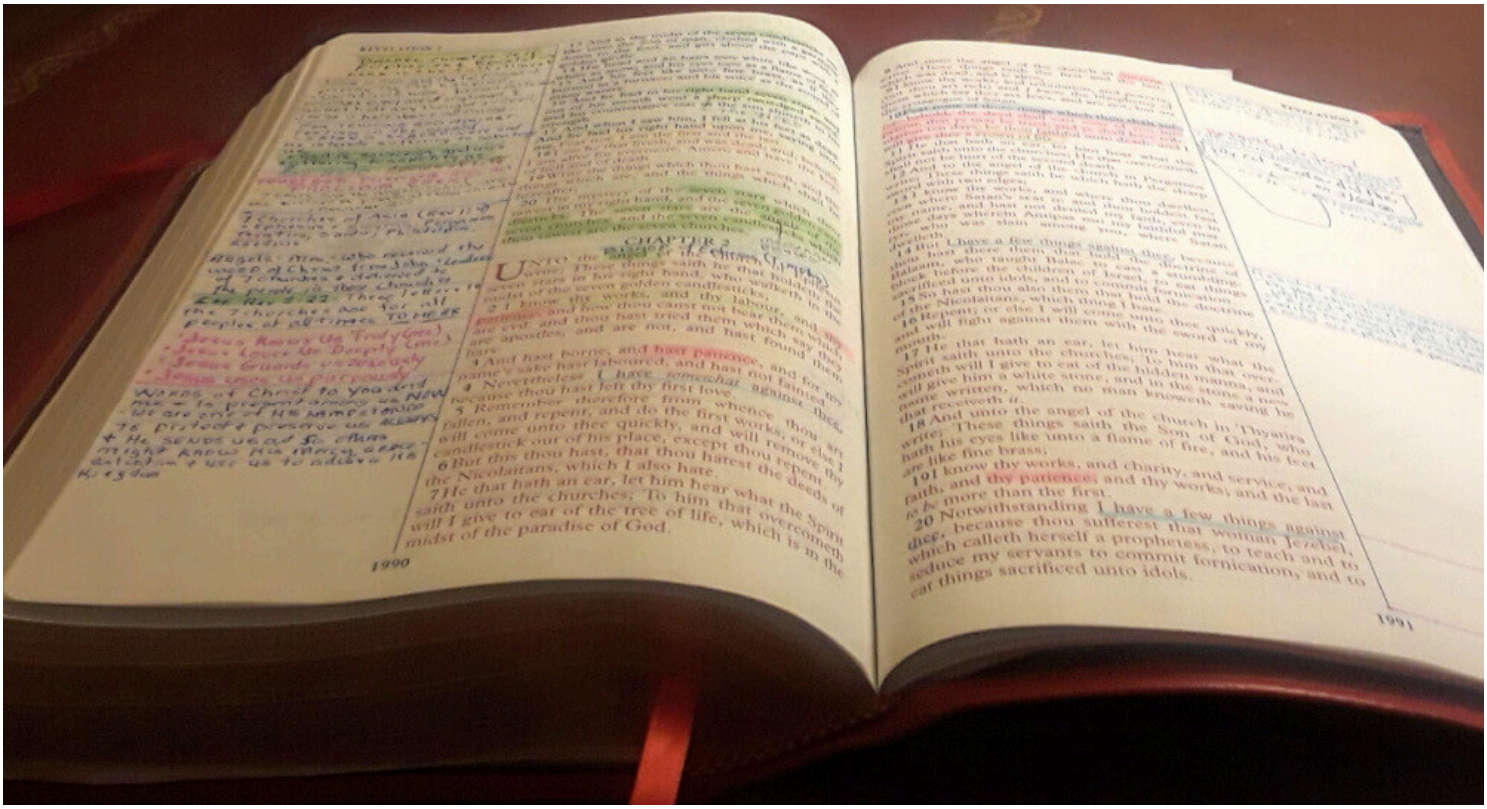
Freeman, Tzvi. *Our Land*. Chabad.org.

Romans 11:29.

Isaiah 65:1.

New Year's Resolution: Do Not Allow Evil to Prosper!

JANUARY 6, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Heed the Advice of Edmund Burke
New Year's Resolution: Do Not Allow Evil to Prosper!

by Lawrence Kadish | **Gatestone Institute**

The British statesman Edmund Burke left the stage centuries ago but left behind wisdom that would be well heeded by the America of 2022.

"Nothing," he **reminds** us, "turns out to be so oppressive and unjust as a feeble government."

Today our nation is facing multiple threats and the question its citizens need to ask is whether Washington is capable of recognizing these threats. Can this Administration confront and defeat them? Upon that answer hangs the future of our country and our democracy.

From a China intent on assuming global military dominance to an Iran whose nuclear ambition remains unchecked – from an America dependent on goods and services from the very nation that intends to reduce us to a third rate power to international cyber terrorists who put our economic foundations at risk — we need to acknowledge that America is under siege.

There are extraordinary domestic threats as well. Legitimate concerns remain about the integrity of our voting system as well as equally serious questions about the role of "bad actors" both here and overseas sowing mistrust by deliberately spreading social media disinformation.

This coming year will be a challenge for virtually every element of our society as COVID variants continue to take their toll. The credibility of health authorities is suffering: they offer conflicting advice, creating doubt and confusion. What also cannot be debated is COVID's winter impact on hospital staff and emergency first-responders as they suffer from COVID infections, further reducing the nation's ability to recover its health.

America's history is that of a resilient nation, capable of recovering from crises, confident in its future, and blessed with strong leadership. Past history however is not necessarily a roadmap to our future as far too few learn from past mistakes. As Burke is often credited with saying, "Those who do not know history are destined to repeat it." *

Equally threatening to our democracy are those politicians who check public opinion polls before determining the best course of action in a crisis: they fail the very people who have elected them.

Burke again speaks to us from the past when he reminds us, "When the leaders choose to make themselves bidders at an auction of popularity, their talents, in the construction of the state, will be of no service. They will become flatterers instead of legislators…."

The year 2022 will require strategic vision, personal integrity, and an appreciation that

America's leadership role in the 21st Century will be tested as never before. As generations of Americans have done before us, we must prepare ourselves to meet this challenge by embracing Burke's "bring it on" observation when he noted, "He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves and sharpens our skill…."

If we are able to heed yet one more warning attributed to Burke — "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing" — the United States will have the moral strength to confront and defeat its enemies "both foreign and domestic" in a year that by any measure promises to be historic.

**It was actually George Santayana: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."– The Life of Reason, 1905.*

Lawrence Kadish serves on the Board of Governors of Gatestone Institute.

SOURCE: **GATESTONE INSTITUTE**

When Does Understanding Lead to Action?

JANUARY 3, 2022
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Reflections on this year, and the time we have left.

By J. Jeff Toler, for Shenandoah Christian Alliance

At this point in time, a total of 87 email essays under the title of "Understanding the Times" have been delivered to **Shenandoah Christian Alliance** subscribers since May 2020. For these readers, we are deeply grateful. These essays have averaged more than 900 words each. That would mean to date, more than 80,500 words have been written about how we might understand the times we are living in. After more than 20 months it would seem the subject of cultural meltdown is inexhaustible. I am beginning to wonder: "What's next?"

Originally, "Understanding the Times" was launched for the purpose of increasing awareness of the major issues dividing America, and to persuade more Christians to vote, and vote biblically. **Some reports** put the estimate at around 40% of Evangelicals were not even registered to vote in the 2016 presidential election. Surprisingly, as much as 18% of those who did vote, put their trust in a Democrat presidency, even though that party endorses and supports late-term abortions, homosexuality, gender reassignments, and schismatic critical theories. Never mind open borders, runaway debt, and a weak military among the many other provably unchristian beliefs.

It is truly astonishing to see how brazen, contemptuous, and tyrannical the politically correct have become.

Regardless, it seems a growing number of people are experiencing voter's remorse, assuming poll numbers are anything by which to gauge. If Mr. Biden in 2020 received the largest number of votes in the history of America, how is it his popularity has now dipped into the thirty percentiles? It's more than possible that there are two major components in the situation, that for America, and by extension, the rest of the world, is the result of (1) blatant incompetency, and (2) disgraceful venality. Are such men so convinced they can prevail in spite of such a disastrous performance, that this won't ultimately obviate a seriously negative reaction among clear-thinking people? In plain language, do such men think we are that weak and ignorant?

The purpose for continuing these emails after the 2020 election after the winners were declared is this: Christians, particularly evangelical Christians as polls show, are not fully persuaded that Marxist/socialist ideology is at its core, utterly antithetical to an orthodox Christian world view. Perhaps one way is to inform, educate, and inspire pastors and Christian leaders through persuasive rhetoric, that cultural Marxism is the enemy of Christendom.

*"**Aristotle**, a Classical Greek scientist and philosopher, is among the most important thinkers in the development of Western thought. In the treatise **Rhetoric**, we see Aristotle's keen intellect applied to the art of persuasion."* (From **BFW Advertising**)

Persuasive rhetoric employs three modes of persuasion:

Logos—the argument itself; *Ethos*—trusting the presenter; *Pathos*—the emotional investment in the argument

Perhaps 30-odd years inside in-house marketing departments, writing ad copy and press releases may have been the fertile seed bed for my developing persuasive rhetoric. Who can say? Regardless, I am now asking, while paraphrasing **Francis Schaffer**, "How now do we *resist*?" In other words, it's one thing to understand what is corrupting our culture, and quite another to respond. I believe we should have as believers, the capacity to apprehend the notion that mere understanding, without resolute action is akin to the admonition the Apostle **James** gives us: ***"For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead."*** (James 2:26 ESV)

This thought has been in my mind for many months now: that the time for a movement by God through his people is about to happen. Just this past Monday, I heard this very feeling expressed by **Ken Fish** of **Orbis Ministries** on **The Eric Mataxas Show**. But how? **We must engage.** (Please listen: pick it up at **40:14** mark)

So where, and when, do we begin?

"When you know yourself and your opponent, you will win every time. When you know yourself but not your opponent, you will win one and lose one. However, when you do not know yourself or your opponent, you will be imperiled every time." —Lao Tzu, "The Art of War"

Should believers think in such military combat terms? It's debatable. But neither should we just ignore altogether the instruction such thinking provides. If we are to be wise as serpents, as Jesus requires of us, we should definitely know our enemy, and certainly his tactics. How we respond is really the issue here.

Satan's power and abilities are limited, so he uses the power of deception—as he did with Eve in the Garden of Eden. In our world today, Satan's plan has not changed. He beguiles people who are receptive because of their selfish desire, and pride, and now political correctness.

"For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner." (1 Timothy 2:13–14) Does that verse bother some of us? It shouldn't. Adam was not let off the hook, and it's not a strike on women.

We should know the enemy well enough to be able to see he has no power to stop the truth. The only caveat to that is: only if we, The Church, are relentless in our speaking the truth whenever and wherever we are called. ***So, we must engage this coming year, if we haven't already begun.***

This new year that is now upon us can be either more of the same wicked ideology used to destroy us, our children, our congregations, and our communities, or it might usher in a renewal, even a revival. After all, that's already happening everywhere else in the world, if you haven't been paying attention.

The Church, you, me—all of us, only need to network, communicate, and encourage one another. Our enemy has been very effective at this for decades. The people and resources are already in place—from coast to coast, north to south. In the months ahead, I will be providing the information for these very people and resources, with ideas on how to utilize them for the mission before us: be the victors that we should know we already are. Until then…

May God richly bless you and your household in 2022.

Don’t Let Cancel Culture Grinches Strip Your Joy from Christmas

DECEMBER 20, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

> The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views the Virginia Christian Alliance
>
> “It’s Christmas Eve! It’s the one night of the year when we all act a little nicer, we smile a little easier, we cheer a little more. For a couple of hours out of the whole year, we are the people that we always hoped we would be! It’s a sort of a miracle because it happens every Christmas Eve… There are people that are having trouble making their miracle happen… It’s not just the poor and the hungry, it’s everybody that’s gotta have this miracle!”— ***Scrooged*** (1988)

What a year.

It feels as if government Grinch’s, corporate Scrooges, and cancel culture humbugs have been working overtime to drain every last drop of joy, kindness and liberty from the world.

After endless months of gloom and doom, it can be hard to feel the joy of Christmas in the midst of rampant commercialism, political correctness and the casual cruelty of an apathetic, self-absorbed, dog-eat-dog world.

Then again, isn't that struggle to overcome the darkness and find the light within exactly what Christmas—the celebration of a baby born in a manger—is all about? The reminder that we have not been forgotten or forsaken. Glad tidings in the midst of hard times. Goodwill to counter meanness. Innocence in the face of cynicism. Hope in the midst of despair. Comfort to soothe our fears. Peace as an answer to war. Love that conquers hate.

As "**fellow-passengers to the grave**," we all have a moral duty to make this world (or at least our small corners of it) just a little bit kinder, a little less hostile and a lot more helpful to those in need.

No matter what one's budget, religion, or political persuasion, there is no shortage of things we can each do right now to pay our blessings forward and recapture the true spirit of Christmas.

For starters, move beyond the "us" vs. "them" mentality. Tune into what's happening in your family, in your community and your world, and get active. Show compassion to those in need, be kind to those around you, forgive those who have wronged you, and teach your children to do the same. Talk less, and listen more. Take less, and give more. Stop being a hater. Stop acting entitled and start being empowered. Learn tolerance in the true sense of the word. Value your family. Count your blessings. Share your blessings. Feed the hungry, shelter the homeless and comfort the lonely and broken-hearted. Build bridges, and tear down walls. Stand for freedom. Strive for peace.

One thing more: make time for joy and laughter. Shake off the blues with some Christmas tunes, whatever fits the bill for you, be it traditional carols, rollicking oldies, or some rocking new tunes. Watch a Christmas movie that reinforces your faith in the things that truly matter.

Here are ten of my favorite Christmas movies and music albums to get you started.

First the movies.

It's A Wonderful Life (1946). An American classic about a despondent man, George Bailey who is saved from suicide by an angel working to get his wings. This film is a testament to director Frank Capra's faith in people. Sublime performances by James Stewart and Donna Reed.

The Bishop's Wife (1947). An angel comes to earth in answer to a bishop's prayer for help. Cary Grant, David Niven and Loretta Young help energize this tale of lost visions and longings of the heart.

Miracle on 34th Street (1947). By happenchance, Kris Kringle is hired as Santa Claus by Macy's Department Store in New York City for the Thanksgiving Day Parade. Before long, Kringle, who believes himself to be the one and only Santa Claus, has impacted virtually everyone around him. Funny, witty and heartwarming, this film is stocked with some fine performances from Maureen O'Hara, John Payne and young Natalie Wood. Edmund Gwenn won the Academy Award for best supporting actor for his role as Saint Nick.

A Christmas Carol (1951). This is the best film version of the penny-pinching Scrooge's journey to spiritual enlightenment by way of visits from supernatural visitors. Alastair Sim as Scrooge gives one of the finest film performances never to win an Oscar. ***The Man Who Invented Christmas*** (2017) provides a wonderful glimpse into how Charles Dickens came to write *A Christmas Carol*.

A Christmas Story (1983). Ralphie is a young boy obsessed with one thing and only one thing: how to get a Red Ryder BB-gun for Christmas. Ralphie's parents are wary, and his mother continually warns him that "you'll shoot your eye out." Based on Jean Shepherd's autobiographical book *In God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash*, at the heart of this timeless comedy is the universal yearning of a child for the magic of Christmas morning. A great cast, which includes Darren McGavin, Peter Billingsley, Melinda Dillon and a voice-over narrative by Shepherd himself.

One Magic Christmas (1985). If you grew up in a family where times were tough, this film is for you. A guardian angel comes to earth to help a disillusioned woman who hates Christmas. This tale of redemption and second chances is a delight to watch. And Harry Dean Stanton makes a first-class offbeat angel.

Prancer (1989). This story of an eight-year-old girl who believes that an injured reindeer in her barn is actually one of Santa's reindeer is one of the most down-to-earth Christmas films ever made. It's a testament to the transforming power of love and childhood innocence. Sam Elliott and Cloris Leachman are fine in supporting roles, but Rebecca Harrell shines. Filmed on location in freezing, snowy weather, this film is a treat for those who love Christmas.

Home Alone (1990). Eight-year-old Kevin, accidentally left behind at home when his family flies to Paris for Christmas, thinks he's got it made. Hijinks ensue when two burglars match their wits against his. A funny, tender tribute to childhood and the bonds of family.

Elf (2003). Another modern classic with a lot of heart. Buddy, played to the hilt by Will Ferrell, is a human who was raised by elves at the North Pole. Determined to find his birth father, Buddy travels to the Big Apple and spreads his Christmas cheer to everyone he meets. This film has it all: Santa, elves, family problems, humor, emotion and above all else, a large dose of the Christmas spirit. One of the best Christmas movies ever made.

The Christmas Chronicles (2018). The story of a sister and brother, Kate and Teddy Pierce, whose Christmas Eve plan to catch Santa Claus on camera turns into an unexpected journey that most

kids could only dream about. Kurt Russell's star turn as Santa makes for movie magic.

Now for the music.

Out of the hundreds of Christmas albums I've listened to over the years, the following, covering a broad range of musical styles, moods and tastes, each in its own way perfectly captures the essence of Christmas for me.

It's Christmas (EMI, 1989): 18 great songs, ranging from John Lennon's "Happy Xmas (War Is Over)" to Bing Crosby's "White Christmas." The real treats on this album are Greg Lake's "I Believe in Father Christmas," Kate Bush's "December Will Be Magic Again" and Aled Jones' "Walking in the Air."

Christmas Guitar (Rounder, 1986): 28 beautifully done traditional Christmas songs by master guitarist John Fahey. Hearing Fahey's guitar strings plucking out "Joy to the World," "Good King Wenceslas," "Jolly Old Saint Nicholas," among others, is a sublime experience.

Christmas Is A Special Day (The Right Stuff, 1993): 12 fine songs by Fats Domino, the great Fifties rocker, ranging from "Amazing Grace" to "Jingle Bells." The title song, written by Domino himself, is a real treat. No one has ever played the piano keys like Fats.

Christmas Island (August/Private Music, 1989): "Frosty the Snowman" will never sound the same after you hear Leon Redbone and Dr. John do their duet. Neither will "Christmas Island" or "Toyland" on this collection of 11 traditional and rather offbeat songs.

A Holiday Celebration (Gold Castle, 1988): The classic folk trio Peter, Paul & Mary, backed by the New York Choral Society, sing traditional and nontraditional holiday fare on 12 beautifully orchestrated songs. Included are "I Wonder as I Wander," "Children Go Where I Send Thee," and "The Cherry Tree Carol." Also thrown in is Bob Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind."

The Christmas Album (Columbia, 1992): Neil Diamond sings 14 songs, ranging from "Silent Night" to "Jingle Bell Rock" to "The Christmas Song" to "Come, O Come Emmanuel." Diamond also gives us a great rendition of Lennon's "Happy Xmas (War Is Over)." A delightful album.

A Charlie Brown Christmas (Fantasy, 1988): 12 traditional Christmas songs by the Vince Guaraldi Trio. The pianist extraordinaire and his trio perform "O Tannenbaum," "The Christmas Song" and "Greensleeves." Also included is the Charlie Brown Christmas theme.

The Jethro Tull Christmas Album (Fuel Records, 2003): If you like deep-rooted traditional holiday songs, you'll love this album. The 16 songs range from "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" to Ian Anderson originals such as "Another Christmas Song" and "Jack Frost and the Hooded Crow."

With Anderson on flute and vocals, this album has an old world flavor that will have you wanting mince pie and plum pudding.

A Twisted Christmas (Razor Tie, 2006): Twisted Sister, the heavy metal group, knocks the socks off a bevy of traditional and pop Christmas songs. Dee Snider's amazing vocals brings to life "Oh Come All Ye Faithful," "Deck the Halls," "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus," among others—including "Heavy Metal Christmas (The Twelve Days of Christmas)." Great fun and a great band.

Songs for Christmas (Asthmatic Kitty, 2006): In 2001, independent singer/songwriter Sufjan Stevens set out to create a Christmas gift through songs for his friends and family. It eventually grew to a 5-CD box set, which includes Stevens' original take on such standards as "Amazing Grace" and "We Three Kings" and some inventive yuletide creations of his own. A lot of fun.

Before you know it, Christmas will be a distant memory and we'll be back to our regularly scheduled programming of "us vs. them" politics, war, violence, materialism and mayhem.

As I make clear in my book ***Battlefield America: The War on the American People*** and in its fictional counterpart ***The Erik Blair Diaries,*** there may not be much we can do to avoid the dismal reality of the American police state in the long term—not so long as the powers-that-be allow profit margins to take precedence over people—but in the short term, I hope you'll do your part to "spread a smile of joy" and "throw your arms around the world at Christmastime."

As you celebrate the season, take to heart the closing sermon in *The Bishop's Wife*:

> "Once upon a midnight clear, there was a child's cry, a blazing star hung over a stable, and wise men came with birthday gifts. We haven't forgotten that night down the centuries. We celebrate it with stars on Christmas trees, with the sound of bells, and with gifts… We forget nobody, adult or child. All the stockings are filled, all that is, except one. And we have even forgotten to hang it up. The stocking for the child born in a manger. It's his birthday we're celebrating. Don't let us ever forget that. Let us ask ourselves what He would wish for most. And then, let each put in his share, loving kindness, warm hearts, and a stretched out hand of tolerance. All the shining gifts that make peace on earth."—***The Bishop's Wife*** (1947)

WC: 1941

Whose Kingdom is it Already?

NOVEMBER 21, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Who, or what, is really shaping our worldview?

J. Jeff Toler, for Shenandoah Christian Alliance

Worldview – *noun*

A network of ideas and presuppositions which individuals hold in order to explain reality as it interfaces with every area of human civilization. 2. A belief system composed of several ideas, theologies, ideologies, and philosophies used to explain things and events within the realm of time, space, and history.

The Germans have a word for it: **Weltanschauung** (ˈvɛltˌɑnˌʃaʊ ʊŋ), a comprehensive conception or image of the universe and of humanity's relation to it.

Everyone has a worldview, whether they realize it or not.

"Our worldview is the set of presuppositions and beliefs that we use to interpret and form opinions and values concerning life, humanity, family, authority, justice, truth, duty, etc. Our worldview is the "big picture" and culmination of all our beliefs. It is the way we understand reality. It is the basis from which we make daily decisions." (**From Renewanation**)

In his forward to **"Advancing the Kingdom, Declaring War on Humanistic Culture,"** by Dr. Donald Schanzenbach, the Reverend Dr. Paul Michael Raymond (Appomattox, Virginia) begins with this provocative statement, *"Today's Christianity is in shambles."*

Before we take umbrage at this, we might take a moment to consider, even remotely, the possibility that he is completely justified in believing this. Today's Christianity, compared to the historical Christian Church, reveals some sobering distinctions from the Church of the nineteenth century. That Church was still engaged in the business of influencing, or at the very least, making the honest effort at influencing every element of a well-formed worldview—not just for the individual, but for the nations. If for no other reason, it is because we ought to have the moral authority to do so.

Holding such a worldview, one that is based on the convincing and convicting evidence that the Christian/biblical message embraces, ought rightly to demand a powerful desire to maintain and defend it.

The bearer of this kind of worldview understands the need to seek out others who share it, and in turn, share it with others who seek it.

Moreover, such a worldview dictates we, in actual fact, have the power, the right, and the responsibility to apply this worldview in every area of human enterprise. But instead, many modern Christians are clinging tenaciously to a seriously "truncated world and life view." We seem only to focus on evangelism, personal piety, and family life. All well and good. We are commissioned to do so. But our enemy, the enemy of The Church, has entered into *all the other areas of life* we often neglect.

Have we so lost the importance of this that we should be surprised at the accusation? Or are we just protesting any criticism of what we can only *say* should be the business of the Christian church—namely, to be salt and light.

But just how well are we doing even with this slice of the American (sociological) pie? One indication that we are deficient even in the morality quotient may be found in the following statistics found in **"The Scandal of the Evangelical Conscience, Why Are Christians Living Just Like the Rest of the World?"** By Ron Sider, Baker Books (February 1, 2005)

"'Gallup and Barna,' laments evangelical theologian Michael Horton, 'hand us survey after survey demonstrating that evangelical Christians are as likely to embrace lifestyles every bit as hedonistic, materialistic, self-centered, and sexually immoral as the world in general.' Divorce is more common among 'born-again' Christians than in the general American population. Only six percent of evangelicals tithe. White evangelicals are the most likely people to object to neighbors of another race.

Josh McDowell has pointed out that the sexual promiscuity of evangelical youth is only a little less outrageous than that of their non-evangelical peers."

All of this is cited, not to shame or shock, but to reveal that for many, the church in America has little if anything over the secular community. Why? Because the church in America is being influenced more by the culture than the culture is being influenced by the church. Sider's book was published almost 17 years ago. It's not possible to even think it could be any better now.

Paul the Apostle warned Timothy, that there are people who ***"having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people"*** (2 Timothy 3:5) The conundrum seems that we may be surrounded by such people, but too few even know it. How do we advance the Kingdom of God, if we are persuaded that it has not yet come? If that is so, how is it Jesus should say to the Pharisees, ***"If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you."*** (Matthew 12:28 — HCSB) Or, ***"Nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is in your midst."*** (Luke 17:21 — NIV)

Schanzenbach reminds us **the Kingdom is here and now.** God has created this Kingdom, and we are placed here to occupy it, being faithful and fruitful until that day when we will enter into the *Kingdom of Heaven*. Until that time, the righteous and the unrighteous will live together, until we will be separated like wheat from the tares.

Our advantage is this: we have been made righteous by His righteousness, thus we have the supernatural power to resist the devil—and so he will flee from us. Standing up to perverts, idolators, deviants, political ideologues, and "public" health officials shouldn't be all that difficult.

Defending Christendom—the Church universal—requires we preach the Kingdom, teach it to our children, and take on those who have made, in vain, their own kingdom. They have no power here in this one.

As Christians, we are more than conquerers, and this would be that rare occasion when the phrase, "We're in this together" has real meaning.

From One Child to Another

NOVEMBER 10, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The Stand | American Family Association (**AFA**)

HERE ARE SIX WAYS TO ENCOURAGE THE CHILDREN IN YOUR LIFE TO **PACK OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOXES**.

Operation Christmas Child is a project for all ages! You can get the boys and girls in your family and at your church involved in so many ways…

1. Collect Items & Write Shoebox Notes

Helping a child select items for a shoebox gift can teach money management, as well as a greater awareness of the plight of children in need. Including personal notes enhances the experience of praying for the shoebox recipient.

Amy Ashberry, an Operation Christmas Child community relations coordinator from Mathews, Virginia, organizes shoebox shopping trips for children.

During one outing, 19 kids and six chaperones traveled to a local discount store on a former school bus dubbed “The Shoebox Mobile.” That banner on the side of the bus caught the attention

of a couple of people in the store parking lot, resulting in them giving donations to the cause.

Amy had prepared for the Christmas in July activity by creating picture checklists for the children to use as a shopping guide. The group then packed the shoeboxes and made a card for each one – 100 in all!

2. Pack Shoeboxes as a Family

Children can offer unique perspectives on what kinds of gifts kids their age would like.

Kim Sawyer's grandchildren have inspired what they pack in shoebox gifts together, from a doll with a handmade blanket to toy cars. It was her 10-year-old granddaughter who encouraged her to **start packing themed shoeboxes**, beginning with a soccer focus.

"It's so fun to see her get so excited about gifting something to another child," Kim said. "That's the best part."

3. Maintain a 'Shoebox Workshop'

Mary Nix, an Operation Christmas Child church relations coordinator, created a "shoebox workshop" at her church in Missouri, using a dual-purpose Sunday school room to house items for the church's packing parties. With the help of volunteers, from children to retirees, she keeps an organized assortment of shoebox gifts in clear bins on wheeled, metal shelves.

It's a year-round effort of collecting, counting, and sorting the gifts by type, gender, and age category. In addition to helping folks realize when the church's supply of shoebox school supplies or stuffed animal "wow" gifts are getting low, keeping shoebox items in a designated space is a way for people to visually connect with the project, Mary said. In addition to packing parties, there's periodically a table of leftover items available at church that individuals or families can use to pack shoeboxes.

4. Vacation Bible School Connection

This past summer, First Baptist Church in Hamilton, Alabama, made Operation Christmas Child the daily mission's focus of its Vacation Bible School with **stories** and **videos**. Using shoebox items that the church had collected year-round, the children packed 95 shoebox gifts and wrote notes to go with each one. They placed the shoeboxes at the front of the church sanctuary and prayed for the boys and girls who will receive the shoebox gifts.

"They were clapping and cheering," recalled Renee Clark, who organized the emphasis. "They were so excited about their shoebox going to help a child."

The boys and girls also competed in a "penny war" contest to **support Operation Christmas Child**. The church collected a total of $3,500 during VBS.

5. Share the Importance of Generosity

You can use shoebox packing to teach the children in your life about God, His generosity, and ways they can share His love with others.

Since July, children as well as adults at Harvest Fellowship Baptist Church in Smithfield, Virginia, have been giving to Operation Christmas Child through a shoebox display. Building off a Vacation Bible School theme and hoping to generate children's interest over the long haul, project leader Jean Foster set up a train station display and offering container in the shape of a bank. The creative presentation has encouraged children in the congregation to collect change and to earn money through chores to contribute to the fund. One girl in the congregation set up a lemonade stand in her neighborhood, raising $300 for Operation Christmas Child. So far, the bank depot has received over $2,000 in donations.

In Washington state, Faith Carpenter and her three children have joined forces with another mom and kids in their community to pack shoeboxes and fund **Follow Your Box**. They sell baked goods as part of the neighborhood's yearly garage sale. This year at their sixth annual bake sale, they raised a record high of $450.

"Shoebox gifts are a way for my children to reach out to a boy or girl somewhere in the world," Faith said. "It's fun for them to put together a box and to see for themselves what a boy or girl will hold in their hands."

6. Opportunities to Share Christ with Children Right Here

From activity ideas to the **GREATEST JOURNEY(TM) mobile game app**, Samaritan's Purse offers many **family and children's resources** for free download to teach children on this side of the shoebox about God's greatest gift, Jesus Christ.

Amie Winstead, an Operation Christmas Child area coordinator in Tennessee, has held shoebox packing events at her church, inviting community youth to participate as a service project.

For children, she uses the **"Let's Be Friends"** free resource that can be ordered in color or downloaded as a coloring sheet. She has often made it a point to help a child fill out the shoebox note. This helps her get to know them better and learn where they are spiritually. In addition to finding out about the child's favorite color, food, and activity, the sheet includes space to write what their favorite Bible story is and why they love Jesus.

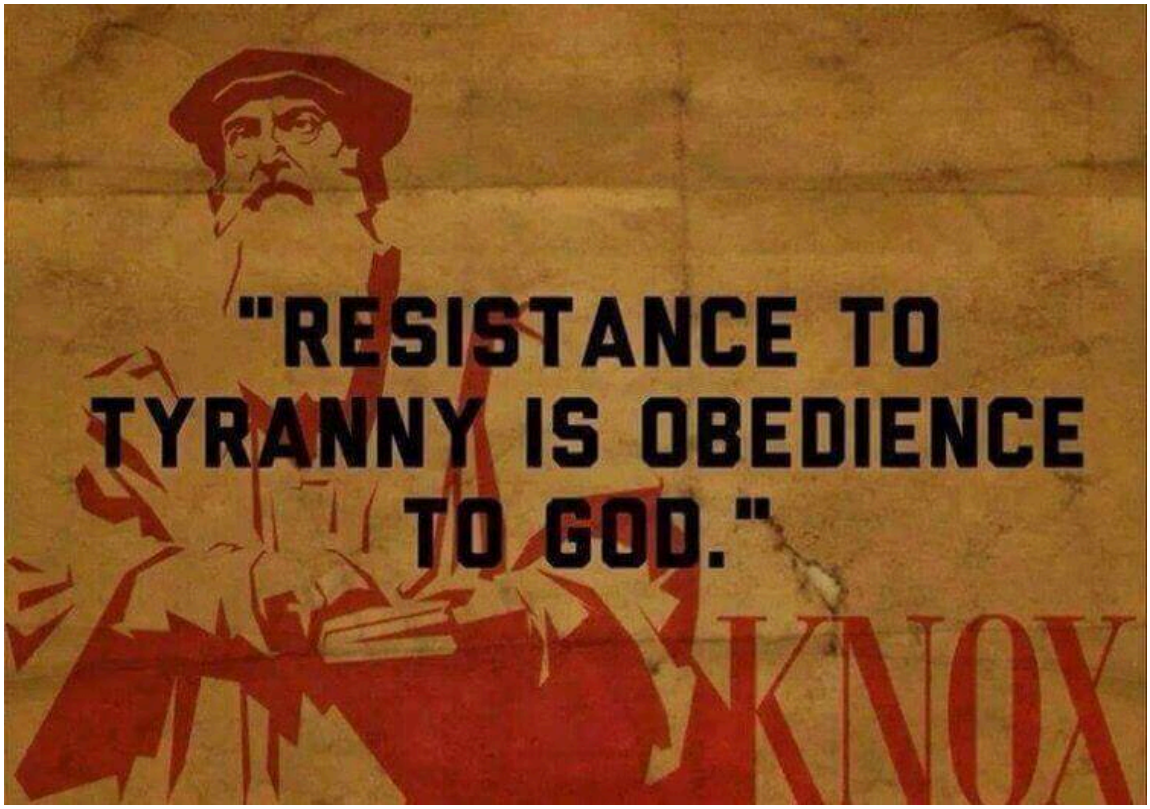
“Operation Christmas Child is great to use as an outreach to share the gospel with your community,” Amie said. “It exposes children to the gospel on this side of the box.”

National Collection Week is on the way! It’s time to prepare shoebox gifts for drop off at a **location near you** Nov. 15-22.

*(Editor’s Note: This is used courtesy of Samaritan’s Purse, and the original was published **HERE**.)*

Big Eva Has Gotten Pretty Fragile

OCTOBER 28, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Are Evangelicals needing some triage?

By J. Jeff Toler, for Shenandoah Christian Alliance

If the Church is *not* to engage in political leadership, then who should? Name another worldview superior to the Christian's biblical worldview.

Some of our readers may not be fully informed of the term, **"Big Eva."** If not, please don't think you're alone. Like so many words and phrases that have entered into the American English lexicon, it's fairly new. In truth, it's more of a pejorative term; generally reserved for those who may be working through their sanctification in a way that might have once seemed imperious, or dictatorial a mere generation ago. Being humble, still considered a virtue, has slipped from the top tier of virtues to be replaced by… well, political correctness.

Big Eva refers, broadly, to the evangelical church—not the ecclesia necessarily, but its hierarchy, the leaders of evangelicalism in the 21st century. The term has been **credited to Carl Trueman**.

Allie Beth Stuckey says,

> *"Big Eva represents the corporate bureaucratic part of evangelicalism, less as a part of the protestant faith, and not even the political label evangelicalism, but kind of like the institution; the people at the top. Big Eva has typically characteristics of people who are just like establishment evangelicals. That's one way to say typically anti-trump, anti-abortion, pro-biblical sex and gender, pro-critical race theory, and pro-social justice." (Allie Beth Stuckey,* ***My Response to John Piper, Tim Keller & Big Eva*** *| Ep 508, begin: 3:53)*

Stuckey identifies Big Eva notables like **Russell Moore**, who is the *former* head of the **Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission**, (that's the policy arm of the Southern Baptist Convention) pastor (and TGC co-founder) **Tim Keller**, author/speaker **Beth Moore**, and others who *"kind of in that crowd, and are part of Big Eva."* There are others within the Big Eva tent, but these standouts (and others) have made their positions on the most controversial issues pretty clear in the run-up to the 2020 election and well beyond.

If you are wondering why this is important, it is because we are approaching a point where division is becoming markedly evident within the **Southern Baptist Convention**. Couple this with increasing criticism of **The Gospel Coalition** (TGC), and **Together for the Gospel** (T4G). Many local churches struggle with discord for a number of reasons. One being the notion that any sermonizing that speaks directly to the patently obvious issues in our culture—both in, and outside the church—is largely to be avoided. But why? It ought to be accepted as fact—though often isn't—that the contemporary culture is an essential mission field in which the Church *must* participate, and moreover, demonstrate strong moral and biblical stands on the topics that are increasingly dividing us. Why?

Because the issues that divide both society at large *from* the Church, are often the same issues that divide the Church *within* the Church.

"Politics as a science or an art, is a subject of vast extent and importance." **Webster's American Dictionary of the English Language** (1828)

Today, secular elites dominate and control both politics and political mandates. We seem to consider them the "Ruling Class." **How is it that Americans are now comfortable with that paradigm? It ought to be utterly repugnant with anyone who can think rightly.** But here is the rub. Right thinking, or correct thinking, has become all but obsolete. And you may as well toss

out the term, "Common Sense." Sense hasn't been common in more than two or three generations.

But for Big Eva, there is a lot of politicking going on. It has been so for some time. But of late, and particularly in the day of the COVID, Big Eva has taken on some of the same hubris of the ruling class politicians: apologizing for being white, calling for unity above all else, and finding their gravitas in social justice. In this regard, they come off as "fragile" in the face of other power structures and certain ideologies.

- ***"But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me."*** (2 Corinthians 12:9 ESV)

Are cracks beginning to appear? Just recently, **Christianity Today announced** that T4G would no longer convene after 2022. Moreover, The Gospel Coalition has come under increasing criticism from a number of newer—and younger—reformed and evangelical voices online and in print owing to its increasing political correctness. It could well be the reason is due to a lack of strong resistance to an eroding culture.

Doug Wilson points to author, **Nassim Nicholas Taleb**, whose book, "Antifragile" is available on **Amazon**, and free as a **PDF**, to explain how we gain from disorder and chaos while being protected from fragilities and adverse events. Taleb writes. *"Antifragility is beyond resilience or robustness. The resilient resists shocks and stays the same; the antifragile gets better."* (Compare that to Robin D'Angelo's "White Fragility" trope that set the stage for BLM, and all the rest of the usual suspects in the summer of 2020.)

Wilson characteristically elaborates, *"Fragile institutions freak out over the prospect of tumult. Sturdy institutions say "huh." Antifragile institutions mutter, "oh boy, oh boy."* ***Antifragile people are in a position to count it all joy when they meet various trials.*** *If you are fragile, if you have adopted the safety-first tenets of fragility, the scriptural exhortations that summon us to welcome adversity with steadfast faith and courage* ***make no sense."*** (emphasis added)

- ***"We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."*** (Romans 5:3-5)

Resisting tyranny is not for the fragile—let alone the faint of heart—among us. Fragile stands no chance against chaos.

Be strong, be blessed.

John Newton: The Great Shepherd and His Sheep

OCTOBER 5, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Jordan Chamblee | **The Stand**

The Bible promises spiritual warfare. The world offers challenge after challenge. Satan's fiery darts are an endless barrage.

In the midst of the conflict, do we think we are strong Christians?

We often believe that by reading the Scripture and prayer we become strong, just as physical exercise strengthens our bodies. We are told to put on a spiritual armor, which paints an image in our heads of an imposing, muscular soldier standing tall against the hordes of darkness.

But the truth is, that spiritual armor is not forged by us. The Word of God never tells us we will become mighty in our own strength.

Consider King David. We regard him to be a strong and mighty man, capable in battles both physical and spiritual. He's the giant-killer, the leader of a band of mighty men, feared by evil kings and pagan nations alike. But David himself tells us the truth. He was like a sheep in need of a Shepherd (**Psalm 23:1**).

We aren't born great warriors in the army of God. More than that, we are in desperate need of saving. Instead of the knight in shining armor, we are the helpless maid locked in the tower. Instead of the dragon-slayer, we are the kingdom in danger of the dragon's fire. Instead of the sheepdog, we are the sheep.

Hopefully, we're all familiar with the life of John Newton, the author of the great hymn "Amazing Grace." A captain of a slave ship, he was heavily invested in the horrific slave-trade of the 1700s. In 1748, as he was sailing home to England, a storm threatened to sink his ship. Until this point, Newton had no interest in spirituality, but that all changed during this storm. Face-to-face with his helplessness and mortality, he cried out to God for the first time in his life. And after he prayed, the storm ceased.

Eagerly, he began to search the Bible to learn about the God who had saved him, and by the time he arrived home, he had submitted to Jesus Christ as his Savior.

This was a man well-acquainted with his neediness. He was under no delusion of personal capability or strength. He knew that he was the one sheep that had gone astray, and that he had been rescued by the Shepherd.

Consider the following words of John Newton, from his sermon "The Great Shepherd."

…

*I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep (**John 10:11**).*

"Who but Jehovah can relieve the necessities of multitudes in all places, in the same moment, and be equally near and attentive to them, in every age? The sinner, who is enlightened to know himself, his want, enemies, and dangers, will not dare to confide in anything short of an almighty arm; he needs a shepherd, who is full of wisdom, full of care, full of power; able, like the sun, to shine upon millions at once, and possessed of those incommunicable attributes of Deity, omniscience and omnipresence.

Such is our great Shepherd; and He is eminently the good Shepherd also, for He laid down His life for the sheep, and has redeemed them to God by His own blood.

This great and good Shepherd has a flock, whom He loved from everlasting – and whom having loved, He will love to the end. He humbled Himself for their sakes, submitted to partake of their nature and their sorrows, took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of sinful flesh.

He died for His sheep, '*the just for the unjust*,' to redeem them from the curse of the law, from the guilt and dominion of sin, from the power of Satan – and to bring them to God.

They, by nature, are all *'gone astray, every one to his own way.'* But having thus bought them with His blood – in His own appointed time He seeks, finds, and restores His sheep. By the power of His Word and Spirit – He makes Himself known to their hearts, causes them to hear and understand His voice, and guides them into His fold. They are under His immediate protection and government.

Considered as individuals, they are fitly described by the name of sheep. A sheep is a weak, defenseless, thoughtless creature – and prone to wander! If once gone astray – it is seldom known to return of its own accord.

A sheep has neither strength to fight with the wolf, nor speed to escape from him; nor has it the foresight of the ant, to provide its own sustenance.

Such is our character, and our situation – unable to take care of ourselves, prone to wander from our resting-place, exposed to enemies which we can neither withstand nor avoid, without resource in ourselves, and taught, by daily experience, the insufficiency of everything around us.

Yet, if this Shepherd is our Shepherd, as weak and helpless as we are – we may be of good courage. If we can say with David, "The Lord is my Shepherd" – then we may make the same inferences which he did, "Therefore I shall not want. Therefore I need not fear."

*My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish! No one can snatch them out of my hand! (**John 10:27-28**)*

SOURCE: **THE STAND**

The Church Finds its Voice Virginia: Wed 9/29 – Fri 10/1

SEPTEMBER 29, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

THE CHURCH FINDS ITS VOICE
A Coalition of Lindsey Communications, The Lindsey Foundation, Faith Wins
and the Pacific Justice Institute to Empower the Resurgence of the Church Vote!

VIRGINIA: Wed 9/29 – Fri 10/1

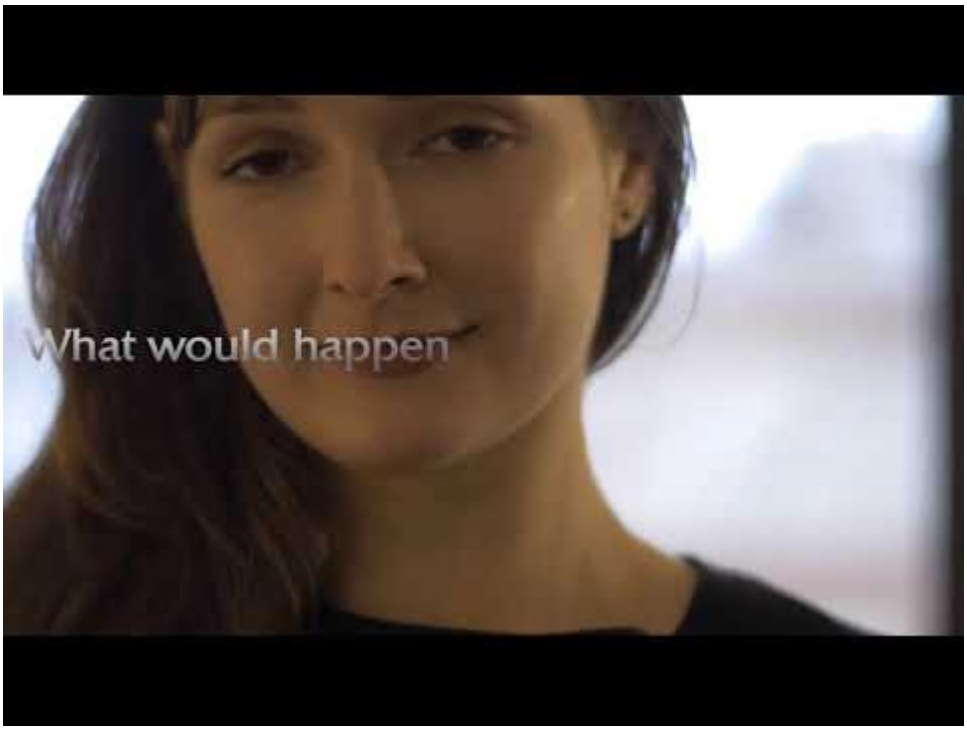
Text "TOUR" to
844-944-8683
to learn more

- Wed 9/29 Evening Mtg 7:00pm @ Augusta Expoland in Fishersville — 277 Expo Road, Fishersville, VA 22939

- Thur 9/30 Breakfast event 8:30am @ Community Baptist Church – 43100 Center Street, Chantilly, VA 20152
- Thurs 9/30 Lunch event 12 Noon @ Emmanuel Baptist Church — 2774 Northwestern Turnpike, Winchester, VA
- Thurs 9/30 Evening Mtg 700pm @ Chesapeake Conference Center – 700 Conference Center Drive, Chesapeake, VA 23320
- Fri 10/1 School Assembly 11am / Lunch event 12 Noon @ Faith Baptist Church – 4105 Plank Road, Fredericksburg, VA 22407

See video and registration links below (download pdf handout here)

FaithWins
https://youtube.com/watch?v=emfu75aF8_M



America's founding principles, guided by Biblical values, are under attack like never before in its history. The responsibility is **The Church** to "find its voice" and preserve our Nation. "THE AMERICAN RESTORATION TOUR: The Church Finds Its Voice", will be a 12-state tour with Chad Connelly and Faith Wins joining forces with David Barton and WallBuilders to bring a message of Hope, Renewal, and Revival to America's leading cities and Churches.

We hope to see you at one of our meetings. Check our national schedule here and register for one in Virginia below.

Wed, Sept 29 at 7:00PM

Augusta Expoland in Fishersville

277 Expo Road, Fishersville, VA 22939

David Barton, Chad Connelly, Evangelist Byron Foxx, Pastor John Godfrey and others

REGISTER HERE

———————

Thurs, Sept 30 at 8:30AM *BREAKFAST PROVIDED*

Community Baptist Church

43100 Center Street, Chantilly, VA 20152

David Barton, Chad Connelly, Evangelist Byron Foxx, Pastor Mike Edwards & Mike Aylestock

REGISTER HERE

———————

Thurs, Sept 30 at 12:00PM

Emmanuel Baptist Church

2774 Northwestern Turnpike, Winchester, VA 22603

David Barton, Chad Connelly, Evangelist Byron Foxx & Pastor Steve Rebert

REGISTER HERE

————————–

Thurs, Sept 30 at 7:00PM

Chesapeake Conference Center

700 Conference Center Drive, Chesapeake, VA 23320

David Barton, Chad Connelly, Evangelist Byron Foxx & Pastor John Godfrey

REGISTER HERE

———————

Fri, Oct 1 at 12:00PM *LUNCH PROVIDED*

Faith Baptist Church

4105 Plank Road, Fredericksburg, VA 22407

David Barton, Chad Connelly, Evangelist Byron Foxx & Pastor Kurt Skelly

REGISTER HERE

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On Earth As It Is in Heaven

SEPTEMBER 28, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Jordan Chamblee | **The Stand**

I fear the Lord's Prayer is so familiar to us that we lose sight of just how incredible it is. When Jesus Christ the God-Man Himself tells us, "This is how you, fallen and sinful creature, should speak to the holy God of the universe," we better listen to Him. This isn't a suggestion, a magic spell, nor is it one of those "vain repetitions" Christ speaks against in verse seven of the same chapter.

Prayer is communion, but it is the kind of communion that changes us. In prayer, we are like the King's children coming humbly but confidently into the throne room to see our Father face-to-face. In prayer, we witness His glory, His sovereignty, and His power, and when we leave the throne room we go out into the kingdom reminded of who God is, who we are, and how we are to live.

Let's focus on a specific part of the Lord's Prayer and explore how it should change the way we live our day-to-day lives.

> Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven (**Matthew 6:10**).

Where is God's kingdom? It is where His will is carried out, and where creation bows the knee to His rule.

Where is God's will done? In God's kingdom: heaven and the church.

God's kingdom and God's will go hand-in-hand. Where God's kingdom is, His will is done. Where His will is done, there is His kingdom.

The fact that Christ Himself instructs us to pray in this way is significant, especially when He says *"on earth as it is in heaven."* Christ is instructing us to pray for the kingdom of God to be realized here and now, in our own lives, and in the world around us. Not someday when things get better. Not a far-off future date when the skies peel back and Christ descends from the heavens. Now. We are asking for the kingdom of heaven to burst through into our world *now*.

It seems like a bold request, doesn't it? But as John the Baptist cried out in the wilderness, *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (**Matthew 3:2**)*, and as Christ said to the Pharisees, *"For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you" (**Luke 17:21**)*.

The Kingdom is at hand. The Kingdom is within us. *"On earth as it is in heaven!"* we plead God's own will back to Him.

These are not the words of a defeated church. These are not the prayers of hopeless people. "God, please make evident Your power and kingship over this earth. Raise your banner over every nation, and make it clear to every haughty ruler that You will have Your way in the affairs of men. Disperse the darkness with the gospel's light. Shatter the chains of sin's bondage and lead the captive free. Break through the ignorance of wickedness with the wisdom that comes from godly fear. Let no one stand who does not bow their knee to You."

As we've said before, this is not a vain repetition. This kind of prayer should have an effect on the way we live every day. So how do we bring this prayer to bear on our day-to-day life?

A good place to begin is meditating on the characteristics of God's kingdom.

Illumination of ignorance.

The kingdom of God reveals who God is. It is a light in the darkness, dispelling ignorance and promoting wisdom. Those who live in this kingdom have true enlightenment because they live under the reign of the source of true wisdom. The life of the Christian should reflect this. We can bring the kingdom of God into the world by being teachers of His Word and interpreters of His wisdom. The way we live and speak should make it obvious that we have access to ultimate universal truth and wisdom.

Exaltation of the humble.

Where the kingdom of God is, there is no oppression. Slaves are set free and justice is served. The humble are raised up from the dust, and the outcasts are brought in to sit in the place of honor at the Lord's table. So should it be when a Christian interacts with the world. Our reputation should be such that when we enter into a situation, the world expects that we will uplift the downtrodden and be unimpressed with those of high status. When the oppressed think of the church, they should feel hope because they know that the citizens of the kingdom of God are about the business of setting prisoners free.

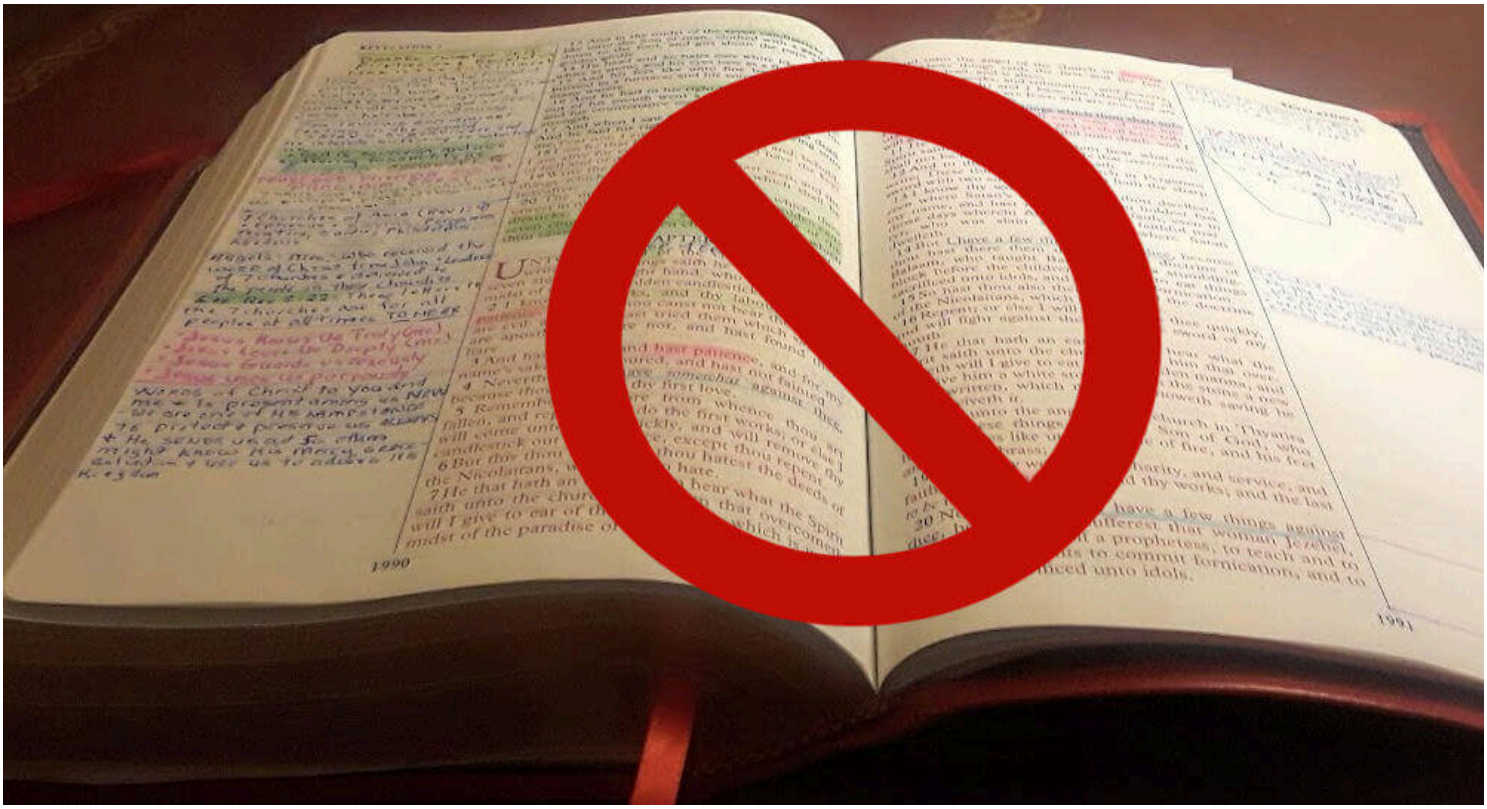
Resurrection of the dead and dying.

Ultimately when Jesus Christ returns at the end of the age, the dead will be raised to life again and everything in creation that tends towards death and decay will be renewed and resurrected. But even now, the resurrection effect of the kingdom can be seen on this side of eternity. The dominion mandate in **Genesis 1:28** has not expired. God has given the world into the hands of mankind, and when Christians take part in this dominion the world should see life flourish. As Jacob when he worked for Laban, whatever we set our hand to should thrive and our work should bless others as if small pieces of Eden were reawakening under our care. Where the kingdom of God is, blessing and life should follow.

*(Editor's Note: This blog was posted first on the Engage Magazine website **HERE**)*

The Gospel of Intolerance

SEPTEMBER 26, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Ed Vitagliano | **The Stand**

For most believers, the words "hateful Christian" are an oxymoron. Christians are to love, and neither their thoughts, words, nor deeds are to ever reflect hate.

Increasingly, however, Bible-believing Christians are being portrayed as full of hate.

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, many culture critics turned their vitriol, not on Islam in general or Islamic fundamentalists in particular, but on **Christians**. In *Newsweek*, for example, then-editor Fareed Zakaria denounced Christians in an opinion piece entitled, "Time to Take On America's Haters."

Zakaria verbally battered Christian leaders like the late Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and Franklin Graham, for daring to portray Islam in starkly negative terms. To be sure, there was no equivocation on their part: Falwell had called Islam's founder, Muhammad, "a terrorist," while Robertson had called him "a robber and a brigand;" meanwhile Graham had the nerve to call Islam "a very evil and wicked religion."

Whether or not the statements are true, they were certainly not polite, in Zakaria's opinion – in fact, he was almost apoplectic over the comments. He called Falwell, Robertson, and Graham "extremists," "haters," and "homegrown fundamentalists" akin to Al Qaeda terrorists.

Despite the obvious hypocrisy of scourging the trio for their harsh tone – and then doing the very same thing to them – Zakaria represented the beginning of a trend in our culture that has only grown worse over the last 20 years. Especially amongst the members of the liberal media, people are renouncing what is perceived to be the intolerant nature of the gospel message.

The tolerant generation

Such intolerance is rapidly becoming our secular culture's version of the unpardonable sin – at least when committed by Christians. Morality, rather than growing out of absolute truths, has been boiled down to a simple ethic of hyper-individualism. Tolerance reigns supreme as the sole measuring rod of right and wrong.

From a Christian perspective, it's not that tolerance is bad – it's just that it no longer means what it used to mean. Theologian and New Testament scholar D.A. Carson said in the wake of 9/11 that the word tolerance used to refer to a simple respect of another's right to believe differently. "In the new view of tolerance, however, I have no strong views and you have no strong views. That makes us both tolerant persons," he said. "If I have strong views and articulate them, I am, by definition, intolerant."

This is especially true when the subject is some controversial cultural issue like homosexuality. In such cases, Christians are often admonished to be more tolerant, or merciful, or loving. Strong views – and even worse, the characterization of any behavior as sin – are discouraged in the most strident terms.

Carson said, "nder the new definition, no place is allowed for a group to claim it is right. The church that takes this stance is no longer perceived as standing for something and thus in some sense heroic, but is merely bigoted, narrow, right-wing, antiquarian."

Disturbingly, this view is quite often expressed more and more by those in church. Surveys of even those who claim to be born again consistently show a dearth of self-described Christians who say they believe that their own faith is the only true religion.

"You are the man!"

The problem is that the message of Christianity is very intolerant. After all, contrary to what some seem to think, the gospel is a message of severity as well as consolation. What could be more severe than for the apostle Paul to say that *"we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are*

all under sin," (**Romans 3:9**)? What is more narrow-minded than to say that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven?

It is a difficult and painful thing to tell a person that his good works are unacceptable to God and that he is trapped in the chains of his iniquity, judged guilty, and awaiting execution. God rejects sinful man. God's justice is an intolerant thing that infuriates the proud heart, and His unapproachable holiness is a discouragement to the religious man who daily labors to earn his place in heaven. Far from being a soothing message of "I'm OK, you're OK," the gospel is like a sword that dismembers entire families (**Matthew 10:34ff**.)

The mission of the church in proclaiming the gospel often includes a prophetic emphasis that pains men with the truth of their own sinfulness. For a culture that no longer fears the Lord, the proclamation of God's provision for sin must sometimes follow on the heels of a proclamation of God's hatred for it.

The nature of this prophetic mission is clearly demonstrated by the story of the prophet Nathan. After King David lusted after Bathsheba, dispensed with her husband Uriah, and then took her for himself, Nathan paid David a visit. He told the king a story of a man, rich with herds of sheep, who nevertheless took from a poor man the only lamb he had and served it for a special dinner (**2 Samuel 12:1ff**.).

David, thinking that the story represented a true incident within his kingdom, was enraged. *"As the Lord lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die,"* he declared.

Then, in one petrifying moment, in which one can almost see the crooked finger of the prophet pointed in David's face, Nathan thunders his accusation: *"You are the man!"*

David's conscience is stricken, and his brokenness, penned for all to see in Psalm 51, is a poignant portrayal of true repentance. Following David's immediate confession, Nathan tells him, *"The Lord has taken away your sin,"* (vs. 13).

This represents the prophetic message of the church, for love does more than clutch and caress tenderly the hand of sin's prisoner. Love must sometimes extend its crooked finger and – perhaps for the first time in the sinner's entire life – point out the fact that the chains exist, and the bars of his cell are locked tight. Love tells the truth (**Ephesians 4:15**).

Pierced to the heart

Some believe that such confrontational, prophetic preaching ended with Old Testament prophets like Nathan––or perhaps with that "transitional" prophet, John the Baptist.

The New Testament, however, presents a different picture. In fact, in Peter's first sermon, preached on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), the apostle boldly proclaims in stark terms the role of both Jew and Gentile in the crucifixion of Jesus: *"ou nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death,"* (vs. 23). Peter concludes with a testimony to the fact that Jesus is both *"Lord and Christ,"* and then again points the finger at the guilty ones, adding, *"this Jesus whom you crucified,"* (vs. 36).

Note the reaction: *"Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?'"*

The word *"pierced to the heart"* means "smitten in conscience," as the truth of what they had done penetrated deep into their hearts and created a sense of spiritual desperation that cried out for hope. It was a moment that seemed to echo David's brokenness.

The prophetic calling of the church is so critical because a sense of one's guilt is necessary before a person feels the need for a Savior. In the next verses of Acts 2, it is only when the people are pleading with Peter for an answer to their awful plight before a holy God that the apostle points the way out. A sinner only senses the need to *"e saved from this perverse generation"* (vs. 40) when he understands that the generation **is** perverse – and that he is personally perverse as well.

We sometimes see this same pattern elsewhere in the Book of Acts. In Stephen's wondrous witness borne against his persecutors, he also thrusts the sword of the Holy Spirit into their hearts: *"You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit,"* he says, and then speaks to them of Jesus Christ, *"the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become,"* (7:51f).

A failure of nerve?

However, the reaction of those listening to Stephen was vastly different than those who heard Peter: *"Now when they heard this, they were cut to the quick, and they began gnashing their teeth at him,"* (vs. 54). Stephen soon became the young church's first martyr, stoned at the hands of an angry mob.

A prophetic message – either one that confronts the sins of the culture or simply proclaims the exclusivity of Christ as Savior and Lord – often produces a terrible backlash from the culture that bears the brunt of it, and that reaction can cause the church to shrink back from its prophetic calling.

Facing the prospect of such backlash, it is difficult for the church to rise to her proper place and continue – or even begin – the process of accurately, consistently, and lovingly preaching prophetically to the culture. Without it, however, how can the church be relevant? If it does not

call the culture to repentance, what good is the church? In the absence of this message, what purpose does the church serve that cannot be better served by some secular counterpart?

Under such circumstances, great courage is required. This may very well be why the Book of Revelation––which, after all, pictures God's people living in a hostile cultural environment – strongly emphasizes overcoming (2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 21:7). It is also why, in **Revelation 21:8**, cowardice is considered to be as wicked as sorcery, idolatry, and murder – and, in fact, is put at the front of the list.

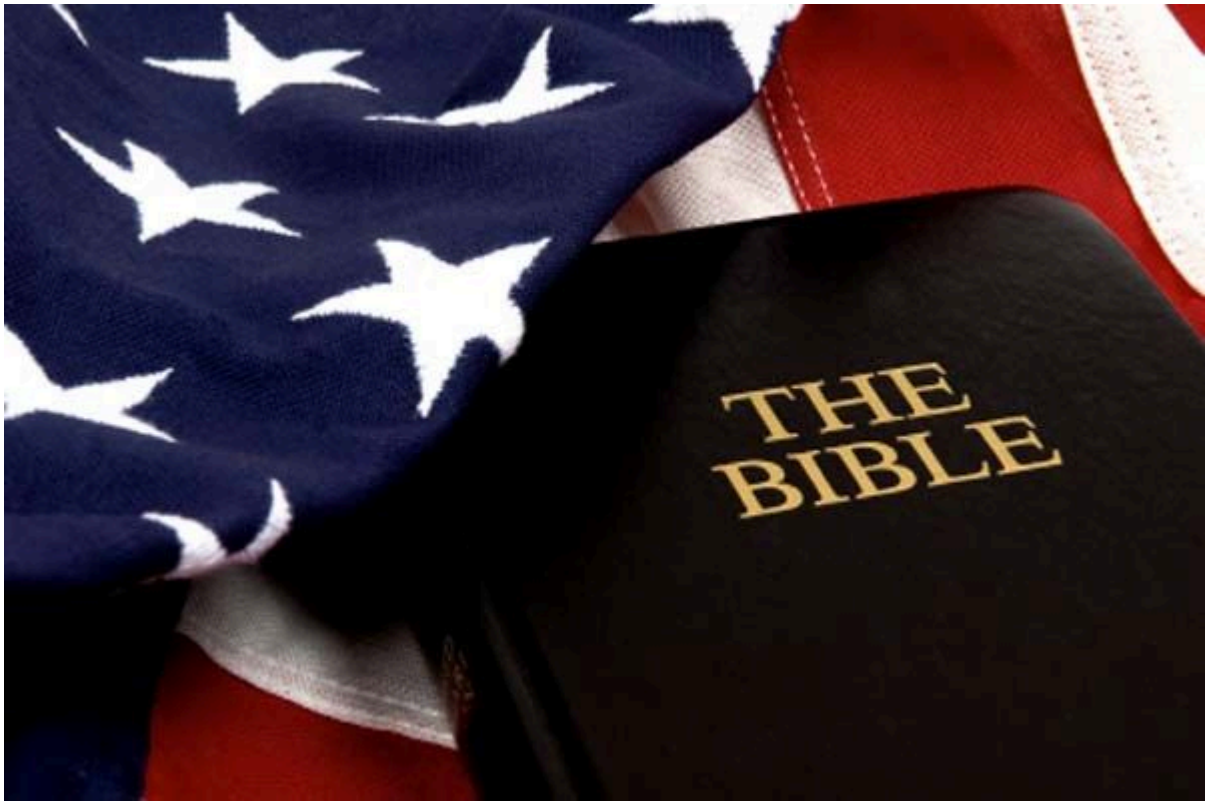
Keeping Stephen's case in mind, it should not be surprising that Christians are increasingly labeled "extremists" and "haters." And the pressure on believers is likely to grow even more intense, as sinners gnash their teeth and call for democracy's version of stoning – be that prison, civil lawsuits, or locked churches. At some point, a stiff-necked society will do what it needs to do in order to silence an unwanted message by silencing the messenger.

Nevertheless, how we respond in that moment will determine whether or not our generation is accorded status with the overcomers, or the cowards.

SOURCE: **THE STAND**

The Coup – Michele Bachmann

SEPTEMBER 25, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Jan Markell spends the hour with Michele Bachmann. We went from "fifteen days to slow the spread of the virus" to nearly global tyranny and shut downs. Then came a leftist coup of America and lawlessness out of Washington. Now vaccine mandates are being threatened and we've seen the Afghanistan debacle. How does the Church contend with such evil?

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Are We Finally Pushing Back? When Church and State can Agree

SEPTEMBER 23, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Jeff Toler | Shenandoah Christian Alliance

The state of Texas has created quite a kerfuffle, as it were, with the passage of two rather controversial new pieces of legislation.

One has to do with the protection of honesty, the other with the protection of life.

Even for the most ambivalent observer, it would seem there shouldn't have to be any controversy. Of course, that observer would have to be over the age of sixty, when these topics were not up for serious debate. Even in the sixties, when the real descent into madness began, the right to be born, and the mandate to be honest were not really controversial to any serious degree. Oh, how we long for the good old days!

This week and beyond—for a while anyway, the discussion is about the **Texas Senate's SB 1**, and **SB 3**. Both are already being challenged by the Democratic Party, and more specifically, the White House. In the blink of an eye, the White House has responded with law suits, and challenges. After all, they can't allow this kind of "nonsense" get in the way of controlling the voting population.

Andrew Klavan gave a really amusing, albeit cynical, assessment in his opening to his **September 11 episode** of "The Andrew Klavan Show"—available on Apple Podcast, and other outlets—produced by the Daily Wire. He opens with, *"The Democrats, and Satan, are working together to try to overturn Texas' new anti-abortion law."* Then he says, *"The part about Satan and the Democrats is actually true. Democrats are in a panic about the Texas law that bans abortion after a baby's heartbeat can be detected."* He's right of course. Without the presence of a satanic influence, there is really no way to explain this slow drip of existential destruction.

▪

His acerbic comments though, are very insightful, albeit facetious. Using his perspective, how is it that a political party can be so openly and virulently hostile to either life or honesty, absent some kind of demonic agenda? Why else do so many liberal leftists (or is that leftist liberals?) evince such a monstrous cruelty toward children? (Not to mention honesty)

The only way to understand it is to study history. Not history as it is now taught today, but the history found in textbooks, magazines, newspapers—even the movies—of just two generations ago.

The change began in earnest in the 60s. Oh, what hath baby-boomers wrought?

In our regular weekly email broadcasts, we have linked to a copy of **Virginia's "Model Policies"** guidelines for transgendered students, among other policies. If you haven't read it—and only when you have the stomach for it—you will see how deeply entrenched in spiritual battle with God and nature, the commonwealth of Virginia has become. There is a reason the leftist—also known as the Marxist—gravitates toward using children as objects of sacrifice. At the heart of Marxism lies a belief system that is very selfish. For them, the true liberty found only in the family and community cannot be apprehended, and so ultimately has no affinity with it. And so, there is no community, only demographics. There is no family, only the state. It is unprincipled dogma. Child sacrifice is performed not by fathers, but by the state, who must replace the father.

For decades human **psychology was defined** as, *"A discourse or treatise on the human soul; or the doctrine of the nature and properties of the soul."* But Marxism deploys a weapon of mass destruction against the human race called **"modern psychology."** Modern psychology has *nothing* to do with the soul. It is without soul. Like Satan, the father of lies, Marxism is very accomplished at disguise. *If* our children can manage to survive birth, Most Marxist thought leaders of the Democratic Party will *systematically* destroy our children when they are adults.

It's been said that the most dangerous place for a child to be in America right now, is in his mother's womb. Easily, the next most dangerous place is in the classroom.

Just this week, SCA features a story from Jonathan Butcher, **"Math, Science, Racism, and the Public Schools."** Writing for The Heritage Foundation, Butcher reveals how educators are introducing the devastating concept of Critical Race Theory into math and science curriculum. Even the hard sciences are subject to ideology.

Some will say that the Marxist has achieved total success in his mission to conquer Western Civilization. If this is true, then the only available option left for the confessing Christian is to offer to our Lord and Savior, the things He holds dear: *our* lives, *our* families, and *our* children. God will judge this country, along with all the nations of the world one day.

America may, or may not, be in free fall today. If so, how will that will actually end? At best, we have only possible scenarios, because the Bible makes no mention of America in any way. But what if instead, God was preparing America for revival—a revival unlike any other in all of history? In such a time, the events we see today will lead to amazing victory—and glory to God! It is written, ***"Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come."*** (1 John 2:18-28) Maybe the antichrist is not who (and where) we think he is.

Christians must know the difference from counterfeit—the antichrists—and the Truth. The Truth will not divide us. The truth will not make us fearful. The Truth loves our children, and would never allow us to sacrifice them.

Can we simply sit and watch the counterfeits operate and say nothing, much less do nothing, any longer?

Are We an Empire of Woke? Where is the church and an obedient People?

SEPTEMBER 21, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Jeff Toler | Shenandoah Christian Alliance

It would be interesting to see how many Americans know the **Woke Progressive Flag** was flying at the American embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan during the military withdrawal from there. Or, for that matter, how many know that same flag flies over embassies all over the world, and most Federal buildings in America? What is the "rainbow flag" as it is called, and what does it represent?

It can be said, the rainbow flag represents an empire of sorts—an *ideological empire*. Some people consider it a replacement for the American flag, which ironically, does not symbolize an empire, but rather a sovereign nation—nothing less than the greatest republic ever conceived by man.

How is it even possible that this flag appears in our public buildings?

After all, it is not the result of an act of Congress. Nor is there any public polling favoring this idea. It seems the flag just began to appear overnight, and without any fanfare or public disclosure. Indeed, there is no mention of the pride flag found in the Federal register. This last point is very important. So, what significance do these flags—and the ideology it represents—possess to warrant display on Federal property? A lot. This flag has everything to do with a

determined worldview that demands consensus and acceptance for their display. **It is even replacing the American flag in classrooms.**

It is a phenomenon really—an astonishing, even bewildering development. Because it is the emblem of an ideology that has managed to overwhelm every essential tenet for generations of traditional constraint. Why is the Woke Progressive Flag, often referred to as "The Rainbow Flag," so important to being woke?

The flag's design is indeed based on a rainbow. Make no mistake in thinking this is a coincidence. The design is a purposefully flagrant misappropriation of God's symbol of restraint from destroying humanity, and His promise that the biblical flood judgement will never happen again. The use of the rainbow is intended to subvert the God of creation and His promises.

So, what does Woke mean, and where did the word come from?

The term "woke" first entered the American lexicon of the English language in the late 1940s. Black Americans, still subject to the heavy-handed discrimination of the Jim Crow era, began to encourage their brothers to "stay woke" and not submit to racial bigotry.

Black Americans in their ongoing fight against racism and social injustice have used the term "woke" at key moments in history.

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*"In literal terms, being woke refers to being awake and not asleep. One Urban Dictionary contributor defines woke as '**being aware of the truth** behind things the man doesn't want you to know'. Meanwhile, a concurrent definition signals a shift in meaning to the act of being very pretentious about how much you care about a social issue".*

*"The Oxford dictionary **expanded** its definition of the word 'woke' in 2017 to add it as an adjective **meaning** 'alert to injustice in society, especially racism'".*

*"In the 1942 first volume of Negro Digest, J. Saunders Redding used the term in an **article about labor unions**. Twenty years later, a 1962 New York Times **article** was titled: If You're Woke You Dig It: No mickey mouse can be expected to follow today's Negro idiom without a hip assist."* (From **theconversation.com**)

After many years, following a few cases of misappropriation, "Woke" gained new coinage, and universal usage, following the shootings of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown that resulted in mass riots. We now know the riots were inspired by a new Marxist organization called **Black Lives Matter**.

The real issue with the term "woke" is the notion that it represents a response to injustice, oppression, hatred, and even the idea that police officers—white police officers in particular—are racist oppressors. Anyone who takes issue with the merits of these accusations is, by these new definitions, *guilty of racism*.

Racism is at the heart of almost every issue that divides America, because being *accused* of racism has assumed a stigma that allows for no reasonable defense. If you're not woke, you're assumed to be a racist. In fact, **A racist is anyone who is not an anti-racist.** This definition is critical for understanding that being woke is *the* requirement for social relevancy and acceptance. Among the Corporate Oligarchy, woke has become another marketing tool, even at the risk of alienating large swaths of their customer base. Woke may sound innocuous, but is very dangerous, and even deadly. In an **age of mass psychosis**, woke is an epithet to some, and an enigma for many. The result is hugely divisive. So much so that America is losing its status as a once great nation, esteemed for its acceptance of diversity. Woke is a part of the decline that has led to the end of America's pre-eminence in the world. Woke is now an important word in the vocabulary of defeat.

America is at war with itself owing to a cultural hegemony that assumes the following: If you tick any of the boxes of being **white, male, cis-gendered, able-bodied,** and **native-born,** you are considered an **oppressor**. Everyone who is not *any* of those traits is a **victim** of **Cultural Hegemony.** Indeed, they are woke.

Woke is one part of an age old struggle that began with critical theory, then moved into Marxism. In time, like all of the deceptions Marxism employs, from Darwinism to feminism, social justice to psychiatry, woke is a simple word with a twisted redefinition by a very determined enemy of God and man. It should not be a part of any believer's vocabulary.

- ***Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.*** (Galatians 6:7)

Christian: My King Is:

SEPTEMBER 19, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

“THAT'S MY KING!” EXTENDED VERSION - S. M LOCKRIDGE 1970's
https://youtube.com/watch?v=VwQqQkdn_5Q

Tim Keller and Progressive Evangelicalism

SEPTEMBER 12, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CULTURAL MARXISM, EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

> Keller's contribution to moving evangelicals in a leftward direction cannot be underestimated. The impact of his teachings will be felt for years to come.

Enemies within the Church on Tim Keller

Perhaps no one has done more to narrow the gap between progressive evangelicalism and mainstream evangelicalism than Tim Keller.

Keller grew up in a mainline Lutheran church. As a teenager, during confirmation class, a young Lutheran cleric and social activist introduced him to a Christian version of social liberation grounded in a "spirit of love." However, the Kellers soon started attending a conservative Methodist church which helped reinforce their son's more traditional conception of God and the reality of hell.[1] What he could not harmonize as a teenager—the ethics of the New Left and orthodox Christianity—he started learning to reconcile in college.

While attending Bucknell University, in his home state of Pennsylvania, Keller learned the "reigning ideologies of the time" from radical professors, including the "neo-Marxist critical theory of the Frankfurt School."[2] He was attracted to this "critique of American bourgeoisie society," as well as social activism. Keller described himself and fellow students as wanting to "change the world" by rejecting things like "the military-industrial complex" and "a society of inequities and materialism." Instead, they promoted "peace and understanding," attended peace and civil rights marches, and shut down the college to debate the morality of the Cambodian invasion in 1970.[3] Though things like segregation and "systemic violence . . . against blacks"

bothered Keller before college, they became an occasion for him to doubt Christianity itself after his arrival.[4]

READ MORE

Major law firm confirms FDA Deceived America with its confusing 'approval' of Pfizer Vax

AUGUST 31, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: COVID, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

When the U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced Aug. 23 it had granted full approval to the first Covid "vaccine" under the brand name Comirnaty, the mainstream media immediately ran with the narrative.

Joe Biden jumped in front of a microphone and told businesses they needed to "step up" the mandating of vaccines for their employees.

Dr. Anthony Fauci told national media outlets he expected a whole host of new "mandates" to be fueled by the "approval" of the Pfizer jab.

There's only one problem. The "approval" given by the FDA was not for the Pfizer jab currently available in the U.S. market.

The devil is always in the details. Some of us weren't fooled.

See our article, which has over the past three days received nearly 150,000 reads: **FDA 'playing bait and switch' with Americans, tricking them into believing shots currently being offered**

have been granted full approval when they have not.

But because we and a few others looked beneath the facade and checked the facts of what the FDA actually did and not what the media and Joe Biden's administration said it did, we took some heat. Even some of our own subscribers questioned whether maybe we got it wrong.

No, it was the corporate media who got the story wrong. And as a result, thousands of Americans no doubt capitulated and went ahead and rolled up theirs sleeves, thinking they had no other choice legally than to succumb to their employers' mandates.

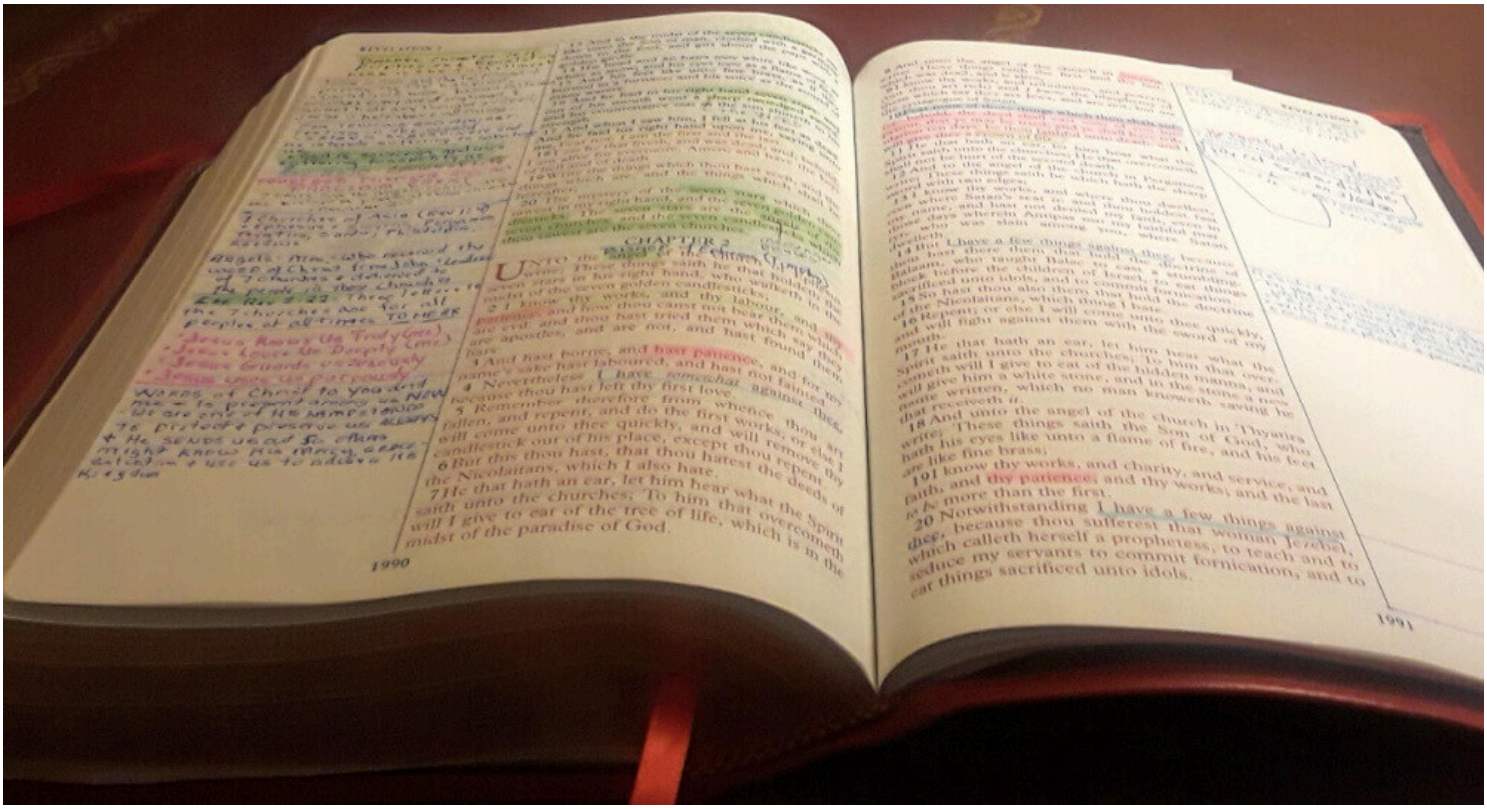
Today, on Aug. 27, the Orlando, Florida-based Liberty Counsel, perhaps the most respected Christian legal firm in the nation, issued a **press release** that confirms our story.

Below is the release, published in full from Liberty Counsel.

Continue reading

Of Politics and Pergamum, and the Southern Baptist Convention Leadership is …

JULY 29, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, WOKE



Only the things of God will endure.

J. Jeff Toler | Shenandoah Christian Alliance

Perhaps we should be concerned not with demanding our rights, but with exercising our responsibilities. The only things worth defending are the things of God, and established by God. The short list includes the family and the Church. The things established by man… maybe not so much.

The Church should not be smugly satisfied in her relationship with politics. It is her relationship with the God who gave her our understanding of, and appreciation for, *good* governance.

We can begin by declaring the ideals of this government are, by and large, based on biblical principles, and practiced by biblically literate and principled people. For the most part, America's founders knew the Bible and the God of the Bible very well. They were also the beneficiaries of the fresh fruit of the Age of Enlightenment. They drew from luminaries like John Locke and Sir Isaac

Newton. There were others of course, but it is important to understand, *"There was no single, unified Enlightenment. Instead, it is possible to speak of the French Enlightenment, the Scottish Enlightenment, and the English, German, Swiss or American Enlightenment."* (From **history.com**)

Good government should include honest politics

No more resounding rebuttal to the argument that The Church has no role in politics than the 2021 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention last month in Nashville, Tennessee. This is because hard politics was on full display there.

This is a harsh indictment to be sure, but there are reliable witnesses who can testify to this: **Dr. Russell Fuller**, **J. D. Hall**, and **Rod D. Martin**, just to name a very few. These men are well-known within the SBC. For those who are not familiar with them, they are, admittedly, polemicists and contrarians, because they oppose the current hierarchy's trajectory. For this reason they garner their share of pushback. Yet they have the bona fides to weigh in on the future of the denomination. Interestingly, **Hall flatly states** that the SBC *is actually not*, in fact, a denomination! (This is not difficult to entirely rebut considering the composition of the SBC is more of a cooperative of independent churches; bound by association for the purpose of shared resources, training, education, and an immense church network.)

It was this meeting that the SBC elected Ed Litton, to succeed JD Greaer as president. (Greaer, it should be noted, **has voiced strong support for CRT**. For his part, Litton claims **CRT is a "conspiracy theory**.") Now, the story is unfolding that Litton's election has generated unintended embarrassment following ample **video evidence of him plagiarizing** none other than Greaer himself! Even mainstream media is reporting on it, giving Southern Baptists a real black eye.

Previously, during the 2019 annual meeting, Resolution 9 was passed, which incorporated CRT/intersectionality into seminary curriculum, among other venues. This year, it was predicted that the more conservative "wing" of the association would strip out this resolution, and bring in conservative leadership as well. Instead, by many accounts, the politicking by liberal, progressive factions took advantage of the high heat of the current cultural memes of CRT/I and social justice. Is it possible being called a racist is worse than actually *being* a heretic?

As the news stories begin to filter out, it is becoming increasingly evident that one of the world's largest evangelical bodies has devolved into a political organization where financially accountability and transparency, controversies with the Ethics and Religious and Liberty Commission, Beth Moore, and the growing CRT/I disputes are drawing increasing and undesirable attention around the world. ***Ironically,*** "The world is watching" was a popular maxim at the convention.

> Baptists, and more broadly, evangelicals, have a long tradition of upholding the inerrancy of the Bible, missions, and evangelism.

They have established a network of theological seminaries that produce upwards of a third of the pulpit supply throughout all of America's churches. They have considerable weight in and outside of contemporary Christianity.

SBC's historical roots are the General Baptists and the Particular Baptists

"**The General Baptists** got their name because they believed in a general atonement. They believed Christ died for all people generally, and that whoever would believe in Christ could be saved. The first General Baptist church, led by John Smyth, was founded in Amsterdam, Holland, in 1608/09. Its members were English refugees who had fled England to *escape religious persecution."*

"**The Particular Baptists** came into existence a generation later than General Baptists. Named for their view of particular atonement, they believed that Christ died only for a particular group, *the elect*. They were deeply influenced by the teachings of John Calvin."
(From **baptisthistory.org**)

Today, the SBC includes both traditions within its large tent, and has historically always maintained an unshakable fidelity to the authority of scripture, truth, and honesty.

Like many of the mainline denominations, the SBC seems to be on the cusp of compromise in embracing ideologies with roots in Marxist dialectic. Progressivism, deconstructionism, and a host of new issues are leaving their handprints all over post-Christian Christianity. It's no longer your grandfather's SBC when ***"A little leaven leavens the whole lump"*** (Galatians 5:9) used to be merely a sermon topic.

> And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: 'The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword. I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.' (Revelation 2:12-15, ESV)

The Cover Up Story Every Christian Should Know About – Voddie Baucham Explains What Really Happened

JULY 23, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

If you are a member of a Southern Baptist church, you need to find out if they support the SBC leadership or not.

https://youtu.be/EaH4DLR2i0I

How to Evaluate Christian Colleges: Six Questions Parents Should Ask

JULY 22, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

David Talcott | **TruthExchange**

When you think of a Christian college, what image comes to mind?

For many of us, we envision idyllic campuses, brick buildings, devout professors, zealous students, fervent worship, transformative bible studies, and life-long friendships. Christian colleges have influenced the lives of millions of Americans, fostering generations of faithful followers of Christ. But how well does that image of the past represent the reality of today?

Outwardly, many of the elements remain the same. But, underneath, the foundations of many Christian institutions are slowly cracking. Ask shocking at it may seem, today it is no longer an exaggeration to say that most Christian colleges have fundamentally compromised their commitment to a Biblical worldview.

The young Christian students we send to college will face the spirit of the age not only from the media and from their peers, but also from unbiblical ideologies now taking root on their own campuses.

The story of how this has happened is lengthy, and not everyone will agree on every detail. But, this brief article is designed to help parents and students assess to what extent a Christian college holds fast to the truths which you rightly expect it to. Christian parents want to find a college that will, above all, strengthen the faith of their children, not work to destroy it. Christian students want to be at a college with like-minded peers and trustworthy faculty. Below is our advice about important questions to ask as you seek to find an institution that fits *what you want and expect* out of a Christian college.

Not everyone will agree on exactly what sort of institution is best. Are you comfortable with professors being permitted to hold to either believer's baptism or infant baptism? Would you accept both Protestant and Roman Catholic professors? Do you want daily chapel or no chapel at all? Some things that are beyond the pale for some families are acceptable or even comfortable for others. But every family should have an honest picture of what a college is really like before they agree to entrust them with their children and their money. Every concerned parent, school guidance counselor, and pastor should know where the college stands on the key theological and cultural issues of today.

The true ethos of a college is often hard to capture, especially if you rely only on promotional material. There is no substitute for speaking directly with and reading articles by those who lead the institution. This article offers you questions that will help you identify a college that fits with what you really want, and remains faithful to biblical teaching. We suggest six questions parents should ask college administrators, presidents, board members, professors, and staff.

1. Does the college have a statement of faith? Who must sign it: every faculty member, student life staffer, and administrative executive?

The religious heritage of many once-faithful colleges no longer serves as the guiding ethos for the institutions. Just because it was "known as" a biblical institution 30 years ago, or because it has "always been" Presbyterian, this does not mean that religious heritage still has a formative influence on that school. Claims that the college operates "in the Wesleyan Tradition" or with an "Evangelical Heritage," are not enough Parents and their students must identify the specific beliefs that drive the institution *today.* If a theological idea is not explicitly ruled out by the statement of faith and associated documents (staff handbook, community covenant, etc.), *you should presume that somebody at the college believes it and could teach or counsel your student to favor it*. As Dr. Jay Bruce notes: "Parents should assume the broadest interpretation of Christian words" that appear in college documents. If the statement of faith doesn't say "inerrancy" when talking about Scripture, then it is intentionally allowing for a looser definition of the authority of Scripture. If it doesn't say "sola scriptura" or "scripture alone" then the college is probably open to hiring Roman Catholics.

Beyond the substant of the statement, it is essential to know *who has to adhere to the beliefs of the institution*. You will need to find out *whether all faculty and key staff members have to agree to that statement of faith*. If professors and student life staff, for example, do not have to sign a clear and robust statement of faith, you should assume that your child may have professors who are atheists or theological liberals. They may have a "dorm mother" or Student Life Director who denies the full inspiration of scripture and the reality of hell, rejects the *Solas* of the Reformation, and holds to any form of heterodoxy and heteropraxy imaginable. Again, if a theological idea is not explicitly ruled out by the statement of faith, you should presume somebody at the college likely believes it and is advocating for it.

Even the formal requirement of adherence to a statement is often not enough. Even colleges with a good statement of faith can fail to adequately vet prospective faculty and staff members on the basis of that statement. Good documents must *actually exercise* a decisive, directive influence on how the institution hires and evaluates its employees. Other indicators about the status of the statement of faith will clue you in to how much weight it carries.

- Is it prominently featured in college materials and the Web site?
- How often do faculty members have to re-affirm the statement—annually or only when they are first hired?

In your college visit, asses how seriously this institution takes the truths of God's word. Were college leaders committed to creating a robust, theologically rich place of learning?

2. Does the college have a statement that addresses same-sex romantic relationships and transgenderism? Who must sign it: every student, faculty member, student life staffer, and administrative executive?

In the current culture, as you surely know, you can no longer take for granted that someone who affirms basic elements of Christian theology also agrees with Christian ethics on topics related to marriage, sex, and transgenderism. A number of Evangelical institutions have recently begun to permit same-sex relationships among their faculty and/or student body. Some schools allow transgender students and others do not. *Christian parents and students must ask themselves: Am I comfortable being taught by faculty and counseled by staff that may approve of same-sex attraction, transgenderism, and other aspects of the new sexual pluralism? Can I accept having my fellow students live unbiblically on those issues?*

If there is no clear institutional statement to which faculty, staff, and students must adhere, you should presume that some significant proportion of them will be accommodated to the new sexual pluralism. Many faculty and staff at Christian colleges received their own academic training at secular schools or more liberal "in name only" Christian universities. Though they may genuine

desire to follow Christ, their academic training is often of the sort that makes it difficult to remain a devout Christian. On sexuality issues in particular, it is now dangerous for faculty to speak out on secular campuses out of fear of being "canceled" and being removed from their program. Many, whether consciously or unconsciously, have ended up going with the cultural flow. Student life staff, too, are subject to these pressures over the course of their education. Many have college degrees in some of the most anti-Christian fields in secular higher education: psychology, education, and related fields. Even at Christian colleges, where many of these staff members were education, those departments are very often the least stalwart ones on issues affecting Christian sexual morality.

In light of this, don't be afraid to ask very specific questions:

- Ask to see the language in the faculty, staff, and student handbooks that address these issues. Ask yourself whether that language is adequate to safeguard the institution.
- Ask whether there are any current faculty or staff openly supportive of same-sex relationships or actually living in one. It may seem impossible, given the promotional materials of the college, but *ask*.
- Ask whether there are any current faculty or staff openly supportive of living as a transgendered person. Are there any openly transgendered faculty members? It may seem impossible, given the promotional materials of the college, but *ask*.
- Ask what would happen if a faculty or staff members *did*begin to support these things. Does the institution allow for a range of viewpoints, or do they require belief in the Biblical teaching that "from the beginning, He made them male and female"?

Some schools have statements from 15 years ago on same-sex marriage and perhaps abortion, but these documents likely say nothing about transgenderism, gender identity, same-sex attraction, or same-sex romantic relationships. If they haven't updated their language to address these topics, take extra care: they might be allowing a range of opinions on the issue.

3. What concrete steps is the college taking to address the dangers of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and the emerging progressive ideology?

One of the unbiblical ideologies that is infiltrating Christian colleges today is Critical Race Theory. At a first glance, Critical Race Theory can seem like a neutral set of intellectual tools, useful for assessing the moral problems in a society. But, in reality it is a different worldview, with Marxist philosophical roots and anti-Biblical ideas about human nature, sin, salvation, and ultimate justice. Dominant in secular education, it is now making its way into Christian colleges through multiple avenues: student life staff who are trained in secular education programs, faculty who are trained in secular graduate schools, administrators who want to avoid drawing

negative attention to their schools if they don't go with the flow, and activist students trained in their K-12 schools.

Look for *tangible evidence* that the college is *intentionally counteracting the influence of Critical Race Theory*. Seek evidence of things like:

- Has a speaker at a school-wide event forthrightly explained CRT's problems?
- Have all student life staff been required to read a book that analyzes and rebuts CRT?
- Has any professor at the school given a public lecture on CRT?

If the school assures you that it has dealt with this question adequately for its students, do your homework yourself. Ask to get a copy of a lecture or to view it online; order the book that students or staff have been asked to read and read it yourself. Find out whether these speeches or books clearly reject Critical Race Theory or whether they encourage a neutral or even positive attitude toward this issue on campus, making it more palatable and acceptable. Ideally, Christian colleges should have an official college statement on Critical Race Theory, but even the best school might not have done that yet.

If you cannot find clear evidence that the college is resisting this ideology, expect that the school tolerates it and that CRT is probably widely accepted across the campus. Expect CRT to emerge, with heavy social pressure to conform, in places ranging from mandatory residence life programs to chapel speakers to courses in psychology, sociology, education, philosophy, and literature. So great is the pressure that even orthodox, conservative professors who don't agree with Critical Race Theory can be afraid to oppose it publicly. The pressures of conformity, and the threat of termination, are strong.

4. Ask to see a list of this year's speakers at chapel, graduation, and school-wide lecture series. Research these speakers to find out whether their commitments fit with your own.

If the college has school-wide chapel services, the speakers who are invited will give you strong clues as to the tenor of the institution. Are they wishy-washy lightweights, mere mouthpieces for today's current fads? Are they robust Bible professors bringing meaty biblical exegesis? Are they Biblical and conservative — engaging today's issues in a way you support — or do they mouth the ideas of the world? Do such speakers fit with the intellectual and moral diet you would like for the next four years? If possible, listen to these lectures with your prospective student and discuss them.

This is not to say that a college should never bring opposing views to campus. Good colleges will often bring in speakers representing a wide variety of viewpoints, especially outside the structure

of its chapel program. College *should* be a place where ideas get tested and students encounter difficult subjects in a supportive environment, so a few speakers who are interesting but not-fully-orthodox are not necessarily a problem. But, look closely at where the *weight*of the speakers falls, and whether there are any that are extreme and anti-orthodox? For example, a scientist who claims to be evangelical but rejects the existence of an historical Adam and Eve might be a reasonable guest speaker in a Genetics class, but a pastor with similar beliefs represented as a Christian minister in a chapel series would be an entirely different matter. So would that same scientist as a full-time professor at the college. It is one thig to encounter an idea in a classroom with a faithful professor helping a student think through it, but it is another thing entirely for that idea to become a formative and unopposed part of your student's education. You want to find out, based on what the *majority* of the speakers are like, whether this institution is faithful to the truth.

5. **Ask what steps the college takes to actively enforce the doctrinal and moral commitments of the institution. Ask, for example, whether any faculty or staff member has been let go because they could no longer adhere to the college's statement of faith or other theological standards.**

Doctrinal and moral commitments must be enforced if they are going to prove useful. At every school over a certain size there will be people whose beliefs are slowly shifting, sometimes in good ways and sometimes in bad. In a healthy environment, someone whose ideas have shifted away from the mission of the college will voluntarily resign or else be invited or compelled to leave the institution. Over any five to ten year period of time, there should be some evidence that the school is actually adhering to and enforcing its doctrinal and ethical boundaries, not using newly discovered social morality to allow mission drift. If there is not concrete evidence of enforcement, you should probe further. Either the boundary means very little or the school has been unusually fortunate. When it comes to firing employees, schools have legal restrictions on what they can say, so they might resist saying anything. Sometimes they can refer you to publicly available news articles that covered what happened. These articles often have enough information to make an informed judgment.

6. **If you have heard negative stories about the college, or read things that don't seem to fit, write to the president and ask for an explanation.**

Perhaps it's an anecdote from a friend, something you heard from a recent graduate, or a blog post that seemed really worrisome. If you've heard something bad, ask about it. "I read Dr. Smith's blog and he seemed to deny the inerrancy of scripture – is that true?" Or "I read Dr. Jones's recent op-ed and he seemed to be supporting transgenderism – is that true?" Or "My friend's grandson came home from his freshman year more zealous about political activism than to spread the gospel.

What are the required freshman courses?" Keep digging until you find out what really happened and whether something like that is likely to happen again in the future. When something truly fishy is going on, the answers won't add up.

What should you do if you find that a prospective college doesn't have good answers to every question? There is no perfect college, so every parent and student must decide for themselves whether the environment is adequate. But, above all, *ask them to change*. Parents, pastors, Christian K-12 schools, and donors *have the ability to influence institutions toward greater faithfulness*.Colleges view parents and students as customers (not *just* as customers, but customers nonetheless). When parents complain, the college listens. If the contact information is on the website, we recommend directly emailing the President or head of enrollment to express your concerns about how the college does not seem to be living up to its Christian mission. If even 5% of prospective parents would do this, it would mean a sea change in how colleges approach their student "market." If prospective students started asking about these issues, colleges would take note. Christian parents can help move colleges in a Biblical direction through this kind of direct advocacy.

Recognize there are likely still many very good professors and other students at the college. At the end of the day, it may still be the right college for you to attend. Knowing the full truth can help you as parents and as students make the best decision for your situation.

Our hope with these questions is that parents will be equipped *to ask questions which encourage faithfulness at Christian institutions*. American Christianity needs faithful Christian colleges, and our hope is that every one of them would succeed and thrive – but, only insofar as they remain in or return to faithfulness to our Lord Jesus Christ. When we walk in faithfulness to His calling, according to His truth, it is then that we are blessed.

This article was written with input from a former Provost at a CCCU college. He prefers to remain anonymous at this time.

Jay Bruce, "How Christian is Your Kid's Christian College?", *The Gospel Coalition*, March 31, 2016.

See, for example, Azusa Pacific University, Eastern Mennonite University, and Goshen College.

SOURCE: **TRUTH EXCHANGE**

Repentant or Remorseful?

JULY 19, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Matthew White | **The Stand**

> Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." And they said, "What to us? See thou" . And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. (**Matthew 27:3-5 KJV**)

As I preached about Judas this past Sunday, I reminded the congregation, and myself, that repentance and remorse are not the same thing. Just because someone is remorseful, doesn't mean they are repentant. Judas is a perfect example.

Remorse can lead to a change of behavior for the express purpose of avoiding consequences, while repentance leads to a change of heart. Remorse is externally focused while repentance deals with an internal change.

Think of politicians or high-profile people who get caught up in and exposed in some scandal. Generally, what follows is a press conference or press release or carefully crafted statement expressing their sorrow over their actions and the harm they have caused. They will often put forth a new façade to match their newfound remorse. Behind the veil, however, those people rarely change. Sure, they are sorry – sorry they got caught, not sorry over what they've done.

This is how Judas is depicted in Scripture. Judas betrayed Christ. Why he did so isn't explicit in Scripture, and is a point of contention among many.

I believe Judas betrayed Christ because Jesus was not turning out to be the Messiah he wanted. Judas, like most people in Israel at the time, was hoping for a Messiah to overthrow Roman occupation and deliver them from Roman rule and oppression.

Had that been Christ's mission, any person who had followed Him and been devoted to Him would have taken a place of leadership and authority with Him. As one of His disciples, Judas certainly would have been included. It's likely Judas hoped for a position among the ruling elite. This view fits with Judas's character. John tells us in **John 12:6** Judas didn't care for the poor, but that *"he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein."* Judas was motivated by money and power.

Christ had already made it clear that He wasn't going to establish an earthly kingdom . When Judas finally realized that Christ really meant He was going to die, and there would be no revolution, he had no more use for Jesus, thus the betrayal.

To be fair, I don't believe Judas thought Christ would ever stand trial and be proven guilty and sentenced to death. Most scholars agree Judas believed Christ would escape arrest because he had seen Christ do so a number of times before.

Matthew Henry puts it this way:

> "Judas, it is probable, expected that either Christ would have made his escape out of their hands, or would so have pleaded his own cause at their bar as to have come off, and then Christ would have had the honour, the Jews the shame, and he the money, and no harm done."

Judas saw it as a win-win. Jesus would escape. Jesus and the disciples would go on about their business. The Jews would be embarrassed, and he would be thirty pieces of silver richer.

It didn't happen that way though. Judas didn't know it, but Christ's *"hour was at hand." (**Matthew 26:45**)* This time, He wouldn't escape. This time, He would go to the cross for us.

Once Judas recognized the consequences of his actions, he was sorrowful.

> "Then Judas…when he **saw** that He was condemned, **repented** himself…" (**Matthew 27:3**)

The King James renders the Greek word *metamelomai*, repented. A better rendering of the word, which many translations use, would be regret or remorse. The Greek word *metanoeo*, most commonly used in the New Testament, describes true repentance – that is, a change of mind over sin that results in a change of action.

The point is, Judas was sorry, but not repentant. He felt guilty that Jesus was convicted and sentenced to death, and he even admitted *"…I have sinned, I have betrayed innocent blood…" (**Matthew 24:4**)*. But it was sorrow over the result of the sin, not the sin itself.

Thomas Watson, a Puritan preacher from the 17th century said, "Many think they repent, when it is not the offense, but the penalty that troubles them."

A guilty conscience and conviction over sin are good attributes, but if that is all that's present, true repentance is lacking.

I'm reminded of an illustration I once read describing true repentance. Imagine traveling on the interstate and you realize you are traveling in the wrong direction. You have a choice. Continue on that path, or admit your error, exit on the off-ramp, turn around, and take the on-ramp and go the other direction. That's what true repentance looks like – turning from sin to righteousness.

Remorse is only part of that equation. Remorse is like slowing down, or even taking the off-ramp, but never really turning around and going the other way.

J.I. Packer said, "Repentance, as we know, is basically not moaning and remorse, but turning and change."

Paul described the difference between repentance and remorse in **2 Corinthians 7:10**:

> For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

Again, Judas wasn't broken over his sin, but the result of his sin. He proved that by the way he tried to resolve the issue. He went to the chief priests and elders to confess his evil and return the

silver. He tried to clean up his own mess. He hoped the religious leaders would listen and let Jesus go. But it was too late.

Instead of going to the chief priest, he should have gone to the High Priest, Jesus Christ. Still determined to take matters into his own hands and make restitution, Judas *"went and hanged himself" (**Matthew 27:5**)*.

Judas had sorrow, but it was a worldly sorrow as Paul described in **2 Corinthians 7:10**, a sorrow that brings spiritual death.

To understand the difference between repentance and remorse, one need not look further than the two examples provided by Peter and Judas. Matthew records their stories, not coincidentally, side by side in Matthew 26 and 27.

Both of their sins, Peter's denials of Christ and Judas's betrayal, were egregious and equally condemnable before the Lord. Their contrasting responses to their wickedness offer a glaring distinction.

Peter *"went out and wept bitterly" (**Matthew 26:75**)*.

Judas *"went and hanged himself" (**Matthew 27:5**)*.

Jesus said of Judas, *"…woe unto the man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born" (**Matthew 26:24**.)* Judas is in hell, not because he betrayed Christ, but because he never repented and sought forgiveness.

Peter, on the other hand, stood before Christ after His resurrection, confessed his love for Jesus, and received the command from Christ to feed His sheep. Peter went on to boldly preach on the day of Pentecost and saw thousands of new believers added to the church.

Thomas Watson, in his book, *The Doctrine of Repentance*, wrote, "A wicked man may be troubled for scandalous sins; a real convert laments heart-sins."

Are you repentant or merely remorseful?

If you really want to know, answer this question: "Am I sorry that I must face the consequences for my actions, or am I broken over sin because I've transgressed against God?"

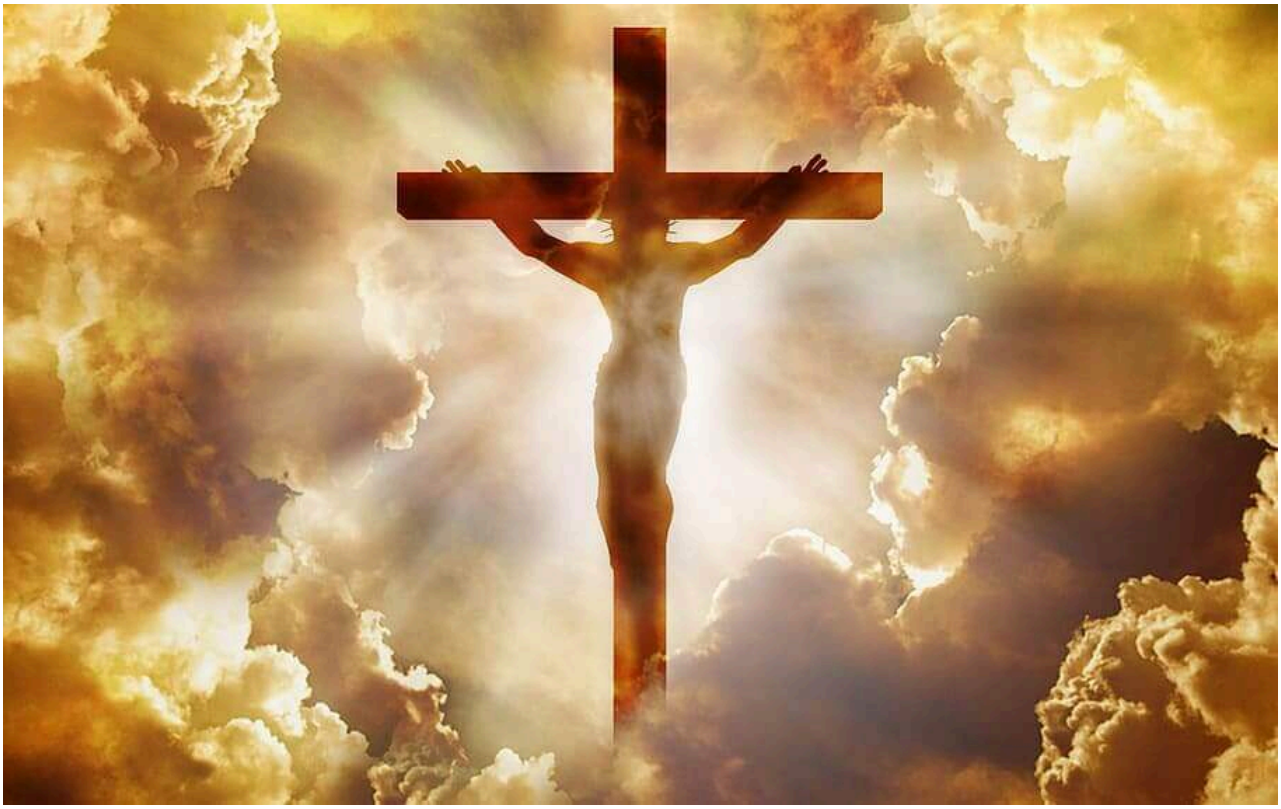
A.W. Pink said it well:

"It is not the absence of sin but the grieving over it which distinguishes the child of God from empty professors."

SOURCE: **THE STAND**

Do You Know the Biblical Jesus?

JULY 15, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



> Everyone who goes to church should read the Sermon on the Mount in its entirety in a single sitting. See if you can make it beyond the Beatitudes, *"Judge not…,"* and the Golden Rule.

Dr. Ray Rooney, Jr. | **The Stand**

I shake my head in sadness quite often these days as I hear people promote or defend a Jesus not found in the Bible. One of the most frustrating facets of being a disciple of Jesus Christ today is seeing how so many churchgoers and pastors use Him to justify their unwillingness to address evil.

Everyone who goes to church should read the Sermon on the Mount in its entirety in a single sitting. See if you can make it beyond the Beatitudes, *"Judge not…,"* and the Golden Rule. You would be quite surprised to find a guarantee of persecution for daring to live faithfully, an admonition about how tasteless salt is worthless (yes, He's talking about people), a guarantee that a lack of righteousness will eternally prevent one from going to heaven, an exhortation to self-mutilate rather than engage in sexual immorality, a prohibition against materialism, a warning

against people-pleasing, a guarantee of being confronted by false prophets, and a prophetic word about those who are disobedient (the house built on sand).

Towering above it all, though, is something Jesus said that should make everyone who thinks they know Him pause…as the blood in their veins turns icily cold.

> Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven… (**Matthew 7:21**)

Yes, this is all in the Sermon on the Mount. That sermon is a whole lot more about being right with God than accepting of sin.

So when I hear churchgoers speak of how Jesus was all about love, hospitality, and inclusivity, I wonder how they managed to mangle the Sermon on the Mount and how they possibly reconcile the passion and crucifixion of Jesus to what they claim was His central message to humanity. If Christ was all about promoting tolerance and acceptance *toward everyone*…how in the world did He end up beaten and crucified?

What kind of twisted view of reality must people have who say Jesus only wanted people to actualize their human potential for love and hospitality and yet was publicly scourged, humiliated, and crucified? News flash: the people who were actually there and watched Him and listened to Him had a quite different view of what the core of His message was.

Two thousand years ago, no one was going to get angry, hostile, or offended if all a preacher had to say was "God loves you" and "turn the other cheek." They may have rolled their eyes and ignored the speaker but they certainly would not have gotten so rabidly angry that they would have beaten and crucified him.

It boggles the mind that people actually believe Jesus was accepting of all and simply proclaimed a message of love and tolerance. Do people really believe that's what the Jewish and Roman leaders tormented and killed Him for?

I have no interest in painting a picture of an angry vindictive Jesus here. He certainly was (and still is) a Man of grace, truth, and love. But to suggest, as many do, that His central goal and mission was to make everyone comfortable with themselves and feel good about their future is absolutely ludicrous.

He said and did things that infuriated a lot of people and it wasn't "God loves you" or working in the local food pantry that did it. He flat out said more people were on their way to hell than heaven (**Matthew 7:13-14**; all references below are from the gospel of Matthew as well). He said those who blasphemed the Holy Spirit would pay for it eternally (12:31). He referred to some

people as tasteless salt (5:13), dogs (7:6), diseased trees (7:17), fools (7:26), snakes (23:33), robbers (21:13), hypocrites (23:13 and many more), children of hell (23:15), blind fools (23:17), whitewashed tombs (23:27), and sheep and goats (25:32). None of which, supposedly had anything to do with His central message and purpose?

*Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword (**Matthew10:34**).*

That had nothing to do with what happened on Good Friday either, right?

Don't get me wrong. There is a context for all of the preceding (and so much more I left out). But even within that context, it is absolutely clear that Jesus had no interest in making people feel good about themselves or accepting of sin in anyone. Not only did He proclaim that God is love, but He also preached a very clear message of righteousness and holiness that is required for forgiveness and eternal life.

Just to make sure people knew what Christ's purpose in life was, John spelled it out quite clearly:

1. *You know that he appeared to take away sins… (**1 John 3:5**)*
2. *The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil (**1 John 3:8**).*

And he prefaced that second one with *"Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil."*

I don't know where you can find the Jesus so many people are describing today. The Jesus who was all about making people feel good about themselves and comfortable in their sins is not in any legitimate Bible I have read. The Jesus who was all about making friends instead of waves must certainly exist somewhere…just not in the Bible.

Jesus Christ was crucified because He made people very uncomfortable about their sins. If you feel comfortable with Jesus in your sinful lifestyle…you don't know the right Jesus.

SOURCE: **THE STAND**

Tolerating the Intolerable

JUNE 28, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Don’t be accepting when God isn’t.

J. Jeff Toler, for **Shenandoah Christian Alliance**

Don’t be accepting when God isn’t.

Henry Parsons Crowell once said it would not be the “modernist nor the conservative who was tolerant of the modernists; but the conservative fundamentalist who was tolerant of those who were tolerant of modernists that would defeat fundamentalism.”

Crowell, the founder of the **Quaker Oats Company,** (and a master at convoluted aphorisms) was a lifelong Presbyterian, who before he died in 1944, withdrew from the Presbyterian Church USA. Why? Because the fundamentalists “were tolerant toward those who were tolerant toward unbelievers.”

Perhaps you can relate to what bothered Crowell. **Modernists** were in ascendency in the early twentieth century. Modernism evolved into liberalism, then progressivism. For all intents, progressivism became the “modernism” for today.

Progressives may well be in the ascendancy now from what we have seen at the **Southern Baptist Convention's Annual Meeting in Nashville** last week. Some time will pass before can know what the future of the SBC will look like, but amazingly, some are already talking about leaving the convention.

In an **interview with Jon Harris**, dismissed professor **Dr. Russell Fuller** had this to say, "

> When I look at the current state of the Southern Baptist Convention I'm not encouraged."
>
> "It was very discouraging. Certain people that I ran into—again I didn't know these folks—would come up to me, and I could tell they were very burdened about where the Southern Baptist Convention going, and those people gave me some hope, but it's going to be very difficult."
>
> "Yes, I hope these people, some of the leaders of these organizations that are trying to do well, I applaud them for trying to do the right thing, but we were **defeated pretty handily**, I believe, at this convention. going to be very tough to **beat the establishment**."

The implication is plain. Russel Fuller believes the "establishment" whose leadership profiles as liberal, has "defeated" the SBC. Worse, Fuller now **believes there are false teachers** within the SBC, and its teaching institutions. This is a serious charge, but his 22 years teaching at SBTC should afford him the credibility.

There was a resolution proposed that would explicitly denounce critical race theory/intersectionalism, (CRT/I) but it didn't make it out of committee. Also, the SBC refused to adopt an amendment that would explicitly denounce CRT/I.

The SBC 2021 annual meeting may become what historians will sometimes call a "seminal event."

One observer, posited that: (a) The resolution was only supported in a relatively small region of the country, and (b) The amendment, it was overwhelmingly decided, to "***not denounce CRT/I by name because of the level of rancor that has been attached to the debate."***

Do we read from this that CRT/I is intolerable for *only a certain* part of the country? If so, what part? Why only *that* part? Moreover, why should a high level of rancor necessarily put an end to the debate? But much more telling is the assertion that there *isn't agreement* on what actually constitutes CRT/I. This is stunning given evidence that these world-views are practiced and promoted *religiously* by people **who do not hold to Christian orthodoxy**. Even school moms get it! Filling such a huge music hall, how can so many pastors, theologians, and Bible scholars fail to

see this given the opportunities of serious study it in the last thirty years? Where is the Berean tradition Baptists so often invoke?

The issue of what has slipped in under the huge tent of the SBC, and by extension, many evangelical churches should really be obvious by now. How serious has this become for this denomination, and perhaps the greater evangelical tradition? Voddie Baucham, among others, believes it is an "impending catastrophe." It shouldn't be too difficult to see the potential for serious harm.

The SBC 2021 annual meeting may become what historians will sometimes call a "seminal event." For at least the last twenty years, the SBC should have seen the army advancing, building its encampment, and erecting the ramparts. Or, at the very least, stumble upon the enemy slipping in within its ranks; ultimately and openly teaching and advocating for the inclusion of new and differing ideologies. Like Eve, it seems quite a few within the SBC saw "that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise."

Once again referencing **Conversations That Matter**, the possibility of restoration and repair seems rather unlikely. This denomination is massive—numbering some 16 million members. For many generations, it has developed an enormous construct of ministries, agencies, schools, missions, and advocacy groups. It sends out an army of missionaries around the world, publishing books, magazines, Sunday school lessons, and more. Southern Baptists are rich in tradition, history, and capital.

But sadly, this becomes the way of things: when transparency becomes opaque, and trust is questioned, even the most venerable must face the difficult prospect of unsustainability.

Critical race theory, intersectionality, social justice—indeed *all* of the seemingly new components of modern social justice, only bring contention for The Church, but vastly more important, they're an impediment to evangelism, authentic transformative belief in a risen savior, and His gospel. If they *are* mere analytical tools, we have nothing to worry about. If they engender rancor, polarization, and false teaching, then maybe there is good reason to avoid these concepts completely. Like Crowell, we should understand how this situation really all started: we were tolerant of the intolerable.

- > "The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil." (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 ESV)

Fellowship Is Essential

JUNE 18, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The Stand

There is a vital component to life within the household of faith, which the LORD has provided for us but that has largely gone neglected. As is always the case, when we neglect something God has provided for us or we ignore a command God has given to us, we suffer negative consequences. Luke the physician records for ecclesiastical posterity some of the inner workings of the church in the first century in **Acts 2:41-47**. He noted:

*hey continually devoted themselves to the apostles' **teaching**, and to **fellowship**, to the **breaking of bread** and to **prayer** (emphasis mine).*

Treatises can be written about each of the four things Dr. Luke noted and that I've highlighted above. I will focus on fellowship primarily in this piece. I may visit the others in more detail in subsequent articles.

First, Luke was very intentional in specifying that the early church devoted themselves to these ecclesiastical disciplines continually. It wasn't a passing fancy. They devoted themselves, gave themselves wholly, to this practice as a matter of regular, consistent, and continual life as the body of Christ. If we read these verses casually we can unintentionally conflate "fellowship" with the "breaking of bread." But, we would be wrong to do so as those are not synonymous terms.

In the first century, there were no "church buildings," no basilicas, no specified 501(c)(3) establishments recognized by the national government as churches. The church was then, and still is today, comprised of people. We, the people who have been cleansed by the blood of Christ Jesus and regenerated by the Holy Spirit, are the church. We must transition from this idea of "going to church" to "being the church" (a conversation for another day). Today, the church in America usually meets within designated buildings that we call churches. In the first century, the church generally met in people's homes.

"Breaking bread" in the first century was very different than what we experience today when we enjoy a meal. If you wanted meat protein then, it usually required a lamb or goat to be slaughtered, cleaned, prepared, and then cooked. If you wanted bread, the preparer would have to gather the necessary wheat, create the dough, and then bake the bread. Sharing a meal in the first century required people to spend hours together. There was no Door Dash, Uber Eats, or pizza delivery service. Neither could you summon a meal through your smart home assistant to order in. It took time.

This meal sharing, then, was accompanied by fellowship. The Greek word Dr. Luke employs there is *koinōnia,* which means "communion, partnership, social intercourse, and participation." To state it simply the early church gave themselves wholly to consistent and continued communion together. This communion was a significant part of their continued gathering together for worship. It is a far cry from the weekly 35-45 minute sessions where we've reduced corporate gathering to worship together to merely worshipping beside one another. Frankly, many of us have worshipped beside the same people for 5, 10, 15, 20 years or more in some instances and we don't even know the last names of the people who sit in the next pew over every week.

In that reduced worship framework what we may not realize is that we've allowed a relational distance to develop within the ecclesiastical context that allows accusations to flourish. **Revelation 12:10** identifies Satan as "the accuser of the brethren." The Greek word for "accuser" is *katēgoros*. This is the term from which our English word "categories" is derived. Satan is the one who seeks to divide, stratify, vilify, and thereby destroy the family of God. What we may not realize is that relational distance provides the fertile soil needed for the seed of accusation to grow.

As you know, I've been blessed with the melanin-ladened permanent tan (don't hate me because God made me beautiful). Let's say that God has sovereignly placed me in a local assembly with let's call him in "Brother B," a less melanated (also beautifully made by God) brother. Yet, I have no real relationship with Brother B. We have no fellowship. We don't really know each other. He's never been to my house. I've never been to his house. We don't know one another's children. I just know he sits with his family every Sunday to the left of where my family sits each week.

You get the idea. If an accusation of racism, skin shade-based partiality, is made against Brother B. he is accused of despising me and my family because of the way God made us or because of perceived cultural differences, relational distance between us could allow that accusation to metastasize. I could begin to question Brother B's love for me, his love for my family, his love for Christ, all because we lacked *koinōnia*.

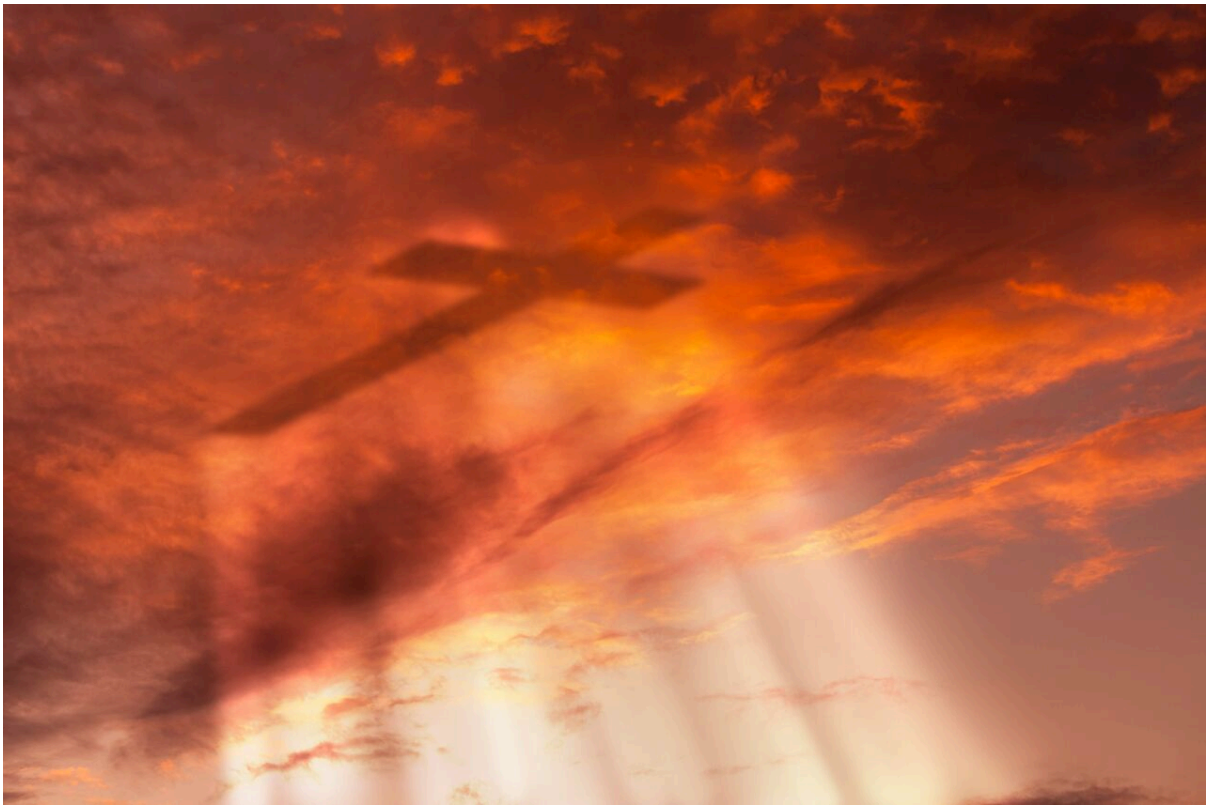
Now consider the alternative. "Brother B" and I know each other very well. We spend time together regularly. He's been to my house. I've been to his house. Our families share meals together. We pray together regularly. I've heard him cry out to God in prayer for my family, he's heard me cry out to God for his family. We held and changed each other's babies' diapers… the stinky ones. Then, the *katēgoros* launches an accusation of partiality against "Brother B." He is accused of despising my family and me because of how God made us or because of our cultural differences. The relational proximity we've developed through *koinōnia* through the years strengthens me to be able to immediately reject that accusation. I can swat it away immediately with a Dikembe Mutombo-like rejection, complete with the finger wave ("No, No, No—ahahahahahah)! Why? Because I KNOW BROTHER B. I know his heart. I know his love for God. I know his love for me, his love for my family. He knows my heart. He knows my love for God. He knows my love for him and for his family.

Koinōnia fortifies us against the *katēgoros*. Neglecting this aspect of body life has allowed Satan's accusations to fester and metastasize in the church in our nation today. One of the things we must return to is intentional *koinōnia* within the family of God. Much of the division we see today can be attributed to a lack of *koinōnia*. It may require us to re-evaluate and adjust how we worship together. But, the family of God is worth it. In fact, Jesus said the way "all men" would know we are His disciples is through the resplendent display of us loving one another within the household of faith (**John 13:35**). *Koinōnia* directly impacts Gospel witness.

SOURCE: **THE STAND**

The Southern Baptist Convention has Gone WOKE

JUNE 11, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, WOKE



After conducting 3 years of interviews and research for our upcoming film Enemies Within The Church, we decided to put together a compilation and excerpts from interviews and footage that we have acquired during our research.

We feel that this content was too important to sit on given the current climate within the Southern Baptist Convention. For more information and articles, please visit www.EnemiesWithinTheChurch.com

EWTC Presents: WOKE SBC Compilation. To support our project please visit our website.
https://youtube.com/watch?v=qOnaakLuJ90

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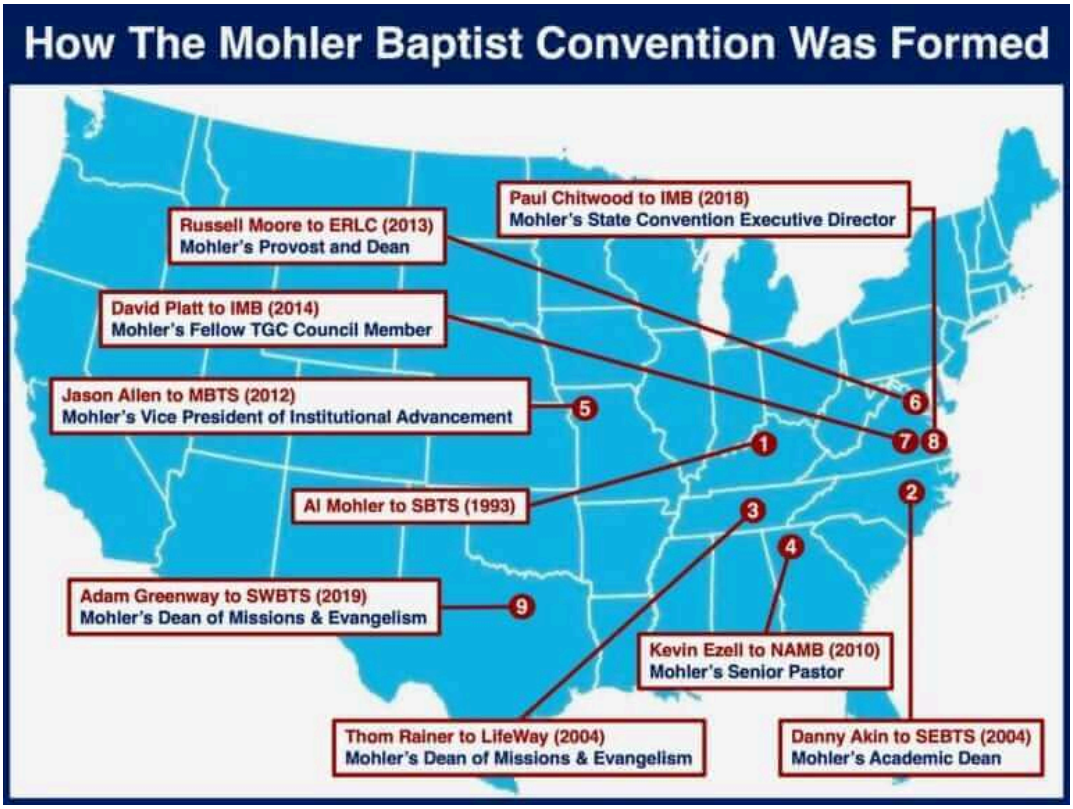
SBC planting churches teaching Another Gospel: the Social Justice Gospel

JUNE 3, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: DIVERSITY, LGBTQ, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



The Virginia Christian Alliance is sharing the **Capstone Report** and urge our readers to go there for more great content.

Capstone Report

Southern Baptist church planters taught that the Gospel is not good news without fulfilling the Great Requirement. Dhati Lewis adds Social Justice works to the Gospel.

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is planting Woke churches—and is doing so by adding to the Gospel. Nay, in fact, the North American Mission Board (NAMB) has changed the Gospel demanding that Christians not only fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandment, but the Woke Social Justice inspired Great Requirement.

A church planter revealed the shocking focus of **NAMB Send leader Dhati Lewis on the Social Justice Gospel in a whistleblower video**.

That same whistleblower released emails with **Dhati Lewis promoting an error-filled Social Justice book that advocates unbiblical ideas of justice**.

Also, documents revealed by the whistleblower and other information shows how a Social Justice Gospel promoted by Leftist Christians is the foundation of Dhati Lewis' "Gospel." In fact, the Great Requirement was inspired by a pro-racial identity politics Methodist minister.

A great Twitter thread explains the link between NAMB's Great Requirement and a Woke, pro-LGBTQ, pro-Social Justice Gospel promoting Methodist minister:

"'The Great Requirement' as used by Send Network and NAMB is the same as that popularized by Methodist Minister, Mike Slaughter, in his book *Change the World*. How does Mike think we implement the great requirement? We can see in his post on his website, 'How I voted'…"***Justice demands that education and health care are universal rights**. ***Justice demands making wrongs right. Yes, all lives matter, but now is the time to realize the importance of black lives matter in light of 400 years of injustices committed against**…**Justice demands protecting the rights of my LGBTQ brothers & sisters."**

https://twitter.com/JohnKaleo/status/1398012080536576008\
And this is not shocking because Dhati Lewis is intimately connected to the Democrat "Christian" front group the And Campaign.

The And Campaign is designed to confuse Christians about how to vote. Its entire purpose is to undermine conservative evangelical Christian support for the appropriate decision to never vote for the pro-murder Democratic Party. Instead, it practices an obscurantism designed to make womb-to-the-tomb social welfare into an equal voting priority as fighting abortion. It is evil.

The And Campaign was co-founded by Dhati Lewis' brother and held a launch event at Lewis's Blueprint Church in Atlanta. You can see all the details and relevant proof **here**.

NAMB SEND President denies the Gospel is Good News without Social Justice

The North American Mission Board through its SEND Network president Dhati Lewis denies the Gospel is good news unless it is accompanied by Social Justice works. In a video first reported by Woke Preacher Clips, Dhati Lewis says, "The gospel is not good news without spiritual redemption and restoration, but **the gospel is also not good news without emotional, economic, and social restoration, as well**."

> "The gospel is not good news without spiritual redemption and restoration, but the gospel is also not good news without emotional, economic, and social restoration, as well." **@dhati pic.twitter.com/hxuY4o9eyI**
>
> — Woke Preacher Clips (@WokePreacherTV) **November 25, 2020**

In the video, Dhati Lewis says "the Gospel demands the church engage holistically with our cities."
What does this mean? According to an essay published by Dhati Lewis, the Christian must push for economic policies to help our cities.

Dhati Lewis **said**, "As we address systemic issues in our community, one of the major factors to consider is economic stability."

And the social needs of the community must be met too. Of course, this means stamping out disparities—a common trope of the Social Justice Left.

Lewis argues, "The social pillar is where we begin to partner with local nonprofits and para-church ministries to address social needs in our communities. The needs of each community are unique, so the social pillar may look a little different depending on the community. **This pillar will address issues ranging from educational disparities to racial reconciliation**."

Also, there is an odd cartoon that Woke Preacher Clips found published by the North American Mission Board—that claims, **"Our refusal to validate our neighbor's current struggles is often more offensive than the gospel itself."**

This is a rather odd claim that is fraught with peril if taken to its logical conclusion.

Also, what does "validate" mean? And what will the secular radicals understand it to mean?

Reminder: Who runs the North American Mission Board?

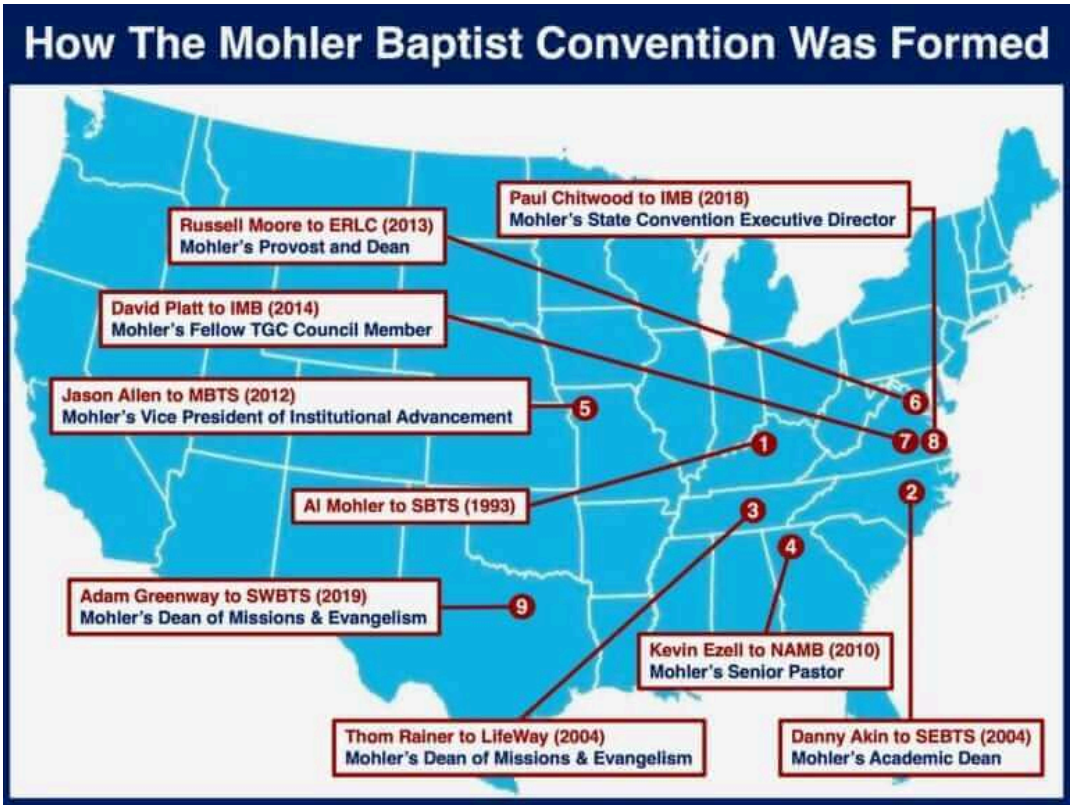
NAMB is run by someone very close to Al Mohler—Kevin Ezell.

Ezell is facing allegations of ungodly conduct by many Southern Baptist state convention leaders.

Ezell's NAMB just lied to the United States Supreme Court.

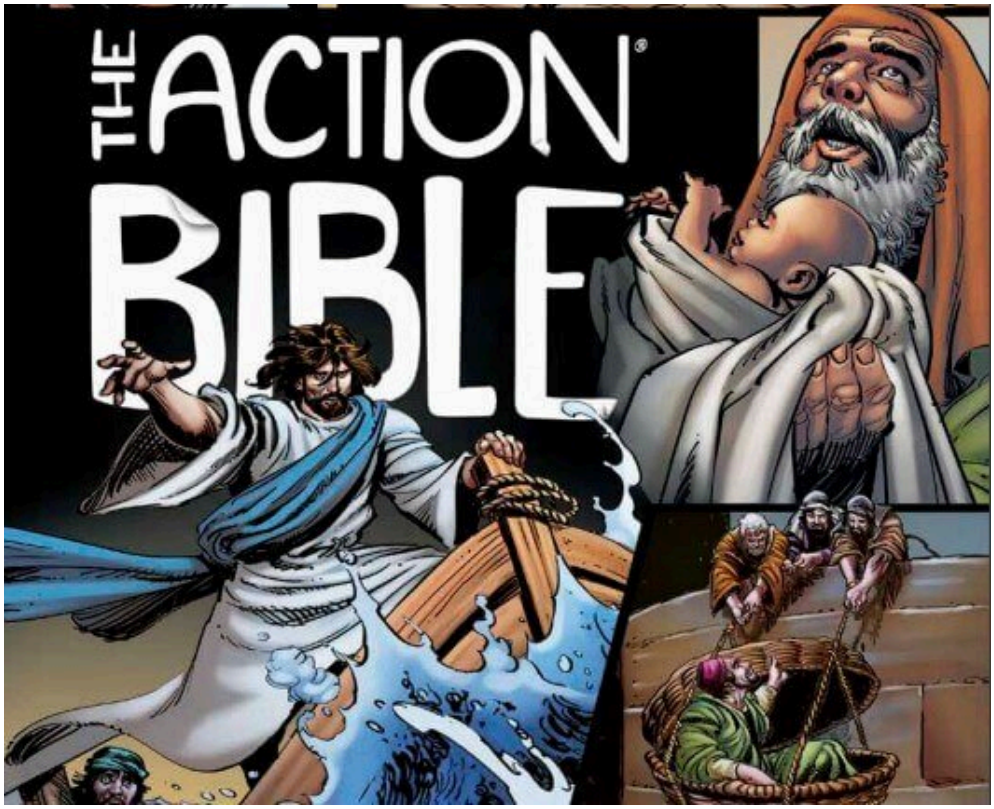
And Ezell is also closely connected to Ed Litton. **He has featured Litton at many SEND conferences in the last few months**.

The close links between Mohler and Litton should probably weigh heavily with how Southern Baptists vote for the next SBC President this June in Nashville.



Bibles in Schools!

JUNE 1, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



The Virginia Christian Alliance joyfully shares "***Bibles in Schools***" and their update:

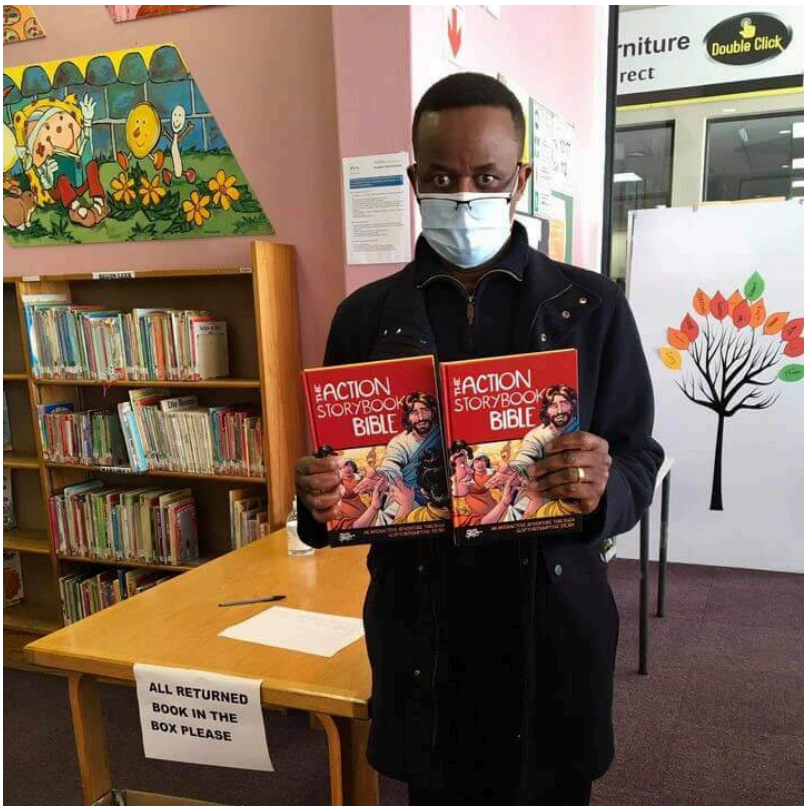
Bibles in Schools Update:

Pastor Charles heard about *Bibles in Schools* from the 700 Club. He is from **South Africa** and wanted to start the movement there! We were able to partner with him to get some Action Bibles to him. He is passionate about getting engaging Bibles in the libraries and schools where he lives.

They have already donated to some of the local libraries and pre-schools. He said, "We will be reaching out to more schools soon and will keep you updated with what God is doing through your ministry here in **South Africa**." We cannot wait to see how God continues to spread the *Bibles in Schools* movement in **South Africa**!

Yay God!

- The **Bibles in Schools** movement has spread to **South Africa!**
- The **Bibles in Schools** movement has spread to **England!** We were able to donate engaging Bibles to a school in England. The teacher said, They absolutely LOVE them! The students in my class saw me opening the box and they were amazed at the artwork in it. They couldn't believe they were Bibles because they've never seen it written in such a way. They are so excited to have a look at them and start reading them!
  I really wish you could have seen the amazement on their faces when they saw them."
  (Stay tuned for a video of the whole story to hear how God orchestrated Bibles in England!)
- **Louisiana**– A few months ago, we donated Action Bibles to a librarian at an elementary school. The librarian said the STUDENTS LOVED THEM. She asked for more copies!
- **Arkansas-** A high school Principal asked to wait to present the Bibles to their school until next year because they are starting a Fellowship of Christian Athletes club next year at their school! It is so exciting to see Christian clubs in our public schools and how we have been connected with them as well!



Pray Big

- **Open Doors for the 2021-2022 school year-** Please be praying hard this summer as we will reach back out to many more school districts this upcoming year to donate engaging Bibles to the schools.
- **Texas, Florida and Georgia-** BIG school districts where we are waiting on their reply. Pray for their salvation and for them to approve the donations for their schools!
- **Salvations**– Many students, librarians, families, superintendents, and teachers are reading these Action Bibles. Pray lives would be changed by the Gospel!

> Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.
> Romans 12:2

In the midst of an ever-changing world, we have a God who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. We pray God would continue to transform lives through these Bibles so students and their families will not copy the behavior and customs of this world. The *Bibles in Schools* movement is spreading rapidly and it means more Bibles are getting in the hands of people. Thank you for helping us give truth and hope to a searching world. Keep Praying and let's keep watching God transform lives!

Hannah Sailsbury
Founder + Executive Director

DONATE!

Are We Confused About This?

MAY 31, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Let's call this sin what it is: wicked.

J. Jeff Toler | Shenandoah Christian Alliance

"The horrific practice of child sacrifice has been committed throughout the world for thousands of years. Generally, the sacrifice of a child was intertwined with the worship of a pagan deity, often a fertility god. Worshipers sought to obtain a blessing from their god(s) or to confirm or complete a vow taken in the name of the god."

"Ancient Aztecs, Incas, and a few other peoples in South and Central America practiced child sacrifice. The same for the Druids of Europe. The city of Carthage in North Africa contains evidence of child sacrifice related to the worship of Ba'al Hammon, a god imported from Phoenicia. Many Roman writers refer to this barbaric act in Carthage."

These passages from **gotquestions.org** explain the kind of child sacrifice that has occurred down through the ages from culture to the next. Generally, most people of the modern era would tell you that there is no longer such a thing as child sacrifice anymore. It is a thing of the past. We would beg to differ.

We are not talking about the worship of Molech, who was the detestable god of the Ammonites. (Even **Solomon was lured by his concubines** to erect shrines and alters to Molech, and to Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians.) Nor are we referring to **recent historical cases** with cult religions. The new child sacrifice is practiced by the worshippers of Fromm, Adorno, Hegel, Marx, Freud, Bloom, et al.

The loss of moral agency has cross-pollenated with essentially every cultural institution we can name.

Instead of ritual by fire, and burning children alive on the red-hot hands of the bronze statue of Molech, modern-day sacrifice includes the slow, agonizing torture of psychological murder at the hands of peer pressure and social media. The latest evidence of this is the astonishing explosion of trans-gendering of young, white, teenage girls. It is enabled by distant and distracted parents, (usually mothers) medical doctors, and complicit school officials. This sacrifice is called surgery. It includes drugs and psychiatry as well. There was a time, not so long ago, when such a thing was considered illegal. It no longer is.

An **extremely important interview** by Jordan Peterson with Abigail Shrier, author of **"Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters"** presents an absolutely riveting analysis of what can be described as an explosive societal anomaly… the deliberate destruction of young girls—many in their early teens in "transitioning" to boys! The surge is utterly unprecedented. In the last decade, diagnosis of "gender dysphoria" — severe discomfort in one's biological sex — has exploded across the West. **Shrier reports** that even **Planned Parenthood** is now involved in this massive craze.

In the **New York Post**, she writes, "Between 2016 and 2017, the number of gender surgeries for natal females in the US **quadrupled**; in the UK, the rates of gender dysphoria for teenage girls are up **4,400 percent** over the previous decade. An ailment that typically began in early childhood, and overwhelmingly afflicted males, suddenly has a new dominant demographic: **teenage girls.**"

The impact this devastating experience has on young women will remain with them for the remainder of their lives; it will be a medical condition requiring unending medical intervention and treatment until the end.

How does this phenomenon correlate with all of the other cultural disasters western civilization is now facing? **It has a root cause: Lies and theft.**

Here is the final analysis: there is no comparison now with any other time in modern history where even the most basic, obvious, and accepted norms are observed. The loss of moral agency has cross-pollenated with essentially every cultural institution we can name: The public school

system, the medical community, the justice system, the media—news and entertainment—and even private Christian schools, and many Christian churches and **Christian ministries**.

The Connection and the Comparison

Cru, formerly known as **Campus Crusade for Christ**, is dancing with the devil. Harsh?

Consider this May 11, 2021, commentary from **Capstone Report** that lays it all out. Within the article is a link to the report: **Seeking-Clarity-and-Unity**. The report from staffer **Scott Pendleton** raises serious concerns over Cru's leftward drift to include *white shaming*, anti-trumpism, and critical race theory. The report was presented to **Steve Sellers**, President of Cru in December 2020.

When *any* Christian ministry imports critical theory and social justice into the mix, then the whole **cultural hegemony of Marxism** must *and will* come along with it… **including transgenderism**. Young women today are being robbed of their esteem and their dignity, and lied to about the tragedy it will bring.

> Again I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, a flying scroll! 2 And he said to me, "What do you see?"
> I answered, "I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits." 3 Then he
> said to me, "This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land. For everyone who
> steals shall be cleaned out according to what is on one side, and everyone who swears falsely shall
> be cleaned out according to what is on the other side. 4 I will send it out, declares the Lord of hosts,
> and it shall enter the house of the thief, and the house of him who swears falsely by my name. And
> it shall remain in his house and consume it, both timber and stones."
>
> 5 Then the angel who talked with me came forward and said to me, "Lift your eyes and see what
> this is that is going out." 6 And I said, "What is it?" He said, "This is the basket that is going out."
> And he said, "This is their iniquity in all the land." 7 And behold, the leaden cover was lifted, and
> there was a woman sitting in the basket! 8 And he said, "This is Wickedness." And he thrust her
> back into the basket, and thrust down the leaden weight on its opening.
>
> 9 Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, two women coming forward! The wind was in their
> wings. They had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and
> heaven. 10 Then I said to the angel who talked with me, "Where are they taking the basket?" 11 He
> said to me, "To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it. And when this is prepared, they will set
> the basket down there on its base." (Zechariah 5:5-11)

In the Bible, Shinar represents the **place of exile** for the wicked.

Do We Fight Back, or Hide?

MAY 22, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CRITICAL RACE THEORY, CRT, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, WOKE

> Maybe resistance isn't really all that futile.

Jeff Toler | **Shenandoah Christian Alliance**

For most of the last 54 weeks, SCA's **Understanding the Times** has attempted to instruct, inform and enlighten you, our reader, with an analysis of our current state of affairs… particularly here in America. Like much of the rest of the western world, America is firmly in the grip of a serious struggle for the very soul of humankind.

Originally aimed at encouraging church pastors and teachers of the importance of registering to vote—and vote according to a Christian biblical worldview—UTT evolved into a cultural chronicling of what has become apparently, a rapid descent into madness; a shocking exposition of ideological warfare on the psyche and soul of America.

We have explained the Hegelian dialectic, critical theory, and it's monstrous cousin, **critical race theory**.

We have parsed and dissected social justice, cultural hegemony, and woke writ large. For most of us who have always assumed we knew what was going on in the world, and that it didn't

necessarily affect us personally, this brave new age has finally slipped off the cloak of its deceit and, taken off the gloves. We now find ourselves staring into ideological warfare on a scale never really seen before.

It is quite shocking, but not so much because it is terrible, but because it is so brazen. No one is really making any attempt at disguise anymore. The face of evil is looking at us from the network news desk, the press secretary platform, and the Oval Office. Monsters don't need to look massive and misshapen to slaughter us. They only need to annihilate our collective assumptions of sanity, dignity, and justice.

Western Civilization, is staggering about like a brutally beaten prize fighter about to go down for the count.

This is a hard charge, and it is controversial to say the least, but we simply must face the facts. Western Civilization, with tacitly at least, the Judaeo/Christian understanding and observance of law, the thirst for truth, and the love of liberty, is staggering about like a brutally beaten prize fighter about to go down for the count. We shouldn't be surprised though. For generations, we have barely bothered to train anymore. We have become weak, slow, and dull-witted. For some, running the race for the prize just doesn't seem worth the effort to put on our shoes.

At some point during this misadventure, Western Civilization must realize its very existence is on the line. We as a culture must realize we have all the evidence we need that time is not just running out, we need to flip the hourglass, or it's game over.

Just recently, a new film is being released promoting the call to resist: **The Woke Reformation, a series on the true meaning of wokeness, and its illiberal origins.** (Warning: graphic language) It is significant because the video interview with Dave Rubin and three of the film's creators include *no Christians*—in fact film maker **Travis Brown** admits he left a very "fundamentalist Christian church." Yet he manages to discuss the immorality of woke progressives from a very sharply defined perspective of good versus evil. This is something that seems increasingly difficult for many Christians who should know the definition very well.

The film apparently will not be made available on any of the usual venues or platforms. There are a couple of reasons for this: It simply would not survive the censorship. Another, and more prescient reason is this method and manner is the way free speech and thought will be conducted now and in the future. We must pay for this freedom—at the very least, a nominal fee. Virtuous people have always known freedom and liberty come with a price.

But wait, there's more!

There is another celebrity we need to hear in our cultural war: his name is **Jesse Kelly**. Recently **Allie Beth Stucky interviewed him** about his campaign to train Christians to be ***anti-***

communist. If you are aware of the likes of Abram X. Kendi and Robin DiAngelo, you will find the contrast interesting as both are promoting the idea becoming ***anti-racist****—the newest flavor in communist ideology*.

Kelly defines communism in very stark and simple terms—but terms that withstand argument. He says, "Communism is simply a way you sell taking power for yourself, and how you sell it. If you are oppressed you give me power, and I promise I will hurt that guy who has been oppressing you on your behalf."

Such people who sell this are no more than hucksters and grifters.

"You could sell that in 1917 Soviet Union when people were standing in breadlines. You can't sell that here. So you to find a new way to sell it to Americans that would appeal to American sensibilities—and American sensibilities are Christian sensibilities, because even if you don't call yourself one, it's a Christian nation. That's what it was founded on."

"Christian sensibilities are kindness, tolerance, equality. These are things you're taught, and especially in this country. So in America the way you sell Communism is, "Don't you want black people to be equal?" want women to be equal? Are you being intolerant of gay people? You sell it through cultural means. You've been oppressed. Elect me I'll hurt them for you."

"It's absolutely everywhere here. They make your movies. They educate your kids. They're in your church."

Such language may seem inelegant, but that's Kelly's appeal to his growing audience. Oh, did we mention he is a Christian? The difference is he just hasn't been seminary educated and trained apparently.

The "Woke Reformation" film makers advocate resistance. Kelly advocates moving your family to a community that shares, or least accepts your worldview and your faith. Both ideas call for courage. Both ideas actually align with biblical teaching and understanding. On the other hand, there is nothing that anyone should find appealing about surrendering to evil.

No Time for Drifting

MAY 19, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Rick Robertson | **The Stand**

About twice a year, my wife and I fly to Nebraska to visit our family. It usually means changing planes at Chicago Midway. Part of that transition includes a ride on one of the moving walkways.

Have you noticed that once you're onboard the walkway it's very easy to disengage from the reality that you're moving forward? You can just drift along in your own little world, forgetting that things will come to an end sooner than you think.

Before you know it, the speaker barks, "Caution! The moving walkway is ending! Caution! The moving walkway is ending!"

If you and I are not careful, we can navigate through *life* that way. We can simply glide along, marking things off our to-do list with little thought about what's eternally important. We lose sight of the fact that with each tick of the clock we're advancing to a point of definite conclusion. It's easy to do that, isn't it?

Moses knew the danger of drifting along with no concern about the passing of time. In Psalm 90, his plea to God was:

*So, teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom (**Psalm 90:12 NASB**).*

Moses was aware that God's children need to be taught to number our days. And he knew that to truly number our days we must have a heart filled with the wisdom that comes from our heavenly Teacher. It's the only way to effectively live out a day in a way that matters.

So, numbering our days is not just a matter of racing through the day accomplishing tasks. It's first spending time with our wise King, listening to Him. Then, we move through the day dependent on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I believe that's what Moses meant when he prayed "teach us to number our days."

You're likely familiar with the British minister Charles Haddon Spurgeon. He was called the "Prince of Preachers," and he preached to thousands in London in the 19th century. I've always appreciated his ability to share deep spiritual truths and present them in a way that someone like me can understand.

In ***Spurgeon's Verse Expositions of the Bible,*** Reverend Spurgeon explains that a well-numbered day is a day in which wisdom is our guide:

"That is the great matter, after all, to get the heart applied to wisdom, to learn what is the right way, and to walk in it in the practical actions of daily life. It is of little use for us to learn to number our days if it merely enables us to sit down in self-confidence and carnal security; but if our hearts applied to true wisdom, the Lord's teaching has been effectual."

May we approach each day with a determined carefulness. There's no time to lose. Each new sunrise will usher in opportunity after opportunity for us to live for our Lord.

This was the Apostle Paul's charge to the followers of Jesus Christ in Philippi:

*Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God (**Philippians 1:27-28**).*

By God's grace, you and I have a much higher purpose now that we're Christians. Our manner of life is to be "worthy of the gospel of Christ." What an honor considering we were once enemies of this King. What a motivation for us to resolve to number each day.

It is helpful when God places someone in our path whose lifestyle challenges us to be resistant to drifting. Those of us who had the privilege of working alongside our founder, Don Wildmon, know that he was an example of a man who was driven. He was laser-focused on accomplishing what God called him to do. He had no time for drifting.

His commitment to his calling resounds in the mission statement for this ministry he launched in 1977:

“The mission of American Family Association is to inform, equip, and activate individuals and families to transform American culture and to give aid to the church, here and abroad, in its calling to fulfill the Great Commission.”

Reverend Wildmon’s pattern should inspire us to move through each day with a sense of purpose. There is critical kingdom work to be done, and…the clock is ticking.

*(Download the **American Family Radio App** to listen to Rick on AFR’s Music Network. He is heard weekdays between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Central.)*

SOURCE: THE STAND

Sowing and Sleeping

MAY 19, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Days of Praise is a podcast based on the Institute for Creation Research quarterly print devotional, *Days of Praise*. Start your day with devotional readings written by Dr. Henry Morris, Dr. Henry Morris III, Dr. John Morris, and others to strengthen and encourage you in your Christian faith.

*"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." (**1 Corinthians 15:42**)*

When a believer's soul and spirit leave the body and return to the Lord, it is significant that the New Testament Scriptures speak of the body not as dead but as sleeping. For example, Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep" (**John 11:11**). This state is not "soul sleep" as some teach, for "to be absent from the body, to be present with the Lord" (**2 Corinthians 5:8**). The body is sleeping—not the soul.

CONTINUE TO FULL DEVOTION

Want Revival? Go Back to What Works

MAY 18, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Dr. Ray Rooney, Jr. | **The Stand**

Just about every approach that can be imagined has been tried to revive the country in general and the church in particular in America…with very little to show for it. Most church growth gurus will tell you that the vast majority of churches experiencing growth are simply getting their members from other churches. There is a lot of shuffling going on but not a lot of brand new born-again believers. Consequently, there was the brilliant idea that church growth would explode if we'd "build it and they will come." So church revitalization has given way to church planting. It sounds good, promising, and exciting until you find out that once again when the truth is finally revealed, all you've done is relocated members from one location to another. To the unchurched, I'm sure all they can see are church building programs engaged for the purpose of making those who already attend church more comfortable.

America has gone beyond "heading in a certain direction." We are almost there. And the sad reality is that the church's impact on society and culture has been negligible. It's no wonder that the faithful are calling, praying, and hoping for revival. **Second Chronicles 7:14** is making the rounds again, but taking an honest look at reality reveals it's not initiating any kind of mass renewal/revival. Maybe we should try what the Bible reveals actually works.

Let's try the Jonah approach! For brevity's sake, I will skip how Jonah's initial rebellion to God's calling to confront the Ninevites led to a most uncomfortable time at sea. But there are parallels that shouldn't be ignored. Like the modern church's absolute unwillingness to speak with authority on the subject of sin. Just because the media and Hollywood have successfully pigeonholed evangelical Christians as bigoted fools who constantly harp on puritanical ideals of human sexuality doesn't mean there is no place anymore for the church to unapologetically address the issue of sin.

Or, how personal repentance must absolutely precede corporate revival. Part of Jonah's prayer as he lingered in the midst of the bowels of the sea creature included "When my life was fainting away, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came to you…" It is significant that a man called by God to speak for Him had forgotten Him. It seems pretty obvious that the church in America is far more concerned about being accepted by culture than it is about being found faithful to God.

Pick an issue (marriage, immigration, government, terrorism, etc.) and you'll find Christian leaders wanting to be seen as compassionate. Rather than address how sin is at the heart of any of the issues and provide some much-needed guidance and correction, they want to come off as sympathetically kind-hearted. Or, in more direct language…accommodating. That is to say 'in sync' with cultural mores. What a disaster it's been. How forgetful our spiritual leaders are of the holy and righteous God.

We've tried everything from implementing John Maxwell's leadership principles to abandoning old churches for new plants, to accommodating sin, and the nation is no closer to revival while the church continues diminishing in number and influence. Why not try what has already been proven to succeed? Jonah's message turned around one of the largest cities in the known world at the time. While I believe in education, Jonah's seminary stint was a three day visit in the belly of a sea creature that Jesus later referenced as a metaphor of hell.

Authentic revival isn't a program developed by Ph.D.'s in the hallowed halls of religious academia. It's personal accountability and faithfulness to God. Plain and simple.

Jonah's revival message? One sentence:

> Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown! (**Jonah 3:4**).

Remember when sermons revealed the terrible consequence of unrepented sin?

As in the First Great Awakening, for example. It began with a sermon entitled "**Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God**." Or the Second Great Awakening led by the "camp meetings" and Methodist Circuit Riders where the fundamental message of repentance was the emphasis? Is that

where our religious leaders are afraid we'd revert to if the message of impending divine judgment were faithfully preached?

It's not like Jesus never broached the subject of judgment:

> And then will I declare to them 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness (**Matthew 7:23**).
>
> Whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come (**Matthew 12:32**).
>
> Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels (**Matthew 25:41**).
>
> But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you…" (**Luke 12:20**)

That's just a tiny sampling of what Jesus had to say about judgment. Likewise, there is much to be found concerning Jesus and compassion and forgiveness. But the latter is seldom tempered by the former in today's American church. Many church leaders have thrown out the Bible message of judgment believing everything will work out if we only preach compassion.

It should be obvious that proclaiming a God of compassion at the expense of a God of holiness (which implies judgment) isn't working. Our nation is proverbially going to hell in a hand-basket. The biblical message, *"the wages of sin is death"* (**Romans 6:23**) is conspicuously absent in many churches and entire denominations.

Revival will not come until the message of judgment is faithfully preached. I realize it is not a very popular message. But don't sell it short. Many people know they are living in sin and intuit that something bad lies ahead if they don't stop. They're just waiting on someone with the gumption to say it to them (I know this is true from my own experience).

That brings me back to Jonah. Just a brief message from a rather unwilling prophet about imminent judgment and look what happened: *"the people of Nineveh believed God"*! (**Jonah 3:5**). And when they demonstrated repentance *"God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them…" (**Jonah 3:10**)*.

What a novel idea! Inform people that if they continue living the way they are living there will be a price to pay. Maybe we should go back to that. I mean, how many people are being saved and joining churches with the "God created you that way and doesn't want you to do anything different" approach?

The first message Jesus preached was *"repent and believe in the gospel" (**Mark 1:15**)*.

Throughout history, that is the message that has preceded and prompted true revival.

SOURCE: **THE STAND**

The Stronghold of Heretics

MAY 15, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Calvin: "Ambiguity is the stronghold of heretics."

By J. Jeff Toler, for Shenandoah Christian Alliance

Doug Wilson recently said, "Now consistent Christians are not anarchists, and are not doctrinaire libertarians. They know that liberty can only flourish within a system of structured order."

For any Christian to shrink from the confrontation of resisting anarchy, tyranny, or cultural revolution, will necessarily mean to abandon the supreme cultural blueprint that God left us as chronicled throughout The Bible. We are not to work from ideological blueprints to build a new cultural order—"from scratch"—by bomb-throwing anti-establishment rhetoric. Our rhetoric is to be all about *anti-corrupt establishment* rhetoric.

If we really want to understand the rationale for most all of the upheaval in our culture today, we will only need to investigate the motives behind the movements. For instance, if we want to see just how sincere **Patrisse Cullors**' motives were for the formation of Black Lives Matter, we need look no further than her real estate investments in the last year or so. She is now a very wealthy and powerful woman. If we want to understand why major corporations donated so heavily to her organization, we need only examine the power these same corporations have in influencing how

they are regulated, and how they calculate their popularity—and their profits—will increase accordingly.

Clear-thinking people—particularly people of The Faith, must admit that this unholy alliance of oligarch and iconoclast will certainly have terrible consequences for anyone who benefits from law and liberty. These very same protections benefit everyone. The corrupt will suffer too. They will just be the last to be eaten.

It is a serious problem—indeed the worst problem—for any ruling class to "rule" in such a way as to foster contempt for the law. By doing so they will only manage to make it risible and not worth obeying anything. Do they not know it is the law that supports them, and their position? If the law becomes no more than a joke, how can we then expect people to continue policing themselves? The Bible warns of the consequences when people do only what is right in their own eyes. It rarely ends well.

When judges are immoral and corrupt, speeding on an open stretch of empty highway is not that big of an issue. But if "The Ruler" decides that forcing people to surrender their rights, as protected under The Constitution as an example, it is another matter altogether. If thinking such a thing is a stretch, think again. It is already being openly discussed and debated inside and outside the halls of congress to authorize the surrender through buy-back programs of our firearms. Of course Law-abiding citizens will be willing to do so if they can depend on the law for protection. Can that be true for the "law-abiding citizens" of places like Portland, Seattle, or Minneapolis? Places where the police have been defunded and condemned—under the accusation of systemic racism.

If the last fourteen months of government mandates, restrictions, and forced behavior has shown us anything, it is this: people will comply if they are sufficiently concerned, and *certainly* if they are afraid. The irony is that people *must* be able to rely on authority to provide protection. All that is necessary to encourage this reliance is to trust the media and politicians to be truthful in what they tell us. But what happens when can see they are not? What do our "lying eyes" actually see?

> In a republic, the rule of law is the most necessary social contract for maintaining the peace. This is why we refer to the police as law enforcement officers.

There is yet another reason to be very concerned when the dominant narrative in our culture is that systemic racism is still the major defining characteristic of America. We prefer to believe this in spite of the undeniable advances made since the passage of The Civil Rights Act of 1964. Does it seem ironic today that The Voting Rights Act that passed the following year was in response to the abuses by politicians in disenfranchising minority voters. America was very far along the road to recovering from the history of systemic racism—particularly as practiced in the American south.

So, what does this have to do with ambiguity and heresy?

SCA finds it very troubling that church leaders, including those within the Southern Baptist Convention, have adopted the rhetoric of enemies of the rule of law—namely Marxist ideologues—who use systemic racism, social justice, and critical theory to disrupt and distort our comprehension of the Gospel.

Perhaps John Calvin couldn't foresee progressive Christianity as practiced today. If he could he might well have added, "Deviance is the refuge of heterodoxy." If we are remotely honest, promoters of social justice, and critical theories are at once altering and ignoring the decrees and truth claims found in scripture.

Christians must know **God demands justice**. In God's economy justice doesn't require an adjective. MacArthur says, "Social justice is just another word for socialism."

Social justice, like most Marxist ideology is distributive. It applies not necessarily to the person, but to *people groups*. This is the way of power dynamics. To work, something must be taken away from some, to be given to someone else to achieve equity outcomes. Even within evangelical circles today, the cultural hegemony claims the image-bearers of God with white skin have oppressed the image-bearers of God with black skin. There is no presumption of innocence when a person is among the cultural hegemony.

One of the 45 Tenets of Communism is this: "Infiltrate the churches and replace revealed religion with social religion." There is nothing ambiguous about this.

Looking for sanctification in all the wrong places.

MAY 7, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

By J. Jeff Toler, for Shenandoah Christian Alliance

With some understanding of the history of Marxism in the USA, and particularly with its **infiltration into the mainline denominations** of the early 20th century, we can begin to see how progressive Christianity became popularized in the 21st century.

Major celebrity figures within the Christian community today seemed to have become, almost overnight, fully woke preachers and teachers. It would seem that it took years for this to happen. If so, no one seemed to be paying much notice. At the very least for many men and women in public ministry, the rhetoric was subtle and gradual, and we dismissed any potential error.

But it is more likely, we were simply not paying attention.

> Sound biblical teaching is, and always has been the singular component in developing sound biblical doctrine. It is the bedrock of our **sanctification**.

We must not confuse this with ***Justification***, which is defined as "an act of God by which those who are unrighteous in themselves are nevertheless declared righteous before God while still in the *sinning state*." Justification is a deliverance from the penalty of sin and is a past action for all

believers, accomplished by Christ at the cross. (**https://www.gotquestions.org/justification-vs-sanctification.html**)

- Paul summarizes the concept of justification: ***"So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men"*** (**Romans 5:18, NASB**).

By contrast, **sanctification** is not the act of God declaring a person righteous; rather, it is the *continual process* by which God is actually making a person righteous. Sanctification is the deliverance from the power of sin and is a present and continuous process of believers becoming Christlike, accomplished by the Holy Spirit's power and presence. Sanctification represents a believer's victory over the flesh (**Romans 7:24–25**), the world (**1 John 5:4**), and Satan (**James 4:7**).

The ultimate end result of our sanctification is that we will be found in Christ's image.

- ***"For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified"*** (**Romans 8:29–30** NASB).

Justification happens when God declares a *guilty sinner* to be righteous; sanctification happens when God makes the *believing sinner* righteous. Simply put, Justification is a singular *experience*; sanctification is a continual *process*. Justification releases us from the *penalty* of sin; sanctification releases us from the *power* of sin. Both justification and sanctification are components of the believer's "eternal salvation" (**Hebrews 5:9**).

So, any process requires at least a few necessary components. In **business management training** for example, these would include:

Decision… For our discussion we must volitionally determine to believe in Christ, by the effective presentation, comprehensive explanation, and strong guidance of Holy Spirit—**our salvation experience.**

Input… True and trustworthy *information* must be explored and studied to continue the development. Trustworthy *people* with the right aptitude are necessary to *share and instruct* in this information—**Bible study.**

Output… How well we do with our decisions *and* our input will then produce the best, most useful results, or output—**our spiritual fruit.**

In an age like this, it is evident our decisions, without *trusted* input, can hinder or hamper our development, and therefore our output. When Jesus admonished Peter to "feed my sheep," He was preparing Peter for the work of the pastor. So consider then, a pastor exhorting the idea of striving for unity among the church. It may sound good, but, what does the Bible teach about unity?

- ***There must, indeed, be factions among you, so that those who are approved may be recognized among you.*** (1 Corinthians 11:19 HCSB)

If we, as true believers, are approved by God, yet unite with those who are not, we will not be recognized as such. In other words, it's a pretty big deal that there must be factions… **Francis Chan's** painful exhortation for unity notwithstanding. It becomes a problem when others in our fellowship insist that we must unite—even if this means compromising when we know we cannot agree. This verse doesn't say there *might* be factions, it plainly says there *must* be factions!

- ***For I have often told you, and now say again with tears, that many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction; their god is their stomach; their glory is in their shame. They are focused on earthly things, but our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.*** (Philippians 3:18-20 HCSB)

A truly redeemed church is united in Christ and nothing more. If the call for unity must necessarily mean moving from this position to be acceptable to the culture, that will only end in compromise and conformity—to this world.

So how then, do we respond to **David Platt who says**, because we are white, we must "look at the reality of racialization," and then adds, "I want Christ to be exalted through increasing diversity?" The message is, If we are white, we must be racist. As Voddie Baucham reminds us, for **Critical Race Theory** crusaders, *everything* is racist.

If it is not found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it is another gospel.

- ***There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*** (Galatians 3:28 NIV)

In end times prophesy, **Jesus plainly declares** ἐγερθήσεται γα ̀ρ ἔθνος ἐπι ̀ ἔθνος—"nation will rise up against nation." The Greek word for nation is **"ethnos"** from which we derive ethnic.

Can any race find sanctification in uniting with critical race theory?

Are Christians any Better?

APRIL 23, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

JMorgan | **Meet the Need**

Christians and churches have inadvertently precipitated our nation's plummet into the **Age of Decadence**. The delusion fueling America's demise, **society's belief that human nature is inherently good**, is not exclusive to non-believers. Many Christians are buying into the world's trust in man's capabilities and potential, redirecting faith away from God's goodness to our own. It is also becoming increasingly common to distinguish and distance ourselves from a culture run amuck, taking some measure of pride in our relative virtue and piety.

Even "faithful" churchgoers can lose their sense of desperation and appreciation for God's grace as they hang around "good" people, stop cussing, resist temptations, serve as a greeter, and volunteer at a homeless shelter. We can start to believe our own press, hearing how we have changed for the better, and join the chorus pointing out the immorality of those still living as we once did. None of that alters the fact that we need grace just as much as those who subscribe to the prevailing "truth" in America today – the inalienable right to pursue the unmitigated, relentless satisfaction of every self-indulgent urge.

No references in our prior posts were intended to imply any distinction between "us" and "them". Characterizing Christ-followers as good and others as bad is a false dichotomy. **Only God is good**. Yes, believers do have enormous advantages – eternal life with their Father, Scripture, and the Holy Spirit – but those don't make us "better" than anyone else. Christians take on a new

nature at justification, but sanctification is a continual process. Righteousness in the Lord's eyes is our inheritance through Jesus, but sinlessness is a state we will never attain this side of heaven. Dying to our original nature is a daily struggle as long as we are on planet earth. "Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me." (**Romans 7:21-23**)

Our society may be on the opposing front lines of that war, fighting for rather than against sin, but all humans share an inability to do the right thing whether we like it or not. When we do anything pure and holy, the Lord deserves all the credit. The blame for whatever we do wrong lies with us. Ironically, the better you think you are, the worse you actually are. **When you think you're the best you're at your worst**. Practicing and preaching morality is noble, as is keeping yourself from sin, but not if it becomes or conveys self-righteousness, separating yourself from "sinners". Jesus levied His harshest criticism at those who claimed to know God but their sanctimonious air proved they didn't. The fact that the Lord softened our hearts and led us to accept His forgiveness should make us feel thankful and humble, not superior.

The Price of Our "Superiority Complex"

Regardless of whether Christians and churches feign or articulate superiority, it is a belief many hold or convey to a culture not enamored with the insinuation. It seems counterintuitive that adherents of a religion hinging on acknowledgement of sin would try so hard to conceal it. To maintain appearances as a "good" Christian, many lack the humility and vulnerability to admit their faults openly either within their church or to friends and neighbors. Yet they are often quick to point out the shortcomings of society and the "lost", in direct contrast with Scripture – "God will judge those outside. 'Expel the wicked person from among you.'" (**1 Corinthians 5:13**)

Jesus won over the crowds, earned their trust, and disarmed their objections through serving the helpless, condemning self-righteousness, demanding authenticity, defending the poor, demonstrating God's power, and revealing humanity's limitations. So pretending to be good (as opposed to exposing our need for Jesus, so others can see theirs), not only contradicts all He taught us but elicits visceral responses from those we were supposed to reach with the Gospel…

1. **Rejection** – Considers longstanding Christian values too outdated for the now enlightened, pointing to the hypocrisy of past leaders to justify their own hedonism, idolatry, and perversion while claiming moral supremacy
2. **Resentment** – Not only dismisses attempts by Christians to impose our religious standard (one they don't believe we abide by), but considers any questioning of their personal preferences to be "hatred"
3. **Retribution** – The only people group that media, Hollywood and politicians are free to mock without hesitation are Christians, who refuse to conform to evolving social norms

Our post-Christian culture accelerates toward its downfall in part because many churchgoers unwittingly drew a line, alienating the "bad" by mistakenly believing we are "good". Christ-followers are redeemed from sin, better able to resist sin, and not controlled by sin, but because we are not sinless our battle is against sin and not other "sinners". Rather than building a wall to segment sacred from secular, our job is to disclose that forgiveness and reconciliation are available to everyone. That wall only serves to keep non-believers from seeing Jesus through us. Instead, they just see another human being, one they think is looking down on them. Therefore, an offended society that claims to value diversity above all else demands conformity around only one thing – cancelling anyone who advocates or does not condemn Christian values.

Who Told Us We Were Better?

Jesus was eminently clear in parables and instructions about the sinfulness of mankind and the importance of authenticity among His followers. Nearly every story in the Bible relates in some way to the passage "**those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted**". So how have Christians in America projected an image so diametrically opposed to central tenets of Scripture? Our perceived arrogance stems from powerful forces in our culture steering our love away from God and our neighbors (the Great Commandment) and toward three alternative objects of our affection…

1. **Love Your Church** – Church growth models encourage differentiation rather than unity in the body of Christ. Books and consultants teach pastors how to overcome the challenge of maintaining a church building and staff by investing in and promoting competitive advantages. Engaging children's ministries, higher quality music, more sound teaching, and a wider variety of programs attract "shoppers" through the revolving door. If one church is better than another, perhaps those members are better than other Christians – and they certainly have a leg up on the "nones" and "dones" who don't go to church at all. Internally-focused strategies for growth or survival may build loyalty, volunteering and giving to churches but also encourage social distancing rather than evangelism and compassion for the good of the community and Kingdom.
2. **Love Your Life** – Scriptural Relativism (selective amnesia regarding Bible verses deemed too controversial or demanding for "consumers") is more prevalent than ever today as churches recover from the pandemic, praying to get back to "normal". Our Scriptural Relativism fuels society's Moral Relativism. Sermons, songs and books accentuate the positives, citing verses like **Jeremiah 29:11**, **Romans 8:28** and **Philippians 4:13**, but ignoring inconvenient passages about sin, accountability, sanctification and the costs of discipleship. In fact, a **recent Barna study** found that 51% of Christians have never even heard of the Great Commission. Without a biblical view of our ongoing struggle against sins of omission and commission, we don't see the **log still in our own eye** when we look in the mirror. Not understanding God's commands to love above all else, we have not represented Him well. Our cries for justice now come across as judgment, what we intend as compassion is seen as

condemnation, our selflessness is considered self-righteousness, and even our humility is labeled hypocrisy. It's no wonder why we've lost our voice and can't seem to do much "right" in modern American culture.

3. **Love Yourself** – To revive a Church that was already declining in attendance, membership, impact, influence and perception before COVID-19, Christian leaders **cave to social pressure** and repeat culture's rallying cries to be all you can be and make the most of your abilities. We leverage ideals the world is selling and put a Christian twist on it, modifying "you're perfect just as you are" to say "we (and God) love you just as you are". In other words, "there's no need to change" – so most don't. And God's role isn't to transform you but to get you through (or out of) difficult situations, the primary theme of contemporary Christian music. "Sin" is no longer part of society's vernacular, so we don't address it in church either. That inconsistency between our (external) words and (internal) actions is evident to media vultures eager to pounce on the next fallen pastor. Our efforts to accommodate culture's obsession with its own "goodness" have backfired, putting us under their microscope since we claim to live by a moral standard (whereas society feels it shouldn't be judged since it has no such standard).

Christians do have a new nature – **one exemplified and marked by the characteristics of Jesus** like humility, servanthood, compassion, and associating with "sinners". So how do we look to the world so little like Jesus? The answer, at least in part, is that our churches look different than Jesus envisioned. Exciting worship, applicable sermons, and fun fellowship may produce cultural Christians who love their church, love life and love themselves, but not necessarily Spirit-filled disciples who truly love God and their neighbors.

It's Your Turn...

In the next blog post, we will discuss how Christians and churches can convey that we're not better so our nation can see that Jesus is best. Please share any thoughts, prayers and ideas about how to communicate how desperately we all need a Savior. That may be the only hope to keep America from plunging into the **next and final phase of its history**.

Stand Up to Tyranny: How to Respond to the Evils of Our Age

MARCH 30, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, TRYANNY, TYRANNY

By John W. Whitehead & Nisha Whitehead
The Rutherford Institute

March 29, 2021

> "The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority."—Martin Luther King Jr. (**A Knock at Midnight**, June 11, 1967)

In every age, we find ourselves wrestling with the question of how Jesus Christ—the itinerant preacher and revolutionary activist who died challenging the police state of his time, namely, the

Roman Empire—would respond to the moral questions of our day.

For instance, would Jesus advocate, as so many evangelical Christian leaders have done in recent years, for congregants to "submit to your leaders and those in authority," which in the American police state translates to complying, conforming, submitting, obeying orders, deferring to authority and generally doing whatever a government official tells you to do?

What would Jesus do?

Study the life and teachings of Jesus, and you may be surprised at how relevant he is to our modern age.

A radical nonconformist who challenged authority at every turn, Jesus spent his adult life speaking truth to power, challenging the status quo of his day, pushing back against the abuses of the Roman Empire, and **providing a blueprint for standing up to tyranny** that would be followed by those, religious and otherwise, who came after him.

Those living through this present age of government lockdowns, immunity passports, militarized police, SWAT team raids, police shootings of unarmed citizens, roadside strip searches, invasive surveillance and the like might feel as if these events are unprecedented. However, the characteristics of a police state and its reasons for being are no different today than they were in Jesus' lifetime: control, power and money.

Much like the American Empire today, the Roman Empire of Jesus' day was characterized by secrecy, surveillance, a widespread police presence, a citizenry treated like suspects with little recourse against the police state, perpetual wars, a military empire, martial law, and political retribution against those who dared to challenge the power of the state.

A police state extends far beyond the actions of law enforcement. In fact, a police state "is **characterized by bureaucracy, secrecy, perpetual wars, a nation of suspects, militarization, surveillance, widespread police presence, and a citizenry with little recourse against police actions**."

Indeed, the police state in which Jesus lived (and died) and its striking similarities to modern-day America are beyond troubling.

Secrecy, surveillance and rule by the elite. As the chasm between the wealthy and poor grew wider in the Roman Empire, the **ruling class and the wealthy class became synonymous**, while the lower classes, increasingly deprived of their political freedoms, grew disinterested in the government and easily distracted by "bread and circuses." Much like America today, with its lack of government transparency, overt domestic surveillance, and **rule by the rich**, the inner workings of the Roman Empire were **shrouded in secrecy**, while its leaders were constantly on

the watch for any potential threats to its power. The **resulting state-wide surveillance was primarily carried out by the military**, which acted as investigators, enforcers, torturers, policemen, executioners and jailers. Today that role is fulfilled by the NSA, the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security and the increasingly militarized police forces across the country.

Widespread police presence. The Roman Empire used its military forces to maintain the "peace," thereby establishing a police state that reached into all aspects of a citizen's life. In this way, these military officers, used to address a broad range of routine problems and conflicts, enforced the will of the state. Today SWAT teams, comprised of local police and federal agents, are employed to **carry out routine search warrants for minor crimes** such as marijuana possession and credit card fraud.

Citizenry with little recourse against the police state. As the Roman Empire expanded, **personal freedom and independence nearly vanished**, as did any real sense of local governance and national consciousness. Similarly, in America today, **citizens largely feel powerless**, voiceless and unrepresented in the face of a power-hungry federal government. As states and localities are brought under direct control by federal agencies and regulations, a sense of learned helplessness grips the nation.

Perpetual wars and a military empire. Much like America today with its practice of policing the world, **war and an over-arching militarist ethos provided the framework for the Roman Empire**, which extended from the Italian peninsula to all over Southern, Western, and Eastern Europe, extending into North Africa and Western Asia as well. In addition to significant foreign threats, **wars were waged against inchoate, unstructured and socially inferior foes**.

Martial law. Eventually, Rome established a permanent military dictatorship that left the citizens at the mercy of an unreachable and oppressive totalitarian regime. In the absence of resources to establish civic police forces, the Romans relied increasingly on the military to intervene in all matters of conflict or upheaval in provinces, from small-scale scuffles to large-scale revolts. Not unlike police forces today, with their **martial law training drills on American soil**, militarized weapons and "shoot first, ask questions later" mindset, the Roman soldier had "**the exercise of lethal force at his fingertips**" with the potential of wreaking havoc on normal citizens' lives.

A nation of suspects. Just as the American Empire looks upon its citizens as suspects to be tracked, surveilled and controlled, the Roman Empire looked upon all potential insubordinates, from the common thief to a full-fledged insurrectionist, as **threats to its power**. The insurrectionist was **seen as directly challenging the Emperor**. A "bandit," or **revolutionist**, was seen as capable of overturning the empire, was always considered guilty and deserving of the most savage penalties, including capital punishment. Bandits were usually punished publicly and

cruelly as a means of **deterring others from challenging the power of the state**. Jesus' execution was one such public punishment.

Acts of civil disobedience by insurrectionists. Starting with his act of civil disobedience at the Jewish temple, the site of the administrative headquarters of the Sanhedrin, the supreme Jewish council, Jesus branded himself a political revolutionary. When Jesus "with the help of his disciples, blocks the entrance to the courtyard" and forbids "anyone carrying goods for sale or trade from entering the Temple," he committed a blatantly criminal and seditious act, an act "that undoubtedly precipitated his arrest and execution." Because the commercial events were sponsored by the religious hierarchy, which in turn was operated by consent of the Roman government, Jesus' attack on the money chargers and traders can be seen as an **attack on Rome itself**, an unmistakable declaration of political and social independence from the Roman oppression.

Military-style arrests in the dead of night. Jesus' arrest account testifies to the fact that the Romans perceived Him as a revolutionary. Eerily similar to today's SWAT team raids, Jesus was arrested in the middle of the night, in secret, by a **large, heavily armed fleet of soldiers**. Rather than merely asking for Jesus when they came to arrest him, his pursuers collaborated beforehand with Judas. Acting as a government informant, Judas concocted a kiss as a secret identification marker, hinting that a level of deception and trickery must be used to obtain this seemingly "dangerous revolutionist's" cooperation.

Torture and capital punishment. In Jesus' day, religious preachers, self-proclaimed prophets and nonviolent protesters were not summarily arrested and executed. Indeed, the high priests and Roman governors normally allowed a protest, particularly a small-scale one, to run its course. However, government authorities were quick to dispose of leaders and movements that appeared to threaten the Roman Empire. The charges leveled against Jesus—that he was a threat to the stability of the nation, opposed paying Roman taxes and claimed to be the rightful King—were purely political, not religious. To the Romans, any one of these charges was enough to merit death by crucifixion, which was usually reserved for slaves, non-Romans, radicals, revolutionaries and the worst criminals.

Jesus was presented to Pontius Pilate "**as a disturber of the political peace**," a leader of a rebellion, a political threat, and most gravely—a claimant to kingship, a "king of the revolutionary type." After Jesus is formally condemned by Pilate, he is sentenced to death by crucifixion, "the Roman means of executing criminals convicted of high treason." The purpose of crucifixion was not so much to kill the criminal, as it was an immensely public statement intended to visually warn all those who would challenge the power of the Roman Empire. Hence, it was reserved solely for the most extreme political crimes: treason, rebellion, sedition, and banditry. After being ruthlessly whipped and mocked, Jesus was nailed to a cross.

As Professor Mark Lewis Taylor observed:

> The cross within Roman politics and culture was a marker of shame, of being a criminal. If you were put to the cross, you were marked as shameful, as criminal, but especially as subversive. And there were thousands of people put to the cross. The cross was actually positioned at many crossroads, and, as New Testament scholar Paula Fredricksen has reminded us, it served as kind of a public service announcement that said, "Act like this person did, and this is how you will end up."

Jesus—the revolutionary, the political dissident, and the nonviolent activist—lived and died in a police state. Any reflection on Jesus' life and death within a police state must take into account several factors: Jesus spoke out strongly against such things as empires, controlling people, state violence and power politics. Jesus challenged the political and religious belief systems of his day. And worldly powers feared Jesus, not because he challenged them for control of thrones or government but because he undercut their claims of supremacy, and he dared to speak truth to power in a time when doing so could—and often did—cost a person his life.

Unfortunately, the radical Jesus, the political dissident who took aim at injustice and oppression, has been largely forgotten today, replaced by a congenial, smiling Jesus trotted out for religious holidays but otherwise rendered mute when it comes to matters of war, power and politics.

Yet for those who truly study the life and teachings of Jesus, the resounding theme is one of outright resistance to war, materialism and empire.

Ultimately, as I point out in my book ***Battlefield America: The War on the American People***, this is the contradiction that must be resolved if the radical Jesus—the one who stood up to the Roman Empire and was crucified as a warning to others not to challenge the powers-that-be—is to be an example for our modern age.

After all, there is so much suffering and injustice in the world, and so much good that can be done by those who truly aspire to follow Jesus Christ's example.

We must decide whether we will follow the path of least resistance—willing to turn a blind eye to what Martin Luther King Jr. referred to as the "evils of segregation and the crippling effects of discrimination, to the moral degeneracy of religious bigotry and the corroding effects of narrow sectarianism, to economic conditions that deprive men of work and food, and to the insanities of militarism and the self-defeating effects of physical violence"—or whether we will be **transformed nonconformists** "dedicated to justice, peace, and brotherhood."

As King explained in a powerful **sermon delivered in 1954**, "This command not to conform comes … Jesus Christ, the world's most dedicated nonconformist, whose ethical nonconformity still challenges the conscience of mankind."

Furthermore:

> We need to recapture the gospel glow of the early Christians, who were nonconformists in the truest sense of the word and refused to shape their witness according to the mundane patterns of the world. Willingly they sacrificed fame, fortune, and life itself in behalf of a cause they knew to be right. Quantitatively small, they were qualitatively giants. Their powerful gospel put an end to such barbaric evils as infanticide and bloody gladiatorial contests. Finally, they captured the Roman Empire for Jesus Christ… The hope of a secure and livable world lies with disciplined nonconformists, who are dedicated to justice, peace, and brotherhood. The trailblazers in human, academic, scientific, and religious freedom have always been nonconformists. In any cause that concerns the progress of mankind, put your faith in the nonconformist!
>
> …Honesty impels me to admit that transformed nonconformity, which is always costly and never altogether comfortable, may mean walking through the valley of the shadow of suffering, losing a job, or having a six-year-old daughter ask, "Daddy, why do you have to go to jail so much?" But we are gravely mistaken to think that Christianity protects us from the pain and agony of mortal existence. Christianity has always insisted that the cross we bear precedes the crown we wear. To be a Christian, one must take up his cross, with all of its difficulties and agonizing and tragedy-packed content, and carry it until that very cross leaves its marks upon us and redeems us to that more excellent way that comes only through suffering.
>
> In these days of worldwide confusion, there is a dire need for men and women who will courageously do battle for truth. We must make a choice. Will we continue to march to the drumbeat of conformity and respectability, or will we, listening to the beat of a more distant drum, move to its echoing sounds? Will we march only to the music of time, or will we, risking criticism and abuse, march to the soul saving music of eternity?

WC: 2275

SOURCE: **The Rutherford Institute**

LIVE STREAM this Wednesday at 7p.m. February 10, 2021: The Way Forward

FEBRUARY 7, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The months ahead are going to test America and followers of Jesus, especially. But as Luke 18 urges, we must pray and not lose heart. We have to resolve to keep praying and standing until God gives justice. As believers, how do we navigate these challenging times? Next Wednesday, February 10, FRC is hosting a special, interactive Pray Vote Stand discussion to chart the way forward.

Live from Cornerstone Chapel in Leesburg, Virginia, I'll be hosting, along with Pastor Gary Hamrick and Alliance Defending Freedom President and CEO Mike Farris. And we want to hear from you! To submit questions in advance, email us at **questions@frc.org**.

We're also inviting people to send video questions with a link to the same address.

If you're in the area, join us in person for worship at 7:00 p.m. (ET) — or visit **PrayVoteStand.org** to watch **the livestream at 7:30 p.m**. with your family, friends, or small group.

We hope you'll tune in for a night designed to encourage and equip God's people!

ACTION: PRAY (**link**) and BIBLE **READING PLAN**

PRAY FOR THE UNITY OF OUR NATION. Truth is the foundation for unity. It would seem easier to go along with the times and get caught up in the current and live by lies, but we must let the truth dwell richly in us all. Pray that the truth of God will be upheld in our homes, our churches, our government, the media, education, and in the culture. (John 14:6; 17:23; Philippians 2:2) Pray that the good news of the gospel and the hope that is found in Jesus Christ would be lifted up and embraced in America again. This is not a time to suppress or hide the hope that is within us but instead pray for boldness to share the gospel and that God would open the hearts of others to receive the peace of Christ and glorify His name that is above every name. (1 Peter 3:15; Philippians 2:9-10)

PRAY FOR THE LORD TO CONFUSE AND CONFOUND THE PLANS OF THOSE WHO OPERATE COUNTER TO THE TRUTH. We can have hope and confidence that truth has already and will triumph. Pray that the lawless deeds of sinful men would be put to shame and that those blinded by the lies would awaken to know the truth. (Isaiah 19; Luke 8:17)

PRAY THAT THE CHURCH (FOLLOWERS OF JESUS) WOULD BE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLDin these dark and difficult times (Matthew 5:14) and that as the light shines in the darkness it would grow and increase in brightness and that the light would expose what has been done in the darkness. (Ephesians 5:11-14; 6:18-20)

PRAY THAT OUR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LEADERS WOULD RECOGNIZE, UNDERSTAND, AND YIELD TO THE TRUTHthat the authority defined and limited to them in our Constitution ultimately comes from God. (Romans 13:1; Daniel 2:21)

PRAY THAT STATE LEGISLATURES WILL TAKE UP THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO REVIEW STATE ELECTION SYSTEMS AND EXPOSE ANY CORRUPTION OR MANIPULATION, and then change the laws and policies to ensure the integrity of our elections. Pray for candor in our governmental systems and for honest and fair accounts. (Proverbs 16:11; 11:1; 2 Corinthians 8:21)

PRAY THAT GOD'S PEOPLE WOULD RESOLVE TO STAND FIRM AND UNWAVERING IN THE POWER OF GOD'S MIGHT(Ephesians 6:10-18). May the church not grow weary of doing good but pray for endurance to run the race ahead for the glory of God. (Galatians 6:9; Hebrews 12)

PRAY FOR THE LEADERS IN THE CHURCH AND ITS MEMBERS THAT WE WOULD DEMONSTRATE THE LOVE OF CHRIST TO OUR NEIGHBORS AND ONE ANOTHER. In these uncertain times there is need for great wisdom and the cultivation of virtue for all Christians. Pray that we would stand the test well and bear with one another in humility, courage, and love. (Ephesians 4:2; 5:15-17; James 1:5)

SOURCE: **FRC**

Owned by Culture

JANUARY 24, 2021
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, CULTURE WARS, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Dr. Ray Rooney, Jr | **The Stand**

"Culture" is one of those words (like love or liberal) that can mean so many different things it is really a challenge to define. Since this blog has a lot to do with culture it is important that you know what I mean when I use the word. When I speak of culture I am referring to "the often unchallenged and universally practiced beliefs, values, and behaviors embraced by a group of people in society" (borrowed from my own doctoral dissertation). Culture produces a way of thinking and therefore living.

The culture of Israel in the first century produced the religious elitism that we see in the Gospels. Men like Caiaphas, Simon the Pharisee, and even Saul of Tarsus (who later converted and became the Apostle Paul). Corporately John the Baptist and even Jesus Christ called all the religious leaders of Israel a "brood of vipers" (**Matthew 3:7**; **12:34**). Those vipers were both creators and products of their culture.

But not everybody was owned by a culture that repeatedly drew the ire and punishment of God over and over and over again…right? Take the apostles, for instance. Jesus specifically chose those twelve men because they stood out from culture, didn't He? Hardly.

Allow me to show you three examples of things said by Jesus' own disciples that reflect that they, too, were in the grip of a culture that blinded both their eyes and their minds. All three examples

can be found in Matthew chapters 18 and 19.

Who is the greatest?

Immediately after Jesus paid His own and Peter's temple tax (see **Matthew 17:24-27**) the rest of the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Apparently, they figured that if Peter could get his taxes paid by Jesus then the rest of them were in line for even better things. And Jesus did say that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (**Matthew 4:17**). The luxurious lifestyles of the religious leaders coupled with the power and influence they wielded had clearly signaled to the apostles that God's approval was demonstrated by wealth and power. (And this wasn't the only time this issue arose. They got into a fight about it at the Last Supper also)

Imagine their shock when Jesus called a little child into their midst and said,

*Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven (**Matthew 18:3**).*

They were wondering how much wealth and power they would wield in God's kingdom and Jesus told them they would not even make it to heaven thinking like that! Talk about a rude awakening.

These men had grown up in a culture that saw wealth and power as hallmarks of divine approval. And if Jesus was ushering in God's new kingdom and the apostles were His hand-picked leaders then it followed that greatness (as defined by their culture) was barreling towards them. The only question they had was what the pecking order was to be. Jesus' response: keep thinking like that and you won't have to worry about it at all.

Owned by culture.

It is better not to marry.

A second example of something the apostles said that demonstrates they were as engulfed in the culture as anyone else has to do with how they responded to Jesus when He was asked about His view of divorce by the Pharisees. The Pharisees believed Moses gave them wide latitude when it came to justifiable divorce. They cited Moses' instructions about the matter (**Deuteronomy 24:1-4**) to Jesus.

They believed that when Moses said if the husband finds "some indecency" concerning his wife that said "indecency" was whatever they determined it to be. Jesus squashed that by referring to **Genesis 2:24** (which predated Moses) and then went on to say that the "indecency" Moses was talking about was only one thing: adultery. In other words, there is no justifiable reason for divorcing one's wife other than adultery. The response of the apostles to that was,

*If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry (**Matthew 19:10**).*

Let that sink in for a bit. These pioneers of Christianity at one time believed that if they couldn't get a divorce from their wives unless she committed adultery then it was better not to marry them! Seriously? Yes. Every one of them had bought hook, line, and sinker into the teachings of the religious leaders of the day that men could divorce their wives for anything they deemed to be indecent (burning supper, gaining too much weight, not keeping the house as clean as they wanted, etc.). How many times had the woman at the well been divorced?

It's better not to marry if you can't divorce your wife for anything about her that bothers you?

Owned by culture.

Who then can be saved?

A third example of how the apostles revealed just how permeated with culture they truly were is revealed in their astonishment at what Jesus said when the young wealthy man walked away from Him. When he turned down Jesus and His invitation to follow Him Jesus looked at the apostles and said,

*Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle then for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God (**Matthew 19:23-24**).*

Their response to Jesus hearkens back to their inquiry about who would be the greatest in the kingdom of God. They had embraced what their culture had instilled in them that wealth was the divine response to a faithful and obedient life. They couldn't believe it when Jesus said what He did about the near impossibility of entering God's kingdom if one was wealthy. Their response?

*When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" (**Matthew 19:25**).*

All their lives they had been taught and told by their leaders that wealth was God's reward for being good (as evidenced by the young man's initial question: "what good deed must I do…?"). The young wealthy man believed he was a shoo-in since his good deeds had already been rewarded with such wealth. And the apostles believed it too. It was just an early version of the prosperity gospel and it so permeated their culture that they didn't believe **anyone** could be saved without buying into it.

Owned by culture.

It should be clear that Jesus didn't choose the apostles because they stood out, apart, and/or against the culture. They were as infected and infatuated with culture as everyone else. Then how did they become the fierce culture warriors that they went on to be? One word:

Pentecost.

They needed to be "clothed with power from on high" (**Luke 24:49**). Once that happened they began to be referred to as the "men who have turned the world upside down" (**Acts 17:6**). Take a look around you right now (especially if you are an American). I would say that is **exactly** what needs to happen to our country and our culture. But you cannot turn it upside down for Christ if you are owned by it.

Throughout Scripture, the Bible tracks two cities and the respective cultures they produce: Babylon and Zion (aka New Jerusalem). Every single one of us is owned by one of those city's culture. Until we are saved, baptized, and filled with the Holy Spirit we are just like the apostles before Pentecost: owned by the culture of Babylon without even knowing it.

*"Come out of her , my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues…" (**Revelation 18:4**)*

SOURCE: **THE STAND**

An Urgent Call to a Holy Uprising

DECEMBER 8, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

THE RESCUE OF THE "MIRACLE BABY"—Lo, a Chinese Christian pastor, carrying Baby Helen Stam and his own son from a looted village after bandits had killed the infant's parents. Mrs. Stam had thrust the baby beneath bedclothes as her executioners appeared.
(Associated Press photo.)

Dr. Michael Brown | **Ask Dr. Brown**

This is an excerpt from Revolution: An Urgent Call to a Holy Uprising. May it stir your heart as you read!

Some of the greatest leaders in the early church included men like Ignatius, who was fed to wild beasts, and Polycarp who was burned at the stake, and Justin Martyr, who was beheaded. Some of the greatest reformers of the late Middle Ages included men like John Huss, who was burned at the stake, and Girolamo Savonarola, who was tortured, strangled, and burned at the stake, and William Tyndale, who was also strangled and burned at the stake. (Never forget that the English Bible you hold in your hand today cost Tyndale his life!)

More recently, missionary-martyrs like Jim Elliot, Nate Saint, Roger Youderian, Ed McCully, and Peter Fleming (martyred in 1956), or twenty years before them, John and Betty Stam, left an eternal legacy in just a few short moments of obedience to death. Listen to their stories and you will understand.

John and Betty Stam were graduates of Moody Bible Institute, sailing for China as missionaries during a difficult time for missionaries. (They were actually married in China, Betty preceding John to the mission field by one year.)

They knew the risks involved, as the China Inland Mission was specifically recruiting laborers to work in dangerous, Communist-infested areas. But both of them had been inspired by a poem written after Southern Presbyterian missionary Jack Vinson was martyred in 1931. Vinson had showed no fear of death to his Chinese captors, telling them, "Kill me, if you wish. I will go straight to God." The calmness he showed inspired his colleague E. H. Hamilton to write this poem.

Afraid? Of What?
To feel the spirit's glad release?
To pass from pain to perfect peace
The strife and strain of life to cease?
Afraid—of that?

Afraid? Of What?
Afraid to see the Saviour's face,
To hear His welcome, and to trace
The glory gleam from wounds of grace
Afraid—of that?

Afraid? Of What?
A flash, a crash, a pierced heart;
Darkness, light, O Heaven's art!
A wound of His a counterpart!
Afraid—of that?

Afraid? Of What?
To do by death what life could not—
Baptize with blood a stony plot,
Till souls shall blossom from the spot?
Afraid—of that?

With courage and faith, John had challenged the graduating class at Moody in 1932. "Shall we beat a retreat, and turn back from our high calling in Christ Jesus; or dare we advance at God's command in face of the impossible? Let us remind ourselves that the Great Commission was never qualified by clauses calling for advance only if funds were plentiful and no hardship or self-denial involved. On the contrary, we are told to expect tribulation and even persecution, but with it victory in Christ."

The day of reckoning came for John and Betty Stam. (One recent book, obviously based on John Stam's words to his class at Moody, calls it, "Victory Day for the Stams." What a concept!) They were captured by Communists (their little baby, Priscilla, was miraculously spared), then painfully bound, stripped down to their underwear, and kept under guard for the night. The next morning, they were paraded down the street while being mocked and ridiculed, after which they were beheaded—baptizing with blood a stony plot, till souls have blossomed from that spot. They were not afraid of that!

As word got out about their martyrdom, the impact was dramatic, both in terms of new missionary volunteers, new student prayer meetings, and large monetary donations to the work in China. A missionary with the China Inland Mission wrote to Betty's parents: "A life which had the longest span of years might not have been able to accomplish one-hundredth of the work for Christ which they have done in a day." That is the power of martyrdom!

"Very truly I tell you," Jesus said, "unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds" (John 12:24). One short act of obedience to death gave many others eternal life!

————————————

Here is an excerpt on John and Betty Stam, and the full article is **HERE**

> On this day, 8 December 1934 the Communists marched John and Betty Stam through the streets of neighboring Miaosheo. A Chinese merchant, Chang Hsiu-sheng, fell to his knees and pleaded for their lives. Finding a Bible and Christian literature in his house, the Communists seized him, too, and marched him to the hill where the missionaries were to be executed. John pleaded for Chang's life. However, a Communist cut his pleas short by slashing his throat. Betty fell to her knees, shuddering once before the blade severed her neck. The Communists executed Chang the next day.
>
> Two days later, Mr. Lo, a local pastor, found Helen Priscilla Stam hidden in a sleeping bag. Pinned to her clothes were a few dollars that Betty had somehow managed to hide from the Communists. Mr. and Mrs. Lo carried Priscilla many miles and delivered her safely into the hands of other missionaries.

—Dan Graves

Pray for Protection: Christian, Pray this Prayer and Say it Aloud

DECEMBER 5, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Almighty God – You are the Alpha, the Omega, the Beginning and the End. For by YOU, all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; ALL things have been created through YOU and FOR YOU (Col 1:16).

I come to you today Jesus, in prayer, supplication, and intercession and give thanks for you are Holy, mighty, all-knowing and that you love us unconditionally. I put on the armor of light. I take up the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the belt of truth, I declare that my feet are covered with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and I take up the shield of faith to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. You have prepared a table before us in the presence of our enemies. You anoint our heads with oil; our cups overflow with blessings (Psalm 23:5).

Almighty Elohim – You say the devil prowls like a roaring lion waiting to devour. You say your Son, is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. I command my prayers fall in-line with YOUR Word Father; and that MY LION is Yeshua, who has conquered death and sin through His blood on the cross. I plead the Blood of Jesus over myself, my wife, family and pets. I pray Lord Jesus, those working against your will, that You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's

vessel." Psalms 2:9 You declare Lord, that what we ask for in Your Name, we will receive (John 14:14).

In Jesus Name we ask that you surround our enemies with horses and chariots of fire and ask that you give us the spiritual eyes to see (2 Kings 1 17).

We call down fire from heaven upon the heads of those working against your will Lord (2 Kings 1 10).

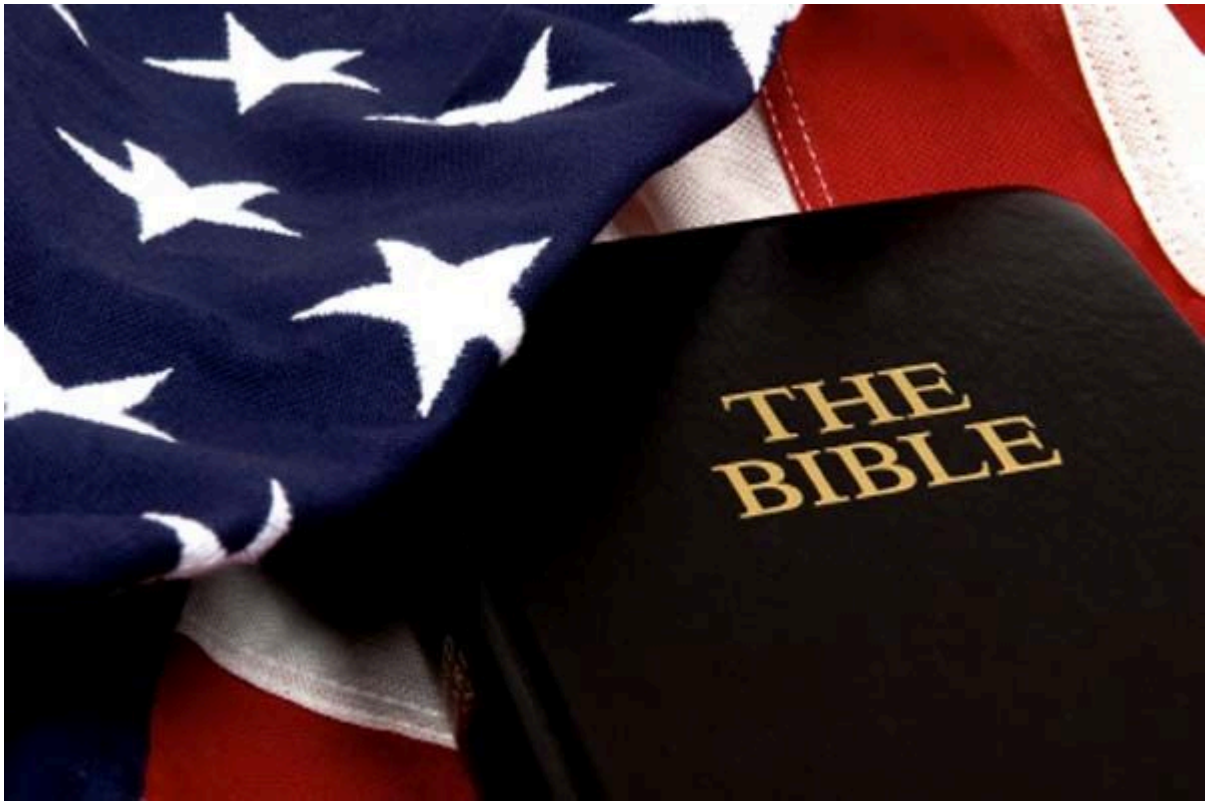
We raise a Hallelujah, in the presence of our enemies, Lord (Rev 19:1). May they know your name is THE name above ALL names (Phil 2:9)! For NO WORD from God will EVER fail (Luke 1:37).

In the name of Jesus, we call an army of warring angels to slay our enemies with the Sword of the Spirit and send them to where Jesus commands.

We now ask that you surround us with an army of angels in the clouds (Matt 24:30), both above and below, and provide us with a hedge of protection from all enemies past, present and future in Jesus mighty name we pray! Amen.

The Christian's Response to Cultural Decay: Part 3

DECEMBER 5, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



*With a nation in near moral collapse and a church that is struggling to be salt and light, what should Bible-believing Christians do? How should they respond? Here are some helpful glimpses from Scripture. (Parts one and two can be found **here** and **here**.) This series originally ran in 2017 and is more relevant than ever.*

6. **Prepare yourself to defend the truth.**

Paul implies that Christians will consistently face "opposition" (**2 Timothy 2:25**) and that the followers of Jesus must correct that opposition with the truth.

Peter famously says the same thing – believers must always be prepared "to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you" (**1 Peter 3:15**).

This preparation – "always being ready" – certainly includes all of the following ideas: (1) studying the Scripture to understand what it says; (2) undergoing some training on how to present biblical truth and how to answer objections (i.e., apologetics); (3) being "prayed up" in advance; and (4) having one's eyes open for opportunities to defend the truth, so they are not missed.

However, Peter's familiar exhortation is sandwiched between two verses that add some additional insight into the nature of Christian preparation. In verse 14, the apostle steels the believer for the inevitable resistance and suffering that comes from being salt and light. Unbelievers will attempt to intimidate us into silence, but we are to consider ourselves *blessed* when we suffer.

Moreover, while our hearts might be troubled by such animosity, the answer is to fix our eyes on Jesus Christ "as Lord" in our hearts and set Him apart as our Master (v. 15). Why would this be necessary? Because it is a simple fact of human nature that, as pressure builds to keep silent, the temptation grows to make something else "Lord." Perhaps it is the fear of man or the desire for the approval of man. Perhaps we will serve comfort as "Lord" as we seek to preserve our place in the world by keeping our mouths shut. As we unflinchingly call Jesus Christ our Lord and serve Him even in the midst of great spiritual conflict, we can defend the faith.

In v. 16, we find another exhortation from Peter. The Christian who stands for the truth will be slandered; we can count on that happening. But if the Christian will live circumspectly, the attacks won't stick. We will have confidence because our conscience is clear, and those who slander us "will be put to shame."

There is only one way for the follower of Christ to be ready for this onslaught – having faith in God and His word. The Psalmist says, "So I will have an answer for him who reproaches me, for I trust in Your word" (**Psalm 119:42**). Because the Christian has confidence in the word of God as the truth, he or she will be prepared to have a response to those who attack the gospel.

7. **Pray for boldness.**

Whenever Christians stand firmly for biblical truth, they can always **expect a backlash**. What we do when the backlash begins, however, will often determine whether or not the truth can make further inroads in a culture.

We see this in **Acts 4:23-31** after Peter and John are released from prison for preaching the gospel. The church is brought up to speed as to what it is up against, and it's not insignificant. The Roman Empire is still our enemy? Check. The religious leaders of our own nation still hate us? Check. The clear demonstration of God's power has not caused the power of hell to slink away into the darkness? Check. Facing such animosity, the church quotes Psalm 2: "Why did the Gentiles rage?" (**Acts 4:25**).

So the members of the early church pray. They cry out to God, declaring His greatness and power. They quote Scripture, clarifying that what they are battling is spiritual in nature. They ask the Lord to take notice of what the enemies of the church are doing.

Then they ask God for something unexpected: "rant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence" (v. 29). I say this is unexpected because I would've asked God to smite

the rebels and crush the resistance. Even what the church asks for next is understandable – miracles.

But *boldness*?

Yet this makes perfect sense. Having patience to endure the blowback and then persistence in declaring God's truth is the Lord's plan for saving lost souls and changing cultures. Preaching the gospel is the main instrument of power that God has given His people. The only way for it to fail is for the church meekly to lay this power aside when the heat is applied.

In faith, Christians are bold for God; that same faith trusts God to act, once the church has preached.

8. **Be willing to suffer evil in order to overcome it.**

The initial cultural response to Christian faithfulness and boldness is often *rage*, which is sometimes followed by persecution of the church by those who hate God. This calls for yet more boldness by believers.

Still, Christians have yet another great weapon: they follow in the footsteps of the Lamb of God and absorb the hatred, the slanders, and the blows of their enemy. In this way, they destroy the power of darkness and make room for the mighty work of God.

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good," says Paul in **Romans 12:21**.

It is interesting to read such a verse in its context. We should never take our own revenge in paying back our persecutors, either by verbally cursing them (v. 14) or physically responding in kind (v. 19). The reason? We leave judgment and punishment to God. Instead, our response should be kindness and aid. This is how we "overcome evil with good."

This doesn't necessarily end the persecution, but one of two things will happen: (1) the patient Christian will be purified and, perhaps, will win back their neighbors and maybe their nation; or (2) the Christian will be crowned with righteousness while the rest of the nation is judged by fire.

Either way, the church has honored God.

9. **Stand with other Christians who love God.**

Too often, Christians divide themselves according to fairly minor categories of interest – styles of worship, cultural customs, dress codes, etc.

Sometimes, too, they are dismissive toward those who differ in terms of ministry emphases. You don't protest in front of abortion clinics? Shame on you! You waste your time being involved in politics? I guess you don't care about kingdom business!

We should be careful about such divisions. Can't we rejoice that *some* in the body of Christ are convinced that it's important to shine a light in a dark corner of the culture without demanding that *all* do it?

Of course, there's nothing wrong with a Christian stating the case for wider participation in a particular area of ministry, but we shouldn't divide ourselves over these differences.

As the Psalmist says, "I am a companion of all those who fear You, and of those who keep Your precepts" (**Psalm 119:63**). That's what determines who my brothers and sisters are.

After all, there's plenty of darkness to go around. We need every Christian lighting a lamp – somewhere in the dark.

Editor's Note: This blog concludes the three-part series. All Scripture verses are from the New American Standard Bible.

Virginia Biblical Voter: Election Tools, Share with Others

NOVEMBER 1, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW, CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

From Don Blake: *Virginia Christian Alliance*

Dear Virginia Christian,

This page has the **iVoteGuide** along with high-value links below and downloads for churches and Virginia Christians to share and multiply to their friends and neighbors. The main resource page we found is Biblical Voter website **here**.

All hands on deck

Time for Christians to Mobilize in Love and Truth!

Virginia Election Information

*(CLICK HERE→)*Sample Ballot and Voter Guides *(←CLICK HERE)*

This is a fight for the life of our country. A Biden/Harris win will doom our religious and economic freedoms and erase our lives as free-thinking, liberty-loving Americans.

Share with church leadership, and social media like Facebook and Twitter and everywhere where folks connect.

These are critical times and the time to stand up for God

Stand on Biblical truths and to love your neighbor is to share truth with them, in love.

Forward this to everyone, time is short and we have elections to WIN!

Read on

Biblical Voter
https://youtube.com/watch?v=pBifXcuYN7E

FREE DOWNLOADABLE SIGNS & HANDOUTS

Party Platform Comparisons: LINK

Church and Pastor's Resources: LINK

Main Resource Websites

www.biblicalvoter.com

https://ivoterguide.com/

Why Christians Should Register to Vote and VOTE: Honor, Duty and Privilege

1. God expects Christians to vote; yet, 2 of every 5 self-professed Christians do not vote regularly and about 1 in 5 are not even registered to vote.
2. Politics is not a secular institution. It is Biblical – from the beginning of God's establishment of government. The Christian worldview is the only accurate depiction of the reality of this world that we humans have. Christians must encourage the Godly exercise of political power. All politics is a moral exercise. Shall "political good" be defined by secularists and atheists or by Christians?

3. Politics now encompasses all aspects of daily living – marriage, life, sexuality, family, personal virtue, etc. These all used to involve moral issues which were to be informed by the final authority – God's word.
4. Involvement in politics is merely an extension of the Cultural Commission given in Geneses 1:27,28. It is the Christian's duty and role to interpret reality from a biblical point of view.
5. Voting is a simple thing to do. It is a right in America that must be exercised biblically. We are all going to be governed by man-made laws. We must vote for men and women who will make those laws and govern in accordance with God's written word.

Please give consideration as to how you can get the word out to those in your sphere of influence to register to vote and then to vote.

Included here are 3 aids to help get Christians engaged for the November election:

1. **Poster** 2. **Church Bulletin** (Customize) 3. **Party Platforms** 4. **Did You Know Cards** (customize)

NOTE: Deadline for registering to vote is October 14th for 2020. Ways to register: online, in person or by mail.

TO REGISTER ON-LINE: https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO RIGHTLY GOVERN A NATION WITHOUT GOD AND THE BIBLE. George Washington

Don Blake, Chairman and President

Virginia Christian Alliance

www.vachristian.org

www.biblicalvoter.com

https://ivoterguide.com/

What is the Responsibility of the Christian Voter?

OCTOBER 25, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: APOSTASY, CHRIST IN PROPHECY, DIVERSITY, LGBTQ, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, REVELATION

Prophetic Perspectives #103: The Election Omen

Tim Moore: America is approaching another presidential election here in 2020. What is the responsibility of a Christian voter?
Author Marsha Kuhnley has written an outstanding book titled ***The Election Omen: Your Vote Matters***. In it, she emphasizes the fact that your vote matters. Marsha, what would you say should be the Christian's response to going out and voting in an election?

Marsha Kuhnley: The Apostle Paul teaches us in **Ephesians 6:10-20** that Christians must put on the whole armor of God. Doing so is especially vitally important in these end times. Paul exhorts those wearing the whole armor of God in that passage to stand *"strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."* Therefore, Christians are meant to stay in an active mode. We wield our sword of truth, and one of the ways we can wield that sword of truth is by voting the way Jesus would have us vote.

Tim Moore: I love the fact that you pointed out that Christians need to remain active. **Matthew 16:18** tells us that the gates of Hell will not prevail when the Saints are marching forward. That means that Christians need to be proactive in declaring God's truth and spreading "salt and light" in our own society. Voting is a key way we can do that.

What should Christians look for when considering to vote for a particular candidate among the choices given in an election?

The Election Omen | Prophetic Perspectives 103
https://youtube.com/watch?v=KJf-qrtzze0

Marsha Kuhnley: Christians must keep a biblical perspective. The Bible provides us with many characteristics and causes to look for in terms of what a candidate supports. Right to life, being Pro-Life/Anti-Abortion, is a big one. What their stance is on the LGBTQ+ movement should match up to what the Bible makes very clear — that God made man and woman for each other and that He created marriage for a man and woman alone. Only a sanctified, covenant relationship should be upheld. Any sex outside of marriage is a sin, and the Bible is very clear about that.

Those are two of the big issues Christians should be looking for when they pick a candidate for their vote.

Tim Moore: Too often lately our religious liberties have been under attack, even in the United States. Christians should then look for candidates who will respect religious liberty and all American's freedom to worship as they see fit. It seems like as of late Christianity has been under tremendous attacks all over the world.

Marsha Kuhnley: Yes, I couldn't agree with you more. In the end times, deception will abound. One of these deceptions is the Equality Act. Congress has had this act on their legislative agenda. It has nothing to do with equality. In fact, this act directly attacks religious liberty. Christians should not vote for candidates who are hostile to religious liberty.

Tim Moore: Some Christians at times have argued that Christians should never "sully themselves" with politics and that we are "above all of that." Why would we not want to defend our society against all of the deception that is raging around us today? No, rather we need to be engaged in society and we need to exercise our responsibility to vote.

Marsha Kuhnley: Yes, again, I couldn't agree with you more. Revelation 3 speaks of the last church — the Church of Laodicea. One of the complaints Jesus had against that church is that they had this "I don't care" attitude. Apostasy! Jesus called that church not to be like that. He wished that the Laodiceans were neither hot nor cold, not tepid and flavorless. Individual Christians can become like the Laodiceans. Jesus calls us not to be like that. Christians need to be hot. We cannot just sit on the sidelines with this "I don't care" attitude saying, "I'm just going to sit here and wait until Jesus comes." We are called to suit up, put our armor on, and vote!

Tim Moore: That's a good message for all Christians. As Marsha revealed — your vote matters. Recognize that voting is not just your American right, but it is also your Christian responsibility.

Apo

4 Rules to Become a Biblical Voter

OCTOBER 7, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Think Critically and Biblically

Voters with Judeo-Christian ethics have a written set of beliefs defining how to live. These core values are outlined in the Bible. The Bible is the written Platform of a Judeo-Christian believer.

The Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians, etc., also publish a list of principles upon which their party and candidates will stand. All Parties have beliefs they reflect as goals and purposes to achieve if elected. These become their Party Platforms.

RULE #1

Become a Christ-O-crat! Align to a Political Party that represents your faith.

Psalm 1:1-6 (NKJV) – Live transformed lives serving God. Scripture informs us:

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. 4 The ungodly are not so but are like the chaff which the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of

the righteous. 6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

RULE #2

Read the Party Platforms

Party Platforms are long and can be confusing to read. But it is essential to know what they propose for our nation, or you could be misled by a candidate's campaign speech with empty promises, etc. Read 60+ Contrasts That Tip the Scales of Justice, The Historical, Constitutional, and Moral Contrasts of the Two Major Party Platforms to get a broad overview of the two parties.www.biblicalvoter.com – under Election Sermons.

RULE #3

Know the Differences Between the Party Platforms

It is our job to know the Party Platforms and to align our faith with the one that most affirms biblical beliefs. As voting is an essential activity of every citizen of the Church, this key point will make the difference in every election. You cannot separate your faith from how you vote at the polls – it is faith in action. Read the synopsis of Party Platforms in the section of this booklet called: Party Platforms – In Their Own Words. Read the full versions on the website www.biblicalvoter.com under Party Platforms.

RULE #4

Vote the Platform; Not the Candidate

Candidates are obligated to follow their Party Platform. For this reason, the platform of the party is generally more important than the candidate.

When you hear the phrase "vote straight ticket," it is because the core values of the Party in their stated platforms take precedence over the candidates.

Exception: When a candidate's values stand in opposition to your faith, even though they run on the Party Platform of your choice, make a further prayerful determination through a vetting process. Know who is running, the positions they take, and their moral stand. Pray for God's direction, counsel with others; you might consider who is the lesser of two evils.

I Didn't Want to Speak in This Church

OCTOBER 7, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Ray Comfort | **The Stand**

I had been asked to preach at three services in a church in Southern California. I had spoken in many churches, but this one made me nervous. And there was a justified reason for that.

If I were to give myself a label, I would probably fit into the category of an "equipping evangelist." This is based on **Ephesians 4:11-12**:

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ…

The evangelist has the job of equipping Christians for the work of the ministry, particularly the often-neglected task of evangelism. And that's what I strive to do. In **Luke 10:1-2** we are told,

After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest….

The laborers are still sadly lacking, and I was in a privileged place to be used by God to stir more to do what they know they should be doing.

I have often likened this to the task of a sheepdog. The sheepdog barks at the sheep in an effort to get them to the place they should be. If you watch a skilled dog at work you will see that he loves what he does, and his eye is forever on the shepherd because above all things, he wants his approval. Sheep will often stubbornly stamp their front feet in defiance of the sheepdog, but that doesn't intimidate him even slightly. He doesn't care how the sheep respond. His only concern is the shepherd's smile.

And so when I go into a local church to herd them towards their evangelistic responsibility, I enjoy myself. Again, this is because we desperately need help in reaching the lost. So few seem to care that sinners are being swallowed by death and if they die in their sins will be damned in Hell. That should horrify every Christian and cause us to run to them with the gospel. But it doesn't. And so I bark at the sheep and tell them that they should be involved in reaching the lost. I tell them that they have a moral obligation to reach out to the unsaved. I remind them that Hell exists and that if the love of God dwells in them, they must warn sinners to flee from the wrath that's to come. It doesn't worry me if they stomp their feet in defiance. I really don't care how they react because I will be leaving the next morning. All that I'm really looking for is the smile of the shepherd. He employed me for this task. I want him to be pleased with what he sees and hears, and hopefully toss me a bone.

I was a pastor for 3 1/2 years and during those years, we wouldn't just let anyone into our pulpit. I, therefore, greatly appreciate it when a local shepherd allows me to speak to his people. I know that I am being put in a position of trust. It's as though he's handing his car keys to a complete stranger, sitting in the back with his family, and saying, "Please stay on the right side of the road."

But this church in Southern California was different. It was my home church. I was being trusted to speak in three services, and I knew that I couldn't soften the message. I didn't want to do it, because I wasn't leaving the next morning.

It was similar to having to share the gospel with our family members. Most of us struggle with the thought of sharing the message with a stranger. But there is the consolation that if a stranger is offended, it's really no big deal. If he walks away in disgust, there will be an understandable feeling of rejection, but it will soon be forgotten because you will more than likely never see him again. But if your mom, dad, or sibling are offended and get angry at you, you've damaged or even lost a relationship that's precious to you. That's how I felt about my local church. All I could do was bark as usual and hope that if it upset the flock, the shepherd would still be happy.

The first service was on a Saturday night and it seemed to be well-received. But I still felt a little nervous that I had two more meetings. When my pastor reminded me of the next day's service times, I smiled and said, "So you want me back?"

He clearly detected my hesitation, and later that night kindly sent me an encouraging email. In essence, it simply said, “Good dog!” And that’s all that really mattered.

(Editor’s Note: This originally appeared online at the Living Waters website **HERE**.)

Do You Remember Connect the Dots?

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, PANDEMIC

By **J. Jeff Toler**, *Shenandoah Christian Alliance*

What a surprising picture it makes.

Understand this, we are facing two monumental social upheavals—both intent on destroying America, and American values: **radical racial upheaval blamed on police and policing**, and **extreme gender identity cultural politicking**. It's entirely possible we have been careless in our observation and understanding of what has been unfolding in America, and by extension around the world for a very long time. The continuing riots—months into a pandemic-engendered, government mandated, social lockdown are one thing. But both issues share something in common: they are terribly misunderstood, critical to the outcome of the general election, and *utterly* pernicious to Christian orthodoxy.

- "***Be serious! Be alert!Your adversary the Devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour. Resist him and be firm in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world."*** (1 Peter 5:7-9)

History of Racial Strife in America

We can agree slavery was evil. We should regret it had a place in American history. We should be grateful we were willing to end slavery. We regret it cost the lives of more Americans that any other single war—**625,000 in only 4 years**. (1)

But after nearly one hundred years, the Civil Rights Act of 1963 finally ushered in most of the opportunities, options, and corrections black Americans needed and deserved, that almost everyone else enjoyed. It can be argued its success was perhaps a component forty-five years later in the election of Barack Obama, the first African American president in our history. Yet, ironically he was a *major factor* in contributing to an **increase in racial division** (2) not seen since the sixties in just *eight years!*

What's the connection?

Why then, do we *not* see how the narrative that Black Lives Matter uses is one that is precisely designed to incite riots? If the police really are evil, racist murderers as portrayed—intent on killing black people at every opportunity, how did this escape the notice of literally millions and millions of clear-thinking Americans until now? No one needs to be told, as the slogan/brand implies, that black lives *do* matter. It should be obvious, because it is. What kind of response should someone make? To this question, Heather MacDonald flatly declares, **in this video**, (3) America is provably not racist. Marxist strategy is simple, and very clever: no discussion *is* welcome—none whatsoever. It's humiliating on its face, because it's intended to be.

What's the connection?

- ***"… (T)he purpose of communist propaganda was not to persuade or convince, not to inform, but to humiliate; and therefore, the less it corresponded to reality the better."*** **Theodore Dalrymple**

When just last year, the Southern Baptist Convention adopted what some consider the *controversial* "Resolution 9," or formally, "On Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality," this may have been the first time most evangelical pastors, including Southern Baptists pastors, had really even heard of these terms. According to presenter Stephen Feinstein, pastor of Sovereign Way Church in California his "intent was to **denounce Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality** ideology so that we could hold accountable those espousing it, especially within SBC institutions." He said It should not be a tool for analysis. Further, Albert Mohler, President of Southern Baptist Seminary has said, "We have to see identity politics as disastrous for the culture and nothing less than **devastating for the church** of the Lord Jesus Christ." (4) The controversy is far from over.

What is Critical Race theory? It is an idea from social sciences that racial inequality is the result of structures created by white people to maintain their place of privilege. Intersectionality goes a step further, asserting that people are often disadvantaged for multiple overlapping reasons including race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation and other social markers. According to UCLA's School of Public Affairs/**Critical Race Studies**, issues this hugely presumptuous statement: "Racism is engrained in the fabric and systems of The American Society." (5) Critical Race Theory clearly has its roots in cultural Marxism.

What Is intersectionality? Researching on Google servers will require serious focus and patience, as *objective* analysis of the concept is not even listed on the first six search pages. This is because few have made a serious attempt to critique the concept created by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw in 1989. According to the **Oxford Dictionary**, *"Intersectionality is a framework for conceptualizing a person, group of people, or social problem as affected by a number of discriminations and disadvantages. It takes into account people's overlapping identities and experiences in order to understand the complexity of prejudices they face."*

Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality, are flagstones paving the path to cultural confusion and destruction. To promote the idea that a person is subject to persecution based "levels of discriminations and disadvantages" in a country literally brimming over with all manner of inclusion and celebration of every sexual, racial, and ethnic distinction, where is exactly is the discrimination and prejudice? Really. For the committed Marxist the adage is, "If it's fixed, then break it." For the Marxist, division and strife are the chief tools of disarming their enemy. The Church of Jesus Christ is at the top of their enemies list.

- ***"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."*** **Ephesians 6:12**

These ideas ought rightly to deserve condemnation. Because it should be easy to see how destructive they are to Christian life and worship.

Be blessed. Be engaged. Be on guard.

(1) **https://www.militaryfactory.com/american_war_deaths.asp#:~:text=The%20Civil%20War%20maintains%20the,of%20that%20total%20(91.2%25)**

(2) von Spakovsky, Hans A., The Heritage Foundation: **https://www.heritage.org/political-process/commentary/obamas-legacy-weaker-and-more-divided-america**

(3) Heather MacDonald/Steven Edgington on Burning Questions: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cg_3JsbzhxI**

(4) Gray, Rudy, The Courier: **https://baptistcourier.com/2019/06/sbc-resolution-9-statement-on-critical-race-theory-intersectionality-point-of-controversy-and-disagreement/**

(5) UCLA School of of Public Affairs: **https://spacrs.wordpress.com/what-is-critical-race-theory/**

(6) **https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/intersectionality**

Romans 13: Government That Serves God

SEPTEMBER 15, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Ed Vitagliano | **The Stand**

Suppose you were a man who was sailing in the Caribbean Sea and suddenly shipwrecked on an uncharted, uninhabited island. It's a relatively large, beautiful location with abundant resources. There's plenty of available building materials, fresh water to drink, and food to eat.

At this point, the need for something called "government" has not arisen, but one day another man unexpectedly shipwrecks and swims to the shore of your paradise. As you watch him stumble out of the surf, you whisper to yourself, "Uh-oh."

All of a sudden, you're not the only guy whose opinion counts. Before the new arrival, you could do whatever you wanted, and no one would complain. Now, you have to consider the needs and wants of another human being. There is suddenly a need for "rules" to govern the actions of both men.x

And if a woman suddenly shipwrecks on the island, well, talk about complications!

The purpose of good government

God created mankind as a social creature. Among other things, we are built for community and fellowship with the people around us. While a few handfuls of us prefer solitude, the vast majority

of men and women desire company in this life.

Such community, especially as the number of people swells in any given location, requires several connected realities. These include: (1) rules or laws for governing conduct; (2) a method for crafting said regulations; (3) leaders to formulate them; (4) someone to execute the laws; (5) judges to decide who has transgressed the rules; and (6) someone else who punishes the lawbreakers. This is what we call government.

The Bible makes clear that God is the author of government. In Romans 13, for example, we see one of the clearest outlines of the nature and purpose of this institution, which consists of "the governing authorities" (v. 1). Paul makes a number of observations that help us understand why governments exist, and what they were created to do.

1. **All authority comes from God.**
   Paul says "there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God" (v. 1). The New Testament word translated "authority" is the Greek word *exousia*, which refers to two related concepts. The first is what we normally mean when we think of authority, which is the *right to rule*. The second is the *power*by which authority is expressed.

Biblically speaking, *exousia* that lacks rightful authority to rule is *illegitimate*; *exousia* that lacks power is *impotent*.

Theologian Adam Clarke states that God is "the origin of power" and authority. Therefore, when Paul speaks of the exercise of human authority, it flows *from* God *to* human agencies. Without this delegation of *exousia*, all would be chaos. Clarke says that, without this transfer of authority, "there could be no society, no security, no private property; all would be confusion and anarchy, and the habitable world would soon be depopulated."

2. **All people, including Christians, are to be subject to government.**
   Since God is the source of authority, no one has the right to rebel against it, since this means they rebel against the One who gave the authority in the first place. Paul says that "whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves."

Paul is speaking generally, because Christians are not obligated to obey government if it means disobeying God (**Acts 4:19-20**, **5:29**).

Instead, according to *Strong's Concordance*, the idea of someone *resisting* legitimate authority means "to rage in battle against, to set oneself against." Paul is warning against armed insurrection or even the attitude of, "I don't let anyone tell me what to do – including the government."

3. **Good government functions according to God's purposes for it.**
   First, Paul says in Romans 13 that government is called to promote what is good. Such authority praises and rewards "good behavior" (v. 3). It is "a minister of God to you for good" (v. 4).

Second, a government that is functioning properly will punish what is evil. Paul says, "But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil."

Of course, promoting what is good and punishing what is evil is a very general statement. There are as many definitions of "good" and "evil" as there are people. What Paul is referring to is good and evil *as God defines it*. A government should be established on righteousness (**Psalm 89:14**). It should, among other things: protect the weak, the fatherless, the afflicted, and needy and rescue them from the wicked (**Psalm 82:3-4**); rescue those who are oppressed (**Psalm 119:134**); deliver the ones who are being led to slaughter (**Proverbs 24:11-12**); and loosen the bonds of wickedness (**Isaiah 58:6**).

Of course, the opposite is true as well. Governments can call good, evil, and call evil, good, just like people do. The Lord holds nations – and their governments – accountable for their actions according to whether or not they do what is pleasing in His sight (**Jeremiah 18:7-10**).

That's why it is notable that Romans 13 does not tell us what form of government God prefers, only that *it is created to serve Him*. This would mean that a government could be a democracy, republic, monarchy, etc. It would therefore be incumbent upon people, if they are given the choice, to create the wisest form of government possible. That is something our founders clearly did.

Governments fail – and succeed

However, because they are constructed by human beings, all governments will be marred by human imperfection, brokenness, and sin. Remember, the law of Moses was written by the very finger of God on Mount Sinai. It was perfect, good, and holy. And yet, even this perfect form of government was undermined by the fallenness and sinfulness of human nature (**Romans 8:3**).

Thus, we need to remember that every form of government, which after all is written by men and not the finger of God, will ultimately be undermined by human lawlessness, pride, and greed. We must never delude ourselves into thinking that what men can create will ever be perfect. Moreover, when men promise perfection, only a fool will believe it.

Yet, if governments can be undermined, they can likewise be improved. In a nation like our own, in which the citizens have the power to mold the government according to their own moral precepts,

Christians have a responsibility to be active in the political process. If we want our nation to honor the Lord in its government, those who follow Christ must place their imprint on it to the best of their ability.

The United States is the only nation we have. There is nowhere else to go to start over, unless someone happens to know the location of a good, unused, uninhabited island.

All Scripture references are to the New American Standard Bible.

Editor's Note: This originally was written for the September 2020 print edition of The AFA Journal and first appeared online ***here****.*

Learn more

▶ **God in the Constitution**
In this 42-minute DVD produced by American Family Studios with David Barton, learn:
• The uniqueness of the U.S. Constitution.
• Why it matters that the U.S. Constitution is a godly document.
• How to preserve the U.S. Constitution.

▶ **The Bible: America's Source of Law and Liberty**
This 208-page soft cover book by historian Stephen McDowell explains why it is essential to return to our biblical roots to preserve our freedoms.

SOURCE: **THE STAND**

John MacArthur Is Obeying the Law; Governor Newsom Is Not

SEPTEMBER 5, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Bryan Fischer

The tyrannical governor of California, Gavin Newsom, has declared war on the church of Jesus Christ in the Golden State. He is looking to claim his first victim in the person of John MacArthur, the longtime pastor of Grace Community Church.

MacArthur is ignoring the latest edict from Gov. Newsom, which totally bans indoor worship services. However, Gov. Newsom's diktat does not have the force of law, since he has zero legal authority to issue coercive mandates like this. We live in a republic, not a dictatorship, a fact that seems to have escaped the governor's attention.

Most state legislatures have granted their governors temporary authority to issue emergency orders for obvious reasons – an emergency may be sudden and unforeseen and require some kind of government intervention until the legislature can convene to deal with it. These emergency orders typically expire after 30 days, and must be renewed by the state legislature or the governor's emergency authority lapses. Newsom's 30 days ran out a long time ago.

So, he may think he can act with emperor-like power over the church, but he can't. Not in America.

He has compounded his problem by targeting MacArthur's church for mean-spirited reprisal. The church has been operating its parking lot on a long-term lease with Los Angeles County, a lease that has been in effect for 45 years with no problems. The governor has evidently decided that if he cannot shut the church down, he'll just evict it. The church has until the end of September to abandon the parking lot or the county will sweep in and confiscate everything on it that isn't nailed down.

There is no policy reason for this. It is simple spite and vengeance on the part of this childish governor.

Grace Community has continued to meet indoors and in-person despite the governor's flatly illegal and unconstitutional fatwa. The reason is simple: Gavin Newsom is not the head of the church, Jesus Christ is, and the Head of the church has commanded His church to meet: "… Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (**Hebrews 10:25**). Governor Newsom says to the church, you can't meet. Christ, the Head of the church, says you must. MacArthur's decision is the same as that of the first century church: "We must obey God rather than men" (**Acts 5:29**).

The gravest problem for Newsom is that his edict is plainly unconstitutional according to both the U.S. Constitution and the constitution of the state of California. The Founders protected religious liberty as the very first right in the entire Bill of Rights. It was the right they sought to protect as the first and highest order of business. The federal government is flatly and unambiguously prohibited by the First Amendment from "prohibiting the free exercise" of religion. That's not freedom of *belief*, mind you, that's freedom of *exercise*. That's the freedom to *practice* your faith without government restriction.

Governor Newsom has prohibited John MacArthur and his entire flock from freely exercising their faith, the very thing government is not allowed to do in America. The reason there even is an America is that our nation's founders fled to these shores for refuge from the tyrant King George who presumed to tell his citizens when and where and how they could meet to worship God.

There are some people – and I am one of them, as is Justice Clarence Thomas – who believe that the First Amendment is a restriction only on the federal government – "*Congress* shall make no law." But an activist Supreme Court has interpreted it as a prohibition on religious liberty restrictions by any government entity at any level, based on the so-called Incorporation Doctrine.

But even if we are wrong when we say that the First Amendment applies only to the federal government, the constitution of the state of California obviously applies, and Newsom is in even bigger trouble with his own state constitution. It declares, "Free exercise and enjoyment of religion *without discrimination or preference* are guaranteed" (Article I, Sec. 4).

The governor is blatantly discriminating against the church of Christ by allowing other large public gatherings for supposedly “peaceful” protests against perceived racism, but not allowing the church to conduct genuinely peaceful protests against the world, the flesh, and the Devil. The governor is without a legal or constitutional leg to stand on.

Article VI of the federal constitution says the Constitution is “the supreme law of the land.” Thus, the supreme law of the land says Grace Community gets to freely exercise its Christian faith. That law outranks Newsom’s illegal edicts all day, every day.

Bottom line: Pastor John MacArthur is the one who is submitting to the supreme law of the land, and following it to the letter. The tyrant governor of California is not. John MacArthur is obeying the law. Governor Newsom is the one who is breaking it.

Dear Progressives, …

AUGUST 28, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Dr. Ray Rooney | **The Stand**

(Editor's Note: This originally ran in April 2019 but has become ***even more relevant*** *due to the various aspects of the news and this being an election year.)*

Dear Progressives,

For now, you have the upper hand in the culture war. I know it looks good from your perspective.

You successfully infiltrated and radicalized the educational system. Social studies has replaced history. Mathematics has become subjective. Feelings have been exchanged for facts.

You've turned patriotism into a mask for racism. And you convinced generations of students, teachers, administrators, parents, and even school boards that there is something inherently (and legally) wrong with any reference to the most read book in the world…the Bible, and the God it reveals.

That's right, you did it.

It's too bad you can't tout **the results** though (or am I being a little conspiratorial when I think those might be the results you were after?). And congratulations, **you own the universities too**. **Conservative faculty have been disappearing** and conservative speakers are routinely barred from speaking.

On abortion, you looked like you were down for the count. With the election of the most pro-life president in history and the confirmation of Brett Kavanaugh (despite the most hate-filled and disingenuous confirmation hearings in the history of the Supreme Court), it appeared as if *Roe v. Wade* was finally headed toward reversal. The American holocaust against the unborn looked like its days were numbered. Well, not only did you brush off what seemed to be an imminent reprieve for the unborn, you were able to stake your claim to the unthinkable: **infanticide**. You've legitimized discussing killing the unborn ***as they are being born***. Virginia's progressive governor even suggested that a baby who survived an abortion should be able to be terminated anyway. Wow. Not only have you successfully distracted much of America from the scourge of abortion, you've actually gotten progressive **presidential candidates on board with infanticide**. Disgusting, but impressive.

Perhaps the centerpiece or crown jewel of your recent accomplishments is how you have successfully convinced most Americans that the view of marriage predominant since the dawn of civilization was somehow skewed or inadequate. For millennia marriage was understood to be a covenant between a man and a woman. It was the bedrock of the family which itself became the bedrock of every successful society. You managed to convince the masses that God's purpose for marriage ("Be fruitful and multiply…") was nonsense. Instead, you claimed that marriage was nothing more than a venue for sexual expression. I stand in awe that you were able to convince so many people (even Supreme Court justices) that sterility is on par with fertility. By undercutting marriage you knew you would be diminishing the importance of gender and now here we are…the transgender insanity is overwhelming our nation. But you knew that was inevitable with the destruction of the millennia-old concept of male/female marriage, didn't you?

I could go on and on with how you progressives seem to have everything going your way. From open borders to global warming to the politics of personal destruction to the full-fledged support of Hollywood to having the mainstream media in your pocket to having sold the idea that the First Amendment is the sole property of progressives who can shut down speech when they deem it offensive or hateful. You've even got a fairly large segment of organized religion on board your crazy train.

But I do believe you have seriously miscalculated. Especially with regard to the support you garner from organized religion. The poor religious saps who call themselves "progressives" are wearing blinders (**2 Corinthians 4:3-4**). Don't mistake them for the rest of us. And don't think for a second that you will *ever* succeed in destroying Christianity (that is, after all, what all this is about isn't it?).

Let me give you three reasons why that even though everything seems to be going your way, your movement is ultimately doomed to everlasting failure.

One: You don't have history on your side.

Rewriting history (as you are so prone to do) cannot actually change it. For more than 2,000 years misguided and hate-filled individuals, nations, political systems, entire empires, and the prince of darkness himself have tried vainly to eradicate Christianity. All failed miserably.

First century Judaism gave it all they had to stomp out Christianity…to no avail. Go borrow your grandmother's Bible and read the end of the Gospels, Acts, Hebrews, and Jude. The more Christians were harassed, persecuted, and killed, the more the church grew (**Acts 16:5**). Roman emperors such as Nero, Domitian, Titus, and Diocletian all tried unsuccessfully to end Christianity. Islam has been trying for 1,400 years and hasn't succeeded. Communists have persecuted and martyred untold millions of Christians in places like Russia, China, and North Korea. And **they are still at it**.

It's a fruitless task you are on, progressives. The centuries are full of people who were sure they could ultimately and finally get rid of Christianity. If you are brave enough, type the following in the Google search engine: **Where is Christianity growing the fastest?** (I hyperlinked it for you). Oops. See what I mean? Here's one more, if you dare…**Click me** (I know that's got to hurt).

Two: God is both changeless and true.

This is of little interest to those progressives who are atheists or who have made themselves into gods. You can skip on down to number three. This is for those who identify as progressive Christians. Your first mistake was choosing to believe in evolution despite the lack of evidence for it and the plethora of evidence that exists for creation. Then you exchanged the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John for the gospel of Roddenberry and Lucas. You actually believe God Himself evolves. You think He has evolved on sexuality, lawlessness, salvation, and His only-begotten Son.

Truth doesn't evolve. Jesus said His words "will never pass away" (**Matthew 24:35**). Moses said "God is not a man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind (**Numbers23:19**). **Hebrews 13:8** says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." James says of God the Father: "there is no variation or shadow due to change." What was true in the Garden of Eden is still true today (**Genesis 1:27**; **2:24**). What was said to Nicodemus in **John 3:16** is still true today and always will be. What Paul wrote to the church at Corinth about who will not inherit the kingdom of God (**1 Corinthians 6:9-10**) is still true today. (Please don't show your ignorance by posting a comment about shellfish or any of the other numerous ceremonial/dietary laws and try to equate them to the eternal moral law…it's embarrassing)

Three: Authentic Christians will never bow, acquiesce, or submit to progressivism.

When three young Hebrews living in Babylonian exile were expected to compromise their religious beliefs by bowing to the image of Nebuchadnezzar they gave a flat out "no!" When told that the consequences would be lethal and extremely painful and asked if they might want to reconsider, their answer was:

*Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up (**Daniel 3:17-18**).*

They believed God would deliver them (which He did) but then added that even if for reasons unknown to them God didn't save them from the furnace, they would still never violate their beliefs. Progressives, welcome to what you are facing.

Faithful believers will *never* bow our knees at your politically correct altar. Ever. Those who are indwelled with the Spirit of God will never accept homosexuality as God's created design (despite what the **Pete Buttigieg's of the world claim**). We will never accept marriage as anything other than a covenantal relationship between one man and one woman. We will never keep our religious beliefs confined to the four walls of our local churches. We will never stop saying that "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (**Acts 4:12**). We will love our enemies but we will never yield our beliefs or our faith to them.

If you think you can simply wait for my generation to die and then the culture war is over…think again. We are educating our children and grandchildren. We're not relying on your corrupt Common Core driven curriculum to raise God-fearing patriotic Americans. And we're not depending on denominational youth directors to tell our kids what is Christian and what isn't. We're doing it ourselves. We're teaching the next generation to stand and be dressed in the full armor of God (**Ephesians 6:10-20**).

You have seriously miscalculated if you think that because many once noble and strong denominations have made a hard left turn that the American church is yours. Ask one of your liberal seminary professors about "the remnant." If you think screaming that we are hate-filled bigots is going to get the job done for you…boy are you wrong.

Not to shock you or anything but there is a great deal of cooperation and networking going on under the national radar between various Christian ministries that have no affiliation with any particular denomination or church. We're not sitting around wringing our hands and just hoping that somebody will do something. Not by a long shot.

Progressives, I'll admit, you've got the upper hand…for now. But you have neither truth nor righteousness on your side. And truth and righteousness know nothing of evolution or defeat.

Be Strong and Courageous When You are Tired and Uncertain

AUGUST 22, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

We recommend to our readers to listen to Pastor Allen Jackson's message below and the importance of what he says.

I. Walking Through the Shadows (Travel Tips)
A. Today
Matthew 6:34 (NIV®)
Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.
Matthew 6:9-13 (NIV®)

9 "This, then, is how you should pray: "'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
10 your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
11 Give us today our daily bread.
12 Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'

Be Strong & Courageous, When You are Tired & Uncertain

NOTES AND MORE RESOURCES **HERE**

The Rising Tide of LGBTQ Protests and Civil Terrorism

AUGUST 22, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: DIVERSITY, LGBTQ, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Joe Rogowski | *Reprint by permission from* ***Minding The Times***

In our present-day culture, daily reports of aggressive, militant, and violent action of groups or individuals, driven by an oppressive hostility and political correctness against our civil institutions, social order, people of faith, holders of opposing political views, and even ordinary schoolchildren, grow in such numbers, frequency, and cruelty that they can only be characterized as "civil terrorism."

Nowhere is this seen more than in any of our public forums, and our political discourse and interactions on any given day on any given topic. This accelerating rise of rebellious and selfish behavior of these groups borders on anarchical. Their intent is to generate passivity, timidity, and fear in targeted populations, like the Church, conservatives, people of faith and even law-abiding citizens, for opposing their ideologies and to pressure them into submission and silence.

As of July, 2018, Brietbart news organization has compiled a list of over 600 instances of harassment, intimidation, coercion, and violent acts of every form against such targets as teenagers, seniors, veterans, even military, single women, clergy, and opposing political figures and their families. By news accounts, that list has grown appreciably since then.

It is well documented that mainline Democrat/Liberal leaders such as Maxine Waters, former vice-presidential candidate Senator Tim Kaine, Hillary Clinton, Adam Schiff, Andrew Cuomo, Pelosi, and countless others have incited this crudity with their incendiary calls for "resistance" against the present administration, its membership, its citizen proponents, its voters and followers, ranking office holders and their families, and even against religious and conservative leaders and adherents. They virtually sanction the disruptive tactics of such terror groups like Antifa and MS 13, and the militant Black Lives Matter and abortion factions. Currently, without stop, they attempt to overturn the legitimate election of the President with failed allegations of misconduct at every level, domestic or foreign, under any pretext.

Who can forget Nancy Pelosi lecturing the Pope with her demented view on Christian doctrine and Lois Lerner's IRS secret targeting of conservative groups. Planned Parenthood and its supporters, of course, carry on their own unique form of civil terror.

This despicable behavior snowballs and then gives a boost to the simple-minded to spit on the President's son and insult members of Congress in restaurants, harass President staffers while fulfilling their duties to say nothing of hoodlums taunting weaker folks in fast food places, out shopping in malls, or on strolls in parks. And who can forget the attack on Republican Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky, one of the most principled members of Congress, who was assaulted in his own back yard, suffering three broken ribs. He still suffers with some breathing difficulties. His terror-stricken wife now carries a handgun.

Among the most egregious occurrences of civil terror has been against students or school faculty on college campuses. Instances of violence or threats against conservative students – and sometimes even conservative professors – are becoming commonplace even at some of America's most prestigious universities, now crumbling pillars of free expression and thought. Students advocating Right-to-Life issues are attacked, beaten, and their campus displays savaged without equal protection. A recent speech by former U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions' at the formerly prestigious Northwestern University was disrupted by thuggery student protests. Sessions was brought to the Chicago-area school by a campus group, the Northwestern University College Republicans.

This trend is even seen expanding to the high school level. Is it unrealistic to consider that our rash of high school shootings flows within this stream of civil terrorism – students enforcing their own brand of "resistance" actions to express their hatred of society's restraints on their selfish and demented whims?

Nothing reveals our culture's civil terror more than that perpetrated by the homosexual/transgender groups against ordinary Americans, not because of their political beliefs but because of their religious beliefs. As a protected class by positivistic, godless laws, LGBTQ groups use their power and influence to inflict unrestrained, catastrophic damage to ordinary citizens with attacks

on their wage earning livelihoods and small businesses. They threaten litigation against whole communities unsubmissive to their demands. Companies are pressured to drop their sponsorships of conservative TV programs.

Epitomizing this fractious behavior is the recent U.S. women's World Cup soccer team, laden with lesbian/homosexuals, attacking the very foundations and principles of the country they're supposed to represent while excluding players of opposing lifestyle views from qualifying for the team. In our punishing politically correct environment, with the protection of positivistic law, LGBTQs have the tools of control over societal personal freedoms, religious beliefs, and personal preferences. LGBTQ groups use their repressive and restrictive tactics to promote their own special interests and agenda with impunity, protected by laws unfounded and unchecked by religious influence and morals. Pastors and Christian activists are known for protesting Drag Queen Story Hour events at libraries and abortion policies were recently ridiculed and mocked at a fundraiser for the abortion advocate, Planned Parenthood.

https://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-pastors-activists-mocked-in-drag-queen-fundraiser-for-planned-parenthood.html

These current reactionary movements, nurtured by the mind molders of academia, the degenerate arts and entertainment industry, and the mendacious media that portray themselves as ennobled, patriotic "resistance" warriors, are implicitly, by definition, "rebellion" in its raw and ugly form. In their gross selfish and deranged mentality, their behavior is the specious rejection of all authority – moral, religious, magisterial, rule of law, law enforcement, logic, expert opinion, voter and legal judicial outcomes, universal and traditional heritage, and even a renunciation of true justice. On a national level, they refuse to acknowledge that the President won his office by all legal and necessary lawful means. They refuse to acknowledge that he is leading the country in its wellbeing successfully in every category and index.

The hostile actions of these groups can only be viewed as an ultimate indifference or even consent to the looming, mortal, disastrous impact on our societal harmony, successful social order, and national stability. Their selfishness and lust for power flows without restraint. Resistance isn't their strategy, rebellion is. Their method is civil terrorism. And they enjoy the virtual sanction of the Democratic Party with its financial supporters, our liberal, extremist organizations, and our activist, biased judiciary.

Love,
Joe Rogowski
"Life is a special occasion"
Hallmark Corporation

Digital Addictions – Solutions

AUGUST 21, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Brad Huddleston

Previous articles in this series identified the downside of the misuse and overuse of technology. In this final installment, I want to provide proven solutions for digital addiction. Are these solutions easy? Not necessarily. Are they doable? Absolutely! The news is good, and you should be encouraged to embark on this challenging journey to digital wellness. And, you should seriously consider taking the entire family on this expedition together.

Following will be a series of strategies to balance our over-dependence of technology, but we can't get the cart before the horse. If you or someone in your home is addicted to technology, a digital detox must come first. With this type of addiction, slowly weaning off of the digital drugs rarely works. In other words, the brain has to "reset" before you can have a measure of self-control over those online activities that can so easily cause us to lose track of time and digital sobriety.

The symptoms of digital addiction include anger, aggression, anxiety, depression, extreme irritability, attention deficits, loss of sleep, and emotional numbness. I will offer a simple test. The next time you're using a tablet or phone to babysit your child, politely ask for it back. If you

encounter resistance, take it away. If you see any of the above symptoms, you can rest assured that there is a measure of literal dependency, and a digital detox should begin right away.

Then, ask an adult that you trust to perform the same test on you later when you are not expecting it. An addict, regardless of what they are addicted to, is not fully qualified to self-diagnose. While you are more likely than a child to have the ability to hide your anger or frustration, be honest with yourself at how this makes you feel. Are you experiencing any of the above symptoms? If so, a digital detox is also in order. A detox takes between four and six weeks; you cannot look at any screens, including television. After a successful rehab, you can return to limited technology. Your new definition of "limit" means staying away from digital activities that are all-consuming. I'm sure you're thinking of a few right now.

With many people now working from home and students homeschooling, I strongly advise that you keep a regular schedule. Your body, mind, and emotions will love you for sleeping and getting up at the same time, as well as maintaining consistent daily work, meal, and study hours.

Make sure all bedrooms are free of technology. One regular excuse I receive from some people is that they use their phones as their alarm clock. The light goes on when I remind them that an inexpensive traditional alarm clock will do the trick. Do you remember what it felt like the last time you slept for 8 hours? Your children need at least 9 hours of sleep for proper brain health and cognition.

Be finished with all screen time three hours before bed. That blue screen you're staring at will inhibit the sleepy hormone, melatonin, from being fully released. In other words, you might go to sleep, but you will not sleep properly. A consistent lack of proper sleep will wreak havoc, especially in the younger ones.

Do not allow your children to look at any screens, including television, before school. This goes for adults before work as well. If you ignore this advice, your attention span will be short and divided for at least three hours from the time you stopped looking at the screen. This has to do with the stimulating chemicals that are released from engaging with digital devices.

These strategies are not exhaustive. After all, I've written two books about this subject, and a third one is on the way. However, if you ask God to help you with just the few I've suggested, you will likely be shocked at how your life changes. Family relationships will be better than ever, and your intimacy with God will soar.

1 Corinthians 6:12 (AMP) Everything is permissible for me, but not all things are beneficial. Everything is permissible for me, but I will not be enslaved by anything .

Life of Jesus Series 'The Chosen' Free APP for Casting to your Smart TV Viewed 50 Million Times

AUGUST 19, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Mason Beasler | **The Stand**

The Chosen, from VidAngel studios and directed by Dallas Jenkins, has now begun production on Season Two and will begin filming in September. Available for free on **The Chosen** mobile app, the series released its first season back in March, which follows the early ministry of Jesus Christ. Containing eight episodes, this first season introduces Jesus and His family, as well as several of the main characters, such as Mary Magdalene, Peter, Matthew, and Nicodemus.
APPLE APP: https://apps.apple.com/us/app/the-chosen/id1473663873

ANDROID APP: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.vidangel.thechosen&hl=en_US

The show takes a descriptive approach to the gospel story, in that it follows the characters in every-day situations. The viewer witnesses Jesus and His followers walk about towns, interact with people, eat meals, etc. The personalities and character traits are on full display, with specific episodes devoted to specific people surrounding the life of Jesus.

The Chosen Season One Official Trailer (HD)
https://youtube.com/watch?v=X-AJdKty74M

“A multi-season show, as opposed to a movie or mini-series, allows you to dig even deeper and spend more time on the stories and the backstories of the people involved,” Jenkins said in an interview with *AFA Journal*.

These in-depth pictures of key people give context to the miracles and spectacular events that filled Jesus’ ministry. When He heals the lame man, the viewer gets to witness the unique reactions from each of Jesus’ followers, which Jenkins and the crew of actors do a marvelous job of portraying.

Additionally, we get to witness the backstory of several key disciples, and the path their lives took leading up to their life-changing encounter with Christ. Through these stories, The Chosen provides context to the disciples’ lives that’s never been seen before.

The choice that these men made – to give up everything and follow Jesus – was a radical and supposedly crazy decision. Matthew, for example, was a tax collector, a position hated by society and not welcomed into most social circles. The show goes in depth on his life, detailing his relationship with the Romans, his fellow Jews, and eventually Jesus Christ. The viewer gets to see how hated he was, an outcast among his own people, while still living a comfortable and wealthy life.

Like all the others, **The Chosen** brings this character to life in a colorful and captivating way. The viewer gets to watch as Matthew is faced with the decision to keep his wealth or follow this strange new teacher from Nazareth. The scene is powerful – one of the defining moments of the first season.

The show saw tremendous results from these first eight episodes. Exceeding 50 million views, the mobile app contains the full first season for free, and also includes an opportunity to “pay it forward,” where viewers can donate to make the episodes available for others. The show also saw incredible global impact, spanning more than 180 countries with translations in more than 50 languages.

While staying accurate to Scripture, **The Chosen** portrays Jesus and His followers in a new and refreshing light, one that is bound to reach many people in the world with the loving and truthful message of the salvation Jesus offers.

Jenkins remarked on this new impact **The Chosen** is having:

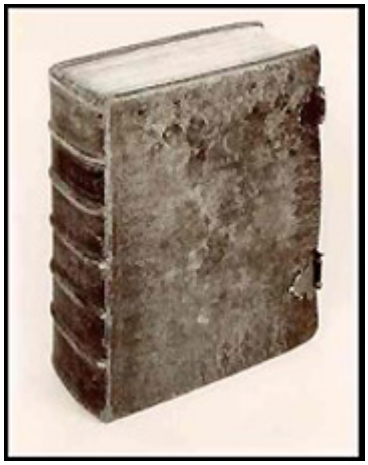
“I think have been coming away from it saying, ‘That’s a Jesus I would actually be interested in getting to know. That’s a Jesus who’s actually funny and charismatic – the kind of Jesus that people wanted to follow two thousand years ago.”

That Jesus is the real Jesus, the one who died for your sins, and still today wants a personal relationship with you.

Like the story of Matthew, this choice is not easy, and may cost you quite a bit. But a life following Jesus is of eternal value, and is the best decision you could ever make.

The Most Mysterious of all the Books in the Bible! Soon and Very Soon?

AUGUST 16, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Studies with Stearman: **The Ultimate Revealing**

It's the most mysterious of all the books in the Bible.

What other book promises a special blessing to all those who read it and follow it's instructions? Of course it's just as controversial as it is mysterious, with some believers dismissing it as nothing more than a spiritual allegory. Others don't believe it should even have been included in the 66 books of the Bible!

What exactly is "the apocalypse" anyway? The Book of Revelation is the ultimate revealing of Jesus Christ and the tragic and glorious events that will soon come upon the whole world.

Join Gary Stearman as he explores the mysteries of the end times, relayed to us by John the Apostle from the Island of Patmos almost 2,000 years ago. Studies With Stearman is about to get very exciting!

Studies with Stearman: Rapture and Revelation Revealed!
https://youtube.com/watch?v=0EkwXcHDZrM

CONTINUE AND ENGAGE

Faithfully Praying the Ten Commandments

AUGUST 11, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Joseph Parker | **The Stand**

The Ten Commandments are found in two places in the Word of God (**Exodus 20:1–17** and **Deuteronomy 5:1–21**.

The Ten Commandments are as follows:

1. You shall have no other gods before God.
2. You shall not make or worship graven images.
3. You shall not take God's name in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.
5. Honor your father and mother.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness (lie).
10. You shall not covet.

Believers would be wise to make it a commitment and habit to pray the Ten Commandments every single day.

Here's why: The Ten Commandments summarize the wisdom of all of the Word of God in ten simple and powerful commandments. All the wisdom of God's Word can be summarized and drawn from the insight and understanding found in these ten unique commands.

Praying the Ten Commandments every day is utilizing a potent weapon God has made available to all. And today would be a great day to begin this commitment in our lives.

Here is a prayer based on the Ten Commandments that one can pray daily for himself/herself, the family, the church, and our nation :

Lord, thank you for my family, the church, and this nation.

Help us, Lord put you first in every way and in all that we do. Help us not make or desire any graven images. Help us honor your name, remember the Sabbath to keep it holy, and honor our parents.

Lord, turn our thoughts away from murder, adultery, and theft. Help us to tell the truth and not covet what belongs to others. Thank you, Lord, for hearing our prayer, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Will praying the Ten Commandments this way really make a difference? Praying this for ourselves, our families, our church, and our nation can make a tremendous difference.

The Word of God is the will of God and His Word tells us in **I John 5:13-15**:

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

His Word is powerful, wonderful, and true. When we pray it in faith, God will always hear and answer that prayer.

So, the challenge to you is to start praying the Ten Commandments every day – starting this day. And the power of God, in praying them, will begin to work in a greater way in our lives, our church, and our nation.

SOURCE: **THE STAND**

Be Strong and Courageous: When You Are Tied and Uncertain

AUGUST 2, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Finishing Well

I. Game Plan for Finishing Well

A. Today Focused

Matthew 6:34 (NIV®)
Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matthew 6:9-13 (NIV®)
9 "This, then, is how you should pray: "'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
10 your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
11 Give us today our daily bread.
12 Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'

Be Strong & Courageous, When You are Tired & Uncertain

SOURCE: **WOC SERMONS**

Why Serve God

JUNE 17, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

*"I have always loved you," says the LORD. But you retort, "Really? How have you loved us?" And the LORD replies, "This is how I showed my love for you: I loved your ancestor Jacob… (**Malachi 1:2 NLT**)*

Dr. Oswalt | **The Stand**

The book of Malachi asks the question, "Does it pay to serve God or not?" When the Judean people came back from exile in Babylon, they were excited. Against all the odds, Yahweh had fulfilled the promises of the prophets to bring them home again. So they dived into the prophetic books to see what other promises the prophets had made. What they found was wonderful: riches, glory, power, world-wide dominion! Wonderful!

But now a century had passed, and none of those things had happened. Why should they bother to serve God if he doesn't pay off? How long did they need to keep stuffing their silver dollars into the divine slot machine until they hit the jackpot? Do you see what the problem was? They were not serving God because they loved him, but to get something from him.

I am afraid that you and I are a lot like the Judeans. We demand that God show us He loves us by what He does for us. Aren't we guilty of thinking and saying, "God if you really loved me, you would…"

- Not have let my child die

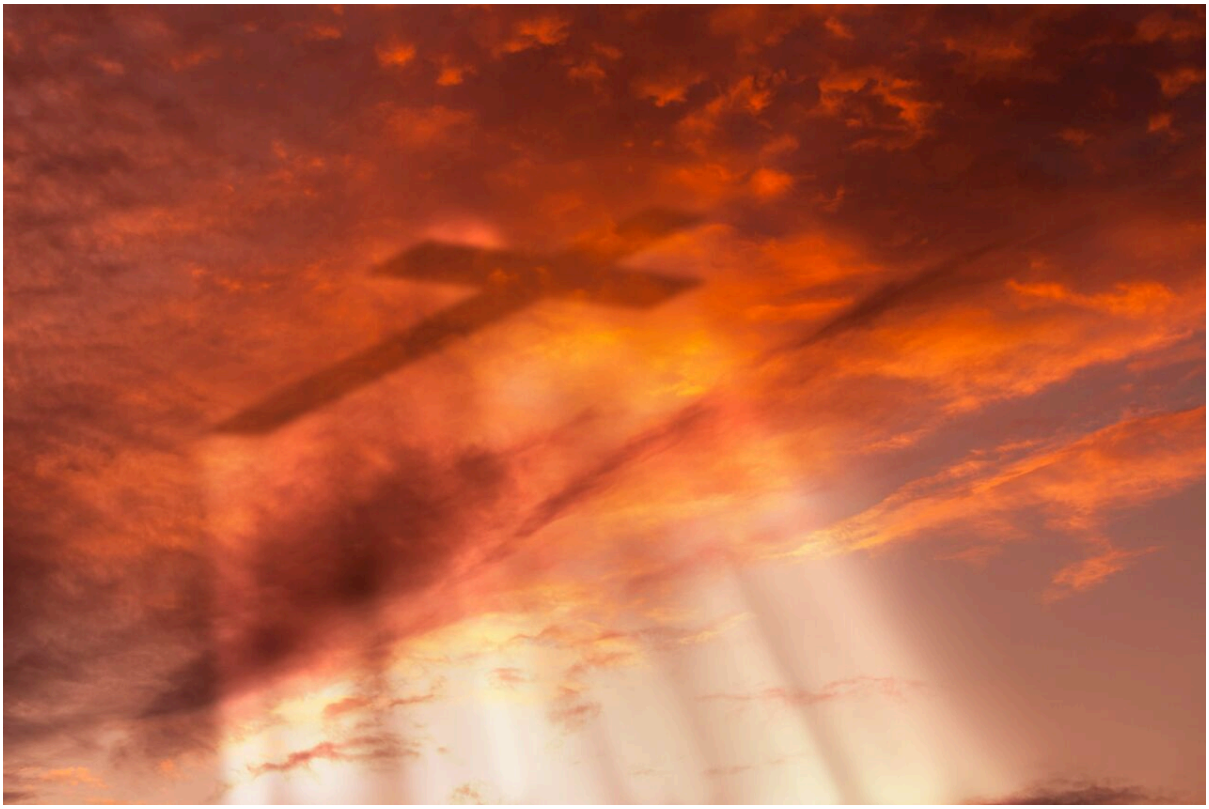
- Take away my spouse's cancer
- Restore my health
- Make me wealthy

But what if we said, "I know you love me; you died for me." So I am going to let *you* choose the evidence of your love in my life." Doubt says, "I won't believe you love me till you prove it my way." That is just like the hot-blooded boy in the back seat of the car, who does not really love the girl he is propositioning; he just wants to use her. Faith says, "I don't exactly see how, but I believe you do love me, and I am going to trust you to show me in your own way." Do you see the difference? It's an attitude shift. One approach is trying to use God for ourselves; the other is allowing God to be God, and trusting Him with the outcome. Ask God to show you his evidence in His time and in His way. He will!

*(Editor's Note: This blog first appeared on Dr. Oswalt's blog site **HERE**)*

Is The Lord Trying To Get Our Attention?

JUNE 5, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Joe Rogowski | **Minding the Times**

Has anyone asked the question whether what we are experiencing through COVID-19 is an exercise of God's wrath upon our sinful and ever increasing decadent societies? My prayer above all else, in our current health crisis, is that we are not experiencing a re-visitation of Numbers 16: 46b:

"Wrath has come out from the Lord; the plague has started."

Could it be that our ungodly choices in our civic and national policies and the increasing secularization of our cultures with our inclinations toward abortion, infanticide, drug and human trafficking, national laws and protections affirming homosexual lifestyles, homosexual marriage and transgenderism while overruling religious freedoms, brazen corruption in high places by national leaders and those passing laws, rage, violence, sexual assaults, and spousal abuse, rampant sensuality, promiscuity and child pornography while our arts and entertainment

industries profit on increasingly erotic, pornographic portrayals and visuals, are leading to a reckoning of our debaucheries on a planetary scale?

With growing frequency, we are witnessing renunciation of His existence with impunity by academics, millennials, university students, renowned scientists, and network hosts stimulating mass audiences with disdain for all things religious or spiritual. Isn't it true that rebellion and selfishness fester in every segment of society with claims of victimhood and deprivations while gratitude, contentment, service, national loyalty, and sacrifice grow increasingly rare? Who could blame the Lord, if what we are experiencing on a global scale is an expression of His wrath and has nothing to do with the Chinese or President Trump but with our own shared humanity's wantonness and degeneracy?

If that be true, then one wonders too, if the so-called Lord's people, who are called by His name, are somewhat complicit in our national and global woes by refraining from our defined duty to lead the nations in repentance according to the given format of

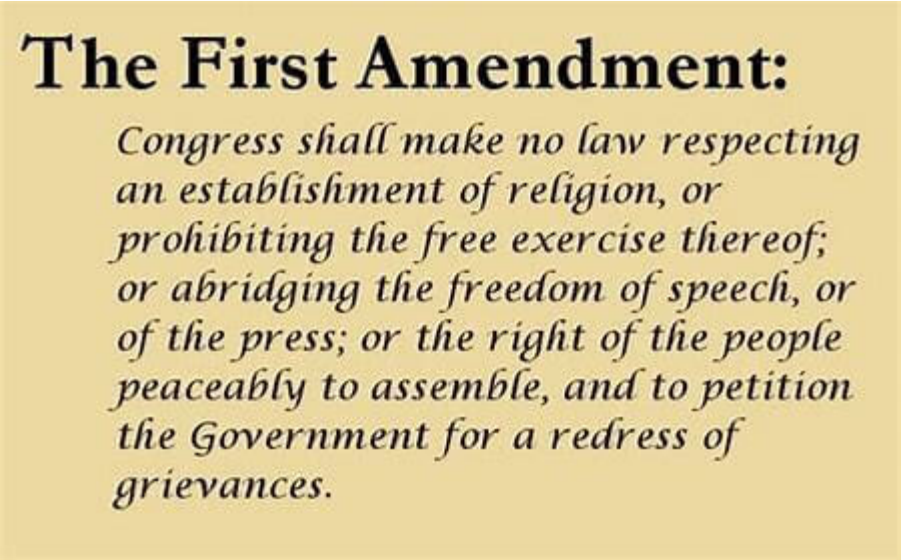
2Chronicles 7:14

*"**If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves**, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."*

Love,
Joe Rogowski
"Life is a special occasion."
Hallmark Corporation

America at the Crossroads of Liberty & Tyranny

APRIL 15, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: LIBERTY, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, PANDEMIC, TRYANNY, TYRANNY



Dr. Robert Youngblood | **The Stand**

Spiritual battles have burst through to our physical world, and we can ignore them no more without dire consequences – freedom and liberty in America are under attack.

America is at more than an economic and health crossroads. America is at the crossroads of liberty and tyranny. We cannot travel both roads.

Liberty flourishes with truth and courage. Tyranny flourishes with lies and fear.

Lies increase the fear. Fear jackhammers our foundational freedoms.

Before COVID-19, I would have written "Fear chips away at freedom." However, the viral strength of the current fear has increased the speed and damage being done to the biblical foundations found within the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

This is why I say and have written before that Christians must "**Pray Against the Lies Killing Our Liberties.**" Since then, I've grown stronger in my belief that America's current climate is progressing rapidly to align with the precursors which created the socialist rise to power in Germany prior to World War II.

There, as it has here, it started with leaders either telling lies or being lied to from those who influenced them. There the lies were intentional. Here they seem to be a combination of intentional and unintentional lies, misinformation, or genuine mistakes.

Regardless, these have fed the fear, and constitutional rights are being assaulted and battered as a result.

Attacks on Constitutional Rights

One headline reads "**Your Fears Don't Trump My Rights**" in response to the Raleigh Police Department declaring "protesting is a nonessential activity." They are only partially right. Yes, it is an "activity" essentially protected by the First Amendment.

As Christians we should remember the First Amendment also protects our religious liberties. The American Family Association is currently requesting readers to write their governors to protect religious liberty as seen in the blog "**Officials Trying to Shut Down Drive-in Worship Services**." Just click there and find the link to send an email to your governor. It's a very easy step to take to help guard your freedoms.

The examples will continue to grow, but thanks to the fast-acting Department of Justice, they will grow less quickly. Here in Mississippi, a Greenville mayor forbade the gathering of a drive-in worship service. The **police issued $500 tickets** to those who dared disobey the mayor. The DOJ got involved (see **here** and **here**).

Ilya Shapiro **of The Federalist wrote**, "These ridiculous examples of petty tyranny led to my **most viral tweet ever**: 'Angered by citations for being in park with nuclear family, or in car at church, or running on the beach. Or 'non-essential' goods roped off in stores. These things have nothing to do with fighting the virus and everything to do with power-hungry politicians and law enforcement.'

Unintentional Lies Join With Intentional Blame

Unintentional lies fall under the category of expert authority, predictions, pride, and error. Interestingly, some of the intentional lies might be the lies of "expert" journalists as they blame Trump hoping to influence our 2020 elections. If so, this may backfire on them.

"The left blames President Donald Trump for our crisis (as if only America is undergoing economic ruin and loss of life)," **wrote Dennis Prager**. "If they were honest, they would blame reliance on 'experts' and 'modeling.' But they hate Trump more than they love Americans – or truth."

Models attempt to use expert knowledge to predict the future. We should all heed Smithsonian Magazine's conclusion to the article "**Why Experts are Almost Always Wrong**." The author wrote, "The moral here? We really have no idea what's going to happen, ever."

Bad data or information means bad decisions. Combine this with fear, and the chances of poor decisions and subsequent consequences multiply.

Models fail because they often try to predict the future as a point versus a high range/low range while simultaneously avoiding what the experts ARE good at doing.

"The point is the predictions of even a world-class expert need to be discounted," wrote Dan and Chip Heath authors of Decisive: How to Make Better Choices in Life and Work, "in a way that their knowledge of base rates does not. In short, when we need trustworthy information, go find an expert – someone more experienced than you. Just keep them talking about the past and the present, not the future."

One writer **shares in an article** how one scientist looked at the past to draw a point in a direction perhaps America is ready for now. "Professor Yitzhak Ben Israel concludes in his analysis summary paper that the data from the past 50 days indicates that the closure policies of the quarantine countries can be replaced by more moderate social distancing policies. The numbers simply do not support quarantine or economic closure."

There's more within the Heath book which could help our leaders, but alas, it may be too late. However, we as Christians, hold the trump card and I'm not referring to President Trump either.

Christians' Responsibilities

America's strength has come from its biblical foundations which are weaved and infused through our Constitution and Bill of Rights. How I ended **my previous blog** is how I will end this one:

"To get nations back on their feet, we must first get down on our knees," said Billy Graham

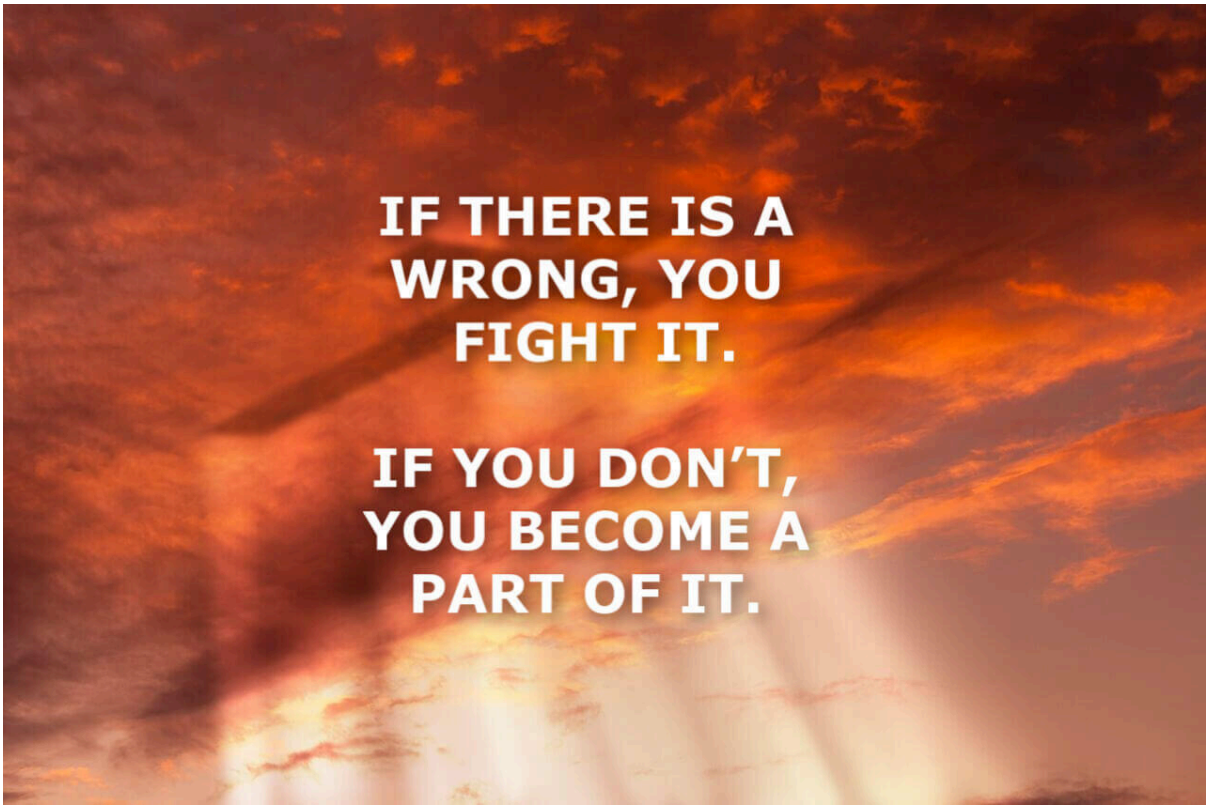
God may still cause America to fall, but let it not be because we as Christians neglected His commands. Let's pray for our leaders and use our votes. There are Christians in other countries who would die to vote in their elections, and many have died because they couldn't. The saddest of all were the German Jews and Christians who didn't vote when they could.

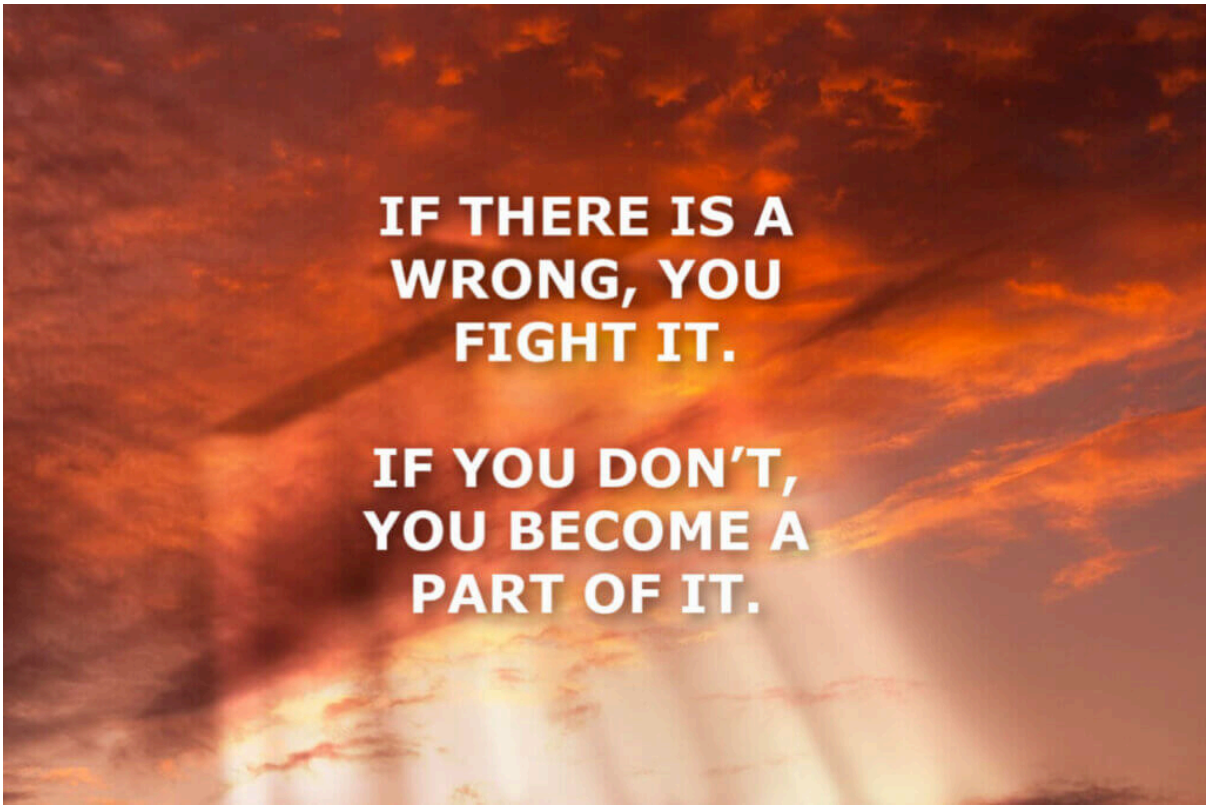
Come what may – pray, vote, pray. Most of all, trust God and obey.

SOURCE: **THE STAND**

It’s Not the Virus that is Ailing our Country: It’s US

APRIL 12, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD





By Greene Hollowell,

> While everyone might have their mind on the virus, life will still go on and we will need to face all the things as before. With that in mind I send this letter.

Listening to the VIRGINIAN, the TV cowboy, who was helping a neighbor who was being wrongly attacked, the neighbor asked why was he helping in a situation that was not his concern, his reply:

> IF THERE IS A WRONG, YOU FIGHT IT.
>
> IF YOU DON'T, YOU BECOME A PART OF IT.

Certainly, there are many wrongs being committed now. It brought to my mind a few verses from the HOLY BIBLE:

> 'Rescue those who are unjustly sentenced to death: don't stand back and let them die. Don't try to avoid responsibility by saying you didn't know about it. For God knows all hearts and He sees you. He keeps watch over your soul, and He knows you knew! And He will judge all people according to what they have done'. Proverbs 24:11,12 (New Living Bible)

Every day we read or hear about wrongs being committed. They are sometimes overwhelming and we say to ourselves, what can I do about it?

If you read about it in the paper, a Letter to the Editor can show support. People want to know they are not alone in a wrong!

Visits to public officials, letting them know about areas they may be unaware, being sure to follow up with a letter confirming any commitments. If you have the stomach for it- protesting at events. If you have the funds, contributing money to help those who might be more affected. Don't vote for those with an evil agenda and actions. Praying to God sometimes brings a miracle.

God is involved in our lives whether we want Him or not, and He does have the final say, and the **SIN of OMISSION** does come into play.

From Got Questions website:

Question: "What is a sin of omission?"

Answer: **James 4:17** declares, "Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins." A sin of omission is a sin that is the result of not doing something God's Word teaches that we should do. It is generally used in contrast with the corresponding phrase "**the sin of commission**," or sins that a person actively commits. Paul juxtaposes the two concepts in **Romans 7:14-20**. He decries his tendency toward both types of sin. He does what he doesn't want to do and knows is wrong—the sin of commission—and he doesn't do what he knows he should do and really wants to do—the sin of omission. Here is a picture of the new nature in conflict with the flesh in which it dwells.

In the New Testament, the classic example given by Jesus is the account of the Good Samaritan. After a man had been beaten and left in need of help, the first two men to pass by—a priest and a Levite, both of whom knew better—failed to act. The third man, a Samaritan, stopped to show compassion to the man in need (**Luke 10:30-37**). Jesus used this example to teach that we are to likewise help those in need. By doing so, he clearly communicated that it is sinful to avoid doing good, just as it is sinful to pursue what is evil.

Jesus further describes the sins of omission in **Matthew 25:31-46**. The goats, those who are sent away by Christ, are those who saw others hungry and thirsty, but did not provide food and water. They are those who saw others in need of clothing, who were sick or in jail but did nothing to clothe or comfort them. These are all examples of sins of omission. There was no sin committed against these needy people—they were not intentionally starved or deprived of their clothing. But the sin of omission was committed when those who could have provided for them chose not to.

Finally, the apostle Paul provides a summary statement that explains why we should do what is right and refrain from sins of omission: "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up" (**Galatians 6:9**). When we do the will of our heavenly Father (**Matthew 12:50**), we avoid sins of omission and live productive, fruitful lives pleasing to God (**Romans 12:1-2**; **John 15:1–11**).

The Dark Side of Technology Withdrawal

MARCH 2, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Brad Huddleston

I can't tell you how many times, after giving a talk, a parent has come up to me and said something like, "You just described my child to a tee."

The only thing I do is give a list of the general symptoms of digital addiction with explanations. Here's the list:

- anger
- aggression
- anxiety
- depression
- irritability
- attention deficits
- emotional numbness

There are more, but in my experience, these are the most common. I convey to my audiences that most of us experience at least some of these symptoms simply because of our daily stresses. What I'm talking about is an exacerbation of these symptoms brought on by addiction.

Anger and aggression are at the top of the list for a reason. These two are the ones I hear about most often, and they can turn horrid. For example, 17-year-old Daniel Petric from Ohio made national news for shooting his parents after they took the violent video game *Halo 3* away from him. His mother died, and his father was injured. If you don't think it can get that extreme in your home, think again. Daniel's conviction was in 2009. Video game technology has and continues to advance at a mind-numbing pace, and the brain clearly cannot handle the ever-growing levels of stimulation.

Dr. Victoria Dunckley, in her book, *Reset Your Child's Brain: A Four-Week Plan to End Meltdowns, Raise Grades, and Boost Social Skills by Reversing the Effects of Electronic Screen-Time*, describes the intensified psychiatric symptoms this way:

Screen-time affects our brains and bodies at multiple levels, manifesting in various mental health symptoms related to mood, anxiety, cognition, and behavior. Because the effects of screen-time are complicated and diverse, I've found it helpful to conceptualize the constellation of common phenomena as a syndrome—what I call Electronic Screen Syndrome (ESS). Importantly, ESS can occur in the absence of a psychiatric disorder and yet mimic one, or it can occur in the face of an underlying disorder and exacerbate it.

I strongly encourage family physicians, counselors, psychologists, etc., to add technology usage questions to their diagnostic criteria, especially when they cannot pinpoint the exact cause of a patient's emotional disturbances. In other words, don't rule out digital addiction as a cause or a

significant contributing factor, particularly when a patient says something like, “I don’t use social media all that much,” or “I keep an eye on my child’s video gaming. He only plays occasionally.” Without being judgmental, red flags always go up when I hear statements such as these. I don’t believe that a parent who is addicted to devices is qualified to self-diagnose or properly evaluate their tech-addicted children.

The link between excessive smartphone use and depression and suicide hasn’t gone unnoticed with people connected to the tech industry. It might seem counter-intuitive that Apple investors would urge the tech giant to curb smartphone addiction. After all, wouldn’t they welcome addiction as a way to make a return on their investment? I’m quite confident many have. While the love of money is the root of all evil, it’s refreshing that at least some investors still appear to care more about people than generating wealth. An Associated Press article explained why they’re concerned:

The investors’ letter cited various studies on the negative effects of smartphones and social media on children’s mental and physical health. Examples include distractions by digital technologies in the classroom, a decreased ability of students to focus on educational tasks, and higher risks of suicide and depression.

What was Apple’s response? On June 4, 2018, Apple issued a press release titled, *iOS 12 introduces new features to reduce interruptions and manage screen time*.

Have these and other tracking apps worked? Perhaps for a small minority, but in the big picture, I believe that as technology continues to advance at a mind-numbing pace, so have the associated problems. And the primary reason they’re not even making a dent? Implementing accountability apps before eliminating the addiction is like putting a Band-Aid® on a broken leg.

Addiction carries with it a far more powerful force than what accountability apps have to offer. There are only two things that can break this stronghold. The first has to be something more powerful than the addiction, and that is God’s power.

…the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing. Isaiah 10:27 (KJV)

The second is a physical separation from all screen activity, including television. Only after the brain has reset following a detox will we have the potential to use technology in ways that benefit us instead

“Teen Who Killed over Video Game Gets 23 Years.” NBCNews.com, NBC Universal News Group, 16 June 2009, **www.nbcnews.com/id/31387876/ns/us_news-crime_and_courts/t/teen-who-killed-over-video-game-gets-years/#.Xk6x3RNKjUI**. Accessed Feb. 20, 2020.

Ibid.

Dunckley, Victoria L. *Reset Your Childs Brain: a Four-Week Plan to End Meltdowns, Raise Grades, and Boost Social Skills by Reversing the Effects of Electronic Screen-Time.* New World Library, 2015. Page 16.

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Ibid.

"IOS 12 Introduces New Features to Reduce Interruptions and Manage Screen Time." Apple Newsroom, 6 Feb. 2020, **www.apple.com/newsroom/2018/06/ios-12-introduces-new-features-to-reduce-interruptions-and-manage-screen-time/**. Accessed Feb. 16, 2020.

This article is from Brad's upcoming book, *Digital Rehab: Digital Detox and Beyond*. More about Brad's work can be found at **bradhuddleston.com**.

Digital Cocaine: A Journey Toward iBalance

FEBRUARY 26, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Everything is permissible for me, but not all things are beneficial. Everything is permissible for me, but I will not be enslaved by anything . 1 Corinthians 6:12 (AMP)

Brad Huddleston

The shocking headline from the Oct. 7, 2019 edition of USA Today reads, *Epic Games sued for not warning parents 'Fortnight' is allegedly as addictive as cocaine*.

The court case came as no surprise to me. After all, I'm the author of the book and video, *Digital Cocaine: A Journey Toward iBalance*. I've been beating this drum for years. Audiences all over the world watch and *listen* to my presentations with great intensity. However, being *heard*, I discovered early on is quite another matter.

I have two major hurdles when attempting to communicate that digital drugs are as addictive as their non-virtual counterparts—heroin, cocaine, alcohol, tobacco, etc. In other words, digital addiction is not a metaphor; it is a literal addiction.

First, the vast majority of parents I speak to believe they and their children are the exceptions to all the science and warnings that I present. The second obstacle I face is convincing my audiences that addiction to devices equivalently affects the brain as cocaine. In an interview on Yahoo! News Now, Dr. Nicholas Kardaras, psychotherapist and addiction specialist, said:

> Kids are, and again, this hypnotic trance that I call it is now being backed by research that shows that these screens are affecting frontal cortex of a child's brain in exactly the same way as cocaine.

I should probably pause at this point and define *digital drugs*. Developing a dependency on technology means excessive screen time, whether it be staring at a high definition-television, smartphone, tablet, electronic billboard, or computer screen. You get the idea.

Where all of this becomes tricky is defining the word *excessive*. Rarely do I have a screen addict tell me that they use their drug excessively. Denial is a classic hallmark of any addiction. Everyone around the digital addict can clearly see their consumption is way over the top. Still, when confronted, the tech junkie can always downplay and justify their unbridled usage, most often accompanied by irritation or anger, but sometimes with a hearty laugh.

I speak in schools all over the world, and given my topic, I often have conversations with members of IT Departments. After speaking to a group of students, one of the tech employees approached me to talk about his video gaming. He assured me that he did not have an addiction and that everything was under control. I hear this all the time. It goes something like this, "I only play a limited time each evening and possibly a little more on the weekends. I'm really careful."

After he walked away, I was approached by one of his colleagues who asked me, "Did he just tell you he limits his video gaming?" I said, "Yes."

He went on to tell me that his video gaming addiction is so bad, he uses his vacation time to play video games.

An addict, regardless of the drug, rarely believes their usage is immoderate. I think the video gamer I just described was sincere. Nevertheless, those who work with him day in and day and out; those who know him, observe something entirely different.

Any honest parent of an infant, toddler, preschooler, kindergartner, adolescent, teenager, or University student will tell you that it doesn't take very long at all before screen time becomes excessive. The time it takes for mesmerization to occur can be the very moment when the eyes lock onto the screen. They are all *instantly* drawn to the glow like a moth to a flame. And over time, their personalities change, and not for the better.

A child's brain is underdeveloped and, therefore, susceptible to technology's hyper-stimulating effect. The same is true for a young adult under the age of approximately 25 because even their pre-frontal cortex is still not fully developed. That is the area of the brain that, among other things, regulates impulse control. In other words, they struggle with putting the brakes on their urges, and this includes screen time.

What these young people need are non-addicted adults to come along beside them and put the brakes on *for* them.

Houston, we have yet another major problem. Most adults are just as addicted to their technology as their children. We are now seeing multiple layers of denial in the typical nuclear home.

This article is from Brad's upcoming book, *Digital Rehab: Digital Detox and Beyond*. More about Brad's work can be found at **bradhuddleston.com**.

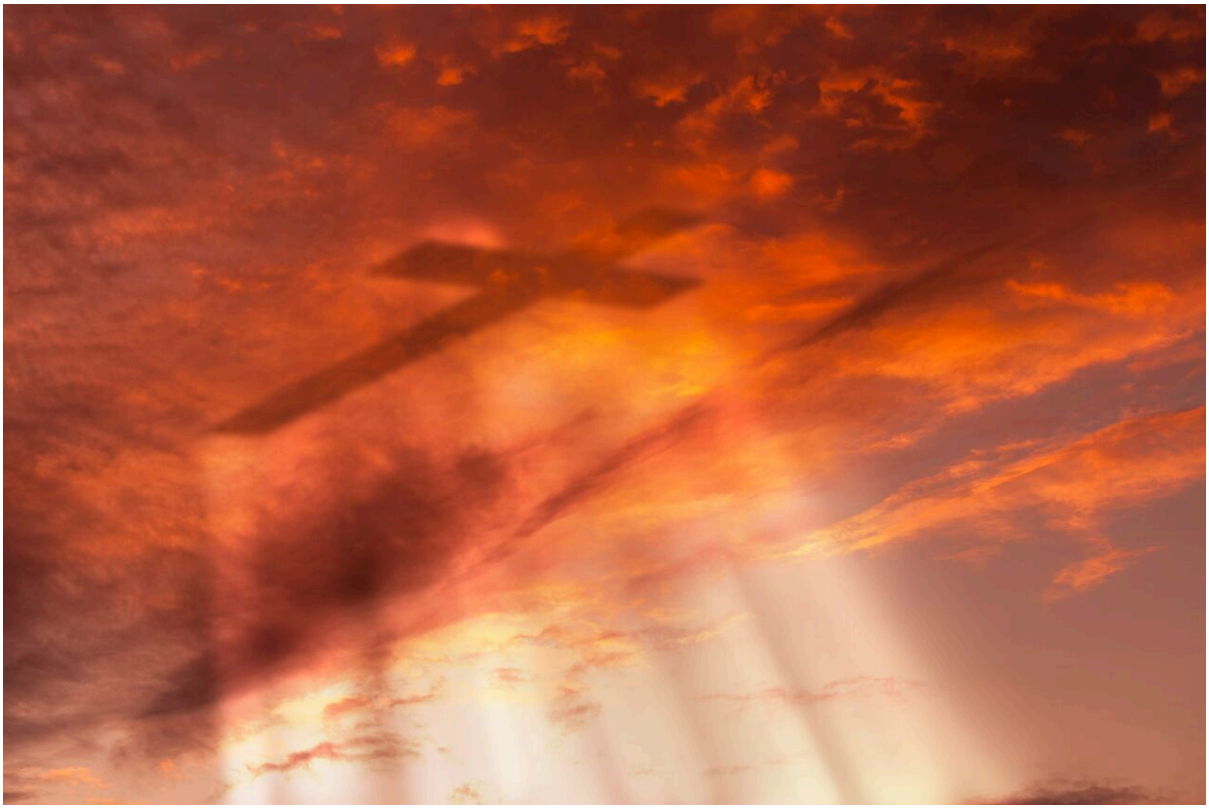
"Glow kids: Beware of the screen." *YouTube* video, 13:58. October 13, 2016. **https://youtu.be/MQMlOjOPsKg**, accessed Feb. 9, 2020.

"Maturation of the teenage brain." Mariam Arain, Maliha Haque, Lina Johal, Puja Mathur, Wynand Nel, Afsha Rais, Ranbir Sandhu, and Sushil Sharma. National Center for Bioteachnology Information, US National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health. Published April 3, 2013. **https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3621648/**. Accessed Feb. 10, 2020.

"Principles of Adolescent Substance Use Disorder Treatment: A Research-Based Guide." National Institute on Drug Abuse, **https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/principles-adolescent-substance-use-disorder-treatment-research-based-guide/introduction**. Access Feb. 10, 2020.

EMERGENCY Alert: SOGI Bills Will Destroy Churches and Religious Schools!

FEBRUARY 16, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: DIVERSITY, LGBTQ, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Dear Christian, it is the Christian's duty to defend the Word of God and the Church when directly attacked, not to act is to be disobedient. We will be judged for both our actions and our inaction at the Bema Seat of Christ.

from the **Family Foundation**

I wish I had better news for you on Valentine's Day of all days, and that the title of this email was an exaggeration, **but we really have found ourselves in a dire and urgent situation in Virginia, and we MUST act now to save Christian churches, schools, and non-profit ministries from the destruction the new Democrat majority is plotting for them.**

HB 1663 (D-Sickles) and its Senate version **SB 868** (D-Ebbin) place far-reaching special protections for "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" (SOGI) into virtually every part of our law, and **EVERY TIME** it creates a direct conflict with people of faith (typically Christians) who hold to a Biblical and historical view of marriage, sexuality, and human nature – including churches, private schools, and non-profit ministries.

These bills virtually guarantee that churches, private religious schools and non-profit ministries, and Christian-led businesses who will not abandon God's Word and His design for male and female will be targeted, sued, fined, bankrupted, and ultimately shut down. (Read some of the ways below.)

Click HERE to contact your legislators now and demand that religious entities like churches and schools be taken off the LGBTQ+ Hit-List!

Yesterday, our team sought to engage the House General Laws Committee when SB 868 came before them, and Democrats on the committee absolutely shut down discussion and ignored the concerns raised. (Watch for yourself **here**.) Notably, consider this exchange:

"We found that there are a number of things in that really don't provide protections for religious entities in particular – churches, and so forth. There are some exemptions in the bill, but they are pretty narrow.

As for the punitive damages, there is no limit on the punitive or compensatory damages. There's also an award of attorney's costs and fees – only to the Plaintiff if they prevail, but not to the Defendant. In addition, there are fines that are pretty hefty. In totality, this makes it a Plaintiff attorney's DREAM, to go suing everyone and everything."

"I've actually looked at the language…and I think it's actually doing *exactly* what we intended for it to do. If you don't want to be subject to unlimited punitive damages, don't discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

I mean, this wasn't meant to be a non-punitive bill. We created a private right of action for a reason. And so I think that the bill accomplishes *exactly* what it's intended to do in the form that it's intended to do it. And so, at this point, I would move that we report the bill." (To which all the other Democrats "seconded" in unison and voted to pass the bill.)

There you have it: It is absolutely their intention to destroy ALL opposition to their twisted, anti-scientific, anti-Christian sexual dogma. They're openly admitting it.

And we shouldn't be surprised, either. After all, that was from **the same Delegate who, just two years ago, when speaking in favor of a similar bill** and responding to similar SOGI concerns of religious groups and universities, said: "There are certain sincerely held religious beliefs which are so discriminatory that we don't give them the protection of the law, and this is one of those cases."

For them, this isn't just about commerce or fairness or tolerance. They've made it abundantly clear time and time again that they intend to punish and even destroy ANYONE – even churches, schools and religious nonprofits – who will not bow the knee to the god of sexual "freedom." We're here doing everything we can to stand in their way, but we cannot do it without people of faith all across this Commonwealth expressing their opposition in the strongest terms.

Please TAKE ACTION NOW while there's still time to amend this legislation, so that at a minimum, churches, schools, and faith-based ministries are not the obvious target of destruction for the LBGTQ mob and its henchmen within our government.

(For more evidence of the Left's intentions, **watch Delegate Dave LaRock's floor speech against HB 1663** and the subsequent reaction.)

Below are *just some* of the impacts these bills will have, unless they are amended to provide better protections for religious entities. **Download the Full One-Pager PDF HERE** to better understand many of the ways Religious Entities will be impacted.

"Places of public accommodation"

- **Makes churches a "place of public accommodation,"** treating them the same as any other businesses when it comes to "SOGI," thereby impacting their privacy policies in sex-segregated facilities, their abilities to perform and host some weddings/ceremonies and not others, carrying out church discipline against its members, and even the church's ability to limit its own membership and church leadership roles on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, or even religion!
- **Many Private Christian PreK-12 schools and universities** would be considered a "place of public accommodation," subjecting them to the same types of restrictions as any other place of business.
- **Faith-based foster care and adoption agencies** would be prohibited from giving preference to homes with both a mom and a dad, thereby forcing them to close. (As has happened in other states)
- **Faith-based homeless and women's shelters** will also fall under this, opening them up to lawsuits by "transgender" persons, as has happened in other states.
- **Virtually every Private Business** will be considered a place of public accommodation, meaning that they will not be able to enforce sex-segregated facilities such as bathrooms, showers, and changing areas.
- **Christian business owners connected to the wedding industry** will be directly harmed, as in other states (including cake artists, photographers, wedding venue hosts, florists, caterers, etc.).

"Unlawful employment practices"

- All employers will likely be prohibited from enforcing any sex-segregated policies such as in bathrooms, showers, changing areas, and even separate male/female dress codes – even if they believed someone was abusing it, **with no exemption for religious employers.**
- All employers will likely be compelled to actively use an employee's preferred pronouns even if different from their biological sex, **with no exemption for religious employers.**
- Would likely require all employers to include gender reassignment therapies/surgeries in their employee health plans, **with no exemption for religious employers.**

- While religious entities would still be allowed to hire individuals of the same religion, **this would NOT protect religious employers' ability to hold their employees to a standard of conduct consistent with their doctrinal faith** if the conduct was outside of work.
- Businesses and organizations will most likely have to create training procedures on SOGI nondiscrimination for all their employees just to prove they're not violating this law.

Civil actions by Attorney General and Private Parties

- **"Mark Herring's New Seek-And-Destroy Power":** Gives the AG broad new powers by bringing civil actions against virtually anyone he "has reasonable cause to believe … *is engaged in a pattern or practice of resistance to the full enjoyment of any of the rights* granted" by the Virginia Human Rights Act.
- **Any church, religious non-profit, or business who doesn't embrace the LGTBQ+ ideology can now be targeted by the AG.**
- Any private individual can join in the AG's suit and receive damages, or they can initiate a suit of their own.
- **Penalty of $50K fine for first offense, and $100K fine for subsequent offenses**!
- Provides for payment of complainant's (but not the Defendant's) attorney's fees and costs, as well as award **UNLIMITED compensatory and punitive damages**!
- **This will force non-profits and small businesses out of business!** They will be pressured into an unfavorable settlement just to try to avoid the possibility of a far harsher penalty if they lose.
- **These remedies incentivize lawyers to look for every possible opportunity to sue** vulnerable people/entities/businesses because the potential payout is so lucrative.

SOURCE: **FAMILY FOUNDATION**

Where Do Christians Go When They Die

FEBRUARY 15, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Lamb & Lion Ministries
Dr. Reagan: We are going to focus on questions people sent in to our ministry about Eternity, or to put it another way, questions about Heaven and Hell. The first question deals with when a person dies, whether he or she immediately goes to Heaven or Hell, or spiritually sleeps in the grave until the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Their childhood preacher taught them about a concept called Soul Sleep.

Tim Moore: **There are some who have become misled when it comes to the concept of Soul Sleep.** This concept teaches that our souls are buried with our bodies and we just hang out in some kind of limbo until Jesus returns to resurrect our bodies. But, the Apostle Paul was very

clear, and he told us a couple of different times, such as in 2 Corinthians 5:6-8 where he states, *"Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight, we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord."* Paul also revealed in Philippians 1:21, *"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."* And, again in verse 23, *"But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better."* Paul said he knew that when he departed his body he would be with Christ.

Dr. Reagan: Those are very good points, but the person who believes in Soul Sleep would come back at you and say, "Okay, if there is no Soul Sleep, then why is it the Bible refers to death as sleep?"

Nathan Jones: That is because we are talking about the body here. What is six feet under is our physical, human body, our earthly body, which naps underground. Can you imagine being a soul trapped in a decaying corpse under the ground with the worms and the bugs and stuff? No wonder so many people are terrified of death! But, no, the Bible says that when we die we will be escorted by the angels up to Jesus Christ. So, **the very second that you die, if you believe in Jesus as your Savior, you will then immediately stand before the Lord.**

Now, the body still waits under the earth. It waits for the Rapture, or the Resurrection if you are already dead. The earthly body will be resurrected and merged with our intermediate bodies, and then **we will at last don our glorified bodies, and those are the bodies that we will indwell for all of eternity.**

Dr. Reagan: It is metaphorically true that death is sleep in the sense that the body goes into the ground, or the body is burned, or the body is lost in the ocean, or whatever fate. But, when Jesus returns, a supernatural thing is going to happen. Jesus is going to speak and all of those bodies are going to come back together. The dead are going to awake, in the sense that the Bible uses sleep to refer to the body which remains here, and that the body will one day be resurrected and rise again. At the resurrection, our earthly bodies are going to wake up. **The body may sleep, but not the soul. The soul immediately upon death goes to be with the Lord.**

Nathan Jones: There are a number of people, especially Catholics, who write in to the ministry and ask about cremation. They ask, "If I were to burn up my body in cremation, then how could the Lord resurrect my body?" The Lord works at the subatomic level. He can put every atom back in place, so don't worry about it. Trust that your body will indeed be resurrected. After all, the Bible talks about the sea giving up its dead, and the earth gives up its dead. Wherever your body is, even if it was blown into the wind as atoms, the Lord will put them all back together again.

Will we live forever in Heaven or on the New Earth?

Dr. Reagan: A lot of people are surprised to learn that **our eternal home is not going to be Heaven but the New Earth.**

Tim Moore: The New Jerusalem on the New Earth is going to be Heaven, for what defines Heaven? Heaven is where God is. Wherever God is, that's where I want to be, and that to me is a heavenly place. It is Heaven. **The Scriptures say that the Lord is going to return to reign over the earth. Heaven will come down and God's glory will fill the earth.** When that happens, Ezekiel reveals that Jesus' name will then become Yahweh Shammah, meaning "the Lord who is there." The Lord will be there ruling over the earth, and so Heaven will be here. Christians will reign with Jesus on the earth during the coming Millennial Kingdom and then on after into the Eternal State.

Dr. Reagan: Having been raised in an Amillennialism-teaching church, when I first began to believe what the Bible really says about the end times and started the transition to becoming Premillennial in my view, this revelation about Heaven being on the New Earth was one of the things that was the biggest shock to me. I had always been taught that when we died we were going to become like ghosts, we were going to be kind of like spirits, and we were going to float around on clouds and play harps. Heaven wasn't going to be tangible and material, but an ethereal place filled with spirits. A lot of that kind of thinking is actually due to Eastern religious concepts and not biblical concepts. When I read in the Bible that we are going to be given glorified, eternal bodies and that we are going to live on a new earth, I was shocked. Nobody had ever taught me that, but that is indeed what the Bible teaches.

Nathan Jones: I have always wondered how some can teach that we will be living forever in ethereal bodies, sitting on clouds, and playing harps. Wouldn't our immaterial hands go right through the harps? Ever since I was a kid, that imagery bothered me.

Rather, John 14 reveals that **ever since Jesus ascended to Heaven He has been preparing a place for His children to live.** Read Revelation 20-22, for there we learn about what this prepared place will be like, and it's given a name — the New Jerusalem. It's this super-city that the Lord has been building. And what a structure! John explains that this super-city is going to be 1,500 miles wide, and long, and high. So, it could be a cube or it could be a pyramid. The New Jerusalem will actually come down to a New Earth.

Now, it has been calculated that this city is so big that if it was placed on the current earth the earth would wobble uncontrollably because of the city's sheer size. So, it's been estimated that the New Earth might even be as large as Jupiter in order to handle a city of such mass. The New Jerusalem will be Heaven on earth.

Dr. Reagan: This eternal city will descend down to the New Earth just at the end of the Millennial reign. God is then going to take all of those who are believers in Christ and place them in that glorious new city while He refurbishes the planet, burning off all the effects of sin and the curse. Then the city is going to descend to the purified New Earth, and the Father Himself is going to come and live in our midst. **We are going to be living in our new bodies, in the New Jerusalem, on a New Earth, living in the presence of our Creator Jesus forever and ever.**

Tim Moore: What a glorious picture! Revelation 21:23 further describes the New Jerusalem as *"The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light."* That is what God's faithful can look forward to, and that will be right here on the earth.

Dr. Reagan: When the high priest went into the Holy of Holies once a year to sprinkle the blood on the Mercy Seat, that was symbolic of the fact that the death of the Messiah — His blood — would make it possible for the grace of God to cover the Law of God, which was in the Ark. But, the priest also stepped back and sprinkled the blood on the ground, and most people overlook that. That act was symbolic of the fact that the Messiah's death would also result in the redemption of the physical universe. **God intends to redeem this universe and place it back into its perfected state as God had originally created.** So, yes, there is going to be a New Earth, but it is going to be a perfected earth, and beautiful beyond anything we can imagine.

Nathan Jones: You would have to think, too, how could we be ghosts if we are eating from the Tree of Life? Ghosts don't need to eat from the Tree of Life. Revelation talks about how the city's inhabitants will be traveling in and out of the city through its 12 gates. Why would we need to come in and out of gates if we didn't have bodies? We know then that **our glorified bodies will be tangible, they would be recognizable, and they will be physical.** We'll also be wearing clothes. Ghost don't need to wear clothes, but we will indeed be wearing robes, so our bodies must be tangible.

Tim Moore: Jesus in His glorified body ate with the disciples. He enjoyed the bounty of the catch.

Dr. Reagan: Oh, yes, and that is one of the things I am most excited about. I believe in my glorified body I'll be able to eat all I want without having to gain a pound. Not even an ounce!

Resource

This Q&A series is also available in a **video album** which contains two DVD discs that feature seven television programs in which David Reagan, Tim Moore, and Nathan Jones respond to questions about the Bible and Bible prophecy. These programs are **great for both individual and group study** and provide an excellent starting point for discussion.

What Does the Bible Say About Pandemic Diseases and Sicknesses

FEBRUARY 8, 2020
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, PANDEMIC

From **GOT QUESTIONS**

Question: "What does the Bible say about pandemic diseases/sicknesses?"

Answer: Various outbreaks of pandemic diseases, such as Ebola or the coronavirus, have prompted many to ask why God allows—or even causes—pandemic diseases and whether such illnesses are a sign of the end times. The Bible, particularly the Old Testament, describes numerous occasions when God brought plagues and diseases on His people and on His enemies "to make you see my power" (**Exodus 9:14**, **16**). He used **plagues on Egypt** to force Pharaoh to free the Israelites from bondage, while sparing His people from being affected by them (**Exodus 12:13**; **15:26**), thus indicating His sovereign control over diseases and other afflictions.

God also warned His people of the consequences of disobedience, including plagues (**Leviticus 26:21**, **25**).

On two occasions, God destroyed 14,700 people and 24,000 people for various acts of disobedience (**Numbers 16:49** and **25:9**). After giving the Mosaic Law, God commanded the people to obey it or suffer many evils, including something that sounds like Ebola: "The Lord will strike you with

wasting disease, with fever and inflammation . . . which will plague you until you perish" (**Deuteronomy 28:22**). These are just a few examples of many plagues and diseases God caused.

It's sometimes hard to imagine our loving and merciful God displaying such wrath and anger toward His people. But God's punishments always have the goal of repentance and restoration. In **2 Chronicles 7:13–14**, God said to Solomon, "When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." Here we see God using disaster to draw His people to Himself, to bring about **repentance** and the desire to come to Him as children to their heavenly Father.

In the New Testament, Jesus healed "every disease and every sickness," as well as plagues in the areas He visited (**Matthew 9:35**; **10:1**; **Mark 3:10**). Just as God chose to use plagues and disease to show His power to the Israelites, Jesus healed as an exhibition of the same power to verify that He was truly the Son of God. He gave the same healing power to the disciples to verify their ministry (**Luke 9:1**). God still allows sickness for His own purposes, but sometimes disease, even worldwide pandemics, are simply the result of living in a fallen world. There is no way to determine whether or not a pandemic has a specific spiritual cause, but we do know that God has sovereign control over all things (**Romans 11:36**) and will work all things together for the good of those who know and love Him (**Romans 8:28**).

The spread of sicknesses such as Ebola and the coronavirus is a foretaste of pandemics that will be part of the end times. Jesus referred to future plagues associated with the last days (**Luke 21:11**). The two witnesses of **Revelation 11** will have power "to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want" (**Revelation 11:6**). Seven angels will wield seven plagues in a series of **final, severe judgments** described in **Revelation 16**.

The appearance of pandemic diseases may or may not be tied to God's specific judgment of sin. It could also simply be the result of living in a fallen world. Since no one knows the time of Jesus' return, we must be careful about saying global pandemics are proof that we are living in the end times. For those who do not know Jesus Christ as Savior, disease should be a reminder that life on this earth is tenuous and can be lost at any moment. As bad as pandemics are, hell will be worse. The Christian, however, has the assurance of salvation and the hope of eternity because of the blood of Christ shed on the cross for us (**Isaiah 53:5**; **2 Corinthians 5:21**; **Hebrews 9:28**).

SOURCE: **GOT QUESTIONS**?

Recommended Resource: The Book of Signs: 31 Undeniable Prophecies of the Apocalypse by David Jeremiah

Merry Christmas from the Moon

DECEMBER 25, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The Virginia Christian Alliance thanks all of our readers this year for their support and we continue our efforts to focus on the values that matter to Christians most. From the Sanctity of Life to the culture wars that rage around us. But there is no higher calling than that of the commission given to us in Matthew 28:18-20,

18And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen

From the Holy Scriptures and the book of Luke, Chapter 2

> And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.
>
> And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,
>
> Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.
>
> And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.
>
> And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

And no matter where you are, you can share the Good News!

"Merry Christmas from the Moon" was produced by ***The John 10:10 Project****. This was produced in 2018*

03:52

04:17

FOR MUCH MORE: SEE THE **JOHN 1010 PROJECT Website**

Pastors & Ministry Leaders Summit | Thursday, November 14, 2019, Richmond, VA

NOVEMBER 10, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

"To give children a good education in manners, arts and science, is important;
to give them a religious education is indispensable
and an immense responsibility rests on parents and guardians who neglect these duties."
—Noah Webster, American Dictionary of the English Language, 1828

A Biblical Worldview Plan for Rescuing Our Children & Nation

Virginia Watchmen Council, America's Black Robe Regiment, The Foundation for American Christian Education (FACE) at

Thursday, November 14, 2019
9:00 AM to 3:30 PM
The Virginia Christian Alliance
8659 Staples Mill Road,
Henrico, Virginia 23228
REGISTER HERE

We will be discussing a practical strategy for churches to assist parents in equipping their children with a Biblical Worldview, thus rescuing them from the lies that pervade education today, and preparing them to lead in their own generation.

This Summit will address the following questions:

1. What is a biblical worldview, and why is it essential to ensuring the future stability of our nation?
2. What does the Bible say about parents' role in the education of their children?
3. How has American education changed since the the first permanent English settlement at Jamestown in 1607 (412 years)?
4. Does education today result in a proper understanding of Nature, Government, Economics, Education, Sociology, and Religion ?
5. Why is a biblical worldview so important to the preservation of Liberty, and how does it inoculate the civil society against Tyranny?
6. How can pastors and Sunday school teachers inculcate a biblical worldview in the hearts and minds of church members?
7. How has public education today contributed to moral and spiritual decay, and brought us to the brink of absolute despotism?

All attendees will receive:

1. A worldview assessment in advance of the event;
2. A Free subscription to a new publication, *Political Correctness: A Deceptive and Dangerous Worldview*.
3. A copy of the book, *Sons and Daughters Walking in the Truth*, which explains what the Bible teaches concerning the education of children.

4. A complimentary lunch!

This crucial summit is brought to you by the Virginia Watchmen Council, America's Black Robe Regiment, The Foundation For American Christian Education (FACE), the Nehemiah Institute, the Virginia Christian Alliance (VCA), and Exodus Mandate. Please join us for a day of strategizing on how we can rescue our precious children and our nation, the land of Christian liberty.

Thursday, November 14, 2019
9:00 AM to 3:30 PM
The Virginia Christian Alliance
8659 Staples Mill Road,
Henrico, Virginia 23228
REGISTER HERE

In this special Christian Education Pastors and Ministry Leaders Summit, Virginia Watchmen Council (VWC) Chairman and leader of the Family Research Council's (FRC) Watchmen Pastor initiative in Virginia, Rev. Michael Hirsch, Rev. Bill Cook, Founder of the Black Robe Regiment of Virginia, and Northern Virginia Chairman of VWC, Dr. Max Lyons of the Foundation for American Christian Education (FACE) and Mr. Dan Smithwick of the Nehemiah Institute will present a compelling case for Biblical Worldview Education within the Church, and practical steps pastors can take to restore their legacy as principle educators of their flocks and education leaders in the local community, by equipping parents with the knowledge and skills needed to disciple their own children.

We will be discussing a practical strategy for churches to assist parents in equipping their children with a Biblical Worldview, thus rescuing them from the lies that pervade education today, and preparing them to lead in their own generation.

Summit Speakers

Dan Smithwick

After serving honorably with the United States Air Force as a cryptologist and a successful career in upper-level management that included 20 years with AT&T, Dan Smithwick founded the Nehemiah Institute in 1986, a non-profit ministry providing Biblical worldview training and worldview assessment programs for use by Christian educators, students, families, churches, and media outlets. Through the Institute, Dan authored the PEERS Test, a worldview assessment designed to reveal an individual's worldview on politics,

economics, education, religion and social issues (PEERS). The PEERS Test and the Institute's worldview training materials have received critical acclaim and support from high profile organizations such as Focus on the Family, the Christian Film & Television Commission, Answers in Genesis, the Foundation for American Christian Education (FACE), The Colson Center and the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN). As president of Nehemiah Institute, Dan focuses on developing new products to reach a broader audience with the Institute's Biblical worldview assessment programs and training materials, establishing positive relationships with members of the media, and assisting Christian educators and students with worldview training programs.

In 1997, Dan authored the groundbreaking study course, PILLARS and in 1998, he contributed to "The Media-Wise Family" with Dr. Ted Baehr, president of the Christian Film & Television Commission. As a recognized expert on worldview training and assessment, Dan has made many radio guest appearances, including Point of View, Issues in Education, Southwest Radio Church, and Reasons for Faith. In addition to his business career and ministry work, Dan has been an active voice in Christian education for over 30 years, serving as board member of several Christian schools, as well as teaching in a private school. Dan also serves on the Executive Council of the Coalition on Revival Ministries (COR), a ministry providing world-class theological studies for churches and Christian education institutions. He is also a member of the Steering Committee for COR's sister organization, the International Church Council Project (**www.churchcouncil.org**). Dan's newest work is a program entitled, "The Kingdom Seminar," providing biblical worldview training to local churches. A sample seminar flyer can be seen at: **http://www.basileians.com/kingdomseminar/**. Further information on hosting this half-day seminar may be obtained by calling 800-948-3101. Dan and his wife of 48 years (deceased 2015), are parents of five children and grandparents of thirteen. Dan currently resides in Winter Garden, FL (Orlando area).

Dan's presentation will focus on the basic meaning of worldview understanding with illustrations showing the dramatic worldview shift occurring in America over the past several decades. Using 30 years of assessment data from Nehemiah Institute's PEERS Test, Dan will show significant variations in the views of Christian leaders, parents and young people from Christian homes. He will argue that the shift away from our Judaeo-Christian heritage was an education issue and show why the restoration of the biblical worldview must also be an education matter.

Dr. Max Lyons

Since 1979, Max Lyons has served as a teacher and administrator at three Christian schools. He has served as Principal at the elementary, middle and high school levels, and was the Head Administrator and CFO at **StoneBridge School** in Chesapeake, Virginia. His last school position was Director of Guidance at **Atlantic Shores Christian School** also in Chesapeake. Max has extensive experience is all aspects of Christian School

management, including curriculum development, teacher professional development, recruiting and admissions, fundraising, business management, board development, and guidance and counseling. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from Virginia Wesleyan College, a Masters in Christian School Administration from Regent University, and a Ph.D. in Christian Education from Whitefield Theological Seminary.

Max is Director of Teaching Services at FACE. He is a teacher, curriculum writer, blogger, and conference speaker, specializing in the Bible, History, Government, Law, Economics, and Biblical Worldview. He has taught a Biblical worldview adult Sunday school class for two decades. His publications include *Celebrate Our Christian Holidays Like You Were There*, *Government Takes All… What's Left for Me?*, *Sons and Daughters Walking in the Truth*, *How to Establish a Christian School to Restore the Republic*, and *The Seven Pillars of Liberty*. Max and his wife Margie co-authored *Thinking and Acting Like Jesus,* an upper-elementary Bible curriculum, and Max co-authored the children's book and Virginia history curriculum, *Odyssey of Faith*. He is co-author of several books published in Portuguese that are used by a network of Principle Approach schools in Brazil, and *Government Takes All…What's Left for Me?* was recently published in Spanish.

Max and Margie attend Kempsville Presbyterian Church and have four children and seven grandchildren. Max will be addressing the topic: *Liberty and Education, What's the Connection?,* demonstrating how classical biblical Christian education can (help) save America. He will show how external or practical liberty is dependent upon internal Liberty and demonstrate the connection between the worldview taught in schools and the preservation of Liberty. In America, 200 years of Biblical Christian education resulted in unprecedented religious, economic, educational, and civil Liberty. In the past several decades, however, education in America has transitioned from biblical to non-sectarian, to humanist, and more recently to Marxist/perverted/pagan, seriously eroding our liberties to the point that we are in danger of totalitarianism. We must restore Biblical Christian education in our nation if we hope to remain free.

Rev. Michael Hirsch

Rev. Michael Hirsch is Chairman of the Virginia Watchmen Council, and Family Research Council's (FRC) "P-50" pastor, overseeing the FRC Watchmen Pastors initiative in Virginia. He is an ardent Patriot and a Leader in the Tea Party of Fredericksburg. He also serves as Shift Leader at **Calvary Christian Church** in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Michael received his theological training at **Teen Challenge Bible Institute** in Saginaw Michigan.

Rev. Hirsch is a first generation American, the firstborn son of an immigrant Ukrainian Jew, who fled from Czarist Russia, emigrated to America, and married his Jewish mother. Michael was born,

when his Father was 60 and his Mother 19! He became a ward of the state and was moved from South Bronx and placed in foster care. At the age of five he was kidnapped by his maternal grandmother and an Aunt who worked with her to raise Michael in the suburbs of Boston. In 1986 he was called to full time pastoral ministry and for 25 years he and his wife Susan have served the church family in four different locations in the greater Fredericksburg area. The church he pastored, Calvary Christian, is located at Confederate Ridge.

Over the years Michael has traveled to 18 countries as a missionary evangelist, and ministered in numerous crusades including four in Colombia, South America, and four in India where the one-night crowds in a single city swelled to over forty thousand; he has helped plant churches during thirteen missionary trips to countries of the former Soviet Union in Belorussia, Ukraine and Russia.

Rev. Bill Cook

Rev. Bill Cook is Founder and CEO of the America's Black Robe Regiment, a fellowship of patriotic clergy and Christian "Minutemen," actively engaged in restoring the Foundations of Liberty in America, and the Pulpit's legacy as Wellspring of the political ideology that ignited a Revolution to "secure the Blessings of Liberty." Rev. Cook has held a variety of pastoral positions spanning two and a half decades. He served as Assistant Campus Minister and Director of Student Life at Regent University in Virginia Beach for seven years and subsequently as an associate pastor at three different churches over a ten-year period. While his five children were growing up, he obtained work as a Systems Engineer supporting several different federal agencies, including the Intelligence Community, Department of Homeland Security, and the Transportation Security Administration. While at DHS, he supported the Director and Science Adviser at the Science and Technology Directorate's Explosives Division, and the Transportation Security Administration, pursuant to characterizing terrorists' explosives of choice, and evaluating a variety of airport screening systems at the TSA Systems Integration Facility (TSIF). During the summer of 2012, he sensed God calling him to return to full-time ministry focused on recruiting and mobilizing fellow clergy and their churches in the battle to secure the "Blessings of Liberty" to this and future generations of Americans. He founded the Black Robe Regiment of Virginia in July 2012 as part growing national movement of clergy at the vanguard of efforts to restore America's decidedly Christian heritage, and the Church's vital leadership and influence at every level of government.

Joy of Believing from Days of Praise Daily Podcasts

SEPTEMBER 8, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Days of Praise Daily Podcasts devotion is one of the best and highly recommended. Created by the Institute of Creation Research, which supports and provides the research that supports the Biblical account of creation, a young earth and has resources like their DVD series on creation.

Free Subscription for monthly Acts and Facts Magazine and Day of Praise booklet: **Check it out.** or https://www.icr.org/subscriptions

Todays Devotion:

JOY ON BELIEVING

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." (1 Peter 1:8)

https://www.icr.org/article/11454

After His resurrection, the Lord acknowledged the legitimate need for evidence of such a mighty miracle, honoring the request of Thomas to see for himself that He had, indeed, returned from the grave. Nevertheless, Thomas could and should have believed the evidence from the other disciples when they testified of the empty tomb and the previous appearances of Christ. Consequently, the Lord Jesus gave a mild but loving rebuke to His doubting disciple. "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

It is not that the Lord wants us to be credulous, believing something with no basis except blind faith. Today we have an abundance of solid evidence, more even than the disciples themselves had, and there is no excuse not to believe. Nevertheless, we must believe; "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Romans 8:24-25).

We cannot yet see Him with our eyes, as Thomas did, but we see Him with our hearts, and that is enough. As we read of Him in the Word, we see Him on the cross, taking "our sins in his own body" (1 Peter 2:24) and it breaks our hearts. Then we read of the empty tomb and the linen clothes, and are like John, who "saw, and believed" (John 20:8). Then we "rejoice with joy" (literally, "exult with exceeding gladness"), which cannot be told vocally any more than He can be seen visually. One day soon we shall really see Him in His glory, and "when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). HMM

Days of Praise Podcast Days of Praise Podcast is a podcast based on the Institute for Creation Research quarterly print devotional, Days of Praise. Start your day with devotional readings written by Dr. Henry Morris, Dr. Henry Morris III, and Dr. John Morris to strengthen and encourage you in your Christian faith.

Marxist ‘Critical Race Theory’ infiltrates the Churches and the culture

AUGUST 9, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: 1984, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The Southern Baptists, the most conservative major Protestant denomination in America have started down the Marxist road. Several other denominations are well ahead of them. If this is not reversed, how will this shift affect our culture and politics in years to come?

By Trevor Loudon | **Epoch Times**

When the Southern Baptists, the largest Protestant denomination in the country endorses "Critical Race Theory" (CRT) you know American Christianity has a Marxism problem.

At the Southern Baptists national convention in Birmingham Alabama in June a resolution on "Critical Race Theory" and "intersectionality" gained passage with a strong majority.

The resolution affirmed the Bible as "the first, last, and sufficient authority" in guiding the church on dealing with social evils and said that "critical race theory and intersectionality should only be used in submission to Scripture". The resolution described critical race theory as a "set of tools to explain how race functions in society and intersectionality as the study of how various characteristics overlap".

Traditional Baptists who believe that the Bible is the inerrant word of God and contains the answer to all problems personal and social within its pages must have wondered why their church would need Marxism for any reason at all?

One brave Christian Tom Ascol, senior pastor of Grace Baptist Church in Cape Coral, Florida, unsuccessfully challenged the CRT resolution, correctly explaining that "critical race theory and intersectionality" are "rooted in ideologies that are incompatible with Christianity."

http://kentuckytoday.com/stories/resolutions-contend-for-vulnerable-gospel,19978

What is Critical Race Theory?

So what actually is CRT? What does "intersectionality mean?

According to the UCLA School of Public Affairs:

CRT recognizes that racism is engrained in the fabric and system of the American society. The individual racist need not exist to note that institutional racism is pervasive in the dominant culture. This is the analytical lens that CRT uses in examining existing power structures. CRT identifies that these power structures are based on white privilege and white supremacy, which perpetuates the marginalization of people of color.

In other words racism is about power, it is exclusively a white problem and is intrinsic in the current social system. Therefore to end racism we must change the existing power structures – a polite way of saying revolution. Affirmative action, reparations and hate speech legislation are all justified by CRT. All are revolutionary tools derived from Marxism.

"Intersectionality" is the concept that all oppressions are linked. Racial oppression is linked to gay oppression which in turn is linked to the oppression of women and workers. This is a modern expansion of the Marxist idea that "capitalism" oppresses not only workers but racial and gender groups as well. All "oppressions" intersect. We cannot treat them as separate problems. The main problem is not just capitalism, but white racist sexist capitalism.

Two Black scholars are most closely identified with modern CRT – the late Harvard Law professor Derrick Bell and the recently deceased James Cone, a professor of Systematic Theology at Union Theological Seminary.

It is worth noting that a member of the Southern Baptist convention resolutions committee Walter Strickland avidly teaches James Cones' theories from his post at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, North Carolina. Strickland seems to have no conflict teaching Cone's version of race-based Marxism to the future Baptist pastors who stream through his classroom.

https://keywiki.org/Walter_Strickland Was told about the Cone stuff a Southeastern graduate who is working on the church movie with us.

James Cone – religious revolutionary

There is zero doubt that James Cone was a Marxist.

In 1990 Democratic Socialists of America published a Cone edited anthology entitled "The Black Church and Marxism: what do they have to say to each other?"

In June 1984, a delegation of Black American Church leaders visited Havana Cuba,

Granma, the Cuban Communist Party newspaper reported that the organizers included the communist controlled Ecumenical Council of Cuba, the Baptist Worker-Student Coordination of Cuba, and the Caribbean Council of Churches. The Black Theology Project was listed as a US sponsor, and the Soviet controlled Christian Peace Conference was also represented.

Delegates included Rev. Jeremiah Wright, UCC Trinity Church Chicago and future pastor to Barack Obama; William Babley, director Racial Union Program Methodist Church; Howard Dodson chairman Black Theology Project; Dwight Hopkins, vice chairman Black Theology Project and a future founder of the communist led Black Radical Congress; and James Cone Union Theological Seminary.

James Cone was also a little un-Christian in his racial views.

In his 1969 book "Black Theology and Black Power" Cone wrote: "The time has come for white America to be silent and listen to black people…All white men are responsible for white oppression…Theologically, Malcolm X was not far wrong when he called the white man 'the devil.'

In a 2004 essay Cone opined, "Black suffering is getting worse, not better…White supremacy is so clever and evasive that we can hardly name it. It claims not to exist, even though black people are dying daily from its poison."

Derrick Bell – legal revolutionary

Derrick Bell, who a young Barack Obama once praised at a Harvard protest rally as comparable to Rosa Parks, was also a man of considerable influence.

Bell's 1973 book, "Race, Racism and American Law," has become a law school standard and is now in its sixth edition.

Derrick Bell "set the agenda in many ways for scholarship on race in the academy, not just the legal academy," said Lani Guinier, the first black woman hired to join Harvard Law School's tenured faculty and the daughter of leading Communist Party USA member Ewart Guinier.

Derrick Bell was a contributor to journal Freedomways which has been described as "one of the most influential African-American literary and political journals of the 1960s and 1970s." Freedomways was established and run by well-documented members and sympathizers of the Communist Party USA.

Declassified documents from Operation SOLO, an FBI program to infiltrate the Communist Party, reveal that Freedomways, which closed in 1986, was subsidized by both the Soviet and Chinese Communist Parties.

https://keywiki.org/Derrick_Bell

https://keywiki.org/Ewart_Guinier

Derek Bell was also a founding member of the National Conference of Black Lawyers the self-proclaimed "legal arm of the Black Liberation Movement".

https://www.ncbl.org/?page_id=1654

According to the organization's website;

In 1968, young people of African descent in America were growing impatient with the slow pace of social change. Despite modest advances brought on by two decades of non-violent resistance, from one end of the country to the other, the cry for Black Power was raised in the midst of a sea of clinched fists. At the same time, this new militant spirit had moved many to don black berets and carry rifles. On street corners in practically every Black community, passers-by heard demands for Nation Time and Power to the People!

Inevitably, the powers-that-be responded to this activist renaissance with police brutality, frame-ups and a vicious counter-intelligence program that targeted scores of militants for harassment, prosecution or assassination. A small group of Black lawyers refused to sit idly by while the iron fist of government came down hard on the bravest and most intelligent of the Black community's younger generation. This period forced the birth of the National Conference of Black Lawyers which, as an organization, began to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with rifle-toting revolutionaries.

The National Conference of Black Lawyers was a US affiliate of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, a still existing international communist front originally founded by the Soviet Union.

https://keywiki.org/National_Conference_of_Black_Lawyers

Is CRT compatible with Christianity?

Is CRT compatible with Christianity, or indeed any God-centered faith?

Christianity is based entirely around the individual and his or her relationship with God. It is the individual who may be saved through faith in Jesus Christ, not the collective.

How can a collectivist philosophy which emphasizes racial division above all else and despises all manifestations of individual liberty have anything to offer Christianity?

The answer is simple. It doesn't.

CRT is a Marxist technique used to divide society into antagonistic racial groups who can be manipulated to create chaos and revolution.

Are those who bring CRT into the church Christian? Or are they Marxists posing as Christians? Is their true purpose salvation or revolution?

I was told recently of an episode that occurred in a church in North Carolina. The young pastor, all fired up with CRT noticed that a black family and a white family in his congregation shared the same surname. He falsely concluded that the ancestors of the white family must have once owned the ancestors of the black family. From the pulpit the pastor demanded that the white family apologize to the black family for the slave-owning sins of their forefathers. The white family bravely refused to apologize for the non-existent transgression, which created a major split in the church. That church no longer exists.

CRT is not just a Southern Baptist problem. This false Marxist doctrine is taught in churches, seminaries and universities all across America.

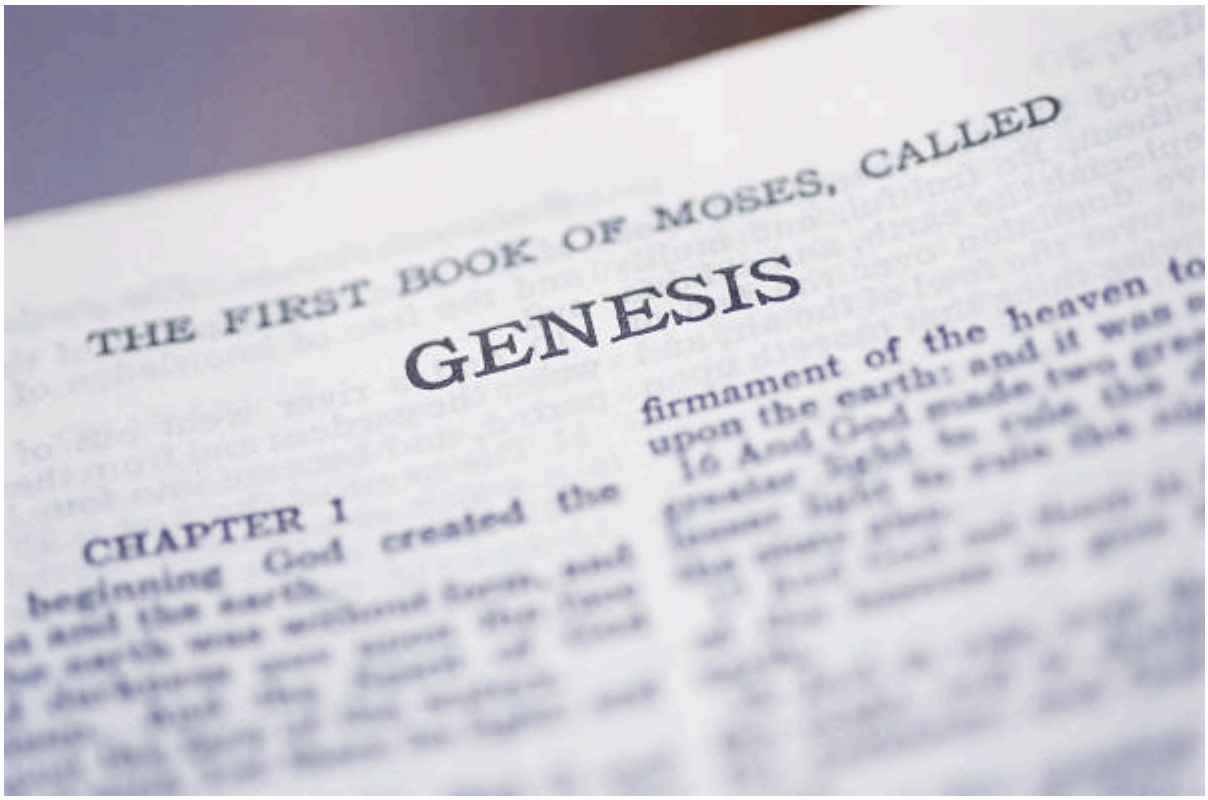
Some brave souls are standing against this corrupt doctrine but hundreds of thousands of seminarians and churchgoers are going along with revolution posing as religion.

The late great Andrew Breitbart used to say that "politics is downstream from culture." He could have added that "culture is downstream from religion".

The Southern Baptists, the most conservative major Protestant denomination in America have started down the Marxist road. Several other denominations are well ahead of them. If this is not reversed, how will this shift affect our culture and politics in years to come?

Taking God at His Word

AUGUST 6, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Institute for Creation Research

*For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. (**Colossians 1:16-17**)*

Almost four years ago, **I announced in *Acts & Facts*** the Lord's leading and provision for beginning work on the **ICR Discovery Center for Science & Earth History**. We'd had a vision for some time to build a world-class facility to reach people of all ages with the foundational message that the Bible is authoritative in all things and that the scientific evidence confirms the Genesis account.

We joyfully anticipate the grand opening on September 2 and want to thank those who have diligently prayed with us and given to support this exciting new venture. As this article relates, the ICR Discovery Center will expand our decades-old mission to proclaim the whole of God's creation truth to a lost world. — *Henry M. Morris III, D.Min.*

Science Agrees with God's Word

The work of the Institute for Creation Research begins and ends with the firm conviction that the Bible is wholly true. As followers of Christ, we trust Him above all else. His Word communicates to us with great purpose and clarity, and we proclaim all of it and reject any compromise.

FULL ARTICLE

Seeing What God Sees

JULY 27, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Joy Lucius Writer, AFA Journal | **The Stand**

I was reading my favorite chapter of the Bible one morning, **Romans 12**, "And so, dear brothers, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living sacrifice, holy – the kind he can accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask?"

Once again, the words of the apostle Paul called to me just as they drew me long ago when I was only 11 years old. In fact, I can clearly remember my initial encounter with what has become my "life chapter."

Amazingly, I found **Romans 12 for the first time in** *The Living Bible,* the same version I read again this particular morning. Back then, in 1973, as a preteen, it was a very hip, trendy, teen-friendly Bible placed in the drawer of a motel by a dedicated Gideon.

I hope to meet that sweet Gideon missionary in heaven one day. Because even though I had attended church my entire life, that *Living Bible* (and yes, I took it home; the insert said I could) made the Word come alive for me. It spoke to me then, and my life has never been the same since.

So, I smile whenever I read Romans 12 or whenever I hear it quoted. Truly, those words beckon to me each time, calling me to repentance and service. They often bring me to my knees, sometimes instantly and tearfully tearing at who I think I am versus who He called me to be.

Those words remind me that everything I am belongs to Him, and they direct me to give all of me to His service, ensuring that my life has meaning and purpose.

And Romans 12 always, always humbles me.

Just think! We are a part of Him, the God of the universe. And He wants us; He desires us. And yes, He longs for us to love Him, to worship Him, and to serve Him by guiding and welcoming His other beloved children into His body of believers.

We all have a place in Him, a particular space no one else can fill. We belong!

One time, when I was feeling quite holy and spiritual, I read this chapter and asked God to show me (figuratively) my place in the body. Perhaps I imagined myself a mighty arm or a discerning eye. Who knows! But I got much more than I bargained for. He showed my place alright – and instantly humbled me in the process.

He showed me a finger, a long, wiggly, pointer finger on a right hand to be exact. Then, He let me know that even though my job was to point people to Christ and curl myself inward to invite people into the body, I often failed.

He showed me how I often point out people's flaws and how I tend to point out every negative detail in the world. He revealed to me that I often misused and abused my place in the body of Christ.

As I prayed and listened, I realized how often I separated people from Him rather than bringing them in. With one small flick of my pointer finger, I dismissed and damaged those He desperately loves.

Wow! In one solitary moment, His Spirit within me spoke words of conviction that were hard to swallow. I fancied myself quite accepting and loving, while He saw a heart of haughty pride and condescension. He spoke to me so quickly, so true, and yet so powerfully.

Yes, in an instant, Romans 12 changed the way I looked at my attitude toward others. I prayed then and I pray now to always be a part of the body that loves with truth and grace, inviting others to know Jesus.

Do I fail at it sometimes? Yes, of course. But I always hear His still, small voice and remember a wiggling finger drawing me, pointing me back to Christ.

And that one simple gesture reminds me that I am merely a small, small part of the body, albeit an important part. I can help make the difference in whether people He places in my path find the Savior quickly or spend a lifetime looking for a place to fit in and belong, a place to be loved.

Romans 12 also reminds me that not only do those lost and searching people I encounter along life's path have a place and a purpose – I need those people as well.

We belong together! Together, we form the body of Christ.

So, today, I plead with you, my brothers and sisters. He loves you, and I need you. We are a team, a body – His body.

Let us surrender and give our bodies to Christ as a living sacrifice. For in our total surrender, He can take each of us and make us into who He called us to be. And then, we can take up our particular, assigned place in the body of believers, and we can live fully and completely for Him.

After everything that He has done for us, it is the least we can do.

The Rising Tide of Civil Terrorism

JULY 20, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: DIVERSITY, LGBTQ, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

by Joseph Rogowski |

Reprint by permission from ***Minding The Times***

In our present-day culture, daily reports of aggressive, militant, and violent action of groups or individuals, driven by an oppressive hostility and political correctness against our civil institutions, social order, people of faith, holders of opposing political views, and even ordinary school children, grow in such numbers, frequency, and cruelty that they can only be characterized as "civil terrorism."

Nowhere is this seen more than in any of our public forums, and our political discourse and interactions on any given day on any given topic.

This accelerating rise of rebellious and selfish behavior of these groups borders on anarchical. Their intent is to generate passivity, timidity, and fear in targeted populations, like the Church, conservatives, people of faith and even law-abiding citizens, for opposing their ideologies and to pressure them into submission and silence.

As of July 2018, Breitbart news organization has compiled a list of over 600 instances of harassment, intimidation, coercion, and violent acts of every form against such targets as teenagers, seniors, veterans, even military, single women, clergy, and opposing political figures and their families. By news accounts, that list has grown appreciably since then.

It is well documented that mainline Democrat/Liberal leaders such as Maxine Waters, former vice-presidential candidate Senator Tim Kaine, Hillary Clinton, Adam Schiff, Andrew Cuomo, Pelosi, and countless others have incited this crudity with their incendiary calls for "resistance" against the present administration, its membership, its citizen proponents, its voters and followers, ranking office holders and their families, and even against religious and conservative leaders and adherents. They virtually sanction the disruptive tactics of such terror groups like Antifa and MS 13, and the militant Black Lives Matter and abortion factions. Who can forget Nancy Pelosi lecturing the Pope with her demented view on Christian doctrine and Lois Lerner's IRS secret targeting of conservative groups. Planned Parenthood and its supporters, of course, carry on their own unique form of civil terror.

This despicable behavior snowballs and then gives boost to the simple-minded to spit on the President's son and insult members of Congress in restaurants, harass President staffers while fulfilling their duties to say nothing of hoodlums taunting weaker folks in fast food places, out shopping in malls, or on strolls in parks. And who can forget the attack on Republican Senator Rand Paul of Tennessee, one of the most principled members of Congress, who was assaulted in his own back yard, suffering three broken ribs. He still suffers with some breathing difficulties. His terror-stricken wife now carries a handgun.

Among the most egregious occurrences of civil terror has been against students or school faculty on college campuses. Instances of violence or threats against conservative students – and sometimes even conservative professors – are becoming commonplace even at some of America's most prestigious universities, now crumbling pillars of free expression and thought. This trend is even seen expanding to the high school level. Is it unrealistic to consider that our rash of high school shootings flow within this stream of civil terrorism – students taking "resistance" action to express their hatred of society's restraints on their selfish and demented whims?

Nothing reveals our culture's civil terror more than that perpetrated by the homosexual/transgender groups against ordinary Americans, not because of their political beliefs but because of their religious beliefs. As a protected class by positivistic, godless laws, LGBTQ groups use their power and influence to inflict unrestrained, catastrophic damage to ordinary citizens with attacks on their wage-earning livelihoods and small businesses. Companies are pressured to drop their sponsorships of conservative TV programs.

Epitomizing this fractious behavior is the recent U.S. women's World Cup soccer team, laden with homosexuals, attacking the very foundations and principles of the country they're supposed to represent while excluding players of opposing lifestyle views from qualifying for the team. In our punishing politically correct environment, with the protection of positivistic law, LGBTQs have the tools of control over societal personal freedoms, religious beliefs, and personal preferences. LGBTQ groups use their repressive and restrictive tactics to promote their own special interests

and agenda with impunity, protected by laws unfounded and unchecked by religious influence and morals.

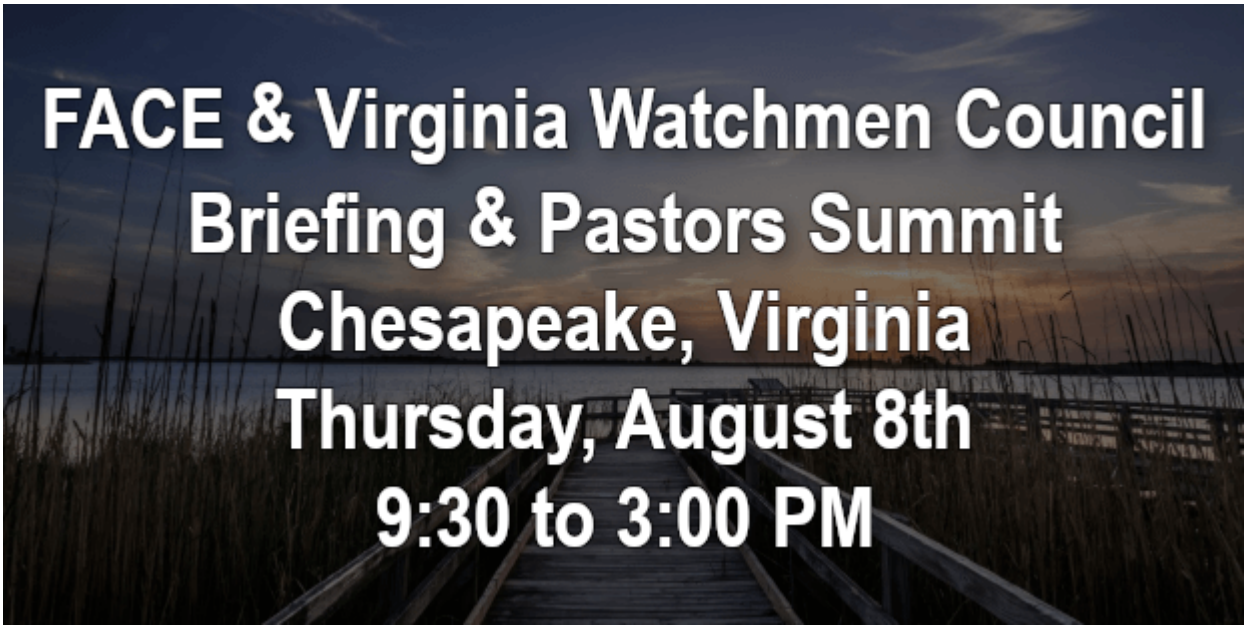
These current reactionary movements, nurtured by the mind molders of academia, the degenerate arts and entertainment industry, and the mendacious media that portray themselves as ennobled, patriotic "resistance" warriors, are implicit, by definition, "rebellion" in its raw and ugly form. In their gross selfish and deranged mentality, their behavior is the specious rejection of all authority – moral, religious, magisterial, rule of law, law enforcement, logic, expert opinion, voter and legal judicial outcomes, universal and traditional heritage, and even a renunciation of true justice. On a national level, they refuse to acknowledge that the President won his office by all legal and necessary lawful means. They refuse to acknowledge that he is leading the country in its wellbeing successfully in every recorded category and index.

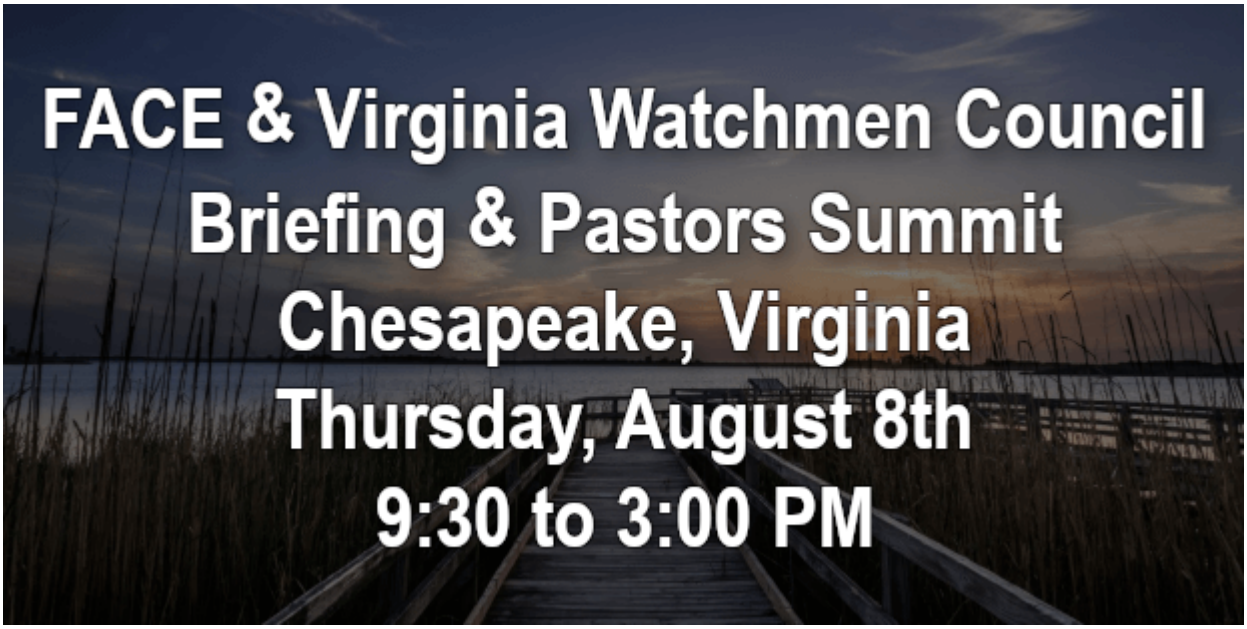
The hostile actions of these groups can only be viewed as an ultimate indifference to the looming, mortal, disastrous impact on our societal harmony, successful social order, and national stability. Their selfishness and lust for power flows without restraint. Resistance isn't their strategy, rebellion is. Their method is civil terrorism. And they enjoy the virtual sanction of the Democratic Party with its financial supporters, our liberal, extremist organizations, and our activist judiciary. Congress needs to remove this unfair protected class status of the LGBTQ movement.

Joseph Rogowski serves as a board member on the Virginia Christian Alliance

Briefing and Pastors Summit on Thursday, August 8

JULY 14, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD





Thursday August 8

The Foundation for American Christian Education (FACE), with the Virginia Watchmen Council are pleased to bring you the following Briefing and Pastors Summit on Thursday, August 8 from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM at FACE Headquarters in Cheseapeake, Virginia. FACE is located at 4225 Portsmouth Blvd, Ste B, Cheseapeake, Virginia 23321.

Register for the FACE Event

The agenda for the event follows.

Event Agenda

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER
09:30 AM	Meet & Greet and Refreshments	
09:45 AM	Welcome & Introductions	Dr. Carole Adams, President & Master of Ceremonies
10:00 AM	Short Tour of FACE Library, Presentation on the Mission and Vision Plan for the Principle Approach	Dr. Carole Adams & Carey Woodruff, Executive Vice-President
11:00 AM	"History of the PEERS Test & the Significance of Biblical Reasoning to Politics, Education, Economics, Religion & the Civil Society "	Dan Smithwick, President of the Nehemiah Institute & Author of the PEERS Test
11:45 AM	Lunch (Q & A)	Dan Smithwick
12:15 PM	"How Socialism threatens Christians, Pastors and the Church & what you can do about it."	Dr. Max Lyons, Author & Director of FACE Teaching Services
01:00 PM	Brief Introduction of Watchmen on the Wall, the Virginia Watchmen Council, and "Five Biblical Mandates for Restoring Righteousness in Government"	Rev. Michael Hirsch, Virginia Watchmen Council Chairman
01:25 PM	"Revolutionary Pulpits: The Last Hope of A Dying Republic"	Rev. Bill Cook, Northern Virginia Watchmen Council Chairman, Founder & CEO, America's Black Robe Regiment
02:00 PM	Round Table Discussion	Dr. Carole Adams, Carey Woodruff, Dan Smithwick, Dr. Max Lyons, Rev. Michael Hirsch, Rev. Bill Cook
02:20 PM	Tour of StoneBridge School, National Demonstration School for the Principle Approach Methodology	Dr. Carole Adams, Carey Woodruff, Dan Smithwick, Dr. Max Lyons, Rev. Michael Hirsch, Rev. Bill Cook
03:00 PM	Close in Prayer & Adjourn	

Saturday, July 27th “Elders at the Gates” Event with Dr. Alveda King and Dennis Peacocke Staunton, VA

JULY 14, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Don’t miss this powerful seminar with Dr. Alveda King, niece of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Dennis Peacocke. Cultural conditions demand biblical truths that originate from a heart of service.

Hosted by:

Victory Worship Center

Pastor Ray Eppard

200 Hammond Lane Staunton, VA 24401

For more info call Travis Witt @

540.761-0386 or

traviswitt@usa.com

Sat. July 27th @8a – opening remarks by Dr. Alveda King, lunch provided, and concluding remarks ending at 3p. The Church is called to influence culture by being servant leaders; confident that

God's Word has answers for city, county, state, and national issues.

Dennis Peacocke Bio:

One of the most genuine and compelling communicators of our day, Dennis Peacocke has carried a concern for social justice for over 35 years. In his college days, this concern was expressed through his involvement in the civil rights and free speech movements. He graduated from University of California – Berkeley with a major in Political Science at the height of the turbulent 60's.

Since his conversion in 1968, Dennis has gained international respect as a strategist due to his unique way of applying biblical solutions to the many challenging issues facing families, churches, business, and government.

Both a former business owner and pastor, Dennis is the founder and president of GoStrategic, a leadership organization dedicated to demonstrating the relevance of Christianity to every area of contemporary life. He has authored four books: ***On the Destiny of Nations*** published in 2012, ***Winning the Battle for the Minds of Men***, published in 1987 and 2000, ***Doing Business God's Way***, published in 1994 and 2003, and ***The Emperor Has No Clothes*** published in 2003.

He shares this challenging and timely message to audiences nationally and internationally. Dennis and his wife Jan reside in Santa Rosa, California. They have three adult children and 12 grandchildren.

Also:

Take advantage of these activities on Friday July 26 – JMU conference center

1-4p – Virginia Watchmen Council summit

430p – Press conference – "One Blood Initiative Affirmation"

530p – Meet and Greet with Dr. Alveda King – tickets required

630p – Valley Family Forum's "Celebrate the Family" banquet featuring Dr. Alveda King – tickets required

Friday, July 26 Dinner with Alveda King on “Renewing the Dream for America”

JULY 14, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

We are inviting our readers to join the Valley Family Forum for their 17th annual ***“Salute to the Family”*** dinner which will be held in JMU’s Festival Conference and Student Center ballroom on Friday, July 26, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

As a reminder, our featured speaker is Dr. Alveda King, niece of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., on the theme of ***“Renewing Our Dream for America”***. Like him, she too has a dream of building a nation in which everyone is able to reach across ethnic, racial, religious, and party lines to achieve equality and justice as “One Nation under God”.

In addition, she dreams of a day when America will again respect and protect the inalienable Right to Life of the unborn. To that end, she serves on the pastoral team of Priests for Life and leads their outreach initiative, Civil Rights for the Unborn. She also adds her voice to the “Silent No More” Campaign in which she shares from her own experience with abortion.

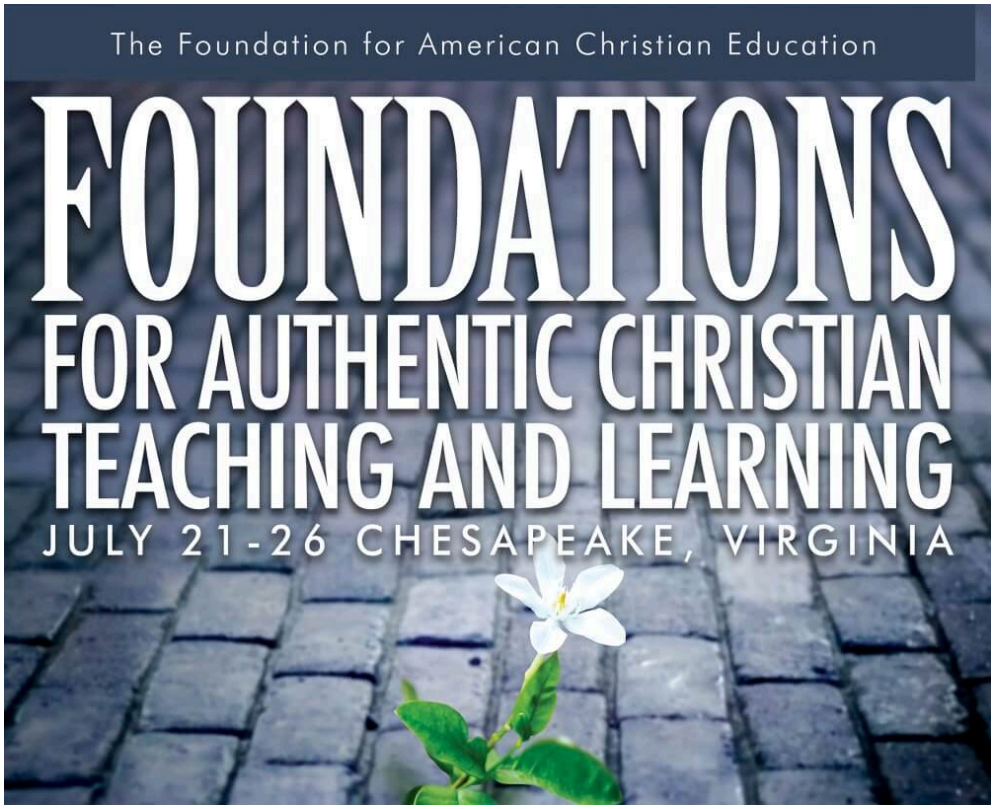
For Reservations

Seats are still available at $200 for tables of eight or $25 per person. For reservations, contact us at (540) 564-3779 or by email to **family@valleyfamilyforum.org**, and then send your check to the Valley Family Forum at PO Box 881, Harrisonburg, 22803.

You can also listen to their online podcasts by clicking on the Crossroads menu available on their home page at **www.valleyfamilyforum.org**.

July 21-26, 2019 Teacher Summer Training, Online and Classroom

JULY 5, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Teacher Summer Training: Foundations for Authentic Christian Teaching and Learning

Online and In Our Classroom.
July 21-26, 2019

The Foundations for Authentic Christian Teaching and Learning certification course relies on Biblical reasoning; the practice of the methods that form Christian character; mastery of the Biblical classical approach that measurably forms the Biblical worldview for all of life; preparation to be a living textbook to your students; use of Christian scholarship to cultivate effective communication skills; the emergence of the teaching gift that elevates the individual, imparts vision for the Kingdom, and rebuilds the culture for Christ.

The Foundations Course is the entry-level, five-day course in the Principle Approach philosophy, methodology and curriculum towards becoming a credentialed master Principle Approach teacher. The joy of forming like-minded study partnerships with Principle Approach

teachers and fellow-students focuses upon authentic learning and the honing of the Biblical worldview and Christian scholarship.

For more information and registration visit **https://face.net/the-foundations-course/**.

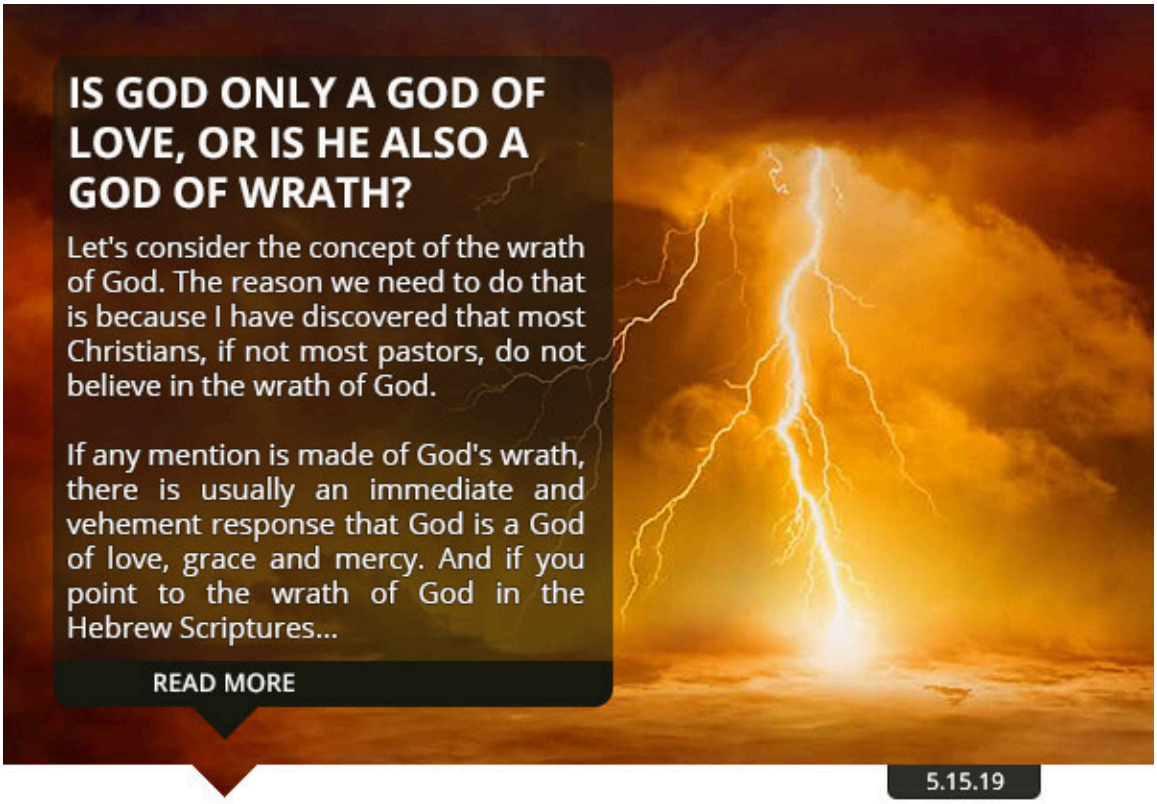
Our classroom is filling up fast. Register today.

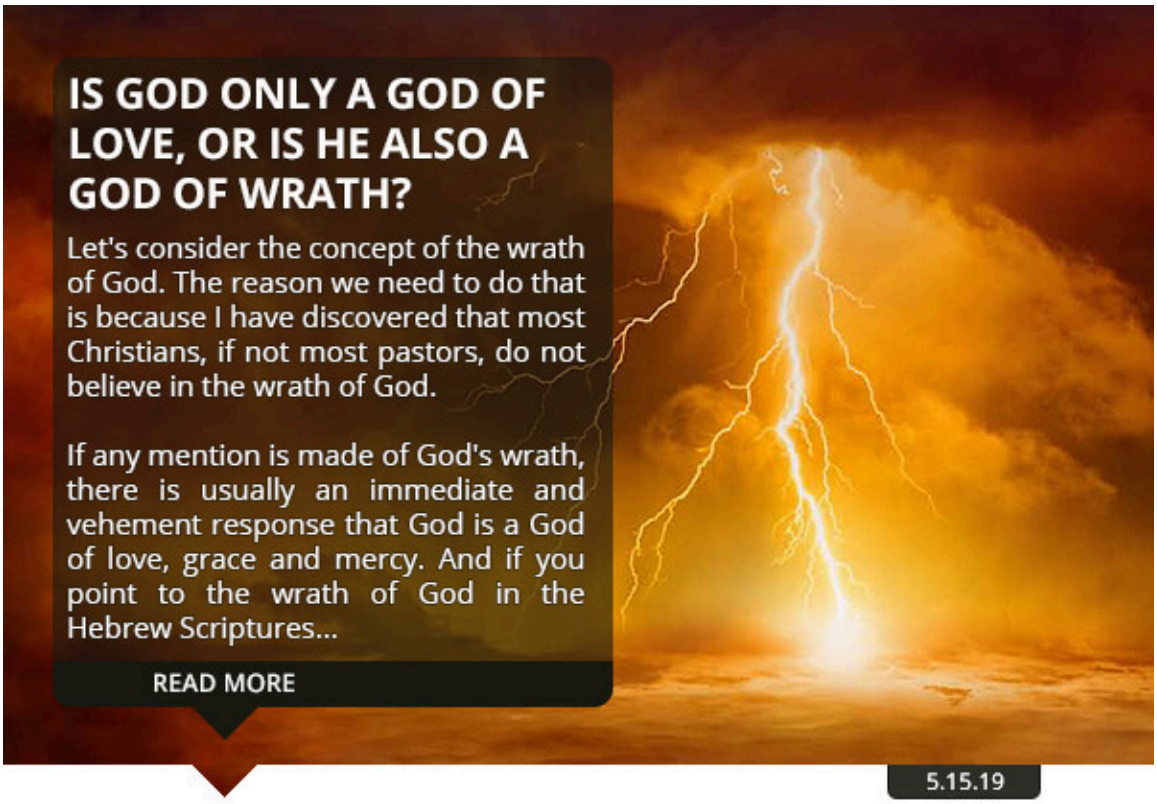
Foundation for American Christian Education

Our vision is to raise an army of individual lives prepared to build the family, the church, and the nation through education in a Biblical-theistic worldview to glorify God above all and bless the people by applying wise principles to all areas of life. ***www.face.net***

Is God Only a God of Love?

MAY 15, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRIST IN PROPHECY, OBEDIENCE TO GOD





Let's consider the concept of the wrath of God. The reason we need to do that is because I have discovered that most Christians, if not most pastors, do not believe in the wrath of God.

If any mention is made of God's wrath, there is usually an immediate and vehement response that God is a God of love, grace and mercy. And if you point to the wrath of God in the Hebrew Scriptures, as, for example, when He destroyed the world with the Noahic Flood, the response usually is, "But that was the God of the Old Testament. The God of the New Testament is a God of grace, mercy and love."

One of the most memorable times when I encountered this attitude was in about 1995. I was contacted by the producer of a popular radio talk show in Oklahoma City. He said the host of the program had seen an article I had written about the financial accountability of Christian ministries, and he had liked it. He wanted to interview me about it. I agreed to the interview.

The host began the interview by graciously giving me the opportunity to summarize the fundamental message of my ministry. I responded by saying that God had called me to proclaim "the soon return of Jesus."

I then explained that this message was like a two-edged sword, with a message for both believers and unbelievers. I pointed out that the message for believers is to commit themselves to holiness and evangelism. I then added, "The message for unbelievers is to flee from the wrath that is to come, by fleeing into the loving arms of Jesus now."

Before I could proceed with my explanation, the host cut me short. "What do you mean when you refer to 'wrath'?" he asked.

"I mean that Jesus is going to return very soon to pour out the wrath of God upon those who have rejected God's love and grace and mercy."

He responded by saying, "I happen to be a Christian, I go to church every Sunday, and I have never heard anything about God 'pouring out wrath.' My God is Jesus, and He wouldn't hurt a fly!" Then he literally yelled at me, "Your God is a monster!"

That was the end of the interview. He hung up on me. I was not given an opportunity to respond to his misrepresentation of our Creator. If I had been given a chance to respond, I would have quoted the warning Jesus gave in the book of Revelation to the church at Thyatira which was tolerating a false prophetess who was corrupting the whole church. Jesus warned:

> *20) "But I have this complaint against you. You are permitting that woman — that Jezebel who calls herself a prophet — to lead my servants astray. She teaches them to commit sexual sin and to eat food offered to idols.*
>
> *21) I gave her time to repent, but she does not want to turn away from her immorality.*
>
> *22) Therefore, I will throw her on a bed of suffering, and those who commit adultery with her will suffer greatly unless they repent and turn away from her evil deeds.*
>
> *23) I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am the one who searches out the thoughts and intentions of every person. And I will give to each of you whatever you deserve." (Revelation 2:20-23 NLT)*

These verses pretty well destroy the concept of a meek and mild Jesus who wouldn't hurt a fly!

Of course, I could also have pointed to the fact that the Tribulation begins with Jesus Himself launching the Seal Judgments. In fact, in Revelation 6:16, those judgments are referred to as *"the wrath of the Lamb."*

Let me give you another example that occurred more recently, in 2005. It is the example of an enraged pastor.

I was invited to speak to a large church in the Dallas area where I had spoken several times before. The date of my presentation fell on a Sunday about three weeks after hurricane Katrina had devastated New Orleans.

I decided I would speak about the hurricane, with the intention of pointing out that I believed it to be a remedial judgment of God upon this nation for two reasons. The first reason I mentioned was our nation's strong-arming of Israel to surrender the Gaza Strip to its enemies. I noted that the hurricane had started forming very suddenly near the Bahamas on the last day of the Israeli withdrawal.

The second reason I gave was the immorality of our nation and particularly the city of New Orleans, a city that calls itself, "Sin City USA." The hurricane hit the city just as it was preparing to conduct its annual festival called "Gay Mardi Gras." The 2005 theme of this sexual orgy was "Jazz and Jezebels." In 2004, the event had attracted 125,000 revelers who proudly flaunted their perversion publicly in a garish parade. The event was sponsored by a group called, "Southern Decadence."

All hell broke loose during the following week. You see, the pastor was out of town when I

delivered the message. When he returned home and watched a video of the message, he went ballistic! He even checked my speaking schedule on our website and called the next church where I was to speak and warned them about allowing me to present my sermon.

What was he so mad about? Two things. First, he felt it was wrong for me to attribute a disaster to God when it should have been assigned to Satan. Second, he objected to my characterization of the hurricane as being a manifestation of the wrath of God. He insisted that the "God of Wrath" was the Old Testament God, whereas the God of the New Testament is a "God of Grace." The idea of God pouring out His wrath was entirely foreign to him.

These are only two examples of many experiences I have had where Christians have reacted with revulsion against any mention of God's wrath.

Four points need to be made concerning the modern day Church's view of God — four very important points:

1) We need a balanced view of God.

Yes, He is a God of love, grace and mercy. But He is also a God of holiness, righteousness and justice. The prophet Nahum provides us with that balanced view: *"The LORD is good, a strong refuge when trouble comes. He is close to those who trust in him"* (Nahum 1:7). That is the God of love, grace and mercy.

But consider what else Nahum has to say about the nature of God (Nahum 1:2-3):

> *2) The LORD is a jealous God, filled with vengeance and rage. He takes revenge on all who oppose Him and continues to rage against his enemies!*
>
> *3) The LORD is slow to get angry, but his power is great, and he never lets the guilty go unpunished.*

2) The second thing we need to keep in mind is that God has not changed.

There is no such thing as "the God of the Old Testament versus the God of the New Testament. God has always been a God of love, grace and mercy, just as He has always been a God of holiness, righteousness and justice.

God is immutable. And that means He never changes. He declares this in Malachi 3:6 where He

says, *"I, the LORD, do not change."* The point is reiterated in the New Testament in Hebrews 13:8 where it says, *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."*

3) The third thing we need to understand is that because He is a God of holiness, righteousness and justice, He is going to deal with sin.

I'm convinced that most people think of God as a Cosmic Teddy Bear who winks at sin. That is not the true God of the universe. The Bible makes it crystal clear that God takes sin very seriously and that He deals with it in one of two ways: Grace or Wrath.

Everyone knows John 3:16; few seem to be aware of John 3:36, taken from a sermon of John the Baptist: *"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."*

4) The fourth thing we need to understand about God is that He is sovereign.

God is on His throne. He is in control. Psalm 2 says he laughs at all the plots and schemes of the world's political leaders. He is not laughing because He does not care. His laughter is provoked by the fact that He has the wisdom and power to orchestrate all the evil of Satan and Mankind to the triumph of His Son.

People like to attribute all bad things to Satan. But the interesting thing is that the Bible never does that because the writers believed in the sovereignty of God. They therefore understood that when bad things happen, God allows them either to discipline us or to refine us in righteousness — or for purposes known only to Him.

Satan is not free to do as he pleases. The book of Job makes this clear. Satan could not touch Job or his household or his possessions without God's permission, and even when that permission was granted, Satan was told he could not take Job's life.

Some people argue that the first half of the Tribulation will consist of the wrath of Man and Satan and that the wrath of God will be manifested only in the Bowl Judgments that occur near the end of the Tribulation. But that is not true.

Even during the first half of the Tribulation, when Satan and the Antichrist will be rampaging around the world, they will do so under the sovereignty of God. They will be used by God as instruments of His wrath, just as the Babylonians were used by God to pour out His wrath on

Judah (Habakkuk 1:5-11).

This begs the question: “Are you saved and so are living under God’s mercy, or are you still living in rejection of Jesus Christ and so remain under God’s wrath?” Your decision will have eternal consequences.

Read the entire article “Judgment in Jehoshaphat” on our website!

Pilgrim's Progress: Epic Classic to Hit the Big Screen Easter

MARCH 19, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Evangelist (John Rhys-Davies) meets Christian to show him the way

Our children are bombarded by every form of secular media. From social media to video games, to TV on demand and the internet, every possible distraction is delivered up except for what they really need and long for — engaging and culturally relevant Christian media.

The unreached people groups of the world are mostly made up of those who cannot read or comprehend the printed page. They are starved for visual content that reveals God's truth. The most effective way to reach them is proven — engaging and culturally relevant Christian media.

From our families to the field, **RevelationMedia** is at the forefront of delivering engaging and culturally relevant animated films. Films that promote Biblical literacy, discipleship and world evangelism.

Films that are ALWAYS free to the missionary and to those who support our work.

AFA Journal

In his epic allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan wrote of Christian, his main character:

One here will constant be,
Come wind, come weather
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent
To be a pilgrim.

Once required reading in schools, the 1678 classic is said to be the second most read book in the world, surpassed only by the Bible. But today, fewer and fewer people are familiar with the story.

Official Trailer:

The Pilgrim's Progress | Official Trailer (2019)
https://youtube.com/watch?v=04WXlAcOtS0

Steve Cleary, founder and CEO of RevelationMedia, is on a quest to reverse that trend. He wants to see the beloved classic once again embraced by Christians worldwide. That's why Cleary, in partnership with AFA, has produced an animated version of **The Pilgrim's Progress** that he hopes will be used in mission work across the globe.

Cleary has a broad range of experience in Christian media. He recently spoke with *AFA Journal* about his new version of **The Pilgrim's Progress**.

AFA Journal: Besides **The Pilgrim's Progress**, what have you worked on?
Steve Cleary: I am one of the founders of Cat in the Mill Studio in Costa Rica. We are partners on the **Torchlighters** series for Vision Video and Christian History Institute. I also played a role in the creation of AFA's feature film **Summer Snow** and the **Ryan Defrates** cartoon series. Recently, I completed a docudrama titled **Tortured for Christ** for the Voice of the Martyrs.

Pilgrim's Progress Vanity Fair Clip

The Pilgrim's Progress | Vanity Fair Scene
https://youtube.com/watch?v=mt5lKsymguY

AFAJ: What inspired you to focus on Christian media?
SC: Thirty-eight years ago, Campus Crusade (now Cru) created the **Jesus Film Project**. Millions of people worldwide have watched that film, and many are still watching it. But kids and teenagers see it as something their parents and grandparents watched. I believe it is time for something new.

What's interesting about that aspect is that Americans can see a new Christian movie every two weeks, but most of them do not make their way to the mission field or are not appropriate for the front lines of mission work. We get plenty of new movies here in the U.S., but missionaries get the crumbs.

Giant Despair Scene

The Pilgrim's Progress | Giant Despair Scene
https://youtube.com/watch?v=02Bi1wTheEk

AFAJ: What do you mean by "not appropriate?"
SC: I don't mean these movies are bad, I mean some are culturally inappropriate. For example, **Mom's Night Out** is a good movie, but no one is going to show that in a Syrian refugee camp, because moms there don't get nights off. They live in tents and are just trying to keep their kids alive.

On the other hand, **The Pilgrim's Progress** is a story for every Christian in all places and all times. It exists in a world of its own while revealing profound biblical truths. That's why its appeal has been universal.

I might add that although the story is animated, it is for adults and children. It is a common misconception that animation is automatically for kids. **The Pilgrim's Progress** is aimed at families and, in general, is recommended for ages eight and over.

We chose to animate our version because the story translates more effectively to that format than to other kinds of media.

AFAJ: There are many great stories you could have animated. Why did you choose The Pilgrim's Progress?
SC: The Pilgrim's Progress was written 370 years ago by a pastor in prison who was experiencing persecution for his faith. Christians across the globe can relate to it regardless of the level of trials or persecution they are enduring.

In times past, it was read by nearly everyone, but we have an upcoming generation for whom the story is completely unfamiliar. They've never heard of the character named Christian. They don't know about Apollyon the dragon, or about Faithful and his sacrifice.

AFAJ: How close are you sticking to Bunyan's original story and language?
SC: If we tried to do the full story scene for scene, it would be over 20 hours long. We are condensing it to a normal, feature-length film.

However, we've tried to stay as close to the original story as possible. Some of the language has been updated for modern viewers. We have maintained the characters' names as well as the various locations in
the plot.

AFAJ: How will you make it free to missionaries?
SC: Anyone doing the work of missions can contact RevelationMedia. We will send them the movie with permission to show it as many times as they like for free.

Consider this: Homeless shelters can't show movies because they can't afford the licensing fees, but they will be able to show **The Pilgrim's Progress**. The same goes for ministries working in

inner cities or refugee camps.

We are not waiting until we sell 100,000 DVDs before we make the movie available for free to these ministries. It will be available to them the same day it is available to anyone for purchase.

Our goals for the film include translating it for mission work across the world. Right now we have the support to translate it into 20 languages. Our ultimate goal is 100 languages. That will reach over 90% of the world's population.

AFAJ: Tell me about the StoryBox.
SC: For ministries that have no means to show the movie, RevelationMedia is currently developing a portable projection system called the StoryBox. It can turn any room or village church into a theater. Everything needed comes in a weatherproof box that contains an iPad with a projection system, a full sound system, and a wrinkle-free screen. Everything is powered by rechargeable batteries that can run for 20 hours on a single charge.

So whether the mission front line is inside a homeless shelter or a refugee camp, missionaries can show **The Pilgrim's Progress** or any other digital media we put on the iPad. It is an incredible tool.

AFAJ: When will The Pilgrim's Progress and the StoryBox be in the hands of missionaries?
SC: The Pilgrim's Progress will be released in some 700 selected theaters on April 18 and 20. The film will also immediately be available to the mission field.

The StoryBox is still in development, but we have five working prototypes. Our plans are to begin distribution of the StoryBox later this year.

Classic story coming for Easter
The Pilgrim's Progress will debut during Holy Week in theaters across the U.S. for two nights only, April 18 and April 20. It will simultaneously be offered to the global missions community, and It will be available at **afastore.net** or 877-927-4917.

Producer Steve Clearly has partnered with the AFA online store on other video projects such as the **Ryan Defrates** series and the feature movie **Summer Snow**. Learn more at **revelationmedia.com**.

Charles Stanley: What Does Obedience To God Require

MARCH 10, 2019
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Obeying God is not an option for believers; it is a requirement.

So what does it take to move from disobedience to obedience?

Steps to obey God include recognizing God's sovereignty, forsaking sin, and surrendering our will to Him. Obedience may seem tough, but what God requires He enables through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Dr. Stanley's motivation is best represented by the truth found in Acts 20:24,

> "Life is worth nothing unless I use it for doing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about God's mighty kindness and love." *Living Bible (TLB)*

This is because, as he says, "It is the Word of God and the work of God that changes people's lives."

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

Let’s pray for persecuted Christians who celebrate Christmas with fear in trembling

DECEMBER 25, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

December 24, 2018 (**LifeSiteNews**) – Nobody knows where Asia Bibi, the Pakistani Christian woman recently released from years on death row for "blaspheming" the Muslim religion, will spend Christmas. Her spokesman **said** only that it will be in a closed room in protective custody, to keep her safe from the mobs in Pakistan who have been baying for her blood since the nation's supreme court acquitted her of the charges. Many Western nations that enjoy bragging about their love of human rights have refused to offer this beleaguered woman asylum from her tormentors.

And it is not only Asia Bibi who will celebrate Christmas under the shadow of the persecutors.

A widespread crackdown on Christians in Iran led to the arrests of over 100 Christians, with many of them arrested for "proselytizing" Muslims to Christianity, which is a crime in the Islamic Republic. Those arrested were ordered to detail their past religious activities and cut contact with any Christian groups they might be involved in. Christianity has existed in Persia since shortly after the Crucifixion some 2,000 years ago. Despite this, many Christians fled after the Islamic revolution of 1979. Some reports indicate, however, a rising rate of conversion to Christianity despite the obstacles.

In China, police officers in some cities are apparently being given quotas for how many Christians they need to arrest. *Open Doors*, an organization that tracks the persecution of Christians around the world, **noted** that police officers could lose their jobs if they do not imprison the required number of Christians. This comes in the wake of a massive **nation-wide crackdown** which began with the arrests of the leadership of a prominent evangelical house church, with apartments being surrounded and entire families dragged off to jail. Chinese Christians are promising to stand firm in the face of this persecution.

In Egypt, some have been trying to draw attention to a **silent epidemic** for years: The systematic kidnapping of Christian girls by Muslims. Girls are pulled off the streets, held in captivity, sexually assaulted, and told they must convert to Islam. Violence is used to break their will: One young Coptic Christian girl from Minya **was kidnapped** by five Muslim men, forcibly stripped naked, and filmed. The kidnappers threatened to make the video public if she did not convert to Islam and marry one of them. Christians in Egypt keep a close eye on their daughters, and try to ensure that they never travel alone. The authorities rarely bother to assist those families who are robbed of their daughters.

In Nigeria, the massacre of Christians by Fulani radicals has **continued**. Hundreds have been killed in the past several months in an ongoing humanitarian crisis that has been largely ignored by the world, with men, women, and children being hacked to death with machetes in what many in the press are simply writing off as a tribal conflict over farmland. Christian girls have also been kidnapped by terrorist groups such as Boko Haram, and one fifteen-year-old schoolgirl **named** Leah Sharibu remains in captivity because she refuses to convert to Islam.

Around the world, Christians will celebrate the birth of Christ while fearing for their families and for their lives. They will pray for safety for their daughters, the release of their friends, and the protection of their communities. When I was asked to write a Christmas reflection, it was these headlines that my mind immediately went to, because it seems some days as if the world is on fire and Christians are the primary victims being thrust into the flames.

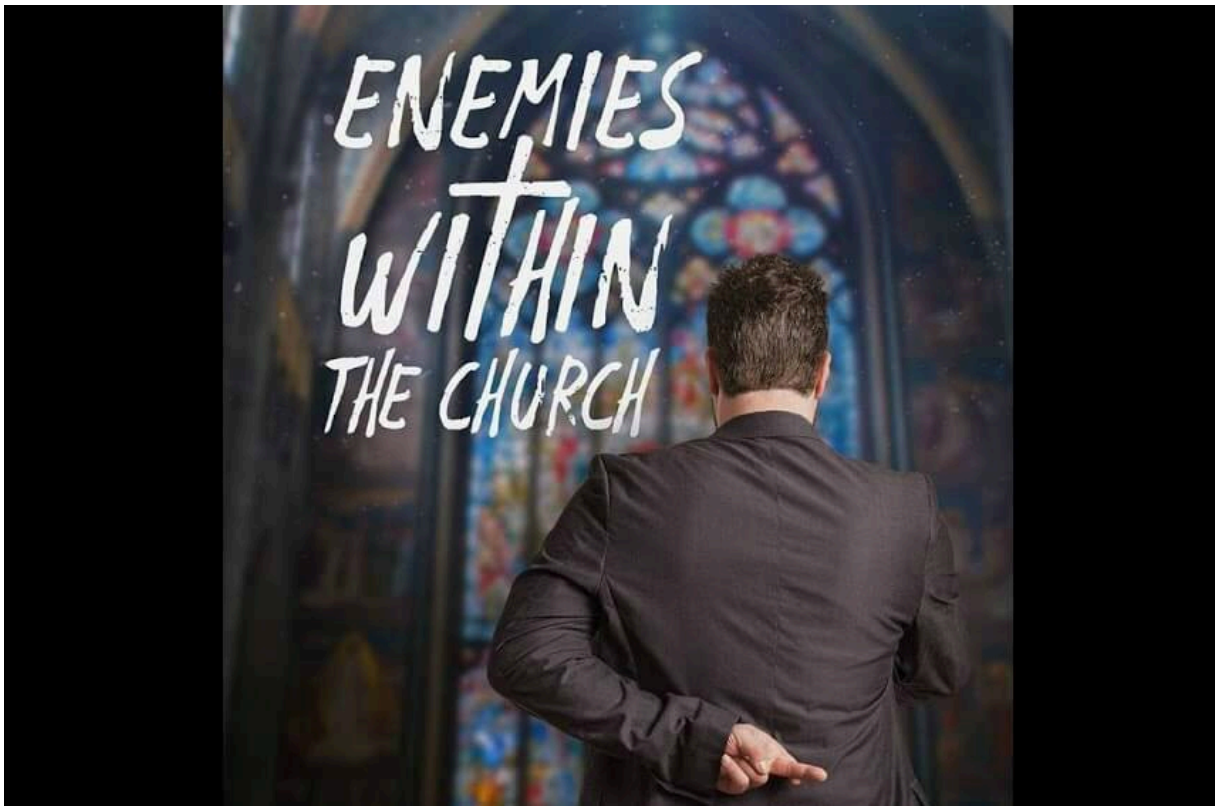
Reading these stories should give Western Christians a valuable sense of perspective. As secular jihadis continue their holy war against all those who will not bend the knee to their new sexual orthodoxies, it often feels as if persecution is only just around the corner. Christians are demonized if they admit they still hold the beliefs that Christians have held for 2,000 years. Christian adoption agencies are being shut down, businesses are being hounded out of existence, and mockery and blasphemy are the norm for Western elites rather than the exception. And yet, compared to the physical persecution experienced by Christians around the world, the West is still a haven for those who wish to celebrate Christmas this year.

The Lord Jesus came into the world as a despised and rejected man of sorrows, as I heard again at a performance of Handel's *Messiah* this Advent season. Almost as soon as His existence was made known to the authorities, Herod sent men to have Him murdered. Around the world today, the spiritual descendants of Herod still send their minions to persecute those who bear the name of the Saviour who was born over 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem. They will celebrate His birth with joy mixed with fear and trembling.

Spare a thought and a prayer for them as you sit in church this Christmas season.

The Wolves Have Entered the Church and are Enemies Within

DECEMBER 16, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



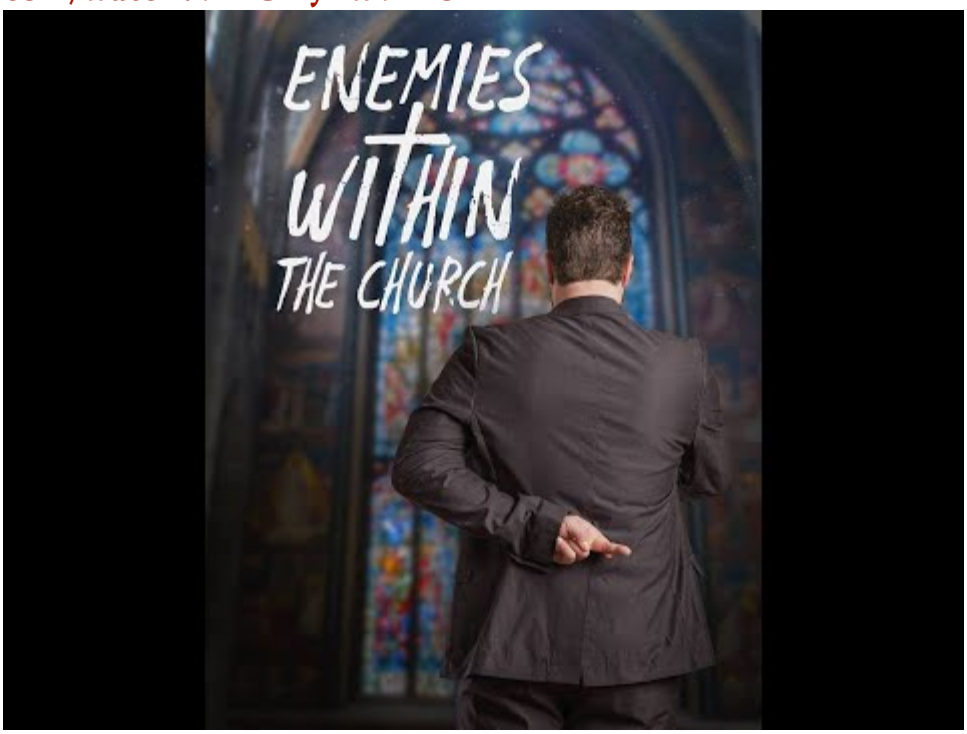
Trevor Loudon

> "Enemies Within: The Church" is going to produce the evidence, expose the false teachers and the underlying agenda to undermine the influence of Christ across the world.

Every single problem we face in the western world is, ultimately, a theological problem, and every solution to every problem is a theological absolute.
What happened to living, powerful, transformative, nation-shaking Christianity?

You know…the kind Jesus brought the world? Something dressed up like to look like Christianity is doing just fine, here in America, but is it a counterfeit? It certainly resembles Christianity, but most of the people I know sense that something is wrong.

Enemies Within The Church Sneak Peek
https://youtube.com/watch?v=kCMyAwvRF8A



Cashiers say that the best way to recognize a counterfeit dollar is **not** by studying counterfeit dollars, but by getting to know the real thing well enough that you can easily discern the fake.

Maybe that's a part of our problem today? Maybe, just maybe, the present generation who call themselves "Christians" really believe that they are Christians, because they can't recognize counterfeits… Maybe they have fallen victim to the heresies like the "social justice" gospel.

When we look at history, the western church we see right now…hardly resembles the empty shell of what it once was.

The Bible is very clear that evil is present in the world. On the political level we saw in the twentieth century the twin evils of Communism and Fascism slaughter nearly 200 million. Both forces attempted to co-opt Christianity to serve their goals.

Does evil still exist? A silly question, but one that is seldom addressed in most churches today. What if evil forces were infiltrating today's churches? What if these forces are twisting doctrine, harnessing well-meaning Christians to its own purposes? Why does Matthew 10:16 warn us " Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves" Why does John 8.44 call the devil the "Father of Lies"?

This documentary will expose, name the names and organizations of whom are at work to undermine the Christian Church and destroy it's foundations.

What does the Bible say about obedience?

NOVEMBER 18, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Question: "What does the Bible say about obedience?"

Answer: The Bible has much to say about obedience. In fact, obedience is an essential part of the Christian faith. Jesus Himself was "obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:8).

For Christians, the act of taking up our cross and following Christ (Matthew 16:24) means obedience. The Bible says that we show our love for Jesus by obeying Him in all things: "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15). A Christian who is not obeying Christ's commands can rightly be asked, "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" (Luke 6:46).

Obedience is defined as "dutiful or submissive compliance to the commands of one in authority." Using this definition, we see the elements of **biblical obedience**. "Dutiful" means it is our obligation to obey God, just as Jesus fulfilled His duty to the Father by dying on the cross for our sin. "Submissive" indicates that we yield our wills to God's. "Commands" speaks of the Scriptures in which God has clearly delineated His instructions. The "one in authority" is God Himself, whose authority is total and unequivocal. For the Christian, obedience means complying with everything God has commanded. It is our duty to do so.

Having said that, it is important to remember that our obedience to God is not *solely* a matter of duty. We obey Him because we love Him (John 14:23). Also, we understand that the spirit of obedience is as important as the act of obedience. We serve the Lord in humility, singleness of heart, and **love**.

Also, we must beware of using a veneer of obedience to mask a sinful heart. Living the Christian life is not all about rules. The Pharisees in Jesus' time relentlessly pursued acts of obedience to the Law, but they became self-righteous, believing they deserved heaven because of what they had done. They considered themselves worthy before God, who owed them a reward; however, the Bible tells us that, without Christ, even our best, most righteous works are as "filthy rags" (**Isaiah 64:6**). The Pharisees' external obedience still lacked something, and Jesus exposed their heart attitude. Their hypocrisy in obeying the "letter of the law" while violating its spirit characterized their lives, and Jesus rebuked them sharply: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which indeed appear beautiful outside, but inside they are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so you also appear righteous to men outwardly, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Matthew 23:27–28). The Pharisees were obedient in some respects, but they "neglected the weightier matters of the law" (Matthew 23:23, ESV).

Today, we are not called to obey the Law of Moses. That has been fulfilled in Christ (Matthew 5:17). We are to obey the "law of Christ," which is a law of love (Galatians 6:2; John 13:34). Jesus stated the greatest commands of all: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the prophets hang on these two commandments" (Matthew 22:36–40).

If we love God, we will obey Him. We won't be perfect in our obedience, but our desire is to submit to the Lord and display good works. When we love God and obey Him, we naturally have love for

one another. Obedience to God's commands will make us **light and salt** in a dark and tasteless world (Matthew 5:13–16).

Recommended Resource: Lord, Change My Attitude Before It's Too Late, Revised by James MacDonald

More insights from your Bible study – Get Started with Logos Bible Software for Free!

Summoning Up Demons

OCTOBER 23, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Jan Markel | **Olive Tree Ministries**

I have to be honest: This is an article I wish I didn't have to write. The Christian walk is about good news, not bad. So I promise to take some bad news and turn it into good news before I am finished. But some of the paragraphs about which I write contain the inconvenient truth.

This is a call to prayer and spiritual warfare. We are battling principalities and powers (Ephesians 6:12) and they are not even subtle today. They are bolder than some believers and some pulpits today. But were the church not here to provide a buffer against evil, the battle would be more intense. *Can you imagine the chaos of the Tribulation when there is no restrainer?*

Unprecedented Harassment

I am hearing from Christian leaders who are struggling with Satanic pushback like never before. They are experiencing discouragement, family struggles, health challenges, ministry conflict, and personal attacks. Frankly, they sense a horde of demons have been loosed to harass and discourage. I believe that is exactly what has happened.

Pastor J.D. Farag speaks of the rising tide of evil in his **October 7 prophecy update.** Pastor J.D.'s takeaway from speaking at my September 29 conference was that evil is increasing exponentially daily. He came to this conclusion, in part, by speaking to hundreds of attendees and hearing their stories. To say these are difficult days is an understatement.

In Amir Tsarfati's current event **update of October 19,** he reports a demonic-like hijacking of some of his social media with accompanying text threats. He even had a message from a dark organization I will not name. I also wish to respect his privacy. However, he has shared a good deal of this online.

Lawlessness and Anarchy

What are we to make of the lawlessness around the world and particularly in America? The Godless are stirred up. They want no morals, no laws, no restraint, no rules, no standards. They don't like faith, family, or love of country. They think their evil is good (Isaiah 5:20). They are filled with strong delusion believing violent progressiveness is the savior of the world.

They think they are righteous in threatening good people, chasing conservatives out of restaurants, assaulting politicians with bodily harm, and cursing out men like Ted Cruz in **demonictantrums.** But evil is in the air and they are breathing it in and then acting it out.

Even more Godless activity is stirred up and financed by a man who is in love with evil — George Soros.

Ahab and Jezebel in Washington

On September 26 the Satanic Arch of Baal, also known as the Arch of Palmyra, was planted in the heart of Washington, D.C. ISIS destroyed the original Temple of Baal in Syria in 2015. Its history goes back to the book of Kings and Ahab and Jezebel. Unspeakable activity went on in this pagan temple. It is the essence of evil and rebellion.

The Arch of Baal replica, also known as the Arch of Palmyra from Syria.

Why would anybody want to bring a replica of it back and honor it? Yet the replica began a global tour in 2015.

America welcomed it and had a “celebration” under it with the U.S. Capitol building in the background last month. It was at the same time the U.S. was embroiled in the Judge Kavanaugh controversy. Is it any wonder that his confirmation was consumed in turmoil when such a monument to evil was just a few miles away?

Spells Over a Cauldron

On Saturday, October 20, **witches then put a hex on Judge Kavanaugh.** Spectators were invited to pay $10 for tickets to watch spells being cast against a good and decent man.

Because evil has been unleashed, we cannot disagree with someone; rather, we must perpetrate acts of darkness with spells over a cauldron. Who could have imagined wickedness rising to this level?

Anything Goes

Spencer Gifts inside of a Chicago mall is featuring items for teens including t-shirts encouraging them to **summon up demons** and engage in actual bloodshed (details being spared here.) A local pastor intervened and stated, "We're so close to being Sodom and Gomorrah. We're living in a place where just anything goes. Do whatever you want, whatever you feel," he lamented. "All I'm going to say is, repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand."

And at the same time, **Facebook censors prayer.** The demons behind the tech giants couldn't take it.

Pagan Pride

Pagan festivals are nothing new. People love to glory in wickedness and they suggest their nature worship is harmless. But I live in one of the occult capitols of the world here in Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN. This week they announced their forthcoming **"Paganicon" for 2019** where revelers celebrate pagan pride. This is literally in my neighborhood and *may be coming to yours.*

The Devil's Holiday

What you may not know is the pagan/occult world is on overdrive from October 13 – 31. Their special holiday is on the horizon: Halloween — the devil's holiday. It is as if a spell comes over the

entire globe for it is under the influence of the evil one (I John 5:19). As Amir Tsarfati reports, even Israel's ultra-Orthodox Jews *allow their youth to act ungodly only on this day.*

These Jews are spiritually blind. What is the excuse of believers who sanction the darkness represented by this unholy day? What blinds them to the fact that this day represents *far more than costumes and candy? Why would any righteous person want to participate, party, and decorate with ghosts and all things dark?*

It would seem that some who should know better are giving heed to the doctrine of demons (I Timothy 4:1).

Evil to Wax Worse and Worse in the Last Days

The Bible is clear that the last days would be characterized by a demonic outpouring. Demons are real and the battle we wage is real. Evil is to wax worse and worse (II Timothy 3:13). When we see these things increasing, we are to know His return is very near.

Jesus Christ Crushes All Evil

I could fill many more paragraphs with further proof of this encroaching evil but I want to end on a note reminding you of a pending trumpet blast instead. Jesus came to destroy the devil's work and He will (I John 3:8).

As full as the day is now with evil and devils, it will someday soon be filled thousands of times over with God's glory and beauty. Yes, the earth has to go through much pain before that happens, but it will take place.

And all of those who wish to exalt themselves above God will be crushed.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. — Romans 8:38,39

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. I John 4:4

The Curses on Kavanaugh: Do They Matter?

OCTOBER 21, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

By Bryan Fischer

> *A Prayer for Justice Brett Kavanaugh is listed below and is in response to a concerted effort on the part of satanists, wiccans, witches, and spiritists to curse Judge Kavanaugh in New York City, on Saturday, October 20, 2018.*

By now, most Americans will have heard about the **rituals performed in Brooklyn** last Saturday (October 20) to place hexes on new Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh. The "Witches of Bushwick" carved his name into a black candle, doused it in "Revenge Oil," and then set it on fire. Three "poppets" – cloth dolls made to look like real people – adorned the altar, effigies of Kavanaugh, President Trump, and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.

The effigies of the three were burned, along with their pictures. Graveyard dirt, coffin nails, and a caldron were likewise part of the ritual.

One of the organizers of the event **told the BBC** the hex was "aimed at exposing Brett Kavanaugh for what he truly is, to cause him harm and see him undone." He also referred to himself in the plural, as in "they" and "themself" rather than "he" or "himself."

The event was attended by 60 other people, who each paid $10 to attend the hexing. It turns out the witchcraft session was also a fundraiser for the LGBT agenda and abortion, which gives you a pretty good idea of the ultimate source of both homosexuality and the murder of the unborn.

While many Americans laugh at the whole idea of the casting of curses and whatnot, curses should not be dismissed out of hand or waved away as just so much superstition. While there are certainly dilettantes out there just fooling around, there are practitioners of the dark arts who are skilled at interacting with the unseen world of principalities and powers. Their curses, targeted against unsuspecting and unprotected individuals, can be powerfully effective.

God's view of witchcraft is hardly ambiguous: "You shall not permit a sorceress to live" (Exodus 22:18). Am I advocating the death penalty for the witches and warlocks today? No. But the fact that God took it seriously enough to make it a capital offense in ancient Israel means at a minimum that witchcraft is not innocent or harmless. Witches can release dark powers against the objects of their hatred.

CS Lewis pointed out that the only reason we do not execute witches today is that most Americans think it's all hokum:

"If we did—if we really thought that there were people going about who had sold themselves to the devil and received supernatural powers from him in return and were using these powers to kill their neighbours or drive them mad or bring bad weather—surely we would all agree that if anyone deserved the death penalty, then these filthy quislings did? There is no difference of moral

principle here: the difference is simply about matter of fact. It may be a great advance in knowledge not to believe in witches: there is no moral advance in not executing them when you do not think they are there."

Jesus spent a good deal of time in his earthly ministry delivering people from the bondage of demonic spirits, and his apostles did the same. He was not, as many think, simply accommodating himself to the ignorance of his time. He clearly recognized the reality of demons and the damage they can do to ordinary human beings. For just one example, consider Mark 9:25 & 29: "You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again…This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer."

What Jesus said about the existence of the age to come applies equally to the existence of the unseen world: "If it were not so, I would have told you" (John 14:2, NASB).

So witchcraft and the world of demons is not something to be taken lightly. Now we, of course, cannot know how effective Saturday's curses were. But we do know that God knows, since nothing is concealed from his gaze, and we know that he has given us power and authority in the name of Jesus over all the work of the enemy of our souls. "*Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you" (Luke 10:19)*.

One thing we can do is go to war in the Spirit on behalf of Brett Kavanaugh and his family, using "the weapons of our warfare" which have "divine power to destroy strongholds" (2 Corinthians 10:4).

I have crafted a prayer for God's people to use on behalf of Justice Kavanaugh, using the weapons of our warfare to pray for victory in the unseen world for him and for ongoing protection from the work of the evil one for him and his family.

There is great power in the united prayer of the saints. I encourage everyone reading this column to pray the following prayer to release the power of God into Justice Kavanaugh's life. Please pray this prayer out loud – while God can read our minds, Satan can't, and we want him to be forced to yield to every command uttered against him.

A Prayer for Justice Brett Kavanaugh

Note: this is in response to a concerted effort on the part of satanists, wiccans, witches, and spiritists to curse Judge Kavanaugh in New York City, on Saturday, October 20, 2018.

Father,

We know that you know everything about everything. Nothing is hidden from your eyes as the one with whom we have to do. We know that you see everything in the world we cannot see,

the world of the spirit.

We ask you now to turn your full attention to Brett Kavanaugh and his family. Please take note of every curse, every spell, every hex, and every work of witchcraft that has been spoken or woven against him. We pray that you will cause every curse these workers of darkness have sent against Judge Kavanaugh to return on their own heads that they might be taught not to blaspheme and oppose your servants.

We transfer every curse, hex, and spell that has been woven against Judge Kavanaugh to the cross of Jesus Christ, and we break the power of every such curse by the power of the cross and in the name of Jesus Christ. We declare that Jesus became a curse for Judge Kavanaugh and his family when he hung on the cross, and by the cross we invalidate and break the power of every curse that has been spoken against him. We shatter the power of these curses and nullify them completely, and we declare that they no longer have any hold or place in Judge Kavanaugh's life.

In every place where Satan has intended a curse, we pray that you, in the name of Jesus, would release a blessing. We pray that you will command all demonic spirits who have gathered against him to leave his presence and forbid them to return. We ask you to surround him and his family with battalions of warring angels, with authority from you to protect him, shelter him, and defend him on every side against every work of Satan.

Bless him and his family with the full manifestation and presence of your Holy Spirit. Fill his home, his marriage, and his family with the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Grant him great wisdom as a justice on our Supreme Court that he may use his influence there to condemn only the guilty and to acquit only the innocent.

We pray these things in the powerful name of Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Amen.

(*Unless otherwise noted, the opinions expressed are the author's and do not necessarily reflect the views of the American Family Association or American Family Radio.*)

The Voting Booth: Where Liberty Lives or Dies

OCTOBER 16, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: LIBERTY, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Bill Cook | **Western Journal**

When the earthly well-being of a pastor's congregation is riding on Christians fulfilling their duty to vote, it's *his* duty to remind his congregation of that fact.

I've said before that Christians have an obligation to vote, if for no other reason than to counterbalance the political aims of those who would do evil.

If we believe the word of God, we know that every person is either alive in Christ or dead in trespasses and sins. The Apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians that the latter "walk according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience."

If we know this, why would we think that liberty could continue to prosper after we've ceded the voting booth to those who are opposed to God? What would happen if on Election Day, all who are alive in Christ failed to vote, and the children of disobedience *did* vote? What if the opposite were true?

To a greater or lesser extent, the scenario above is repeated in every election, making it morally incumbent for *every* Christian of voting age, without exception, to vote in *every* election. If

voting *is* a moral duty, it *is* a *sacred* duty, and if we vacate our sacred duty as Christians to vote, God will destroy us, if we don't destroy ourselves first.

Abortion on demand did not result from the moral decay of America. The redefinition of marriage, the breakdown of male and female, and other deviances from the image of God did not gain a foothold in America because of secularism, secular education, removal of God from public schools, or foreign influence — at least not directly.

The decay of conscience in America is the predictable result of Christians abandoning their mandate and accepting the myopic and heretical view that the Church's only mission on earth is preaching the Gospel, society be damned.

If this had been the thinking of our Christian forebears, America would never have become the land of freedom and liberty that it somewhat resembles today.

Imagine if in every election since the turn of the last century, *every* Christian had voted in *every* election? Would progressivism have the hold it has on governance in America today? Would progressive jurists have been nominated to the Supreme Court, and would the Court have ruled as it did in Roe v. Wade in 1973?

Would more than 60 million unborn babies have been murdered? Would the Johnson Amendment, which effectively gagged the American pulpit, and ended the annual election sermon — a tradition that had held for more than 300 years — have been signed into law?

Would the "sexual revolution" be part of our national history? Would Johnson's Great Society have resulted in rampant poverty among minorities in our inner cities? Would a federal deficit so high that it exceeds the imagination be hanging over our heads?

If the only thing necessary for evil to triumph is that good men do nothing, then the only thing necessary for a nation to begin the march toward Armageddon is for good men not to vote.

Voting is as much a sacred duty for the individual Christian as it is for the Christian community. Dietrich Bonhoeffer's oft-quoted saying is no less true with the word "vote" substituted for "act."

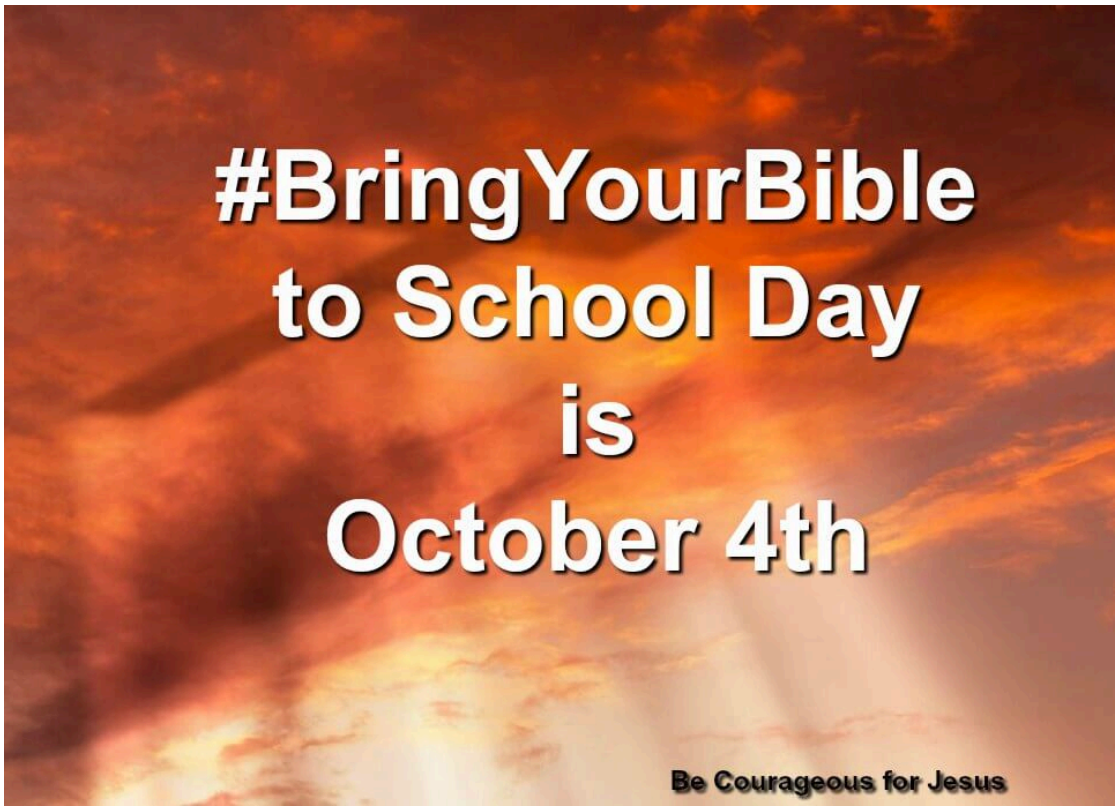
"Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act." — Not to vote is to vote.

SOURCE: **THE WESTERN JOURNAL**

Rev. William Cook is Founder and CEO of America's Black Robe Regiment, an association of clergy actively engaged in restoring Liberty in America, and the Legacy of the American pulpit as Wellspring of the political ideology that ignited a Revolution and won Liberty.

October 4th Generation NEXT Will Shine! #BringYourBible To School Day

OCTOBER 1, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



(***Forward This Letter To A Student You Know***)

Dear Generation NEXT,

Your moment to shine, **October 4th Bring Your Bible To School Day**, is just a few days away. This is your time in history! You have been chosen by Jesus just as He chose disciples 2000 years ago. Joel 2:28 tells us that in the last days, God will pour His Spirit out on all flesh, and sons and daughters will prophesy. That's YOU, Generation NEXT.
Go figure why Satan devised abortion in hopes of killing you off before you were ever born. Then after you made it to earth, he sent drugs and pre-marital sex to take your soul to hell. You have been ordained for this hour to be God's messengers to a dark world.

October 4th is your chance to draw a line in the sand and set a new standard for young people. Every student you meet during a school day will either spend eternity in hell or heaven. You have

the opportunity by participating in Bring Your Bible To School Day to plant seeds of eternal life in your fellow classmates.

Click to hear about Ethan's experience in taking his bible to school on a **Bring Your Bible To School Day.**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnTpiIZjjeA

Now, it's your turn. Here's how easy it is.

Click HERE for your "*business cards*" to pass out on **October 4th**. **Print out sheets of these scriptures**, cut them into cards and place them in your Bible. As you go about your day, pass them out to classmates. You can be a light in each life.

Visit www.bringyourbible.org for more information.
REMEMBER: The official hashtag is **#BringYourBible**

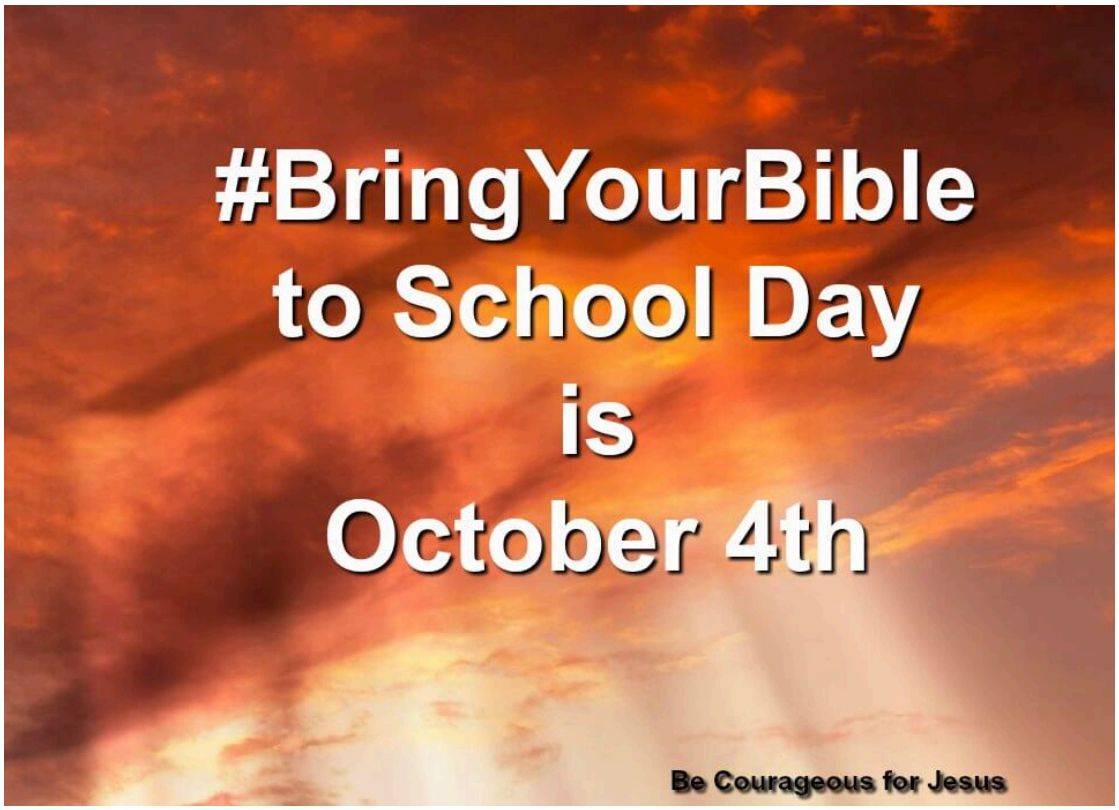
Students can follow "Bring Your Bible to School Day" on **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Instagram**.

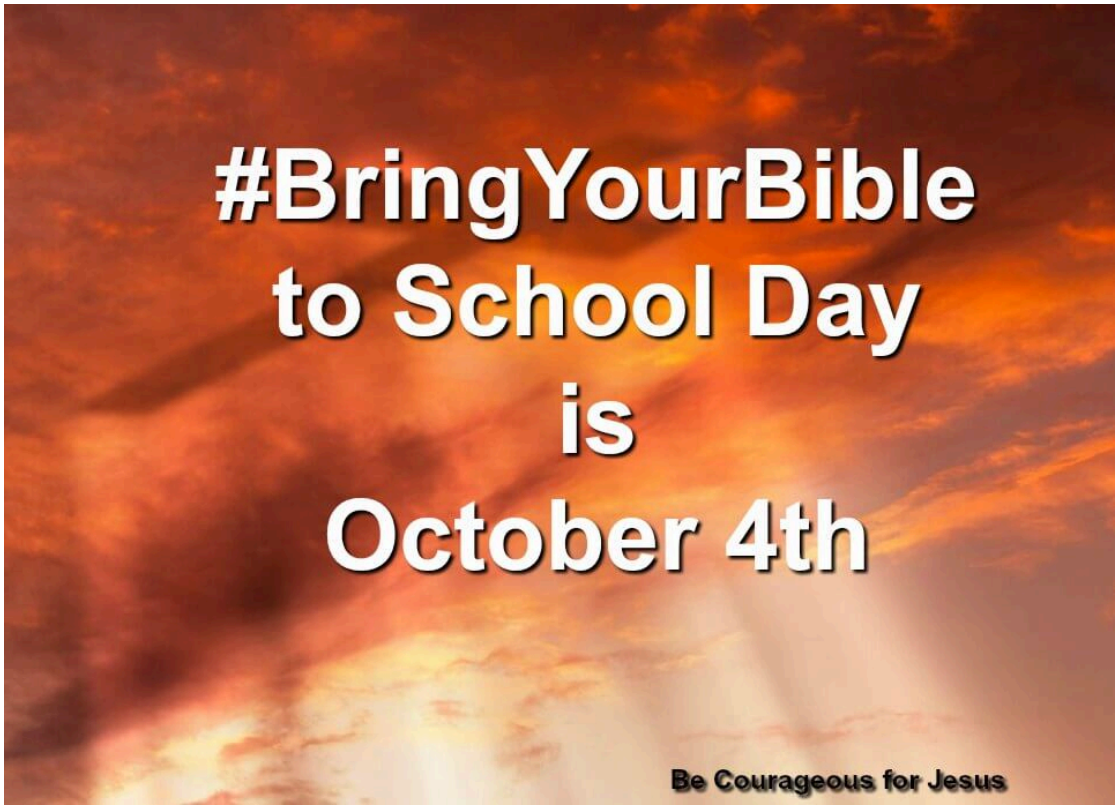
God Speed you on your assignment,
Linda Wall and the Staff at Virginia Christian Alliance

PS. **Click here** if you missed last week's article on Bring Your Bible To School Day.

October 4th: Generation NEXT This Is For You: Bring Your Bible To School Day

SEPTEMBER 25, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD





Linda Wall

“Bring Your Bible To School Day” October 4th (hashtag #BringYourBible).

Being a Christian is more than going to a building on Sundays. It’s about becoming Christ-like and sharing the message of Jesus to others. During the next two weeks, the Virginia Christian Alliance will send out helpful ideas to assist you in participating in “Bring Your Bible To School Day”.

On October 4th, you have an opportunity to introduce your classmates to the Bible, God’s Word. The spokesperson for this year’s Bring Your Bible To School Day is Sadie Robertson. Here is her message to you. **CLICK HERE**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5QEI6uqVWLY

This call is to all students from kindergarten to college. Be a voice of hope to classmates. Use #BringYourBible on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to spread the word nationally.

“YES” it is legal to take your Bible to school.

MYTH # 1 Students Can't Read The Bible or Pray At Public School

Fact: Students have the right to talk about their religious beliefs, pray, read scriptures and invite other students to join them in these activities — as long as students are voluntarily participating and not disrupting school instruction time.

MYTH # 2 Students Can't Distribute Religious-Themed Materials At Public School

Fact: Schools cannot impose an outright ban on religious-themed materials if they already allow students to distribute non-religious materials. But schools can prohibit distribution that is disruptive.

Students still have rights protected under the U.S. Constitution. Be the salt. Share your faith. The Bible has a powerful message of hope and love for all.

Virginia Christian Alliance wholehearted supports Bring Your Bible To School Day sponsored by Focus on The Family.

Visit www.bringyourbible.org for more information

Students can find more information, including the official video and stories from students and parents, at **BringYourBible.org**, where they can also **sign up to participate** and get free, downloadable guides. Elementary, teen and pastor/parent versions are available.

Students can also follow "Bring Your Bible to School Day" on **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Instagram**. The official hashtag is **#BringYourBible**.

To learn more about Bring Your Bible to School Day or to coordinate an interview with Focus' education issues director and #BringYourBible spokesperson Candi Cushman, please contact Michael McGonigle at **news@fotf.org** or 719-548-5743.

Where Are The Men With Power In The Pulpits Today ?

SEPTEMBER 18, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

> "If we want to see revival in our churches again we need to preach the difficult truths" Shane Idleman (clip below from his *Should the World Love Church?*)

Shane Idleman | BARBWIRE

I'm an avid reader of books about revivals and spiritual awakenings written by those who actually experienced them. Ironically, many, if not all, say that we must preach and proclaim God's Word with authority if we are to experience true revival. The New Testament also bears this out—without authority and power from on high, words are lifeless. There is nothing to fear when preaching the truth. God ordained it, and He blesses it. He desires that all men "come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:4).

Samuel Chadwick (1840-1932), in his book, The Way to Pentecost, made this powerful proclamation, "Truth without enthusiasm, morality without emotion, ritual without soul, makes for a Church without power." Authority is not a dreadful, unpleasant word—it's a powerful word. When God gives people authority to passionately and lovingly proclaim His Word, souls are converted, lives are changed, and families are restored. Sadly, this is lacking in our day.

Where are the Isaiahs and Jeremiahs calling nations to repentance? Where are the Peters and Pauls who spoke with such authority that martyrdom did not silence them? Though they are dead, they still speak! Where are the Wycliffs who stood so unyielding for the truth that he was called The Morning Star of Reformation? Where are the Tyndales and Huss' who were burned at the stake for simply declaring the truth? Where are the Luthers who, when asked to recant or face possible execution, said, "Here I stand; I can do no other"? Where are the John Calvins who shape

the religious thoughts of our Western culture? Where are the John Knoxs who cried, “Give me Scotland or I die”? Where are the Whitefields who shook continents? Where are the Howell Harris’, Daniel Rowlands’, and Griffith Jones’ who preached with such passion during the Welsh revivals of the 18th century that we still honor them today?

I say again, “Where are they?” Where are the John Wesleys who said, “Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and we will shake the gates of hell?” Where are the David Brainerds who spent so much time in prayer that even the great Jonathan Edwards was convicted? Where are the Robert Murray McCheynes who, even though he died at age twenty-nine, was one of Scotland’s most anointed preachers—causing people to weep before even preaching a word (not emotionalism, but anointing)? Where are the Spurgeon’s who spoke with such authority that his sermons are read more today than ever before? Where are the D.L. Moodys who brought America to her knees? Where are the Evan Roberts’ who, during the Welsh Revivals of 1904-5, preached so powerfully against sin that people cried out, “No more, Lord Jesus, or I’ll die”? Where are the Puritans like Richard Baxter, who said with such humility, “I speak as a dying man to dying men”?

Where are men with uncompromising power and authority in the pulpits today? Granted, there are some, and I appreciate their ministry, but as a whole, the church is lacking. The one thing that all of the great men previously mentioned had is the one thing that many are lacking—authority and the power of the Holy Ghost. They were also men of extraordinary prayer, brokenness, and humility. Men filled and clothed with power from on high. The men who do the most for God are always men of prayer. “Preaching, in one sense, merely discharges the firearm that God has loaded in the silent place” (Calvin Miller). “Preaching is theology coming through a man who is on fire” (D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones).

Pastors, we’d do well to revisit Jeremiah 23 regularly. Although this passage was written primarily to the false leaders in Jeremiahs day, the principle still applies to us—stand firm in God’s counsel: “‘Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!’ Says the LORD…they also strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that no one turns back from his wickedness…and to everyone who walks according to the dictates of his own heart, they say, ‘No evil shall come upon you’….” (cf. Jeremiah 23:1-32).

These leaders, like many today, had “perverted the words of the living God” (vs. 36) by not warning, instructing, challenging, and contending for the faith. Pastor’s, we must be desperate for more…desperate for more of God…desperate for more of the Spirit’s power…desperate for more brokenness and humility.

As the church falls deeper into self-reliance and further from reliance on God, our need for bold leadership has never been greater. Change will only occur when there is a strong conviction of sin, genuine faith, humility, and sincere repentance—may God grant us the wisdom and strength to

proclaim these truths. We must stop confusing God's patience with His approval and preach with conviction from the pulpits again.

Watch the short clip: A loving appeal to pastors and preachers to preach the Word:

Should the World Love Church? by Shane Idleman (clip)
https://youtube.com/watch?v=WBXkM6ELqVg

SOURCE: **BARBWIRE**

Shane Idleman is the founder and lead pastor of Westside Christian Fellowship in Lancaster, California, just North of Los Angeles. He recently released his 7th book, ***Desperate for More of God****. Shane's sermons, articles, books, and radio program can all be found at* ***www.WCFAV.org****. Follow him on Facebook at:* ***https://www.facebook.com/confusedchurch****.*

Conservative Christians Issue Statement on Social Justice and The Gospel

SEPTEMBER 11, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW, CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The Statement rebukes the Neo-Marxist assault on the Church; Wins praise from diverse group of Southern Baptists including Calvinists and Traditionalists; The Statement on Social Justice and the Gospel is most important document since the Chicago Statement on Inerrancy in 1978

Evangelical Christians are locked in a critical debate about the future of the church. Some leaders have embraced a progressive political agenda complete with Neo-Marxist group identity politics. These progressives want to make the church relevant to millennials. The Statement on Social Justice and The Gospel rejects this. The Statement is a rebuke against the church adopting wicked, worldly definitions of justice predicated on group struggle and identity.

The introduction to the new statement explains its purpose: "**Specifically, we are deeply concerned that values borrowed from secular culture are currently undermining Scripture in the areas of race and ethnicity, manhood and womanhood, and human sexuality.** The Bible's teaching on each of these subjects is being challenged under the broad and somewhat nebulous rubric of concern for 'social justice.'" You can view the statement and sign it at: **https://statementonsocialjustice.com/**

Brad Jurkovich, pastor of First Baptist Church Bossier, Louisiana and the speaker at this year's Southern Baptist Convention who gave a memorable speech nominating Ken Hemphill as SBC president, called the Statement on Social Justice and the Gospel a "compelling document."

“As the pastor of a Southern Baptist Church I am grateful for the clarity that the Statement on Social Justice and the Gospel provides,” Jurkovich said. **“It is a tremendous resource that can help our Southern Baptist Denomination stay strong and vibrant with all that Scripture calls us to and is a compelling document that can strengthen the heart and mind of every follower of Jesus.”**

The document was shaped by many important Reformed pastors and theologians. However, that should not worry Southern Baptists of other soteriological beliefs. One of the architects of the statement, Dr. Tom Ascol said this is an issue that should unify Southern Baptists.

“It is an issue that should unite all who are concerned about the authority, inerrancy and sufficiency of God’s Word as well as the integrity of our gospel witness,” Dr. Ascol said. “The statement has been written and is being published because we are convinced that the gospel is being threatened by ideas and movements that find their origins in worldly, unbiblical philosophies.”

The unbiblical philosophies of concern included Neo-Marxism and its attendant identity politics along with Intersectionality. J.P. Moreland, Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at BIOLA and co-author with Dr. William Lane Craig of the magisterial book Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview, previously **explained the threat to a Christian worldview from the Diversity and White Privilege movements**. It appears at this time that JP Moreland added his name to the list of signers.

The Statement on Social Justice and the Gospel provides an important balance against the one-sided conversation on these issues coming from many important evangelical leaders. Dr. Ascol said the statement, “Provides alternative perspectives on the issues addressed.”

The mostly Reformed-led statement won praise from non-Reformed Southern Baptists.

J.J. Lewis, a pastor-teacher and consultant from Chatsworth, Georgia, and a signer of the Traditional Southern Baptist understanding of God’s Plan of Salvation, praised the Statement on Social Justice and the Gospel.

“The Statement on Social Justice and the Gospel brings a current dividing issue to the forefront in today’s world of Christianity,” Lewis said. “Biblically, social justice and social ministries must be an outworking of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and not the other way around. **Anything that subordinates the Gospel to a secondary role is completely void of the power and purposes of God.**”

Brad Jones, pastor of Looxahoma Baptist Church of Senatobia, Mississippi and a signer of the Traditional Statement, praised the Statement on Social Justice and The Gospel and urged unity to

fight the threat to the Gospel. He said, **"It's going to take both reformed and traditionalist to fight this battle."**

It also drew praise from local Southern Baptists leaders. Former president of the Alabama Baptist Convention, John Killian praised the statement.

"The Statement on Social Justice and the Gospel is a concise statement on the purpose of the Gospel, expressing concern at the abuse of our claim to proclaim that Gospel," Killian said. **"I am thankful for John MacArthur's wise leadership in calling back Bible-believers to Gospel truth."**

Initial signers include a range of evangelical Christian leaders including John MacArthur, pastor of Grace Community Church, Voddie Baucham, of VBM, Phil Johnson, executive director of Grace To You, Rod Martin, founder and CEO of The Martin Organization, Darrell Harrison of the Just Thinking Podcast, Josh Buice, pastor of Pray's Mill Baptist Church and director of the G3 Conference, James White of Alpha and Omega Ministries, Michael O'Fallon, president of Sovereign Nations, Tom Buck, pastor of First Baptist Church Lindale, Tom Ascol, pastor of Grace Baptist Church and executive director of Founders Ministries, Justin Peters, head of Justin Peters Ministries, Anthony Mathenia, pastor of Christ Church, Jeremy Vuolo, pastor of Grace Community Church of Laredo, David Miller, Line Upon Line Ministries, Craig Mitchell, president Ethics and Political Economy Center, and Gavin Peacock, associate pastor of Calvary Grace Church.

Check back at **CapstoneReport.com** as we begin a detailed examination of the Statement's affirmations and denials.

What Happened to My Church?

SEPTEMBER 7, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

By Jan Markell | **Olive Tree Ministries**

Church issues are the most frequent inquiry I get here at Olive Tree Ministries. Other leaders tell me the same. What has happened in the last 30-40 years? Many people visit church after church only to walk away disheartened. Others are lifetime members of a church and have seen changes that left it unrecognizable — spiritually speaking.

At first, members and attendees wonder if they are being a bit too judgmental, but the sad reality eventually sinks in that something has gone terribly wrong.

My background is in a fundamental church in Minneapolis that delivered verse-by-verse messages and had frequent prophecy conferences. Try to find that today! You will find a few but they are few and far between. This same church warned me about a coming apostasy back in the 1970s, but who knew it would get so bad starting somewhere in the 1990s. *Nothing could have prepared me.*

First, it was music that became the great divider. Nobody minds some guitars and a bass but into the second decade of the 21st Century, ear plugs are handed out as one enters the church sanctuary.

Some churches open with a secular song, dim the lights, add some smoky fog, and have an atmosphere similar to the local bar. All of this is to enhance choruses that will be sung two-dozen

times by hypnotized church members. I would learn that it is to attract "seekers" — a 21st Century term. Bill Hybels admitted that he came up with the term but confessed it didn't work well in his church!

Organs and pianos were tossed out 25 years ago because they did not promote "church growth." The over-age 55 crowd was on their own. Some churches threw them a bone with an 8 a.m. service for those with gray heads. That trend began "the great divide" between generations.

Someone made a conscious decision that we should have a "new way of doing church", although many members and attendees agreed *there was nothing wrong with the old ways of doing church.* Terms began being used like "purpose-driven," "seeker-sensitive," "church-growth movement," "postmodernism", "Emergent", and more.

People started to hear about love, unity, and tolerance. We must be known for what we agree on, not what we disagree on. Everything and everyone must be accepted. Aberrations must be accepted. Sin must be accepted. People loved having their ears tickled. They would be encouraged to "feel good" and have their self-esteem built up. Sound doctrine was being set aside.

The saving of souls was being set aside for the entertainment factor and social justice causes. It seemed that many in the church no longer cared that so many were on their way to hell! What an offensive, intolerant thought. But clearly, *sound doctrine will separate and divide so we must tread lightly in that area.*

Relevant issues have vanished. Pulpits have become afraid to talk about voting biblical values. Pastors quit speaking in favor of marriage and against abortion. It seemed like an "eleventh commandment" came into the church: *Thou shalt not offend. Taking a stand was clearly over.*

When it came to issues like Bible prophecy, the silence became deafening! People were told this was "divisive" although rock music in the church apparently was not! Millions are going to be left behind at the Rapture of the Church but there are no warnings about this going out from hardly any church. Instead, pulpits are dispensing Osteen-type messages that talk about "your best life now" on this broken, corrupt planet.

This is just a short explanation as to why e-mails and letters pour into this ministry and others asking about how they might find a healthy, relevant church in their neighborhood.

In 2017 my friend Terry James invited me to submit a chapter in his proposed book titled **"Deceivers: Exposing Evil Seducers & Their Last Days Deception."** I had been doing Christian radio across the country for many years and as I researched programs, I was reminded daily that there had been a straying from sound doctrine.

I was confronted with the fact that I had two choices: I could overlook this trend or expose it. I took the warning to watchmen in Ezekiel 33 very seriously and I determined to confront the false teaching head-on and tell the truth about it. *I did not want the blood on my hands!* I knew this would cost me listeners and friends. I would soon find out that certain radio stations would marginalize me and even *ban me for the naming of names.*

Was this too high of a price to pay? I had to seriously ponder that and count the cost. Could I stick with my plan? It's a big, lonely world. We need all the support we can get. My plan would not win friends — but it might save some people from making lifelong theological mistakes by revealing who and what could be trusted and not trusted.

I began my research by tracing the history of false doctrine and reckless church movements going back to the early 1900s to the present. From mystical madness such as so-called Christian Yoga to the experiential of the New Apostolic Reformation, wolves were prowling around the flock.

At the same time I saw that discernment was going over a cliff as books like "The Shack" and "Jesus Calling" were embraced as much as the Bible.

An entire movement sprang up around Todd Bentley who kicked sick people with his biker boot to heal them and this was celebrated.

Evangelical organizations like the NAE embraced global warming and called for America to destroy all her nukes. What does this have to do with the gospel?

Ecumenism soared and Protestants began embracing Catholicism. Kenneth Copeland announced that the Reformation was over.

I observed something called the "laughing revival" and I concluded that it wasn't so funny.

I could go on and on. You can see that the odds of you having a healthy, well-balanced church are slim but they are out there! If you have one, thank God for it daily. If you don't, know that you are not alone. Millions visit nearly every potential church in town and walk away perplexed and heartbroken. Are they looking for perfection? A few may be but most are not.

They just know today's church would most likely not be recognized by their parents or grandparents. Jesus said the gates of hell would not prevail against the church (Matt. 16:18). Having said that, the gates of hell are trying like crazy to penetrate the church, change it, change its message, change its purpose, distort the gospel, and wear down the saints — pastors included.

> In summary, GotQuestions.org says, *"….the church is not a building or a denomination. According to the Bible, the church is the body of Christ — all those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation (John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 12:13). Local churches are gatherings of people who claim the name of Christ.*
>
> *Members of a local church may or may not be members of the universal church, depending on the genuineness of their faith. The local church is where believers can fully apply the 'body' principles of 1 Corinthians chapter 12: encouraging, teaching, and building one another up in the knowledge and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ."*

Christ died for the Church and we cannot give up on it! A heavenly endless church service awaits us in Eternity with a celestial choir and orchestra. The preaching will also be out of this world! We'll all be one denomination. The bickering will be over with. We won't insist on our own way. We'll finally be in one accord.

Gary Stearman and Jan Markell discuss church issues on Prophecy Watchers TV. Hear our current radio program with Dr. Ed Hindson here. It is titled "Is the Rapture the Great Escape?"

Jan Markell: The Fall of the Modern Church
https://youtube.com/watch?v=i_utKTbkp5Y

Shepherds Surrendering the Vote to the Sons of Disobedience

SEPTEMBER 5, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Rev. William Cook

> Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience.Ephesians 2:2

For the past four weeks, I have been working on behalf of Ryan McAdams, a pastor and the leader of the Virginia Prayer Caucus, who has been called of God to run for Congress in Virginia's Fourth Congressional District.

My focus has been on encouraging fellow pastors to show the brief video, "**What Difference Does Make?**" (video below) to their congregations in one or more Sunday services remaining in September, display a PowerPoint slide containing a "text-to-register" number, and distribute a brochure on the moral duty of Christians' to vote. The video is compelling, scrupulously non-partisan, and at 1 minute and 40 seconds, hardly an imposition on a Sunday agenda.

Sorry

This video does not exist.

We are simply asking them to show the video, distribute the brochures, and facilitate Christians registering and turning out to vote on November 6. The only part of the process that might be considered "partisan" is the legally required acknowledgment in tiny print at the bottom of the brochure, "Paid for by Ryan McAdams for Congress."

The responses from some of the pastors I've approached might suggest that I had asked them to renounce the Faith, teach false doctrine, or God forbid, spearhead a political campaign rally. In an age when popular church growth theory treats "political" speech as a pariah that threatens unity, fruitful ministry, and the evangelical mission of the Church, it is ironic that political sermons were standard fare in America for more than 300 years. Natural rights, the social compact, and election sermons stressing the moral duty of Christians to vote, in a manner that promotes Liberty and sustains the civil society were mainstream sermon topics.

Moreover, notwithstanding the dampening effect of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (a.k.a. The 1954 Johnson Amendment), coupled with the specious notion that Separation was meant as a prohibition on political preaching and Church involvement in civil government, political sermons are occasionally still preached, albeit rarely, in some churches today. I have in my library a list compiled by the American Antiquarian Society, of more than five hundred New England election sermons preached between 1634 and 1885. Titles include:

Sermon Title	Date	Preacher
An Election Sermon	1715	Joseph Moss
Good Rulers A Choice Blessing	1725	Azariah Mather
The Origin and Ends of Civil Government	1795	Andrew Lee
The Political Advantages of Godliness	1797	Isaac Lewis

On the Evils of Weak Government	1800	John Smalley

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the pulpit and political preaching to our nation's Founding *and* the preservation of Liberty since. It was the "Pulpit of the Revolution" that supplied the ideological basis and motivation for the American War for Independence. In the Preface to his book by the same title, historian John Wingate Thornton affirms the historical record about the central role of the pulpit in America's Founding:

The true alliance between Politics and Religion is the lesson inculcated in this volume of Sermons, and apparent in its title, "The Pulpit of the Revolution." It is the voice of the Fathers of the Republic, enforced by their example. They invoked God in their civil assemblies, called upon their chosen teachers of religion for counsel from the Bible, and recognized its precepts as the law of their public conduct. The Fathers did not divorce politics and religion, but they denounced the separation as ungodly.

They prepared for the struggle, and went into battle, not as soldiers of fortune, but, like Cromwell and the soldiers of the Commonwealth, with the Word of God in their hearts, and trusting in him. This was the secret of that moral energy which sustained the Republic in its material weakness against superior numbers, and discipline, and all the power of England. To these Sermons—the responses from the Pulpit— the State affixed its imprimatur, and thus they were handed down to future generations with a twofold claim to respect.

It is fair to say that America would never have become a great nation had the political disposition of her pulpits matched that of her pulpits today. Nor will the Liberty taken for granted by the Church today survive if America's pulpits continue to abandon the voting booth and the government it produces to the "sons of disobedience." (Ephesians 2:2)

The Call to Repent and Rebuild

Last Sunday around noon, God began to speak to my heart about the condition of the Church in America and the responses I was receiving from pastors, and it shook me. Those who know me can attest that I rarely claim to have heard from the Lord unless others report hearing the same thing, and leaders I am in fellowship with affirm what I feel I need to say. No one benefits from "Thus saith the Lord" if the Lord has not spoken, and God will not countenance presumption to accommodate an inflated ego.

Later Sunday afternoon at about 3:00 PM I called a friend in Texas who is a pastor and has relationships with pastors all over the country, to ask for his help in reaching out to pastors in Virginia. During our conversation, he mentioned that he would attend an invitation-only meeting at the White House with the President, along with several other faith leaders who were also being invited to attend. At that point, I asked if he would convey to meeting attendees, the urgent

message God had given me to the Church earlier in the day and he agreed, so I sent the message God had given me to his email address. Following is the message I sent:

Who will make America great again if not I? Can America achieve greatness on her own? Can greatness be achieved without righteousness? Is anything too hard for God? Is there not a faith that subdues kingdoms, works righteousness, and puts foreign armies to flight? (Hebrews 11:30-34) Am I not doing a work in your day that some will not believe, though it plays out before their very eyes? Why do some cry "blasphemy" when they hear that Donald Trump is my olive branch that I have extended to my Church, to prove my people and learn what is in their hearts? Why do so many of you feel compelled to apologize for my sovereign work on earth on your behalf?

Is the President not my answer to your persistent cries for deliverance over the previous decade? Did I not raise up Cyrus and anoint him to execute my sovereign plan in the earth on behalf of my people? Is the current administration not a window of opportunity that I have opened to you to rebuild the foundations of Liberty and the Wall of Righteousness that was a bulwark against calamity, but has fallen and crumbled because of your apathy and neglect? Though you are not worthy, I have given you this season to set things right in your heart and your nation, that you might be the head and not the tail.

Do not reject my olive branch, or I will take him from you and leave you neither root nor branch. I have given you this season, not to pass judgment on what I am doing, but to repent and put away evil from your midst so that you might be prepared for the great outpouring of my Spirit that will once more cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. If you are able to hear it, my final warning over Jerusalem was a warning to you and to America—Do not miss the hour of your visitation.

On Thursday afternoon I stopped by Regent University to speak with a member of the faculty in the School of Divinity. When I walked into his office, he was watching **Lance Wallnau's most recent podcast**, which was a sobering report on what the President had told attendees at Monday's meeting. I was stunned because I had no foreknowledge of the agenda of the meeting and the President's message confirmed what God had spoken to me the previous Sunday, albeit in greater detail, **At the meeting, President Trump warned more than 100 Christian leaders that if we lose the House in the Midterm Election, anti-Christian persecution will ensue.**

It is difficult to put into words the urgency I feel about Christians turning out to vote *en mass* on November 6, for candidates whose lives and policy positions comport with biblical morality. If Democrats take back the House in November, an outcome I am convinced will signal the end of America, everything we believe or hope for will be put in immediate jeopardy.

The prevailing reticence of pastors to say or do anything even remotely "political," amounts to dereliction and considering the current ongoing national crisis, is the equivalent of reckless endangerment of the Flock of God. The Church cannot surrender the voting booth to the "sons of

disobedience" and expect prayer alone to keep Liberty alive. Apart from the Church, there is no body of people capable of "securing the Blessings of Liberty."

Liberty lost is lost forever, and the Church will have only itself to blame. We have a Divine commission to safeguard Liberty, but if through apathy or ignorance we vacate our charge as sole Guardian thereof, the Chief Shepherd will require it of us.

—

Rev. William Cook is Founder and CEO of America's Black Robe Regiment, an association of clergy actively engaged in restoring Liberty in America, and the Legacy of the American pulpit as Wellspring of the political ideology that ignited a Revolution and won Liberty.

Rev. Cook has held a variety of pastoral positions over a period of sixteen years. He was Assistant Campus Minister and Director of Student Life at Regent University in Virginia Beach for seven years, and subsequently, an associate pastor for three different churches spanning a period of ten years.

While his five children were growing up, Rev. Cook worked for several years as a Systems Engineer for The Boeing Company, Booz Allen Hamilton, and a few smaller companies, supporting the Intelligence community, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). At DHS, he provided project management support to the Explosives Division Director and Science Advisor on a homemade explosives characterization project and evaluated airport passenger screening systems for TSA.

During the summer of 2012, Rev. Cook felt God calling him to back to full-time ministry to activate and mobilize clergy and their congregations in securing the "Blessings of Liberty" to themselves and their Posterity. He founded the Black Robe Regiment of Virginia in September 2012 as the vanguard of an effort to restore America's decidedly Christian heritage, and the Church's vital leadership and influence within government. He also currently serves as Northern Virginia Watchmen Council Chair for the Virginia Watchmen Council.

Prior to launch of the Black Robe Regiment, Rev. Cook served as Director of Operations for Bishop E.W. Jackson's organization, STAND (Staying True to America's National Destiny), and Director of Coalitions for the E.W. Jackson for Lt. Governor of Virginia campaign. He spent four years as an editor, researcher and Web developer for Dr. Walid Phares, and is a contributor to the Cyber Security and Counter Terrorism desks for **Wikistrat**.

His website is **http://www.blackroberegiment.us**

Rev. Cook and his wife Judy have five adult children and nine grandchildren, reside in Northern Virginia, and recently celebrated their 34th wedding anniversary.

John Wingate Thornton, *The Pulpit of the American Revolution, or the Political Sermons of the Period of 1776 (Boston, Gould and Lincoln, 1860), Preface III*

Screen time: How much is too much?

SEPTEMBER 4, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Brad Huddleston

Excessive use of digital technology has become the global norm in every age group. This “new normal” is taking us into uncharted psychological waters. Millennials (Generation Y) are those born in the early 1980’s. Their parents remember what it was like to have a “pre-internet brain.” They can recall what it was like to have much less anxiety, stress, and depression. They reminisce about the days of longer attention spans, uninterrupted face to face conversations, and time did not seem to fly by so fast.
Generation Z, the children of the Millennials, cannot relate to their grandparents, often thinking they are out of touch.

The fact is, fMRI scans are showing that our brains are changing, and not for the better.

The word “balance” has become a cliché. I find that most people who use that word concerning their use of digital technologies have never actually measured their time spent looking at screens.

This must change.

As technologies such as virtual and augmented reality continue to advance exponentially, so does the resulting brain stress, and even more so in underdeveloped adolescent brains.

Simply put, our brains are on perpetual overload, and if we continue down this path, we will hit a collective tipping point that will result in digitally induced psychoses that no one on planet earth knows how to treat. We already see the beginning of this dangerous trend.

Technology was supposed to fix the world's ailing education systems, and yet there are no measurable increases in cognition. The technology manufacturers, of course, would have you think otherwise.

So, what do we do about it?

God never intended for us to be part of the world's system.

> 2 Corinthians 6:17 (NKJV) "Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."

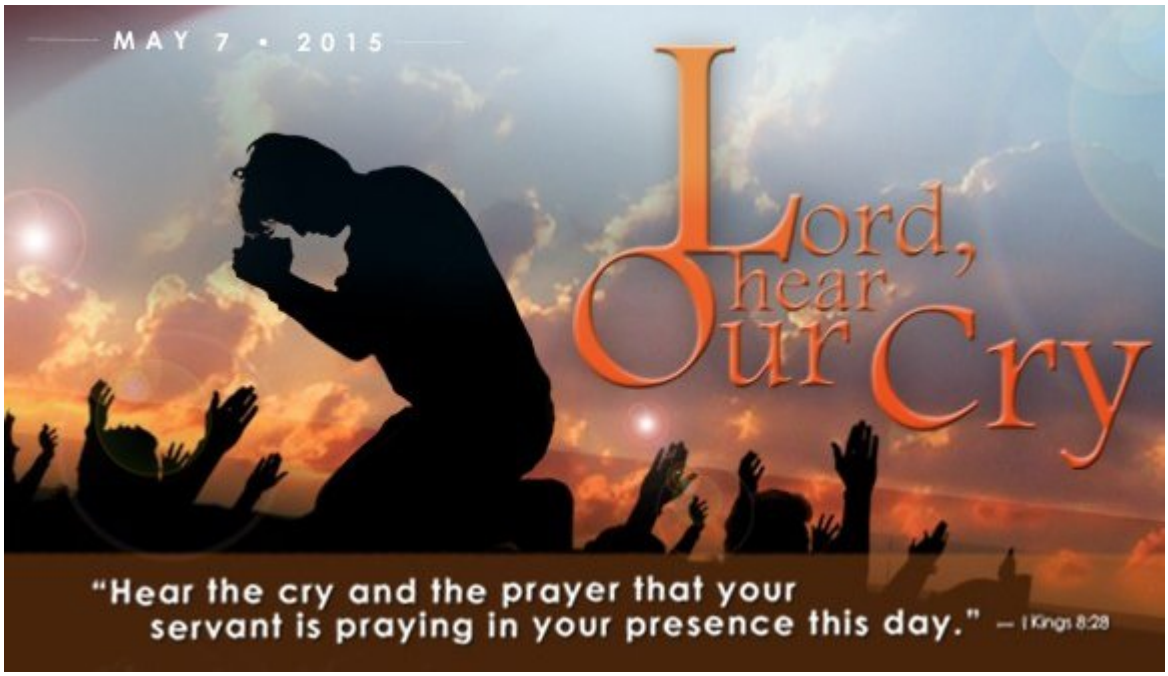
Whenever there is a discussion about holiness, or separation from the world, I think many assume I am talking about no technology use at all. Nothing could be further from the truth. As Christians, we are to abstain from worldliness, not things that are beneficial. Following are suggestions to begin a journey toward true iBalance:

- It is common knowledge that many tech executives in Silicon Valley send their children to non-tech schools, and they agree to severely limit its use in the home until the age of 12. Steve Jobs never allowed his children to use the iPad. I recommend you follow their parenting example.
- 80% of the issues discussed in this article have to do with entertainment technology. Stop all video game playing whatsoever; this includes "education video games." Instead, play lots of board games with other human beings.
- Eliminate all technology from all bedrooms and sleep a full night.
- Allow no screen time before school and three hours before bed.
- Do not listen to music while studying and sleeping. When a "brain-break" is needed from study or work, do not check email, social media, etc. Instead, listen to two or three songs and then get back to work.
- The truth is, Generation Z's underdeveloped brains cannot handle smartphones and social media. Not even a little bit. (Many who are older cannot either.)
- Remember what grandma said: too much of a good thing can be bad.

Much more work will be needed to achieve iBalance, but the above suggestions will be a great start to eating the elephant in the room one bite at a time.

Prayer Should be Terribly Serious

AUGUST 25, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



> My Friends, we are not even able to take the next breath of air or have the next Heartbeat… without HIM. In other words, HE gives us Life from one Heartbeat to the next. So when we Pray to give HIM thanks for all of Life, shouldn't we be as earnest as we know how to be? …

Don Twobears | **Rapture Ready**

I have a sort of Bee under my Blanket if you will – something that has been growing in me for some time now. Let's take a look.

I have heard parents teaching their children Rhymes in Prayer, the sort of… "Rub a dub dub, thanks for the grub!" sort of Prayer. There are others as well, and this is where I find the Problem. A Prayer is supposed to be solemn and thoughtful, stemming from the Recesses of one's heart. Most Importantly, we are going before the Lord God Almighty, the Creator of absolutely Everything! That includes you and me and our Children!

I remember so well when my Grandsons were born. I got to care for the youngest most recently while my Daughter and her Husband were at work. I looked into his little eyes and asked him if he remembered what God looked like. Did he ever get the chance to see HIM with those little eyes of his. No, I was not trying to be flippant by any stretch of the word. To look at him and know the

Lord God had HIS hands on him just weeks ago…or so, made me giddy! That was the time I began to read more in-depth about being "Fervent" when I would Pray.

According to Webster's Online Dictionary, "Fervent" is this: 1) very hot; glowing, the fervent sun. 2) exhibiting or marked by great intensity of feeling; zealous fervent prayers, a fervent proponent, fervent patriotism.

The Word of God says **in James 5:16** "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

As we can see here, a "Fervent Prayer" is a Prayer with Great meaning, from the Deep Recesses of our Heart. For Example, we could say, A Person has Cancer and so the Person's Family and Friends began Praying in great earnest! They gathered together around the bed of the Person and began speaking to the Lord God Almighty to Heal this person… am I not correct? Another example was Jesus Christ.

Luke 22:41-44 "And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

That, my Friends, is probably the greatest example of "Fervent Prayer!" So the question now is, does anyone Pray with that level of earnestness anymore? Is that not how we should Pray? In my Heart, I believe that we are standing before the Lord God Almighty and talking with HIM. Are we showing HIM the respect HE deserves…according to who HE is, and HIS Power and Knowledge? Is HE not the Creator of absolutely Everything to include you and me?

Why is it so difficult for you and me to Recognize who the Lord God truly is, and how is it that we think we can be so disrespectful before HIM? I believe we should be sweating bullets of Blood as well with every single Prayer that we Pray. Are we not Praying in Earnest for a desire to be fulfilled by HIM?

If you were God, would you be willing to accept the Prayers that are offered up all the time? Of course, you wouldn't. Because, my Friends, those Prayers are essentially a slap in HIS Face. They are indeed disrespectful, thus the reason I am writing this particular article. We are asking for help from the Father God! HE is a Just and Righteous God. He creates everything by virtue of a Thought. That moment requires Great forethought; in other words, KNOW what you are doing and asking for – most of all, to whom you are speaking!

Does The Father Love us? Of course, HE does; you know HE does. All the more Reason to come before HIM in perfect Reverence. Don't get me wrong; I have been Guilty of this as well, BUT…I

am learning not to be that way anymore. When we go Before HIM to ask for Forgiveness of our SIN, we need to include our disrespect for HIM as well…it is Sin! I would be willing to bet there are a great many Prayers that HE will not accept…for this very reason.

It would seem that we Pray for different reasons, with different levels of intensity; would you not agree? Are there any droplets of Blood in your sweat when you thank HIM for a new day? More than likely…No. This is my Point exactly.

Matthew 6:6-8 "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."

Do I think any of us will sweat Droplets of Blood when we Pray? Probably not, but that doesn't mean we should Pray with any less severity. In my estimation, how much closer to the Lord God would we be if we Prayed with complete Earnest and from our Hearts…about everything?

John 15:5 "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: <u>for without me ye can do nothing</u>."

My Friends, we are not even able to take the next breath of air or have the next Heartbeat… without HIM. In other words, HE gives us Life from one Heartbeat to the next. So when we Pray to give HIM thanks for all of Life, shouldn't we be as earnest as we know how to be? I would think so, my Friends. Our Blessings from HIM are beyond our ability to comprehend, and this happens with every single second that goes by. Our Lives are in HIS capable Hands…and we need to be so very thankful for that.

Our Salvation was because of HIS Death on a Roman Cross for you and me… What a sacrifice that was! And the biggest thing to know is that HE did that because HE Loves us so very much; that includes absolutely everyone ever born on this Planet!

If you knew that you were going to die 5 minutes from now, how would you be Praying and what would you Pray for? I must say, it would be a very earnest Prayer Indeed… A very "Fervent Prayer!"

I Pray in all earnest that the Lord will Bless each and every one of you, according to HIS Perfect Plan in our Lives.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

All Scripture comes from the King James Version of the Bible

SOURCE: **RAPTURE READY**

BREAKING NEWS: Another Christian in America Headed to Prison

AUGUST 24, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

By Linda Wall

Christian businessman Philip Zodhiates lost his Appeal. He now faces two three-year sentences for living out his Christian faith in America. If you are not familiar with the Lisa Miller Case click **here** or view directly below.

You may not have thought glbxyzt issues affect you but if you are a true believer: one who lives their faith outside of the sanctuary and beyond Sundays, it is going to affect you.

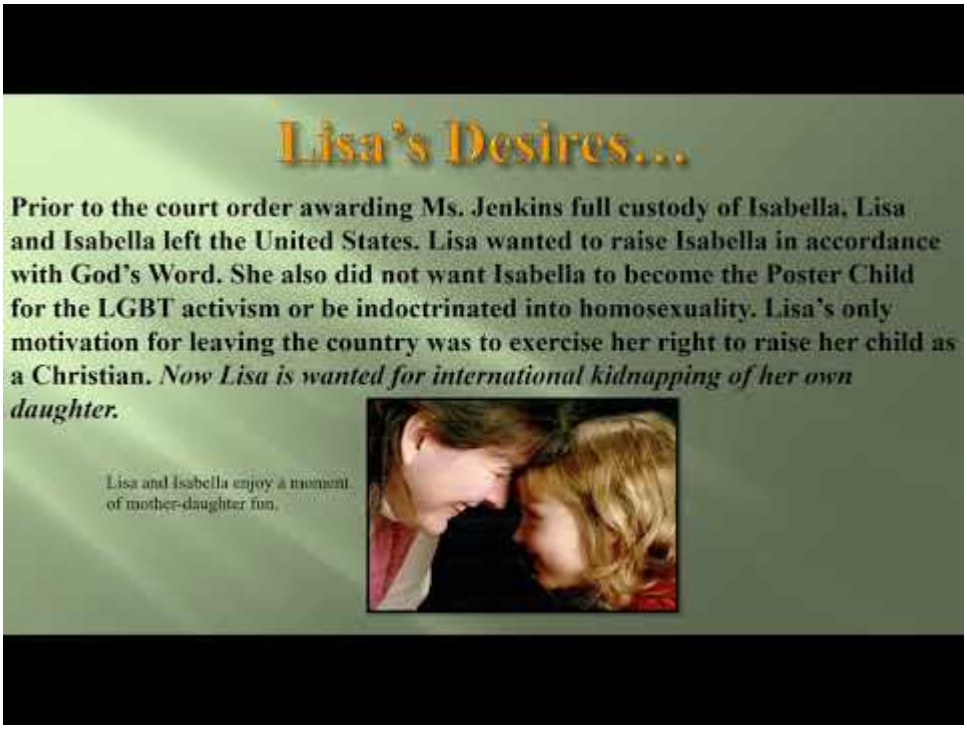
The only thing Philip did was obey Galatians 6:2 of "bearing one another's burden". He helped a Christian single Mom and her daughter escape alleged child abuse, indoctrination of sexual perversion by glbt activists and be free to live out their Christian faith outside of America.

What would you have done? What will you do here in America when they come for you because you love Jesus and obey God?
The Lisa Miller Case is a precedent-setting case that has been going on for fourteen years. The ACLU and the Southern Poverty Law Center are determined to use this case to make glbt supreme law in America by criminalizing Christianity.

I am asking believers to help Philip and Kathie with their $350,000 attorney fees by going to **www.419fund.com**.

Lisa Miller Case

https://youtube.com/watch?v=hATXWiZz0Ig



Evangelical Political Theology: Resources for the Concerned Christian

AUGUST 22, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW, CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW, ESCHATOLOGY, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Alan Atchison | **Capstone Report**

In one recent discussion (or maybe it was one of the interviews I've done following my first post on **Repairing Evangelical Political Theology**), I was asked what were a few good books for a concerned Christian wanting to build a theological foundation for their political philosophy. It was a great question and worth exploring. So, here are my thoughts on who you should read and why. The great news is that most of the resources are available online and free.

Important Thinkers Evangelical Christians Should Read and Follow

In modern evangelical Christian theology, there are three theologians you should read: Dr. Wayne Grudem, Dr. Norman L. Geisler, and Dr. William Lane Craig.

Wayne Grudem has written a Systematic Theology that is the textbook for countless Systematic Theology classes. Also, Grudem wrote a superb and in-depth study of modern political issues in his work, **Politics According to the Bible**. Norman Geisler is one of the great thinkers of modern Christianity. He played a major role in the fight for inerrancy and apologetics. Geisler has a multi-volume Systematic Theology among countless other theological and philosophical works. Concerned Christian voters would do well to read Geisler's work on moral philosophy. Specifically, **Geisler's Christian Ethics**, the second edition delves into how Christians can navigate moral decision making when in a fallen world, often God's commands might seem to be in conflict. Certainly, we saw the necessity of understanding this type of concept during the Trump-Clinton election of 2016. **To get a sample of what the book is like, you can read an excellent summary of Graded Absolutism here written by Dr. Geisler**. *(Editor's note: I have a post planned attempting to incorporate Graded Absolutism into voting for Christians.)*

William Lane Craig is the finest Evangelical Apologist and Philosopher of our generation. Craig's general works on Apologetics, his deeper philosophical works and even his Sunday School class provide important Christian resources. Craig's Defenders Sunday School class is a great place for Christians to start developing a deeper understanding of key Christian doctrine; in the class, Craig covers it all—from understanding the nature and types of revelation to Christology to Natural Theology to Eschatology. Getting these doctrines right help an evangelical get other issues—issues like politics—right. So, Craig's podcasts and online resources are the perfect place to start. He is an amazing teacher, gifted at making any topic interesting. I recommend starting not at the very beginning (as topics like revelation can be very in-depth and intimidating), but begin listening to **Defenders in a Natural Theology lecture like Part 5: Argument from Contingency**. Or, the lectures on the Divine Attributes are good starting points too. This free resource for evangelicals is the perfect antidote to the growth of heresy in the church: ReasonableFaith.org. Bookmark it.

Important thinkers offering online commentary about key issues

In addition to the systematic theologians mentioned, there are many great resources and thinkers online covering key issues happening today. Three that immediately come to mind are New Testament scholar Dr. Robert A.J. Gagnon, Dr. Carol M. Swain and Dr. Robert Lopez.

Dr. Gagnon posts in-depth analysis on his Facebook page regarding everything from election politics (as in the case of ERLC attacks on conservative political candidates) to issues including biblical marriage. You should check out his **Facebook Page** and this article at Stream detailing how **Christianity Today has smeared evangelical conservatives**.

Dr. Carol Swain recently retired as professor law and Political Science from Vanderbilt. She appears regularly on Fox News offering commentary on politics and religion. I've had the privilege of interviewing Dr. Swain, who is a Southern Baptist, **on racial issues and politics in the**

Southern Baptist Convention. She's worth reading and following online. **Check out her website**.

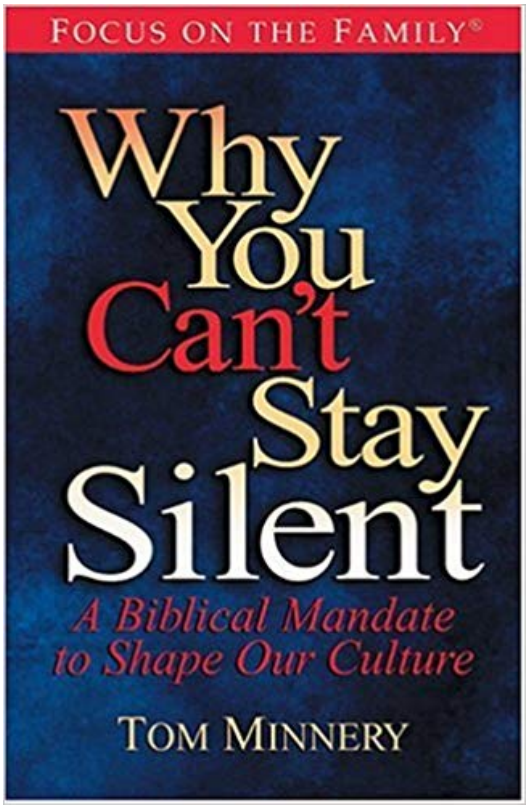
Dr. Robert Oscar Lopez is a professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and has long experience suffering in the culture war. While teaching in Califonria, he was attacked by progressives and was driven out of the secular university. He ended up teaching at one of the best SBC institutions of higher learning. You can **read an interview with Dr. Lopez here on this site**, and you should **check out his blog**.

Any additional suggestions as to thinkers or resources that concerned evangelical Christians should read or follow online? We need to build a resource list for committed Christians wanting to build a robust Christian worldview and engaging on the political issues of the day. I'd love to hear your recommendations.

Read more at **http://capstonereport.com/2018/01/27/evangelical-political-theology-resources-concerned-christian/31859/#gYd7ulCiV2kIxiXs.99**

Crossroads: Why You Can't Stay Silent, Part I

AUGUST 10, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



"Silence in the face of evil is itself evil; God will not hold us guiltless." (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

"You are the Salt of the earth and the Light of the world. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven." (Jesus, Sermon on the Mount)

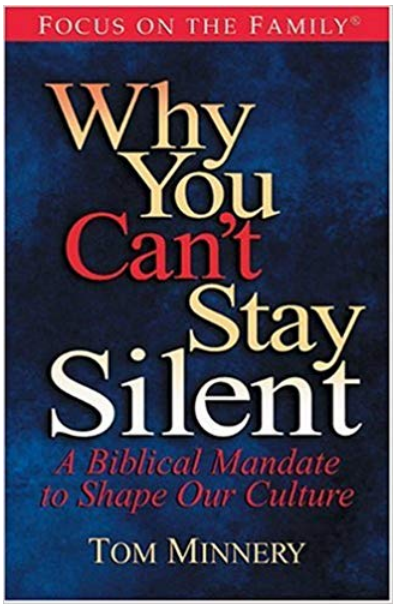
We are called to "pull down strongholds, demolish arguments, cast down everything that exalts itself against God, and bring every thought into obedience to God." (II Corinthians 10:3-4)

"The church must be a public voice for the eternal truths of God." (Pastor Neil Laybourne)

Tom Minnery on "Why You Can't Stay Silent"

Valley Radio MP3 Podcast HERE, listen to Part I and download the entire PDF book here.

When Tom Minnery was an aspiring journalist assigned to cover Capitol Hill, he was asked to report on research that the Reagan Administration was doing on the pornography industry in America.



As a part of that research, he attended a public hearing that included the first-hand account of a girl who had been molested as a child – in part due to the influence of pornography on her abuser. Highly paid lawyers for the porn industry openly snickered at her and her testimony.

That experience informed and infuriated Mr. Minnery. It was just one more item on a growing list of other concerns he was having about the coarsening of our culture and the destructive impact it was having on families across America. Someone had to do something! Someone had to speak out!

As a result, he left a promising career in journalism, joined Focus on the Family headed at that time by founder Dr. James Dobson, and soon became its Vice President for Public Policy.

From that vantage point, and to help others who shared these concerns and wanted to fight back, Minnery wrote a book entitled Why You Can't Stay Silent: A Biblical Mandate to Shape Our Culture.

Speaking Out – and Why It Matters

At about the same time that Minnery wrote his book, Valley residents were also becoming increasingly concerned about many of the same issues, including attacks on the Sanctity of Life and of Marriage, on our Religious Liberties, and yes, about the destructive impact of pornography on our communities.

But what could they do to confront, rebuke, and defeat these strongholds of evil while at the same time working to support and advance the Biblical principles of virtue on which American was founded? Don't they interfere with our call to proclaim the Gospel and to "evangelize"?

For answers, they relied heavily on Minnery's book for guidance and for inspiration during a series of Forum-sponsored seminars called "Capstone: The Christian's Role in Culture and Public Policy".

For example, what could they do to ban or at least regulate the three SOB's (Sexually Oriented Businesses) in Harrisonburg and also to remove porn from the shelves of "family-friendly" local businesses? What could they do …

— To help save the lives of unborn babies, even when our own government actively defended and supported the evil of abortion that has now claimed the lives of more than 60 million babies since 1973?

— To fight for marriage as the permanent union of only one man and one woman, even when our own government was working to undermine and even redefine it by including unions between same-sex partners?

— To defend our religious liberties as a gift from God even when our own government was forcing us to accept its dictates even when they violate God's laws?

Valley Radio MP3 Podcast HERE, listen to Part I and download the entire PDF book here.

WWJD? Salt and Light

These are not new challenges. They are as old as Creation itself. However, like many others who came before us, we have too often been silent when we should have been speaking up. Sadly, the moral decline we are seeing today is a consequence of that silence.

So, we often wonder, "What would Jesus have done? … What did He mean when He called us to be Salt and Light to the world?"

What does Minnery refer to as the "godly principle" that drove a Vermont farmer and three Indiana mothers to stand up for moral virtue in their communities? What "divine impulse" and "twin truths" have made the church throughout history to be a "community of compassion" in times of great need?

Finally, what role are we called to play today, both individually and as the Body of Christ, to take a stand for the full Gospel in this great Civil War of Values in America?

Crossroads: Where Faith and Culture Meet

That's the background for what Rita Dunaway and I will discuss this weekend as Part I of our new Crossroads series on Why You Can't Stay Silent.

It will air on one of the following Valley radio stations: WBTX (1470 AM and 102.1 FM) on Saturday at 4:00 p.m. and again on Sunday at 7:30 a.m., followed by WSVA (550 AM and 92.1 FM) at 8:30, and on WNLR (1150) at 11:30.

If you miss the broadcast, you can hear it online at www.valleyfamilyforum.org and click on the Crossroad's link located on the home page.

Crossroads is almost entirely listener supported. Therefore, if you would like to help, please send your check to Crossroads at PO Box 881, Harrisonburg, 22803. All donations are tax-deductible.

In addition, please remember to check Rita's columns on many of these hot-button issues that appear every week on World Net Daily and on Saturdays in the Daily News Record.

Thank you, for God and Country,

Dean

How Christians Should Vote: A Christian model for voting in the 2018 midterm elections & beyond

AUGUST 3, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW, CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW, ESCHATOLOGY, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

A candidate's personal sinfulness matters, but it matters less than sinful public policy

> "Often the only choice open to the Christian in a particular situation will be a choice between evils; but he will realize that it is not a matter of indifference whether the greatest possible, or the least possible evil comes to pass, and that that to help to bring about the greatest evil by refusing, out of a mistaken perfectionism, to choose the least is surely to be guilty of dereliction of duty." — C.E.B. Cranfield

Was voting for Donald Trump wrong? Was it a betrayal of Christianity? That is the narrative offered by progressives. Who can forget Southern Baptist ERLC chief Russell Moore claiming Christians supporting Trump betrayed everything they believed? **It was sickening and theological malpractice.**

But those critics misunderstand the point of voting. It isn't for virtue signaling.

There is a reason theologians and pastors ranging from Dr. Wayne Grudem to Dr. Norman Geisler to Dr. Robert Jeffress supported Trump. Policies. Trump's policies were the moral choice.

"Voting for Clinton and her ultraliberal policies is not an option for me as an evangelical Christian," Grudem told OneNewsNow. "Therefore, I am left with two options: (1) vote for Trump, or (2) vote for a third-party candidate whose hopes of winning belong to fantasy – not reality. And if these are my only two options, then voting for a third-party candidate has the clear effect of helping to elect Clinton, because it is taking my vote away from Trump. That is why the liberal media loved it when I said I was finding it hard to decide."

A Christian model for voting

What is an election? An election is not the place for witnessing to the lost or of showing the world how awesomely you live your Christianity. Elections determine the direction of public policy for a state. For Christians, we should approach an election as an opportunity to help the state to do its job—its God-given job.

What is the state's God-given job? Protecting life and religious liberty for starters. (**Check out this link for our extended treatment of Romans 13 & 1 Peter 2:13-17**.)

Christians must evaluate the candidates and party platforms in view of what God wants the state to accomplish. This must keep in mind a key truth: We live in a fallen world. Candidates are sinful. All of them.

Typically, Christians have evaluated fitness for office with a focus on personal morality. That worked when the country was mostly Christian and even nominally Christian. However, today we live in secular America. Often no candidate truly represents a Christian worldview. What should a Christian do when neither candidate reflects their morality? Focus on policy.

Christians must learn: A candidates personal sinfulness matters, but it matters less than sinful public policy when voting.

Simply, is Donald Trump's personal infidelity and rudeness more important than allowing the election of a candidate promoting mass murder and the erosion of religious liberty? Character matters, but when the choice is between a rude, adulterer and the party of abortion and reduced religious liberty—there was no choice. There is no choice in 2018 and beyond.

Evangelicals overwhelmingly rendered that verdict despite the progressives who worked hard to shake their confidence.

There was only one choice—Donald Trump in 2016. But, why do so many elites attack this? William Lane Craig said it best—spiritual immaturity.

Craig said:

> "I think there is a kind of immaturity among some people about moral decision-making where they think that moral decision-making is a matter of choosing between the good alternative and the bad alternative. That is a very naïve, almost childish, view of moral decision-making. We are frequently confronted with moral choices in which we have no good alternatives…Intro courses in philosophy or ethics major on this point by presenting moral dilemmas to clarify students' values. For example, a textbook illustration is the runaway streetcar example where if you do not throw the switch the streetcar will hit and kill a man working on the tracks. But if you do throw the switch then the streetcar will kill five people who are on the tracks. So which choice do you make? You don't have a good choice in a case like that. There are two bad outcomes and you have to choose the lesser of two evils. I think the most poignant illustration of this point is Sophie's Choice where the young mother is presented by the Nazi soldiers with a choice as to which of her children will be sent to the death camp and which one she can keep alive. If she refuses to choose one of her two children then both will be sent to the death camps. In a case like this, this poor mother had no good choice. She had to choose the lesser of two evils and pick one of her two children to be exterminated. It is just horrible."

Progressives at The Gospel Coalition and the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention apply a childish moral reasoning in an attempt to exploit the biblically illiterate and show the world (or at least the folks at the Washington Post and New York Times) how authentically Christian they are.

Pharisees of old prayed in public. They did alms in front of everyone. Today, Pharisees virtue signal to please the crowds on Twitter, the hordes on Facebook and the elites at the New York Times or Washington Post. However, that isn't a productive way to win elections.

But didn't 2016 show evangelical Christians only care about results?

Philosopher and Theologian Norman Geisler explains that results matter. He wrote, "The Christian ethic does not neglect results. Although results do not determine what is right, they may influence one's ethical decisions. For example, a Christian should calculate which direction a gun is pointing before pulling the trigger. Drivers need to estimate the possible consequence of their speed in relation to other objects."

And with the Supreme Court on the line in 2016, our religious liberty was staring down the barrel of a gun.

But it has limits. Geisler cautions, "There is, however, an important difference between the deontological use of results and a teleological use of them. In Christian ethics these results are all

calculated *within* rules or norms. That is, no anticipated result as such can be used as a justification for breaking any God-given moral law."

Politics isn't about perfection, but results (and that isn't consequentialism)

The Trump-Clinton election of 2016 highlights this key principle. Politics isn't about perfection. You'll never find the perfect candidate. However, God still wants us to be involved as good citizens. As C.E.B. Cranfield warned, allowing a greater evil because we won't accept a lesser evil is dangerous.

A common critique of this view among evangelical elites focuses on how a Christian must refrain from supporting a bad person. How do we reconcile this seeming tension? Graded Absolutism.

Christians believe our actions must be governed by God's absolute moral standard. The standard proceeds from his unchanging nature and His expressed commandments, according to philosopher and theologian Norman L. Geisler. Yet, we live in a fallen world where the likes of Stalin and Mao murder millions. Because evil exists there will be times that our moral duties may conflict. The textbook example comes from the life of the heroic Christian Corrie Ten Boom who lied to save the lives of Jews during Nazi occupation of her homeland.

Geisler explains, "graded absolutism holds that our responsibility is to obey the greater commandment, and we are not guilty for not following the lesser conflicting commandment."

Applying this to an election is useful. Christians should rank their priorities based on the Bible's teachings. (Pro Tip: Any consistently Christian worldview will rank protecting babies and religious liberty at the top.)

Ordinarily, as Christians we shouldn't promote someone with character flaws; however, in the context of an election, Trump's character flaws were far less dangerous than the policies offered by Democrats and the Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton.

This is why Christian voters instinctively focus on abortion and religious liberty. These are key issues. Protecting innocent life and worshiping God freely are at the heart of God's purpose for government.

Any vote destructive of those ends defies God's created order. As Christians, we should vote for candidates who best further these policy goals.

But what about other issues? Aren't they important too? Of course, but is any issue more fundamental to the purpose of government than the protection of innocent life? Isn't that the cornerstone of justice?

Voting in a fallen world where Christian and non-Christians participate in the political process necessitates compromise and focus. Compromise in understanding that gains may be tempered by the limitations of the mechanisms of the state (constitutions or courts, etc.). Focus in understanding that one election or cycle is not enough to bring lasting change on these issues.

Cranfield explained a theological basis for these limits, "Both New Testament eschatology and the New Testament insistence on the fact of human sinfulness lead us to the realization that there are limits to what we can achieve in the sphere of politics, and that t**herefore limited goals are not to be despised."**

Evangelical Christians in 2018 must continue their efforts from 2016 to defeat the attacks on life and liberty. Christians with a consistent Christian worldview must prioritize protecting innocent life and religious liberty. At a minimum, that means opposing the party of abortion and religious oppression (the Democratic Party) at every opportunity.

Politics requires discipline. To achieve results, Christians must be consistent voters and able to ignore the distractions from political opponents (even when they are or claim to be fellow Christians.) Christians must remember that heading into the 2018 election and beyond.

SOURCE: **CAPSTONE REPORT**

Linda's Lessons Learned: Colorado Baker Jack Phillips – A Modern Day Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego

JUNE 11, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Linda Wall

If the three names Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego do not ring a bell in your mind, the account of their day to fame can be found in the third chapter of the book of Daniel. For Christians, these are three of our predecessors who were thrown in a fiery furnace because they refused to obey a government law that violated the laws of the Living God.

This week every news blip, blog and commentary gave their twist and slant on the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in favor of the Colorado baker. What would you have done if you had been in the baker's shoes? Would you have denied the Lord by making the wedding cake for two men or would you have said, "No"?

Jack Phillips has spent the last six years of his life going through trials and tribulations because he was a modern day "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego."

Each and everyday believers are confronted with situations whether or not to stand for Christ and upon God's Word or become a "Judas" and betray Jesus. Some have experienced situations as severe as Jack Phillips, but often the situations occur within the confines of a church building or among others who profess Christianity.

After Jesus rescued me from homosexuality I fell in love with Him. He's all I wanted to talk about. I couldn't understand why other church-going Christians did not want anything to do with Jesus once they walked outside the sanctuary. Maybe they weren't in love with Him; maybe they were ashamed; maybe they were fakes.

Today, there has been a great misunderstanding about what constitutes a Christian. The faith that the early Church had is quite different from what we call Christianity today. Almost forty years ago, I sold everything I owned to literally follow Jesus in order to find out if He was the same today as He was yesterday. Guess what? He isn't the one who has changed. It's the ones who claim to be followers of Christ who have changed and developed a comfortable Christianity.

Many churches today push a "rapture" doctrine, which has seduced the Saints of God into a sleep. Jesus's final instructions were to go and to teach. It's called *The Great Commission*. Never was it intended for the followers to sit on the pews, let the preacher do it all and wait to fly out of here.

Jack Phillips lived his faith outside the sanctuary, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. He stood upon God's Word. What about you? Are you willing to stand for your faith as a modern-day Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego?

There are many cases similar to Jack's going on all across America. **Last week** we introduced of few of them to you.

Thanks be to God for seeing Jack through his fiery furnace and for the victory for the freedom to exercise one's Christian faith in America.

Pray for boldness and to be endued with power from on High. Put on the whole armor of God: truth, righteousness, the gospel, faith, salvation and the Word of God that you may be able to be a modern-day Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego when you face your fiery furnace.

Linda's Lessons Learned: Please You Send Three Postcards for Philip?

APRIL 7, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Linda Wall

Another Virginian (**must read the first here**) under Christian persecution in the Lisa Miller Case is Philip Zodhiates.

I had never met him until last weekend when I had lunch with him and his wife. As I sat across from them in the restaurant, it did not take long to determine these were "real Christians" – those who practice their faith outside of the sanctuary.

For this, Philip has been sentenced to two concurrent 3-year prison sentences.

Despite the fact that the United States Constitution guarantees the freedom to exercise one's religion, Philip is facing imprisonment for giving a mom and her daughter a ride from Lynchburg, Virginia to Buffalo, New York.

He is charged with aiding and abetting in international kidnapping for helping a fellow sister in the Lord with a ride.

Philip Zodhiates is presently out on bail awaiting an appeals court hearing on April 9.

A postcard campaign has been launched in an effort to bring this injustice to the attention of President Trump, Vice President Pence and Attorney General Sessions. Will you click on the

following link, download and mail the three postcards? Print pages 1 and 2 front to back on cardstock. **https://tinyurl.com/yaz54p5k**

This is the beginning of setting the record straight about the violation of Constitutional rights in the lives of Christians in America in the Lisa Miller Case. Those who practice sexual perversion in this country want to make the Lisa Miller Case the equivalent of Roe vs. Wade.

Their goal is to set a precedent for the entire country against Christians who live their faith and obey God and His Word. Pray against the principalities that have America in bondage to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender behaviors.

Philip Zodhiates is facing legal fees over $350,000. Would you consider a donation toward this debt? Donate here: https://419fund.com/projects/philip-zodhiates/

About 419 Fund

The 419 Fund is a 501(c)3 non-profit crowdfunding site that provides an opportunity for Christians to support one another for legal, medical, scholarship, missions and more. 419 Fund was conceived and created to help Christians lift and ease fellow Christians' financial burdens. 419 Fund approves opportunities for funding including legal fees, court costs, attorney's fees, fines, individual medical needs, supporting pro-life organizations, and providing aid after natural disasters. Fundraising can also be used to generate scholarships for deserving college students, or to gain financial support for missions and missionaries. 419 Fund is a non-profit organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

For more information on the 419 Fund visit them online: **https://www.419fund.com/**

The Most Important Event in Our Lives

MARCH 31, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

We were given the wonderful gift of life but we are born with an inherited sinful nature passed on to us by our forefathers.

Continuing to live with this sinful nature can have devastating eternal consequences particularly at our death, unless we have a spiritual experience called 'being born again'.

This spiritual event involves Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and what he did for us. We can answer God's calling by repenting for the sins we have committed, acknowledge Him and ask by faith and trust that God will forgive us. He does this by pouring our sins into Jesus and in exchange God's goodness is poured in to us, the born-again experience. God's Holy Spirit now dwells in us, we are not our own, we belong to Him.

God has said if we confess our sins He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

At death we come into heaven and have an eternal relationship with God. If we do not have this born-again experience at death we are eternally separated from God in Hell.

This is the plan that God, our Creator, has placed us in and calls us to according to the Holy Bible.

He has given us the responsibility to decide to accept the Lord Jesus or not- it is the most important decision in our lives. As an unknown poet said:

"The greatest miracle of all,

The sages taught of yore,

Is life itself. But search again:

The transformed life is more."
Greene Hollowell

Crossroads: Entertaining Ourselves to Death, High Impact Audio

MARCH 25, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

"Guard your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life." (Prov. 4:23)

"Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6)

"I will put no wicked thing before my eyes, and I hate the work of evil people who put it there. I will have no part of it." (Ps. 101:3)

"Whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and commendable, if there is any excellence or anything worthy of praise, think on *these things." (Philippians 4:8)*

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good, and acceptable, and perfect." (Romans 12:2)

"The Lord has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land because there is no truth, no mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. They have sowed the wind and shall reap the whirlwind. Therefore, the land is in mourning." (Hosea 4:1-3; 8:7)

* * * * *

How Could This Happen in America?

Our Crossroads program this weekend will focus first of all on three horrific events that reflect the gravity of moral decline and decay in our culture today and which set two new records for deadly violence in America. (**click here for mp3 Audio**)

The one that is still so fresh in our minds took place last month on February 14 at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland Florida. Seventeen people were killed and 17 more wounded by 19-year-old shooter Nikolas Cruz.

Before that, however, on December 14, 2012, 20-year-old Adam Lanza shot and killed his mother and then went on to kill 20 children and seven adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut before killing himself. It was the deadliest mass school shooting in U.S. history.

(**click here for mp3 Audio**)

And then, although not school related, there was the mass shooting in Las Vegas last October 1 when 64-year-old Stephen Paddock fired more than 1100 rounds into a crowd attending an outdoor music festival, leaving 58 people dead and 851 injured. It is the deadliest mass shooting committed by an individual in our history.

So that's what has happened but the bigger question is how and why it is happening. Is it just about gun control or could there be larger causes for this growing violence in our culture?

God Has Been Expelled from the Public Square

We can point the finger of blame in many different directions, but three of them stand out.

First of all, the less obvious but most important cause of these tragedies is the rejection of God in our schools and in the culture at large. When the U.S. Supreme Court banned school-sponsored prayer and Bible reading in 1962 and 1963, it left a moral vacuum in its place.

When it compounded those tragic decisions with another misguided decision in 1980 to prohibit school displays of the Ten Commandments, it made the situation even worse. Everyone is now left to do what is right is his/her own eyes.

As in the days of the Old Testament prophet Hosea, we have sowed the wind and are now reaping the whirlwind.

The Breakdown of the Family

The second cause should also come as no surprise, for both school shooters came from broken families. That reinforces what we all know to be true as a matter of general principle.

There is no better environment in which to raise a child than in a home with a loving father and mother who also love God and who raise their children according to His Word. Broken homes often lead to broken hearts and broken lives.

The Entertainment Sewer of Violence

Finally, and perhaps the most obvious cause of all but also the least mentioned, is the moral rot that is permeating the world of entertainment in which our children swim and which their parents too often tolerate, normalize, and perhaps even approve.

The correlation between what we see and what we do should be obvious. When our boys and young men amuse themselves by soaking in violence, cruelty, and murder from television, movies and online videos, all available now on personal, handheld devices, and when they then begin to participate in such acts for hours on end via ever-more-realistic and addictive video "games," no one should be surprised when they gravitate toward real-life violence.

In fact, Sandy Hook investigators found a cache of hair-raising games in killer Adam Lanza's collection, including a computer game called "School Shooting," in which the player controls a character who enters a school and shoots students. Cruz had similar tendencies.

Lanza and Cruz are not isolated cases on this issue of entertainment as it relates to violence. For example, consider these facts from a recent paper published by the American Association of Family Physicians:

Children and adolescents in the U.S. spend an average of 7.5 hours per day using various forms of entertainment media, including television, video games, the Internet, and recorded media.

An average American youth will witness 200,000 violent acts on television before age 18.

Nearly all American teens — up to 97% — play video games. The average amount of weekly playing time is 13 hours.

Consumers of Rap music are also more likely to accept the use of violence, to accept violence against women, and to commit violent or aggressive act themselves.

Not surprisingly, there is a significant association between violent content with increases in aggression, desensitization to violence, and a decrease in positive social behaviors.

Therefore, given this background, why does the "March for Our Lives" gun control rally taking place in Washington today not address these larger issues and culpable causes? They are either willfully ignorant or intentionally resistant to their conclusions.

Moral Rot, Pornography, and Sexual Harassment

In addition to the entertainment sewer that feeds violence and warps the character of young boys who grow up to be school shooters, there is a parallel sewer that feeds the appetite for sexual immorality. It affects both men and women and often leads to harassment aimed particularly at women.

It is right for the #MeToo movement to expose sexual harassment. But we should not settle for punishing sexual harassment and abuse. We should also aim to produce fewer sexual harassers and abusers by examining the causes of such behavior.

For example, why do scantily clad women parade themselves before testosterone driven males to get their attention and then complain at the form it takes? And why do men allow themselves to be drawn into those dangerous traps rather than turning and running in the opposite direction as they should?

We should acknowledge the moral rot that permeates the world of sexual entertainment in which our children also swim. For further example, according to a RANS Health Survey conducted several years ago:

Teens who watch a lot of television with sexual content are more likely to initiate sexual intercourse in the following year.

Frequent exposure to TV sexual content was associated with a significantly greater likelihood of teen pregnancy in the three years following exposure.

Heavy exposure to sexually degrading lyrics predicts accelerated initiation of sexual activity.

So, where is the public outcry against pornography that leaves a trail of ruined men, exploited women, broken marriage, damaged children, disease, crime, and sometimes violent death?

When pornography is accepted and normalized, when sex is the most prevalent theme in our music, books, magazines, television programs and movies, it is no wonder that some men will seek to act out the ideas they have consumed. So while the steady diet of sex in our media and

entertainment doesn't excuse sexual harassment or abuse or make it any less wrong, it should make it less surprising.

Isn't it time to confront the root of the problem, just as we did in turning the culture away from smoking 40 years ago to where we are offended today when it pollutes our public space?

And if they're serious about confronting sexual harassment, why doesn't the Women's March head to Hollywood to demand more wholesome entertainment? And why doesn't it direct its ire at Corporate America to demand support for and sponsorship of family-friendly entertainment and for natural marriage rather than for a perverted LGBT agenda and transgender bathrooms?

Enough Is Enough!

Bringing it home, what can we do as parents, as ministry and community leaders, as educators, and as elected officials?

How can we exert our own personal responsibilities and authority to ensure that our lives and our homes reflect the Godly values that are so critical to developing Godly character in our children and in our communities?

To assist in that process, Rita has recommended a web site from Focus on the Family called **www.pluggedin.com** that provides excellent suggestions for books, movies, TV programs, and games that avoid violence and gratuitous sexual content.

In addition, we can speak out when we see materials that are hostile to these values, just as the Valley Family Forum did 15 years ago when it encountered three SOB (sexually oriented businesses) in Harrisonburg and, with strong community support, asked the City Council to limit the time, manner, and place of their operations. They did, and now there are none. Laus Deo!

Crossroads: Where Faith and Culture Meet!

For more on all of this, please join Rita Dunaway and me this weekend on one of the following four Valley radio stations: WBTX (1470) at 4:00 p.m. today (Saturday) and again at 7:30 a.m. on Sunday, followed by WSVA (550) and WSVA/FM (92.1) at 8:30; and on WNLR (1150) at 11:30.

You can also listen online at **www.valleyfamilyforum.org** by clicking on the appropriate Crossroad's link shown on the home page.

We deeply appreciate your prayers, your encouragement, and your financial support of these programs. All gifts are tax-deductible and can be sent by check to Crossroads at PO Box 881, Harrisonburg, 22803.

For God and Country,

Dean

Martin Sheen reveals wife was conceived in rape, talks about ‘strong’ anti-abortion views

MARCH 25, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

DUBLIN, April 12, 2011 (**LifeSiteNews.com**) – Well-known for his role as President Bartlet in the television drama “The West Wing,” actor Martin Sheen, born Ramon Estevez, has given an interview in which he reveals the startlingly personal reasons for his ‘strong’ anti-abortion stance. In the interview he also discusses his Catholic faith, which he says includes praying the Rosary, belief in transubstantiation, and the communion of saints.

Sheen, a complex character whose Catholic devotional life and pro-life views have not stopped him from backing the presidency of Barack Obama, was interviewed by Gay Byrne; **the interview** was released on Irish broadcaster RTE’s website April 3.

Byrne asked Sheen: “The liberal causes that you espouse are readily identifiable with people in the movie business, but your anti-abortion stance is very strong indeed. And tell me what you told me on the late late show in 1987 as to why that is.”

Sheen replied, “Well we had pregnancies with our grandsons, three specifically. And we welcomed these children and encouraged the mothers to have the children and gave them support. The lads were not happy at the time but they came to love these children. We have three grown grandchildren, two of them are married, they’re some of the greatest source of joy in our lives.”

Sheen went on to note that his wife Janet struggled after the conception of their fourth child, but chose life despite the circumstances after speaking with a therapist.

However, Byrne asked about Janet, “was she not born because of a rape?” Sheen responded that his wife would rather that he not speak about it, but does admit that she was conceived in rape. Byrne followed up, suggesting that “if there had been an abortion she would not exist.”

Sheen relates further that even after birth Janet’s mother contemplated “dumping her in the Ohio River.” She was raised by aunts till she was six, after which her mother, with a new husband, “came to collect her,” he said.

During the interview Sheen also gave a brief reaction to the matter of his son Charlie Sheen’s much-publicized escapades involving drugs and prostitutes, and the recent cancellation of the television show “Two and a Half Men,” in which Charlie starred.

Martin said that he had only known of the cancellation of “Two and Half Men” for 24 hours prior to the RTE interview. He said that he prays for his son Charlie “every day, and I’ve been doing so for quite a while.”

As to the outcome of Charlie’s situation, said Sheen, “I dread to think, I don’t know.” He noted that he would be cutting short his journey to Malta and heading home to support his wife in dealing with the matter.

*View the interview **here.***

Why Christians Should Oppose Expanding Medicaid

MARCH 22, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

1) The Church's duty. God calls the family and the Church – not the State – to care for the sick and the poor among us. Rather than living out God's command to care for the sick and the poor, Christians who support a massive expansion of the Medicaid welfare program in Virginia are illegitimately ceding their own responsibility to the State.

2) Government replaces the Church. The State's expansion of Medicaid would be a further usurpation of the Church's exclusive God-given mission to care for the sick and the poor. In doing so, the State minimizes an essential function of the Church in society by depriving the Church of many of its best opportunities to serve the least of these in order to meet both their physical and spiritual needs.

3) Idolatry of the State. The unassailable tendency of government welfare programs like Medicaid is to make an idol of the State. Since the State becomes for many their provider, sustainer, healer, the one on whom they depend, and the one they turn to in times of need, they naturally attribute to government the honor and glory rightly due to God. And they increasingly turn to government agencies instead of the Church, who can point them to God. The greatest idolatry of our time may rightly be deemed the silent worship of the false god of the welfare State.

4) Government theft and redistribution of wealth. Instead of encouraging voluntary giving out of a spirit of charity, love, generosity, and Godly obedience, expanding Medicaid necessarily involves an illegitimate confiscation of private property through the coercive power of the State, accompanied by a system of redistributing that property to select people whom the State deems worthy. Because the State lacks the rightful jurisdiction for charitable giving, welfare programs like Medicaid rob from some what is rightfully theirs in order to give it to others to whom it does not belong.

5) Undercutting those most in need. Expanding Medicaid from the most needy and vulnerable populations to cover able-bodied adults further dilutes the impact of already scarce resources. Under Virginia's current Medicaid program, only one in five doctors will even accept Medicaid patients. Expanding the program adds hundreds of thousands more Virginians to the list of eligible enrollees, but doesn't add any more doctors, nurses or medical facilities to accommodate them – making it even harder for the most needy to receive care.

6) Strapping future generations with our debt. Expanding Medicaid is morally wrong because it will strap our children and grandchildren with mountains of future debt they cannot pay back, by substantially adding to the federal deficit in order to pay for what has already proven to be a fiscally unsustainable program.

7) The curse of generational dependency. All government welfare/entitlement programs have proven by experience to create generational dependency upon the State, instead of promoting and allowing for personal responsibility and advancement. Such programs create a perverse incentive to remain below a certain financial threshold, to hide income sources, and to engage in illegitimate forms of trade. And while purporting to help individuals in their time of need, far too often such programs trap individuals and effectively consign them to a status of helplessness rather than health.

8) Contributing to family breakdown. People of faith should discourage further expansions of welfare programs like Medicaid because they have been shown to be a major contributing factor to family breakdown, and particularly, to the rise of fatherless households. Medicaid creates a disincentive for people to marry because it rewards those whose income remains separate, and thus lower.

9) Lack of personal accountability. Government welfare programs like Medicaid fail to accomplish what they seek to fix and always cost more than anticipated because of the lack of personal accountability for the individual beneficiaries of the program. When an impersonal governmental entity provides for a person's needs with tax dollars it obtained by force, that person begins to feel entitled. When a private person, affiliated with a private organization provides for a person's needs with money that was voluntarily and sacrificially given, a relationship with accountability is formed, the person being helped begins to feel both grateful and empowered, and the one who helped them is better able to determine whether that person should continue to be helped.

10) More taxpayer-funded abortions. Expanding Medicaid in Virginia will lead to more abortions and at taxpayer expense. When Illinois, for example, expanded its Medicaid program under Obamacare, it led to the funding of at least 12,000 more abortions per year.

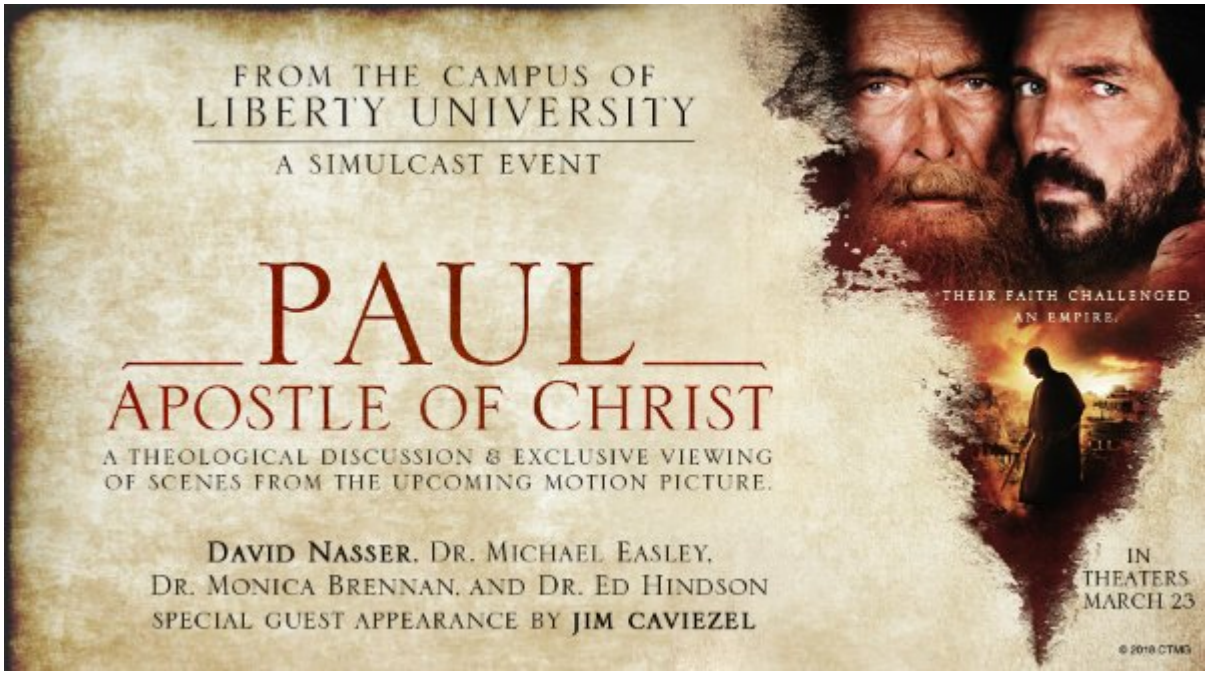
Beyond the direct funding of abortion, expanding Medicaid will mean millions more in funding flowing to the five Planned Parenthood abortion centers in Virginia for "family planning" services.

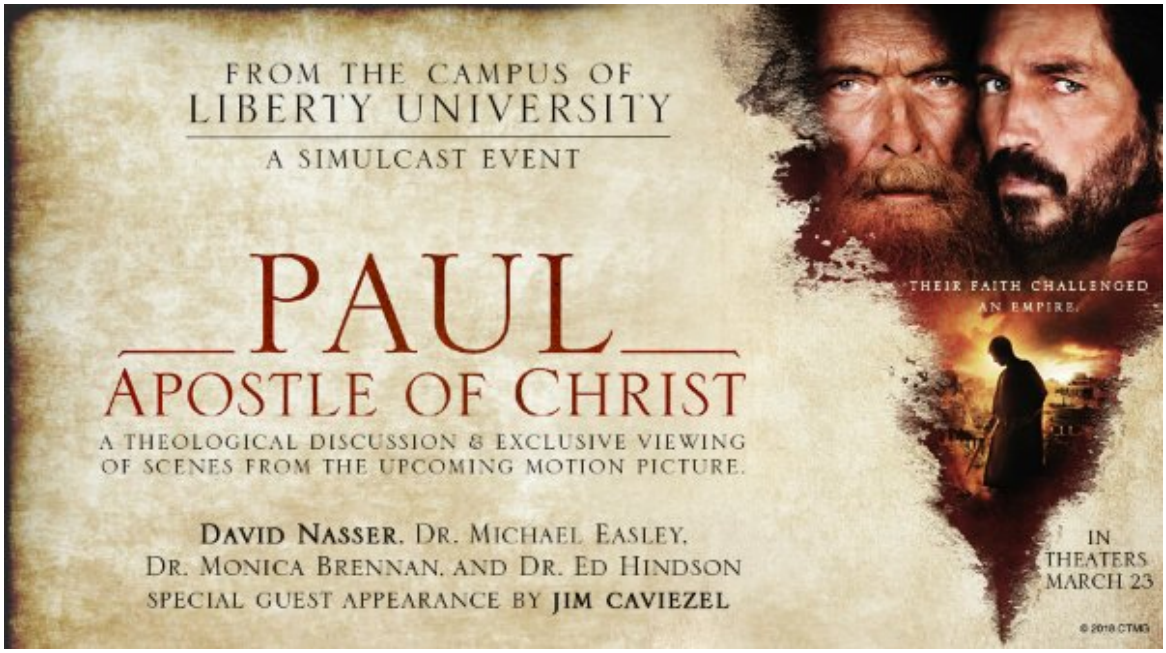
11) Violating conscience rights. If the massive federal power grab of much of America's healthcare industry has shown us anything, it is that it sets up many more conflicts between the priorities of the State and the conscience rights of individuals. The field of medicine continues to force upon medical professionals, business owners, and taxpayers alike increasingly difficult choices – like paying for and/or participating in abortions, various forms of contraception, stem-cell research, human genetic engineering, physician-assisted suicide, hormone therapy, and "gender-reassignment" surgery. These would only increase by expanding Medicaid.

12) The deterioration of liberty. Every time the government's power and dominion grows, all of our liberty shrinks with inverse proportionally. The surest way to preserve the freedom to fully live out our faith is to keep government limited and within its proper scope. We do this by avoiding things like the massive expansion of Medicaid.

March 18th, Richmond VA: Special Showing of PAUL, APOSTLE OF CHRIST at Virginia Christian Alliance

MARCH 11, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD





Sunday**, March18th at 4:30 to 6 pm.**
Seating is limited!
Please RSVP to don@vachristian.org
Virginia Christian Alliance

8659 Staples Mill Road
Henrico, Virginia 23228

PAUL, APOSTLE OF CHRIST is the story of two men. Luke, as a friend and physician, risks his life when he ventures into the city of Rome to visit Paul, who is held captive in Nero's darkest, bleakest prison cell.

But Nero is determined to rid Rome of Christians and does not flinch from executing them in the riskiest ways possible. Before Paul's death sentence can be enacted, Luke resolves to write another book, one that details the beginnings of "The Way" and the birth of what will come to be known as the church.

Bound in chains, Paul's struggle is internal. He has survived so much—floggings, shipwreck, starvation, stoning, hunger and thirst, cold and exposure—yet as he waits for his appointment with death, he is haunted by the shadows of his past misdeeds. Alone in the dark, he wonders if he has been forgotten… and if he has the strength to finish well.

Two men struggle against a determined emperor and the frailties of the human spirit in order to live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ and spread their message to the world.

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

Linda's Lessons Learned – Stop Whining, Christians. REJOICE!

MARCH 10, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Linda Wall

A few weeks ago "enemies of the cross of Christ" (Philippians3:18) on the TV show, *The View*, mocked **Vice President Pence** for following Jesus Christ. He was even called mentally ill. This incident was a perfect modern-day example of what Jesus told us to expect if we follow Him.

Jesus said, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad for great is your reward in heaven…" (Matthew 5:11-12)

Christian persecution in America for following Jesus Christ is escalating. Jesus was hated 2,000 years ago, and He is still hated today. If you are following Him, you are going to be hated, also.

Jesus said, "and ye shall be hated of all men for my names sake, but he that endures to the end shall be saved." (Matthew 10:22)

Today, too many American Christians are whining and acting just like this world when persecution comes, using terms like Christian bigotry, bullying and equality for Christians. Grow up, brethren! Rejoice and be exceedingly glad as Jesus stated.

Recently, I shared with you about the Assembly of God church I was attending that became lukewarm when they took their eyes off of Jesus. At that church**, I experienced the worst**

persecution thus far in my journey: threatened with being arrested.

At the Lord's leading, I put together a book explaining the erroneous teachings that were coming from the Christian celebrities stopping by on their nationwide tours. My research took me to the College of William and Mary where I discovered many modern-day doctrines had their origins in Hinduism.

Once the research was complete, the Lord had me send copies of the book to forty different church members. It created quite a storm because the pastor was out of the country. Upon his return to America, he called a meeting of staff and key church and choir members.

Some stood to defend the writings because it was all scriptural. The pastor attempted to justify that he was the pastor, and I was nobody. Little did he know that Jesus Christ had taught me God's Word, and I was being His Messenger.

Eventually, I was threatened by a letter from the pastor's lawyer stating I would be arrested if I returned to the church. That was a joyous occasion for me. It was just like Jesus said it would be. The ultimate was happening – I was in trouble for standing for Jesus and standing on the scriptures. I rejoiced and praised God that I was worthy to be persecuted for the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

It is time to grow up believers. You will be persecuted. It's not bullying. It's not bigotry. It is exactly what Jesus said it would be: persecution. Learn to stand upon God's Word.

Apostle Paul put it this way:

"Put on the **whole armour of God**, that ye may be able **to stand** against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore, take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able **to withstand in the evil day** and having done all, to stand." (Ephesians 6:11-17)

Vice President Pence isn't the only one in America to be persecuted for standing for Christ. You've probably heard of the baker, the florist, the photographer or the County Clerk in Kentucky to name a few who stood for Jesus and the Word of God. They have indeed suffered consequences for their stands, but great is their reward.

Allow me in the weeks to come to introduce you to some **Virginia Christians** who are suffering for their stand for Christ and God's Word: **Lisa and Isabella Miller, mother and daughter, Pastor Ken Miller and Phillip Zodiates.** I will share the details of the Christian persecution of these four Virginians that began fourteen years ago and is on-going.

Linda's Lessons Learned – Calling the Lukewarm Church in America to Action

MARCH 4, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Linda Wall

*(**Part 1**: Why Is the Church in America Lukewarm? | **Part 2**: Why is the Church in America Lukewarm? GLBT Influence | **Part 3:** Why is the Church in America Lukewarm? The Bible*

As I sat there on the pew in the Baptist church in Norfolk, Virginia, I yearned to be free from homosexuality; I had reached the end of my rope. A few days earlier, Satan had tried to get me to commit suicide. I knew that killing myself was not an option, but what was the answer for my life?

Questions ran through my head: Could I be free from homosexuality? Could the Jesus I had learned about in Sunday school help me? Was He really more than a historical figure? Was He alive? Would He hear my cry or was He way off yonder in heaven?

Time seemed to be frozen as I thought about all of the miracles Jesus had performed when He walked the earth: restoring sight to the blind, enabling the lame to walk, healing lepers and even raising the dead. If He was really the same today as He was yesterday, then He could heal me from homosexuality.

When the pastor gave the invitation to come to Jesus, I went forward to the front of the church weeping all the way, repented of my sins, asked for forgiveness, turned from my wicked ways, and from that day to now, almost forty years later, I have been following the "same Jesus."

I can attest to the fact that Jesus is alive, and He is the same today as He was yesterday. He is giving the same message today, "Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand."

For several weeks, I have been sharing with you how many false beliefs have crept into American church. (Why Is The Church in America Lukewarm? parts 1,2,3).

The Call to Action for the Church today is the same as the action I took: repent and turn from wickedness and follow Jesus.

When we come to Jesus, we become a new creation, old things are passed away. Jesus becomes Lord of our lives and we follow Him. We become His messengers in our day-to-day lives, not just inside a church building. If there is to be a revival or spiritual awakening in America, it has to be done the Bible way. Jesus has put it in very simple terms for the Church of what action must be taken.

After His resurrection, Jesus met with John on the Isle of Patmos. Jesus evaluated the churches. He said what was right, what was wrong, what corrections had to made and the consequences if they didn't. **(Revelation 2-3)**

What Might Jesus Say to the Lukewarm Church in America Today?

"I know thy works, thy labour, thy patience, thy tribulations, thy poverty, thy charity, thy service, thy faith, nevertheless I have somewhat against you." *(Rev 2-3kjv)*

You have built your modern day 'Golden Calves' and you worship them:

> your Christian schools, your Christian colleges and universities, your Christian ball teams, your Christian bands, your Christian pleasure cruises, your Christian theatrical productions, your Christian mission trips, your Christian anything and everything.

You have bowed down and worshiped other gods:

> your denominations, your church buildings, your choirs, your pastors and ministers, your man-made doctrines, your Easter and Christmas musicals, your mission trips, your good works, your yards, your cars, your houses, your children, your grandchildren, your jobs and careers, your hobbies, your gadgets and your sport teams.

You have kept silent when you should have been the light of the world and the salt of the earth:

> silent when I was removed from the lives of the children in school, silent when it became legal to kill babies inside the womb of their mothers, silent over the abomination of the men marrying men and women marrying women, silent about sin in the Church, silent about divorce, premarital sex and immorality in the Church.

You have committed spiritual adultery:

your allegiance has been to yourself, your organizations, your political parties, your fights for various 'causes,' your news media, your radio talk shows, your church meetings and conferences, your signing of petitions, your sending of faxes and your lobbying. Your children are taught with cartoons rather than the Bible, God's Word.

You have forgotten me:

you have forgotten what I did for you, you have forgotten the mocking, you have forgotten how they spit in my face, you have forgotten my beatings and how the skin was ripped from my bones, you have forgotten the crown of thorns pressed into my skull, you have forgotten the nails that were driven into my hands and my feet, you have forgotten the sword piercing my side and my blood pouring out for your sake that your sin-sick soul would have liberty and freedom and to break every chain that binds you.

All the Lukewarm Church has to do today is: REPENT

"If my people, which are called by my name,

shall **humble themselves**

and **pray**,

and **seek my face**,

and **turn from their wicked ways**;

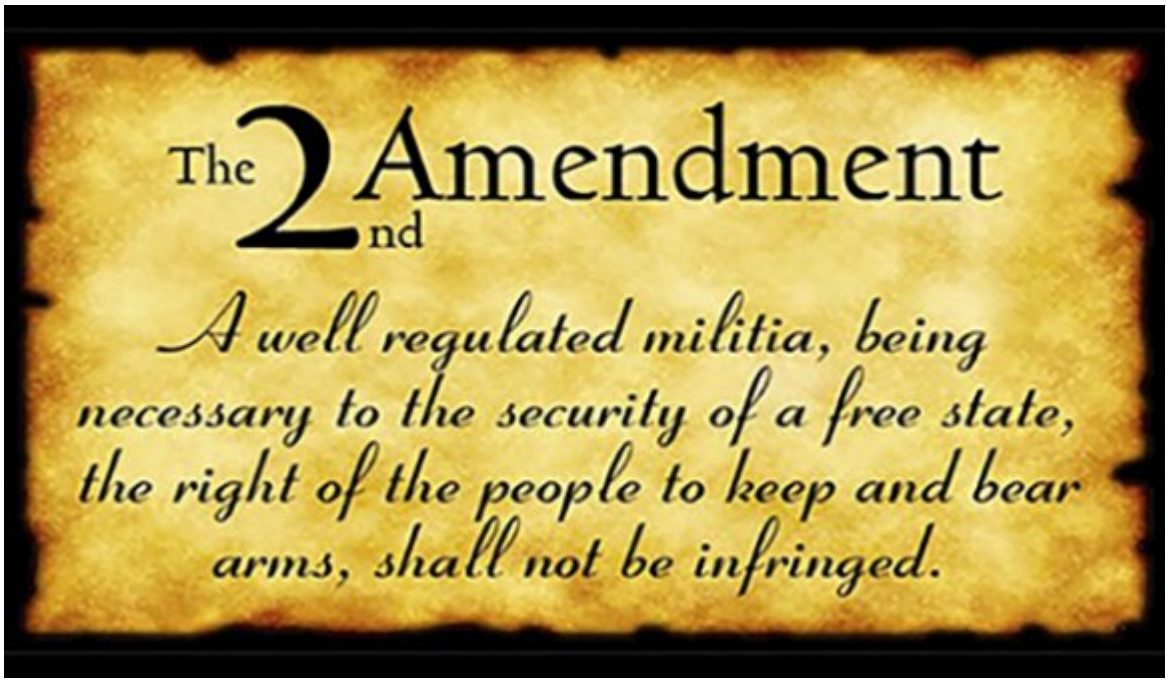
then will I hear from heaven,

and will forgive their sin,

and heal their land." (II Chronicles 7:14)

Amendment II Non-Negotiable

MARCH 4, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



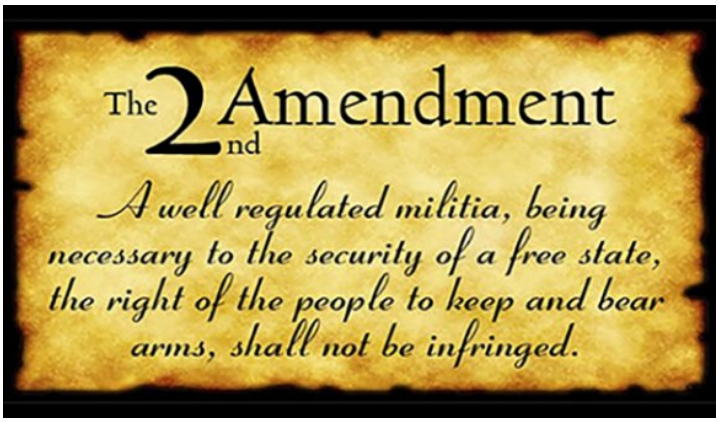
Rev. William Cook

What did the Framers mean by the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution which reads, *A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed*? The answer lies in the meaning of *"Militia*" and "*infringed*" as understood by Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century Americans. We look to "The forgotten Founding Father," Noah Webster (1758-1843), for the meaning of both.

Noah Webster (1758 – 1843), was a lexicographer and a language reformer who is often called the "Father of American Scholarship and Education." During his life, he was also a lawyer, schoolmaster, author, newspaper editor, as well as an outspoken politician. He began compiling *An American Dictionary of the English Language* in 1807, 31 years after the Declaration of Independence was ratified on July 4, 1776, 24 years after the American Revolution was formally concluded on September 3, 1783, and 16 years after the Bill of Rights was ratified on December 15, 1791. The first edition of his dictionary was published in two volumes in 1828, and the second, 33 years later in 1841.

The definition of "Militia" from *An American Dictionary of the English Language* along with some poignant quotes by a few Founding Fathers should suffice to illuminate the Framers' intent in the Second Amendment.

MILI'TIA, *noun* The body of soldiers in a state enrolled for discipline, but not engaged in actual service except in emergencies; *as distinguished from regular troops, whose sole occupation is war or military service. The militia of a country are the able bodied men organized into companies, regiments and brigades, with officers of all grades, and required by law to attend military exercises on certain days only, but at other times left to pursue their usual occupations .*
—Noah Webster's 1828 Edition of the American Dictionary of the English Language



"Who are the militia? Are they not ourselves? Is it feared, then, that we shall turn our arms each man against his own bosom. Congress have no power to disarm the militia. Their swords, and every other terrible implement of the soldier, are the birthright of an American… The unlimited power of the sword is not in the hands of either the federal or state governments, but, where I trust in God it will ever remain, in the hands of the people." —Tenche Coxe, The Pennsylvania Gazette, February 20, 1788

"To preserve liberty it is essential that the whole body of the people always possess arms and be taught alike, especially when young, how to use them…" —Light Horse Harry Lee, in Letters from the Federal Farmer to the Republic (1787-1788)

"A well regulated militia, composed of the people, trained to arms, is the best and most natural defense of a free country." ***(First Annals of Congress, at 434, June 8, 1789.*** **—James Madison**

"I ask you sir, who are the militia? They consist now of the whole people." (Elliott, Debates, 425-426) —George Mason

"The right of the citizens to keep and bear arms has justly been considered as the palladium of the liberties of a republic …" —Joseph Story, Associate Justice of the US Supreme Court

"A free people ought not only to be armed and disciplined but they should have sufficient arms and ammunition to maintain a status of independence from any who might attempt to abuse them, which would include their own government." —George Washington

If we believe media reports that the FBI and Broward County Sheriff's Office dropped the ball on 19-year-old Nikolas Cruz, the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooter, and that Broward County Sheriff's deputies failed to intervene during the attack, why the continued haranguing for

added infringements on gun ownership, including greater austerity in vetting the mental fitness of aspiring gun owners?

In a South Florida Sun Sentinel article published on Friday, reporters John Maines and Megan O'Matz, did yeoman's work in documenting the significant advance warnings the FBI and Broward County Sheriff's Office received about Nikolas Cruz, beginning two years ago. The article, ***Nikolas Cruz: A timeline of the warning signs ahead of Stoneman Douglas shooting***, reveals that the "sheriff's office received at least two calls from people concerned that Nikolas Cruz would shoot up a school. But deputies brushed them off."

The article also reveals that "a neighbor's son told the Broward County Sheriff's Office" on February 5, 2016, "that Cruz, pictured with guns on Instagram, 'planned to shoot up the school.' A deputy responds, discovers Cruz owns knives and a BB gun, and forwards the information to Marjory Stoneman Douglas high's school resource officer Scot Peterson.

The Sentinel article also indicated that in September 2017, "A blogger in Mississippi warns the FBI that a someone named 'nikolas cruz' wrote on his YouTube page: 'I'm going to be a professional school shooter.'" The report also reveals that "A caller from Massachusetts tells BSO that Cruz is collecting guns and knives and "could be a school shooter in the making." The caller says Cruz is now living in Lake Worth. A Broward County Sheriff's deputy tells the caller to contact the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office."

If simple due diligence by authorities would have prevented the attack, obsessing over Cruz's mental state or use of an AK-47 is completely detached from reality. Moreover, why would anyone entrust the definition of "mental stability" to a Government that has amassed $18.96 trillion in debt, that would allow men and women who believe they are the opposite gender to enlist in the US Military, that has appointed members of Hamas, a US-designated terrorist group, to sit on our Homeland Security Advisory Council's Countering Violent Extremism Working Group, that approves same-sex marriage, that has defended the mass murder of more than sixty million unborn children, that insists America is facing "an opioid crisis," while effectively ignoring our nation's immigration crisis, that refuses to secure our borders while defending the rights of non-citizens over those of citizens? INSANE!

The Musket was the AK-47 of the American Revolution. The British might have won if George III had thought to impose mental health and age restrictions on ownership of the muzzle-loaded, smoothbore long gun that became the "workhorse of the Revolution." God forbid there is not another Donald Trump after the next Barack Obama?

Could it be that there are worse fates than dying in a mass shooting at school? What about being indoctrinated in practical atheism, "climate change," and Socialism? What if the school teaches that a man can be a woman, or a woman, a man? What if students are being taught that premarital sex is good? That abortion will make the problem go away? What if students learn that two men

or two women can be married? What if they are taught to hate their country? What if much of what they learn at school is wrong.

Further discussion of restrictions on gun ownership is an outrage and an attack on the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Americans. Nothing more, nothing less. We the People, this clergyman included, repudiate the notion entirely.

Government does not exist to placate shrill ignorance, but to defend the Constitutional rights of all American citizens. The Second Amendment is not open to revision in the court of public opinion. Citizens' right to keep and bear arms is not debatable.

The gun control cabal does not expect to eviscerate the Second Amendment in one fell swoop, but will adhere to the maxim, "a good crisis shall not go to waste." Gun grabbers will happily walk away with incremental success, with a ban on the AK-47, or "mental fitness" as a prerequisite to gun ownership.

Notwithstanding strident demands *that "Something has got be done!"* nothing more is needed save a firm resolve to uphold the Second Amendment. Defenders of the right to keep and bear arms should not let the Stoneman crisis go to waste either, but use it as a teachable moment to enlighten the American people on Amendment II and Founding intent.

February 28, 2018

Kendall, Joshua C. (2012) *The Forgotten Founding Father: Noah Webster's Obsession and the Creation of an American Culture*. New York, New York, Berkley Books.

Noah Webster (1758 – 1843), was a lexicographer and a language reformer. *Webster's Dictionary 1828 – Online Edition, American Dictionary of the English Language*. Retrieved from **http://webstersdictionary1828.com/NoahWebster**

Linda's Lesson Learned – Why is the Church in America Lukewarm? (Part 3) The Bible

FEBRUARY 25, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Linda Wall

The past two weeks, (**Why Is the Church in America Lukewarm? Part 1**and **Why is the Church in America Lukewarm? Part 2 GLBT Influence**) I've introduced you to two of the tools used to establish lukewarmness in The Church: *The Handbook on Communism* and *After the Ball*, *How America Will Conquer Its Fear and Hatred of Gays in the 90's*.

Come and journey with me to look at how the church I was attending became "lukewarm."

When I finally surrendered to the Lord, it had been almost ten years since I had been in a place of worship. Even though I returned to the Lord in a Baptist church and was raised Baptist, I wanted to see what other denominations had to offer.

For weeks, I visited the different mainstream denominations and even a Jewish Synagogue. Each presented themselves as "right" and the other denominations as "wrong." Each denomination had their own **"traditions of men"** that Jesus said made the Word of God of none effect (Matthew 7:13). The Jewish service was quite special as they sang from the Book of Deuteronomy in the Torah yet they had rejected Jesus as The Messiah.

I settled at an Assembly of God church in Hampton, Virginia because it was the closest to resembling the Church in the Book of Acts. The **"Spirit of God"** was moving there in a mighty way! The **"gifts of the spirit"** were in operation, hard core sinners were being set free from drug and alcohol addictions, sexual sins and broken marriages and family relationships were being restored. It was as if I had stepped back in time to the days the book of Acts was written about.

I saw Jesus Christ being "**the same as He was yesterday"**! He was alive, and He was the head of The Church again. Many were willing to follow Him across America to share the gospel. The Church awakening and returning to its roots was awesome!

However, megachurch buildings were beginning to pop up in various places in America. Jim and Tammy Bakker were building their PTL kingdom, Robert Tilton was plastering his picture all over billboards in Texas and Robert Schuller had his glass cathedral promoting motivational celebrities weekly. TV evangelists were promising wealth, success, prosperity, fortune and fame. Our pastor sought the counsel of some of these individuals who all said, "build, build, build."

Soon talk of building a bigger building became the buzz around the church. I could not understand the plan for building a bigger building when Jesus had told us "to go and teach" (Matthew 28:19). I found scriptures stating God didn't dwell in a temple made with hands (Acts 17:24), so how did the people think the bigger building was going to be God's house?

Soon the words "Assembly of God" were dropped from the church name and Bethel Temple A Trans-denominational Church was mounted on the front of the building. Life-size pictures of the pastor and his wife, a picture of the building and the slogan, "Get into the Good Life," were put on numerous billboards throughout the Hampton Roads area.

Before long, every Sunday morning or night there was a guest speaker or religious entertainer. Afterwards, I would go home and search the scriptures for the errors I heard coming from the pulpit. The focus soon became all about self and who we were in Christ rather than about Jesus being Lord. The gospel of Jesus Christ was replaced by prosperity gospel and an entertainment social Christianity. Thus, a lukewarm church was born.

Bethel Temple is not the only church that this happened to. All over America, congregations have relied on pastors and not sought the Lord and read the Word for themselves.

Scriptures have been taken out of context, and the doctrines built upon those scriptures have produced a powerless lukewarm Church. A church that is no longer the light of the world or the salt of the earth, but a club of meetings, conferences, balls teams, rock bands, coffee houses and entertainment musicals.

Here Are a Few of the Doctrines Made From Bible Verses Keeping the Church Lukewarm

- – That's Old Testament, We Are Under Grace Now
- – Once Saved Always Saved
- – Love One Another
- – The Gifts Died With Original Disciples
- – Love The Sinner, Hate the Sin
- – Pastors Are Head of The Church

- – Judge Not That Ye Be Not Judged

When a scripture is pulled out of the Bible and used to keep the church silent and from maturing in Christ, the church is exactly as it is in America today: **LUKEWARM**.

*(**Part 1**: Why Is the Church in America Lukewarm? | **Part 2**: Why is the Church in America Lukewarm? GLBT Influence | **Part 3:** Why is the Church in America Lukewarm? The Bible | **Part 4**: Calling the Lukewarm Church in America to Action*

Linda's Lessons Learned: Why is the Church in America Lukewarm? Part 2 GLBT Influence

FEBRUARY 19, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Linda Wall

Last week I shared how tactics taken from the Handbook on Communism opened the door for the birth of the lukewarm church in America. (**click for Part 1**)

This week I want to introduce you to another factor that has contributed to the church becoming Lukewarm. In less than two decades how has a behavior God calls abominable become acceptable by the church?

For two years I researched homosexuality searching for answers on how a Christian girl like myself ever became involved in it. During that research, I discovered that just like the Communist, the pushers of homosexuality also had a manual.

However, theirs was more like a "sports playbook".

In that playbook, *After the Ball: How America Will Conquer Its Fear and Hatred of Gays in the 90's,*

Christianity is labeled the greatest threat to the normalization of homosexual behavior.

I'm certain you will recognize the following tactics I discovered in this 'homosexual manifesto'.

- Capitalize on the AIDS crisis and establish the promiscuous sexual minority as a victimized minority in need of protection and care.

- Move public opinion away from the behavior homosexuals engage in and portray them as victims.
- In order to eliminate the talk of sin by the religious, play the "born that way" card.
- Straights must be taught it is as natural to be homosexual for some as it is for others to be heterosexual.
- Raise theological objections to conservative biblical teaching calling it hateful anti-gay doctrine.
- Focus on religious bigotry and get moderate churches to join.
- Call conservative churches homophobic, antiquated and out of step with the times.
- Portray gays as mainstream Americans seeking liberty and pursuit of happiness under the banner of "rights".
- Isolate Christians by presenting them as hysterical, backwoods preachers.

Next week Part 3 addresses the third and final manual, the Holy Bible and the "lukewarm church" in America.

*(**Part 1**: Why Is the Church in America Lukewarm? | **Part 2**: Why is the Church in America Lukewarm? GLBT Influence | **Part 3:** Why is the Church in America Lukewarm? The Bible | **Part 4**: Calling the Lukewarm Church in America to Action.*

Evil Raises Its Head Again

FEBRUARY 18, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Dan Wolf | Virginia Christian Alliance

Another tragedy occurred yesterday, on Valentine's Day, in Florida. First, my prayers and condolences go out to those affected including school personnel, children, their parents, families, and neighbors. And I also include the shooter and his family. They need our prayers as well. We may never understand why this shooting happened, but in some ways understanding why it happened doesn't really matter. It was an act of hate—evil.

Pray and Reflect

These tragedies can cause us to become angry and fearful. That's okay as long as we do not let those emotions control our actions. We must, as individuals and a society, rise above such things. There are several steps we each can take. The first step is simply to pray. As noted above for all of those who were directly touched by the shooting. Pray for their healing, and for those who lost their life.

Don't stop there. Also offer prayers of thanksgiving for the safety of our families, friends, and neighbors. Pray that such shootings will never happen again. *But most of all reflect and pray for God to lead you, and us as a nation; in how we live, the choices we make, and the things we do*. He had a direct hand in creating this nation. To know that one simply needs to look at our history.

This is a time for reflection, on who we are both as individuals and a society. The single most important item to reflect on is where you've placed God in your life. When He is not first we are much more likely to make poor choices and act unwisely. None of these things prevent evil from occurring again. We weren't promised life would be easy. We were promised we would never be alone; God will always be with us, and He will lead us through whatever we face.

The Politics of Hate

I only watched a little of the coverage as it was too much to bear. The media was already beginning to politicize the event in the first few hours by talking about mental illness. And today came the cries from our media, politicians, and talking heads for gun controls. We are all too familiar with the drill. Their narrative is another lie, and an asinine position. As we reflect on who we are as a people, I hope you will consider the following.

I've never seen a gun go off by itself in search of someone in order to shoot them. It takes a person making a choice to pull the trigger and commit the act. The specific instance doesn't matter so much as these types of shootings are all driven by hate.

Why? Why does there seem to be more hate today? What I'm going to say will not be popular with the media or some of our leaders, but it is no less true. *As a society, we've largely turned away from God*. We are each free to make our own choices, that is the gift of free will we each received from God. However, with that freedom comes great responsibility, and that responsibility can only be effectively exercised when we are turned toward Him. When we turn away from Him, He allows us to go our own way. That choice is ours and not His, and as we've seen over the last ten years it at times cost us a great deal.

Think this notion is wrong? Consider, our leaders are a reflection of who we are as a society—a people. I hope you will think about the following three recent events in your reflections. Let me preface this discussion by saying that not all of our political representatives are bad, and that fault can be found with both parties. *We only need to look at their actions, and what they choose not to act upon*.

Late-Term Abortion

First, only last month the Senate voted against ending late-term abortions. Why? Because some claim there is not yet a life involved. It's only a fetus that has no rights. The problem is this too is a lie.

Let me offer an analogy supporting that statement. Consider a seed. Any seed. Say a kernel of corn. That kernel represents the potential for life, much like the sperm and egg we possess as men and women. Plant that seed in the soil—and if there is moisture, warmth, and fertile ground—the seed grows. When is the seed alive? Is it only after it breaks forth from the ground, or does it need

to be so many centimeters from the surface before it's considered to be alive? I would say that once the seed germinates, and begins to work to split its covering that the seed is alive. If that first step doesn't happen, then none of the subsequent events will either as it is a dependent and necessary condition.

It is no different for a child. Once the sperm and egg combine, a life is created. Any contrary arguments are analogous to saying the seed hasn't yet broken the surface (birth) or it isn't yet close enough to the surface (only x number of weeks along and therefore not alive). *Ending that child's life too is an act of hate—evil. It is as much evil and murder as the deaths that occurred in this shooting.* Period.

Immigration and DACA

There continues to be much turmoil about foreigner's status in our land. Arguments claim to focus on the compassion we should have as a society, over an executive order that was illegally and unconstitutionally created. Those arguments too are lies. In support of that statement, what does the Bible say about treating foreigners in one's land? It turns out much.

We are not to take advantage of aliens, and we are not to mistreat them. We are to care for them as we would any other disadvantaged person within our society—with charity. We are to care for them just as we would widows, orphans, and the elderly – those unable to fully take care of themselves.

However, that does not mean they should become citizens. In his *Summa Theologicæ*, Thomas Aquinas noted a distinction between peaceful and hostile foreigners. For any individuals wishing to be admitted to Israel's society, a period was to exist allowing for the common good of their newly adopted society to become entrenched within the immigrant's heart. *In short a time for them to fully integrate into their new society. That integration period was three generations*, and only if you came from certain countries. *It was an affair of the heart that allowed sufficient time for a correct judgment, for justice to occur*. *Integration by immigrants into their newly adopted society is expected, and political authorities have a responsibility in this area*. The full article can be found **here**.

Federal Spending

Just the previous week, Congress passed a bipartisan bill to fund the federal government. To do that they simply raised the spending caps they themselves had put into place. They didn't even consolidate those caps down into a single spending cap. *It is unfortunate that bipartisanship today means not addressing our problems, but instead placing them on the backs of future generations. It is wrong and immoral*.

Both sides tout what they got from the deal, and that what they got was necessary. That is true, but it came at the very high cost of not dealing with our real problems. Problems that were created

by the very government voting to raise their spending levels. Entitlement spending like Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and supporting *Obamacare. Such votes do not show leadership, but a lack of compassion for the very people our elected officials took an oath before God to serve. Both the inaction on immigration and passing the recent spending bill are abdications of responsibility. But that is not entirely their fault, because in the end, we elect them.* We need to do better, so that they will also do better.

Conclusion

The hatred and lack of compassion we see all too often today reflect the absence of love that occurs when we are turned away from God and toward ourselves. The proof? God is love. When we turn from God, we turn from love, and hate tries to find a way in. While following Him won't eliminate all of our troubles, it will make our difficulties more bearable. We are still human and will make mistakes, but in the end what matters is that we are striving in the right direction. We may never get there, but if we are trying we will certainly get much closer than if we do not try. The three examples above all indicate our leadership's moving away from morality—away from God.

The truth doesn't change. It is constant as God is constant. We don't need to know or understand all the lies. We just need to know the truth and to be able to discern when something is a lie. We will only get that kind of clarity when we pray, read scripture, and then act in accordance with God's will.

Faith, Football and Coach Ron Brown

FEBRUARY 18, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Terry Beatley | **America OUT LOUD!**
VCA Board Member

Using sports as a parable to teach young people about who they can become when they surrender their lives to Christ, Coach Brown is on his game when it comes to football.

He's tough, demanding and prepared.

He's Coach Ron Brown who for years has used the game of football to raise up young men of stature, humility and strength of character through faith in Jesus Christ. Using sports as a parable to teach young people about who they can become when they surrender their lives to Christ, Coach Brown is on his game when it comes to football.

Podcast: Download | Embed

For him, football is so much more than just winning a game, a season, a championship.

He currently serves as Associate Head Coach/Running Backs for Liberty University after a long career at Nebraska.

Off the field, Brown and former Husker Stan Parker are co-founders and co-directors of a statewide Christian ministry called Mission Nebraska.

The ministry stewards MY BRIDGE RADIO, which consists of numerous Christian radio stations and translators across Nebraska. Brown spends much of his time challenging and inspiring men and boys to take a strong, courageous Christian stand in the public square across America.

Brown spent the four years prior to his return to coaching serving as the Nebraska State Director of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (2004-07). After returning to coaching, Brown has continued as a regular columnist for FCA's national magazine "Sharing the Victory."

During his time away from coaching, Brown also worked as an internet, television and radio college and high school analyst for ESPN and Sports Spectrum.

He has authored several books on Christian character and growth. He is an outspoken advocate on many issues, including adoption, abstinence and drug and alcohol education, race relations and anti-pornography, to name a few.

MORE ON TERRY AND THE SHOW

Linda's Lessons Learned – Why Is the Church in America Lukewarm? Part 1

FEBRUARY 13, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

by Linda Wall

Each week, Linda's Lessons Learned will feature an episode from my personal walk during my past life of homosexuality or my present life of following Jesus.

Last week I shared with you about **God showing me that one could not be gay and Christian**. This week I am sharing what I learned because I was invited to a Communist Party Meeting in Norfolk, Virginia.

I was living in the Ghent Section of Norfolk, a hub where homosexuals lived and partied together. The invitation came from a bartender who worked at Shirley's. (I'll use the name Becky as to protect the girl's privacy.)

One night Becky invited me to go with her to a meeting. When I asked what kind of meeting, she replied, a Communist Party meeting. Even though I was living a life of drugs and homosexuality, I

still loved America! I was horrified at her invitation and I guess my face revealed exactly how I felt.

Here's what Becky said next:

> Linda, we are here and we are going to take over this nation. We are in the education field, news media, television, the medical profession, the government, and the religious institutions. We will work our way up to the top decision making positions and take this nation from within. You need to get in while you can and ride this bandwagon to the top.

Betraying my country was not an option for me. I figured Becky was probably just blowing smoke and that there was no such thing as a Communist Party in America. After that invite, I avoided Becky whenever possible. It wasn't long before I left homosexuality and never saw her again.

The more the Lord healed me and renewed me, the more I started to see that during the years I had been living in the homosexual kingdom, America had been going downhill and the principles upon which she was founded had been unraveling. The Church was now preaching a different gospel than what I heard as a youth. How had the Church lost its position as the compass for society? Had there been an enemy from within destroying The Church?

During one of my moments of pondering I remembered the invitation to the Communist Party meeting. Maybe Becky wasn't blowing smoke? Maybe Becky was a communist?

Off to the library I went. After days of reading and taking notes, I could honestly say Becky was right. Page after page in black and white were instructions on how the communist were going to take America from within. For the purpose of this article I am only sharing the notes I took concerning religion.

Know this, for the most part, today the Communists operate under the title of Progressives.

Which Communist Tactics Do You Recognize?

- Communist tactics have changed in the course of time: in the beginning the communists believed it would be easy to destroy churches; today they believe it better to use a church rather than destroy it.

- Article 124 of the Constitution of the Soviet Union of 1955 contains the following provision: "in order to preserve the right of citizens to freedom of conscience, the Church is separated from the State, and the schools are separated from the Church in the Soviet Union."
- Infiltrate the churches and replace revealed religion with "social religion". Discredit the Bible and emphasize the need for intellectual maturity which does not need a religious crutch."
- Eliminate prayer or any phase of religious expression in the schools on the ground that it violates the principle of "separation of church and state."
- Religion and everything connected with it is bad.
- A degenerate corrupt religion is thought to be far less dangerous than a pure religion
- We demand that religion be a private matter
- We demand the complete separation of church from state
- Never leave the churches to themselves

Antireligious propaganda directed at the youth is never to be relaxed

(Taken from Handbook On Communism edited by Joseph Bochenski/Gerhart Niemeyer), (The Naked Communist by W.Cleon Skousen)

*(**Part 1**: Why Is the Church in America Lukewarm? | **Part 2**: Why is the Church in America Lukewarm? GLBT Influence | **Part 3:** Why is the Church in America Lukewarm? The Bible | **Part 4**: Calling the Lukewarm Church in America to Action*

5 Surprising Facts About the Worldview of Gen Z

FEBRUARY 3, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

IMPACT 360 INSTITUTE

Who is Gen Z? How do they differ from the Millennials and other generations? What kinds of questions are they asking about God, happiness, and the biggest questions of life? What do they think about topics like science, faith, and church? What is life like for a young Christian in 2018? Are Gen Z Christian prepared to follow Jesus in a post-everything world? And if not, how should we go about getting them prepared?

In this episode of the Impact 360 Institute podcast, Nikki Gentry and Jonathan Morrow introduce you to Gen Z, the generation following the Millennials, or the "next, next generation." For the past year and a half, Impact 360 Institute and **the Barna Group** have been studying this generation, seeking to understand the worldview of Gen Z, and thinking through how to prepare them to follow Jesus in today's culture. Now this research has been published in a new and exciting full color report, and Jonathan and Nikki give you an inside look into what it says.

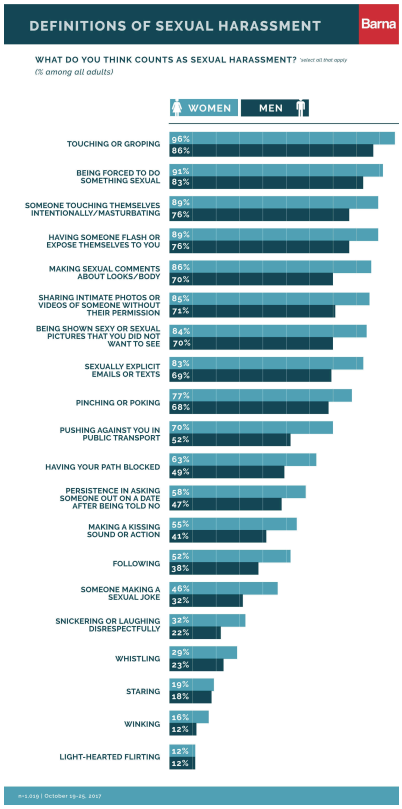
So how does the worldview of Gen Z differ from other generations? For starters, the percentage of people with a "biblical worldview" has been declining with each generation. When Barna began studying the Boomers, about 10% had a biblical worldview. Gen X decreases to 7%, and the Millennials decrease to 6%. But now at Gen Z, it seems that number is at all an all-time low, where only 4% of Gen Z have a biblical worldview.

So what should we do? With that number in mind, isn't it easy to get discouraged? In this episode of the podcast, learn why at Impact 360 Institute we feel hopeful and excited for Gen Z. Gen Z wants answers to life's biggest questions, and we believe that the biblical worldview gives them those answers, and the best way to live. Get the new report and more at **whoisgenz.com**, and join us as we cultivate leaders who follow Jesus in the next generation.

Do you have questions about faith and science? Check out **Is God Just a Human Invention?** by Jonathan Morrow and Sean McDowell.

Year in Review: Barna's 10 Most-Read Articles of 2017

FEBRUARY 3, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: 1984, OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Barna Group

It's safe to say that *a lot* happened this year. 2017 launched with the inauguration of President Trump, followed by the record-setting Women's March just a day later. Hurricanes Irma, Harvey, Jose and Maria battered the Caribbean and the southern United States; Americans witnessed a total solar eclipse; a slew of sexual misconduct allegations launched the **#MeToo movement**; and tragic violence in Las Vegas, New York and Charlottesville rocked the country.

Throughout the year Barna attempted to make sense of American public opinion on a range of issues related to our daily lives and faith journeys. We **conduct tens of thousands of interviews every year**, and much of that research is released online. So, to celebrate the end of 2017, we've compiled our top 10 most-read articles of the year from our website:

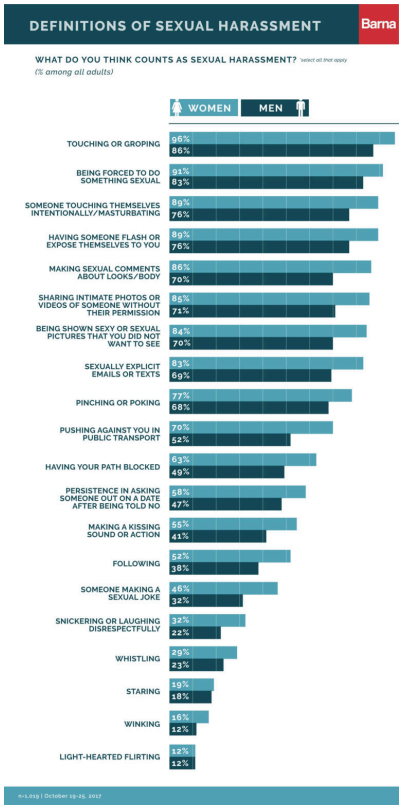
10. **Meet the "Spiritual but Not Religious"**

In the conclusion of a two-part exploration of faith and spirituality outside church, Barna looked at those who claim to be "spiritual but not religious." You've heard it—maybe even said it—before. But what does it actually mean? Can you be one without the other? Spiritual practice is

increasingly moving away from the public rituals of institutional Christianity to the private experience of God *within*. Barna took a close look at this segment of the American population who identify as spiritual, but hold unorthodox views about God, are ambivalent toward religion and take part in more informal and individual modes of spiritual practice.

9. **Behaviors Americans Count as Harassment**

In October, the *New York Times* reported more than a dozen initial allegations of sexual harassment, assault or rape against film producer Harvey Weinstein. Those revelations prompted other victims to come forward in unprecedented numbers and public fashion, sparking the #MeToo hashtag and almost daily reports of the sexual misconduct of high-profile figures. The flood of new allegations caused many to ask: What counts as sexual harassment? A national survey of American adults conducted by Barna between October 19-25, 2017 (shortly after the original Weinstein report) asked American adults to identify specific acts they consider to be harassment.



8. **6 Tech Habits Changing the American Home**

Parents today believe it is harder than ever to raise children—and technology isn't helping. That's a key finding at the heart of ***The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place***, a new book by Andy Crouch (a recipient of one of ***Christianity Today*'s 2018 Book Awards**). In the book, Crouch's clear and incisive thinking is combined with original Barna research among parents, who are feeling the tensions of parenting in a digital age. In this sneak

peek, we looked at some of the top revelations about how parents and kids relate to their devices and to each other.

7. **The Aging of America's Pastors**

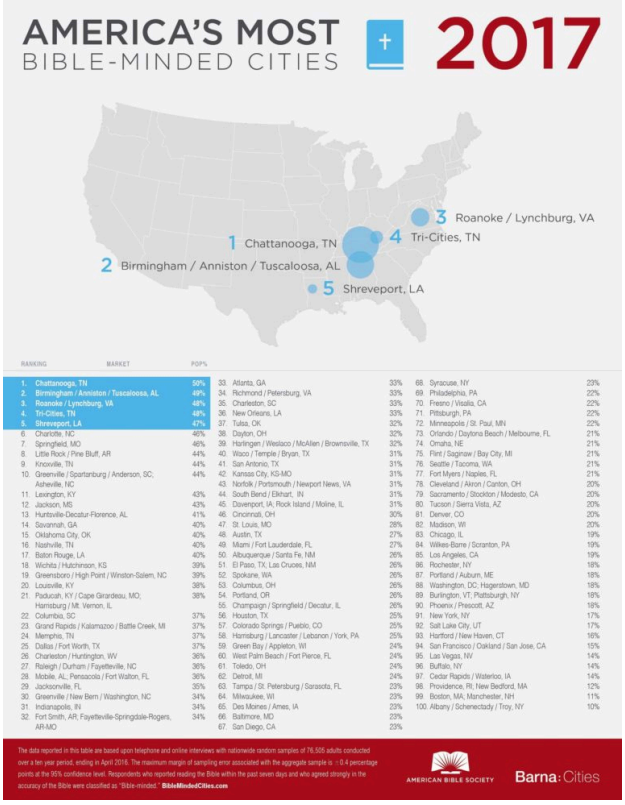
In 1992, the median age of Protestant clergy was 44 years old; 25 years later, the average age is 54. Pastors are getting older, and this has important implications for the future of the church. In partnership with Pepperdine University, Barna conducted a major study into how today's faith leaders are navigating life and leadership in an age of complexity. **The State of Pastors study**—revealed at a Pepperdine event earlier in the year—examined the shifting demographic of faith leaders, and the cultural forces responsible for the dramatic changes.

6. **State of the Bible 2017: Top Findings**

Barna's State of the Bible study is always a popular one. Many Americans are searching for beacons of hope and moral grounding amidst uncertainty and perceived moral decline. Barna conducted the annual State of the Bible survey, commissioned by American Bible Society, to examine behaviors and beliefs about the Bible. The results show that Americans overwhelmingly believe the Bible is a source of hope and a force for good even as they express growing concern for our nation's morals. These and other snapshots are included in our list of top 10 findings from 2017's State of the Bible report.

5. **2017 Bible-Minded Cities**

We live in an age when the Bible is read and understood very differently in cities across the country. So how exactly do Americans from each region interact with the Bible? In the annual Bible-Minded Cities report, in partnership with American Bible Society, Barna explored how Bible engagement plays out regionally in the United States. For the second year in a row, Chattanooga, TN was the most Bible-minded city in America, and at the other end of the spectrum, Albany / Schenectady / Troy, NY was the least Bible-minded city—also for the second year in a row. Where does your city rank?



4. **Meet Those Who "Love Jesus but Not the Church"**

We live in an increasingly secular American culture. In this new age, religion is in retreat from the public square, and traditional institutions like the church are no longer functioning with the cultural authority they once held in generations past. But even though more and more Americans are abandoning the institutional church and its defined boundary markers of religious identity, many still believe in God and practice faith outside its walls. This article was the first in Barna's two-part exploration of faith and spirituality outside the church, looking specifically at those who "love Jesus but not the church."

3. **Church Attendance Trends Around the Country**

Making it into the top three this year is Barna's ranking of the nation's largest cities according to church attendance. Americans are attending church less, but those shifts have occurred in varying ways and at different rates throughout the diverse regions and cities across the country. Barna's report ranks the nation's largest cities according to the metrics of churched (very active), unchurched and dechurched. Based on the data, almost four in 10 (38%) Americans are active churchgoers, slightly more (43%) are unchurched, and around one-third (34%) is dechurched. But as you'll see, there are great variations among American cities.

Top 20 Most Churched Cities

Barna

RANK	MARKET	%
1.	Chattanooga, TN	59%
2.	Salt Lake City, UT	59%
3.	Augusta-Aiken, GA	57%
4.	Baton Rouge, LA	57%
5.	Birmingham-Anniston-Tuscaloosa, AL	56%
6.	Jackson, MS	55%
7.	Paducah, KY-Cape Girardeau, MO-Harrisburg-Mt.Vernon, IL	54%
8.	Montgomery-Selma, AL	53%
9.	Greenville-New Bern-Washington, NC	52%
10.	South Bend-Elkhart, IN	52%
11.	Wichita-Hutchinson-Dodge City-Salina-Manhattan, KS	52%
12.	Sioux Falls-Mitchell, SD	52%
13.	Charlotte, NC	52%
14.	Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson, SC-Asheville, NC	51%
15.	Roanoke-Lynchburg, VA	51%
16.	Little Rock-Pine Bluff, AR	51%
17.	Savannah, GA	51%
18.	Lafayette, LA	50%
19.	Monroe, LA-El Dorado, AR	50%
20.	Greensboro-High Point-Winston-Salem, NC	50%

*Those classified as *churched* have attended a church service in the past seven days, not including a special event such as a wedding or a funeral.

n=76,505 U.S. Adults | 2000-2016

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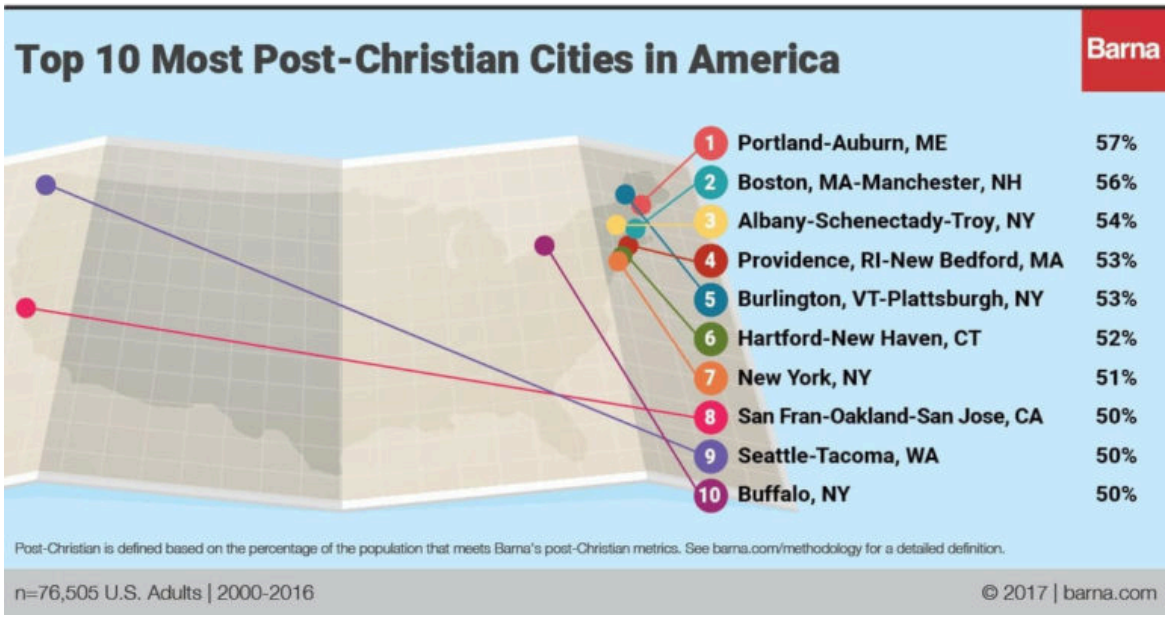
2. **Competing Worldviews Influence Today's Christians**

Barna conducted research among practicing Christians in America to gauge how much the tenets of other key worldviews—including new spirituality, secularism, postmodernism and Marxism—have influenced their beliefs about the way the world is and how it ought to be. Barna's research, conducted in partnership with Summit Ministries, shows that Christians who consider their faith important and attend church regularly don't always hold traditional biblical views. So, if Christians are open to nonbiblical perspectives, what are they believing?

1. **The Most Post-Christian Cities in America: 2017**

The most-read article of the year was our list of the most post-Christian cities in America, a metric Barna has developed to measure the changing religious landscape of America. To qualify as "post-Christian," individuals must meet a set of criteria which identify a lack of Christian identity, belief and practice. These include whether individuals identify as atheist, have never made a commitment to Jesus or have not read the Bible in the last week. According to the study, the most post-Christian city in America is Portland-Auburn, ME, followed by a handful of cities in New England and the Northeast and two on the West Coast. Where does your city rank?



SOURCE: BARNA

About the Research
The statistics and data throughout these studies have been drawn from a series of national public opinion surveys conducted by Barna Group. All of the studies referenced were conducted by Barna Group, unless otherwise noted, among a nationally representative sample of the population identified. For a more detailed methodology for each study, see the "About the Research" section in the footer of each respective article.

About Barna Group
Barna Group is a private, non-partisan, for-profit organization under the umbrella of the Issachar Companies. Located in Ventura, California, Barna Group has been conducting and analyzing primary research to understand cultural trends related to values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors since 1984.

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Deborah's Voice, Largest Christian Women's Gathering in DC

JANUARY 21, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Terry Beatley | **America OUT LOUD!**
VCA Board Member

Like Deborah in the Old Testament who arose to save her country out of the muck and mire of corruption and idolatry, women of Christian-Judeo faith are called to "AWAKE. ARISE. ADVANCE." to Washington, DC…

America's Christian-Judeo heritage is under attack and it is time for the Deborah's to AWAKE, ARISE and ADVANCE to pray for our country and show the world how strong we are because of Christ in us. The goal is for hundreds of thousands of sisters-in-Christ to gather in D.C. to pray for America and praise Jesus Christ on September 29, 2018.

In 2015, God woke Pastor Diane Mullins with three words: "AWAKE. ARISE. ADVANCE." A few days later, she was awakened was the word "HONEYBEE." A week later, she was awakened with the word "DEBORAH." Like Deborah in the Old Testament who arose to save her country out of the muck and mire of corruption and idolatry, women of Christian-Judeo faith are called to "AWAKE. ARISE. ADVANCE." to Washington, DC for a full day of praise, worship and prayer for the United States of America. The goal is 750,000 Christian-Judeo women – it is time for all women to get out loud for Christianity!

Show Coverart
Show Coverart

AMERICA OUT LOUD PODCAST NETWORK

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Terry Beatley, Author & Show Host

http://www.hosea4you.org

Terry looks at both sides and then filters through a biblical worldview lens. President of Hosea Initiative and author of What If We've Been Wrong? She says the #1 problem facing women: they've been duped my the lies, myths and propaganda of the "sexual revolution". Three words describe Terry: Tenacious, Christ follower, Pro-life.

MORE ON TERRY AND THE SHOW

If you claim to be a disciple of Christ and you're slobbering over Oprah, you'd better watch this

JANUARY 9, 2018
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Published by: **Dan Calabrese** | **Herman Cain Website**

She's one of the biggest deceptions in the world today, and when people I see in church every Sunday are buying into it, something is very wrong.

I can hardly even be bothered to care about the presidential talk. For crying out loud, we're three years away from any election. I know, I know, the political pundit's response is that fundraising starts now, and a little over a year from now we're having the first primary debates. Fine. Obsess over that. If and when Oprah decides to run for president, I'll deal with her candidacy just as I dealt with Hillary's. (see videos below)

That's not my concern now. My concern is how many people I'm seeing who are jumping all over the Oprah bandwagon – and I'm talking specifically about people I know because I worship Jesus Christ alongside them in church. And they're proclaiming Oprah for president on the basis of the Golden Globes speech she gave on Sunday night.

The issue here is not just that Oprah is not a Christian. There's a plausible case to be made that Donald Trump is not a Christian, and that Donald Trump doesn't really have much of a spiritual belief system at all. That could very well be true.

But Donald Trump also doesn't have a spiritual agenda in opposition to Christianity. Oprah not only has such an agenda, but she's already been successful in misleading millions of people to buy into her anti-Christian, new-age, self-help BS. She denies that Jesus is the only way to the Father. She says that whatever God is for you, that's what God is. She says that God is about "feeling" and not about believing.

I understand there are an awful lot of secular people who can't imagine why any of this would be a problem. I'm not addressing them. I'm addressing people that I know profess faith in Jesus Christ, yet are also falling all over themselves to get behind this new-age peddler of mystical garbage.

It can't be made any clearer than Oprah makes it right here:

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

There's a simple and fairly obvious rejoinder to the common objection Oprah raises here: Look at Hebrews 11:6, which says that God rewards those who earnestly seek Him. Now let me ask you a question: If God knows that someone has a heart that's open to Him, but that this person lives in some remote part of the world that will never see a missionary or a Bible, do you think God can find a way to reach that person with the Gospel?

Of course He can.

What will that way be? I have no idea. What difference does it make? When God says, "Here's how things work," and we say, "I don't see how things can work that way," what we're really saying is that we don't believe God unless He conforms to the limits our own understanding. Oprah doesn't think God can offer salvation to the person in her hypothetical scenario, but the problem here is

the limit of Oprah's imagination, not any limits to what God can do. Because there *are no limits* to what God can do.

But Oprah doesn't believe that.

By the way, according to Oprah's spiritual guru Marianne Williamson, "the universe" is God. Williamson has made quite a living with her books and videos trying to convince people they can connect to a version of "God" that leave no place for Jesus or for the Bible. You want to see deception? Here you go.

Much of what Williamson says sounds appealing, but as 2 Timothy 3:5 warns us, it has the appearance of godliness while denying its power. Oprah eats this up, as you might expect given her love for new-agey nonsense and her determination to find any spiritual path that doesn't require her to submit to the authority of Christ:

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

Now, if you're reading what I'm writing and you're getting mad at me because you love Oprah and you don't want this to be true, you might look around for something that refutes what I'm saying, and you might come up with the following video. The title of the video suggests that, in the video, Oprah professes her faith in Jesus Christ.

She does not. Watch the actual video and you'll see that.

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

She says “I am a Christian, that’s my faith,” but everything else she says contradicts the Gospel. First of all, she suggests that religion has nothing to do with spirituality, which means she doesn’t think her own supposed Christian faith is related to spirituality. If that’s what she thinks she completely misses the point of Christianity.

She then says “I respect all faiths,” and it’s fine to respect all faiths, but she presumes to teach people how to “live in the space of spirit” without needing Jesus.

If Oprah was really a disciple of Jesus Christ, she wouldn’t deny that He is the only way to the Father. And she wouldn’t make celebrities out of people like Marianne Williamson and Anthony Robbins, who peddle self-help BS without any spiritual victory in Christ. She wouldn’t say it doesn’t matter if you refer to “what you call God” as God or the light. Also, if Oprah was really a disciple of Jesus Christ, Hollywood wouldn’t love her as it does.

I often hear Christians say, “If someone says they’re a Christian, I take them at their word.”

I don’t. I look at their fruit. Matthew 7:21-23 says that Christ will reject many who presume to call on Him as Lord, because he knows their hearts are not with Him. And we’ve seen many people in modern culture who label themselves as Christians but then proceed to offer teachings that are contrary to the Gospel. Oprah Winfrey is one of those people. Not only is she not a Christian, she is a deceiver.

Some people want her to be president? We’ll get to that in due time. But if you’re a Christian and you’re cheering this woman on, you need to know who and what she really is.

*Dan writes Christian spiritual warfare novels and does all kinds of other weird things too. Follow all his activity by **liking him on Facebook**!*

SOURCE: HERMAN CAIN

Baptist Church in Richmond Moves to Open Membership to Homosexuals

DECEMBER 29, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Greene Hollowell

(The following article was first published on Dec 27th, 2015)

Recently the Pastor of a Richmond Baptist Church, in a sermon, opened the door for the church to consider allowing homosexuals (assume active) into their membership.

The Pastor stated marriage was changing from multiplying (having children) to being about love and commitment. He feels the need to open up membership with the decision of the Supreme Court legalizing homosexual marriages citing civil rights and his belief that homosexuals don't choose their sexual orientation. In addition, he said Jesus never spoke about homosexuality.

Needing help in his decision making he conferred with key people (including deacons) to get their opinions. He asked them to choose 1 from 4 positions that would most likely align with their thoughts.

1. Condemnation of homosexuality and exclude from membership.
2. Tolerate, "don't ask, don't tell"
3. Welcome in membership, but do not ordain nor marry.
4. Complete acceptance- same rights and privileges of others.

When he averaged out the responses the number came out- two and one half- between Tolerate and Welcome.
The Pastor then asked them to vote-'where should we be.' The answer was 3- Welcome in membership.
Summing up he said the church had a 'big tent', a lot of people with different opinions. He felt the thing to do was to leave the judgment up to God and the Supreme Court.

https://vimeo.com/132256658

In Light of Recent Events from **Richmond's First Baptist Church** on **Vimeo**.

A number of years ago a smaller Baptist Church took a 'don't ask, don't tell' stance concerning admitting homosexuals in membership. (Remember President Bill Clinton and Gen. Colin Powell authored and forced this stance on the military. Later President Obama and Adm. Mullins imposed full acceptance.)

Most of the Mainline Protestant Churches have long ago accepted homosexuals in their membership.

Of the large Mainline Protestant denominations, only the Southern Baptist Convention churches have maintained a Biblical stance. In THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE 1963 edition, the only mention of sexual sin was the word 'vice'. Back then, before the sexual revolution, homosexuals were considered perverted and so vile they were referred to as 'unmentionables.' When THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE was updated in 2000 they added the words- 'oppose….all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality and pornography.' In addition a section was added on THE FAMILY stating 'Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime.'

The Church was a Southern Baptist church for most of its history. A number of years ago they left the Southern Baptist and affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a liberal breakaway from the Southern Baptist, because they felt the Southern Baptist was too conservative in their beliefs of the basic fundamentals of the Christian faith and their opposition to abortion and homosexuality.

It is apparent that the church will open their membership to active homosexuals, WELCOME- but no ordination nor marrying. Does the church think it will end there?

Why these two stipulations, these exceptions? The homosexuals will want to know- Is there something wrong with active homosexuals that they are not fit to be ordained as deacons or ministers? Why not marry loving, committed homosexuals, what's wrong with one of the males being designated as wife? The homosexuals are not going to take these exceptions lying down. The church will probably have to capitulate.

Of course there are other considerations the church will need to explore- some of the homosexuals might be pedophiles. Homosexuals make up 75% of the pedophiles. A lesson might be learned from the Catholic Church. Homosexual priest, protected by their Bishops, caused untold spiritual devastation with their assaults on the children. In addition they paid out hundreds of millions of dollars in compensation as the outrages were brought to light, some churches taking bankruptcy. This is not to make light of the 25% heterosexuals pedophiles and the damage they do. There should be the same restrictions on them.

The church's movement should not be too surprising when you consider the movement of the country. Consider the majority of the voting Americans support the Democratic Party, the party that pushes the homosexual agenda, second only to their support of abortion. However, you might think Christians and their churches would consider what God has directed in the HOLY BIBLE as opposed to the Supreme Court decisions. God is pretty definite in His descriptions of homosexuals, using the word abomination. In addition He states they will never enter the Kingdom of God.

Certainly the church should welcome homosexuals that have repented of their sinful actions and are committed to live a life according to the Word of God, just as every other sinner, including those committing adultery and fornication, should.

Greene Hollowell

VIRGINIA CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE
8659 Staples Mill Road
Richmond, VA 23228
(804) 261-1570

One Solitary Life

DECEMBER 23, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Adoration of the Shepherds by Gerard van Honthorst, 1622

(the original version by Dr James Allan Francis)

Let us turn now to the story. A child is born in an obscure village. He is brought up in another obscure village. He works in a carpenter shop until he is thirty, and then for three brief years is an itinerant preacher, proclaiming a message and living a life. He never writes a book. He never holds an office. He never raises an army. He never has a family of his own. He never owns a home. He never goes to college. He never travels two hundred miles from the place where he was born.

He gathers a little group of friends about him and teaches them his way of life. While still a young man, the tide of popular feeling turns against him. One denies him; another betrays him. He is turned over to his enemies. He goes through the mockery of a trial; he is nailed to a cross between two thieves, and when dead is laid in a borrowed grave by the kindness of a friend.

Those are the facts of his human life. He rises from the dead. Today we look back across nineteen hundred years and ask, What kind of trail has he left across the centuries? When we try to sum up his influence, all the armies that ever marched, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned are absolutely picayune in their influence on mankind compared with that of this one solitary life…

I understand that this is the original essay by Dr James Allan Francis in “The Real Jesus and Other Sermons” © 1926 by the Judson Press of Philadelphia (pp 123-124 titled “Arise Sir Knight!”).

The Christmas Bug and the Need to Get Real

DECEMBER 22, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

By Dr. Mark Creech

During Christmas time, my father loved making this season of the year magical for children.

As children, every year Daddy would remind my sister and me to put cookies and milk out for Santa's arrival on Christmas Eve night. On Christmas morning, I was always giddy with excitement to find an empty plate and glass under the tree next to my toys.

One Christmas morning, I was nearly beside myself to follow Santa's tracks where he had stepped in the ashes of our wood burning fireplace after coming down the chimney and walking across the living room floor to place my gifts. I got every kid in the neighborhood to come and see it. Every one of them was in awe as they ogled over St. Nick's very own footprints. Of course, I wasn't old enough to recognize that those tracks were remarkably similar; in fact, even identical to my Daddy's fireman's boots he kept in the closet at the end of the hall.

The night Santa would come; I would desperately try to sleep, lest he should find me awake when he showed up. One Christmas eve, when sleep fled from me, I heard sleigh bells outside my bedroom window. I could hardly believe my ears as I threw the covers over my head and buried my face in the pillow. I thought, "It's Santa!!! It's really Santa and his reindeer and sleigh!!!" It never dawned on me the new strap of sleigh bells Daddy had hung near my stocking was intended for more than a Christmas decoration.

Out of all of these, however, nothing was as enchanting as Christmas critters. As Christmas neared, if there was an animal or perhaps even an insect of some kind nearby, Daddy would say, "Hey, hey, look over there. Do you see that squirrel on the side of that tree?" "Yes sir," I would respond. "Do you know what that is? That's a Christmas squirrel, and he's spying on you to see if you are being naughty or nice, and he's going to report back to Santa Claus. That's how he gets a lot of his information on little children," he would tell me.

These are such precious memories. As you might imagine, as a father, I wanted to pass this tradition along to my own children.

One year, about three weeks from Christmas, when they were still small, we took our children to visit their grandparents. That day I noticed on the big picture window of their house an unusual looking and rather large beetle. I called my son over and said to him, "Hey, hey, look what's on the picture window. Do you see that huge beetle?" I asked. "Yes sir," my boy said. "Do you know what

that is? That's a Christmas Bug and he's spying on you to see if you are being naughty or nice, and he's going to report back to Santa Claus. That's how he gets a lot of his information on little children," I told him. He then rushed off to play outside.

Not long thereafter, I suddenly heard a loud noise near the front of the house. BLAM!!! I rushed to see what was happening, only to find the Christmas Bug was splattered across the picture window just like an insect on a car's windshield. I stuck my head out the front door and called, "Son, what happened to the Christmas Bug?" He replied, "Daddy, that Christmas Bug ain't telling Santa Claus nothing!"

Our family finds that story hilarious, but I'm sure you'll be relieved to know I didn't end up raising a criminal. My son turned out to be a very fine man.

But this does give me the opportunity to say, Christmas is actually about something very real. It's not about Santa, reindeer, sleigh bells, or Christmas critters, as much fun as playing that game with children might be. It's about Jesus Christ, the One who came to make us real.

Christmas is about getting real with God. The first step, of which, is recognizing that we're sinners, fallen, broken, rebels against God and his ways, quite adept at being double-minded, double-tongued, and double-trouble. Christ, the Son of God, the Messiah, the Savior of the world, came to transform and renew our lives with his saving power. We cannot overcome our depravity or experience redemption apart from him. He was born to identify with us that he might save to the uttermost anyone who trusts and follows his word.

It's about getting real with ourselves and others. Unless we live authentically, we lose our souls. We mustn't pretend and cover up, deceiving ourselves, and leading others to believe that we're something we're not. That's what Adam and Eve did when they covered themselves with fig leaves after they ate the forbidden fruit in the Garden. No, we need to come clean and be real.

The Christ of Christmas is real.

He's "the way, the truth, and the life" (**John 14:6**). Everything we pursue outside of him, his grace, and his will, ultimately proves to be an illusion – unsatisfying to the longings of the human spirit – unreal.

Christmas is a time to get real.

Merry Christmas.

Kirsten Powers: Becoming a Christian Ruined My Love of Christmas

DECEMBER 22, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Kirsten Powers | CT
Excerpt

But then I learned to see the beauty of Christ's coming like never before.

In my unorthodox childhood, Christmas was as an oasis of normalcy. It was the one day of the year I could count on some sort of harmony in my divided family.

At age five, my parents divorced and established two outposts in my life, from which I shuttled back and forth. One home was headed by my sophisticated, East Coast-born, feminist mother; the other by my down-to-earth, Idaho-bred father, who held fast to his traditionalist views.

The Christmas season was a magical time, made all the more special because I got to experience the magic twice. I helped pick out and decorate two Christmas trees, one at my mother's house and one at my father's. Wherever we woke up on Christmas morning, my brother and I were greeted by mountains of presents piled under the tree. We would spend hours plowing through them and then look at each other with delight as we realized we would get to do it all over again just a few hours later at the other house. Christmas meant two of everything.

Continue Reading

10 Biblical Reasons Behind Trump's Jerusalem Decision

DECEMBER 10, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

A WND exclusive by Rabbi Tuly Weisz notes the world's holiest city 'has shalom at its core' and provides 10 biblical reasons:

1) Jerusalem is mentioned over 800 times in the Bible.
For Zion's sake I will not be silent and for Jerusalem's sake *I will not be still. ISAIAH 62:1 (The Israel Bible)*

2) "King David declared it 3,000 years ago!"
But I chose Jerusalem for My Name to be there, and I chose David to rule over My people Israel. II CHRONICLES 6:6 (The Israel Bible)

3) The Jews have never forgotten Jerusalem.
If I forget thee O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither. PSALMS 137:5 (The Israel Bible)

4) The sovereign State of Israel established Jerusalem as its capital city.
Thus said the Lord, 'I have returned to Zion, and I have made My dwelling in the midst of Jerusalem.' ZECHARIAH 8:3 (The Israel Bible)

Read more at **http://www.wnd.com/2017/12/10-biblical-reasons-behind-trumps-jerusalem-decision/#mqIsf1zopDbq3jkd.99**

Vote With Your Dollars This Christmas With The 'Naughty and Nice List'

DECEMBER 4, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Barb Wire

Faith and Freedom with Liberty Counsel's Mat Staver and Holly Meade, and BarbWire.com Founder Matt Barber… An 11-minute weekday radio program discussing hot topics in the area of religious liberty, the sanctity of human life and the family.

Naughty and Nice List PDF

As part of our Friend or Foe Christmas Campaign, we also have the Naughty and Nice List. You can check where these retailers are with respect to Christmas and you can shop accordingly.

We're going to be talking about it on Faith and Freedom. I'm Mat Staver, Founder and Chairman of Liberty Counsel, joining me is Matt Barber, the Founder of BarbWire.com, and Holly Meade, the Director of Communications for Liberty Counsel.

0:00 / 0:00

Mat Staver: Well, fifteen years ago we launched the Friend or Foe Christmas Campaign, designed to educate and, if necessary, litigate to make sure the real essence, the reason for Christmas is not censored. But we also launched the Naughty and Nice List, which overviews the retailers that want to profit off of Christmas, some of whom acknowledge it, but also some pretend that Christmas doesn't exist. You can vote with your shopping dollars during this Christmas and you can patronise those stores that recognize Christmas, the real reason for the season. And you can boycott those stores, or refuse to go to those stores…

Naughty and Nice List PDF

She Wanted To Join ISIS, Met Jesus Instead, And Got Delivered From Demons On Camera

NOVEMBER 24, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Rita Chaima radiates with joy. When you see her face, you can tell she's filled with deep happiness and contentment.

But that's the opposite of the way she used to feel. Chaima was raised a Muslim, and from an early age she struggled with suicidal depression.

She tells her powerful story in a new documentary called **"In His Footsteps"** by a ministry called **The Last Reformation**.

"I just saw a cruel world and I didn't want to be a part of it," she recalls.

Chaima says she tried to kill herself three times. "I was doing drugs, I was smoking, I was smoking anything… I just wanted to destroy myself."

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

At one point she became so angry that she made up her mind to join ISIS in Syria.

“I hated people who weren’t Muslim. I wanted to kill them,” she says.

The videos by ISIS inspired her. “I loved to see them bleeding. I was seeing videos of decapitation and loved it.”

But then something else happened. Her mom got a bunch of free books for her, and there was a Bible among them. That’s when Chaima met Jesus.

“I started to read the Bible to prove to Christians that they were wrong,” she says. “But I was wrong! And the grace of Jesus Christ started to touch me.”

“I was reading things like ‘pray for your enemies,’ ‘love them,’ and I was someone who wanted to kill them.”

“Intellectually I didn’t want to accept Jesus, but Jesus started to do a work in my heart,” she says.

She couldn’t resist the love of Jesus anymore, so she decided to follow Him.

When she told her family what she had done, they rejected her. She says they stopped talking to her, and for months she was alone in her room. “It was like a prison.”

She says in the past, depression would have overtaken her. But not this time. She started to read the Bible a lot. “Jesus was there with me. He was encouraging me. The Holy Spirit was really there. I felt it, I knew it.”

Her Muslim family has now totally abandoned her, but her story doesn’t end there.

When it was time for Chaima to be baptized, something supernatural happened.

“I don’t even remember what I did. I had to see the video of my baptism. I was completely crazy, the demon was crazy, it wasn’t me. I kicked Jon. He baptized me. I kicked him.”

But as she flailed and screamed, Jon continued to minister over her, telling the demon to go until peace finally came over her body. She was finally set free and baptized in the Holy Spirit.

“After the baptism I felt like the heavy weight completely disappeared. And I was so excited to go and make disciples,” she said.

“I started to want to talk about Jesus to everyone, even to the people who led me to terrorism. I wanted to go and see them, tell them that they are wrong, and that love is waiting for them.”

And that’s just what she now does, traveling with **gospel minister Peter Ahlman** and other Christians, she shares her testimony wherever she goes.

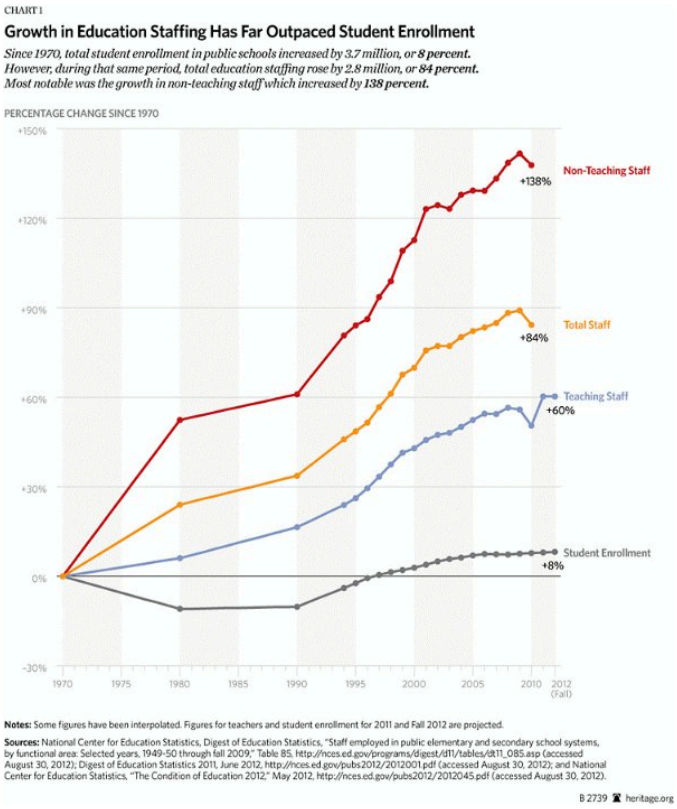
You can watch her testimony BELOW through an excerpt from the “In His Footsteps” documentary by The Last Reformation.

Report vis CBN News

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

Saul Alinsky Would Be Proud, and So Would Satan, Part II

NOVEMBER 18, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Dan Wolf | VCA Advisory Boad
Living Rightly

This article continues the discussion **started in Part I**, using the areas of education, poverty, and healthcare as examples. More detail on the first two topics can be found in *Collectivism and Charity: The Great Deception*.

Platform Principles

Responding to all the items within the Democratic platform would create a very long article. Fortunately that's not needed. Just a few principles underlie their plan and include;

- More spending fixes the problem
- Creating laws and regulations to 'level the playing field'
- Government management increases efficiency
- Providing 'free' resources is necessary and responsible governance

Each principle has been used with education, poverty, and/or healthcare. More spending is the most obvious, and nothing is too big to promise—including 'improving' Social Security. The Obama administration racked up $10 trillion in new debt all on their lonesome, doubling the debt of all previous president's combined. Additionally, the recent Democratic budget called for $10 trillion in new taxes, without any apparent spending reduction. Deficits don't matter, but only with Democratic spending.

Laws and regulations are used to both level the playing field and at the same time remove barriers to competition. Underlying this principle is the notion the economy must be managed and only the government elite can do it. In other words, *you are not capable of making your own decisions*. We will provide you security, it will just cost you some freedom. This notion is the opposite of our purpose.

Nothing is ever free, it may merely not cost you. This is an outgrowth of the first point on spending. Whenever something has been provided for 'free,' someone else paid the bill. This creates a perverse incentive at odds with personal responsibility. The bottom line is that these are echoes of the same old tired lines used by the serpent in the Garden of Eden. *They have never worked and will never work, because they are lies*.

Education

Simply put, education is a disaster. We've tried to spend our way to excellence, using money as fertilizer hoping something good will grow. *We now spend in excess of $149,000 per student for a 13-year public school education. An increase of almost 200% from the $50,000 figure in 1970, before the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) was created*. During this time the teaching staff ratio decreased from 60% to 50%, while test scores relative to other countries fell. Further, for much of this time graduation rates decreased and only in the last 15 years or so have they come back to their pre-DOE level. And it only took spending trillions of dollars to achieve. Excellent!

As for college, since the federal government took control of student loans college cost increases have outpaced those of healthcare, and we now have over $1 trillion in student debt. The graph below shows public education staffing growth.

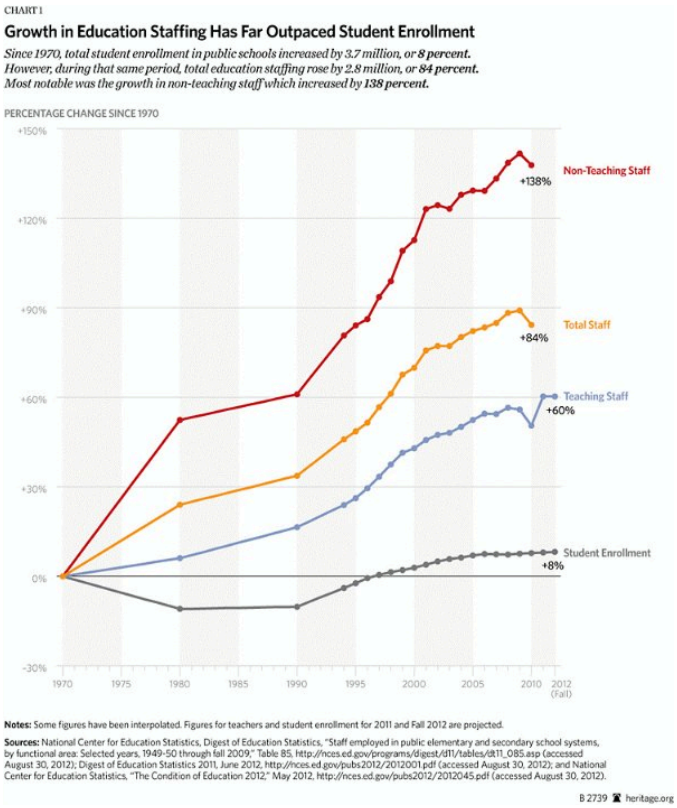


Figure 1: Growth in Public Education Staffing

But it doesn't stop there. Our education process now substitutes technology use for some education, using educational games. Some students use this technology to access pornography, and it's a growing problem schools don't want to talk about. It's not the technology itself that is bad, but the way it is used. Couple the gaming and pornography access with society's growing dependency on social media, and you provide a basis for addiction development. This addiction corrupts human relationships. It provides bread and circuses. While the technology presents an opportunity for great good, it also poses a risk for great evil if not done properly.

To be sure, school administrators take steps to prevent access to pornographic sites. But once a student is addicted, and it is an addiction, the urge is strong and they will work to find ways to satisfy it. Our young are being harmed and losing their way. It is not right. They are our children. For those interested in learning more about this topic, I recommend Brad Huddleston's book *Digital Cocaine*.

Poverty

Another win for big government. There is much ado about inequality, and the need for so many justices—social, economic, environmental, climate, reproductive, racial, criminal, and restorative. Justice is important and mentioned 28 times in the Democratic platform. *But there is only one true justice—God's*. The justices Democrats mention are all mans. What's wrong with that picture? We can look to poverty policy as a case in point.

Although well intentioned, poverty policy created many negative unintended consequences. When man turns away from God, God leaves man to his own devices—and their consequences. We still have God's grace when making bad decisions, but don't realize its benefits until we align our will with His.

The War on Poverty began in 1964. Since then we have spent over $22 trillion on programs fighting poverty, and now spend about $1 trillion each year. After all that, our poverty level remains at about 15%. There has been no change while mean assistance spending doubled from $8,000 to $16,000. Those receiving assistance have increase over the last 15 years from about 75 million to close in on 150 million—over 1/3 of our population. T*oday only about 66% of assistance spending goes to those below the poverty line*.

Another Addiction

The above are signs of another addiction. More bread and circuses. We no longer understand what being poor means. Material poverty is only one type, but we no longer even understand that. We've gotten lost with our success.

A 2007 study of America's poor indicated;

- 43% owned their own home, only 6% of poor households were overcrowded
- About 75% owned at least one car
- 80% had air conditioning
- 97% had a color television

It is certainly not an extravagant lifestyle, nor is it intended to be. But the poor in America generally live better than the middle class in many other countries—including Europe.

Finally, look at average income changes. Since the war on poverty began the average income for those in the middle (third quintile) have grown about 40%, while growth for the poorest group (first quintile) has only grown about 7%. *One result of poverty policy is the gap between the poor and everyone else has increased. Take away a person's incentive to provide for himself and his family, and you make him a slave*. One final point about government effectiveness, private charities on average provide $ .75 in services for each dollar they receive (versus government's $ .30). If the $22 trillion in government expenditures had instead been given to private charities, just the difference in spending efficiency alone would have been enough to eliminate much of the income gap just noted.

The following graph illustrates these effects. The solid lines represent annual income by quintile (20%). The dotted lines government assistance spending's impact on the indicated quintile, and the dashed lines the effects of that assistance spending if done by the average private charity.

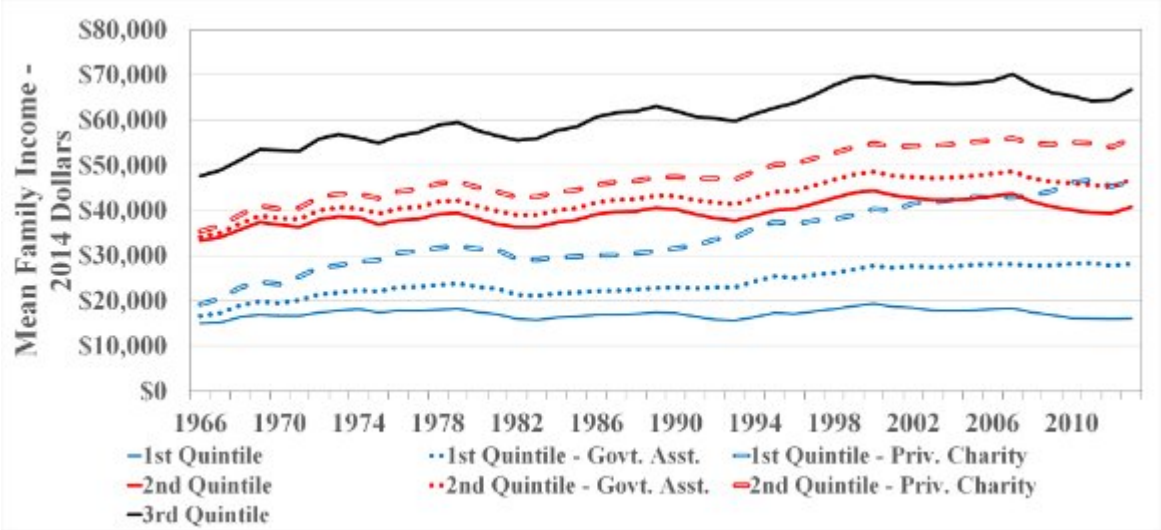


Figure 2:Mean Family Income, with Adjustments for Assistance Spending by Quintile, 1966-2013

Healthcare

A trifecta in governing effectiveness. What are the odds? Unfortunately, this is about as close to a sure thing as one can get. We can start with the legislation being advanced by lies; lies that those who spoke them knew were lies. We can move on to the billions spent for a web site that didn't work and was unsecure. From there we can go to the health insurance premium increases, in some cases over 100% per year accompanied by deductible increases. While insurance costs increased, choices often decreased and in some states the government run marketplaces went bankrupt.

Obamacare was never about healthcare. It was about insurance. Putting a party between you and your healthcare provider. What are some effects for hospitals and other providers? Virginia has over 100 hospitals. Most privately run hospitals have a religious basis; a mission including looking after those who need healthcare but cannot afford it.

One change here is the move away from payment for services to value based patient satisfaction. At the same time patients are led to believe there will be no pain after a procedure. These changes contribute to increased unreimbursed healthcare costs—revenue decreases.

New Obamacare requirements are estimated to cost Virginia hospitals about $1.5 billion annually. Increases that must be absorbed by the service provider. When revenues decline and costs increase, margins are reduced. In 2015 about one fourth of Virginia's acute care hospitals had negative operating margins, and in rural areas over forty percent ran in the red.

These conditions cannot continue indefinitely. Eventually healthcare providers will need to refuse to perform certain services, focus only on areas where a positive operating margin can be achieved, close their doors, or obtain government funding to 'make up' the deficit. Big government

at its finest, first create a problem with new legislation and then come to the rescue with more government to manage the consequences.

More information on healthcare can be found in the following articles, **Addiction** and **Mental Health and Refugees**.

Concluding Remarks

The strife and division growing within our society is evidence we are on the wrong track. We often select weak leaders, ones generally making big promises but whose actions serve themselves. But these leaders only reflect the people's values electing them. Are we still willing to serve or want to be served?

One of the things I admire about President Trump is, despite whatever flaws he may have, he appears to truly be trying to change things for the better. He cares, and is attempting to again give us the opportunity to help ourselves. That is the only way we are ever truly free, but it requires faith and self-sacrifice. One way we see we are on the wrong path is our government's attempts to undermine President Trump's agenda, thereby retaining their power and cronyism.

While writing this article, Donna Brazile's new book was released. The DNC's and Clintons actions in the last election are appalling, but should surprise no one. After all, Hillary Clinton lauded a man in her thesis who in turn lauded Satan. How appropriate, and how sad. Somewhat unexpected is that Ms. Brazile even spoke at all, but why did it take a year after the election to happen?

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The Christian's Response to Cultural Decay: Part 2

NOVEMBER 13, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Ed Vitaglianoafa Executive Vice-President

American Family Association

*(Listen to AFR radio on 88.1 FM out of Richmond, and 91.3 Culpeppoer and online from anywhere **HERE**, and **apps for iPhone and Android**)*

With a nation in near moral collapse and a church that is struggling to be salt and light, what should Bible-believing Christians do? How should they respond? Here are some helpful glimpses from Scripture. (Part one can be found **here**.)

Remember that anger does not cure the disease.

Of course, many Christians are paying attention to what is happening in America. During this period in our nation's history when wickedness seems triumphant on every side, many in the church are taking it to heart.

In times like these, it isn't easy to keep our grief from turning into anger. After all, the Psalmist says, "Burning indignation has seized me because of the wicked, who forsake Your law" (Psalm 119:53).

There is a place for such righteous indignation, because when anger flows out of holiness, humility, and biblical clarity, it is prophetic in nature.

At the same time, however, we must remember that the anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God – and righteousness is what this nation lacks.

It says in James 1:19-22:

This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

At one time or another, we've all probably attempted to berate someone into the kingdom of heaven. It's frustrating to know people who are destroying their own lives or stubbornly refusing the love of the Savior. We want to shake them and scream, "What is wrong with you? Can't you see what you're doing? Don't you see what's happening here?"

No, they don't – and neither did we when we were lost. I'm guessing we didn't respond too well to angry denunciations when they were hurled at us, either.

Instead, James indicates that, rather than use the impotent tactic of personal anger, Christians should endeavor to live holy lives, be humble, allow the word of God to do its work in our own hearts, and obey it. A personal witness that flows out of this lifestyle will undoubtedly be much more effective.

Intercede for the lost.

Christians must pray for our sin sick nation, and we must pray for the lost. Most believers probably have been taught at least the rudimentary principles of such intercession.

However, we tend to think of intercession only in terms of prayer. Intercession is prayer, but more generally it is the priestly position we occupy between God and the lost. This is why we pray for people – whether or not they know we're doing it and even if they would resent us for doing so. It is because we occupy this priestly position that we pray. We represent the lost – and the nation – before the face of God as we intercede for them.

One of the most famous passages revealing this truth is found in Ezekiel 22:30-31, which states:

'I searched for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, so that I would not destroy it; but I found no one. Thus I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; their way I have brought upon their heads,' declares the Lord God.

God looked for people – even a single individual – who would stand before Him and intercede that the Lord would have mercy. The amazing thing about these verses is that it is clear God would have spared the land if someone would have prayed! However, because no one interceded, judgment came.

We also intercede on behalf of God, representing Him to the sinner. In an equally powerful passage in the New Testament, Paul explains that Christians are ambassadors in the earth for Jesus Christ, "as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Corinthians 5:20).

It might be strange for some Christians to see the apostle speak of such divine compassion for the lost. Far too often, too many of us think of God as an indifferent and implacable judge, holding the gavel high, prepared to render final judgment, sternly warning the sinner to "turn or burn" while they still have time.

Instead, Paul portrays God as pleading with the lost – and the Christian as begging on behalf of Jesus – that they be reconciled.

Gently but firmly stand for the truth.

Once we have our attitudes right and we possess a clearer understanding of our calling, the Christian must proceed with the task of expressing the truth of God in every situation where opportunity exists.

In 2 Timothy 2:23-26, Paul makes the case once again about the Christian's proper attitude. We must not be argumentative, and our truth-telling must be out of a "kind" demeanor, it must be "patient," and it must be characterized by "gentleness."

However, far too many Christians have fallen for the lie that they must choose between exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit and preaching the truth. Kindness, patience, gentleness, love – none of these Christian characteristics diminish our responsibility to tell the truth. In other words, speaking God's word is not unkind or hateful.

Instead, Christians are called to teach and correct "those who are in opposition" (v. 25). The "knowledge of the truth" is the proper avenue to salvation and spiritual freedom. In fact, Paul suggests that this combination of truth and love is the only way to repentance. It is the only pathway for sinners to "come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will" (vs. 26).

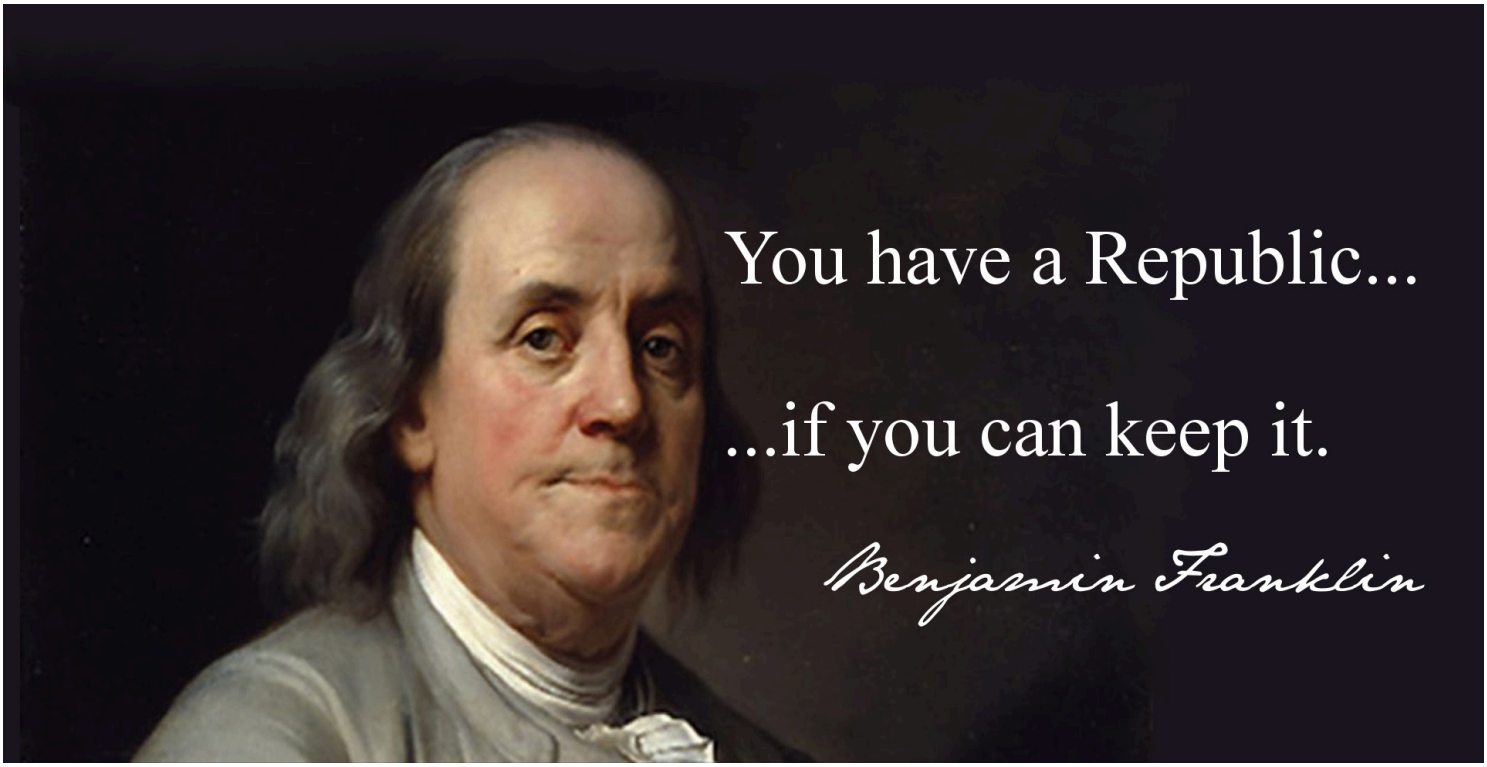
Also note that the believer must remain focused like a laser on the goal of preaching the gospel and speaking God's truth. Paul warns us to avoid getting sidetracked in things that don't matter – "foolish and ignorant speculations" – because they only cause fruitless arguments.

Perhaps America is in the state she is in, at least in part, because Christians have not remained focused like a laser on declaring God's truth.

Editor's Note: This series will continue with this writer's next blog.

Saul Alinsky Would Be Proud, and So Would Satan, Part I

NOVEMBER 12, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Dan Wolf | VCA Advisory Boad
Living Rightly

Living in the Land of Lies discussed some progressive principles, how they impact society and differ from our founding ideas. Progressive ideas are not limited to any particular political party. This article draws from the **2016 Democratic Party Platform**, a platform steeped in progressive ideas representing man's enlightenment of himself. Man turned toward man, or man and man alone.

At its heart, the Democratic platform presents government solutions to all our current problems. Actions requiring government expenditures and intervention. The words invest, investing, and investment occur over 60 times in just 50 pages. Some of their stated ends I agree with, but it's not just the ends alone that matter. The means used to achieve them are at least as important—and overlooked.

This article refutes the economic and moral bases underlying the Democratic platform. The Democrats approach fails in both cases. The next article examines three specific policy areas from

their platform.

The Economic Argument

Like everything else, government is not free. Whenever a new government solution is created, a whole host of new activities are required to support it. These include;

- Application processing
- Application approval
- Fund disbursements
- Overseeing solution compliance
- Program audits
- Investigating out of compliance instances
- Enforcement actions when non-compliance is found
- Solution management
- Solution support functions, such as IT and Operations

Each new regulation or law requires hundreds, and in some cases thousands, of new federal employees for support. Not one of these new positions creates any economic value, and probably takes away from it. In general, government is a fiscally irresponsible problem solving approach. It is estimated the federal government provides about $ .30 in services for each tax dollar it receives. A private charity performing at this level would likely be prosecuted for fraud or malfeasance. From a Biblical view it is bad stewardship, and man was charged with stewarding God's creation.

But It's Not Just About Government

The good news doesn't end there. Additional expenses are not only incurred by government whenever one of their solutions is implemented, but each and every organization subject to the new requirements also incurs additional costs for;

- Applications
- Expenditures
- Compliance monitoring
- Audit
- Management
- Support functions

None of these new program related activities add value to the economy either. These new functions produce nothing. Instead they increase costs and reduce profitability if the increases cannot be passed on to those using the goods or services. Even if the cost increases are passed on, they take disposable income that would have been used to make other purchases. The only party

winning under this approach is government itself. Everyone else loses, except the few well connected elite.

The Moral Argument

It is now time for the moral argument. God is good. If He weren't, you probably wouldn't be here because neither you nor your ancestors would have been created. You would not have been granted the gift of existence.

Someone good must be virtuous—righteous or morally upright. Justice is the virtue of giving each their due. An example. A worker earns their wages and should be paid what they have earned. It is morally right. Doing the moral thing is good. Therefore a moral being must give someone what they have earned, what they are due. As God is not only good, but the source of good, He must also be morality's source. As God is creation's Creator, He is also its Governor. In Jonathan Edwards' words;

he Creator of the world is doubtless also the Governor of it. He that had power to give being to the world, and set all the parts of it in order, has doubtless power to dispose of the world, to continue the order he has constituted, or to alter it.

God's governance is the only absolute power. This governance requires communication. As Governor, God's law is one means of communicating His commands to His creation. This is referred to as the law of Nature's God contained within scripture. As Creator, His law is supreme. Man's disobedience is therefore rebellion, a rebellion that is the closest man can come to committing a capital crime against God. If God is just, man must be punished for that rebellion. There is no balance as envisioned by pagan thought, no mixing between good works and bad works. Virtue is not a balance. There are only fully virtue and vice. Our individual choices make the difference.

The Difference Between Pagan and Christian Morality

Christianity provides a unique solution to the pagan paradox noted above. "Paganism declared that virtue was a balance. Christianity declared it was in a conflict; the collision of two passions apparently opposite." Conflict within a will to do good or evil, to promote virtue or practice vice. This view is Christianity's key to ethics. Paganism holds this passion to be a mixture, a blending of white and black into gray. Accepting this pagan view means becoming not too much of anything. One is neither too prideful nor too humble, too boastful nor too meek. However, when one strives to become not too much of anything, they also become not much of anything. We do not fulfill our purpose as we do not utilize the gifts we've each received.

What Does This Have To Do with Politics?

Quite simply we belong to Him, and this is true in two ways. The first is through our creation by Him. In this sense of belonging we have no choice. The second is through our obedience to Him as Governor. In this second sense we have a choice, for we were each given the gift of free will. The ability to choose the actions we take. This is freedom, and we cannot fulfill our purpose without it. Through our choices we are "not merely to be his subjects and servants, but to be his children."

Governance is to have a moral foundation. This requires communication between Creator and created, between Governor and governed, in order to promote His declarations, methods, rules, and enforcements. *This understanding is necessary in order for us to choose obedience*. This understanding requires revelation. We are not born with it. The only way we learn it is through education, but we've shut God out of our government, schools, the public square, and even some of our churches. All in the name of a corrupted idea labeled 'separation of church and state.' A perversion of the original idea created by man's legal mind.

The Biblical View

This morality requires self-sacrifice. Several passages in both the Old and New Testaments point this out. "o we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *each of us is to exercise them accordingly*." All power comes from God. "For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God." Rulers are not exempt from this "for rulers are servants of God."

Finally, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all." There is a distinction between man's governance and God's. Man uses his power to be served, God's exerts His power to serve others.

Moral Leadership

Moral leaders create environments promoting virtue and unity as a people. This virtue and unity produces good, leads to prosperity, and promotes peace. Immoral leaders, on the other hand, promote vice and create division among a people. Vice and division lead to weakness, jealousy, envy, and hate. It promotes strife and discord. It leads to war, either with other nations or civil war within. Look at the last nine years. Which road are we on?

Political parties make little difference. We can look at the irresponsible spending under Bush the younger's administration. Spending that accelerated under the Obama Administration. Their excuses do not matter, because the problems they cite were in turn caused by poor governance and other weak minded decision making. Division increased under Obama along many fronts. Racial tensions increased, as did differences between genders, sexual orientation, and the divide

between those that have and those that do not. We can look at issues such as abortion, gay marriage, gender confusion and many others. These are the result of a society that has lost its way because we no longer teach what is necessary for success. It is evidence we are no longer a single people. Sodom and Gomorrah are here.

There is no freedom without faith, and if our faith wanes so will our freedom. We will not be able to manage self-governance. Instead we will trade our freedom for economic security, a promised security that can never be delivered because it is a false promise. Our security is our responsibility. Giving that responsibility to another is an illusion, one for which we are ultimately held accountable.

The next article examines the areas of education, poverty, and healthcare within the Democratic platform.

Dan Wolf is a researcher, analyst, and author. He has written three books examining the relationship between faith, freedom, virtue, and charity. Together these form the cornerstone of our purpose, and our society's foundational principles derived from those relationships. Links to his work can be found at the **Living Rightly** website.

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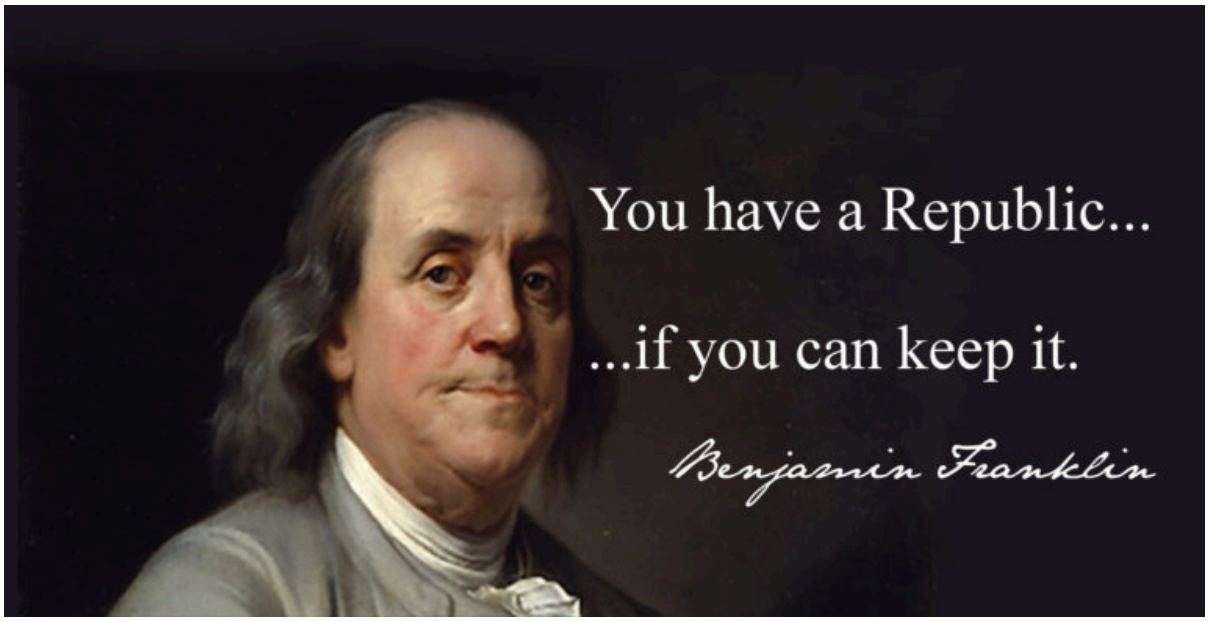
You have a Republic...
...if you can keep it.
Benjamin Franklin

Bible Belief Is Not Bigotry

NOVEMBER 7, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

By Dr. Mark Creech
Christian Action League of North Carolina, Inc.

Dizzy Gillespie, the great jazz trumpeter, is remembered not only for his stupendous talent but also for the way his cheeks would puff out when he blew his horn.

Writer Jim Doherty says that on one occasion Gillespie was talking with Chicago Symphony trumpeter Adolph (Bud) Herseth. Herseth, a white man, is known for turning bright red whenever he would play. Gillespie, who was Black, kidded with Herseth, "Bud," how come your cheeks don't puff out when you play?"

Herseth replied, "Diz, how come your face doesn't get red when you play?"

Two great trumpeters with different styles. God has made us all unique, and the creation shows that God enjoys its diversity.

Nonetheless, the celebration of diversity shouldn't include matters sinful, shameful, and harmful. Granted, bigotry is something to be reviled, but Christians who believe homosexuality and same-sex marriage are sinful base their views on solid reasoning.

Although the word, "discrimination," is typically seen as a bad thing, our laws discriminate against behaviors that are considered detrimental. Could you imagine calling someone who discriminates against the incestuous or the Harvey Weinstein's of the world as bigots? These may involve consensual conduct but they would still be wrong – very wrong.

Bigotry is really about prejudging people without a substantive reason and opposition by conservative evangelicals to same-sex relationships or polyamory are rooted in their love of what's healthy and beneficial.

Considering the serious negative spiritual and physical consequences of sex outside of the marriage of a man and a woman, is it really rational, kind, or just to affirm this behavior? God forbid. This would not only be an injustice to society but hurt those engaged in it.

More than 60% of North Carolinians voted in 2012 to elevate state law defining marriage as one man and one woman into the state's constitution. These people didn't vote for a constitutional marriage amendment out of bigotry, but because thousands of years of evidence clearly show

heterosexual relationships of one man and one woman committed to marriage for life is superior in providing society with the most benefits. Other types of relationships have significant personal and societal drawbacks, especially for children.

A. **John Shore, Jr. recently said in an editorial in the Asheville Citizen-Times**that if one gives their money or time to a church or ministry that opposes homosexual activism, then you are a bigot. If you speak out against homosexuality, then you are a bigot.

It's not uncommon for those who cannot win on the merits of their arguments to sling mud by name-calling. Moreover, Shore's charge is a case of selective morality. While resistance to gay marriage is certainly not bigotry as he asserts, it might be asked why he thinks bigotry is wrong. From what moral standard or authority does he argue? On what basis does he contend bigotry is wrong, but at the same time refuse to admit homosexuality is wrong too?

The reality is Christian people who treat homosexuality as a sin are the very opposite of bigots. For instead of stereotyping homosexuals as predetermined products of either their biology or environment, the Gospel treats them equally as sinners (as are all of us) that need to repent and trust in Christ. This is the heart of the Christian faith: Christ died to set sinners free from sin.

So if you've been a thief, a drunkard, a drug addict, an extortionist, an adulterer, a liar, a murderer, etc., you can be forgiven and emancipated. But oops, when you think about it, to oppose these behaviors might warrant the charge of bigotry as well.

Nonsense, it's not bigotry! And there is something terribly wrong with the celebration of that kind of diversity.

*This article was first submitted to the Asheville Citizen Times (A-CT) in response to an editorial by N. John Shore in the A-CT titled, "**Does My Bible Belief Make Me a 'Bigot?'**" The A-CT agreed to publish my piece, provided I was willing to accept qualifiers such as "I believe" and "We believe" which would have reduced my argument to a subjective one.*

A. *John Shore's editorial that accused conservative Christians who believe homosexuality is sinful as bigots was purely subjective but treated as objective fact in the A-CT and not subject to their addition of qualifiers. I could not in good conscience allow myself to be reduced to such media bias and discrimination. Therefore, I instructed the A-CT to pull the article, which they did.*

*You can read more about the A-CT's blatant media bias here: **Asheville Citizen Times Writer Calls Christians 'Bigots,' Rev. Creech Seeks to Respond But Paper Demonstrates Media Bias.***

Rev. Mark Creech is executive director of the Raleigh-based Christian Action League of North Carolina.

The Greatest Man of the Second Millennium

OCTOBER 25, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Bryan Fischer

Martin Luther was the greatest man of the second millennium.

Many great and influential men moved about the world stage between 1000 AD and 2000 AD – George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Napoleon, Abraham Lincoln, Bismarck, and Winston Churchill to name just a few – but Luther towers above them all.

As a lowly monk, he stood alone against the mightiest political power of the day, the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, and against the mightiest religious power of the day, the pope of the Roman Catholic Church. This wasn't David against Goliath, this was David against an army of Goliaths. Luther took them on, and he won.

As a result, the history of the world was changed forever, and the impact of his courage and boldness will be felt until the end of time.

Great men have left their imprint on the world's politics, science, literature, art, commerce, and education. But over the last 500 years, all of them have stood on the shoulders of this great man.

While others brought civilization back to liberty or prosperity or peace, Luther brought civilization back to the word of God.

Luther had no intention of changing the world when he tacked the 95 Theses on the door of the Wittenberg Church on October 31, 1517. In fact, he said later that if he had known what he was getting into, he couldn't have been dragged into it "by a team of twenty horses."

But when he ran across John Tetzel corrupting the purity of the gospel beyond recognition by selling indulgences – sentence reductions in purgatory – for filthy lucre, had knew he had to do something.

He simply wanted to start a dialogue and a debate about the corruption and theological error that had crept into the church of his day. He had no desire to destroy the church; he only wanted to reform it. He wanted to restore the gospel in all its purity – that Scripture and not tradition is our ultimate authority, and that man is not saved by works but entirely by the grace of God through faith in Christ.

Luther Before the Diet of Worms by **Anton von Werner** (1843–1915).

But he was resisted, intimidated, and threatened by the religious and political establishment of his day, and brought before the Diet of Worms to answer to the emperor and the pope.

Luther manfully refused to budge even though he knew his life was at stake. Said Luther at the climactic moment, "Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason…my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand, I can do no other, so help me God. Amen."

An eyewitness reported that as he left the room after defying the most powerful men in the world, he raised his fist in the air and said, "I am finished!"

But he wasn't. With God protecting him, he worked to bring European civilization back to the original authority of the Bible and away from misguided human tradition. He wanted to restore men to the glorious truth that they are set right with God by faith, and not by obedience to a set of man-made rules.

Protestantism was the fruit of his labor, and as it swept through Europe it not only revitalized a continent's spiritual life, it radically reformed its political life as well. The biblical concept that every man is a priest in his own right led inevitably to the selection of political leaders by the vote of the people rather than by heredity.

Protestantism took root in England, but the hunger of the Puritans and Separatists for an even more purified church led them and hundreds of thousands of Protestants after them to the shores of America. (The population of America at the time of the Founding was 98.4% Protestant, 1.4% Catholic, and 0.2% Jewish).

The Protestant heirs of Luther in America formed the colonies, drafted the Declaration of Independence, crafted the Constitution, and unleashed the Protestant work ethic which made America the most prosperous nation in the history of the world. Protestants founded America and built America.

America soon became the greatest force for good in the history of humanity, modeling what a republican form of government looks like, demonstrating the centrality of Christianity to a prosperous and stable society, and sending more missionaries to more darkened corners of the world than the rest of the world combined.

In 1851, the yacht "America" took on the sailing world and trounced the competition. Queen Victoria asked, "Who is first?" When she was told it was America, she asked, "Who is second?" "There is no second," came the reply.

And none of that would have been possible apart from the courage of one man who dared to stand on the truth of Scripture and change the course of human history.

The greatest man of his millennium? Hands down, Martin Luther. And there is no second.

(*Unless otherwise noted, the opinions expressed are the author's and do not necessarily reflect the views of the American Family Association or American Family Radio.*)

Twitter: **@BryanJFischer**, on Facebook at "Focal Point"

Host of "Focal Point" on American Family Radio, 1-3pm CT, M-F **www.afr.net**

2 States Ravaged by Opioids Show Difference Faith Makes

OCTOBER 21, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

A large and growing body of evidence shows that not only can religion help prevent people from using illicit drugs, but it also plays a strong role in effective treatment programs. …

Fred Lucas | The Daily Signal

HANOVER, N.H.—There is a strong correlation between lack of religious attendance and illicit drug use, research shows in contrasting two states hit hard by the opioid crisis.

The parallels are demonstrated by two comparative studies of New Hampshire and West Virginia.

West Virginia suffers from an ailing economy, while New Hampshire has a strong economy, noted J. Scott Moody, CEO of the Granite Institute, a conservative think tank. The institute takes its name from the fact that New Hampshire is known as the Granite State.

"It's not just economics causing the overdose problems. There are other factors," Moody told The Daily Signal.

Moody and Wendy P. Warcholik, co-directors of the American Conservative Union's Family Prosperity Index, issued the **http://www.familyprosperity.org/application/files/3515/0540/5675/FPI-WestVirginia-WEB.pdf'**);" target="_blank" rel="noopener">West Virginia report in September and the **http://www.familyprosperity.org/application/files/7314/9161/3959/FPI-FullReport2017-WEB.pdf'**);" target="_blank" rel="noopener">2017 Family Prosperity Index report in February.

The February study reveals a regional problem.

> A large and growing body of evidence shows that not only can religion help prevent people from using illicit drugs, but it also plays a strong role in effective treatment programs. … The northeastern states dominate the upper-left quadrant of the chart , where low religiosity is correlated with high drug use, while deep southern states and Utah dominate the lower right quadrant, where high religiosity is correlated with low drug use.

Moody noted that New Hampshire has a serious problem, not only with opioid addiction, but also a related problem with a high suicide rate. One in 10 young adults say they have had suicidal thoughts.

“You have to ask, why is that? Our economy is booming. We’re pretty much at full employment. Anybody who wants a job can find a job,” Moody said. “So we looked at more social-type issues. For example, New Hampshire is one of the least religious states in the country. It’s New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine. It’s a race to the bottom. … We suggest there is a strong correlation between illicit drug use and religious attendance.”

By contrast, data seems to be showing some improvement in West Virginia, he said.

“Ironically, West Virginia is much more religious than northern New England, and that has actually suppressed their illicit drug use, which was a positive for West Virginia, but they still have a suicide problem along with it,” Moody said.

The Family Prosperity Index found that “etween 2000 and 2015, New Hampshire’s drug overdose rate increased by 724 percent to 0.033 percent (2nd highest) from 0.004 percent. Over the same time period, the national average grew by 148 percent to 0.017 percent from 0.007 percent.”

West Virginia’s illicit drug use rate as a percent of population exceeded the national average in most years; however, the state has seen some reversals.

The study released in September says, “In 2014, West Virginia has the 20th-lowest illicit drug use rate (except marijuana) at 2.5 percent and the second-lowest regionally, just ahead of Virginia (2.3 percent, 14th-lowest).”

The findings show:

> While West Virginia's current low ranking is encouraging, the recent bounce-back between 2013 and 2014 suggests continued vigilance is needed, as it may indicate a return to a higher illicit drug use rate (except marijuana) in the years ahead (perhaps to levels of the near past between 2004 and 2010).
>
> A significant reason for why West Virginia's illicit drug use rate is relatively low is due to the state's above-average religious attendance. In 2015, 44 percent of West Virginians attended church at least once per week (tied for the 17th-highest with Missouri and Indiana), which is 16 percent above the national average of 38 percent.
>
> Regionally, West Virginia had the second-highest level of religiosity trailing only Kentucky (47 percent, 10th-highest). All other neighboring states were lower in religiosity: Virginia (42 percent, 22nd-highest), Ohio (40 percent, 23rd-highest), and Pennsylvania (38 percent, 31st-highest).

The research measures religiosity using Gallup data, which has tracked weekly church attendance since 2008.

Other national research backs this up more broadly on drug use.

The reports point to a 2001 study, "So Help Me God: Substance Abuse, Religion and Spirituality," from the **http://www.centeronaddiction.org/download/file/fid/1198′**, 'National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse');" target="_blank" rel="noopener">National Center on Addiction and Substance Abusethat found:

> "dults who never attend religious services are almost twice as likely to drink, three time likelier to smoke, more than five times likelier to have used an illicit drug other than marijuana, almost seven times likelier to binge drink and almost eight times likelier to use marijuana than those who attend religious services at least weekly … .
>
> "eens who never attend religious services are twice as likely to drink, more than twice as likely to smoke, more than three times likelier to use marijuana and binge drink, and almost four times likelier to use illicit drugs than teens who attend religious services at least weekly.

A 2005 study, "Faith Matters: Race/Ethnicity, Religion and Substance Use," from the **http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-faithmattersRaceReligionUse-2004.pdf'**);" target="_blank" rel="noopener">Annie E. Casey Foundation, a research center focused on education and opportunities for young people, found:

> Religion is an important protective factor against substance abuse and an important support for persons in recovery. Religious people are less likely than others to use drugs and less likely to experience negative drug-related consequences.

The office of Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, is also conducting the**https://www.lee.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/socialcapitalproject?ID=3B785797-C874-4515-9F9C-6A6D4C3C9127′**, ‘ Social Capital Project’);” target=”_blank” rel=”noopener”> Social Capital Project, a multiyear research effort looking at “associational life,” which includes families, communities, workplaces, and religious congregations. The report doesn’t single out religion as a mitigating factor to addiction, but notes that isolation is a major cause.

“Studies show that social networks influence the behavior of their members, affecting whether they are obese or fit, happy or sad,” the Lee project says. “The stark fact is that socially isolated people and others without social support die younger. Even among people with adequate social support, health status is connected to the health of their friends, family, and co-workers.”

Fred Lucas is the White House correspondent for The Daily Signal. **Send an email to Fred**.

The Christian's Response to Cultural Decay: Part 1

OCTOBER 15, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Ed Vitaglianoafa Executive Vice-President
American Family Association

(Listen to AFR radio on 88.1 FM out of Richmond, and 91.3 Culpeppoer and online from anywhere ***HERE****, and* ***apps for iPhone and Android****)*

Sometimes it seems as if America has become like Judah during the time of Isaiah, when nothing in that culture was sound or healthy:

Where will you be stricken again, as you continue in your rebellion? The whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot even to the head there is nothing sound in it, only bruises, welts and raw wounds, not pressed out or bandaged, nor softened with oil (**Isaiah 1:5-6**).

Alex McFarland, author, apologetics expert, and co-host of ***Exploring the Word***, heard weekdays on AFR, has identified the three greatest challenges facing the church, and all three are veritable giants.

They are:

1. **militant secularism,**
2. **intolerant homosexuality, and**
3. **radical Islam.**

Especially in the case of the first two in the U.S., these giants seem everywhere ascendant.

As the Psalmist says, "The wicked strut about on every side when vileness is exalted among the sons of men" (**Psalm 12:8**).

Even in the church today, it seems as if every form of heresy exalts itself against the truth. Of course, we were warned by the Apostle Paul that such times would come, "when will not heed sound doctrine, but having itching ears, attach themselves to teachers after their own lusts" (**2 Timothy 4:3**).

Still, the followers of Jesus must battle against the lies of hell, because to lose this fight is to see a culture overthrown. For those Christians who think the destruction of a culture does not matter to

the church, think again: "If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (**Psalm 11:3**).

How should Christians respond?

We know we are always called to be salt and light (**Matthew 5:13-16**), but what, exactly, does that look like?

Here are some helpful glimpses from Scripture:

Let your heart break.

Many Christians simply do not care that our society is unraveling. Whether it's because they are apathetic, self-centered, engulfed in an idolatrous love of pleasure, or insulated by wealth from the catastrophic depth of human suffering underway in America, many people who name Jesus as Lord could care less.

This is a monstrous sin against a holy God – and it will be punished in the day of trouble. In Ezekiel 9 we see a terrifying picture of the spiritual struggle surrounding a decaying nation as judgment swiftly approaches.

The prophet Ezekiel sees a vision of destroying angels drawing near to Jerusalem, preparing to unleash devastation. Before judgment comes, however, another angel is given instructions:

The Lord said to him, 'Go through the midst of the city, even through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst' (**Ezekiel 9:4**).

Sometimes, all we can do is "sigh and groan" at the sights and sounds of wickedness in our midst. But God sees our sorrow – and takes notice. Such lamentation over the triumph of evil wins His approval and, we see in the next verses, His protection.

All those who did not sigh and groan, who were not marked for God's protection, were brought to utter ruin. God's holiness consumed its way through the rottenness and rebellion like a fire engulfing a decrepit slum, so much so that Ezekiel despaired that all would perish.

And church leaders take note – in terms of God's own people, the judgment began from the top down. The destroying angels were told: "'nd you shall start from My sanctuary.' So they started with the elders who were before the temple" (v. 6).

As it is true that, when God judges His people, it often starts first with a holy visitation upon His shepherds, so it is true that God starts a national judgment by examining the church – before sinners are judged.

For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the Godless man and the sinner? (**1 Peter 4:17-18**)

Christian, it is time to take note of our own sin, and then the sin that is found in the wider church. Once our own hearts are broken, we can then – and only then – call sinners to repentance. To "sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in midst" is to please God and, if He wills it (**1 Peter 4:19**), provide for our own protection should judgment come.

Don't be judgmental toward sinners.

It is axiomatic that the moment a Christian mentions sin, the immediate retort will be a Bible verse: "Do not judge so that you will not be judged" (**Matthew 7:1**).

Yes, it is clearly an effort to escape the conviction of the Holy Spirit by pointing to the flawed messenger. Yes, it is usually easily proven that the sinner couldn't find the verse to save his or her own life. Yes, it is obviously a twisting of what Jesus meant by "judging."

Nevertheless, what Jesus *did* mean is often missed by Christians who are all too happy to correct a sinner's poor Bible exegesis. The goal is to "see clearly" so the sinner can be helped. How do we get ourselves into a position to see clearly? By remembering to search our own hearts for the sin that infects our hearts, too. If we do this, we will tend to be compassionate to other sinners, even as we ask God to be merciful to us.

Let me give you an example. I don't like it when Christians mock atheists like Richard Dawkins. I see him and other atheists as people who are searching for answers but have not had God reveal Himself to them. They are groping for God, as Paul says in **Acts 17:27**, even if they don't know it. Dawkins is a very bright individual who is dismissive of the idea of a God because he just can't see Him.

Of course, **Romans 1:18-32** makes it plain that every man has some awareness of God through nature yet suppresses that awareness in pride, idolatry, and unrighteousness. Thus they are without excuse and will be held guilty for that stubborn refusal to honor God.

However, I am well aware that I could have been just like Dawkins, had not God, in His mercy, shown Himself to me. As a result, I feel a lot of compassion for him – even when he's being a jerk. I can't really see how I can be snarky toward a man who is stumbling in the dark, just like I was. After all, I didn't see God until He lit a lamp and whispered in my ear, "Psssst … over here."

SOURCE: **AFA**

The mission of the American Family Association is to inform, equip, and activate individuals to strengthen the moral foundations of American culture, and give aid to the church here and abroad in its task of fulfilling the Great Commission.

Editor's Note: This series will continue with this writer's next blog. All Scripture verses are from the New American Standard Bible.

Out of the Las Vegas Tragedy Comes More Hope

OCTOBER 9, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: INTERFAITH, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Dan Wolf

My heart goes out to those at the recent Las Vegas Route 91 Harvest Festival shooting. My prayers are with you, your families, the first responders, and medical personnel who assisted those who were wounded. It was truly a calamity, but as we'll see in a bit there were also some very hopeful moments in the midst of the tragedy.

The Reality

It is unfortunate that not even a single day passed before some attempted to inject politics into the shooting. There were of course calls for more gun controls, including the bump fire stocks used by the murderer. Outlawing these devices will likely do little harm, it will only take such devices out of the hands of law abiding citizens who are unlikely to use them in the first place. However, outlawing these devices will also likely do little good. Criminals and others intent on doing evil are most likely to use such devices, and they don't care about the law. Make the devices illegal and those intent on doing evil will buy them illegally or find a way to make them. That is the reality we face.

The police can only act once a crime occurs. Rarely are police nearby at that moment as their presence lessens a criminal's chance of succeeding in whatever they've planned. That is also reality. The primary responsibility for our safety, and that of our families, rests with each one of us. We have but two choices. We can either accept or reject that reality; we can face reality or just allow it to happen. Each of us is free to make either choice. But regardless of our choice we should continue to live our lives without fear. Self-defense is a right, and owning a gun an option for defense; as is having a plan, watching your surroundings, trusting your senses, understanding how to defend yourself, etc.

It seems like some days we are once again living in the old west. Not because of guns, but rather the acts of evil occurring like those in Las Vegas. Such acts are immoral. Sometimes there is no understanding evil, but its happening should not surprise us. We've cast God out of our government, schools, the public square, and even some of our churches. With His removal we lose His morality. God is not the cause of evil acts. But when we turn away from Him, He leaves us to our own devices, and we in turn often destroy each other. We turn from self-sacrifice to self-interest. We turn away from our purpose. His morality provides the only answer.

The Answer

Even when we turn away from Him, He is always with us. Take the Las Vegas shooting. He was present in the midst of the evil happening that night, just as he is present for those suffering from the **recent hurricanes**. Some examples? Given the number of weapons in the murderer's room, the number of shots fired, the size and density of the concert crowd, it is a miracle that only 58 people died in the shooting. The rapid police response and hotel security approaching the killer's room ended the shooting in only a little over ten minutes—another miracle. Over five hundred wounded went to the hospitals. The medical personnel's response to the emergency was tremendous, and very few lives were lost. Again, another miracle given the high powered rifles used. Finally, while there was also panic during the shooting, the best of humanity was also on display as people stopped to help others in need.

There is a simple answer to the evil we see around us today. We need to;

- Turn away from ourselves and back to our Creator. To do this, we must acknowledge our arrogance as individuals and a people.
- Repent and ask for forgiveness. This puts us on the right path.
- Learn from our mistakes. Study. Practice those things that make us better. This step transforms us into the people we were intended to be.

While the ideas are easy, living them is often hard. But we are never alone, and we have His promise on that. However, rather we receive those blessings depends on our choices. Will we choose Him?

Dan Wolf is a researcher, analyst, and author. He has written three books examining the relationship between faith, freedom, virtue, and charity. Together these form the cornerstone of our purpose, and our society's foundational principles derived from those relationships. Links to his work can be found at the **Living Rightly** website plus his extensive list of interfaith and Islam articles **listed here**.

The World's Rejection Of Christians

OCTOBER 8, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Bill Muehlenberg | **BARBWIRE**

One of the clearest teachings found in the New Testament is this: if you throw your lot in with Jesus Christ, commit to being his follower, and decide to proclaim him wherever you go, you will be hated on. There are no ifs, ands, or buts about this one – the disciple of Christ will be rejected by the world.

You cannot read the gospel accounts, the book of Acts, the epistles, or Revelation without repeatedly noting how often Christ-followers are persecuted, attacked, abused and hated – all because of their association with Christ. And of course 2000 years of church history also demonstrates this conclusively.

But none of this should be surprising. As Jesus said, the servant is not above his master. So what the world did to Jesus is exactly what the world will do to Christians. And guess what? The world hated Jesus. The world rejected Jesus. The world crucified Jesus.

Trendy progressive Christians insist that if we just love a lot and don't rock the boat, everyone will receive us and welcome us. Sorry, but no go. The most loving and gracious man to walk the earth was Jesus, yet still the world rejected him.

Sure, some folks did receive him and follow him, but for the most part, the crowds rejected him. They wanted nothing to do with him. They wanted him out of their lives. In my morning reading I again came upon this basic truth. We find these amazing words in Matthew:

"Then the whole town went out to meet Jesus. And when they saw him, they pleaded with him to leave their region" (Matthew 8:34). Wow, what a brief but telling look at how Jesus was received. Are you having trouble getting people to love you and accept you because you are a Christian? Well, welcome to the club.

You are simply following in Jesus' footsteps. Nothing new here. Nothing out of the ordinary. You are just being treated as Jesus was treated. Now of course we must be careful here. Some Christians are being rejected and disliked, not because they are so Christlike, but because they may just be real chumps!

They may be obnoxious, annoying, uncaring pests who of course rightly repel people. So we must take care here: if you are shunned by the world, is it because you are living a real Christians life, or

because you are just a pain in the butt to be around? It is always good to be doing a bit of a check-up here in this regard.

But having said that, if we seek to be as Christ-like and Spirit-filled and gracious and loving as we can be, we will still be rejected by the world. Let me go back to this passage for a moment. The context of this story is found in Matthew 8:28-34. It involves the episode of how Jesus restored two demon-possessed men:

> When he arrived at the other side in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. "What do you want with us, Son of God?" they shouted. "Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?" Some distance from them a large herd of pigs was feeding. The demons begged Jesus, "If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs."
>
> He said to them, "Go!" So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and died in the water. Those tending the pigs ran off, went into the town and reported all this, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. Then the whole town went out to meet Jesus. And when they saw him, they pleaded with him to leave their region.

We can see a big reason here for the rejection of Jesus: obviously the owners of the pigs were quite upset about all the financial loss involved. In the account of this story found in Mark we learn that the swine numbered about two thousand (Mark 5:13).

No wonder they got so angry. And of interest, we find this often in the days of the early Christians community. The world especially goes ballistic when the proclamation of the gospel leads to any sort of financial loss. For example, we read about riots occurring in the book of Acts following gospel presentations which led to ruined businesses and the like.

In Acts 16:16-40 for example we read about how a demon was cast out of a female slave by Paul and Silas. She had "earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling". When they found out her money-making abilities were now gone, all hell broke loose.

We find the same in Acts 19:23-41 where we learn about a "silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in a lot of business for the craftsmen there." He railed against Paul and his anti-idol gospel, and as a result a riot broke out in Ephesus.

But even if money and its loss is not involved, there will be a zillion other reasons why the world will reject and hate on Christians. As mentioned, we have plenty of promises to this effect by Jesus and the disciples. These would include the following:

Matthew 5:10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Matthew 10:22-23 “You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another.”

Mark 13:9-13 “You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them. And the gospel must first be preached to all nations. Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. Everyone will hate you because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.

Luke 6:22-23 “Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.”

John 15:18-20 “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember what I told you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.”

John 16:2-4 “They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you.”

Acts 23:12-15 The next morning some Jews formed a conspiracy and bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul. More than forty men were involved in this plot. They went to the chief priests and the elders and said, “We have taken a solemn oath not to eat anything until we have killed Paul. Now then, you and the Sanhedrin petition the commander to bring him before you on the pretext of wanting more accurate information about his case. We are ready to kill him before he gets here.”

2 Corinthians 4:8-10 We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

1 Thessalonians 3:4 In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know.

2 Timothy 3:12 In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

As I say, it should come as no surprise that those in the surrounding culture do not exactly welcome you with open arms when you seek to represent Christ and proclaim biblical truth and values in the public arena. In fact, if you are not getting the same reaction that Jesus and the disciples got, you may need to ask yourself some hard questions!

If everyone in the world just loves you to pieces and thinks you are just peachy, maybe you are not quite being the salt and the light you are called to be. Let me finish with a few quotes from some of the great saints who have gone before:

"You were once a servant of Satan, and no king will willingly lose his subjects. Do you think that Satan will leave you alone? No, he will always be at you, for he 'prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.' Expect trouble, then, Christians, when you look beneath you. Then look around you. Where are you? You are in enemy country, a stranger and an alien. The world is not your friend. If it is, then you are not God's friend, for whoever is the friend of the world is the enemy of God. Be certain that you will find enemies everywhere. When you sleep, remember that you are resting on the battlefield; when you travel, suspect an ambush in every hedge. As mosquitoes are said to bite strangers more than natives, so the trials of earth will be sharpest to you." Charles Spurgeon

"Laughter, ridicule, opposition and persecution are often the only reward which Christ's followers get from the world." J.C. Ryle

"The apostles went away rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ, that they were graced so far as to be disgraced for the name of Christ!" Thomas Watson

"I was honored today with having a few stones, dirt, rotten eggs, and pieces of dead cat thrown at me." George Whitefield

"The world never burned a casual Christian at the stake." John R. Rice

"Persecution is simply the clash between two irreconcilable value-systems." John Stott

"Everyone recognizes that Stephen was Spirit-filled when he was performing wonders. Yet he was just as Spirit-filled when he was being stoned to death." Leonard Ravenhill

"A true man of God prepares God's people for persecution. The false teaches them how to avoid it." David Pawson

"If you are suffering as Christians, and because you are Christians, it is one of the surest proofs you can ever have of the fact that you are a child of God." Martyn Lloyd-Jones

“Why in God’s name do you expect to be accepted everywhere? How is it the world couldn’t get on with the holiest man that ever lived, and it can get on with you and me?” Leonard Ravenhill

SOURCE: **BARBWIRE**

BILL MUEHLENBERG

Bill Muehlenberg, who was born in America, lives in Melbourne, Australia. He runs a web-based ministry of pro-faith, pro-family activism called CultureWatch: **http://www.billmuehlenberg.com**. Bill is widely sought out by the media for comments on social issues, faith issues, and family issues, and has appeared on all the major television and radio news shows, current affairs shows, and debate programs. He is the author of In Defence of the Family; Strained Relations: The Challenge of Homosexuality, and several other books.

Living in a Land of Lies: How Progressivism Impacts Society

SEPTEMBER 29, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: INTERFAITH, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Collectivism Principles	Progressive Counterparts
Good of the State and not the individual is the proper subject of political thought	The State is the solution to all problems, we are not to look to God or individuals. In essence the State takes God's place.
All are not equal, rather some are more equal than others	Wealth transfers: entitlements, grants, regulations, exemptions, etc.
Those most fit should rule	Those with leadership gifts have a right to rule, the connected, the political elite
Persuasion and compulsion to be used to bring harmony to citizens	Excoriating those outside the left's orthodoxy by media and academia.
Some are marked for subjection and for those who do not submit, war is proper	The Charlottesville, VA riot was the first shot. Also the attacks on police.
Citizenship is only for the elite, some are by nature free and others slaves	Elite grant themselves exemptions from the very laws they pass for our benefit
Citizens should be molded to suit the form of government under which they live	Education process focused on indoctrination instead of education. Do we produce citizens or protesters?
Citizens do not belong to themselves, but to the State	State declares what is right through its laws, regulations, policies, etc. It is the people's purpose to obey. Examples include abortion, redefining marriage, and gender confusion.

by Dan Wolf

This article examines our governance, specifically its guiding principles. This article is not party specific. It doesn't matter whether you have a 'D', 'I', or 'R' after your name. One's ideology and derived principles are what matter, and today's ideological buzz word is 'progressive.' People holding progressive ideas exist in both major parties, and are outlined below. Later, we'll review portions of the **2016 Democratic Party Platform** for its underlying principles, not picking on that particular party—but today's Democratic party is largely controlled by communists and socialists. Their platform provides all the evidence needed to see where they actually stand, regardless of what they say.

Collective Principles

You see, with **progressive ideology** the truth is relative. The ends are all that matter, and are to be achieved at any and all cost. Equality is also subjective. All are not equal, but rather some are more equal than others. Elitism is the norm, and this elitism undermines morality as man turns

toward himself. He becomes arrogant in his thoughts, values, and actions. *Man turns from his purpose of self-sacrifice to self-interest. He corrupts himself*. This is evident by progressivism's fruit, which include the division, envy, and hate we see all too much today.

But progressivism is not new, it is the same old recycled ideas that have always, *repeat always*, failed because its ideas are inconsistent with our nature and purpose. Progressive ideology's root lies in pagan thought. A root both anti-Biblical and anti-Christian, which is why both our Founding principles and Christianity are under attack today—and have been since the Obama administration's beginning, when a historical tipping point was reached.

The table below outlines some basic collectivism principles and how they manifest themselves in progressivism. Principles coming from Plato and Aristotle's writings; these ideas also underlay their kindred ideologies of communism, fascism, socialism, etc. These same principles have their counterparts in Islam as well.

Collectivism Principles	Progressive Counterparts
Good of the State and not the individual is the proper subject of political thought	The State is the solution to all problems, we are not to look to God or individuals. In essence the State takes God's place.
All are not equal, rather some are more equal than others	Wealth transfers: entitlements, grants, regulations, exemptions, etc.
Those most fit should rule	Those with leadership gifts have a right to rule, the connected, the political elite
Persuasion and compulsion to be used to bring harmony to citizens	Excoriating those outside the left's orthodoxy by media and academia.
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Citizens should be molded to suit the form of government under which they live	Education process focused on indoctrination instead of education. Do we produce citizens or protesters?
Citizens do not belong to themselves, but to the State	State declares what is right through its laws, regulations, policies, etc. It is the people's purpose to obey. Examples include abortion, redefining marriage, and gender confusion.

I heard Chuck Schumer call for truth, but he should not ask for what he is unwilling to give. When truth becomes relative, lies become acceptable. This is Plato's idea of the noble lie where the ends sought outweigh telling a lie. Noble lies become truth. In turn lies become everything not agreeing with one's position. Changing one's position changes truth; there are no longer fixed standards. Noble lies are used to increase harmony or division within society, depending on the State's goals and objectives—and whose truth is being asserted. We see this in the lies both parties

tell. Take Obamacare as an example. Democrats swearing you could keep your doctors and that healthcare costs would go down. Republicans promising to repeal it if elected.

Our True Principles

Our society's foundation came from Biblical principles. These include;

- God as Creator is creation's king, its governor. As He has the power to create, he also has the power to keep things as they are, change them, or end them at any time. His is the only absolute power in existence. All other power comes from this source.
- Through our creation we all possess an equal nature, not an equality of abilities. Through our creation we also inherit the same basic rights.
- Leaders are to be elected by the people and come from the people. A leader's role is simply to provide impartial righteous judgment when an individual chooses to act unjustly. They are to execute the virtue of justice.
- Leaders are also to serve their people, and in turn serve their Creator. The final judgment is God's, and leaders will be held accountable for any unrighteous judgment they render.
- As leaders serve the people, the individual is the proper level of political thought. We are called as both individuals and a single people. Not just any people, but God's people acknowledging His authority in terms of our existence, morality, and knowledge.

These Biblical principles are not only contrary to, but incompatible with, the progressive principles previously outlined. *An education in both the languages of reason and faith are necessary to create and maintain the moral basis required for a society to be successful*. When either of these pillars are removed from education, a society loses its way. It is not a matter of if, but when. All societies are only one generation away from losing their faith and freedom, for there is no freedom without faith.

I know some will disagree with these ideas, and that is okay. But if you disagree, you at least owe it to yourself to investigate and search for the truth, then perhaps pray that you are right.

The next article examines some principles underlying the 2016 Democratic platform.

Dan Wolf is a researcher, analyst, and author. He has written three books examining the relationship between faith, freedom, virtue, and charity. Together these form the cornerstone of our purpose, and our society's foundational principles derived from those relationships. Links to his work can be found at the **Living Rightly** website plus his extensive list of interfaith and Islam articles **listed here**.

Wolf, Dan, p. 240, *A War for God,* living rightly publications, 2017.

Wolf, Dan, *Do You Want To Be Free,* Telemachus Press, 2013. This book builds the case for collective and individual lines of thought from Plato and Aristotle and the early Church Father's works, to our country's founding documents.

Americans Need to Heed the Following

JULY 21, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Greene Hollowell

1. Jesus is the only way to God. It is a life and death matter for eternity. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me". This means the people that do not recognize Jesus and have salvation through Him are lost- Jews, atheists, foreign religions and Mormons. Catholics need to know –it is not by works of righteousness, but only by the grace of God. "Salvation is not a reward for the good we have done, so none of us can take any credit for it. Then what can we boast about doing to earn our salvation? Nothing at all. Why? Because our acquittal is not based on our good deeds: it is based on what Christ has done and our faith in Him".
2. Abortion is the murder of a human being. It is Americas' Holocaust. The blood of millions of babies must be calling out to God. The sad fact is the majority of our citizens support this killing and it has weakened our opposition for euthanasia, suicide and yes, infanticide. Mothers deciding to kill their own baby before birth—unbelievable!
3. God owns our bodies and is involved in our lives. The BIBLE tells us "Your own body does not belong to you. For God has brought you with a great price. So use every part of your body to give glory back to God, because He owns it". This means we need to avoid sexual promiscuity and perversions. We cannot abuse our bodies with drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and our minds with obscenities and vulgarities. Scripture says "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs,.....Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or course joking, which is out of place....".
4. Belief in the authority and accuracy of the HOLY BIBLE is at an all time low. Many doubt the Creation account, the six 24 hour days and the early creation (6,000 years ago), believing in the evolutionary billions of year's time frame and doubting the long years of early man's life span and the universal Flood. Evolution is the atheistic attempt of man to avoid and reject God and His account of Creation. The evolutionist has concocted an unbelievable account of our origins. With no satisfactory explanation of any beginning nor how the life of an animal evolved into a human with a soul, the theory remains laughable. However we shouldn't laugh too loud because most scientist and PhD's believe this science fiction is really a law, like the law of gravity. "Yes, they know there is a God, but they wouldn't worship Him as God or even give Him thanks." Christians can't choose what part of the Bible to believe or not believe. And why should they accept an unbelievable idea developed by atheists concerning our origins? We Christians need to head the scripture- "Don't let anyone lead you astray with empty philosophy and high sounding nonsense that comes from human thinking..."Greene Hollowell

Greene Hollowell

Love God With All Your Heart: The Greatest Commandment

JULY 20, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Dave Daubenmire | **Barbwire**

"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." Jesus Christ as quoted in Matthew 22:36

The purpose of this commentary is not to anger you, although I am sure some of you will get angry. I have contended for quite some time that one of the greatest dangers of Christianity comes not from what the Bible teaches, but rather from what we believe and the Bible doesn't actually teach.

So many Christians simply talk in platitudes…repeating a meaningless statement that they heard their pastor, or some other well meaning friend repeat to them. You know how they go…Christians shouldn't judge…we are all God's children…God helps those who help themselves…love the sinner and hate the sin…those non-Biblical statements that makes us feel so loving and caring to repeat.

I am sorry to break the news to you, but so much of what Christians believe simply is not true. Is it any wonder we are so ineffectual in sharing the Truth of the Gospel of the Kingdom with others?

The Bible repeatedly warns us about "another Gospel" and those who would come in His name proclaiming it. The lack of Biblical knowledge of professing Christians borders on the scandalous. We have permitted pop culture to dictate how "Christians" are to behave.

I am sick and tired of having non-believers lecture me on how a Christian is supposed to act. You see, that is part of the problem. We are not to "act" like a Christian…we are to BE Christian. My Christianity is not an act.

So I would like to take this opportunity to point out another fallacy that the culture has taught us. LOVE THY NEIGHBOR is not the first and greatest commandment. In fact, it is merely a mirror reflection of the first. In this age of "new math" we have juxtaposed the numbers and now live a Christianity where the numbers have been inverted.

Open up any package and turn to the instructions and you will find a list of steps required in order to properly assemble what is inside. The "instructions" will tell you to do step 1…then step 2… then step 3. You will never properly assemble the package if you get the steps out of order.

Keeping that in mind it might be necessary for us to spell out what Jesus taught in Matthew 22:36.

- Step 1. Love God with all of your heart, all of your soul, and all of your mind.
- Step 2 Love your neighbor as yourself.

Doing step number 1 FIRST is required before you can successfully complete step number 2. But unfortunately, American Christianity has reversed the instructions and today we are being taught that step number 2 comes before step number 1. You cannot love your neighbor until you first love the Lord.

"What is the point you are trying to make, Coach?" I hear you asking. Well, it is actually quite simple. Are you to love your neighbor MORE than you love the Lord? Doesn't the command mention "ALL of your heart, ALL of your soul, and ALL of your mind?" How much is left for others if ALL of your love is given to the Lord?

Here is the rub. We Christians love to tell people about the love of God while at the same time refusing to do the very things that He commanded us to do. In John 14:15 Jesus was quoted as having said "If you love me you will keep my commands." Later in John 14:23 he repeats "Anyone who loves me will obey my teachings."

Is it possible to love Jesus by ignoring his teachings? Can you love him by loving what he hates? Didn't He warn us that we could not follow Him if we loved others MORE than Him?

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:26.

Was Jesus bi-polar? Was He confused? In one statement He tells us to love our neighbor while in another instance He tells us to HATE our parents? Was He teaching situational ethics?

No my friends, He was simply reinforcing the Truth that it is wrong to love ANYTHING above Him. Loving HIM is the first and greatest commandment.

Let me cut to the quick. Acceptance of a person engaging in sin is NOT LOVING THE LORD. If our expression of the Lord is demonstrated in honoring and keeping HIS commands is it possible for us to show love to HIM when we show love and acceptance to those who DENY His commands?

The two commands are inextricably linked. You cannot love your neighbor until you have complete devotion to God. We are teaching a Gospel today that elevates relationships with others above our fealty to Christ and His commands.

That does not mean that we are not to love "neighbors" who are engaging in sin, but that we are required to hold an allegiance to God and His standards above ANY relationship with another human being.

To openly express love to a "neighbor" engaged in sinful behavior without giving the Truth of what God says about the behavior is "loving your neighbor" more than loving God. It may make you feel more Christian, but it is denying the One who demands total and complete allegiance to Him.

American Christians have lost their salt because we have refused to say the hard things to those who are violating the laws of God. God calls homosexuality an abomination. The Bible teaches that abortion is murder and that God HATES hands that shed innocent blood.

As much as I wish it wasn't so, those hands are connected to a person's body. Is it possible to hate the hands without hating the body the hands are connected to? Is it possible to be "friends" with a sodomite while refusing to tell them what God says about their behavior? Does "friendship evangelism" demand we accept what God abhors?

I know…I know…who am I to judge? Perhaps I am off base but I am simply the one asking the question. It is not a question of who you will LOVE…but what you will TOLERATE.

Love your neighbor as yourself? Maybe that is the problem. Perhaps we love ourselves too much. We have elevated the approval of our fellow man above our obedience to Christ.

Today we are taught to love sinners more than we hate sin. We will never get the second command correct until we come under obedience to the first.

God is love. Jesus is the Truth. Speaking the Truth IS Love.

SOURCE: **BARBWIRE**

Videogame Company Tries to Block Concerns about Pornographic, Sexually Coercive Games

JULY 19, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The National Center on Sexual Exploitation (NCOSE)

Steam, a popular videogame distribution platform that could be likened to the 'Walmart of online videogame distribution,' is selling games that normalize and promote sexual coercion and exploitation. These games, *House Party* and *Porno Studio Tycoon*, are easily available to an estimated **35 million** children who buy videogames off of Steam.

Background Information About Steam:

Steam, a popular videogame distribution platform that could be likened to the 'Walmart of online videogame distribution,' is selling games that normalize and promote sexual coercion and exploitation. These games, *House Party* and *Porno Studio Tycoon*, are easily available to an estimated **35 million** children who buy videogames off of Steam.

The *House Party* 'hook up' game is literally training its users in predatory tactics for sexual assault, and even sex trafficking, which plague real, living people offline in high schools, universities, military bases, and more. The sexual encounters are blatant animated pornography, featuring genitalia, ejaculation, and more.

The game *Porno Studio Tycoon* centers around sexual themes where the user acts as the pornographer. It includes sexual sounds, hypersexualized characters, and generic depictions of sex acts, although there is not full nudity. This game promotes and glamorizes the exploitive industry of pornography, where performers frequently experience physical and emotional trauma, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. **Learn more here.**

Steam's parent company (Valve Corporation) has already received **thousands of emails** complaining about the harms of their sexually graphic video games.

But so far, instead of fixing the problem, they are just blocking our email system – essentially plugging their ears!

But we have a solution.

- You can email Valve executives directly at these email addresses:

- Eric Kirchmer, Operations Executive – **eric@valvesoftware.com**
- Chris Grinstead, IT Manager – **chris@valvesoftware.com**

DJ Powers, Marketing Business Development – **powers@valvesoftware.com**

We think they are blocking our system's emails based on the subject lines or the text within the emails, so if you write your email in your own words that's most likely to make it through their filters. If you need more information about the problem you can **learn more here**.

Our fundamental request is that Steam publicly commits to remove these sexually graphic, exploitive games and that it increases protections to make sure these kinds of games are not sold on its platform ever again.

*If these emails don't work for any reason, let us know by emailing **public@ncose.com**, and we can get more email addresses!*

Thank you for taking these actions – this company can't tune us out!

Your voice is being heard.

BREAKING: Popular Videogame Distributor Advertises "Porno Studio" Game to Millions of Children

JULY 11, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

From the **National Center on Sexual Exploitation**

Videogame Company Comes Under Fire for Promoting

Sexual Coercion and Exploitation

A mainstream online videogame store, with an estimated 35 million users under the age of 18, is facilitating gamified sexual coercion and animated pornography featuring genitalia, ejaculation, to users of all ages. This is occurring through the Steam® video game distribution platform, which was developed by the Valve Corporation.

The National Center on Sexual Exploitation is calling on the videogame distributor to remove these games and is asking the public to **email executives** about their concerns.

"Sexual exploitation is not a game," said Dawn Hawkins, Executive Director of the National Center on Sexual Exploitation. "Steam, a popular videogame distribution platform that could be likened to the 'Walmart of online videogame distribution,' is selling games that normalize and promote sexual coercion and exploitation. These games, House Party and Porno Studio Tycoon, are easily available to an estimated **35 million** children who buy videogames off of Steam."

“The House Party ‘hook up’ game is literally training its users in predatory tactics for sexual assault, and even sex trafficking, which plague real, living people offline in high schools, universities, military bases, and more. The game includes disturbing features that allow users to increase their odds of ‘having sex’ with a woman in the game if they manipulate and coerce women into sex acts. Different game scenarios include blackmail using nude pictures, increasing women’s alcohol consumption, impersonating a friend through text, and jamming a woman’s cell phone reception to isolate her in a room away from other party goers. Users ‘win’ the game by having sex with women at the party. The sexual encounters are blatant animated pornography, featuring genitalia, ejaculation, and more.”

“The game Porno Studio Tycoon centers around sexual themes where the user acts as the pornographer. It includes sexual sounds, hypersexualized characters, and generic depictions of sex acts, although there is not full nudity. This game promotes and glamorizes the exploitive industry of pornography, where performers frequently experience physical and emotional trauma, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.”

“Steam sells and promotes these games to users of all ages and requires only a simple click of a button to pass through a tepid warning that the material may not be suitable for all ages. These games are in direct violation of **Steam’s own policies** against pornographic or patently offensive content.”

“The National Center on Sexual Exploitation is calling on Steam and its parent company Valve to remove these games from their store and to install and enforce a more robust policy against selling games that normalize or glamorize sexual exploitation. Concerned individuals can email Valve executives **here**.” Hawkins concluded.

This story was originally broken by **NoFap®**, a well-known pornography addiction recovery company. They published two in-depth stories about it, located **here** and **here**.

NCOSE reached out for comment and their spokesperson's response included, "We do not think that Steam should be advertising pornographic games to children. Furthermore, as more people become aware of the existence of porn addiction, they are becoming increasingly mindful of inadvertent porn exposure in their daily lives. Valve should restrict such content to a specific area, available only to those who are interested in viewing it, but easily avoided by those who are not."

A Research Summary of the public health harms of pornography is available **here**.

Email Corporate Executives To Demand Change and CLICK HERE TAKE ACTION.

SOURCE: **NATIONAL CENTER ON SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

Noah Movie HD Official Full Version

JUNE 28, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

In the time of Noah, people were going about their daily lives, not mindful of the impending destruction. Like them, are we ignoring warnings of God's coming judgment? The Bible gives us clear signs of the last days. Did you know the Scriptures say we will see:

• Flippant use of God's name
• Money-hungry preachers and rampant hypocrisy in the church
• Wars and rumors of wars
• Denial of a global flood

But surely no educated person could believe that Noah and his ark ever really existed. Wouldn't it be impossible to fit millions of species of animals into one boat? And what evidence is there (if any) for a worldwide catastrophic flood? However…what if it did all happen exactly as the Bible says? What would that mean? Who was Noah, and why is the amazing account of his life so relevant to you in the 21st century? Don't be caught unaware. Time may be very short. Will you be ready?

A movie by Ray Comfort. This is not the Russell Crowe film.

Ray Comfort | Living Waters

https://youtube.com/watch?v=

Published on Mar 25, 2014

Noah Movie HD: Noah—And the Last Days
Connect: **http://www.NoahTheMovie.com**
Facebook: **http://www.Facebook.com/OfficialRayCo…**
Twitter: **https://www.Twitter.com/RayComfort**
Get DVDs in bulk as low as $1: **http://www.NoahTheMovie.com**

Christian Conservatives Name The Most Effective Cultural Change Organizations

MAY 22, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

20 Organizations that Had the Most Positive Cultural Change in the U.S. in 2016, According to SAGE Cons

American Center for Law & Justice (ACLJ)	35%
Billy Graham Evangelistic Association	33
Samaritan's Purse	29
American Family Association	27
Focus on the Family	23
Family Research Council (FRC)	22
Fox News	19
Heritage Foundation	17
National Right to Life	16
Judicial Watch	14
Hillsdale College	13
Liberty Counsel	9
Tea Party	9
Wikileaks	9
Salvation Army	8
National Rifle Association (NRA)	8
Colson Center	7
Ravi Zacharias Ministries	7
Susan B. Anthony List	5
Habitat for Humanity	4

Source: American Culture & Faith Institute, RightView™ 17-1, N=700 SAGE Cons, January 2017.

The American Culture & Faith Institute (ACFI)

If you want to make a difference in American culture, you are most likely to do it in conjunction with a non-profit organization. That's one of the striking conclusions from a national survey among Christian conservatives conducted by the American Culture & Faith Institute (ACFI). The survey asked people to identify the organizations, of any type, that they believe made the most positive impact on American society during 2016.

Christian Non-Profits Got It Done

The survey respondents overwhelmingly identified non-profit organizations as the entities making the greatest positive difference in American society last year. Of the five dozen organizations specified by survey respondents, only one of them – Fox News – was a for-profit organization.

The survey among SAGE Cons – an acronym for Spiritually Active, Governance Engaged Conservatives – also found that eight out of every ten of the culture-influencing organizations were Christian non-profits.

Most Effective Change Agents

The ACFI survey asked SAGE Cons to identify the organizations they believed to have been most effective at leading positive cultural change in the U.S. during 2016.

Topping the list were the American Center for Law & Justice (chosen by 35%) and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (named by 33%). Samaritan's Purse (29%), American Family Association (27%), Focus on the Family (23%), and the Family Research Council (22%) were the next most recognized organizations.

Both the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan's Purse are currently under the leadership of Franklin Graham, son of the famous evangelist Billy Graham.

A bit farther down the list were Fox News (listed by 19%), Heritage Foundation (17%), National Right to Life (16%), Judicial Watch (14%), and Hillsdale College (13%).

Other organizations named by at least 5% of SAGE Cons were Liberty Counsel (9%), Wikileaks (9%), Tea Party (9%), Salvation Army (8%), Colson Center (7%), Ravi Zacharias Ministries (7%), and Susan B. Anthony List (5%).

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Hillsdale College	13
Liberty Counsel	9
Tea Party	9
Wikileaks	9
Salvation Army	8
National Rifle Association (NRA)	8
Colson Center	7
Ravi Zacharias Ministries	7
Susan B. Anthony List	5
Habitat for Humanity	4

Source: American Culture & Faith Institute, RightView™ 17-1, N=700 SAGE Cons, January 2017.

About the Research

The research described in this report is drawn from a nationwide online survey that is part of the RightView™ longitudinal research project, a national study undertaken among spiritually active, governance engaged conservatives – a segment known as SAGE Cons. This wave of the survey had a sample size of 700 qualified adults and was conducted by the American Culture & Faith Institute during January of 2017.

In RightView™ studies SAGE Cons are identified as adults who are registered voters; conservative on political matters; have accepted Jesus Christ as their savior; are active in pursuing their Christian faith; and are actively engaged in politics and government. They represent about 8% to 10% of the national adult population, which constitutes a segment of some 20 to 25 million individuals.

The American Culture & Faith Institute is a division of United in Purpose, a non-partisan, non-profit organization. The mission of United in Purpose is to educate, motivate and activate conservative Christians to engage in cultural transformation in ways that are consistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The organization does not support or promote individual political candidates or parties.

Additional information about this study and related research is accessible on the American Culture & Faith Institute website, located at www.culturefaith.com. To receive a free copy of the weekly research reports produced by ACFI, visit the website and register for the ***American Culture Review*** newsletter.

The Family Bible Revolution : Reaching the World for Jesus

MAY 17, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Pastor Jim Langlois

Who is the world's greatest evangelist? How did they reach so many people for Christ? How can we effectively continue to evangelize this ever changing world? Would a flash flood of the Word be as effective as an underground watering system at the roots? Who would be the first we should target?

Is there a way to have such a thing as systemic sustainable evangelism? If so, how could we accomplish it and how much money and resources would we need to bring it to pass? How much technology will we need? Should we be concerned with both salvation and discipleship? Is it possible to accomplish both at the same time? How many systems, buildings, transportation, and personnel will we need bring it to pass? Can it be done through a volunteer system or will we need to hire staff?

These are all great questions and although all types of evangelism are necessary and effective, the approach within this book can be accomplished without any of the above. It can also have tremendous value for the success of marriages and families. One truth, five principles, and six steps. It's ***The Family Bible Revolution*** and step six is where the rubber meets the road!

https://youtube.com/watch?v=8AmJOwhjcxg

Join the The Family Bible Revolution

We Are Looking At The Wrong Ones

MAY 13, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

DRUGS DEALERS: Our focus has been on the drug dealers, yes they are the lowest scum, but they are the wrong target. The guilty ones are the Americans that use the drugs.

PROSTITUTES: Our laws are against them, but they are the wrong target, the main effort should be against the boys and men who pay them for sex- the fornicators and adulators.

ABORTIONIST: Yes, the abortionist is the bottom feeder of the medical profession, they do the actual killing of the baby, but they are the wrong target. We should focus on the girls and women who bring their babies in to be killed by them.

MALE MARINES: Yes, the male marines that look at naked women marine's photos with or without permission are being involved with pornography which is not good. However, the trouble is with the naked women- just what did they have in mind when they posed for the picture? These women should be discharged for lack of common sense. (Assume the pictures were taken without coercion.)

Greene Hollowell

Richmond, VA

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Christian Voters' Impact on the Recent Election

APRIL 25, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Dr. Mark Beliles' article on the recent presidential election gives us time to develop Christian leaders and urges us not to waste our votes.

Dr. Mark Beliles | **ATC**

The recent presidential election provided interesting insight into the impact of Christians. Trump's surprising victory with over 62.7 million votes was comprised of no less than 43 million Christians – over two thirds of his total votes! Of these, about 24 million votes were from white Evangelicals, 15 million were from white Catholics, and 4 million were from Hispanic and Black Christians. About half as many Christians voted for Clinton and of these about half were white Catholics and the other half were Blacks and Hispanics. Of her 65.4 million votes only about a third were Christians (and only about a 9 million were Evangelicals).

The ratio among Evangelicals (black and Hispanic included) is about 3 to 1, and among all Christians (including Catholics) is about 2 to 1 in favor of Trump. The gap of over 20 million Christian votes in favor of Trump and the Republican Party far exceeds any other demographic advantage by far, and in the battleground states, the turnout of Christian voters was even higher than in other areas and especially explains how Trump won the most electoral votes.

Hispanic voters are identified by pundits to be crucial to the future of presidential elections but in states such as Florida, Texas and Arizona the influence of Evangelicals on Latinos especially hinders the Democratic Party from winning those states. Studies show that over time Hispanic immigrants gradually become more Republican voters due to both Evangelical and Catholic churches in those areas favoring Republicans. The only likely change in this pattern of voting is if religion declines in America or if the Republican Party stopped appealing to religious voters so much more effectively than the Democratic Party. (Hispanic votes in big margins in California and

New York add to the Democratic popular vote nationally, but in terms of the Electoral College, these states always go Democratic anyway.) All in all, it shows the amazing power of Christianity in American politics.

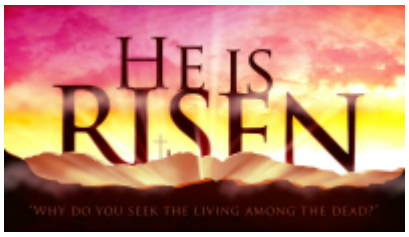
Even more amazing is how sophisticated the Christian vote proved to be. Instead of being swayed emotionally by media soundbites and simplification and perversion of candidates' views, strong majorities of Christians, even Hispanics, looked past personalities and mistakes by the candidates, and beyond single issues or purely ethnic interests, and voted based on substantial analysis of all issues and worldviews. They did not necessarily vote "for" Trump but clearly against what they deemed was a worse evil in the policies of the Democratic Party. Neither did Christians fall into the mistake of wasting their vote on minor party candidates. The data shows a maturity in the Christian vote in America which is highly commendable. Having said that, the post-vote responsibility of Christians is to not only support those in power, but also reach out with humility to those believers who voted for the Democratic Party and try to educate, learn and heal as much as possible.

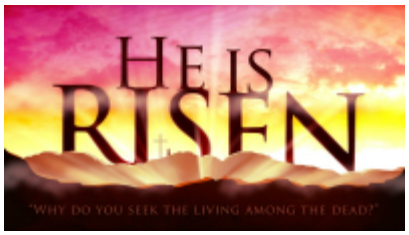
If Clinton had won perhaps the direction of the nation was irreversible, but it seems that God mercifully gave to us in America a gift of time. The question we must answer is "time for what?" If we think simply voting and a Trump administration is going to turn America around we deceive ourselves. We must act now to develop better leaders in all the spheres of culture and perhaps in 8 years we might be in a position that new leaders are beginning to step up for the future.

Mark A. Beliles is founder and president of the America Transformation Company. He also founded the Providence Foundation in 1983 and its Biblical Worldview University. ***Read more here****.*

Greatest Hope When Life Gets You Down

APRIL 23, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD





Benham Brothers

Easter weekend is over, we've eaten too many chocolate eggs, and now it's time to get back to the grind. Well, at least Jason ate too many eggs.

The Mondays after holiday weekends are usually the hardest ones, because all the festivities and fun have come to an end – and the boss needs that report done, your son needs help with his homework, your daughter is late for soccer practice and the news of the day just seems so bad all the time. Dang, where is the hope?

There's just a lot going on in life, and it can really get you down, if you don't fully understand what we just celebrated.

Easter is far more than a tradition to be venerated. It's a truth to be celebrated – a truth that will set our hearts free to live in total victory, no matter what's going on around us.

Because Jesus rose from the grave, we have hope – a hope that transcends our circumstances and transforms our perspectives. We can be free to live in victory in *this life* because the resurrection of Jesus grants us access to the *next life*.

Jesus said, "Because I live, you also will live" (John 14:19). That's good news!

So no matter what happens here on earth, because we have Easter, we have hope.

Sometimes a song says it best, and one of our favorite songs we often sign during this time of year is "Because He Lives," by Bill and Gloria Gaither.

Interestingly, it was in the midst of difficult circumstances when the Gaithers penned this amazing song, which has touched the hearts of tens of millions of people who have held fast to the powerful truths its lyrics.

The St. Augustine Record tells the story:

“In the late 1960s, while expecting their third child, the Gaithers were going through a rather traumatic time in their lives. Bill was recovering from a bout with mononucleosis. It was a special period of anxiety and mental anguish for Gloria. The thought of bringing another child into this world, with all of the ‘craziness,’ was taking its toll on her.

“On New Year’s Eve, she was sitting in their living room, in agony and fear. The educational system was being infiltrated with the God is dead idea, while drug abuse and racial tensions were increasing. Then suddenly, and quite unexpectedly, she was filled with a gentle, calming peace. It was as if her heavenly Father, like an attentive mother bending over her baby, saw his child and came to her rescue. The panic gave way to calmness and an assurance that only the Lord can impart. She was assured that the future would be just fine, left in God’s hands.

“Shortly after the baby was born, both Bill and Gloria remembered that the power of the blessed Holy Spirit seemed to come to their aid. Christ’s resurrection, in all of its power and affirmation in their lives, revitalized their thinking. To Gloria, it was life conquering death in their daily activities. Joy once again dominated the fearful circumstances of the day.

“Those events gave rise to one of the most famous Christian songs of our time, ‘Because He Lives.’”

So as you’re caught up in the whirlwind of life between now and next Easter, go ahead and sing this song and be reminded that, because He lives, you can face tomorrow:

> Because He lives
> I can face tomorrow
> Because He lives
> All fear is gone
> Because I know
> He holds the future
> And life is worth the living
> Just because He lives
>
> Read more about the **Benham Brothers**

Rest in Peace: Harry H. Hanger, Jr.

APRIL 23, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

A tribute to Virginia Christian Alliance Advisor Board Member Harry H. Hanger, Jr., aged 65 of Chesterfield who went to be with the Lord on April 14th, 2017 after a courageous battle with ALS:

Harry and his wife, Elaine, have been part of the VCA family from its beginning 8+ years ago. Elaine was a founding Board Member. Harry and Elaine were living examples of a Christian couple. Truly they were role models to all who knew them.

We shall all miss Harry and we will continue our prayers for Elaine and the family..*Don Blake, VCA Chairman*

His obituary as posted in the Richmond Times Dispatch and **listed here**:

HANGER, Harry H. Jr., 65, of Chesterfield, went to be with the Lord on Good Friday, April 14, 2017, after a courageous battle with ALS.
He is survived by his wife, Elaine; three children and their spouses, eight grandchildren, and three older sisters.

His faith in the Lord gave him strength throughout his life and inspired those who knew him. "Poppie," as he was known by his children and grandchildren, loved his family and provided a wonderful legacy of faith, character, and love.

In his free time he enjoyed creating beautiful handmade gifts in his woodworking shop. He influenced those around him through his integrity in the propane industry, his teaching of the Bible, and his gentle leadership.

Donations may be made to Noble Warriors, P.O. Box 1921, Midlothian, Va. 23113 or Needles Eye Ministries, 104 Berrington Ct., Richmond, Va. 23221.

Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That's what Christians do now.

APRIL 17, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Don Wildmon Speech "That's What Christians Do Now"

In 1973 the Supreme Court said it was OK to kill unborn babies. Since then, we have killed more than the entire population of Canada. And it continues. A woman's choice? Half of those who have died in their mothers' wombs have been women. They didn't have a choice. It is called abortion.

Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That's what Christians do now.

First it was in dingy, dirty theaters. Then, convenience stores. Then, grocery stores. Then on television. Now it is in the homes of millions via the Internet. It is called pornography.
Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That's what Christians do now.

They called it no-fault. Why should we blame anyone when something so tragic happens. Haven't they already suffered enough? Half of the marriages in America end this way. The children suffered. The family broke down. It is called divorce. Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That's what Christians do now

https://youtube.com/watch?v=mBBSXLPnAIU

At one time it was a perversion. We kept it secret. We secured help and hope for those who practiced it. Now it is praised. We have parades celebrating it, and elected officials give it their

blessing. Now it is endowed with special privileges and protected by special laws. Even some Christian leaders and denominations praise it. It is called homosexuality.
Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That's what Christians do now.

It used to be an embarrassment. A shame. Now a third of all births are to mothers who aren't married. Two-thirds of all African-American children are born into a home without a father. The state usually pays the tab. That is why we pay our taxes, so that government can take the place of parents. After all, government bureaucrats know much better how to raise children than parents do. It is called illegitimacy.
Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That's what Christians do now.

At one time it was wrong. But then the state decided to legalize it, promote it and tax it. It has ripped apart families and destroyed lives. But just look at all the money the state has raised. No longer do we have to teach our children to study and work hard. Now we teach them they can get something for nothing. We spend millions encouraging people to join the fun and excitement. Just look at the big sums that people are winning. They will never have to work again! It is called gambling. Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home.

That's what Christians do now.Not long ago, Christians were the good guys. But now any positive image of Christians in movies or on TV is gone. We are now depicted as the bad guys — greedy, narrow-minded hypocrites. The teacher can't have a Bible on her desk, but can have Playboy. We don't have Christmas and Easter holidays — just winter and spring break. We can't pray in school, but can use foul language. It's called being tolerant. Me? I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That's what Christians do now.

Yes, all these things came to pass within 30 years. Where were the Christians? Why, they were in church. All these things are for someone else to deal with. Times have changed. Involvement has been replaced with apathy.

But don't blame me. I didn't do anything. I go to church, the minister preaches, I go home. That's what Christians do now. Don Wildmon

The Case for Charity, or Why the First Effort to Repeal Obamacare Failed

APRIL 10, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Dan Wolf, Author and VCA Advisor

Given all of the discussion today about our 'rights' to things such as healthcare, education, a job, etc.; I think it is appropriate we look at exactly what our role is in creation. What we own, what we owe, and what we are responsible for. We seem to have forgotten much, even within many of our churches.

Jonathan Edwards stated that the creator of something is also its governor. As one had the power to create, they also had the power to change and/or to end. There is only one assumption being made for this article, and that is that God has created everything that has ever been created (see below). I believe this, and it is not a stretch. It's an act of faith, but it is the only rational assumption one can make. There is simply no other philosophic thought or framework that can truly explain existence, morality, or knowledge – take your pick. You have also been given the gift of free will—freedom—by Him as well.

So what did our Creator create? From Genesis, chapter 1;

- Day 1, Light. There was evening and morning. There was time.
- Day 2, The Heavens. The waters above were separated from the waters below.
- Day 3, The Earth. The waters below formed the earth and seas. All vegetation growing from seed, and the things from the earth itself we use were created.
- Day 4, Lights in the Heavens. The stars, the greater light of the sun and lesser light of the moon. These were made to not only separate light from darkness, but as signs for the seasons to mark the passage of time.
- Day 5, Things of the air and sea. All the creatures that move through the air and sea.
- Day 6, Beasts of the earth and man. Unlike anything else in all of creation, man was made in his Creator's image. Man was also given dominion (stewardship) over all of the things of the

air, land, and sea.

Finally, after all had been created it was declared by Him to be very good.

As man created none of the things noted above, he therefore does not own any of them. Each of our lives is a gift from God. While we have stewardship, even the land does not belong to us. This is reiterated in Leviticus 25:23. "The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me." We are finite, while He is infinite. If the land is not ours, then how can anything which comes from it be ours?

But even though none of these things are ours, they were certainly made for our use, to assist us on our journey with Him as just stated above. That journey is the reason for our existence. We are therefore, not to set our eyes on those things of this world but on their maker. The journey's purpose is to come to know Him, and be like Him to the extent we are able. We were specially made for this purpose as nothing else in creation has been. We were given His image, an inward image. It is by this image, the mind that is within man, that we are able to have a relationship with Him. Although this image is remote, there is nothing else like it in all creation.

Completing that purpose requires learning, in both reason and faith as our Creator cannot be proved by man. He is beyond our human reasoning ability. However, by that same token neither can he be disproved by man's reason. This is where faith steps in as first causes cannot be demonstrated, they can only be accepted through faith. Faith is simply acceptance of something without proof. Those who advocate collectivism, in all its forms such as progressivism, simply ask that you place your faith in man instead of God. That you place your faith in the things of this world that you can see and not in their maker.

As God is Good, the goal of our journey is to become good. Evidence for this is simple. We were given the gift of life by our Creator. It is surely better to be than not to be. Giving life is the act of a loving God. Otherwise we would not exist for no one wishes something not to exist, but then creates it. What is good is what is right, and this is where rights come into play. A right is something that is in accordance with justice or a moral principle—it is righteous, virtuous.

It is this same sense of moral rightness that is at the heart of capitalism. Capitalism is simply someone lying awake at night trying to figure out how to do something for someone else, and doing it in such a way that another is *voluntarily willing to exchange money for the good or service*. If either party violates this principle then, while you may continue to call such a system capitalism, you do not in fact have it.

While capitalism is not charity, it does leverage charity's form. That is why capitalism has been successful, and why America has prospered. What do I mean by this? Consider the things capitalism leverages from charity.

- It begins in an act of faith. Not so much a faith in God, but instead in an idea – and sometimes in another virtue, one of hope.
- It is voluntary; a willing exchange between two or more parties. There is no coercion in connection with the exchange. The freedom to act, or not act, must exist for all parties.
- It is virtuous. The underlying effort is an attempt to do something for someone else in such a way that it improves their life by either allowing a person to do something they could not do before, or could not do as well. Virtue is a will in conformity to God. It is righteous. Acting in a way that attempts to improve another's life is virtuous.
- Charity, however, is different as it is performed simply out of another's need. There is no anticipation of anything in return. Instead charity is a virtuous act performed simply out of love for another because we share the same nature. This is agape.

Charity is 'the funding or aiding of those in need in a way which builds virtue in both the giver and receiver.' Charity is an individual act. It is transformational for both the giver and receiver. All charity begins in an act of faith, an act which rests on the divine truth and terminates only as having some reference to God. It therefore requires a focus on our Creator. Charity is voluntary, requiring the freedom to act. Charity is virtuous in that the act aligns with His will. It is righteous. It is performing good. As charity aligns with God's will, it fulfills divine law, it complies with His governance. It is performed out of love for another simply because of our shared nature, one has a need and the other the desire to fill it in such a way that both are better off.

This does not necessarily mean that all human creations are bad, but rather what man creates should align with our Creator's will—His governance. Take private property ownership. It is a matter of positive law, created by man. However, it provides at least three benefits. First, each of us cares for something more that we are personally responsible for, and private ownership does that. It makes us accountable. Second, society is more efficient because each of us has that personal responsibility to discharge. If we each had to care for everything, we would have complete chaos. Third, we are each more content when we have our own tasks to perform, unlike when things are held in common without distinction. Consider the battles that are fought over so-called 'entitlements,' things that are held in common and declared by man as something virtuous. But they are simply vice cloaked as virtue. Corruptions of what should be.

Think this is wrong? Then let's compare the basis for charity to one of these so-called 'rights' declared by our human government. This will also shed some light as to why these 'rights' lead to so many negative unintended consequences. The recent healthcare reform bill before congress provides a good case study.

First, it doesn't repeal the original act that was Obamacare. It keeps in place some of its mandates and taxes. Things that are contrary to charity and our purpose. Those retained healthcare structures, while they may not be used by the current administration, could be leveraged for other purposes again sometime in the future. This is why Obamacare must be totally repealed. Not a

scrap of it can remain. One example, if you have to pay for coverage you don't need, your insurance will cost you more than it should. Second, it breaks a clear promise that was made in the last election, and that is not a virtuous act. If the legislation fails in the first step of its promise, then the additional promises of later phases to finish the job are worthless. These are only some of the negative outcomes that occur when we do the wrong things, even if they are said to be done for the right reason. Why?

First, these type of actions are not grounded in faith in God, but rather in man. Second, they are sanctioned by human law alone, and are not voluntary. They are not individual acts, nor are they transformational. These man-made 'rights' remove the individual responsibility and accountability that must be present in any act for it to be charitable, for it to be beneficial to anyone. Instead, the 'giver' is robbed and the 'receiver' locked into a form of servitude—an exchange of freedom for a form of security. Third, the action is morally wrong as neither person is better off in a way that brings them closer to fulfilling their purpose, and therefore not virtuous. Fourth, instead of being about a love based upon our shared nature, the creation of such 'rights' are about power and control. This is what I mean about vice parading itself as virtue. The creation of such rights do not lead to unity and prosperity, but instead to division, envy, and jealousy. It is not only the ends that matter, but the means used to obtain them as well.

This situation will only change when we ourselves decide to change and refocus not on the things of this world but our Creator, and therefore on our true purpose. It is then that we will find leaders who will act out of a sense of morality and righteousness, because we will not settle for less.

Dan Wolf is a researcher, analyst, and author. He has written three books examining the relationship between faith, freedom, virtue, and charity. Together these form the cornerstone of our purpose, and our society's foundational principles derived from those relationships. Links to his work can be found at the **Living Rightly** website.

Wolf, Dan, p.8, *Collectivism and Charity*, living rightly publications, 2016.

Why Ash Wednesday? Why Ashes?

FEBRUARY 28, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

By Andrea Philips
First published on ***Return to Order***

On Ash Wednesday Catholics proclaim their Faith in the public square as they go about marked with a black cross.

Still, as praiseworthy as it is for Catholics to uphold the feast of Ash Wednesday by making a point of receiving ashes, it can easily become merely a pious habit, "something we Catholics do."

Yet, like everything in our Catholic Faith, the liturgical feast of Ash Wednesday and the custom of ashes has a rich history, deep meaning and rich symbolism.

The custom initiated back in the early Middle Ages when repentant public sinners submitted to forty days of penance. The bishop blessed the hairshirts, and the ashes which, after biblical penitential custom, were poured over the sinners' heads. In time, all Christians whether public or private sinners, wished to benefit from the practice.

Ash Wednesday is the first day of the season of Lent symbolic of the forty days Our Lord fasted in the desert. Occuring forty six days before Easter, it is consequently moveable-as early as Februay 4 and as late as March 10.

The ashes applied to the forehead, made from the palms of the previous year's Palm Sunday, are blessed, perfumed with incense, and hydrated with a little holy water or oil as a binding agent. Thus treated, the ashes are considered a Sacramental.

Ash as a Sacramental

Though sacramentals do not ipso facto operate Grace as the sacraments, they are helpers to the sacraments in that they are visible, touchable, hearable signs that help predispose our souls to

Grace.

Free Book: Return to Order: From a Frenzied Economy to an Organic Christian Society—Where We've Been, How We Got Here, and Where We Need to Go

Thus for example, when we enter a church,dip our finger in the fount and bless ourselves, we are making use of a sacramental, holy water, to place ourselves in a prayerful mode. With the right disposition, and a short prayer of contrition, holy water can even remit venial sin.

The Catholic Church is replete with sacramentals, holy objects, words and rituals that we can see, touch and hear to help convey to our spirit an attitude of openess to Grace.

The ash used on Ash Wednesday, accompanied by the words "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return," or, "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel" places us in a disposition of penance and humility, which is the attitude needed for a fruitful, Grace-filled Lent.

Sacramentals are specially potent when well explained to children who are so visual and touch oriented. They are a powerful means to convey the unseen mysteries of our Faith to their young minds.

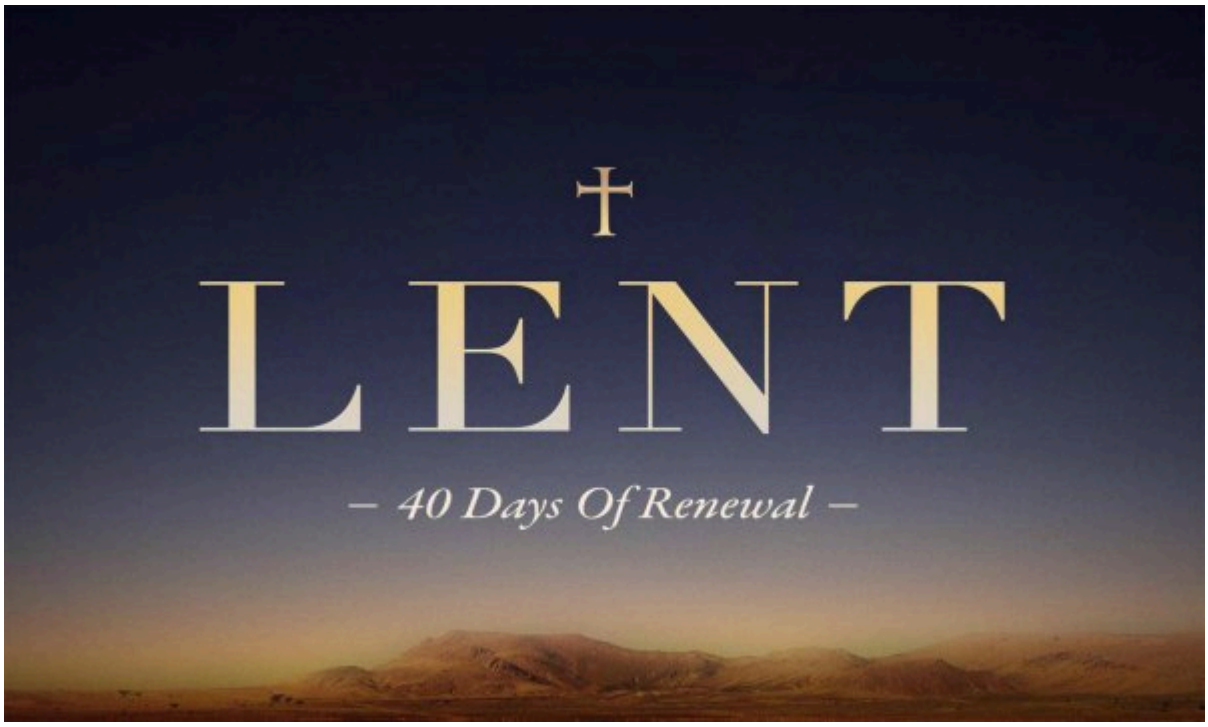
About

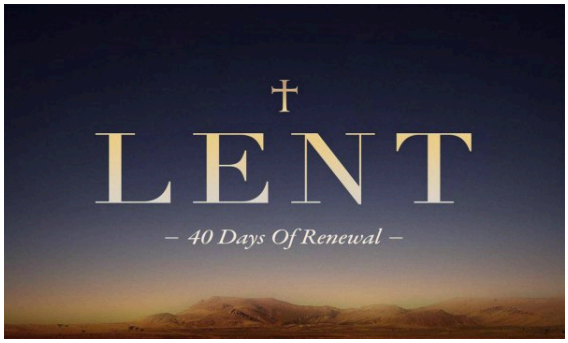
The Return to Order campaign is based on the award-winning book, ***Return to Order: From a Frenzied Economy to an Organic Christian Society–Where We've Been, How We Got Here and Where We Need to Go*** by **John Horvat II**. It addresses the growing alarm, confusion and frustration that so many Americans experience when seeing the nation fall into disorder and chaos.

This social decay manifests itself in many ways. It can be seen in the breakdown of the family and community. It can be experienced in the frenetic intemperance of hectic lifestyles, the frenzied activity of economic markets and the abuse of technology and social media. Above all, there is the abandonment of God and His law and the increasing public recognition of satanic acts, symbols and ideas.

Lent and Love

FEBRUARY 28, 2017
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD





Craig Hudgins
Virginia Christian Alliance

Recently, while attending a funeral for a Catholic friend, Don Blake, President and Chairman of the Virginia Christian Alliance, noticed some pamphlets that reflected on the upcoming period of Lent, which is commonly celebrated by Catholics in preparation for Christendom's most holy time of the year, Easter.

Liking what he read in the pamphlets, Don then called me, an evangelical, cradle Catholic and one of VCA's board members, to discuss the concepts of Lent as outlined in those pamphlets. Don, whose work with VCA has created an ecumenically diverse Board and members, felt it might be useful to take up a similar approach to honoring and acknowledging our Lord's sacrifice by highlighting an idea for contemplation each of the six weeks leading up to Easter. This is the first of six.

As a former Marine, I tend to have a penchant for reducing larger concepts into an acronym to enable me to recall and mull over that concept. In pondering what I think Lent represents I formed the acronym **Love Eventually Negates Troubles**. (1Cor 13:7-8) Fundamentally, I believe

that is one of the basic underlying ideas that our Father would like for us to get out of the promise that Easter represents. Love covers a multitude of sins. (1Peter 4:8)

For Catholics Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, this year 2017, March 1. Ash Wednesday is generally signified by attending a church service where ashes(which are produced by burning the palm branches from the previous year's Palm Sunday mass that celebrated Christ entrance to Jerusalem) are applied with the thumb of the priest on the forehead of each person, and in the process the words are whispered to the receiver, "Little man, from ashes you have come and to ashes you shall return."(Gen 2:7)

The intent is to begin to move each person into a mindset of humility, acknowledging the brevity of this life and that at any moment we may be standing before Jesus, to give an account of all that we have done in this life. Thus, out of a mindset of humility and submission to the will of God we repent, throughout the six weeks of Lent, working out our salvation with fear and trembling. (Phl 2:12-15)

The word repent is derived from the Greek word, metanoia, which much more accurately describes the nature of true repentance, a change of mind and a change of heart. Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary provides an excellent description of this "nature".

> "Evangelical repentance consists of (1) a true sense of one's own guilt and sinfulness; (2) an apprehension of God's mercy in Christ; (3) an actual hatred of sin (Ps. 119:128; Job 42:5, 6; 2 Cor. 7:10) and turning from it to God; and (4) a persistent endeavour after a holy life in a walking with God in the way of his commandments.
>
> The true penitent is conscious of guilt (Ps. 51:4, 9), of pollution (51:5, 7, 10), and of helplessness (51:11; 109:21, 22). Thus he apprehends himself to be just what God has always seen him to be and declares him to be. But repentance comprehends not only such a sense of sin, but also an apprehension of mercy, without which there can be no true repentance (Ps. 51:1; 130:4)."

During Lent, try to focus on some simple ideas that are specifically oriented towards God and make it a repetitive action. A friend of mine sets his watch alarm to go off numerous times throughout the day which is intended to bring his mind back to repeating one thought about God. If we focus on one thing, God is love (1Jn 4:8-11) the change of mind and heart that will be produced from that will represent everything that our Father meant for it to be through the sacrifice of His son Jesus for us. Remember, **Love Eventually Negates Troubles** and God is Love.

Easter's coming!

Craig Hudgins serves as a board member on the Virginia Christian Alliance and Craig formerly founded and published a conservative newspaper, the Virginia Chronicle. He formally served as the Secretary for the Board of ACT for America! and formally co-host of the pro-life radio show Dominion Air with VCA Advisory board member, **Diana DeBoe**.

Craig is a life long Roman Catholic and distinguishes his fervor for this faith by virtue of the personal relationship he came to have with Jesus Christ in 1976. His priorities in life are defined by his commitment to God, family and country.

Bishop DiLorenzo: Standing up for Catholic doctrine

OCTOBER 22, 2016
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Letter to the Editor:

At last a Religious Official that is willing to up hold God's laws concerning sexual deviancy. Congratulations to Bishop Francis Xavier DiLorenzo who stood down a Catholic committee that would have allowed a homosexual to serve in a key position.

The homosexual 'steamroller' that has buffaloed all major businesses and States in compliance with their agenda has also silenced most pastors who fear to make mention of them.

I know of Catholics that are urging Bishop DiLorenzo to take action on Democrat Senator Tim Kaine who is a member of the Richmond Diocese. Kaine, who is an honored man, champions positions that are in opposition to the BIBLE and Catholic law- homosexual marriage, allowing homosexuals to adopt children, transgender outrages and abortion.

Kaine claims he is against the killing of babies as in abortion but he is hypocritical in his supporting votes for abortion rights. Senator Kaine is probably President Obama's key supporter for these assaults against God's commands, second only, maybe, to Senator Harry Reid. These may be the reasons he was chosen to run as Vice President to extend Obama's legacy.

Greene Hollowell Richmond, VA

This LTE was published in the **Mineral Daily News Tribune** as well.

Protest by Catholics as Tim Kaine in Violation of "Obstinately Persevering in Manifest Grave Sin"

OCTOBER 2, 2016
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

On Tuesday, Sept 27 from noon to 1:30 a good size group of Richmond Diocese Catholics gathered at the Diocese offices on Parham Rd to petition Bishop DeLorenzo to follow Canon Law 915 in regards to Virginia Senator and candidate for vice president Tim Kaine.

When people started to arrive a Henrico police officer informed everyone they were not allowed to park in the Diocese lot. The officer monitored the group the whole time. A package containing a letter and petition addressed to Bishop DeLorenzo was not accepted by Diocese staff, who also rejected the TV 29 reporter.

News reports below detail Kaine's grave sin and violation of Canon 915 and photos of the protest follow. **SEE VIDEO from Channel 29**

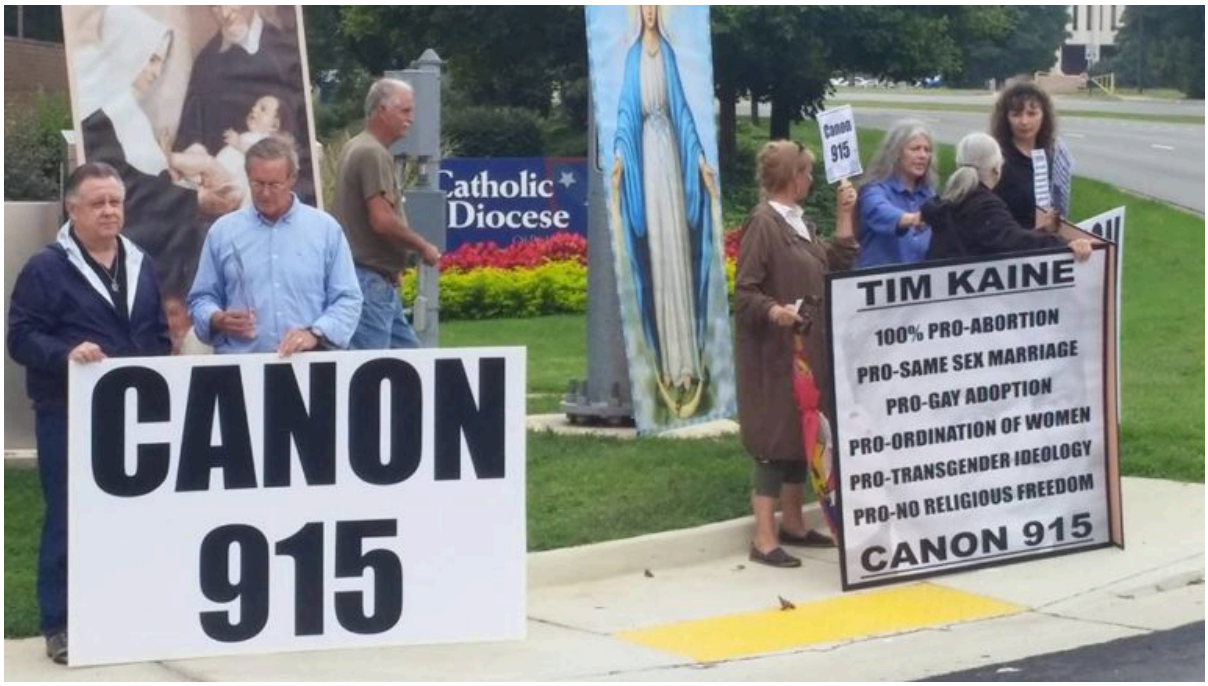
Protest and petition to Bishop Francis X. DiLorenzo to enforce Canon 915, the Catholic Church's law forbidding the distribution of Holy Communion to pro-abortion politicians. (photo credit: Don Blake, Virginia Christian Alliance)

LifeSiteNews's Claire Chretien reports: *(photos are from the Virginia Christian Alliance and not part of LifeSiteNews original report)*

RICHMOND, Virginia, September 30, 2016 (LifeSiteNews) — About two dozen Catholics prayed a rosary outside the Diocese of Richmond's pastoral center on Tuesday and petitioned Bishop Francis X. DiLorenzo to enforce Canon 915, the Catholic Church's law forbidding the distribution of Holy Communion to pro-abortion politicians.

Canon 915 says that individuals "obstinately persevering in manifest grave sin are not to be admitted to Holy Communion." The Catholic Church teaches that the Eucharist is the literal body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ.

Democratic vice presidential candidate Sen. Tim Kaine's home diocese is Richmond. After Hillary Clinton announced Kaine as her running mate, Kaine's parish gave him a standing ovation and his pastor praised him despite his adamant support for abortion and same-sex "marriage."



(photo credit: Don Blake, Virginia Christian Alliance)

DiLorenzo subsequently issued a statement saying Catholics have a duty to determine their own worthiness to receive Holy Communion "through an upright and informed conscience."

A few months later, Kaine predicted that the Catholic Church will change its stance on same-sex "marriage" just like he did. He publicly admitted that he knows the Church's stance and rejects it.

"My full, complete, unconditional support for marriage equality is at odds with the current doctrine of the Church that I still attend," Kaine said at a dinner for a prominent LGBT advocacy group. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, "Heresy is the obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and catholic faith" (CCC 2089). Canon 1364 of the Code of Canon Law says that heretics incur automatic excommunication.

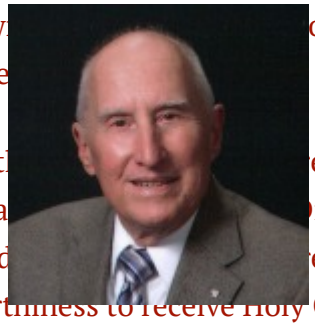
Sexual Immorality is Immoral, Regardless of What Mankind Says

SEPTEMBER 11, 2016
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The Catholics who gathered Tuesday prayed the Angelus, the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary, and the Divine Mercy Chaplet, according to one of its leaders, Frances Bouton.

Bouton said the rally participants were praying for DiLorenzo and that he will enforce Canon 915.

"We remain respectful and very hopeful that the Bishop will do the right thing in this important situation by enforcing Canon 915, and we continue to offer our prayers for him in this regard," Bouton told LifeSiteNews via email.



"A steady stream of folks have been w o to ask him to enforce the canon," Bouton said, so the rally came "on the

"Praying the rosary is always a good t enzo always seeks prayers on his behalf," Deborah Cox, the communica iocese of Richmond, told LifeSiteNews in an email. She referred enzo'sprevious statement saying Catholics should determine their worthiness to receive Holy Communion "through an upright and informed conscience" and a September 13 statement he issued affirming the Catholic Church's unchanging teaching that marriage is between one man and one woman.

Letter to the Editor:

In the Supreme Court brief against the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) it stated that Gay men and Lesbians were portrayed as Mentally Unstable, Sexually Promiscuous and Morally Deficient.

If you viewed a Gay Pride parade you would have to agree about the participants being mentally unstable.

If you were knowledgeable about public solicitation and glory holes there would be no disagreement about them being sexually promiscuous.

If you ever viewed the videos on the San Francisco bath houses you would have no questions concerning being morally deficient. (The bath houses were eventually closed down as a public danger and nuisance.)

Certainly not all homosexuals would participate in the above, living seemly normal lives, but by definition and action they are involved in perverted sexual acts. These acts have devastating consequences to the individual- HIV/AIDS, STD, suicide and early deaths. In addition they have impact on others, for example, gay Catholic priest assaulting young boys.

The petition the faithful delivered to DiLorenzo on the day of the prayer rally said, "Tim Kaine's anti-Catholic positions put him squarely in opposition to Holy Mother Church. These very publicly championed positions include abortion, homosexual marriage, homosexual adoption, transgender ideology, ordination of women, and no religious freedom."

Despite all this our Supreme Court ruled that homosexual sodomy is protected as a fundamental right and they could marry. Apparently the majority of voting Americans agree that they pose no harm.

"In short, it would appear that Tim Kaine is an enemy of the Catholic Church," the petition continued. "But because Tim Kaine continues to call himself a Catholic in good standing, and because he is running as a vice presidential candidate, we are asking you to set the record straight by publicly disciplining Kaine under Canon 915. Catholics in America and beyond have the right to

In all of this what does God reveal to us in the HOLY BIBLE? There is strong condemnation of sexual sins- adultery, fornication and homosexuality. For sexual immorality, 23,000 fell dead in

one day. In addition there is the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring towns which were filled with sexual immorality and every kind of sexual perversion.

For those who believe God is our Creator and who is involved in our daily lives we need to fear God and realize that we reap what we sow and there will be judgment.

Greene Hollowell

Richmond, VA

> by publicly disciplining Kaine under Canon 915. Catholics in America and beyond have the right to know that Tim Kaine is not a Catholic in good standing, and you, as his Bishop, are the rightful authority to whom this clarification belongs."
>
> The petition asked DiLorenzo to enforce Canon 915 "for the sake of our children, our children's children, and all the millions more unborn children who will be aborted under a Hillary-Kaine administration."
>
> In her speech to the rally participants, Bouton outlined Kaine's well-documented support of abortion, same-sex "marriage," same-sex adoption, transgender ideology, women's ordination, and the triumph of the LGBT agenda over religious freedom.
>
> "Now that Tim Kaine is a vice presidential hopeful with Hillary Clinton, and Hillary is calling for taxpayer funding for abortions through all nine months , it is totally clear that Tim Kaine has officially and willing become a consenting party to the further expansion of this most egregious and barbaric evil," Bouton said.
>
> Furthermore, she asked, "If Tim Kaine used his status as a Catholic senator to publicly petition the pope for women priests," referencing a statement Kaine made around the pope's U.S. visit, "what might we expect from him to petition for as a vice president?"
>
> "We are still encouraging faithful Catholics from around the U.S. to very politely and respectfully write Bishop DiLorenzo," Bouton told LifeSiteNews.

Stirring the Church for Another Great Awakening

SEPTEMBER 3, 2016
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: DEAN NELSON, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Don Blake and Dean Nelson (VA Christian Alliance)

Appreciated: Great Awakenings Past

Is it time for another Great Awakening in America? For example, the First Great Awakening stirred Americans to throw off the tyranny of Great Britain in the mid-1700's.

It was spearheaded by evangelists like George Whitefield and by a Black-Robed Regiment of pastors like John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg in Woodstock who, on January 21, 1776, preached from Ecclesiastes 3 — and then led 300 of his friends and neighbors into the War for Independence.

The Second Great Awakening in the 1800's was also led by pastors like Charles Finney who stirred the people to throw off the shackles of slavery. Like the first, it too was a battle for freedom.

Anticipated: A New Great Awakening?

So do we need another Great Awakening today to turn back new challenges to our freedom and to our unity as a nation? Sadly, the greatest challenges seem to be coming primarily from our own federal government, which has:

1. Attacked and overturned basic Judeo-Christian values of Life, Marriage, and Religious Liberty;
2. Driven us deeper into an immoral national debt that now exceeds $19 trillion (nearly $60,000/citizen);

3. Violated constitutional principles and abused its executive and judicial authorities;
4. Encouraged class and racial divisions that promote dependency over personal responsibility; and
5. Refused to recognize and confront the growing threat of Islamic jihad here and abroad.

VFIA #230 Stirring the Church for a Third Great Awakening from **Dean Welty** on **Vimeo**.

* * * *

For God and Country,

Don Blake (top right) is the Chairman and President of the Virginia Christian Alliance. After college and a stint in the Army, he went into business and has served on numerous professional and non-profit boards, including work with Virginia pastors to promote family values. He lives in Richmond.

Dean Nelson (bottom right) helps lead the Frederick Douglass Foundation, the Wellington Boone Ministries, and Care Net — a network of more than 1,000 pregnancy centers across America. He also serves on the Board of the Virginia Christian Alliance. He lives in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

Dean Welty (far right) of ***Valley Faith in Action*** airs five times on WAZT-TV, beginning at 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, again at 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 p.m. Sunday, and finally at Wednesday midnight. That is on Comcast Cable Channel 13 in the Harrisonburg/Rockingham area but varies in other locations. However, if you miss the TV program, you can watch it and earlier programs online**HERE** anytime.

Dean

The Press Ignores Catholics and Protest Outside Kaine's Church

AUGUST 28, 2016
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Press releases were sent to approximately 40 news media, such as the Richmond Times Dispatch and television stations but only 2 showed up and none from Richmond: Washington Post and TV 29 of Charlottesville! (thanks for coming!). Richmond reporters are avoiding Tim Kaine's dark side including his violation and disobedience to the core beliefs of the Catholic church. Will Richmond reporters not cover Kaine's dark side? Kaine's church is located at 2712 2ND Avenue, Richmond, VA. and the Richmond Times Dispatch is at 300 E. Franklin, less than 3 miles away.

The release sent yesterday and photos from today's protest are added below:

Fellow Richmond Diocese Catholics call out Tim Kaine at St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church

Frances Bouton

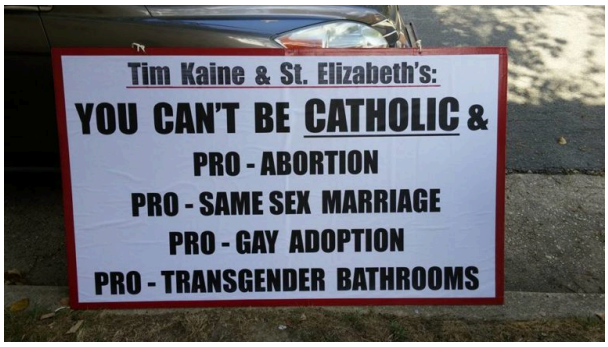
August 27, 2016

A group of faithful Richmond Diocese Catholics will be protesting on the sidewalk in front of Tim Kaine's church, St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church in Highland Park, tomorrow after the 9:00 am Sunday Mass. Starting at 9:30 am the faithful will be gathering to protest Tim Kaine's claim that he is a Catholic in good standing. He is not!

Senator Tim Kaine calls himself a Catholic, but nothing could be farther from the truth. He has repeatedly defied Catholic teaching in many areas – most particularly on the sacredness of human

life and traditional marriage between one man and one woman – teachings that are at the heart of the Catholic Church. His support for abortion, same-sex marriage, same-sex adoption, transgender bathrooms and no religious freedom puts him squarely in opposition to the Catholic faith.

Tim Kaine may have a friendly and paternal demeanor, but he is no friend of the Catholic Church and no friend of children. Kaine is perfectly happy that the innocent unborn are dismembered or crushed to death in abortions, and he is perfectly happy that children are adopted by same-sex couples. Tim Kaine is certainly *not* America's Catholic Dad!



In this Jubilee Year of Mercy, Catholics and people of good will are called to perform acts of mercy. In the Catholic Church, we are given specific corporal and spiritual works of mercy – seven of each. The corporal works include feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and burying the dead. But it is two spiritual works of mercy which we hope to perform in front of St. Elizabeth's Church – admonishing the sinner and instructing the ignorant.

Let it be said to Tim Kaine today, "You have a God-given free will to think and act as you please, but the Catholic Church has fixed laws and beliefs. You cannot freely go against these laws and beliefs and still call yourself a Catholic. You are in grave error! As a politician, Catholic Canon Law 915 dictates that you should not approach the Communion rail. In doing so, you bring down condemnation upon yourself."

Faithful Richmond Diocese Catholics and faithful Catholics from around the globe also say, "Tim Kaine, renounce your support for abortion, homosexual 'marriage', homosexual adoption, transgender bathrooms and intolerance towards businesses that exercise their First Amendment rights, or refrain from referring to yourself as Catholic. You cannot have it both ways. You are in grave error."

Contact info:

Frances Bouton

Tel: (*redacted for this publication*)

Email: (*redacted for this publication*)

Tim Kaine + Hillary - A Match Made in HELL!
* PRO-ABORTION
* PRO-SAME SEX MARRIAGE
* PRO-SAME SEX ADOPTION
* PRO-MEN IN GIRLS BATHROOM
NOT America's CATHOLIC Dad!!
With Tim Kaine's Votes, Thousands of BLACK Babies are Killed by Abortion in Virginia Every Year!!
Tim Kaine Supports:
Abortion, Tax Payer Funding for Abortion, Same-Sex Marriage, Same-Sex Adoptions, Transgender Bathrooms, and No Religious Freedom.
The Catholic Church Does Not.

Tim Kaine
DOES NOT
follow the teachings of the Catholic Church!!
He is a Catholic in Grave Error!!
TIM KAINE SUPPORTS "CHOICE"

The Prophet Daniel – Man of Character

JULY 24, 2016
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Rob Franzen
VCA Board Member

One of the flaws in the past few generations within the church is that there has been great emphasis on gifts and charisma. Our gifts, talents, and charisma, void of a strong solid foundation, has resulted in many great Christian leaders falling and bringing much hurt and shame. I understand and fully agree that we, the church, need to demonstrate the power of God to our generation (I Cor. 2:4). This requires that we submit our God given gifts and talents to be used for His glory and Honor. But we need to ask ourselves, "why then do we not see more of His miracle working power in our churches and why have there been so many people of God who have fallen victim to various sins?"

The answer involves simply getting back to the basics of life. Jesus said in Matthew 7:24, "*So everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts upon them will be like a sensible (prudent, practical, wise) man who* ***built his house upon the rock***" (AMP). Building requires a strong foundation. Gifts and showmanship will draw people for a little while but it never lasts because people like this do not have the foundational characteristics that produce the fruit of the Spirit, the radiance of Jesus, and enables one to endure life's hardships as Joseph did in the book of Genesis. As I read about the Prophet Daniel, the Lord showed me Daniel's impeccable godly character that enabled him to prosper. The book of Daniel teaches us that God specializes in bringing good out of every bad situation to those who put their trust in Him! But how do we accomplish such faith and trust in these last days?

Some of the foundational characteristics celebrated throughout the Bible, as demonstrated in the life of Daniel for example, commitment, discipline, focus, endurance, courage, bravery, integrity, valor, honor, defending the weak and helpless, and standing up for righteousness.

In Dan. 1:8, we first see Daniel's tremendous commitment where "*he purposed in his heart not to defile himself…*" Now that's commitment, commitment to someone he knew personally and had tremendous trust in. In December, 2009, a very godly and seasoned Pastor in upstate NY told me

that 2010 will be a year of separation unto the Lord. His *word* bore witness to my spirit; we need to separate ourselves unto the Lord more and more as this world drifts further and further from the Lord. We cannot continue to defile ourselves with the ways of the world, feeding our flesh and expecting blessing and closeness with the Lord. The apostle James tells us the same, "… *keep yourself unspotted from the world*," James 1:27.

Daniel 6:2 teaches accountability. Accountability is an important part of character that we all need in order to prosper as Daniel did.

Dan. 6:3 tells us that Daniel was preferred above the rest, because an excellent spirit was within him. I admonish you to seek out what makes up an excellent spirit from the Scriptures yourself. Daniel's character is something that we all should aspire to obtain. This excellent spirit doesn't originate with Daniel but it is found in the person of Jesus Christ! Promotion and success comes from the presence of the Lord.

Integrity is a vital part in Godly character. Look up and study the word integrity. "The word 'integrity' may not occur in the New Testament, but its equivalents may be seen in 'sincerity,' 'truth,' the 'pure heart,' the 'single eye,' etc. … It is equivalent to being honest, sincere, genuine, and is **fundamental to true character**." (The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, emphasis mine.) Daniel was a man of such integrity!

We see in Dan. 6:4 that bad things still happen even when you do the right thing. Life isn't fair, just ask Joseph. When Joseph did the right thing and ran from Potiphar's wife, he went to jail for it, Gen. 39. Why do bad things happen to people? The answer is that we live in a sinful, fallen world. We will understand why bad things happen, like the earthquake in Haiti, when we rightly understand the first several chapters of the book of Genesis. In Genesis, we learn about the entrance of sin that resulted from mankind's choices. Still today we are dealing with the unfairness of life and sins effects all around us every day. Therefore, we need to go to our Saviour every day for His protection and strength to endure life's difficulties. He has what we want and need! We may not be able to stop bad things from happening but possessing godly character enables us to overcome life's difficulties. This is why it is vitally important to have godly character in your foundation.

The times and future we face; In Dan. 6:7, we see prophetically what we will face in our life today. "*All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors* (the world leaders), *have consulted together* (as seen in Ps. 2:2) *to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree* (Law), *that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions*" (NKJV).

It was only for 30 days. Daniel could have shrunk back and laid low for 30 days and not create any waves or buck the new world system. He could have saved himself a lot of turmoil and conflict. Our nature does not like conflict. But like it or not, we are in a conflict with the devil, and the

quicker we learn this the better we'll be. If you go 30 days without praying, then you will be a weak, powerless Christian. You will be out of touch with God and His purposes, and unable to impact the culture God placed you in! You won't have the mind of Christ. You'll be swept away with the enormous tide of the anti-Christ spirit. Daniel was a man already rooted in his faith and possessed the foundational character needed to carry him through this conflict. **Are you rooted like this?** Daniel had the faith and "experiential trust" built up within him, the integrity, the courage and bravery, the valor and endurance to face whatever any anti-Christ dished out. **Do you have this kind of Godly character?**

In Dan. 6:10 we see Daniel was not going to bow down to this anti-Christ intimidation because he did not have a spirit of fear, timidity, or cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and love and a well disciplined sound mind (II Tim. 1:7). Daniel knew the king's signed law could result in his death, but he responds and showed the signature of true godly character! It was signature against signature. He wasn't passive, and he wasn't aggressive, but he **was** assertive, unchanging, and standing strong for righteousness sake!

Dan. 6:16-23 – We all will experience the evils and unfairness of life. We all will be tried and our characters examined and proved to determine what we are made of. God loves us so much that He will allow things to take place in order for us to see ourselves for who we truly are. Like squeezing a pealed orange – what's inside will come out. What's coming out of you while the pressure of life is squeezing you? When we are pressured in life, our true character shows forth.

Nothing in life ever stays the same, and that's alright because we are to grow from faith to faith, and glory to glory. Life is difficult, and that's alright too because Jesus said " be of good courage; I have overcome the world," John 16:33. We will be leaving all this behind; we are in the world but not of this world. Another way to say this is that although we live here now, but we are citizens of heaven!

My prayer for you is that you spend time in prayer and in His Word **cultivating the true character of Christ** by the Holy Spirit. My prayer is that it becomes more important to you to be great in God's sight, more so than being great and flashy in people's sight, thereby, withstanding, enduring and overcoming life's challenges that we face every day! May the grace and power of Jesus Christ be with you!

Rob Franzen

The mission of the "Creation Under Fire project" is to educate people with the truth of our origin as revealed in the first book of the Holy Bible – Genesis. To establish a clear understanding of the original thought and intent of the author as it was originally recorded; therewith, dispelling untrue theories of creation within the church. In turn, strengthening people's faith and equipping them with real answers for the faith they possess and to defend it well. Also to expose the most subtle scheme Satan has ever unleashed on humanity, which has sent more people to hell than any other attack mankind has ever known. **Refranzen1@aol.com** **www.CreationUnderFire.com**

Presbyterian Church- USA Support For Abortion, Homosexuals and Now the Islamic Allah

JULY 4, 2016
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: INTER-FAITH, INTERFAITH, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Mainline Christian Denomination Praying to Allah?

Christian Broadcasting Network

The Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. is raising eyebrows after lifting up prayers to Allah at its General Assembly meeting last week.

RAMADAN PRAYER COUNTDOWN:
Each night, at 8:38 p.m. ET on Facebook, we will hear LIVE from different ministries as they share praises of how Muslims have supernaturally encountered Jesus. Join us in praying for the Muslim world during Ramadan.

"Allah bless us and bless our families and bless our Lord. Lead us on the straight path – the path of all prophets: Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad."

These were the words that rang out over the congregation at The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, USA meeting in Portland, Oregon. Wajidi Said, co-founder of the Muslim Education Trust, led the attendees in the prayer to the Islamic deity, a move arranged by the Ecumenical and Interfaith ministry staff at the assembly.

The prayer was part of the "first order of business" during the meeting's opening session, a time dedicated to praying for those affected by the Orlando shooting that occurred just weeks before.

"In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the merciful, let us praise the Lord… Peace be upon them and peace be upon Allah," Said prayed. He also prayed peace on the "bigots" and "Islamaphobes."

Later, at the conclusion of the session, Rev. Gradye Parsons offered an apology to anyone who was offended by the prayer. He assured the congregation that mistakes can be made, but the prayer was not an intentional one.

"It was never the intention to offend anyone, and we offer an apology to those who were offended," Rev. Parsons said.

But the Presbyterian church still affirms that it will advocate for “positive relationships with people of other religious traditions” and is committed to fighting “the rise in Islamophobia.”

Crossroads: Nehemiah and the Great Wall

JUNE 24, 2016
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

For Jerusalem — Thirteen Principles — For America

Rebuilding Our Own Broken-Down Walls

When Nehemiah heard about the broken down walls of Jerusalem, he wept, he mourned, he fasted, and he prayed before the God of Heaven. (Nehemiah 1:3,4)

Then he developed a plan, and all the people joined him. Despite strong opposition, they persisted and, in only 52 days, they prevailed in rebuilding the wall! Laus Deo! (Nehemiah: 1-13)

* * * *

Broken Down Walls: Then and Now

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be taken hostage and taken into exile to Babylon, as Nehemiah was 2500 years ago? What did he do to deserve this?

And then to find out that your friends and family who were left behind in Jerusalem are being mistreated, the city walls have been torn down, and the country is in shambles?

It's terrible! But Nehemiah is the cupbearer to the Babylonian king. It's a comfortable position. Why should he get involved with troubles back home? That's their problem. And even if he did, what could he do?

Do you sometimes feel like that today? That the solid "walls" of Judeo-Christian values and constitutional principles which have protected America for 400 years are being broken down and destroyed?

But so what? Why should we get involved? And what can we do about it anyway?

What Makes Us Weep?

But is it really so bad that, like Nehemiah, we are brought to tears when we examine our walls today? Life is good, so why worry? But what about the following examples?

— Should we not be weeping at the way that enemies of God are trying to expel Him from our culture and from the public square?

— Or at the continued legalized murder of 58 million unborn babies since 1973 – over 3,000 per day in America?

— Or at the coarsening of our culture, at the spread of violence, and at rampant pornography that leaves a trail of ruined men, exploited women, damaged children, disease, crime, and even death?

— Or at the many marriages and families that have been broken by divorce and which are now even redefined to include same-sex partners?

— Or at the attacks on our religious freedoms by groups like the ACLU, LGBT activists, radical Islamic jihadists, and even by members of our own government?

— Or at the immoral national debt of over $19 trillion that we are passing on to our children — nearly $60,000 for every American citizen?

— Finally, should we not be weeping at the abuse of executive federal power that violates the Constitutional design of limited government and infringes on the rights and the freedoms of "We the People" and of the states?

Thirteen Leadership Principles: For Action

But weeping is just for starters. It must lead to action.

Therefore, as Rita Dunaway and I reviewed the life of Nehemiah on Crossroads radio last weekend, we identified 13 leadership principles that he used to rebuild the broken-down walls of Jerusalem 2500 years ago, and which we can use today to rebuild the broken-down walls of America.

They all begin with the letter "P" to make them easier to remember, and proceed to a beautiful victory celebration after only 52 days, as follows: Prepare, Pray, Purpose, Plan, Proceed, Participate, Passion, Protect, Persist, Pattern, Purify, Prevail, and Praise!

Crossroads: Where Faith and Culture Collide

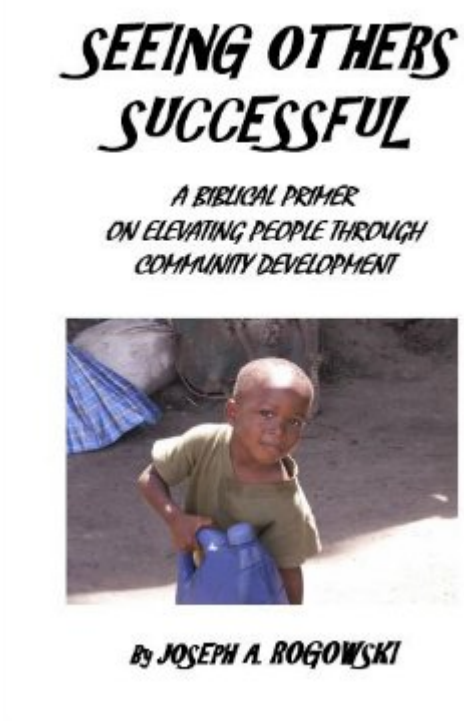
Because of a storm-induced technical blackout, we were unable to let you know ahead of time about this program that was carried on Valley radio last weekend. However, you can listen online HERE anytime.

From the Crossroads Team, for God and Country!

Dean Welty

Manual on Mission Outreach: First Principles

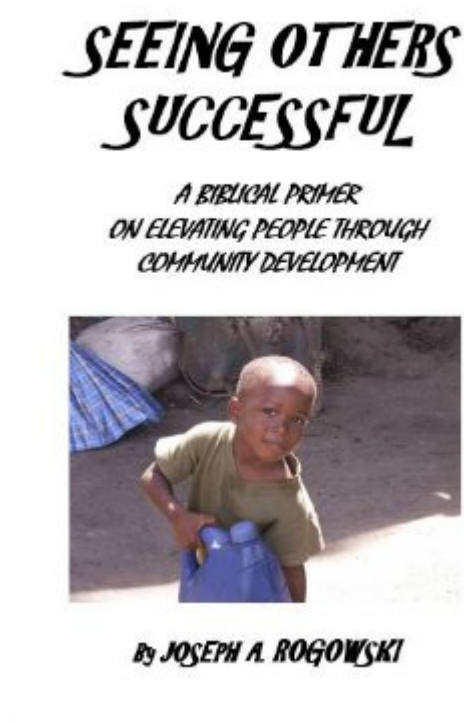
MAY 22, 2016
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



This manual is an Apologetic, Autobiographical, Technical, and Philosophical blend to give the reader an informative, practical, Instructive, and entertaining learning experience. It recounts some life experiences on the mission field that few have rarely encountered.

Author Rogowski suggests that in our church mission efforts, we often underrate the effectiveness of demonstrating the Gospel through practical helps as a viable means of evangelism. He maintains that the unique ministry of community development is a powerful evangelism tool linked with the mission to help the poor escape their culture of poverty. He presents a beginners look at the first principles necessary to be effective in motivating and facilitating poor communities to become more self-reliant while avoiding the snares of dependency.

This is a must read for those in service agency and ministry oriented situations with groups of any type. It is a valuable tool for those considering mission outreach. **ORDER HERE**



Mr. Rogowski is a native of Buffalo, New York. He and Ursula of Germany were married in 1963. While enjoying a career as a pharmacist and minor partner in a regional chain of pharmacies in Western New York, Mr. Rogowski experienced a religious conversion in 1977. He resigned his positions in the company and left with Ursula and their two children for the mission field with Youth with a Mission in 1981. They served in the Asia and the Pacific region for approximately ten years.

Mr. Rogowski developed a seminar on community development that eventually launched him in ministry into fourteen different nations over two decades. He earned a Master's degree in Public Policy at Regent University in Virginia Beach, Virginia in 1999 and taught a Master's level course on Third World Politics at the International University in Vienna, Austria in 2001.

Joseph and Ursula served on Mercy Ships in Ghana in 2006 and in Liberia in 2008. During free time, Mr. Rogowski presented seminars on community development to church and interested groups in the local communities. He continues to promote the principles of helping the poor through community development and of a Biblical worldview and culture.

He and Ursula have three grandchildren and reside in suburban Richmond, Virginia. They are directors of the small-project consulting, non-profit, charitable 501 (c) (3) corporation, Arise Development Services.

CONTACT: E-mail: **heyrogo@verizon.net** Web site: **Arise Development Services**

How they Hate a Christian in Damascus

DECEMBER 13, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Bill Federer | **American Minute**

"How they hate a Christian in Damascus!…" Mark Twain wrote
"…and pretty much all over Turkeydom."

Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known as **Mark Twain**, was born NOVEMBER 30, 1835.

His first popular story was "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County," written in 1865 while he was in San Francisco. In 1866, as a reporter for the Sacramento Union, **Mark Twain** traveled to **the Sandwich Islands** (present-day **Hawaii**). In 1867, a newspaper funded **Mark Twain's** voyage to **the Mediterranean**, which he recorded in his book, *Innocents Abroad*, 1869.

While on this trip, **Mark Twain** saw the picture of his friend's sister, **Olivia Langdon** of Elmira, New York, and he fell in love. Immediately upon his return, he met and married Olivia.

In *Innocents Abroad*, 1869, which established his reputation as a writer, **Mark Twain** described **Syria** under the **Ottoman Turkish Empire**: "Then we called at the tomb of Mahomet's children and at…the mausoleum of **the five thousand Christians who were massacred in Damascus** in 1861 by the Turks.

They say those narrow streets ran blood for several days, and that men, women and children were butchered indiscriminately and left to rot by hundreds all through the Christian quarter; they say, further, that the stench was dreadful. All the Christians who could get away fled from the city, and the Mohammedans would not defile their hands by burying the 'infidel dogs.' The thirst for blood extended to the high lands of Hermon and Anti-Lebanon, and in a short time twenty-five thousand more Christians were massacred and their possessions laid waste…"

Mark Twain added: "How they hate a Christian in Damascus!–and pretty much all over Turkeydom as well.

And how they will pay for it when Russia turns her guns upon them again! It is soothing to the heart to abuse England and France for interposing to save the Ottoman Empire from the destruction it has so richly deserved for a thousand years…"

Mark Twain continued: "It hurts my vanity to see these pagans refuse to eat of food that has been cooked for us; or to eat from a dish we have eaten from; or to drink from a goatskin which we

have polluted with our Christian lips, except by filtering the water through a rag which they put over the mouth of it or through a sponge!…

These degraded Turks and Arabs… When Russia is ready to war with them again, I hope England and France will not find it good breeding or good judgment to interfere…"

Mark Twain wrote in *Innocents Abroad*, chapter XLII: "If ever an oppressed race existed, it is this one we see fettered around us under the inhuman tyranny of the Ottoman Empire. I wish Europe would let Russia annihilate Turkey a little–not much, but enough to make it difficult to find the place again without a divining-rod or a diving-bell."

Mark Twain wrote in *Innocents Abroad*, chapter LVI: "Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies…about whose borders nothing grows but weeds, and scattering tufts of cane, and that treacherous fruit that promises refreshment to parching lips, but turns to ashes at the touch… Palestine is desolate and unlovely…"

In *Innocents Abroad*, chapter LIII, **Mark Twain** described the condition of Jerusalem under Ottoman Muslim rule: "Rags, wretchedness, poverty and dirt, those signs and symbols that indicate the presence of Moslem rule more surely than the crescent-flag itself, abound… Jerusalem is mournful, and dreary, and lifeless. I would not desire to live here…

…The Moslems watch the Golden Gate with a jealous eye, and an anxious one, for they have an honored tradition that when it falls, Islamism will fall and with it the Ottoman Empire. It did not grieve me any to notice that the old gate was getting a little shaky."

Mark Twain wrote in *Innocents Abroad*, chapter LVI: "Renowned Jerusalem itself, the stateliest name in history, has lost all its ancient grandeur…the wonderful temple which was the pride and the glory of Israel, is gone, and the Ottoman crescent is lifted above the spot where, on that most memorable day in the annals of the world, they reared the Holy Cross."

In chapter XLVII of *Innocents Abroad*, 1869, **Mark Twain** described the land of Israel: "We dismounted on those shores which the feet of the Saviour had made holy ground… We left Capernaum behind us. It was only a shapeless ruin. It bore no semblance to a town.

But, all desolate and unpeopled as it was, it was illustrious ground. From it sprang that tree of Christianity whose broad arms overshadow so many distant lands today. Christ visited his old home at Nazareth, and saw His brothers Joses, Judas, James, and Simon…. …Who wonders what passed in their minds when they saw this brother (who was only a brother to them, however He might be to others a mysterious stranger; who was a God, and had stood face to face with God above the clouds) doing miracles, with crowds of astonished people for witnesses?…

…One of the most astonishing things that has yet fallen under our observation is the exceedingly small portion of the earth from which sprang the new flourishing plant of Christianity. The longest journey our Saviour ever performed was from here to Jerusalem – about one hundred to one hundred and twenty miles… Leaving out two or three short journeys, He spent His life, preaching His Gospel, and performing His miracles, within a compass no larger than an ordinary county of the United States…"

Of the Bible, **Mark Twain** wrote in *Innocents Abroad*, 1869: "It is hard to make a choice of the most beautiful passage in a book which is so gemmed with beautiful passages as the Bible; but it is certain that not many things within its lids may take rank above the exquisite story of Joseph.

Who taught those ancient writers their simplicity of language, their felicity of expression, their pathos, and above all, their faculty of sinking themselves entirely out of sight of the reader and making the narrative stand out alone and seem to tell itself? Shakespeare is always present when one reads his book; Macaulay is present when we follow the march of his stately sentences; but the Old Testament writers are hidden from view."

Mark Twain wrote in *Innocents Abroad*, 1869: "In the starlight, Galilee has no boundaries but the broad compass of the heavens, and is a theatre meet for great events; meet for the birth of a religion able to save the world."

Bill Federer www.AmericanMinute.com

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Two ETERNAL Destinations Available

NOVEMBER 7, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

We read in the HOLY BIBLE "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it. The world and its entire people belong to Him." God is our Creator and we were created in His image. He made us and we are His. He rules over everything.

He has given us many wonderful gifts; the most important (and dangerous) is the gift of deciding to give our life to Him. The choice we make now determines where we will spend eternity. The bottom line is that our relationship with our Creator is the most important thing in our earthly life.

God tells us that he "showed how much he loved us by sending His only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through Him". Accepting Jesus as our Savior involves repentance, faith, trusting and acknowledgement of Him. It is a new birth- we are in fact 'born again'. For those of us who have accepted Jesus as our personal Savior it gives meaning and help to our lives despite the problems that we all experience

However many people who will read this have not made the decision necessary for the new birth. Again the Scripture tells us "the gateway to life is small and the road narrow and only a few find it". Which is a pity since it is open to all mankind, no matter who we are or what we have been like. Yes, even a murderer can be born again.

But this life on earth is but a moment, even if we live to be 100. The soul that God implants while we are yet in our mother's womb continues on after our earthly death. For this world is not our home, we are only passing through, looking forward to our city in heaven.

God has told us there are two eventual destinations he has prepared for mankind, Heaven for those who have been born again, who love and serve Him. Hell for those that have rejected the Lord Jesus.

The key attribute of going to Heaven is that we will be in the presence of God, that where He is we may be also. There will be no more heart ache or sickness like we sometimes experience here.

The Biblical descriptions of Hell are so horrendous that one would wonder how a God of love could commit a significant portion of mankind to this never ending destination. You might say it's really not fair. We were born with a sinful nature; we did nothing to deserve it. It's like STRIKE ONE, before we get to the plate. But that is the situation in which we find ourselves.

There are those who believe all will be saved and not experience Hell. However we need to consider what God tells us from His Word. Actually Jesus has more to say about Hell than Heaven. It is very scary!

We need to examine God's nature. Yes, love is first, but He is a God of justice and purity. Sin cannot be brought into His presence. The Bible says-"Don't you know those who do wrong will have no share in the Kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, who are idol worshippers, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, greedy people, drunkards, abusers and swindlers- none of these will have a share in the Kingdom of God." Those who believe that they have a personal relationship with Jesus but indulge in these sins need to reexamine their position. Don't fool yourselves!

What does the Bible tell us about Hell?

When God opens the Book of Life, anyone whose name was not found recorded will be thrown into the Lake of Fire. (This Book of Life is not the membership roll of the any denomination or church. It is composed of those who have been 'born again'. It is by grace that we may be saved).

The Lake of Fire burns with fire and sulfur, and there will be torment day and night forever and ever. You will experience the terrible wrath of God, there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. The smoke of their torment rises forever and ever, and they will have no relief day or night.

If you don't think God would do this, consider these examples of God's swift judgment revealed in the Bible:

About 4,500 years ago He drowned all mankind because of their wickedness except Noah and his family.

He killed the oldest child in each Egyptian home to expedite the Exodus.

Many times because of His chosen people's disobedience, He killed thousands of them by earthquake, sword, snakes, plagues and fire. For sexual immorality, 23,000 fell dead in one day. God sent His Angel of Death to destroy those murmuring against God.

For not following His explicit instructions concerning their priestly duties, He burned up Aaron's two sons, Nadab and Abihu.

At times He sent the Israelites into battle with instructions to kill all the men, women and children, to completely destroy communities.

In the New Testament there is the episode of God striking Ananias and Sapphira dead for lying about the amount of their gift to their fellow Christians. He gave them no chance to say" I'm sorry, please forgive me!"

Yes, God is love, but you can't mess around with God! God shows His anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who push the truth away from themselves.

Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Our life here on earth is very short. We need to be reminded how brief our time on earth will be, that our days are numbered. If a sudden deadly illness or accident would take you out, you would have no ability to appeal to God, too late, too late. Now is the time if God is tugging at your heart, you need to act and make the choice God allows us to make. You definitely don't want to take the chance. God looks down from Heaven, watches everything closely, examining everyone on earth.

Two eternal destinations, HEAVEN, to be with God or HELL, separation from God- you have a choice if God is calling.

By **Greene Hollowell**

Virginia Christian Alliance Board Member

The Avoided Doorway to the Glory of God A Study in the Purpose of Brokenness Part IV

OCTOBER 25, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Rob Franzen

Each young woman's turn came to go in to King Ahasuerus **after** she had completed twelve month's **preparation**, according to the regulations for the women, for thus were the days of their **preparation** apportioned: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with perfumes and **preparations** for beautifying women – (Esther 2:12 NKJV, emphasis mine).

You might be wondering why I would relate this verse (along with verse 17 and the whole story) with the profound and difficult subject of *suffering* and *brokenness*. It has to do with illustrating **the ultimate purpose in brokenness**. I have been casually mentioning it throughout these messages, now it's time to emphasize how profound and prophetically powerful this really is!

In the first 3 parts to this 4 part message on *Brokenness*, I shared 4 causes behind our hardships and sufferings. The fourth cause behind some of our troubles I mentioned is "God." This series is designed to focus in on God's involvement and what He is up to during times of hardship, which also explains why He allows bad things to happen. This quote from J.C. Ryle, "There are no lessons so useful as those learned in the school of affliction," reveals in it one of the purposes of suffering described in Ps. 119:67,71,75. I also read a quote from Pope John Paul II that said, "Suffering is an invitation to be like the Son by doing the will of the Father." That's exactly right; suffering is an opportunity or doorway if you will to join together with Jesus. By denying our *will* and *pride* and doing what pleases God in the midst of our sufferings, we develop godly character. There are no classrooms that can make you understand the "why" of suffering. Only by keeping our focus on Jesus, will we learn godliness.

Our closeness to Christ through our experiences of pain and suffering is where we will gain understanding and the grace to endure even if we still can't understand the "why." What I refer to as *God's school of hard knocks* and what the Bible refers to as *the furnace of affliction* (Isaiah 48:10)

is **first** for the purpose of breaking our outer-man. This consists of the *soulish* part of us, (our *will* and *pride* specifically). Sufferings serve as one of Gods tools to break our outer-man for the purpose of our inner-man or spirit-man within to come forth and prevail in our lives. The Bible reveals that there is a veil separating the outer court from the inner place of the holy of holies (Ex.26:33). Hebrews 4:12 shows us that there is a separation point between bone and marrow, illustrating the veil as it were or an egg shell-like separation between our soul and spirit; where our outer-man meets our inner-man. We have to **break** the egg shell for the use of the nutrients within.

The Word of God teaches we have to **break** the *earthly* alabaster jar (Mark 14:3-9/Jh 12:3-8) for the use of the precious, valuable ointment within to be a sweet smelling aroma unto the Lord (2Cor.2:15; Eph. 5:2). Succeeding in this will allow the Glory of God to be revealed through you here on earth. This leads to the **second** and ultimate purpose in brokenness: prepared to go beyond the spiritual veil and into the direct presence of the King of all kings!

What Esther 2:12 is saying is that after all the young women had been chosen throughout the whole kingdom for the King to pick a new Bride to make Queen; the women were kept from seeing the King for twelve months to undergo a purification process. Before they could see the King, they had to be prepared to be presentable and beautiful before the King's presence. *No sin can stand before the presence of a Holy God*! They had to be made delightful and desirable to be around; polished and deep cleaned if you will. Understand that the women were chosen indiscriminately, from the high class to the very lowest of class.

Many among them had a poor diet and ate frequently the same ole harsh foods that caused particular odors through the pours of their skin. Their skin was often callus and dry from hard work under the hot sun. Bugs and lice were also a problem for some. You wouldn't go see a King or Prime Minister or President without looking your best. These women were fed healthy foods and for the first six months bathed frequently, being scrubbed down and rubbed down with oil of myrrh and also probably the traditional olive oil and aloes as well, (according to the use of the Hebrew word *shemen* and its frequent use back then). The pure oil of myrrh was a main ingredient of the holy anointing oil the Priests anointed with, Ex. 30:23. After six months of organic treatments to cleanse and condition the skin, the best herbal spices were added for sweet smelling aromas. After a year of lavish, healthy foods and state-of-the art spa treatments, and proper etiquettes and protocol training, they were prepared to come before the King, in his inner chambers. The awesome supernatural thing about these Old Testament passages is that they teach the reality of what actually happens in relation to the spiritual and natural realms (1Cor.10:11).

The first word that is in bold in our opening verse is the word "**after**." A biblical concept is taught throughout the Old and New Testaments that receiving the promises and blessings come **after** doing the will of God; **after** the battle, **after** the fight, **after** the conflict and struggles will you

achieve the victory. For you heard it said, the greater the battle, the greater the victory. This is seen in the whole concept of *the Patience of the Saints*; it is seen in the life of Christ in Acts 1:3 "… **after** His suffering … He showed Himself alive …" (NET) ! The book of Hebrews tells us in 10:36, "… **after** you have done the will of God you may receive the promise." 1 Peter 5:10 says, "And, **after** you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory in Christ will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you" (NET). This principal is also seen in this powerful verse (which sums up my whole message and purpose of this message in a nutshell), "**Establishing *and* strengthening the souls *and* the hearts of the disciples, urging *and* warning *and* encouraging them to stand firm in the faith, and <u>that it is through many hardships *and* tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God</u>**" (**Acts 14:22** AMP).

Next, there are 5 principal organic ingredients found in the way the anointing oil was made, found in Ex. 30:23. This message helps relate what the significance of these are to us today. There are 2 bitter spices and 2 sweet spices mixed together by olive oil; namely – pure <u>myrrh</u>; sweet <u>cinnamon</u>; sweet <u>calamus</u> cane; <u>cassia</u>; and <u>olive oil</u>. If there is any truth to biblical numerology, the number 5 relates to Grace. Grace is absolutely needed to <u>enable</u> us to endure hardship as a good solider of Jesus Christ (2Tim. 2:3). Exodus shows us that only half as much sweet spices were used. It only takes half as much of the sweet spices to counter the bitter.

That's the power the Holy Spirit has in us to overcome bitterness in our lives today. The mixing of spices and other ingredients to make fragrant ointments is the symbolic work of the Holy Spirit instilling all His attributes into us as our sin-nature is broken down. We need to bathe daily in the sweet anointing of Gods Spirit. The gum from the bark of Myrrh is bitter but is associated with the meaning of *meekness*, same with the spice Cassia which refers to *tears*. Sweet Cinnamon refers to obtaining *sweetness of spirit*, and Calamus is a sweet cane referring to *gentleness*. Olive oil represents *peace* and *prosperity*. The woman the king would choose to be his Bride had to radiate these qualities. The Holy Spirit is that great care taker of the Bride, mixing His spices within us that they become a part of our very nature so that we may be presentable to the King. There is so much more to this that I'll have to share in book form.

In the previous message on brokenness, "*The Patience of the Saints*," I mentioned that <u>there are few who minister out of a broken spirit</u>. On a personal/individual level, many jump off God's operation table because of the pain of *pruning* and loss; thus, the title "*The Avoided Doorway to the Glory of God*." People naturally tend to avoid being broken. Remember, God is preparing a Bride – and that through blood! Many I talk to about this on the larger *prophetic* level concerning the whole Body of Christ going through a purification/beautification process become nervous and panicky. They begin to wonder subconsciously how they can save themselves from trouble; which is nothing more than the fallen-natured mind, going into fearful survival mode. They are taught to believe that God will rapture them and therefore *escape* any further trouble and hardships. While it is true that Jesus will come and catch His Bride away (1Thess.4:17), it is the timing that has been in debate for centuries. We simply do not know exactly when this will take place. We do

know that the leaves are starting to turn and the season is upon us. However, the timing is a secondary issue that we ought not to fight about and be so focused on. We need to be focused on Christ and what He is doing now and **doing** His will every day and tomorrow will take care of itself!

The Church has always grown the most when under the most persecution. The end-time, anti-Christ persecution and hardships that are embarking upon us, could serve as the final purification process of the Church. These times of severe hardship and suffering sparked serious times of intense prayer leading to great times of revival. There is awesome revival in some of our most intense times of persecution. We saw in history that in order for the Church to **break** out of the whoredoms of idolatry, she (the Church) had to be r*eformed,* and underwent a purging / purification process during the Reformation period (roughly between 1215-1689 AD with the worst of it in the 1500's) in order to be useful and *Greatly Awakened* and preserved.

I believe the Church will again experience something very similar in an anti-Christ end-time world system to rid her of the spots (Jas.1:27) of the worldly whoredom's she adapted to over time. Everything that can be shaken will be shaken (Heb. 12:27) until all that is left is the structure of truth upon the pure foundation of Christ! I understand this is a hard and unpopular message that turns many people off, but I believe this is the *Jeremiah-like* prophetic message the Lord is saying to the Church. This is to warn the Church to be ready and strengthened, exactly as Acts 14:22 says above.

Remember how Job endured by keeping his focus on God which brought him through brokenness to incredible blessings. In like manner, *the Patience of the Saints* will also bring us into blessing beyond our wildest dreams! Be ready to go, and be ready not to go, **stay in Christ no matter what! For it is Christ, not our theology that is our strong refuge and mighty fortress against any and every attack!**

It's never easy going through hardships and being broken. The good news is that brokenness is only for a season and always leads to wholeness. Our responses determine how long or short our seasons are. The important thing to do is to stay focus on Christ more than our troubles. Also keep in mind that our loving heavenly Father has a wonderful plan and purpose for our life that He is bringing about. Suffering and brokenness is involved at times but knowing there is a Blessed Hope at the end of the fire brings a resolved and confident endurance. By continuing in prayer and renewing our minds in the Word of God, we can learn to purely trust Him and love Him through whatever hardship comes our way, assured that blessings are guaranteed to follow. While going through any hardships in your life, never lose focus of the ultimate purpose in brokenness; which is coming before and living in the awesome, direct, un-veiled, Shekinah Glory of our Holy and Sovereign Creator! **It will be worth it all when we see Jesus!**

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The Patience of the Saints A Study in the Purpose of Brokenness Part III

OCTOBER 18, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Rob Franzen

(see links to this multipart series at end of article)

Here is **the patience of the saints**: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus (Rev. 14:12)

Luke 21:19 speaks of this "patience" saying, In your patience possess ye your souls. Other translations communicate it like this: By your steadfastness *and* patient endurance you shall win the true life of your souls (AMP). By your endurance you will win your souls (Barclay's Daily Study Bible).

I was always puzzled by these words until God began showing me the message and purpose of brokenness. I understand that it takes faith in something to endure through something. The Greek word for *patience* is *hypomonē* and can also be interpreted as *endurance*. It is very similar to the word *perseverance*. In a 2009 devotional I spoke of the slight difference between patience and perseverance. Patience is waiting with contentment (some can wait but not be content), while perseverance is fighting the battle while you're waiting with contentment. Perseverance in the faith is a main theme throughout the New Testament for the Body of Christ to follow until the return of Christ; a theme that is not talked about enough. With the pressure of the end-times bearing down on us, we need to understand the message of biblical brokenness and how to receive the grace to persevere. The hardships we endure in life have a way of applying a lot of pressure on us, – to the point of breaking us.

I think we all would agree America needs to cry before the Lord for His mercy. Consider this thought; the Tea Party members are fighting for a good cause, but what will be the result if they could have their complete way? We could have a restored Republic with its many freedoms and prosperity; however, most would just go back to cooking on their grills, boating, vacationing, partying, and enjoying life as usual. The only problem is the main problem would still exist –

America leaving (or rather kicking) God out of the picture. For the most part, we live in a godless society. God is not going to just sit back and let us drift off to self-destruction. God is preparing a Bride! Because of His love for us, He is going to intervene and break His children of the worldly culture, to which we have become so adapted. James 1:27 says; "Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their misfortune and **to keep oneself unstained from the world**." We are to live in and influence the humanistic, godless culture around us without being stained by it; and do this with an imperfect, sin-loving, core nature. I know it is an up-hill battle, but we're not alone! The Grace of God is in the message of brokenness more than we realize! Grace is God's enabling power for us, first to desire to do His will and second, the power to carry out His will**. "**For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him" (Phil.2:13 NLT). Grace is His enabling power in us to be what we're called to be and to do what we're called to do. We're called to have the love of God and the endurance of Christ 2Thess.3:5 (endurance = doing the will of God while waiting for Christ).

One of the ways we cleanse ourselves from this world is by literally crying before the Lord which many times are due to the sufferings we experience. Have you ever felt better and cleaner after a good cry? James 4:8 says, Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. This is something we don't hear preached and has become a lost art. When is the last time you cried before the Lord?

We cry in brokenness when we truly recognize how bankrupt we are without God; Blessed are the poor in spirit (Matt. 5:3). If we allow the brokenness, God promises to mend us back together the right way. We are NEVER left broken! Scripture assures us that God comforts and heals us from brokenness in verses like; Psalms 31:12; 51:17; Isaiah 57:15; 61:1 and Palms 34:18 He is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

The sin of Adam's failure was in essence declaring independence from God. Man has done so ever since. This sinful independence has become a part of our DNA. Only through pressure, sufferings and discipline can this independence be skimmed off. There is no other way! We can, to a small degree surrender and die to self and submit to the Lordship of Christ, but we do not know the depth of wickedness that lies deep within our own hearts (Jer. 17:9).

My friend and late founder of Pine Crest Bible Institute and author Wade Taylor writes in one of his daily devotionals found at **www.WadeTaylor.org**

"A spirited horse has to be broken before it can be ridden. This is done, not because the horse has done something wrong but so it can become productive. Likewise, scourging has to do with our becoming a yielded vessel in the hand of the Lord. – John W. Follette once said that there are few who **minister out of a broken spirit**. This is **because there are few who are willing to go through the process of being reduced through scourging** . We may feel that we do not deserve the problems we find in our pathway, and this is true. But they are there because the Lord is

seeking to make us far more useful to Him in the outworking of His purposes. Only then can the Lord trust us with His glory, and the end-time authority which is about to be released."

When we submit to the discipline (scourging) of the Holy Spirit, we willingly give Him permission to take us into the wilderness to address those impurities that keep us from walking in more of His fullness. We wonder why we don't see more healings, and we want to see more miracles and more of the power of God at work. **The reason we don't is** because there are few who are willing to be reduced through sufferings. Few are willing to pay the price in journeying through the *furnace of affliction* and trade off our impurities for His Grace and Power. Far too many believers jump off God's operation table before the Holy Ghost can complete this work. It can be painful and humiliating to be reduced – to come to a place of "no reputation" – becoming empty of self, Phil. 2:7. In our sin-fallen culture we have a perverted perception of what success is. Many believe that in increasing in money and monetary things is real success. However, we are living in the last days and the Bible teaches in John 15:2, that healthy growth comes by pruning; which is being cut back and reduced. Remember what is being reduced/stripped away. It is the extra baggage if you will; the sin natured stuff that keeps us from coming into the presence of God.

My dad owns a welding shop with lots of steel stock we had to cut. Working with this steel as a young boy, I got a steel splinter in my hand. My mother had to dig out the sliver of steel. It was too deep to get to with tweezers. She had to cut and dig into my skin to get to the splinter. It hurt and she knew it hurt, but she loved me enough to do what was necessary to make sure the foreign object was cut out before infection set in. This is a natural illustration of what our heavenly Father does at times in our spiritual lives. Our Father knows our sin nature will infect us and take us to a devil's hell. Father loves us enough to intervene and do what is necessary to deliver us from our ailment. This means we will experience loss. Our sufferings and/or discipline could be the loss of bad attitudes, prestige positions, money, material possessions, etc. Our pride will cause us to experience something **seemingly** negative to humble us. What we see as "negative," God may see as a "positive." A fall is humiliating to our sin nature; but to our spirit-man it is the sting of our loving heavenly Father pulling the splinter out; and that's the way we need to renew our mind to see it. The fallen nature is the part of us that we must take to the cross to crucify again and again until it is dead. God could have also saved me from getting the splinter but instead He allows things to happen in order for us to recognize our true condition and need for Him. The Sovereignty of God uses situations and circumstances in our lives for His higher purposes.

Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. … My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, **as an example of suffering and patience**. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of **the perseverance of Job** and seen the end *intended* by the Lord – that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful (James 5:7-11).

Job is the prime example of the purpose in brokenness. Job endured in the faith no matter what! After losing virtually everything he had, he kept God front and center of his focus knowing that someday it would pay off; if not in this life, then in the Hereafter – it didn't matter to Job. To add salt to injury, his friends insisted that he must have sinned badly and were under judgment to be experiencing all this suffering. I had a very similar experience when I was going through an extremely painful and difficult time in my life. I was being attacked from multiple sides and experienced tremendous loss. I had to live with another family for a time. The man of that house, – my *Christian* friend – began hurling accusations at me saying that I must have sinned and was under judgment. This "friend" appeared to have the model Christian family but in reality is following only one individual who is a homosexual. My friend also demanded I believe this individual to be one of the two witnesses (prophets) of Rev. 11:3 or I would continue to be under judgment. Needless to say, I was getting out from under that, even if I had to live in a pup-tent. Thankfully, I seek to surround myself with mature men of God. One such man at the time was teaching me the admiral quality of learning to suffer quietly. What an opportunity I had to strap myself down on Gods operation table, allowing His Grace to work and His character to develop.

The importance of *the patience of Job* is the end result! Job did not move by the arm of the flesh and settle for the next best thing that came along. Job waited for what God brought his way, and God was waiting for Job to see the bigger reality! Job did not jump off God's operation table and curse Him when it became extremely painful. Today, the importance of **the patience of the Saints** is the end result! We will win our souls! Job was rewarded by the restoration of all he had lost, and more. We too, can walk into the blessings of God on earth and into His fullness and all the glories of heaven! We will win the rewards of faithfulness when we endure through the painful, difficult days of an anti-Christ world system of the end times. Our opening verse, Luke 21:19 isn't salvation by works, rather its Jesus basically saying, "*you have been refined as sliver. Because of your faith and trust in Me, you endured the fiery trials, allowing these to work out impurities such as doubt and unbelief. You allowed My grace to work in you, and it tested you and purified you so you can come into my direct, un-veiled presence*."

The process of brokenness involves the loss of something within or about us. The spiritual and the physical realms parallel each other is a biblical principal. If there is something God wants to cut away within us and we are stubborn and unwilling to lose it, or there are material things around us preventing and distracting us from a closer relationship with Father, rest assured that our jealous God will put His finger on it. That's the love of God in action, and His grace is available for us to have *the patience of the Saints* through anything unto the very end!

May The Lord strengthen your hearts and fill you with His Amazing Enabling Power – His Grace!

- **Why Being a Christian Can Be Difficult? A Study in the Purpose of Brokenness Part I**
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Understanding Suffering A Study in the Purpose of Brokenness Part II

OCTOBER 11, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Rob Franzen

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing (James 1:2-4 NKJV).

The word "broken" today basically brings negative thoughts or images: broken equipment, broken bones, broken hearts, etc. Many today in our churches are unaware that the Word of God speaks a lot about the subject of brokenness: biblical brokenness. What is biblical brokenness? The Bible speaks of a brokenness that is not only positive but absolutely essential. Jesus reveals a symbolic spiritual pattern in communion when the Bible says; "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke *it,* and gave *it*" (Matt. 26:26).

The profound spiritual pattern here is Jesus first "blessed you," in that He saved you, then He "breaks you," in order to "give you" or ultimately present you faultless to the Father. What does this "breaking" mean? It means God only works through broken vessels; the more broken, the more God can flow through that vessel. It means that God cares enough about you to do what is necessary that you may reflect His character and ultimately prepare you for His un-veiled Glory. God works through people whose *heart*, *will* and *pride* have been broken. Just saying this turns people off, but God never leaves us broken. Our *heart, will* and *pride* are broken so that we are transformed to reflect Him in our total person. The message of biblical brokenness is the process and methods God uses to break us so that He can put us back together in a better and more righteous way. Brokenness is metaphoric language used to describe our condition when we are crushed of a *broken heart* from painful experiences. The message of biblical brokenness involves fiery trails, pain, suffering, hardships, even discipline (Heb. 12:11). This is why we don't hear about it from our pulpits. Nobody wants to hear about suffering. People don't usually shout "amen" and give big offerings when hearing about how we must persevere through sufferings. We

associate suffering with negatives, yet God's intentions are in no way negative. Our own immaturity prevents us from understanding how good and essential biblical brokenness really is.

To help us better understand biblical brokenness, we will briefly discuss four main reasons behind suffering and trouble. They are: 1) our sin-fallen environment around us; 2) The consequences of our own sin; 3) The devil; 4) God and His Sovereignty. In discussing these we will then identify what biblical brokenness is not. We have to be mature enough to discern which one of these is the cause of our sufferings. The Sovereignty of God can and does use all of these to bring about His desired, higher purposes. However, identifying which cause that is behind our trials and sufferings is key to which discipline we use to navigate our way out successfully.

Our sin-fallen environment is seen in cases like Luke 13:4 "Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them …" No one person's sin directly caused this to happen (except maybe Adam's if you are one who has to place blame). Bad things happen to good people all the time due to the fact that we live in world groaning in anguish from the effects of sin, and waiting for the Restoration (Romans 8:20-22). It rains upon the just and the unjust alike (Matt. 5:45). The bottom line of the 2nd law of thermodynamics in nut-shell is that everything is wearing down, thus, causing problems. Earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, volcanos, floods, natural disasters of all sorts are due to the effects of sin on a once perfect creation. When God created, there were no flaws; the flaws came later when sin entered the natural world at the fall of Adam. Eventually, the once perfect earth experienced judgment on sin, causing a world-wide flood, which caused the breakage of the tectonic plates, volcanos, violent weather patterns, etc. A proper understanding of the first several chapters of Genesis explains the very reason why we suffer from a sin-fallen environment. The Bible starts with God, who is perfection and works out from there. According to the book of Genesis and Ezek. 28:13, Rom. 5:14; 1Cor. 15:21-22, 26 and others there was no sin, no death, no sickness or even a devil before God brought forth a perfect world from His perfect self. Starting with perfection is essential to biblical interpretation. We are also affected by senseless acts of violence, vandalism, theft, murder, terrorism etc. all due to culture being eaten up by the degeneration of sin. Sin is the underlying problem & Jesus Christ our Creator-Redeemer is the ONLY possible remedy for sin!

The second reason we experience sufferings and troubles of all sorts is due to God's law of sowing and reaping; scientifically called the law of cause and effect and also in quantum mechanics. Galatians 6:7 – Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Hosea 8:6-7 – A workman made it, and it is not God; … "They sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind." In other words, we suffer consequences from our own sin and bad decisions.

The third reason for suffering and troubles in our lives is from Satan and his angels (demon spirits). How to identify an attack from the devil is by knowing John 10:10 – "The thief comes only to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. When sufferings and troubles are clearly designed to steal, kill or destroy us, know that it is the forces of darkness behind this kind of attack. 2Cor. 2:11,

admonishes us not to be ignorant of the devils devices or schemes. Philippians 2:5 says "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus…" 1Peter 4:1 says "Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind …" Why would we have to arm ourselves with the same mind and focus of Christ? Because we too will journey through sufferings as our Lord did. Jesus wasn't too good to suffer or exempt from it, neither were His Apostles and neither are we. In fact Jesus had to be baptized/ immersed in suffering, (Lk. 12:50). Christ was focused on the prize (the end results); we too have to focus on the end result – the hope of our salvation fulfilled at His return!

The fourth reason we will experience trials and sufferings is that our heavenly Father is preparing us **by** refining us for His higher purposes. Biblical brokenness is found in the refining process. The refining process has both an immediate purpose and an eternal purpose. God's desired immediate purpose is to develop godly character in us that we may reflect Him to a lost and dying, dark world. God's eternal purpose for us is to ultimately come into His un-veiled, holy presence. Refining involves a whole lot of fire and pressure that we may let go of that which the trials have shaken loose (Heb.12:27-29). The hotter the fire, the more pure we potentially can be, depending on our response – which reveals our true condition. Psalms 66:10, For **You**, O God, have tested us; **You** have refined us as silver is refined (NKJV). Isaiah 48:10 **I** have refined you, … **I** have refined you in the furnace of suffering (NLT). Psalm 119:67,71, 75 says Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word. It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees. I know, O LORD, that your laws are righteous and in faithfulness **you** have afflicted me (NIV), and Isaiah 45:7 speaks of God orchestrating and allowing and being Sovereign over every situation to bring impurities and character flaws to our attention that we may repent of them.

Biblical brokenness is not God punishing us or sending us a sickness. It is not us whipping ourselves. It is not the devil beating us up or sin prevailing in our lives. Rather, it is what God is doing in us **as** we walk through trials and tribulations that could be caused by any one of the above under the Sovereignty of God. It is us working in cooperation with God **as** we experience the pressures of life and hardships from whatever means. It is us grabbing onto the Grace of God and allowing His will to be done in us **as** we go through suffering of any sort.

By spending time in prayer and worship, the study of the Word, sitting under sound biblical teachings and accountable-fellowship in the church, is how we will mature to a place of being able to discern the cause of our sufferings. These disciplines will also equip us to gain the wisdom and support needed to navigate our way free from the impurities within us and into His glorious light and joyful freedom. Sometimes the cause or "the why," will still remain a mystery. Our heavenly Father desires our complete trust in Him; we are to continue to walk faithfully by His Grace; refining and blessings are promised to follow!

People are often confused of the cause behind their trouble. If we are confused about the cause then we will have difficulty discerning which discipline to exercise to navigate our way out of

trouble, jeopardizing the development of godly character. Some are confused because they either don't understand or outright reject biblical brokenness. They'll say it isn't for today, that it's Old Testament stuff; "Jesus suffered for us so we don't have to." How misled and out-of-touch with reality these people are. There is suffering all around us. They'll also say, "God wants us to grow from faith to faith, from glory to glory, and prosper and be victorious." This is a true statement, however to grow like this the Bible teaches in John 15:2 that healthy growth comes by pruning; which is being cut back, reduced; and cutting hurts if you haven't noticed. We have to understand what is being cut away. It's the extra baggage if you will; the sin natured stuff that keeps us from coming into the presence of God. When there are nay-sayers against truth, it always leads to some kind of imbalance and abuse. For example, they'll say out of balance things like "*your sickness is definitely from God to teach you a specific lesson; so find and learn your lesson rather than pray for healing*." This is wrong! God does not want us sick! In fact, Scripture declares that divine healing is for today in over 75 references in the New Testament & over 110 references in Old Testament. Other abuses concerning the message of brokenness are extreme acts of self-mutilation. Acts like whipping themselves, crawling on their knees for miles until they bleed, some have even nailed themselves to a cross to suffer like Jesus. These folks are totally missing the concept and purpose of biblical brokenness.

When we examine the heroes of faith in the Bible and how they each responded to their specific troubles, we see different responses to different attacks. Some did not respond in the natural but exercised spiritual warfare, or just rested in belief and faith, knowing God has it under control. Other times they responded by doing something in the natural by faith. For instance; when Saul was throwing spears at David trying to kill him, David didn't retaliate. Rather, his response was waiting in faith; knowing this is God's battle and trusted God with his destiny. John 10:10 shows us the spiritual principal happening – "*the devil comes to kill*." We cannot physically kill the devil, so when he is obviously trying to kill us, our discipline to victory is an unseen fight of faith. Ephesians 6:12 tells us who the real enemy is that is trying to kill us while 2Cor. 10:4-5 tells us how to fight against such forces of darkness. God probably did not author these tribulations for David, yet, at the same time, the Sovereignty of God was sure **using** these situations to bring biblical brokenness – David had to be refined because God was preparing a King. What is God preparing you for?

A different cause of David's suffering required a different means of response. In 1Samuel chapter 30 we have the story about David and his army being robbed of everything they had, including their wives and children. John 10:10 tells us the devil *comes to steal*. This case was more in the natural and required a natural response of faith and courage. Faith and courage is a part of godly character that God wants to develop in us! David had to go physically take back what the enemy had stolen from him. Abraham gives us the same example in Genesis 14:13-16.

International evangelist Reinhard Bonnke gave a great response when asked why God allows such suffering in the world. The German born evangelist explained with an analogy of the German

Minister of Transportation who establishes the laws of the road for order and safety. When one of those laws is broken, accidents will happen. The more laws being ignored and broken on the roads, the more accidents will happen, (and that's exactly what we see to be true). Somewhere, somehow one of Gods spiritual laws was violated. Sufferings are ultimately due to separation from God and His divine laws and order.

Understanding what brokenness is not helps us see where the message of brokenness fits into the Bible. Especially when compared to the more popular messages of self-improvement, prosperity, overcoming, and being more than a conqueror unto victory, etc. All these are God's desire for us however, the way there, is by way of the cross!

My prayer is that we **let patience have its perfect work** in us (**now**) that we may be (refined) perfect and complete in Christ, that He can present us to eternal glory before a Holy God.

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Why Being a Christian Can Be Difficult? A Study in the Purpose of Brokenness Part I

OCTOBER 3, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Rob Franzen

A Study in the Purpose of Brokenness Part I

By Rob Franzen

Ever wonder why being a Christian can be difficult at times when outright sinners are not experiencing the difficulties you are as a Christian? Isn't Jesus supposed to be with me delivering me from these troubles and making life easier for me? Why doesn't God prosper me more than wicked people; I would use the money for the good. Jeremiah the prophet asked the same question in chapter 12:1-3 "Why are wicked people successful? Why do all dishonest people have such easy lives? You plant them like trees and they put down their roots. They grow prosperous and are very fruitful. They always talk about you, but they really care nothing about you. But you, Lord, know all about me. You watch me and **test** my devotion to you" (NET).

The short answer to why we experience sufferings would simply be, "God loves you!" Our heavenly Father loves you too much to leave you in any sinful condition whatsoever; He wants more for you. That's why the Bible says in places like Rom. 5:3-5; Jas 1:2-4; and 1Pet.1:6-7 that we can rejoice when we're experiencing difficulties; we know God is at work! "…, although you may have to suffer for a short time in various trials. Such trials show the proven character of your faith, which is much more valuable than gold – gold that is tested by fire, even though it is passing away and will bring praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed (1Peter 1:6-7 NET).

When you became a true follower of Jesus Christ, you just entered into God's Ultimate Plan for your life! The day you received Christ as your Savior is the day you gave your life (which includes your rights) to Jesus as being LORD; and the day you consecrate your life to Him is the day the Holy Spirit has the liberty to perform the work necessary to prepare you for the Glory of God.

God's ultimate plan for you as well as all creation is to be a part of The Restoration. This is where God restores all things back to His original purpose & plan Acts 3:21. It's all coming full circle; when everything is restored back to a sinless, perfect order of harmony & balance. But before we can get there we have to go through a cleansing, purification process; a journey of sanctification, in order to work out impurities in our heart and the issue of *free will* in mankind. This is **the journey to the Glory of God through Brokenness.** Don't be afraid of brokenness because completed brokenness always leads to wholeness; and the grace of God is abundantly available to enable us to persevere through to victory, wholeness and His glory!

By being sensitive to the Holy Spirit while going through my own personal trails, I have gained a better understand of the purpose in brokenness, as well as receiving prophetic revelations for the entire Body of Christ in this matter. The subject is deeper and more profound than most of us realize. Put your spiritual eyes and ears on. On the grand scheme of things, God is preparing a Bride; a Bride that has to be made white – through Blood. From the fall of mankind at the beginning, to the great marriage of the Lamb in heaven, God is purifying Himself a Bride and the issue of *free will* is being ironed out in the whole process! I can't possibly get it all down in a few devotional letters like this, however, a book has already been started and God helping me, I will share more with you soon.

Christians talk of the glory of God, desire the glory, seek the glory and want to show the glory of God in their lives and ministries. But how many realize what it takes to enter into the glory of God? There is an enormous price to pay for the glory of God in your life, a great trade-off that is quite worth it.

You know we all have a very sinful nature that hinders us from coming into the direct presence of our Creator. God is so pure and holy; we would explode and evaporate without His veil shielding us from His direct, brilliant, Shekinah Glory. No sin can come into His presence. Jeremiah says that our hearts are very deceitful and so desperately wicked that we cannot begin to know how much wickedness is in our own hearts (Jer. 17:9). Yet the Bible says in Hebrews 12:14 "Pursue … holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Holiness is a separation unto pureness that we must achieve. Our Creator-Redeemer has provided us with the shed blood of Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit; but He is also actively at work in our lives helping us to weed-out the impurities deep within our hearts. God desires direct, unadulterated fellowship with us as He once did with Adam so He has to test our devotion as Jeremiah said, and put us through a fiery-pressure cooker. This is exactly what the Apostle Paul means when he said, "that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, **and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed unto His death**" Phil.3:10.

The late Bible teacher, Derek Prince wrote a devotional that said;

“One thing the Bible teaches very clearly is that God tests His people and the comparison that’s used many times in Scripture is that God tests us the same way as a silver refiner refines silver. In Bible times the way that a man did that was to place the silver in a metal container over the hottest possible fire and then, as the silver began to melt and bubble in the heat, the dross, the scum, the impurities would rise to the surface and he would skim them off as they rose up and he would go on skimming until there was no impurity left in the silver. And the test of that was that as he looked into the surface of the silver he could see his own face properly mirrored in the silver.

So that’s how God tests us in the furnace of affliction. The hotter the furnace, the more the impurities are brought to the surface. And God graciously skims them off with His great heavenly skimmer. He goes on with that skimmer until He sees His own image reflected in our lives. And then He knows the process of refining is successful and He takes us out of the furnace.”

God deals with us like this in order to bring to the surface all the impurities deep within our hearts. The sufferings cause us to recognize and break us of those things, and our hearts becoming purified is the result. When we are under pressure and suffering, or experiencing the Holy Spirit’s discipline (scourging’s), out of nowhere we may experience sinful desires start to surface in our lives. Our sin-nature is trying to survive. Don’t beat yourself up, rather rejoice in the fact that God is showing His love and care for you. Why? For God is showing you what’s inside of you & bringing those impurities to the surface in order to skim them off. When the impure junk starts to surface, confess it as sin and surrender it over to the Lord. 1Cor. 10:13 says: “No trial has overtaken you that is not faced by others. And God is faithful: He will not let you be tried beyond what you are able to bear, but with the trial will also provide a way out so that you may be able to endure it” (NET). Notice, with every trial or temptation comes also a way of escape.

The Bible is full of heroes that suffered and endured injustices against them. Why does God allow us to undergo these hardships and sufferings? To reveal how we will react and/or respond to injustices against us; thus, revealing who we really are. For under pressure is when our true colors (character) show. The reason for Abraham sojourning in hardship for so many years before he saw any glimpse of the promises of God; and why Jacob suffered injustices by his father-in-law; and why Joseph was sold into slavery and thrown into prison for doing the right thing; and why Moses spent 40 years in exile; and the Children of Israel wandered in the wilderness 40 years; and why David was hunted like a dog and lived in hardship running for his life for a decade; and the reason we experience tremendous pain and suffering in life **is simply, to reveal & break us of the hidden motives of our wicked heart, that our hearts would be purified so that we can be useful and pliable in the hands of our loving heavenly Father for the advancement of His Kingdom in these last days.** (This leads to another main reason we will cover in the next letter).

Notice how these heroes of faith responded: How did Joseph respond when he was unjustly thrown into prison? How did Moses respond when he was in exile 40 years in the desert? How did David respond when spears were being thrown at him? How did Peter, Paul and the Apostles respond to the many false accusations, violence and the many injustices against them? They never retaliated! "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," says the Lord in Heb. 10:30; Deut. 32:35, 41, 43. They understood that vengeance belongs to God alone. They didn't react or respond to the negative situation; rather they focused on God and what He was doing in them. Moses went on living his life with strangers, never denying his God; Joseph ministered to others out of his need in prison, David sang unto the Lord in loneliness, and Peter went fishing and Paul kept preaching. Behind the scenes, they were exercising belief and faith.

There is purpose in God's school of hard knocks. Please do not jump off God's operation table before the operation is done just because it's painful. Learn why from the psalmist, who said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word. It was good for me to to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees. I know, O LORD, that your laws are righteous and in faithfulness you have afflicted me(Ps. 119:67, 71, 75 NIV).

I admonish you to have the tenacity and endurance like these heroes of faith, for they **believed** God (the work of God in our spirit) and did not stagger at God's promise with unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform(Rom.4:20-21). These heroes weren't perfect but broke through because they did not focus on all the many difficulties of life but kept their focus on the rewards of faithfulness! We need grace for this. The New Testament commands us to be strong in the grace that is **in** Christ Jesus(2Tim.2:1). This message is crucial to grasp and understand for the coming days! Please hear with your spirit. God's grace is more than enough for you in all your many difficulties (2Cor.12:9), you just need to **believe** it and keep walking faithfully no matter what!

Having done all to stand, keep standing strong! God bless you & keep you.

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Government Serves a Moral People

AUGUST 9, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Conventional political wisdom suggests that candidates must avoid, at all costs, the appearance of being focused on "divisive social issues" and instead focus exclusively on the economy. This is a false dichotomy of issues.

When politicians show us their positions on today's social issues, they show us their philosophies of government. Ultimately, these — their conception of the proper role between government and the governed — will determine our success at restoring national prosperity.

Candidates who favor restriction of abortion recognize that the protection of human life is one of the primary purposes of government, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence. But also inherent in this worldview is the conviction that every single person is endowed with distinct worth and potential; that any given child could be the next Thomas Jefferson, Albert Einstein or Bill Gates. Thus, the public policies advanced by these candidates will reflect the core belief that no human being is a dispensable dependent, but each holds unique potential to contribute to our collective flourishing.

According to this worldview, a strong marriage culture enhances our human potential. Thus marriage — that permanent, exclusive union of one man and one woman which is proven to be the best possible environment for child-rearing — should be encouraged, protected and revered.

In this framework, the purpose of civil marriage is not to provide individuals with personal affirmation of their lifestyle choices or emotional bonds (a post-modern American desire), but rather to stabilize, regulate and incentivize the particular kind of union which confers irreplaceable benefits upon society as a whole.

A candidate's position on marriage — what it is, why the state regulates it, whether it is amenable to revision and when the state should permit its dissolution — carries broad implications for how that candidate's election would affect the economy. For when families thrive, they foster citizens (both the spouses and, ultimately, the children they nurture) who are contributors to the economy.

On the other hand, study upon study has shown us that when families falter, prosperity dwindles. Women and children are hit hardest, often driven to poverty. The state is typically left to pick up the pieces in the form of financial and housing assistance, mental and physical health care and, in the worst cases, child protective services and the criminal justice system.

The sheer dollars-and-cents cost of family fragmentation to individuals and U.S. taxpayers (an estimated $112 billion every year) cannot be ignored. This is why to focus on marriage is to focus on the economy.

Of course, even in a strong marriage culture, there will be human needs for which a compassionate citizenry must provide. Politicians who value the role of religion in both private and public life favor an environment where robust faith communities are empowered to meet needs that government is ill-equipped to meet well — caring for the poor, the sick, the orphans and the elderly. Neighbors (not government) helping neighbors is good for the economy and for our moral fiber.

Our early republic was an unprecedented success because the people viewed government as the protector rather than provider of fundamental rights, and they did not depend on it as the guarantor of financial well-being. Families, churches and communities were the central component of America, and government stood back and let them prosper.

We looked to each other for help rather than to an impersonal bureaucracy. The latter may be capable of distributing financial resources, but it cannot enhance them with the caring personal networks which graciously spur us on toward the industriousness befitting our human dignity.

When a candidate tells us he counts every human life an asset, supports a healthy marriage culture and wants to encourage people to take care of people, he is telling us that he ascribes to our Founding Fathers' vision of government. In that revolutionary vision, government was not the colossal beast it is today, but rather the servant of a moral, hardworking people and a protector of their God-given rights.

This was the vision that birthed a healthy, prosperous America, and it is a formula that can work again if we will collectively insist upon a return to it.

Plans for applying the machinery of a behemoth government to solve human problems seem enticingly simple. But to grow this machinery atop an America devoid of its original social values

is to invite implosion. Critics may scoff at difficult discussions of messy social issues, but these are the issues that reveal the secret of our prosperous past and hold the key to a brilliant future.

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Rita M. Dunaway, J.D., is a policy advisor at Virginia Christian Alliance.

What Do You Believe & Why

JULY 26, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Christians and The Culture: "Defending Faith, Family and Freedom"

There have been several articles in newspapers about what Americans believe. The USA Today December 10, 2009 had a long article about the findings of a survey by the Pew Forum on religion. Here are some of the findings of the survey:

Christians – 23% believe "the position of stars/planets can affect people's lives" (astrology);

Christians – 22% believe "people will be reborn again and again";

Christians – 17% believe "people with the 'evil eye' can cast curses or harmful spells".

The article states that 92% of Americans have an "allegiance to someone they call God" however, the survey said "70% believe many religions can lead to eternal life" and 68% said "there is more than one true way to interpret the teachings of their religion".

Albert Mohler, President of the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville says he sees "rampant confusion" about faith revealed in the Pew findings. He says "This is a failure of the Pulpit as much as of the Pew, to be clear about what is and is not compatible with Christianity and belief in salvation only through Christ."

Why do Christians "blend with the culture? Is it because the "church" has failed to teach from the pulpit? Is it because Christians are not grounded in their beliefs, and are confused by public opinion and political correctness? Is it because Christians have lost their bearings and can no longer recognize truth from the lie? Right from wrong? Yes.

Last week there were several articles in the paper with the following headlines: "Creature Appears to have Emerged 397 Million Years Ago", "Hubble Captures Universe as Toddler…600 Million Years after the Big Bang". These articles and others, almost weekly, proclaim as fact what they report. Where does that leave the Book of Genesis?

As Christians, we need to know what we believe and why, and we need to speak out for the Biblical truth of our faith.

Charles Stanley, the great Southern Baptist preacher formerly of The University of Richmond and Grove Avenue Baptist Church, says "All people have a belief system…what we believe affects every area of our lives and shapes every decision we make, yet few of us take the time to really think about what we accept as true." We as Christians need to develop a "truth filter" and look at everything through a Biblical World view. There are a lot of resources to guide us. Check out these websites and get on their e-mail lists: **The Truth Project**, **American Family Association**, **Family Research Council**, **Heritage Foundation** and other **links on Virginia Christian Alliance**.

Donald N. Blake

Chairman/President,

Virginia Christian Alliance

It Is Now Time for Civil Disobedience

JULY 5, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

I posted an article at Renew America several months ago titled "**The Coming Criminalization of Christianity in America**." I suggested that the outcome of the Supreme Court's decision on homosexual "marriage" would be to enshrine sodomy into American law and in so doing, would

decree that all Americans must bow to homofascism. As expected, they have done the despicable deed. Now what?

Many, many so-called Christian leaders will, of course, do nothing other than what they have done throughout the decades, and that is effectively ignore the homosexual lobby and its lawlessness. Other so-called Christian leaders are clearly apostate and have embraced that lawlessness, while falsely claiming that God agrees with them. That is a despicable lie. God does not agree, as Scripture clearly reveals. And then there are those believing Christian leaders who will fight evil. They are the hope of this nation, at least until Almighty God ultimately determines America's fate.

Pastor William Owens (a black minister) of **The Coalition for American Action and Principles** (CAAP), consisting of ministers of all races, has decided to take a firm stand.

His organization will view the Court's pernicious decision as equivalent to previous Courts' decisions against black Americans, who sought equal treatment under law. That was the time when a black American minister Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his followers used the only tool available to them against a gargantuan lawless court system. They took to the streets in civil disobedience. Pastor Owens has announced that his organization will consider doing the same to fight the current Court's ruling against Christians.

In a similar vein, former high school coach Dave Daubenmire has formed a large group of Christians called the **Salt and Light Brigade**, referencing Christ's call to believers to be the salt and light of the world (Matthew 5:11-14). Coach Daubenmire indicates that he will be posting updates on planned acts of resistance to the lawlessness of this Supreme Court.

Bible Christians and the rest of the millions of Americans who made known their staunch opposition to homosexual sham "marriages" through the ballot box (in 31 states), can now stand with these brave men and others like them who have fearlessly chosen to resist. We can declare boldly that we will not be disenfranchised. Why should we allow disenfranchisement in America, where so much blood has been spilled to guarantee us the right of conscience?

It is a given that the pernicious court system aided by a lawless Obama administration will act viciously toward opposing Christians, with a force matching that of Hitler's Nazi regime. And we should not expect aid from spineless legislators (of any political party) or so-called conservative pundits. They will talk a good game, but most were cowering in their corners hoping for the very decision that the Court has rendered. They can now hide behind that decision and claim their hands are tied (true Pontius Pilates). They will say "The Law" has spoken, when in fact five self-serving, lawless Jurists have forced their godless will upon the American people, again.

More and more Americans will be persecuted, prosecuted, and imprisoned as this Court ruling goes into effect. It is certain to play out that way, because eventually the persecuted will stop

accepting lawless court rulings that result in their bankruptcy and Naziesque brainwashing sessions ("sensitivity training") that are punishment for noncompliance with evil.

At some point, Americans being so treated will say "No" and stop responding out of fear. All of America will then grasp what homofascism truly means, as the Germans eventually grasped what Nazism meant.

With the organization and planning that Pastor Owens, Coach Daubenmire, and groups like them will provide, victims of homofascism can now share a sense that they are not alone. Organized Americans stand with them.

If a small business is terrorized by activist homosexuals (because most big businesses are already on their knees doing their bidding) or an individual's job or position is threatened by homosexual tyranny, those people can seek legal protection from groups such as Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), American Counsel for Law and Justice (ACLJ), and Liberty Counsel. All are adept in the legal fight against the enemies of Christianity.

What the Court has done is galvanize decent people into an opposing force, and I thank God for that.

This is now a fight between defiant, flawed humankind (the perverted activists and all who support them) and Almighty God.

I pity the fool who thinks the former will win this one. No matter how many Christians the godless persecute or kill off, Christianity will stand, and they—activist homosexuals, the legislators and judges who bow to them, the apostate Christians and all others who support them—will face Almighty God in due time for their actions.

It does not matter how many of our family members have chosen to live homosexual lifestyles (two of mine died of AIDS). Nor does it matter how many homosexual friends you may claim. We will be called to account for where we choose to stand on this issue of unrepentant homosexual sin and the tyranny that accompanies it. Almighty God is not mocked (Galatians 6:7, 8), and those who are currently flipping Him off, spitting in His face, as it were, will be judged.

It is true that all of us will eventually face judgment, but those who are not willfully defying God need not fear that judgment. God knows who willfully sins and who does not, and for that, all who are repentant and struggling against inherently sinful natures can be grateful.

The fear of God that is expected of us is not the morbid fear of an unjust tyrant, such as the tyrants who now control America. It is a fear that is born out of reverent respect for His overwhelming power and His perfect justice. Like that of a caring and loving Father. Bible Christians must hold fast to this truth.

Pastor Carl Gallups, in one of his recent books, ***Final Warning: Understanding the Trumpet Days of Revelation***, speaks of chaos enveloping the earth in the last days before the return of Christ. In regard to the latest Supreme Court assault on America's heritage of freedom of religion, he has this to say to biblical Christians: *

Let me encourage the children of God, under the blood of Jesus,… We were raised up by God Himself – for such a time as this.

It's not all falling apart. It's all coming together!

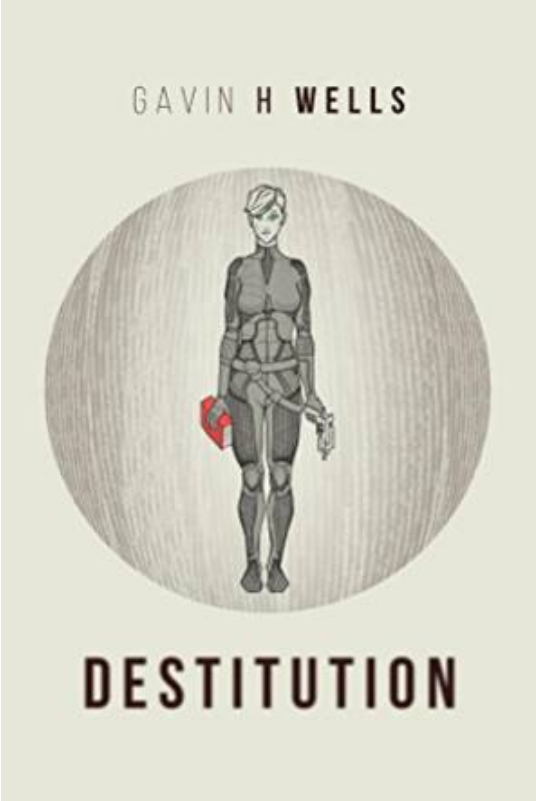
SOURCE: **BARBWIRE**

Sylvia Thompson is a black conservative writer whose aim is to counter the liberal, leftist spin on issues pertaining to race and culture. Ms. Thompson is a copy editor by trade currently residing in Tennessee. She grew up in Southeast Texas during the waning years of Jim Crow-era legalized segregation, and she concludes that race relations in America will never improve as long as the voices of many are stifled by intimidation from the few. She believes the nation needs resounding voices of opposition from true patriots and Bible-oriented Christians, to stem the forces that would transform this nation into something it was never intended to be.

Read more at **http://barbwire.com/2015/06/30/1100-it-is-now-time-for-civil-disobedience/**

A New Novel that All Christians Should Read – and Then Share with Non-Christians

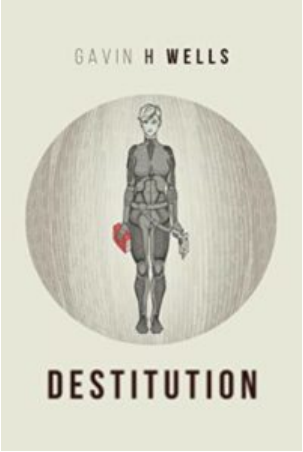
MAY 31, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



Destitution is a fascinating novel. On the surface, it is a heart-stopping sci-fi thrill ride about the impending destruction of an entire civilization. Deeper down, though, it offers a careful treatment of many contemporary issues and spiritual themes that should resonate with every American Christian. As the world is attacking Christianity from all sides, *Destitution* depicts an alternate world in which the only remaining faith system is similarly being attacked from all sides, with the ultimate goal of eliminating it entirely from society.

There is nothing preachy about the novel; the spiritual messages are all delivered metaphorically, reminiscent of C.S. Lewis. It is done in a way that Christians would understand immediately, but would not dissuade non-Christians from reading it as well. In fact, the story is so compelling that, after hooking non-Christians, it might just end up getting a number of them to think twice about some of their basic assumptions on life.

I cannot stress enough how much I recommend this book to everyone—Christians in particular—even those who don't normally enjoy science fiction. It is a powerful and persuasive critique on many of the worldly attacks currently being leveled against people of faith. You won't regret



reading it. Also, it will give you a great tool to share God's truth with your non-Christian friends in a way that they might just consume and even enjoy.

Back Cover Copy

On the technologically advanced planet of Toluv-Eion, Thoma Si-Noms has worked much of her life for the visionary Slygur Tin-Ai, planning to help orchestrate a Revolution that she believes will free the human race in a new way, eliminating all pain, disease, and even death. One large organization—called the "Infinites"—stands in the way, though. To thwart their opposition, Thoma has developed a lethal virus that will selectively eradicate every Infinite from the planet. But after surviving a surprise attack on her life, she awakens to the truth about the nature of both her employer and the Infinites she aimed to destroy. Compelled to switch sides, she now must fight her former and powerful allies to save herself—and all humanity—from a horrific future foretold long ago, one of total **DESTITUTION**.

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God Is Breaking Up Fallow Ground

APRIL 28, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Brad Huddleston, one of Virginia Christian Alliance advisors is a specialist in dealing with the effects of technologies such as smartphones and the devastation it is having on our children. Brad has returned from missions to South Korea and Australia where he ministered to 6,000 students. He has seen the effect of governments preventing the mention of God is our schools. At the end of the article Brad ask, WHERE TO WE GO FROM HERE?

The answer is we need for him to minister here in Virginia. As a start we are running Brad's article- Smartphones- Not Always So Smart to appear next week.

God Is Breaking Up the Fallow Ground

Years ago I remember reading a tract from Last Days Ministries (Keith Green) written by Charles Finney entitled *Breaking Up the Fallow Ground: An Outline for Repentance*. The title comes from Hosea 10:12 (NIV) where God says,

> "Sow righteousness for yourselves, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, until he comes and showers his righteousness on you.

God is obviously telling us that our hearts can become hard and we need to soften the soil of our spirit so that He can work in us. Hardness of heart keeps God's seed, fertilizer, and water from entering the most secret areas of our lives. In this passage, the responsibility is clearly ours to begin this process and then God joins us in this process.

There are other times when, in His mercy, God pursues *us*. This could not have been made clearer than when Jesus died for our sins.

> Matthew 27:51 (NIV) At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

Perhaps you've read this verse a million times and never really pondered the significance of the curtain being torn from *top to bottom*. The symbolism here is both powerful and personal. This passage is letting humanity know that when we were not even looking for God, He came down here looking for us. That's why the rip in the curtain started at the top and ended at the bottom. Simply put, He loves us and is chasing us down, even when we're unaware of Him.

At the time of this writing, I am in Australia. Before coming here, I spent six days in South Korea delivering a keynote, conducting workshops, and preaching at Global Youth Forum 2013. Over the past two months, I have spoken to approximately 6000 students, parents, teachers and church attenders. For the first time in many years, I can now honestly say that I am witnessing God visiting students on a big scale. Let me explain…

I am not seeing full scale revival in this generation but I do believe we could be headed that way if we are willing to invest prayer, fasting, time, and resources.

I have been in one public school after another, day after day, and have watched the Holy Spirit descend and keep the students riveted for as long as 65 minutes. I am often complimented on my public speaking abilities and while I certainly appreciate and need the encouragement just like anyone else, I can tell you that only God can hold teenagers' attention for that long in this day and age. The Lord is truly up to something.

When I say that I have watched the Holy Spirit visit public schools, I want to be clear in what I mean. The law prevents me from outright evangelism. I have not given altar calls. We are not at that stage (yet). If you are someone who is shielded from the secular world, you might not realize just how lost this generation is. You have likely read how hostile the culture has become toward Christians. Trust me, its one thing to read about it and quite another experience to actually be on the front lines.

For the first time in modern history in the western world, much of the current generation has absolutely no spiritual frame of reference. We are literally starting from scratch when it comes to evangelism. Yes, we have always had sins such as drugs, alcohol, and pornography, however, never have we seen the sheer volume of pornography and related digital addictions in so many people, especially at such young ages. This is due in part to smart phones in the bedrooms of people of all ages, but most alarming, in children. I am not sure how to relate to you how it feels when you've encountered pornography on third grader's smart phones. Yes, grade 3.

None of this has escaped God's eyes. His heart still breaks for those who are lost in depravity. So let's go back to what I am seeing in school after school. I am watching God visit thousands of students. You can see it on their faces as I speak to them. My heart breaks when I leave a line of unsaved students waiting to speak to me. The ones I get to speak to are so honest. They often confess their porn addiction, cutting, video game addiction, and phone addiction (just to name a few). It is so refreshing to see the conviction from the Holy Spirit and yet the majority don't even know what is happening to them. They are hungry. So what do we do?

Space will only permit me to answer that question with two examples of what is being done.

I was recently hired by the Queensland Police to tour with Cyber Safety Expert Sergeant Nigel Dalton. Nigel is a true man of God who has a call on his life to serve (minister to) young people. In those 7 days, we spoke 24 times to almost 3000 students and 180 parents and teachers. We watched in absolute amazement as God visited students. The cry for help from many of them was at times inspiring and yet disturbing.

The second example I would like to relate is that of Pastors Ivan and Roslyn Waldock in Goodiwindi, Australia. The Waldock's have been in ministry for many years and while they don't have a full understanding of modern technology, they can clearly see what has happened to their community and they sense an urgency that something must be done right away. Even though they had no experience with contacting schools, they reached out to both Christian and Public Schools in their community and offered my services at no charge. In other words, their church paid for everything, including me, just because they care and want to see Jesus move in their town. And He did.

As I would speak day after day, there sat Roslyn in the back of the classrooms interceding the entire time. As I would speak, the Holy Spirit would descend in such a sweet way and captivate the hearts and minds of the students. The vast majority of them had no idea what they were experiencing but they loved it. What they were actually enjoying was the love of God being brought in by the church. The Scriptures talk about God's favor. For example…

Luke 2:52 (NIV) And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

All of the Principals from every school, both Christian and Public, took it upon themselves to invite me back next year. That is God's favor. Through the efforts of Christians such as Nigel, Ivan and Roslyn, God is helping these students, who don't even know Him, to plow up the hardened soil of their hearts. He loves them. He came down here, tore the curtain from top to bottom because He loves them. I am witnessing this everywhere I go.

Where do we go from here?

I am seeking God as to what to do next. So far, I am being led to return to the same schools. I want to plan off-campus crusades. I will take time off at the end of this year to create discipleship materials by faith. My faith tells me that if we are willing to fast, pray, invest time, money, and be willing to endure persecution, we will see a harvest of souls. I will leave you with this for now…

Matthew 9:37-38 (NIV) Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Brad Huddleston has degrees in Computer Science and Bible. He is an author, speaker, and Evangelist. He and his wife Beth travel the globe ministering in conferences, churches, schools, and retreats. Brad often appears on radio and television. His book can be ordered at www.bradhuddleston.com and ***www.darksideoftechnology.com***, and he can be reached at ***brad@bradhuddleston.com***.

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The Issue Of God

APRIL 5, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

> *… the men of ISSACHAR, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do…**1 Chronicles 12:32***

During our missionary training sessions back in 1981, Art Katz, a converted Jew, made this statement to us during one of his lectures:…

> *the issue of God was going to become more and more pronounced in society as we proceed more and more into the future….*

Today's headlines across our nation this April Fool's Day 2015, are replete with issues related to God and religious belief, and whether conscience can be coerced by any form of governmental or societal pressure. We are witnessing an unprecedented abuse of political and raw economic power in attempts to punish people of faith into submission and silence.

History abounds with heroic icons of religious belief willing to pay the ultimate price for the sanctity of conscience and religious conviction…Time will tell, but that history may not yet be over. Stout hearted men will inspire stout hearted men. God will not be mocked.

Conscience is the most sacred of all property.

A man has a property in his opinions and the free communication of them.

"Where an excess of power prevails, property of no sort is duly respected. No man is safe in his opinions, his person, his faculties, or his possessions." quotes by James Madison 1792.

Invitation to Help Us Reverse the Destruction of America

MARCH 22, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

I want to introduce you to a Ministry that is focused in doing so.

While there are six other major thrusts, the central issue is **PROMOTING OBEDIENCE TO GOD** AND THE PREEMINENCE OF JESUS CHRIST AS REVEALED IN THE HOLY BIBLE. In addition we will seek to refute the atheistic, agnostic, materialistic and humanistic cultures including the left-wing religious denominations that we believe are destroying our country.

The other 6 thrusts are:

PROMOTING CREATIONISM AS REVEALED IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS, IN SIX 24-HOUR DAYS. Refuting Darwinian Evolution, Theistic Evolution, Gap and Day-Age Theories and Progressive Creationism.

PROMOTING THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE AND THE RIGHT TO LIFE FOR THE BABY IN THE WOMB. Refuting the culture of death as in abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, suicide & doctor-assisted suicide, abortifacients, cloning & embryonic stem cell research and the killing of excess babies as in in-vitro-fertilization (selective reduction).

PROMOTING BIBLICAL SEXUAL MORALITY THROUGH ABSTINENCE ONLY EDUCATION AND PROGRAMS SUCH AS TRUE LOVE WAITS. Refuting sexual promiscuity: adultery, fornication, heterosexual oral sex, pornography, incest and bestiality, pedophilia and homosexuality.

PROMOTING AMERICA AS A NATION UNDER GOD, BUT NOT A NATIONAL CHURCH AS THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND. Refuting foreign cultures, legal precedents, languages and religions in opposition to Christianity.

PROMOTING THE GOD-ORDAINED FAMILY UNIT. Refuting cohabitation, no-fault divorce, perverted partnerships/non-traditional family adoptions.

PROMOTING GODLY RELATIONSHIPS, CIVILITY AND HEALTHY LIVING. Opposing racism, vulgarity & obscenities, body & mind abuse (smoking, alcohol and drugs, etc.).

All of these subjects can be reviewed in greater detail by visiting the VIRGINIA CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE web site- **www.vachristian.org**. In addition there are hundreds of articles written by our directors and advisors and others.

The mission of the VIRGINIA CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE is to promote moral, social and scientific issues we face today from a Biblical point of view. In addition we will refute and oppose, not with hate, but with facts and humor, the secular cultural abuses that have overridden laws and standards of conduct of the past.

WE WILL ENCOURAGE CHRISTIANS to participate in these efforts through conferences, development of position papers, booklets and tracts, radio/TV spots, newspaper ads and articles and letters-to-the-editor, web sites, newsletters and providing speakers for church and civic meetings.

While non-denominational, we believe in the fundamentals of the Christian faith and the Holy Bible.

I invite you to participate with us in any of the areas that interest you. If you are interested please contact me by e-mail (greene@vachristian.org) or phone (804) 261-1570-VCA OFFICE. We would be glad for your to visit us at the VIRGINIA CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE office at 8659 Staples Mill Road.

If you are not able to participate but have financial resources we can certainly use any amount you can send.

Greene Hollowell

Co-founder/Director/ Web Editor

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Why a Bad Supreme Court Decision May Require Civil Disobedience

MARCH 21, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: EUGENICS, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Mathew D. Staver | **Barbwire**

Civil disobedience has a long and noble history in Western culture, and we will need a primer on it if, as seems likely, the Supreme Court rules against natural marriage in June.

Of course, civil disobedience is not justified just because we disagree with a human law, but only when that law conflicts with a higher revealed or Natural Law. When he was jailed for violating a law used to stop him from protesting injustice, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote his famous ***Letter from Birmingham Jail.*** "A just law is a man-made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God," he argued. "An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law."

He went on to say: "I would be the first to advocate obeying just laws. One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that 'an unjust law is no law at all.'"

Such resistance is the very opposite of lawlessness. Dr. King set forth four steps to resist injustice: (1) gathering of facts, (2) negotiation, (3) self-purification and (4) direct action. We must learn more so we can see more. We have a duty to be informed. We must use all civil means to resolve the conflict. And, we must humbly seek the Lord before taking direct action.

Historical Precedent

Judeo-Christian history and the Western legal tradition agree with Dr. King. Sir William Blackstone wrote the definitive legal source used by British and American lawyers alike through the nineteenth century. In his *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, Blackstone wrote that "divine Providence" revealed His will through the "holy scriptures" and the "moral precepts" of revealed law. "Upon these two foundations, the law of nature and the law of revelation depend all human laws; that is to say, no human law should be suffered to contradict these." This natural law "is binding over all the globe in all countries, and at all times; no human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this."

The Declaration of Independence refers to this same principle when it uses the words "laws of Nature and of Nature's God" and declares that we are "endowed" by our "Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Merely because a legislature or a judge passes a law or issues an opinion does not make a law just. "To consider the judges as the ultimate arbiters of all constitutional questions a dangerous doctrine indeed," wrote Thomas Jefferson, "and one which would place us under the despotism of an oligarchy." To cite an extreme example, if you lived under the Nazi regime and the law required you to not hide or aid a Jew in any way, would you comply with Hitler or obey God? To obey Hitler, you would have to disobey God.

Biblical Precedent

Scripture is replete with examples of civil authorities colliding with revealed or Natural Law. The Book of Hebrews says Moses was hid for three months because his parents "were not afraid of the king's edict" (Heb. 11:23). In Daniel, the three Hebrews refused to bow down and worship the King of Babylon, and they were thrown into the fiery furnace from which God rescued them (Dan. 3:16-30). Ditto for Daniel in the lions' den. Daniel could have prayed silently in his closet, but he openly disobeyed an unjust law and prayed so he could be heard (Dan. 6).

Prayer and preparation is essential. When Mordecai asked Esther to plead with the King of Persia for the Jewish people, she knew approaching the King without being summoned was illegal. She asked for her uncle, Mordecai, and the Jewish people to fast and pray for three days while she would do the same with others in the palace. Only then did she engage in direct action.

The Supreme Court Has Gotten It Wrong Before

The Supreme Court was wrong when it denied Dred Scott his rights and said, "blacks are inferior human beings." And the Court was wrong when Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote, "three

generations of imbeciles are enough," thus upholding Virginia's eugenics law that permitted forced sterilization.

In these earlier cases, the definition of "human" was at issue. Now the definition of "marriage" is at issue. The Constitution does not grant a right to same-sex "marriage" — which is nonsensical since marriage intrinsically involves a man and a woman. Nor does the Constitution prohibit states from affirming the natural created order of male and female joined together in marriage.

The U.S. Supreme Court could still come off the rails in their June decision and invent a newfound right to "same-sex marriage," striking down state laws that recognize the reality of marriage. If the Court takes that disastrous step, we should view it the same way history views the *Dred Scott* and *Buck v. Bell* decisions. Such a decision would fly in the face, not just of the Constitution itself, but of the natural created order.

What We Must Do

The temptation for many will be to cave or compromise. The temptation even for the faithful will be to retreat into our churches and cloisters. In 2004, same-sex "marriage" came to Massachusetts. Contrary to the claim that such laws would usher in an age of "tolerance," the law immediately became a legal club to beat unwilling participants. Catholic charities bravely refused to place orphans in same-sex homes, because it was contrary to their mission.

Unfortunately, they stopped doing adoptions in the state. This cannot be our precedent. What they should have done is to say, "We are called to place orphans in homes with moms and dads. We will not voluntarily surrender our calling." Massachusetts might have used force to stop Catholic charities anyway, just as lone florists and bakers are being driven to bankruptcy in other states. But what would happen if, instead of quiet retreat, *many thousands* of individuals, agencies, charities, churches and schools all came together, prepared, prayed and peacefully refused to countenance a Supreme Court decision that violates not only our highest legal document, but the laws of Nature and Nature's God?

Perhaps we would see our culture step back from the brink of insanity, or perhaps we would suffer in the face of injustice. Whatever the outcome, the hour is late. It's past time for us to get ready.

Mathew D. Staver

Mathew D. Staver is Chairman and Founder of Liberty Counsel®, an international nonprofit litigation, education, and policy organization dedicated to advancing religious freedom, the sanctity of life, and the family since 1989, by providing pro bono assistance and representation on these and related topics. With offices in Florida, Virginia and Washington, D.C., and an outreach in Israel, Liberty Counsel has hundreds of advocates around the world.

Christian Engagement in a Postmodern World

MARCH 8, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Dear friend,

It has been a while since I last wrote to you, and there is very good reason for that. It is not because I didn't want to or lacked a word to share. On the contrary, I have been busier than ever with theological research, scholarly studies, writing research papers, and such for the Master of Divinity program at Oral Roberts University. I have become a full-time student in the ORU distant learning program while still maintaining my everyday life with work, children, local church ministry, etc. Last year God was so gracious to open the way for me to go on two missionary trips to the Dominican Republic and Nigeria. There is opportunity to go again this year to these places and more. However, I am seeking God's wisdom as to where to best serve my time. I have already passed up trips to Haiti and India to concentrate on my studies. Yet, I am ready to go as soon as I sense the green light to go, even with my studies.

Saints, we are living in very exciting times and opportunity with the gospel. There is no question that times have been changing. We have long been in the midst of a paradigm shift from the modern age to a postmodern age and worldview. These shifts can take 50 to 100 years before there is a settlement again, (and right now no one is sure where things will settle). David Dockery, editor of the book *The Challenge of Postmodernism*, states:

"the last two decades the Western world thought itself capable of arriving at truth in all arenas through scientific inquiry. That modern world is giving way to a postmodern world. Postmodernism describes a dislocating of the human condition, what some call an in-between time, as the modern age winds down and the new age emerges. **Two hallmarks characterize this age: a disbelief in objective truth and a deep sense that morality is relative."** (emphasis mine).

Many polls have shown that only about 25 percent of Americans believe in absolute truth. In June of 2013 I wrote concerning this issue of "absolute truth." I attached the two-part message for you to re-visit again (at your leisure) because it is more relevant today than ever. Only the discerning

Christian that sees and understands the times we live in can shift gears to maintain relevancy and effectiveness in today's culture. Postmodernists still have an underlying hunger for spiritual things. I am more affirmed than ever that Jesus Christ and His Word have the answers people are searching for. He is unchanging and His Word is unchanging, however, in these postmodern times we have to be very smart in approaching people with the gospel. What worked yesterday doesn't necessarily work today.

The bottom line is that the gospel of Jesus Christ transcends every age, culture, worldview, and time! The gospel still works and the world will eventually come full circle, if you will, to that realization. However, we have a part in this battle.

Please print out the these two articles and read them carefully.

- **Original Absolute Truth?**
- **The Desensitizing of Our Culture and the Cure**

They will assist you in staying firmly rooted in the truth of Scripture and engaging a lost world seeking the only One who can fill every void and need.

May our Creator-Redeemer richly bless you,

March 6, 2015

Refranzen1@aol.com **www.CreationUnderFire.com**

The mission of the "Creation Under Fire project" is to educate people with the truth of our origin as revealed in the first book of the Holy Bible – Genesis. To establish a clear understanding of the original thought and intent of the author as it was originally recorded; therewith, dispelling untrue theories of creation within the church. In turn, strengthening people's faith and equipping them with real answers for the faith they possess and to defend it well. Also to expose the most subtle scheme Satan has ever unleashed on humanity, which has sent more people to hell than any other attack mankind has ever known

An Evening with J Lo

JANUARY 8, 2015
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Last night I was channel surfing and came across a concert with Jennifer Lopez. The concert hall was packed to capacity. It was the beginning of the concert. J Lo's dancers came onto the stage first, the lights were perfect, the music was creating a sense of anticipation that the star was about to appear.

Suddenly, a crane began to lower from high above and on the attached platform was a costume adorned Jennifer Lopez. As the music continued to create excitement and the dancers were preparing to join the star, the camera cut to shots of the audience.

I was stunned at what I saw.

Tears were flowing. People of all ages were crying as their eyes met the beautiful creation known as J Lo as she descended closer and closer to the stage. Grown women covered their mouths as the tears flowed. The camera cut to a grown man weeping. Children were wide-eyed with awe and wonder.

My spirit was repulsed as I watched this worship service. I saw a depth of intimacy that one rarely sees in contemporary church culture. In fact, I wonder how many people in that audience forbade talk about "religion" at their family Christmas celebrations yet there they were, having a truly religious and deeply spiritual experience with Jennifer Lopez. It showed on their faces.

I wonder how many church-goers were in that audience? I wonder if they would be willing to fall that deeply in love with the One who gave His life to save them? I wonder if they would be willing to shed tears of joy for the Savior—or would that embarrass them?

The people who were crying had invested a lot of time with Jennifer to develop that level of intimacy yet, they likely had never actually physically met her face to face.

That's the key to intimacy. Investment of time with a person. You don't even have to physically be with someone in order love them deeply or even shed tears of joy or hurt for them. There's more

than enough information available for the hundreds of thousands, if not millions, who have become deeply emotionally attached to Jennifer to the point that they shed tears over her.

It's been 2000 years since Jesus walked the earth. There's more than enough available information about Him to experience and have a deep relationship with Him. In fact, Jesus rose from the dead and through the Holy Spirit, still walks the earth today and, unlike Jennifer, Jesus can and will have literal personal intimacy with anyone who asks. If invited, He will literally move right into one's heart.

Idolatry is alive and well on planet earth and is spreading faster than ever. The concert reminded me of the Ten Commandments…

You shall have no other gods before or besides Me. (Exodus 20:3)

…and from the New Testament:

…they exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, (Romans 1:25)

What would an evening with Jesus be like for you?

Brad Huddleston is on the Virginia Christian Alliance Board of Advisors. Brad has degrees in Computer Science and Bible. He is an author, speaker, and Evangelist. He and his wife Beth travel the globe ministering in conferences, churches, schools, and retreats. Brad often appears on radio and television. His book can be ordered at www.bradhuddleston.com and ***www.darksideoftechnology.com****, and he can be reached at brad@bradhuddleston.com*

The Value of Christian Principles

OCTOBER 5, 2014
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Our nation once placed a high priority upon the American family. Parents, teachers and politicians alike viewed the family and its moral and cultural virtues as the most basic building block of society. Parents and government recognized the need for the next generation to observe the basic tenants of their Christian values.

Church was a more significant part of family and society, along with the government, which did what it could to support the parents' values.

The U.S. government has been well-served by generations of young people raised with Christian values. Historically, millions of people have made it their life's ambition to come to this God-blessed land. America has welcomed people from all nations to come here, work hard and experience opportunity and freedom unavailable anywhere on Earth, until now!

The very concept of freedom as we know it came through the teaching of the Bible. The same book public schools today will not allow our children to read or discuss. What made America so different? Established by a small group of families determined to live by biblical principles, and not allowing despots to determine their future freedom. Principles based on adherence to the Ten Commandments and "Loving your neighbor as yourself" Recognizing mankind's basic flaw the prophet Jeremiah warned about almost 2,000 years before, "The heart of man.is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it"

The Pilgrims recognized the many attempts to limit their forefathers' freedom in England before they came here. King Charles I said the law of the land was whatever he said it was. Oliver Cromwell disagreed with him, and Charles lost.

The current war directed at Christians today is a systematic attack on the values chosen almost 400 years ago and later protected by a Constitution based on those same Pilgrim Christians' biblical values. Some years ago, Ted Koppel, addressing students at Duke University, spoke of the "Vannatizing" of society -how television (among other media) has become less and less an outlet

for the expression of complex, intellectual subjects and more a purveyor of ambiguity and empty slogans in the service of selling products and other ideas qf ethical and moral standards. He gave two examples of this:

1 “Shoot up if you must, but be sure to use a clean needle.”

2. “Enjoy sex with whomever and whenever you may but make sure you use protection.”

The answer is no, not because it isn’t cool or you may end up in jail or dying in an AIDS ward, but because it is wrong!

Koppel continued: ‘We have spent 5,000 years as a race of relatively rational human beings trying to overcome the curse of man’s proclivity to do the wrong things that naturally lead to destructive behavior while searching for the ‘truth’ and the moral absolutes it contains. In place of the truth, we have discovered facts and for moral absolutes we have substituted moral ambiguity.”

He described the modem Tower of Babel as the television tower. ”Voices everywhere and every voice and every opinion is given the same value by a society that has lost its moral foundation.

Culminating with the principle that society finds truth as a medicine too strong to take in undiluted form. What Moses brought down from the mountain were not Ten Suggestions but Ten Commandments.”

These were the foundation of America’s values, laws and ultimate success for hundreds of years, until now! We old-timers are now leaving what has been a God-blessed nation to our children, a nation that doesn’t work, is deeply in debt, morally, financially, politically, culturally bankrupt with leadership that our enemies don’t trust and which we, the people, are daily growing very much more afraid of Amazingly, this same declining nation is waging war against the very basic Christian principles that brought our nation into existence.

Wmston Churchill once said, ”When one generation no longer esteems its own heritage and fails to pass the torch to its children, it is saying in essence that the very foundational principles and experiences that make the society what it is are no longer valid What is required when this happens and the society has lost its way is for leaders to arise who have not forgotten the discarded legacy and who love it with all their hearts?’

We readily recognize those leaders in our society who are steering us to catastrophe, but where are the Christian leaders who will join together in the battle for truth, to rescue this nation from its inevitable ruinous end?

Stanlely Treleaven, Board Member, Virginia Christian Alliance

What Do You Read? It Makes a Difference in Your "World Views"

JULY 27, 2014
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Christians and The Culture: "Defending Faith, Family and Freedom"

I read years ago that "Leaders are Readers and Readers are Leaders". Makes sense doesn't it? It makes a difference what we read. We are influenced by what we read and therefore we must always seek the truth in all things. "Wise people store up knowledge" (Prov. 10:14).

The number one thing we should read – daily – is the Bible and probably a daily bible study or devotional. Everything else we read should be filtered through our "biblical world view". We live in the world, so we need to keep up with the world going on around us. To be informed, we should read a newspaper daily – not just the sports, flair or headlines. We need to read the editorials and commentaries and we should try to understand the motivation of the writers of our news and commentaries.

The Bible says "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6).

It is true. We Americans and Christians are not well-informed about current issues or our Nation's Christian heritage. Too many Christians are reading People Magazine instead of World Magazine, or Time and Newsweek instead of Charisma and Townhall. Look at the newsstands. What is being offered? One must "seek wisdom" and we have to search for Biblically-based news to know the truth about where we as a people are, and where we are headed.

So much happens in Congress, and locally here in the Virginia General Assembly, that we never hear about. These issues affect our daily lives and threaten our Christian faith. How can you

respond to the issues if you don't know them? How do you know who is right and who is wrong on the issues? It goes back to your Biblical filter. The Bible says that a time will come when "wrong will be right and right wrong." We are in those times now. Look at the news. What Christians know to be Biblical truths are under attack. Full frontal assault. The enemy is relentlessly out to silence the Christian voice.

Let's assume we know the issues, know the right side to be on etc. How do we respond to make our views known? Christians need to come together in support of our faith and beliefs. Christians need to come forth in large numbers to stand for Biblical principles. This means leaving your comfort zone to write, call, attend meetings – do something. Those who oppose our Biblical world view are much smaller in numbers, but they are united and relentless in their quest to humanize our Nation.

1. Make your views known to your family and friends. We are to influence others and our culture.
2. Write, call, e-mail your elected officials your point of view.
3. Write letters to the newspaper.
4. Pastors and lay leaders need to speak out – publicly.

IT'S TIME TO ROCK THE BOAT!

Many Christian-based web news outlets are available at a click of your computer mouse. In January I suggested several. You can sign up for e-mail news – free – from the below listed on the **Virginia Christan Alliance LINKS page**.

Donald N. Blake, Chairman/President of the Virginia Christian Alliance. The mission of VCA is to promote moral, social and scientific issues we face today from a Biblical point of view. In addition we will refute and oppose, not with hate, but with facts and humor, the secular cultural abuses that have overridden laws and standards of conduct of the past.

The Church in America has Forgotten

JUNE 27, 2014
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

First Published in **Renew America**

We must never forget: *everything* Hitler did in Germany to persecute the Jews was "legal," and everything the Partisans and Individuals of Conscience did in any of the enslaved Greater Reich, was "illegal." Those caught were subject to torture and death. Pure and simple: it was illegal to aid and comfort a Jew in Hitler's Germany, or in the Greater Reich, and those caught doing so were sent to a Concentration Camp, and certain death, or killed outright. Because of my moral convictions, I am sure had I lived in Germany during that time, I would have aided and comforted my Jewish brothers even though it was illegal and I might lose my life doing so. That being said,

> "…If I lived in a communist country today where certain principles dear to the Christian faith are suppressed, I believe I would openly advocate disobeying these anti-religious laws…"

The above words were expressed in Dr. Martin Luther King's famous essay, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." It was written to eight prominent obviously liberal Alabama clergy who were all white. The letter was King's response to their request that the battle for Integration should continue in the local and federal courts, not in the free and open marketplace of ideas, the streets and before the nation on television. Their fear was these nonviolent demonstrations would incite civil disturbances. Dr. King wanted these ministers to know that the demonstrators' efforts demonstratively produced the core truths of Christianity, and to respond any differently, would be antithetical to the message of the Gospel. The Civil Rights Movement is what history has since ascribed to it. More accurately, the Civil Rights Movement was an act of the Holy Spirit advancing much needed social justice, because in the fullness of time, it was born in the "Protesting Church" of the south and moved north. And it was Dr. King who equated the suppression of Christian faith as a tenant or attribute of communism and commented that if he lived in a nation that did such, he would openly advocate disobeying these anti-religious laws. Yet despite continued racial and

intellectual discrimination, Dr. King kept his charge and lived by the creed he proclaimed America had broken and forgotten to keep…

> "…We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed, by their Creator, with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness…"

And because Martin believed and fought for that creed to apply for *all* of its citizens, you and I live in a better America today. But we have forgotten…

We have forgotten the commitment of Dr. Martin Luther King and the faith of one – if not the greatest – prophetical voices of our time. Dr. King saw legalized segregation as a suppression of the Christian faith and a direct violation of the Declaration of Independence. Dr. King and thousands of courageous clergy and citizens of faith – along with others of conscience holding those same values – protested and demonstrated against what he articulated in this letter as "unjust laws." And in order to express his point unequivocally, Dr. King quoted from St. Thomas Aquinas with these words,

> "…A just law is a man made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put it in the terms of St. Thomas Aquinas: An unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal law and natural law. Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust…"

We must never forget yet it appears, too many *have* forgotten… And due to our lapse in memory, we are now living in a time Dr. King stated can be equated with communism: "The Christian Faith is being suppressed." For just as it was in Martin's day, so it is today: One of the greatest hindrances is the liberal clergy, and the deafening silence of the mainline established church which has seemingly been bought off. They have forgotten that …

> "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America…"

… begins the Preamble to the Constitution, but I must ask this salient question: How is it that the church must appeal to the Supreme Court so that it isn't directly forced into paying for abortions it does not believe in, when the church was here long before the court, and, the court derives its position from us, *'We the people'*? We *are* the people! Why must the church in America be coerced by its government to ignore Eternal and Natural Law? The Eternal Law, or the Scriptures, plainly and unequivocally commands its citizens, "thou shall not kill." The sanctity of life runs thematically from Genesis to Revelation. There are repeated warnings in scripture *against* the seduction of child sacrifice, the destruction of those who are fearfully and wonderfully made. Abortion is Un-Natural and therefore cannot comply with Natural Law. Miscarriages comply with Natural Law. The women's body knows when there has been a miscarriage and immediately shuts the process of birth down without harm to the women. Not so with abortion. The natural process has been humanly interrupted by the brutal extraction of the child and the body continues the natural process. This is the cause of the epidemic rise of breast cancer especially in the Afro-American community. Yet, the Obama Administration is forcing by human law – unjust law – Christians to finance the reprehensible killing of innocent babies in the womb against their will, while the mainline established church, via their deafening silence and obsequious manner, turn a blind-eye on the madness. The church cannot afford to act in such a manner as this, for as Dr. King said, it is a "suppression of their faith."

Same Sex marriage… Once again the Eternal Law or the Scriptures plainly and unequivocally commands its citizens not to engage therein. I am amused when I hear "Liberal Clergy" attempt to justify their practice of silence on this issue by stating, "Jesus never mentioned Homosexuality." Well Jesus never mentioned Crack Cocaine, Heroin, Crystal Meth, or IPads either but this statement is merely an exercise in fraudulent deception. *Jesus didn't leave it up for discussion!* When Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Mary's Baby, makes the comment, "Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment than for that city…" it must have struck fear into the hearers – they knew where this place was, and might have even known people for there. If you examine the word 'tolerable,' it is referring to the *degree* of punishment in Hell, not 'whether or not'! I am sure you understand that Jesus directly mentions the people of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. As you well know from the account we have in Genesis, the practice of homosexuality was epidemic. It is so well defined in human history that we adopted the word "sodomy" describing the act which is derived from the name of the city of Sodom. Jesus states that the citizens of these two cities were going to hell because of this iniquity. In the age of "Political Correctness" this is why Christians might be considered homophobic: Because they are scared of hell (maybe 'as') and heed the scriptural warnings. Do you think anyone came up to Jesus later and asked him, "Hey Jesus, how do you feel about Homosexuality?" You would have to have been Geraldo Rivera… No, because Jesus made them homophobic about even discussing it due to his reference to the outcome of the judgment awaiting those who practice it. Jesus also knew the Apostle Paul would be explicate later on in his letter to the Romans but would also give an open invitation to homosexuals to be free from the practice and come to salvation.

Natural Law… My body is not designed to be penetrated anywhere for sexual pleasure. There is not a biologist or physician on the planet that can make the case that homosexual or lesbian sex is natural. I wrote about this in detail in my article, "Why Homosexuality Is Wrong." The Apostle Paul makes quite clearly the same case in his letter to the Church of Rome. See Romans 1: 18–32. So to create curriculum to teach this to children in public schools as early as 1st grade homosexuality is a healthy and viable means of expression is physiologically, sociologically, theologically, and morally wrong. For let us again not forget what Dr. King said…

> "…If I lived in a communist country today where certain principles dear to the Christian faith are suppressed, I believe I would openly advocate disobeying these anti-religious laws…"

Have you forgotten?

© Clenard Childress

Rev. Dr. Clenard H. Childress, Jr., is the senior pastor of The New Calvary Baptist Church in Montclair, NJ. He is the founder of the website **Blackgenocide.org** and president of Life Education And Resource Network, Northeast. LEARN is the largest African-American pro-life group in the US. Rev. Childress is a leader in social activism and partners with the Center For Bioethical Reform, taking the Genocide Awareness Projects to college campuses around the country.

You Whitewashed Sepulcher!

MARCH 29, 2014
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Many an explosive conversation may erupt in the clash between two worlds: Politics and Religion. Both have the potential to evoke the gamut of emotion, from red-faced, stiff-necked mad-man rage to complete head-in-the-sand apathy.

It's a challenge for Christians to respond to the sphere of Politics when it is in direct conflict to fundamental biblical Truth. Often political activists steer away from "Faith" issues to avoid offending the non-religious. As Christians, what should be our response? Speak up or shut up? Throw ourselves into the fray, or stand back to avoid being caught up in the mudslinging of negative words and mob-mentality behavior unbecoming as a Christian?

What did Jesus do? I find it interesting that Jesus had little to say to the political world, and much to say to believers. But what's surprising to me is His red-faced and stiff-necked comments to a third group of people… religious hypocrites!

Apparently Jesus was not angry with sinners or believers, but angry with those who claimed to be believers, and whose fruit proved otherwise. He called them "whitewashed sepulchers," (tombs), and said they were "of their father the devil!"

Matthew 23:27–28 (NKJV)

27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For **you are like whitewashed tombs** which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.

28 Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside **you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness**.

John 8:42–47 (NKJV)

42 Jesus said to them, "**If God were your Father, you would love Me**, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.

43 Why do you not understand My speech? Because **you are not able to listen to My word**.

44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.

46 Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?

47 He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

I'm just going to say it simply. The key is the "hearing of God's Word." This is not rocket science. The Bible is clear from the beginning to the end. Those who claim they are believers but do not accept the simple definitions of sin and faith are hypocrites – whitewashed tombs – of their father the devil. Don't blame me for that. I am just repeating what Jesus said.

I'll say it another way… those who claim to know Christ and accept abortion as a viable choice – those who claim to know Christ and accept homosexuality, lesbianism, same-sex marriage, divorce for any reason, adultery, and fornication as viable choices – those who claim to know Christ and accept other pathways to gain forgiveness and eternal life… are "whitewashed tombs," and are "of their father the devil," – hypocrites." Again, I am simply repeating the words of Christ.

And to those who claim to know Christ and declare an alternate Gospel – here's one of the most alarming scriptures in the Bible:

Matthew 7:23 (NKJV)

23 And then I will declare to them, '**I never knew you; depart from Me,** you who practice lawlessness!'

You see, the main problem was not the sinners of Christ's time. It was not the believers of Christ's time. It was the religious hypocrites. Is that still true today? I believe so.

Personally, I don't have a problem knowing a sinner sins. I don't have a problem knowing a believer is forgiven of their sins by accepting Christ as their Savior and walking out that salvation as they grow in His Word. I do, however, have a problem with those who claim to know Christ (even wear a white collar) and declare the truths of God a lie.

John 1:1 (NKJV)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14 (NKJV)

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Jesus is not just the words He spoke – He is the entire Word of God!

You Whitewashed Sepulcher! You are of your father the devil. **Repent**, and come to the saving knowledge of Christ who **IS** the Word of God! There's grace for you.

Pastor Jim Langlois
Friend of Virginia Christian Alliance
The Master's House Church
11310 Washington Highway
Ashland, Virginia 23005

www.tmhnow.org

Malachi's Message to our Nation from the Holy Bible

FEBRUARY 4, 2014
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Written: Around 450 B.C.
Theme: God's Love and Justice

The message of Malachi was directed to a people plagued by corrupt priests and wickedness. The prophet confronted the people of Israel for their hypocrisy, infidelity, divorce, pride, greed and arrogance. The nation was so complacent in their sin that God's Word no longer had any impact on them. Malachi challenged them to turn from merely "going through the motions" to a relationship with God filled with faith, obedience, and worship. God loves us passionately and wants us to return that love to Him by being people of integrity, purity, and justice.

In May 1775, Harvard College president Samuel Langdon delivered a message to the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts that is reminiscent of Malachi's prophecy – and which echoes eloquently through history to today's America: "We have rebelled against God. We have lost the true spirit of Christianity, though we retain the outward profession and form of it….My brethren, let us repent and implore the divine mercy….May the Lord hear us in this day of trouble….We will rejoice in His Salvation, and in the name of our God, we will set up our banners!"

From the American Patriot's Bible

CALL TO ACTION

Sign the Petition to Impeach Attorney General Mark Herring

Supreme Court Brief Supporting Hobby Lobby and Conestoga and Religious Liberty

FEBRUARY 1, 2014
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: LIBERTY, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Claiming "an unprecedented attack on religious liberty," the Thomas More Law Center (TMLC) yesterday filed an amicus brief in support of the plaintiffs in two separate cases, Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc, and Conestoga Wood Specialties Corp., pending in the U.S. Supreme Court. In both cases, the plaintiffs are devout Christians who built their businesses from the ground up. They object on religious grounds to providing certain contraceptives which are mandated by the Department of Health and Human Services headed by Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. Both cases are scheduled for oral arguments on March 25, 2014 and the Court's decision is expected sometime before the end of June.

TMLC's brief focuses on religious liberty, "This case is not about competing rights; there is only one right at issue here – the right to religious freedom." The brief goes on to explain that there is no constitutional right to "free" contraception or abortion. Moreover, that "The employers are not objecting to their employees' private decision to use these drugs, they are objecting to being forced by the government to pay for insurance plans that facilitate or contribute to these decisions. The employers object to being used to further a government objective that violates their sincerely held religious beliefs."

TMLC's brief appealed to the foundations upon which our country was built:

"The United States was founded upon a set of noble and workable principles that formed the basis for the Bill of Rights. Paramount was the recognition that for a citizenry to be truly free, they must be allowed to think, to speak, and to worship God without government interference or unjustified restriction."

The brief referred to our Founding Fathers:

"They risked their fortunes and their lives to create a country where people could be free to live and to worship consistent with their own conscience, and to provide for their families without unnecessary and crippling burdens created by an all-powerful government. The citizens currently before the Court challenging the Mandate can appreciate the struggles those early patriots faced. They too cannot allow injustice to prosper and are risking their fortunes and their livelihoods to defend the constitutional freedoms that define this country."

(Click here to read the TMLC's entire 16-page brief)

The Thomas More Law Center (TMLC) is a national public interest law firm located in Ann Arbor, Michigan. It has filed 11 federal cases involving 33 different plaintiffs challenging the HHS Mandate. One of those cases, Eden Foods v. Sebelius et al, is currently in the U.S. Supreme Court, but not scheduled for argument. The Government has suggested to the Court that the Eden Foods case be held in abeyance pending the decision in the Hobby Lobby and Conestoga cases.

Richard Thompson, the President and Chief Counsel for the Law Center, commented, "The religious liberty of every American is at stake. If we lose these cases, the guarantee of religious liberty under our constitution and laws becomes a farce."

The 10th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals ruled in favor of Hobby Lobby represented by the Becket Fund in June 2013, arguing that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act applies to corporate entities, thereby shielding Hobby Lobby founder David Green from providing insurance plans that abide by the Obama Administration's contraception mandate.

However, in August 2013, the 3rd Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals rejected the same arguments, forcing the Mennonite owners of Conestoga Wood Specialties, represented by the Alliance Defending Freedom, to offer health insurance to their employees in a grave violation of their religious beliefs.

You Are What You Vote!

NOVEMBER 4, 2013
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Many times you hear the phrase promoting healthy food choices: "You are what you eat." Medical professionals and athletes are very aware that certain food can energize your body and others can drain it. For some people, their metabolism allows them to eat a lot without gaining weight. For others, their body metabolism is no help with keeping off extra pounds. In fact, one of the reasons for washing your hands before supper is to keep germs from entering your body while you eat. It was on the tradition of hand washing that the scribes and Pharisees confronted Jesus and He told them:

"There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man." Mark 7:15

When you read the entire seventh chapter of the Gospel according to Mark (xref: Matthew 15), you should note that Jesus does not say that washing your hands is wrong. He simply, yet definitively, states that spiritually you are defiled by the contents of your heart, not your stomach.

He explained it to his disciples:

Mark 7:20-23

1. And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.
2. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,
3. Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:
4. All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

Unfortunately, we have many folks who go to church every Sunday, who have been defiled. Yet, they apparently do not know it.

Our nation is in trouble with God because we have elected officials, from the president on down to city officials, who believe that God is wrong for His disapproval of men having sex with other men. We have elected officials running this nation who have no concern that over 50,000,000 babies have been murdered and think it is okay to murder another baby tomorrow. And concerning pride, we have elected officials who march in "gay pride" parades. We also have elected officials who love people who covet the riches of others so that they do not have to work and yet get paid to stay home. We have elected officials who are deceitful, commit adultery, and pass laws from which they exempt themselves. The murdering of innocent children alone is an abomination which is bringing the judgment of God upon this nation and will cause many people to be cast into the lake of fire.

The fact that there are elected officials championing abortion groups like Planned Parenthood and promoting same-sex couples is tragic because they were elected. Someone voted for them so that they could be in a governing position to promote every evil thing that Jesus mentioned that defiles.

Now, no one who believes it is not okay to murder another would vote for a candidate who believes in baby killing. If you do, it reveals what is coming out of your heart.

No one who believes God is the greatest would vote for someone who believes he is greater, knows more, and is more moral and just than God. Yet, if you vote for someone who supports men marrying men and women marrying women, then raising and indoctrinating children to do the same, it reveals the real contents of your heart. Your vote for those who are openly wicked shows who you really are.

The flood gates of pushing same-sex marriage upon society started with elected local city officials in California. For two months in 2004, a newly elected Mayor Gavin Newsom and officials of the City and County of San Francisco issued marriage licenses to approximately 4,000 same-sex couples. At that same time, the San Jose City Council, by a vote of 8–1, agreed to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other jurisdictions for city employees. And those who put them in office were defiled, whether they knew it or not. Who you vote for as mayor and who you vote into city council can defile you.

So, in local, state and national elections, you must decide if you want to be defiled. If a candidate is affiliated to a political party that promotes same-sex marriage, you already know where that candidate stands and you have no excuse if you help him or her promote sin.

Have you been defiled? Hope not. But if so, do you plan to be defiled the next time you vote? When you close that curtain in the little voting booth, God sees and "You are what you vote!"

Dr. Johnny M. Hunter is on the Board of Advisors for the Virginia Christian Alliance and the President of Global Life & Family Mission, a ministry dedicated to promoting traditional family

values, racial harmony, and the survival ofchildren around the world. He is also the National Director of Life Education AndResource Network (LEARN, Inc.), a consortium of life affirming pro-family advocates,which is a prominent African-American evangelical pro-life ministry in the United States.

A Call to Prayer and Fasting for Virginia

NOVEMBER 4, 2013
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

"If my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." II Chronicles 7:14

"Gather together and fast for three days, I also and my maidens, and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law, and if I perish, I perish." Esther 4:16

"Blow the trumpets and sound an alarm. Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land unto the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord. Joel 1:14 & 2:11 and 15.

A Call to Prayer and Fasting for Virginia

With the election now just 48 hours away, repeated below is a note from a group of other concerned Virginians. It includes a proclamation issued by Abraham Lincoln 150 years ago with the concurrence of the Senate at a time of great crisis during the Civil War.

For more details, please visit **For God's Glory** “> . To see similar calls by other national leaders in our history, go to **Wall Builders**

For God and Country,

Dean Welty, Virginia Christian Alliance Board member and Director of the Valley Family Forum

————————–

Dear Fellow Virginian:

Charles Dickens began his famous book The Tales of Two Cities with these familiar words:

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was great the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way…”

These words seem to capture the paradox of our living in these times. On the one hand, we as Americans have so much to be thankful for in our country for the blessings and bounty we enjoy but at the same time have much to grieve over as we consider our societal ills.

One has only to consider the abortion rates, murder statistics, incidents of disease, rates of unemployment, divorce, terrorism threats, and sexual sins to realize that we are suffering and in desperate need of help from the Lord as we seek him for repentance, deliverance, healing and revival.

In times past and in times such as these, concerned citizens have turned to God for help and deliverance by fasting and prayer for themselves and their nation. For example, President Abraham Lincoln penned this call to fasting and prayer in 1863:

Abraham Lincoln's Call to Fasting, Prayer, and Humiliation

“Whereas, the Senate of the United States, devoutly recognizing the supreme authority and just government of Almighty God, in all the affairs of men and nations, has, by a resolution, requested the President to designate and set apart a day for National prayer and humiliation;

And whereas, it is the duty of nations, as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions, in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the

sublime truths announced in the Holy Scriptures, and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord;

And, inasmuch as we know that, by his divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land, may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people? We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown.

But we have forgotten God, we have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!

It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

Now, therefore, in compliance with the request, and fully concurring in the views of the Senate, I do by this proclamation, designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of April, 1863, as a day of national humiliation, fasting and prayer.

And I do hereby request all people to abstain from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite, at their several places of public worship and their respective homes, in keeping the day holy to the Lord, and devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion.

All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope, authorized by the Divine teachings, that the united cry of the Nation will be heard on high and answered with blessings, no less than the pardon of our national sins, and restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Our Call to a Day of Fasting, Humiliation, and Prayer

In a similar call, we as concerned Virginians who revere God are issuing a call to a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer to other like-minded citizens who desire to implore the God of heaven to have mercy on us and help us as we are facing serious challenges as a Commonwealth and Nation because we have moved away from our Biblical foundations and commitments.

We are especially concerned about the upcoming election in the Commonwealth on **November 5, 2013**, and know that our only hope for restoration is that we return to God in repentance, plea for forgiveness and humbly request pardon and healing.

God promises to hear prayer, and we can make a difference by interceding for our Commonwealth and Nation at this critical time in history.

We have set November 3-5, 2013 as the day set apart for this act of faith and ask that you join us and encourage your family members, friends, neighbors, coworkers, church members all who would be so inclined to join us as well.

(Signed)

Your Fellow Concerned Virginians

Dean Welty serves on the Board of Directors for the Virginia Christian Alliance and is Director of the Valley Family Forum, a network of families in the Shenandoah Valley that helps build Faith, Family, and Freedom in the culture and in the public square. He also hosts a weekly television program entitled "**Valley Faith in Action**".

Valley Faith in Action airs at 8:00 p.m. on Friday and at 8:30 p.m. Sunday on WAZT-TV, which is Comcast Cable Channel 13 in the Harrisonburg area. It will air again at Wednesday midnight. You can also access it and other recent programs by clicking **HERE**.

Would MLK Have Championed Today's "Liberal" Causes?

SEPTEMBER 22, 2013
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

In a recent article, Professor Peter Dreier appropriated Martin Luther King Jr. as champion of the "liberal" side of several raging public debates. Having been inspired from childhood by the justice of King's struggle for racial equality and the effective and eloquent way in which he pursued his "Dream," I find Dreier's conclusions surprising and counter-intuitive. I reject the assumption that this giant of a man can be so neatly categorized.

Dreier claimed, for instance, that "King would stand — and sit in when necessary — with the LGBT community to help push states toward legalizing same-sex marriage…" The staggering presumptuousness of such a statement is exposed by the preceding sentences, in which Dreier first concedes that "King did not approve of homosexuality," but then declares that King's viewpoint would certainly have changed over time in light of the NAACP's position and growing support for gay rights among black clergy members.

First of all, it is the height of arrogance for anyone to start from King's known, stated position (disapproval of homosexuality), and assume that he knows King's psyche, religious convictions and motivations well enough to conclude that King would have done an about face as a result of special interest groups or polling data.

But beyond that, the rationale behind Dreier's conclusion is unconvincing. Historical giants like King are historical giants precisely because they don't form their moral views based on cultural trends; rather, they resist man-made constructs that ultimately harm and degrade human beings and lead us, instead, to what is true, good, and beautiful.

William Wilberforce stood against the slave trade and Dietrich Bonhoeffer against the Nazis because, like King, Wilberforce and Bonhoeffer believed that every human being is created in the image of God and therefore has unique dignity and inherent worth. There is no escaping it: at the core of these heroes of humanity is a decidedly and specifically biblical worldview. Their passion for honoring the teachings of Jesus Christ was their motivation for waging war against various iterations of human oppression.

Where would King have stood on gay marriage? I don't presume to know the answer. Although the Bible consistently identifies homosexual activity as a moral wrong, many today profess to be convinced that Jesus Christ himself would have championed gay marriage as a step toward love, compassion and equality.

My respect for King is deep enough, however, to convince me that he would have studied the Scriptures to critically evaluate that claim. In considering whether recognition of gay marriage really is loving and compassionate, he probably would have examined the reasons for marriage and the likely societal consequences of defining this fundamental institution based on individual preferences. He would have looked past value-laden labels and studied the contents of the package under a lens comprised of both compassion and truth.

Another label King would have parsed is that of "reproductive freedom." Dreier trots out the fact that King once received a "Margaret Sanger Award" as ironclad proof that he would have been an abortion rights activist. Dreier candidly admits, however, that "King never spoke publicly about his views on abortion," and that he was assassinated before Roe v. Wade was decided.

We live in a culture committed to the concept of liberty and obsessed with the idea of "choice," so any conduct packaged in the trappings of "right to choose" (as any conduct at all might well be packaged) appears, superficially, to be a moral good. But I believe King would have balked at the idea of labeling one human being's purposeful destruction of another human being as a liberty or "choice" that is beyond the power of a civilized society to restrict.

While supportive of Planned Parenthood's educational efforts on birth control, I think King would have wept at the rate at which babies of color —babies with unique dignity and inherent worth — are being aborted. I think he would have been outraged that a whopping 80 percent of Planned Parenthood clinics are strategically located in minority neighborhoods.

It is impossible for anyone to credibly claim King's endorsement for causes that arose after his death. But this much we know: King was a follower of Jesus Christ.

His boldness, compassion and commitment to serving others were beautifully consistent with the Christ depicted in the Bible. And just as Christ stood for timeless moral absolutes, I believe King would have looked beyond labels, politics, and polls and stood for transcendent truth, goodness and beauty.

Rita M. Dunaway is Vice President for Public Policy with Virginia Christian Alliance. She lives in Harrisonburg.

God Is Breaking Up the Fallow Ground

SEPTEMBER 8, 2013
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Brad Huddleston, one of Virginia Christian Alliance advisors is a specialist in dealing with the effects of technologies such as smartphones and the devastation it is having on our children. Brad has returned from missions to South Korea and Australia where he ministered to 6,000 students. He has seen the effect of governments preventing the mention of God is our schools. At the end of the article Brad ask, WHERE TO WE GO FROM HERE?

The answer is we need for him to minister here in Virginia. As a start we are running Brad's article- Smartphones- Not Always So Smart to appear next week.

God Is Breaking Up the Fallow Ground

Years ago I remember reading a tract from Last Days Ministries (Keith Green) written by Charles Finney entitled *Breaking Up the Fallow Ground: An Outline for Repentance*. The title comes from Hosea 10:12 (NIV) where God says,

> "Sow righteousness for yourselves, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, until he comes and showers his righteousness on you.

God is obviously telling us that our hearts can become hard and we need to soften the soil of our spirit so that He can work in us. Hardness of heart keeps God's seed, fertilizer, and water from entering the most secret areas of our lives. In this passage, the responsibility is clearly ours to begin this process and then God joins us in this process.

There are other times when, in His mercy, God pursues *us*. This could not have been made clearer than when Jesus died for our sins.

> Matthew 27:51 (NIV) At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

Perhaps you've read this verse a million times and never really pondered the significance of the curtain being torn from *top to bottom*. The symbolism here is both powerful and personal. This passage is letting humanity know that when we were not even looking for God, He came down here looking for us. That's why the rip in the curtain started at the top and ended at the bottom. Simply put, He loves us and is chasing us down, even when we're unaware of Him.

At the time of this writing, I am in Australia. Before coming here, I spent six days in South Korea delivering a keynote, conducting workshops, and preaching at Global Youth Forum 2013. Over the past two months, I have spoken to approximately 6000 students, parents, teachers and church attenders. For the first time in many years, I can now honestly say that I am witnessing God visiting students on a big scale. Let me explain…

I am not seeing full scale revival in this generation but I do believe we could be headed that way if we are willing to invest prayer, fasting, time, and resources.

I have been in one public school after another, day after day, and have watched the Holy Spirit descend and keep the students riveted for as long as 65 minutes. I am often complimented on my public speaking abilities and while I certainly appreciate and need the encouragement just like anyone else, I can tell you that only God can hold teenagers' attention for that long in this day and age. The Lord is truly up to something.

When I say that I have watched the Holy Spirit visit public schools, I want to be clear in what I mean. The law prevents me from outright evangelism. I have not given altar calls. We are not at that stage (yet). If you are someone who is shielded from the secular world, you might not realize just how lost this generation is. You have likely read how hostile the culture has become toward Christians. Trust me, its one thing to read about it and quite another experience to actually be on the front lines.

For the first time in modern history in the western world, much of the current generation has absolutely no spiritual frame of reference. We are literally starting from scratch when it comes to evangelism. Yes, we have always had sins such as drugs, alcohol, and pornography, however, never have we seen the sheer volume of pornography and related digital addictions in so many people, especially at such young ages. This is due in part to smart phones in the bedrooms of people of all ages, but most alarming, in children. I am not sure how to relate to you how it feels when you've encountered pornography on third grader's smart phones. Yes, grade 3.

None of this has escaped God's eyes. His heart still breaks for those who are lost in depravity. So let's go back to what I am seeing in school after school. I am watching God visit thousands of students. You can see it on their faces as I speak to them. My heart breaks when I leave a line of unsaved students waiting to speak to me. The ones I get to speak to are so honest. They often confess their porn addiction, cutting, video game addiction, and phone addiction (just to name a few). It is so refreshing to see the conviction from the Holy Spirit and yet the majority don't even know what is happening to them. They are hungry. So what do we do?

Space will only permit me to answer that question with two examples of what is being done.

I was recently hired by the Queensland Police to tour with Cyber Safety Expert Sergeant Nigel Dalton. Nigel is a true man of God who has a call on his life to serve (minister to) young people. In those 7 days, we spoke 24 times to almost 3000 students and 180 parents and teachers. We watched in absolute amazement as God visited students. The cry for help from many of them was at times inspiring and yet disturbing.

The second example I would like to relate is that of Pastors Ivan and Roslyn Waldock in Goodiwindi, Australia. The Waldock's have been in ministry for many years and while they don't have a full understanding of modern technology, they can clearly see what has happened to their community and they sense an urgency that something must be done right away. Even though they had no experience with contacting schools, they reached out to both Christian and Public Schools in their community and offered my services at no charge. In other words, their church paid for everything, including me, just because they care and want to see Jesus move in their town. And He did.

As I would speak day after day, there sat Roslyn in the back of the classrooms interceding the entire time. As I would speak, the Holy Spirit would descend in such a sweet way and captivate the hearts and minds of the students. The vast majority of them had no idea what they were experiencing but they loved it. What they were actually enjoying was the love of God being brought in by the church. The Scriptures talk about God's favor. For example…

Luke 2:52 (NIV) And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

All of the Principals from every school, both Christian and Public, took it upon themselves to invite me back next year. That is God's favor. Through the efforts of Christians such as Nigel, Ivan and Roslyn, God is helping these students, who don't even know Him, to plow up the hardened soil of their hearts. He loves them. He came down here, tore the curtain from top to bottom because He loves them. I am witnessing this everywhere I go.

Where do we go from here?

I am seeking God as to what to do next. So far, I am being led to return to the same schools. I want to plan off-campus crusades. I will take time off at the end of this year to create discipleship materials by faith. My faith tells me that if we are willing to fast, pray, invest time, money, and be willing to endure persecution, we will see a harvest of souls. I will leave you with this for now…

Matthew 9:37-38 (NIV) Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Brad Huddleston has degrees in Computer Science and Bible. He is an author, speaker, and Evangelist. He and his wife Beth travel the globe ministering in conferences, churches, schools, and retreats. Brad often appears on radio and television. His book can be ordered at www.bradhuddleston.com and ***www.darksideoftechnology.com***, and he can be reached at ***brad@bradhuddleston.com***.

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The Desensitizing of Our Culture and the Cure

AUGUST 20, 2013
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set. (Proverbs 22:28 KJV)

As I reflect on our culture, from my childhood until now it is horribly astonishing to witness how our Biblical landmarks and boundaries (of the faith and conviction) have moved so drastically, and continue to move with little alarm further and further away from their original place or standard. I like to listen to the older generation to glean wisdom, and I hear things like how playing card games used to be considered a sin (because of gambling), dancing was bad, Elvis swinging his hips was an abhorrent abomination. Of course innocent card games and dancing can be done in a decent way today.

However, it gets worst. Then we saw the word "gay" hijacked from its original meaning of an innocent happy, to a perverted "happy." We see music getting harder and harder with less and less melody, rhythm, etc. and becoming more and more senseless, wild and thrashy. We went from Elvis to the Beatles, to Aerosmith, to Iron Maiden to out-right, intended gross perversion, and profanity today. We went from sex outside of marriage and living together considered to be sin and to abstain, to encouraging living together to see if it works and handing out contraceptives as if they were candy.

The world preaches "safe sex," when there is no such thing as safe sin! Perverted jokes were wrong, cursing was foul, sinful language. Yet today, all this has become virtually accepted and normal to the current generation (generally speaking). The sad thing is that much of our Christian children cannot tell you why these things are wrong today; and we wonder why they fall prey to these evils. The cultures of the world have drifted from what I call "original truth." We will talk more about *original truth* in the next message. Teaching and educating has been replaced by "social engineering" in most Universities.

The Department of Homeland Security came out with a memo in 2009 listing the main threats of terrorism in America as the Right-wing extremists, Members of the Second Amendment rights group, Christians who believe in end-time prophecies from the Bible and Military Veterans, but

ignored groups who have terrorized like extremist Muslims. Today, the subject of homosexuality is a "political correctness" hot button. Years ago it was not talked about because it was considered morally wrong, and illegal. This hasn't changed in many Christian circles, yet in society it is becoming not only accepted as normal but legalized as well. Biblical landmarks have moved in our culture. What President Nixion was impeached for doesn't compare to what some of our leaders are doing today and getting away with.

Today we have a President who has done what no other American President has done before. A President who personally calls congratulating and praising a major sport figure for coming out of the closet for being a homosexual – which is a total disgrace and dishonor to the highest office of our Nation; and has opened up the flood gates (this was yet another huge devastating blow to our spiritual and moral culture).

Yet we hardly hear of anyone sounding the trumpet as it were in outrage and alarm that this is wrong, in fear of the backlash. In turn, our children are not as alarmed as we older ones once were; this is just a small example of how the landmarks keep moving further with each passing generation. Yet I don't believe God Almighty is going to cower and change His ways by people yelling "you intolerant, bigot," homophobic," "closed-minded fundie,"etc. etc.

How does one boil frogs? One degree at a time. You put the cold-blooded frogs into cool water and slowly turn up the heat. By the time the frogs realize what's happening it's too late, they have been boiled enough that they cannot move enough to escape. This is exactly what is happening to our culture and the people; little by little our culture is being "boiled by degrees." That is the exact tactic of the "Communist Manifesto" if you were to read it.

Our culture keeps bowing to "political correctness," and believing lies that say, "we have evolved and become way more sophisticated and educated than the ancients and their '*holy books*'; we are therefore far more advanced, we are smarter than that old, outdated book called '*the Bible;' we are smarter than God.*" Things have become so backwards because we have drifted so far from original truth that we now call that which is evil good and that which is good evil.

How did this happen? Well, over time our culture keeps giving way to "the little foxes that spoil (ruin) the vine (vineyard)" (Song. 2:15). There are many reasons we can list as to how and why. One *little fox* that I will mention is the lust for self-gratification over the practice of self-denial (a lost art). Our culture has an improper balance and an uncontrollable lust for entertainment. Maybe to numb all the pain & confusion we experience? Knowing a little history like the fact that after ancient Rome dominated the world, it became lax and obsessed with its entertainment in its coliseums.

Lustful appetites went unchecked and they then became morally confused, until over time, homosexuality became prevalent just before its implosion. We can look back in history and clearly see the fall of that great Nation, and we are following all the same telltale signs. I'm watching our

culture lose sight of true masculinity, like the "John Wayne type character;" (also true femininity for ladies). Two generations ago, masculinity and femininity was esteemed. Today, these are ridiculed and perverted by women's lib and Hollywood. There isn't a sitcom today that I know of that has real masculinity on its programs. They only display silly, wimpy men (I'd rather watch the movie *Braveheart* over and over before I subject myself to the sitcoms today). **Silliness has replaced masculinity**, a trademark of a declining culture, like ancient Rome.

This reminds me of a study I did on the word "muse," found in Psalm 143:5. One side of this word is healthy, meaning an active reflecting and thinking. However, what many don't realize is there is another side or definition to the word that means "idle." Reflecting and meditating on something (especially God's Word) is positive. When you are sitting in front of entertainment like the television your mind goes into neutral – idle. When your mind is sitting idle or in neutral, the stuff being fed into your mind through the gateways of your eyes and ears, directs or stirs you in the same direction. For instance, if you are musing / watching a TV show like the many sitcoms that have sexual innuendos and content as its main theme throughout, your mind is directed in that same direction (garbage in, garbage out). "That what a man thinks, so is he" Prov. 23:7.

Most sitcoms and movies today have characters with uncontrollable sexual practices that are made light of and in some cases, the hero or "good guy." We saw this in King David's life when he didn't go out to war as he usually did preforming his manly responsibilities to protect (1Sam. 11:1). Instead he stayed back in the comfort of his home and fell morally with Bathsheba. The old saying is true, "an idle mind is the devil's playground." I believe one of the jobs of Christian leaders is to explain to true disciples how damaging this really is and how to stand against it. However, the problem I see is that many leaders bow to the fear of persecution and being called a stiff, prude and such. "Just preach Jesus and keep it all positive and they'll come," they say. Yet Isaiah 58:1 tells me to "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up my voice like a trumpet and TELL MY PEOPLE (God's people) their transgression!" Not fun, I admit, but it is a part of the responsibility of Christian leaders (subsequent to preaching Jesus and Him crucified).

The fact that we have drifted so far from original truth or the biblical landmarks, I see Isaiah chapter five prophetically describing our culture today. We can do a whole message on this chapter alone. I only make mention above to one of the six "woes" characterizing this chapter. The fourth woe, or curse, as another translation puts it: "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil," (Isa. 5:20). The verse goes on describing how we basically trade righteousness for sin, light for darkness. This verse describes a people that have rejected and replaced God's moral standards with their own standard based on relativism. The result is a deep, utter confusion in the whole Nation about what is right and wrong. My friends, we have now prophetically reached this cursed time in history. Yet at the same time it is an awesome time for us, the redeemed, to impact our world because the light of Christ shines even that much more brightly and easily!

We have heard over and over Christians quoting II Chronicles 7:14, “if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” To be honest with you I was getting sick of hearing it, but it was and is the cry of the Spirit to our Nation. However, we see just the opposite response by our Nation.

For example, in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, at least three of our National leaders stood up and quoted Isaiah 9:10 “The bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with hewn stones; The sycamores are cut down, but we will replace them with cedars.” This is in actuality a response of defiance to God. Please read this portion of Scripture in its context and it becomes clear. Literal bricks and a literal sycamore tree fell when the twin towers came down in NYC. Israel’s turning away from God and the biblical landmarks resulted in foreign enemies coming in and inflicting great damage. This IS NOT God’s fault; God already told where His protection is, (obedience to His Word). It was Israel, and now America, coming out from under God’s protection. as he describes how America parallels ancient Israel’s exact response of defiance.

America was founded by Bible believing men with deep biblical convictions (even the non-church goer’s like Franklin & Jefferson). The U.S. was birthed and flourished because biblical principles were in fact deeply rooted within the culture from the beginning. This resulted in great revivals, from the Great Awakening, to Azusa St., to the healing revival in the forties, fifties and into the sixties, giving way to the Jesus movement and then the charismatic revivals. The seeds of the Word of God produced great harvest. However, today’s generation at large does not have the same level of awareness of those biblical principles. This doesn’t mean revival is not possible, it just means we need to start with the basics again by sowing Gospel seeds into our culture around us.

Yet before these great revivals there was REVOLUTION, meaning there was literal time of war. We are living in what the Bible refers to as “the end times,” meaning the closing of an era and changing into a new and different era. We Christians want to see revival again, yet, learning from history, revival doesn’t happen on its own; it was always preceded with much prayer and action. As I said, our early American culture was already embedded with the seeds of the Gospel. With intense intercession from the Saints, harvest and revival happened. I’m not saying we should take up arms and go fight in these lasts days for Christianity. Revolution isn’t always with literal bloody warfare. I don’t think this is what we as followers of Christ are called to do. We are not called to preserve a natural Nation but a heavenly one; we are citizens of Heaven. (If we want to preserve a natural nation, then maybe war would be the only way due to the extreme, diverse ideologies between conservatism and liberalism; God and naturalism; Capitalism and socialism and/or Communism: for a house divided cannot and will not stand). Our focus needs to stay on preserving the faith of Christ and the biblical landmarks.

The Cure

I found three major cures or protection from being desensitized. They are found in Romans 12:2 and 2 Corinthians 6:17 and Philippians 4:1. Romans says, "and do not be conformed to this world (culture), but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove (know by testing) what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." 2 Cor. Says, "Therefore (meaning you have to know what it says before this), "*Come out from among them* (the worldly ways) *and be separate* (unto the Lord), says the Lord. *Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you*." Phil. 4:1 says along with 1 Cor. 16:13, and 1 Thess. 3:8, "stand fast in the Lord." Hardcore stuff that is not talked about enough these days! These are not merely suggestions, they are commands with promise! In order to be received by God into heaven, we have to come out of the declining, worldly ways. How are we supposed to come out of and not conform to our ever-declining culture and yet have to live and function effectively in it every day? In many denominations, it has been difficult over the years to find where to draw the lines and find the right balance.

Denominations have really abused these verses to the point Preachers are scared to talk about them today. Denominations have tried to teach things like this by placing rules and regulations on what we can and cannot do. This only leads to "legalism." Only the Holy Spirit can lead us into this successfully. Because the things of the Spirit (the supernatural) cannot be taught, they must be caught (with our spirit: a principal found in 1 Corinthians chapter 2, particularly verse 14)! Remember that! It is the truth that you catch and understand will make you free (John 8:32).

The way we grow closer to God is by seeking the Lord through worship, prayer and the study of His Word. By this growing or maturity, the Holy Spirit will naturally lead us in right and victorious living in the mist of our declining culture. In other words, the closer we come to the Lord, the easier living these verses become; and that's the key – closer to JESUS! The more time we spend reading and studying the Bible, the more our minds become renewed or the more we actually begin to think like God thinks. We learn His ways and know right from wrong. We then go our way into our culture without losing sight of Gods truths that we just learned in Scripture; we then can impact our culture with the love of God without being swept away with the ever-changing tide of the culture we live in.

To summarize the answer – renew your mind to think like God thinks (by reading His Word), come out from the worldly ways, and stand your ground firm no matter how much you get made fun of by the majority. Take comfort in Noah who was NOT the majority, (the majority does not dictate what is right or wrong – God does)! Noah withstood the majority and their ungodly onslaught against him. Yet Noah (the minority who later became the totality) came through the flood, and the majority drowned.

Practice these things, practice self-denial (which includes abstinence), and self-discipline powered by the Holy Spirit, and you will be a modern-day Noah who can hear from Heaven and save the

ones around you who will listen!

Rob Franzen

Refranzen1@live.com www.CreationUnderFire.com

The mission of the "Creation Under Fire project" is to educate people with the truth of our origin as revealed in the first book of the Holy Bible – Genesis. To establish a clear understanding of the original thought and intent of the author as it was originally recorded; therewith, dispelling untrue theories of creation within the church. In turn, strengthening people's faith and equipping them with real answers for the faith they possess and to defend it well. Also to expose the most subtle scheme Satan has ever unleashed on humanity, which has sent more people to hell than any other attack mankind has ever known.

A. **Franzen**

Today's Church:Ear Tickling, Entertainment, and Irrelevant Exposition

JULY 13, 2013
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: ESCHATOLOGY, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

At some point, one has to wonder why America's churches are the largest block of irrelevant, impotent, and insignificant institutions in the entire country. And make no mistake about it: when it comes to influencing societal conditions, culture, and the political philosophy of the nation, for all intents and purposes, they ARE irrelevant, impotent, and insignificant.

Think about it: according to the latest available statistics, over 75% of America's adults classify themselves as Christians. That's over 159 million people. Over 43% of America's adults attend the more than 300,000 churches regularly. That's over 90 million people. Yes, both of these statistics are WAY DOWN from just a few years ago, but those statistics still represent a HUGE block of the American population.

So why do these Christians and churches have so very little influence in America's society, culture, and politics? Asking it bluntly, why is America going to hell in a handbasket with all of these churches dotting the landscape?

There is no mistaking the fact that from before the American Revolution, after the American Revolution, throughout the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries, and through the first half of the Twentieth Century, the American Church was a major voice and influence in virtually every facet and sphere of American society. However, with the exception of a temporary resurgence in the 1980s, the influence of the Church in the last half of the Twentieth Century and continuing now into the Twenty First Century is nada. Zilch.

For all intents and purposes, the activist arm of conservative churches, the Religious Right, Christian Coalition, Moral Majority, call it what you will, is clinically dead.

It is not comatose; it is dead.

When it comes to influencing the culture and politics of the nation,

- the modern Church is dead
- Pastors are dead
- Denominations are dead
- Christian schools and universities are dead.

Think of it: 159 million Christians, 90 million churchgoers, and 300,000 churches cannot effectively influence even the smallest change of direction in America's society, culture, and political philosophy.

America is in a societal, economic, and political tailspin, and the Church sits irrelevant and impotent. And don't forget: we are not talking about an enslaved, oppressed country such as communist China where millions of Christians are forced at gunpoint to submit to the machinations of the state.

While it is true that the underground church in China (the REAL church in China) is seeing great growth, without a revolution such as America experienced in the late 1700s, Chinese Christians will never be able to effect societal and political change in that country. And, of course, the communist government in China has all but guaranteed that such a revolution will not take place by completely disarming the citizenry.

In America, we are talking about a nation in which citizens (including Christians) are able to lobby, redress government, protest, rally, organize opposition, speak, vote, form PACs, march, petition, etc. Christians are as free to influence their societies and governments as are any other group of people in the United States. Furthermore, name the other group in this country that can boast 75% of the population who identify with it in name or 43% of the population who regularly attend its public meetings? What would the country look like if the ACLU could boast these numbers? Or the SPLC? Or labor unions?

Labor unions comprise only 11% of the adult workforce. The ACLU membership is reported to be about 500,000. And, of course, the people who belong to the SPLC could fit in a phone booth.

By comparison, these groups comprise a miniscule percentage of the population as opposed to America's churches, yet their influence is exponentially greater. So, what has happened?

The great Nineteenth Century revivalist and major contributor to America's Second Great Awakening, Charles Finney, said this: "Christians must vote for honest men and take consistent ground in politics. God cannot sustain this free and blessed country, which we love and pray for, unless the Church will take right ground. Politics are a part of a religion in such a country as this, and Christians (and citizens) must do their duty to the country as a part of their duty to God. It seems sometimes as if the foundations of the nation are becoming rotten, and Christians seem to act as if they think God does not see what they do in politics."

Finney also said, "If there is a decay of conscience, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the public press lacks moral discernment, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the church is degenerate and worldly, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the world loses its interest in Christianity, the pulpit is responsible for it. If Satan rules in our halls of legislation, the pulpit is responsible for it. If our politics become so corrupt that the very foundations of our government are ready to fall away, the pulpit is responsible for it."

It is no hyperbole to say that, on the whole, the American Church has been mostly ineffective since immediately after World War II.

- The Church sat mute when God was expelled from America's public life in the 1960s.
- It sat mute when the government gave license to the premeditated murder of preborn babies in the 1970s.
- And today it continues to sit mute in the face of a burgeoning police state.

There seems to be virtually no abridgment of liberty, no national scandal, or no threat against our constitutional form of government egregious enough to warrant an outcry from America's pastors and churches.

For the most part, today's pastors are not prophets and watchmen; they are cheerleaders and CEOs.

Our churches are not "the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15 KJV); they are centers of social interaction, recreation, and feel-good indoctrination. Preachers are not reprovers, rebukers, and exhorters (II Timothy 4:2); they are ear-ticklers, entertainers, and expositors of irrelevance.

Let me ask you: what good does it do to teach the stories of Daniel and the lions' den, and the three Hebrew children in the burning fiery furnace, and Esther, and John the Baptist, and Elijah, and Simon Peter saying, "We must obey God rather than men," and Samson, and Gideon, etc., ad infinitum, if you are not going to apply those stories to the practical, day-to-day events we are experiencing now? What good does it do to preach expository messages on the Bible if one does not make those messages relevant to the times and circumstances in which we live? Yet, ear-

tickling, entertainment, and irrelevant exposition seem to be what the modern church in America excels in. The result: ineffective, impotent, weak, unprepared, and sheepish Christians.

Yes, I know there are many churches and Christian ministries that are doing admirable work. We need homeless shelters, food banks, pregnancy resource centers, addiction ministries, etc. We most definitely need pastors and churches to preach the Gospel of Christ. We need missionary outreach. But we also need pastors and churches to teach the Biblical Natural Law principles of liberty and to prepare their congregations to guard and defend our freedom.

I tell you the truth: Christians in persecuted lands are not enamored with entertainment, recreation, and irrelevant Bible exposition. You don't have to bring in some big-name rock band to entice them to fellowship. You don't have to give their teenagers a big gymnasium. You don't have to give their young adults coffee shops and espresso machines. You don't have to shy away from criticisms of tyrannical government. And you certainly are not going to score any points with your fallacious "obey-the-government-no-matter-what" interpretation of Romans 13.

The time is soon coming in this country when it is going to "rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matthew 5:45 KJV) Mark it down, Christian: when persecution and tribulation comes to America (and it has already begun), you and your family will NOT be exempt. When a jetliner falls out of the sky, everyone in it (Christian or not) goes down with the plane. And when a nation falls, everyone in it (Christian or not) goes down with the country.

The church was not created to teach Christian sugars how to recreate on a playground, but to teach Christian soldiers how to fight on a battlefield.

So many of our Christian brothers and sisters seem to be literally enslaved or addicted to some form of church formality. They need a certain music fix, or entertainment fix, or teaching fix, or liturgical fix, or a hundred other fixes. They demand a certain delivery, a certain style, or a certain personality. They intend to do nothing with what they hear, but it makes them feel good hearing it. The carnality, rancor, envy, and meanness inside the church is equal to, or superior to, that which is outside the church. Many Christian businessmen are just as greedy, just as dishonest, and just as duplicitous as businessmen professing no faith. Many deacons and church officers are just as untruthful and cowardly as anyone in the outside world.

What have all of these Sunday School lessons done for us? What have all of these pacifist expositional messages done for us? What have all of these gymnasiums, youth programs, self-esteem classes, and counseling centers done for us? Pastors and churches have been teaching all forms of Bible prophecy for decades. Generations of Christians have come and gone arguing over the nuances of Eschatology. What good has it done us? While we have been playing, partying, prancing, promoting, pouting, pontificating, patronizing, and philosophizing, a fire has been burning the foundations of our country; and we have not lifted a pail of water to help extinguish the inferno.

Truly did the Lord Jesus say,

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." (Matthew 5:13 KJV)

The word "savour" here means "saltiness."

Salt is a preservative that retards decay and ruination. God has sprinkled "salt" in the form of Christian people all over the country. We are here to be a preservative and protection against rot and ruin. But when Christians lose their saltiness, Jesus said, they are "good for nothing" and are destined to be "trodden under foot of men." That is a word description of tyranny and oppression. Can anyone say Jackboot?

Unfortunately, many pastors and churches today are "good for nothing." They have lost their saltiness; they no longer preserve and protect. And, ladies and gentlemen, the Jackboots have gotten out the shoe polish as we speak.

It doesn't matter that America has 300,000 churches, 90 million people attending those churches, and 159 million people calling themselves Christians unless those churches and Christians are actively and tenaciously preserving and protecting the foundations and pillars upon which both the church and the country are built.

As God pruned Gideon's army down from 32,000 to 300, so, too, God may need to prune the Church in America. Let the majority of churches rot on the vine; let them intoxicate themselves on the opiate of entertainment and feelgoodism; let the hirelings in the pulpit lust after ease and social acceptance; let the willfully blind bask in their ignorance; and let the sheepish servants in the sanctuary lick the hands of their oppressors.

Those who choose to fight with Gideon's army, leave these fancy churches, which are nothing more than ornate tombs, and run to the sound of battle! Gideon's captains are strategically placed all around the mountains. Join them! God has never needed a majority to prevail; He never will.

The great Christian patriot and "Father of the American Revolution," Sam Adams, said,

> "It does not require a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority keen to set brush fires in the people's minds."

Let the majority of churches be irrelevant, impotent, and insignificant. Even now, God is raising up unconventional fellowships. A fire for liberty churches is ablaze in the hearts of millions of

Americans. The establishment churches are dead; shake off the dust of your feet and move on. Already, we have over 700 patriot pastors and churches that appear on our Black Regiment web page. There may be one near you.

See the list of patriot pastors and churches here:

The Black Regiment

If you can't find a patriot pastor near you, consider watching our service live at Liberty Fellowship each Sunday afternoon at approximately 2:30pm Mountain Time. Watch us here:

Live Stream

If you cannot watch the service live, you can watch my archived messages at:

Video Sermons

A majority of pastors, churches, and Christians may be irrelevant, impotent, and insignificant; but you and I don't have to be. Already, God is resurrecting Gideon's army. Will you join us?

© Chuck Baldwin

Paul Bradshaw Interview with Rick Warren: What is the Purpose in Life?

APRIL 21, 2013
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

I think this is one of the best ways to answer when someone asks why GOD lets "bad" things happen to "good" people. Or why GOD doesn't always answer prayer in a way we think He should. Rick Warren was the keynote speaker at the Southern Baptist Convention in Phoenix.

You will enjoy the new insights that Rick Warren has, with his wife now having cancer and him having 'wealth' from the book sales.

This is an absolutely incredible short interview with Rick Warren, 'Purpose Driven Life' author and pastor of Saddleback Church in California .

In the interview by Paul Bradshaw with Rick Warren, Rick said:

People ask me, What is the purpose of life?

And I respond: In a nutshell, life is preparation for eternity. We were not made to last forever, and God wants us to be with Him in Heaven. One day my heart is going to stop, and that will be the end of my body–but not the end of me.

I may live 60 to 100 years on earth, but I am going to spend trillions of years in eternity. This is the warm-up act – the dress rehearsal. God wants us to practice on earth what we will do forever in eternity.

We were made by God and for God, and until you figure that out, life isn't going to make sense.

Life is a series of problems: Either you are in one now, you're just coming out of one, or you're getting ready to go into another one..

The reason for this is that God is more interested in your character than your comfort; God is more interested in making your life holy than He is in making your life happy.

We can be reasonably happy here on earth, but that's not the goal of life. The goal is to grow in character, in Christ likeness.

This past year has been the greatest year of my life but also the toughest, with my wife, Kay, getting cancer.

I used to think that life was hills and valleys – you go through a dark time, then you go to the mountaintop, back and forth. I don't believe that anymore.

Rather than life being hills and valleys, I believe that it's kind of like two rails on a railroad track, and at all times you have something good and something bad in your life.

No matter how good things are in your life, there is always something bad that needs to be worked on. And no matter how bad things are in your life, there is always something good you can thank God for.

You can focus on your purposes, or you can focus on your problems:

If you focus on your problems, you're going into self-centeredness, which is my problem, my issues, my pain.' But one of the easiest ways to get rid of pain is to get your focus off yourself and onto God and others.

We discovered quickly that in spite of the prayers of hundreds of thousands of people, God was not going to heal Kay or make it easy for her. It has been very difficult for her, and yet God has strengthened her character, given her a ministry of helping other people, given her a testimony, drawn her closer to Him and to people.

You have to learn to deal with both the good and the bad of life. Actually, sometimes learning to deal with the good is harder. For instance, this past year, all of a sudden, when the book sold 15 million copies, it made me instantly very wealthy.

It also brought a lot of notoriety that I had never had to deal with before. I don't think God gives you money or notoriety for your own ego or for you to live a life of ease.

So I began to ask God what He wanted me to do with this money, notoriety and influence. He gave me two different passages that helped me decide what to do, II Corinthians 9 and Psalm 72.

First, in spite of all the money coming in, we would not change our lifestyle one bit.. We made no major purchases.

Second, about midway through last year, I stopped taking a salary from the church.

Third, we set up foundations to fund an initiative we call The Peace Plan to plant churches, equip leaders, assist the poor, care for the sick, and educate the next generation.

Fourth, I added up all that the church had paid me in the 24 years since I started the church, and I gave it all back. It was liberating to be able to serve God for free.

We need to ask ourselves: Am I going to live for possessions? Popularity?

Am I going to be driven by pressures? Guilt? Bitterness? Materialism? Or am I going to be driven by God's purposes (for my life)?

When I get up in the morning, I sit on the side of my bed and say, "God, if I don't get anything else done today, I want to know You more and love You better."

God didn't put me on earth just to fulfill a to-do list. He's more interested in what I am than what I do.

That's why we're called human beings, not human doings.

- Happy moments, PRAISE GOD.
- Difficult moments, SEEK GOD.
- Quiet moments, WORSHIP GOD.
- Painful moments, TRUST GOD.
- Every moment, THANK GOD..

If you do not pass it on, nothing will happen. But it will just be nice to pass it on to a friend….just like I have done.

God's Blessings

When He gets to your PC, escort Him to the next stop. Please don't allow Him to sleep on your PC. The message He is carrying is very important and needs to go round. May God bless you.

Flesh and Blood

FEBRUARY 4, 2013
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Ephesians 6:12-13 NIV (**Daily Verse**)

Last Sunday, we examined **Thou Shalt Do No Murder**, in light of the 40th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade. Did you see President Obama's press conference introducing stringent gun control measures as a response to the Sandy Hook massacre? **(video**) Before the President spoke, Vice President Biden talked about one of the children that joined them on stage:

when I asked Colin about what he thought we should be doing, he said, "I'm not here because of what happened to me. I'm here because of what happened to me keeps happening to other people and we have to do something about it." Colin, we will. Colin, I promise you, we will. This is our intention. We must do what we can now. And there's no person who is more committed to acting on this moral obligation we have than the President of the United States of America.

Vice President Biden introduces the President who stated:

In particular, I started getting a lot of letters from kids. Four of them are here today — Grant Fritz, Julia Stokes, Hinna Zeejah, and Teja Goode. They're pretty representative of some of the messages that I got. These are some pretty smart letters from some pretty smart young people.....Hinna wrote, "I feel terrible for the parents who lost their children…I love my country and want everybody to be happy and

safe." And then, Grant — go ahead and wave, Grant. (Laughter.) Grant said, "I think there should be some changes. We should learn from what happened at Sandy Hook…I feel really bad." And then, Julia said — Julia, where are you? There you go — "I'm not scared for my safety, I'm scared for others. I have four brothers and sisters and I know I would not be able to bear the thought of losing any of them."

These are our kids……President Obama went on to say:

This is what they're thinking about. And so what we should be thinking about is our responsibility to care for them, and shield them from harm, and give them the tools they need to grow up and do everything that they're capable of doing not just to pursue their own dreams, but to help build this country. This is our first task as a society, keeping our children safe. ***This is how we will be judged.***

Back up the tape and reset the stage with this:

What if….President Obama: "In particular, I started getting a lot of letters from kids. Four of them are here today – Adam Schultz, Katie Adkins, Kasheika Moore and Tyler Bradley. They're pretty representative of the messages that I got. These are some pretty smart letters from some pretty smart young people…..Kasheika wrote, "I feel terrible for all the missing children, and am so fortunate my Mom did not got to Planned Parenthood for an abortion, but instead put me up for adoption, so I may live." Adam wrote, "Even though my Mom was raped, she knew not to abort me because of what a criminal did to her, and I love life and, can you help save more children Mr. President?

You see, if the President and Vice President were really sincere about "SAVING A LIFE", they would have 23 Executive Orders, one of which would DEFUND Planned Parenthood, who is going to get over 542 milllion dollars – YOUR TAX MONEY! (read **Planned Parenthood cranks up abortion mills**)

Over 55 million babies have been killed, in the womb. That is more than the population of South Korea. How many elementary schools is that? How many businesses is that?

Yes, Mr. President, as you have clearly stated and I quote: "This is our first task as a society, keep our children safe. This is how we will be judged.

See the testimony below…followed by the call to March for Life video from last months March for Life, and our duty to march every day FOR LIFE, at work, in our community and daily comings and goings…..pray for the end of abortions in our country before God removes his hand from us..

Richmond abortion bound mother who stopped to listen to pro-life sidewalk counselors, Denny Green and Mary Penner. and her testimony

———————————-

A Nation Rises - March for Life Promot

Blackstone Films

Watch on

Resistance to Tyrants is Obedience to God

FEBRUARY 3, 2013
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

I went at your bidding, and passed along their thoroughfares of trade. I ascended their mountains and went down their valleys. I visited their manufactories, their commercial markets, and emporiums of trade. I entered their judicial courts and legislative halls. But I sought everywhere in vain for the secret of their success, until I entered the church. It was there, as I listened to the soul-equalizing and soul-elevating principles of the Gospel of Christ, as they fell from Sabbath to Sabbath upon the masses of the people, that I learned why America was great and free, and why France was a slave.

– Alexis de Tocqueville, **French historian reporting to the French Senate, 1800s**

A few years before Dr. D. James Kennedy passed away, I spent an afternoon with him at his church in Florida. Dr. Kennedy was the founder of world-renown Coral Ridge Ministries, known for stating

on national television regarding abortion, “Four thousand die daily and 300,000 pulpits are silent.”

On one occasion, Dr. Kennedy told me that while he was holding a large convention at his church, the homosexual lobby was protesting him.

A pastor attending the convention was shocked and asked, “Why is your church being protested?”

D. James Kennedy corrected this pastor with a relevant question: “You mean, your church doesn’t get protested?”

Friends, protestant has meaning: **protest** – ant.

America is looking for the Christ 78 percent of Americans claim they serve.

Agree or disagree with him, Rev. Charles Finney stated:

“Brethren, our preaching will bear its legitimate fruits. If immorality prevails in the land, the fault is ours in a great degree. If there is a decay of conscience, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the public press lacks moral discrimination, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the church is degenerate and worldly, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the world loses its interest in religion, the pulpit is responsible for it. If Satan rules in our halls of legislation, the pulpit is responsible for it. If our politics become so corrupt that the very foundations of our government are ready to fall away, the pulpit is responsible for it.”

How deprived is the understanding of the modern church when it comes to its own history!

Nowadays, effeminate hirelings have infiltrated the pulpits – pulpits they have no business occupying.

By the looks of them, I can see why the enemies of America are so encouraged. Instead of preaching against sin (transgression of God’s Law – 1 John 3:4), these hirelings accept sin, attempting to cover it with a false grace – and in so doing, teach their congregants to war against a just and holy God (Micah 3:5).

What a contrast to the preachers who thundered from America’s pulpits before, during and after the Revolutionary War, causing the colonists to stand up in the face of tyranny. The British labeled them as the much-feared “Black Robed Regiment.” The British were not the only ones who recognized them as the bulwarks of America’s Independence:

“Mighty men they were, of iron nerve and strong hand and unblanched cheek and heart of flame. God needed not reeds shaken by the wind, not men clothed in soft raiment , but heroes of

hardihood and lofty courage. … And such were the sons of the mighty who responded to the Divine call."

– Bishop Charles Galloway, 1898

"The ministers of the Revolution were, like their Puritan predecessors, bold and fearless in the cause of their country. No class of men contributed more to carry forward the Revolution and to achieve our independence than did the ministers. … y their prayers, patriotic sermons, and services rendered the highest assistance to the civil government, the army, and the country."

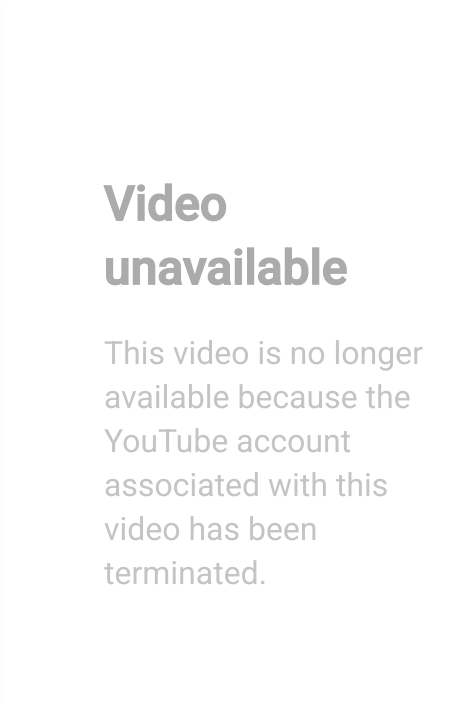
– Historian B. F. Morris, 1864

"The Constitutional Convention and the written Constitution were the children of the pulpit." – Historian Alice Baldwin, 1918

Today the professed church is attempting to flee from its responsibility to be part of the political process when in fact God is the one who gave government (Exodus 18:21). The church is to overcome evil with good. And as our forefathers rightly stated, "Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God."

Let's look at the primitive church's actions through Scripture so we can reform and align ourselves with God's original intent for the church. And surprise, surprise – guess who they were standing against?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qeD-siviqzc



Who is Bradlee Dean? **See his YouTube channel**

Bradlee Dean is an ordained preacher, **heavy metal drummer**, talk-show host of the **Sons of Liberty Radio,** and speaks on college and high school campuses with his ministry, **You Can Run But You Cannot Hide International.** @BradleeDean1

Newtown Carnage: Causes, Consequences, & Cures?

DECEMBER 23, 2012
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

From Heresies, Horrors, & Holocausts — to Hope

> Men, in a word, must necessarily be controlled, either by a power within them, or by a power without them; either by the word of God, or by the strong arm of man; either by the Bible, or by the bayonet. – Rep. Robert C. Winthrop, Speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives (1849)

> "I lament that (if we remove the Bible from schools) we waste so much time and money in punishing crimes and take so little pains to prevent them. … For this Divine Book, above all others, favors that respect for just laws … and virtues which constitute the soul of (our government)." — Benjamin Rush, Signer of the Declaration of Independence

> "All of the miseries and evils which men suffer from vice (and) crime … proceed from them despising or neglecting the precepts contained in the Bible." — Noah Webster

It is naïve and presumptuous to believe there is a single, simple explanation for what happened in Newtown last week. However, one thing is certain: the causes behind this tragedy and others like it go well beyond the call for stricter gun controls. Unless we recognize that, and move to address those causes, we can expect more Newtowns ahead. They include the following:

Heresies: The Rejection of God and the Bible

Throughout history, man has turned his back on God to pursue his own path – with serious consequences. The Scopes Trial of 1925 mocked the idea that man was created by God in His image. In 1962, the Supreme Court held that public school teachers could no longer open class with prayer. In 1963, the Court also ruled against the reading of Scripture in public school classrooms. Later courts went on to ban displays of the Ten Commandments and other references to God. Therefore, with Him out of the way, who decides what is Right and what is Wrong?

The Holocaust: Legalized Murders of the Unborn

In 1973, the Supreme Court ruled that laws protecting the lives of unborn babies interfered with the right of the mother to "privacy", which allowed her to kill her own unborn child. Since that time, an estimated 54 million unborn babies have been legally murdered – some of them within moments of taking their first breath. So, if we can take a baby's life ***before*** birth, why not a child's life ***after*** birth? Have we destroyed our respect for the sanctity of life?

Hollywood Horrors: Desensitized to Violence

The poison of illicit sex and violence that spews out of Hollywood into our theaters, our living rooms, and our video games has deadened our sense of discernment between reality and fantasy, and between good and evil. Like drugs, it is addictive, progressive, and destructive, leaving a trail of ruined men, exploited women, broken homes, damaged children, disease, crime, and often violent death. Can we expect anyone to feed on this poison without being affected by it?

Broken Families, Missing Fathers, and Damaged Children

We are experiencing a moral meltdown in America. ***22%*** of pregnancies are ending in abortion. ***40%*** of the babies who do survive are born to single mothers. ***50%*** of marriages are ending in divorce, and ***33%*** of our children are being raised in single parent homes – most of them without the presence of a father. Is it any wonder that many of these children suffer from lower academic achievement and higher rates of abuse, sexual molestation, STDs, drug dependency, and crime?

The Two Great Commandments: Our Only Hope

Our response to all of this can be as simple or as complicated as we want to make it. Yes, we can pass as many laws as we like, but the problems will persist until we turn our hearts back to God and live in obedience to His Word. Jesus put it very simply when He said that the greatest of God's commandments could be summed up as follows: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind, and your neighbor as yourself. This do, and you shall live."

If we can do that, and teach our children to do so as well, perhaps we can prevent future tragedies like that of Newtown and yes, perhaps we can even be accused — as were Jesus' disciples — of "having turned the world upside down!" May it be so.

Valley Faith in Action airs at 8:00 p.m. on Friday and at 8:30 p.m. Sunday on WAZT-TV, which is Comcast Cable Channel 13 in the Harrisonburg area. It will air again at Wednesday midnight. You can also access it and other recent programs by clicking **HERE**.

Election Reflections: Where Do We Go From Here?

NOVEMBER 23, 2012
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: ABORTION, CULTURE WARS, FAITH, LIBERTY, OBEDIENCE TO GOD, RIGHT TO LIFE

From Meltdown to Revival: Rebuilding the City on a Hill

The Elections: President Obama's re-election last week reflects the growing secularization of our culture that flowered in the early 1960's with the Supreme Court's decision to ban compulsory prayer and Bible reading in our schools.

That trend has accelerated dramatically under Obama's watch, with grave consequences for our moral, political, and economic well-being. Sadly, barring a life-changing Obama conversion or powerful resistance from ***We the People***, it is certain to get markedly worse in the next four years.

The Challenge: Drawing on a range of Biblical texts and Founders' insights, we will examine where we are, how we got here, who is responsible, and what we must do. For starters:

1. ***Resist:*** We must take a stand against the Obama team whenever it tries to impose policies on us that violate Biblical values and the Constitution (see **www.manhattandeclaration.org**), and

2. ***Rebuild:*** We must work to restore those foundational values and principles on which America was founded and has prospered, and which define her as a ***Shining City on a Hill***.

Religion & Morality: A Matter of Patriotism?

> *"Of all the dispositions and habits which lend to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism who should labor to subvert these great Pillars of human happiness." (George Washington, 1796)*
>
> ————————–
>
> ***Our Moral Meltdown:*** The cultural landscape is littered with the damage done by modern "Liberalism/Progressivism" and its rejection of Judeo-Christian values: ***1) 22%*** of all pregnancies now end in abortion, and some ***54 million*** unborn babies have been destroyed since *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. ***2) 40%*** of all babies are now born to single mothers. ***3) 33%*** of children are being raised in single-parent homes. ***4) 50%*** of all marriages end in divorce. ***5) Nine states*** have now legalized same-sex marriage. Pornography runs rampant, leaving a trail of ruined men, exploited women, broken marriages, abused children, disease, crime, and even violent death.

The Economic Costs: As George Washington made clear, religion and morality are indispensable to our prosperity. That is not an idle claim. Those who believe otherwise are overlooking the inconvenient truth that "family fragmentation costs ***U.S. taxpayers*** at least ***$112 billion*** each year (and) the cost to ***Virginia taxpayers*** alone is estimated at ***$776 million*** each year." (For details, see "Report to the Nation" at **www.americanvalues.org**)

Perilous Politics: From Freedom to Bondage

> *"Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." (Benjamin Franklin, 1775)*

> *"A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the majority discovers it can vote itself largess out of the public treasury. After that, the majority always votes for the candidate promising the most benefits with the result the democracy collapses because of the loose fiscal policy ensuing, always to be followed by a dictatorship, then a monarchy." (Alexander Tyler, 1787)*

————————-

We are in a war against greed, corruption, and cronyism within our own expanding federal government. It has created massive national debt; imposed higher taxes, stifling regulations, and immoral mandates; increased entitlements, welfare, and other government handouts; redefined deviancy down; pitted us against each other on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual "orientation", and "class"; and created uncertainty about our support for Israel amid rising tensions in the Middle East.

We cannot continue on this path and still survive as a free people. Indeed, America appears to be headed downward in a classic spiral that has destroyed so many other nations. In 1787, Scottish political philosopher Alexander Tyler described this eight-step, 200-year cycle as follows:

- From ***Bondage***, to ***Faith***, to ***Courage***, to ***Liberty***, to ***Abundance***, to ***Selfishness***, to ***Apathy***, to ***Dependency*** – and back to ***Bondage***.

Who Is Responsible?

> *"I sought for a man to stand in the gap before me that I should not destroy the land, but I found none." (Ezekiel 22:30) "A certain farmer sowed good seed in his field, but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat." (Mt. 13:24-25)*

> *"Now more than ever, the people are responsible for the character of their Congress. If that body be ignorant, reckless, and corrupt, it is because the people tolerate ignorance, recklessness, and corruption." (Pres. James Garfield, 1877)*

————————-

The Man in the Mirror: It is tempting to blame everyone else for the spiritual, moral, economic, and political decline of America. However, the sad truth is that we have found the enemy, and it is us. As noted above, we have been either AWOL or asleep during this time. ***We can do better!***

The Church: An even sadder truth is that large chunks of the Christian church are perhaps most culpable in this ***Sin of Silence***. Although some pockets have spoken out for Biblical truth during this moral and political meltdown, many others drew a line between the "sacred" and the "secular". They bought the lie that they should only "pray" for those in authority and avoid any direct "entanglement" in government and "politics".

Still others bought the lie that we should not "judge" others, even for behavior that is clearly wrong. Similarly, they valued the approval of man over the approval of God and refrained from confronting even the most blatant evils for fear of offending someone. ***It is time to take a stand!***

The Road Ahead for a Great National Renewal

> *"I set before you this day a Blessing and a Curse; a Blessing if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, and a Curse if you will not obey and choose to go after other gods." Deut. 11:26-28*

> *"Without God there could be no American form of government, nor an American way of life. Recognition of the Supreme Being is the first, the most basic, expression of Americanism. Thus, the Founding Fathers saw it, and thus with God's help, it will continue to be." Dwight Eisenhower*

> *"If we ever forget that we are One Nation Under God, we will be a Nation Gone Under." Ronald Reagan*

————————-

The Bottom Line: More than the economy or politics, the solution to our problems is spiritual. As noted above, only when we turn back to God will He resume His blessings on America.

It has taken a long time to get us to this low point, and the climb back to a full recovery will also take time. However, the path is clearly marked by the need for continued periods of ***"Prayer and Fasting"*** and a ***Great Spiritual Awakening***. That will in turn take us through successive gates of ***1) Remembrance, 2) Repentance, 3) Revival, 4) Righteousness, 5) Resistance,*** and ***6) Reform*** – each one bringing us ever closer to a ***National Restoration.***

I look forward to taking a stand with you and marching together toward this noble goal because ***"We won't give up, we won't give in, and we won't quit until we win!"***

Laus Deo!

Valley Faith in Action airs at 8:00 p.m. on Friday and at 8:30 p.m. Sunday on WAZT-TV, which is Comcast Cable Channel 13 in the Harrisonburg area. It will air again at Wednesday midnight. You can also access it and other recent programs by clicking **HERE**.

The Church under the God as Revealed in the Holy Bible is Exempt from Civil Laws that Violate Both Revealed and Natural Law

NOVEMBER 21, 2012
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLE, GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The church, for lack of knowledge, has abandoned its autonomy for the sake of becoming a beneficiary of the state (federal state). They must have the courage to recover their autonomy, exercise their immunity, and not abide a 'civil' law that violates both revealed and natural law. John Marshall, in Marbury v. Madison, said that a 'civil' law that is repugnant to the Constitution is void. John Marshall was merely reiterating a maxim earlier published by men like sirs Edward Coke and William Blackstone who said any positive law (civil statute) that violates revealed and natural law is void.

The church and institutions of religion are wrongfully applying the Romans 13 instruction when they obey an edict of men that contradicts the edict of God. Romans 13 says that we must submit to the 'authorities' as ministers of God for our good. The American system of government is a government of law and not men. That system has an 'authority' hierarchy. First revealed law found in the scriptures; then natural law – observed in natural and understood by rational regenerate minds; then acts of legislatures of which the Heavenly Father may be indifferent. To obey the 'authorities' cited in Romans 13, we must act contrary to any act of a legislature that is repugnant to the law which is revealed. Even more so, ecclesiastical institutions are outside the jurisdiction of the civil

government. The church must not subject its operations and administration to the 'civil' jurisdiction or it abandons its immunity. Even should a church or institution of religion waive its ecclesiastical immunity for some benefit of civil society, there are certain rights and duties that cannot be abandoned even when it enters a relationship with society's civil administration. If an act of that 'civil' administration is repugnant to the law of God, it is void. It must not be obeyed lest you sin with those who administer it. You do not request a exemption or waiver from that which is unlawful. You are immune. You must have the courage to stand against it without asking permission. Even in the face of the unlearned saying that you violate Romans 13.

The church and institutions of religion are not subject to obtaining an 'exemption' from that which they are lawfully immune. Rather than churches being 'exempt' from taxation, the law mandates the government to 'except' churches from the requirements. See 26 USC 508. They are 'excepted' from the requirements on the basis of their immunity rather than the government having the discretion to first impose a requirement upon them and then give them an exemption. In the case of the infamous Obamacare, churches and other institutions of religion ought not to request an exemption but rather ought to declare their immunity and act accordingly.

In American law, courts are not supposed to get involved in a dispute until there is an injury to which the court can provide remedy. (See Marbury v. Madison) If an act requires you to violate the law of God, it is an act in violation of the constitution. If an act is repugnant to the constitution and you have not been injured by the government trying to enforce the unlawful act that you refuse to obey, then the court has no jurisdiction over the matter since you are not being injured. Just continue to do the right thing — disobey — and let the government abstain from enforcing their unlawful act against you. That is the chivalrous precept upon which this nation's liberty rests.

If anybody says that obedience to the health care program would cause them to sin, upon that confession they have an obligation before God to not obey it. If you don't have the conviction of religion that raises to the level of disobedience, it is not truly a conviction. Courts have the obligation to protect your right to obey the mandates of God but they have no obligation to protect your mere religious preferences.

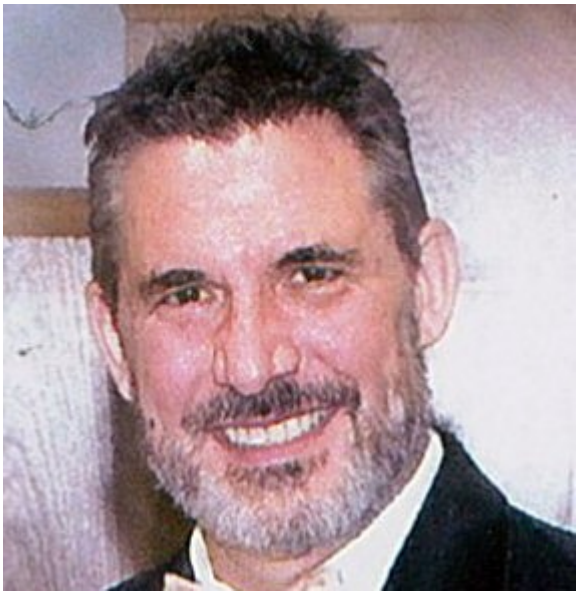
Delegate Marshall's bill proposals demonstrate that he is not suffering from lack of knowledge or courage. He and we are suffering from a lack of a community of legislators and society that understand the importance of exercising due diligence to uphold the law of God and to protect the life, liberty and property of one another. It is not for one man, Bob Marshall, to maintain the quarrel of all. If we do not man the lines with him, we fail.

We sing that this is the land of the free and the home of the brave. I say that this cannot be the land of the free if it is not the home of the brave. Our society's bravery wanes in proportion to our faith. Our freedom will come in proportion to our faith.

David Alan Carmichael is a media consultant to the Virginia Christian Alliance. and the Principal Minister of **Freedom Ministries**, a Christian evangelism, discipleship ministry committed to conveying the truth of God's word to every issue and situation for our day. His Faith and Freedom radio show was broadcast in Hampton Roads from July 2007 through April 2009 and now broadcasts on WOGF Frank Talk 104.3 FM in West-Central Florida, where David talks about the issues of the day from a constitutional basis, a biblical basis, and on the basis of right versus wrong. (HEAR **PODCAST**)

Blind Watchman and Dumb Dogs!

JULY 14, 2012
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD



During a recent study of God's word I came upon this verse,

Isaiah 56:10, "His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber."

Dr. Wayne Grudem cites this very verse in his latest book, "Politics According To The Bible" subtitled, "A Comprehensive Resource for Understanding Modern Political Issues in Light of Scripture." Page 570, "The Hebrew prophet Isaiah knew this had happened with the nation of Israel long ago, he said, His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. (Isa. 56:10)"

Grudem continues, "When this happens – when the watchdogs "cannot bark" – they fail to call leaders to account. Then the people of a nation do not have adequate information to make wise decisions about their leaders and about the direction in which the nation is going. When the watchdogs are silent, a nation will soon be led astray by its leaders, who no longer have sufficient accountability to the public."

Dr. King seemed to state the principle this way, ""The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority." Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Strength to Love, 1963.

So my question is, “To whom does this verse apply?”

Non politically active clergy, at least!

It is central to the Gospel of the Kingdom that pastors watch and give a call.

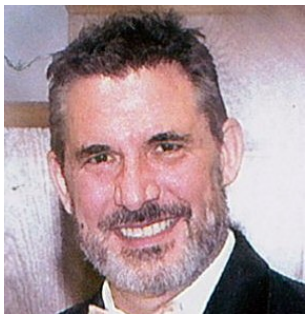
In Matt. 28:19-20, “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” seems to me to mean more than just John 3:16.

All that Jesus commanded is recorded as what he taught in the four Gospels. But also beyond that, Jesus promised his followers that the Holy Spirit would “bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you” (John 14:26), and also that the Holy Spirit “will teach you all things” (vs. 26) and will “guide you into all the truth” (16:13).

Isn’t this why the apostle Peter can say that “the commandment of the Lord and Savior” came “through your apostles” (1 Pet. 3:2), and Paul clearly states much the same when he says, “The things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord” (1 Cor. 14:37). Certainly this is true or they would have no sound authority to speak such.

So then it seems clear to me that both the Gospels and the Epistles come to us as the word of God with the authority of Jesus, and he wants us to teach these things to our churches., including matters of governmental policies, political issues and candidates!

So I frankly conclude that when a clergy person pulls back in silence and hides the light of Christ’s teachings under the “bushel basket of non-political involvement”, they become blind watchmen and dumb dogs!



Rev. MichaEl Hirsch
Mobile (540) 295-4872
Office (540) 371-5294
Senior Pastor Calvary Christian Church
Presiding Director Fredericksburg Rappahannock Evangelical Alliance
Advisor Virginia Christian Alliance
PS – The greatest news I ever heard –
http://www.cccfred.com/ministries/meet-our-senior-pastors/

Atheists Convert to Christianity: Impacted by I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist College

APRIL 28, 2012
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Atheists Convert to Christianity: Impacted by I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist College Seminars Because of your support, I have the privilege of recording two TV shows per month, a radio show every Saturday, and speaking to live audiences much more often (58 presentations since January including 12 I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist seminars at colleges). Many of our hundred or so CIA graduates are busy as well. It is often difficult to measure our impact in this blur of activity. But **two testimonies we just received** from CIA graduates Allen Hainline in Dallas and Eric Chabot in Ohio serve as evidence of how God is blessing our work and how important your support is.

Allen Hainline writes: "I just wanted to share that **a guy on our campus (UT Dallas) has been converted from atheism to Christianity** this year. His name is Mitch and he is a grad student in EE – please be praying for his spiritual growth. He grew up in a nominal Christian household but became an atheist at college. **He attended the "I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist" seminar that Frank did at our campus in September and was affected significantly by it – he then read the book, which helped even more.** One interesting note is the barrage of shallow questions asked by atheists in the Q&A at the seminar really made him think they were close-minded. The student leader of our Reasonable Faith apologetics group, Garrett Engel, really was used by God in witnessing to Mitch and showing him how the evidence is on our side. **So praise God and keep up the good work Frank – God is using your ministry and apologetics is important for evangelism!"**

Eric Chabot writes: I wanted to share a similar testimony. **This student has attended both of Frank's lectures here at Ohio State University. He was an atheist** who was attending the atheist group meetings here but then started coming to our Ratio Christi campus meetings to hear a different perspective. **He recently told me that he has left atheism and thinks that the argument for Jesus being the Messiah is the strongest piece of evidence that he has seen yet. Hence, he has committed himself to be a follower of our Lord. I praise God for this**. Sometimes we want instant results. But in this case, this student took the time to really investigate to see if what we believe is true. I admire him for that.

Thanks be to God and to you for your support. **We would not be impacting eternity this way without you.**

By the way, these conversions are one of many reasons why **we must continue providing evidence** for our views**. Here are six more reasons.**

Protesters at Ohio University Hear I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist:

As I mentioned in my last email, the homosexual rights group "Open Doors" tried to close the doors on my I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist seminar at Ohio University. About **350 attended** that night (and similar crowds attended our events at Ohio State the next two nights). At Ohio University **about 25 came to protest** outside the event. I introduced myself to them beforehand and invited them all in. **They stood in the back for all three hours and heard the entire program, including the Gospel!**

Over 350 attended our Ohio University event as protestors stood in the back and listened.

During the Q&A they asked several questions—none of them challenging any of the evidence I gave for Christianity—but instead dealing with homosexuality and morality. **One asked if homosexuality is a sin.** I said, "Having homosexual feelings is not a sin, but engaging in homosexual behavior is. But homosexual behavior is not the only sin out there. I am a sinner too and have to come to the foot of the cross just like everyone else."

Here's the school newspaper story on the event. **The story contains one rather egregious error.** It claims my book **Correct, NOT Politically Correct** cites "religious reasons" as the basis for my opposition to same-sex marriage. Actually, the exact opposite is true. I didn't use religious reasons at all, but instead made a natural law case against same-sex marriage. The reporter could have gotten that fact from the back cover of the book, but she just assumed she knew what it said (Imagine the media getting it wrong!).

Overall the night went very well. **Many seeds were planted.** Thank you for your prayers!

Footsteps of Paul Cruise with Indiana Jones and C.S. Lewis's Stepson!

There are still some spots available on **an amazing biblical cruise** that I'll be co-hosting this July with**Dr. Bob Cornuke (the real Indiana Jones) and Doug Gresham, right (stepson of C.S. Lewis)**. We will stop at some of the most beautiful places in the world, including **Istanbul, Ephesus, Santorini, Athens, Corinth, Malta, Pompei, Sardinia, Sicily and Rome!**

Go here for all the details http://www.livingpassages.com/footsteps-of-paul-maltaand to see a one-minute video. Or you can call Rhonda at **1-888-771-8717**. Space is limited so sign up soon!

Teach Apologetics: Apply for the New CIA Now!

Our 5th annual CrossExamined Instructor Academy will take place in Charlotte, August 9-11, 2012. **There will be more topics and more opportunities for you to hone your apologetics presentation skills this year. Go here for details.** Apply soon because seats are extremely limited!

Thank you for empowering us with your prayers and donations.

Blessings,

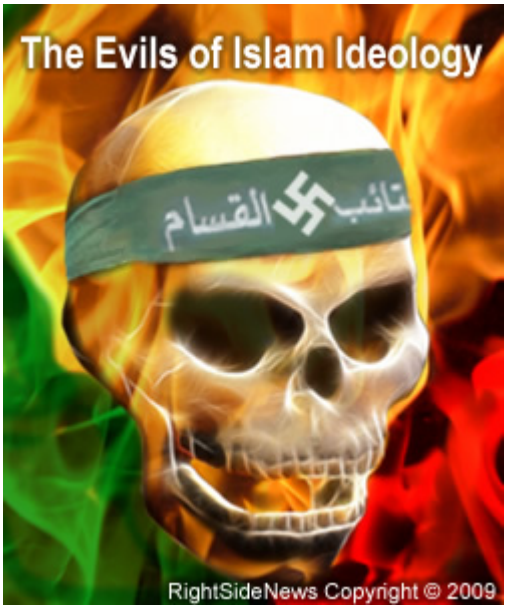
Frank

Dr. Frank Turek

Founder & President of CrossExamined.org
Speaker and author/co-author of:
I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist
Correct, NOT Politically Correct
Legislating Morality
TV: Wednesday Nights @ 9 pm & 1 am ET DirecTV Ch. 378
Radio: Saturdays @ 10 am ET
704-845-1997

Christianity Under Fire by Radical Islam

JANUARY 9, 2012
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

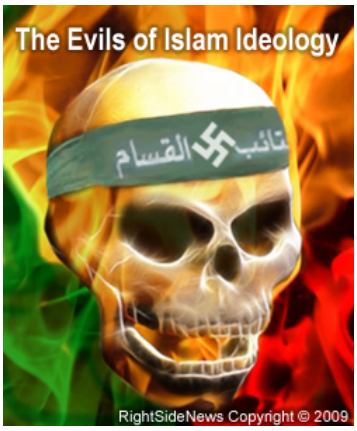


The stage is set. Christians in Islamic Africa and the Islamic-dominated middle east are on the chopping block and barely a peep is heard from the left-leaning media.

So much for the Arab Spring rebels seeking freedom. They were seeking freedom all right, freedom to kill, pillage and ethnically cleanse without reprisals.

Little attention is given in the media to the new crises being suffered by Christians in Islamic nations. With the de facto backing that the United States government has provided the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and other places, they are doing exactly what their manifestos have predicted which is to fundamentally Islamize the region. To do that, is to oust non-Muslims.

Where's the outrage? Where's the UN? Where's the Obama administration?



Three months after the "Freedom Fighters" began their uprising in Egypt, and it appeared the Muslim Brotherhood was taking control of the country, Coptic Christians started to come under fire, with hundreds killed and several churches burned. Christians were protected under the evil dictatorship of Hosni Mubarak, who our president played a hand in deposing. There are no accurate statistics on how many have been killed but there are numerous reports. Here's a sampling:

- **Click here: Hundreds March In Egypt To Mourn Christians Killed | Fox News**

- **Click here: Egypt: Mass Murder of Christians While Churches Burn**
- **Click here: More Christians killed in Egypt in past few days**

Next:Tunisia. Since their fight for "Freedom" Christians have become targets of oppression and murder by fundamentalist Jihadists. Here's a sampling:

- **Click here: Tunisia: Jihadists murder Catholic priest – Jihad Watch**
- **Click here: Christian in Tunisia Under Pressure | Present Truth Ministries**

Next: Nigeria. Islamists in the West African nation have been on a murder spree, targeting Christians for death unless they convert to Islam. Check these articles:

- **Click here: Nigerian Christians killed in fresh attacks | GlobalPost**
- **Click here: More than 100 Christians Killed in Nigeria's Plateau State**
- **Click here: ?Nigerian Christians Killed By Muslims or AL CIA da?? YouTube**

Next:Iraq. Under the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein, Christians were not only protected, they were included in the government. No more. Since 2010, Christians have become fair game for Jihadists. And as our troops decline in presence, the violence increased toward Christians. The three percent Christian population there is dwindling fast. There are dozens of articles, too many to post here. Check these:

- **Click here: Iraq's Christians Near Extinction :: Middle East Forum**
- **Click here: Militants stage deadliest attack on Iraqi Christians – Boston.com**

Next: Syria. Believe it or not, the small Christian population in Syria is fearful of a regime change, as the Assad regime has protected Christians much like Saddam Hussein and Hosni Mubarak did. But, the Arab Spring is changing everything, and our president has called for Assad to step down. (sound familiar) And, in the wake of his departure, Christians know they are in for the same fate as Iraq, Egypt and other places.

- **Click here: Militants stage deadliest attack on Iraqi Christians – Boston.com**
- **Click here: Syrian Christians Threatened by Salafi Protestors « Persecution News**

Next: Believe it or not, Great Britain. As the radical Muslim population grows in England so does the threat of Islamic domination over Christianity. To understand this better, one only has to view this short video in the UK:

- **Click here: MUST WATCH VIDEO: "Unholy War" Christians under attack by Muslims in the UK**
- **Click here: Lord Carey says Christianity is 'under attack' in Britain**

This blog could easily be ten times the length if I would include the bulk of attacks and intimidation toward Christians throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa, but you get the picture. While we like to think ourselves as "tolerant" people wishing to living a peaceful coexistence, that has to be a two-sided goal, or it will never work.

As the Islamic population grows and becomes more emboldened with power in the United States, we will see more of what is happening in places like England, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, and France where they have over 750 Islamic enclaves which are "no-go zones" for French authorities. Sharia is the law.

It is essential that Americans get their heads out of the sand and realize the long-term goals of the Muslim Brotherhood, which is to Islamize the west. That's not anyone's imagination, it is written in their own secret, unearthed documents, many of which I've revealed in past blogs. Why do we ignore tham?

That question is for you, Mr. President. You are a Christian, correct?

Muhammed decreed, from his death bed, that Islam should be spread throughout the world. Islamic fundamentalists have been following that order to this very day, and there is little the "peaceful" and "non-fundamentalist" are doing to stem the tide.

No, I am not a Christian. But that matters not. I am conscious enough to know the threats against non-Muslims are looming down the road. It won't be long.

Wake up America.

Marshall Frank

Thirty years of law enforcement in Miami, Florida, including sixteen years working homicide, gives Marshall Frank a huge reservoir from which to draw insights into the problems facing America today. After retiring from the Miami-Dade P.D. in 1990, Frank went on to become a writer, now with eight published books, five fiction and three non-fiction. His book "**Militant Islam In America**" was published after an exhaustive research study about the inroads that radicals are making within the borders of the U.S. He is currently working on a non-fiction book about the abominable criminal justice system. Book listings, prices and availability can be accessed at his web site:**www.marshallfrank.com**.

The Religious Left and Environmentalism

NOVEMBER 27, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: INTER-FAITH, INTERFAITH, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The religious left views capitalism as the root of a rapacious greed that causes men to exploit and even destroy the natural environment in exchange for financial profit. To combat these forces, religious leftists commonly anoint themselves as stewards of God's earth, committed to defending its air, water, animals, plants, and natural resources from the ravages of free-market economies – especially America's. (They have had less to say about the fact that China, the old Soviet Union, and the former Communist states of Eastern and Central Europe were responsible for pollution on a scale that dwarfed anything ever observed in the Western world.)

> **Source**: Discover the Networks **DTN**
> **Resources**: 1)Indepth Resource page on the environmental movement | indepth videos **RSN Agenda 21**
> 2) **The Cornwall Declaration on Environmental Stewardship** and **A Renewed Call to Truth, Prudence, and Protection of the Poor**
> 3) **Recommended DVD**: **Resisting the Green Dragon**: with David Barton, WallBuilders; Dr. Michael Farris, Home School Legal Defense Assn.; Bryan Fischer, American Family Association; Pastor Jack Hibbs, Calvary Chapel Chino Hills; Bishop Harry Jackson, Hope Christian Church; Dr. Richard Land, Southern Baptist ERLC; Tom Minnery, Focus on the Family; Dr. David Noebel, Summit Ministries; Janet Parshall, National Radio Host; Tony Perkins, Family Research Council; Dr. Frank Wright, National Religious Broadcasters;Wendy Wright, Concerned Women for America——An Evangelical Examination of the Theology, Science, and Economics of Global Warming

One of the harshest critics of American industry is the Evangelical Environmental Network, which **seeks** "to educate, inspire, and mobilize Christians in their effort to care for God's creation,

to be faithful stewards of God's provision, and to advocate for actions and policies that honor God and protect the environment." Toward this end, the organization publishes environment-centered sermons for preachers to use, and offers interpretations of scripture to support leftist environmental agendas.

A San Francisco-based group called the Regeneration Project – claiming to represent more than 5,000 church congregations in 29 states – has launched an "Interfaith Power and Light" campaign aimed at countering man-made global warming. In February 2009 another Regeneration Project initiative – "Religious Plea for a Green Stimulus" – delivered to President **Barack Obama** a petition opposing the construction of any new coal-fired plants in the U.S., urging drastic and rapid reductions in greenhouse-gas emissions, and calling for increased fuel-economy standards for American-made automobiles.

"When billions of taxpayer dollars are at stake, it is a moral issue," said the Project's founder, Rev. Canon Sally Bingham. "When the planet is in peril, it is a moral issue."

The **National Council of Churches** (NCC) has established an**Eco-Justice Program** to lobby Members of Congress to support legislation that will preserve public lands and reduce carbon emissions. In 2002 NCC was a party to "What Would Jesus Drive?" — a campaign that exhorted car manufactures to embrace stricter emissions standards.

An organization called Presbyterians for Earth Care (formerly known as Presbyterians for Restoring Creation) opposes oil drilling in Alaska's **Artic National Wildlife Refuge** as part of an effort to heed "**God's call to be green**."

The Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), representing a host of religious organizations with a combined investment portfolio of more than $100 billion, **pressures** corporations to adopt leftist environmental agendas vis a vis pollution in low-income communities. ICCR also demands an end to "environmental racism," a term founded on the notion that corporate polluters typically dispose of their waste in a manner that disproportionately affects poor, nonwhite populations.

The **National Religious Partnership for the Environment** (NRPE) – a massive coalition supported by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National Council of Churches, the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life, and the Evangelical Environmental Network – **warns** that "the ways we produce and use energy are wounding God's creation." To address this issue, NRPE urges Americans to organize "environmental awareness days," write letters-to-the-editor about environmental matters, and lobby their political representatives "to play a strong international role in researching and preserving biodiversity worldwide."

This section of Discover The Networks examines the environmentalist worldviews, objectives, and activities of these and many other key organizations that comprise the religious left.

Religious Left and New Age Religions

OCTOBER 10, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

This section of DiscoverTheNetworks examines the worldviews and activities of individuals who seek to advance the doctrines of the religious left. (For a fuller discussion of those doctrines, **click here**.) The RESOURCES column on the right side of this page contains a link to the section where profiles of these individuals can be found. It also contains links to articles, essays, books, and videos that explore, in depth, the following:

Source: **Discover the Networks**

- liberation theology, which holds that the church must stand on the side of the impoverished and the downtrodden, and that it must, if necessary, support the overthrow of social systems — especially capitalism — that contribute to their oppression;
- black liberation theology, which seeks to foment Marxist revolutionary fervor founded on racial rather than class solidarity;
- the religious left's affinity for socialist and leftist doctrines generally;
- the religious left's embrace of radical environmentalism, which views capitalism and industry as inherently destructive to the natural world;
- the anti-Americanism that is a hallmark of the religious left;
- the anti-Israel and anti-Semitic worldviews that are commonplace among the religious left;
- the religious left's support for open borders, unregulated immigration, and amnesty for illegal aliens residing in the United States;
- the religious left's steadfast belief that pacifism is the only morally acceptable way of dealing with aggressors around the world; and
- the religious left's alliance with certain elements in the labor-union movement.

IN DEPTH

Understanding Liberation Theology
Black Liberation Theology
Religion and Socialism / Leftism
The Religious Left and Environmentalism
The Religious Left and Anti-Americanism
The Religious Left and Anti-Israel / Anti-Semitic Perspectives
The Religious Left and Immigration
The Religious Left and Pacifism
The Religious Left and Organized Labor

How the Left Defines Itself

SEPTEMBER 25, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) was **founded** in 1947 by **Eleanor Roosevelt**, **John Kenneth Galbraith**, **Walter Reuther**, **Arthur Schlesinger**, and **Reinhold Niebuhr**, "to keep the New Deal dream … alive for generations to come"—i.e., to **promote** "liberal politics, liberal policies, and a liberal future." Closely tied to **Democratic Party** politics and agendas, ADA **boasts** that it "has played critical roles in every Democratic presidential campaign since Harry Truman's, and has provided scores of senior advisors to Democratic Presidents, Senators, and Congressmen over the years." The organization claims to consist of "**thousands of members**," whom it urges "to lobby their Senators and Representatives" on issues of political and social import.

During each election cycle, ADA gives **support**—in the form of financial contributions and volunteer labor—to "scores of progressive Congressional candidates." Its **political action committee** "has contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars" to help "elect liberals to the United States House of Representatives and Senate," with priority given to "incumbents in close races and challengers who are women or minorities in marginal districts." ADA **rates** the respective legislative voting records of all elected officials in Congress and **proudly declares** that it was "among the very first groups to support **Barack Obama**'s Senate race in 2004."

To disseminate its political views and recommendations as broadly as possible, ADA has established an **Education Fund** that produces periodic policy briefs, sponsors guest speakers who address a broad range of issues, conducts polling, and offers student-research fellowships.

ADA's **president** is **Lynn Woolsey**. Its **vice presidents** include such notables as **Elijah Cummings**, **Eleanor Holmes Norton**, and **Jan Schakowsky**. And among its **honorary presidents** are **Barney Frank**, **John Lewis**, **Jim McDermott**, **George McGovern**, and **Charles Rangel**. The organization's **national director** is Michael Wilson, a former official with the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union.

ADA is **headquartered** in Washington, DC and has additional **chapters** located in Los Angeles, Honolulu, Chicago, St. Louis, New York City, Long Island (New York), Cleveland, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Guadalajara (Mexico).

Among ADA's positions on issues of political import are the following:

• **Unemployment**: ADA calls for "direct job creation by the federal government," as well as the use of federal funds to "expan" unemployment benefits, healthcare coverage, and **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** benefits for people who are out of work.

• **Health Care**: Advocating a government-run "**single-payer**" healthcare system," ADA regards the **2010 healthcare reform bill** as "a good first step," albeit one that is "far from perfect," toward a "far more fundamental restructuring of America's health care system."

• **Tax Reform**: "Restore progressivity to our personal and corporate income tax systems … to ensure the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share of taxes."

• **Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan**: Lamenting that "an unnecessary war of choice in Iraq … has severely damaged America's moral standing in the world, multiplied support for terrorists, and depleted our military," ADA asserts that the U.S. should not only "open diplomatic relations and unconditional multilateral negotiations with any country," but should also conduct its foreign policy "through multinational organizations such as the **United Nations** and NATO."

• **Education**: ADA says that to "combat educational inequality," elementary and secondary education should be funded "by means of general taxes" collected from taxpayers nationwide, so that school budgets in low-income neighborhoods can be as high as those in affluent areas.

• **Energy**: ADA supports a **cap-and-trade** policy which would tax businesses whose carbon-dioxide emissions exceed federally stipulated limits. **Moreover**, the organization calls for reductions in the use of fossil fuels and nuclear energy, in favor of greater reliance upon "wind power, solar power, and biofuels."

• **Criminal Justice**: Asserting that every facet of the justice system is infested with "racism and classism," ADA recommends the use of alternatives to incarceration—by way of "education, drug and alcohol treatment, opportunities for recreation, and job-training programs."

• **Women's Rights**: "The women of the United States have not yet achieved full economic, social, or legal equity, and are still denied the same opportunities available to men."

• **Immigration**: ADA **condemns** the "demagoguery and vitriolic scapegoating have been directed at undocumented immigrants, the most deprived, exploited, and abused individuals." Asserting further that "**deportations should be suspended**," the organization **says** that illegals "should have full and equal access to all public services, including education, health care, and welfare assistance, and should … have the right to join a union, obtain a driver's license, and pay in-state tuition at their state's public universities…."

• **Defense Spending**: Chastising America for playing the "role of policeman of the world" and thereby "undermining the role of the UN," ADA calls for "massive reductions" in U.S. defense spending, including an end to "funding for development and deployment of a Star Wars' ballistic missile defense, which violates the **ABM Treaty**."

• **Guantanamo Bay**: "Detaining civilians indefinitely is cruel and inhumane," says ADA, and "should not be practiced by the United States." Thus the organization advocates the closure of the **Guantanamo Bay** detention facility and calls for "criminal and legislative investigations … of torture and other forms of prisoner abuse."

• **Death Penalty**: ADA "opposes the death penalty on moral grounds." It also asserts that capital punishment is applied in a racially discriminatory manner and "has not been a deterrent to crime."

• **Gun Control**: ADA proposes "that the manufacture of guns be restricted to military weapons, to be tightly controlled by the military, and hunting rifles and shotguns of reasonably limited design. The possession of all other guns should be prohibited."

• **Voting Rights**: ADA strongly supports all the provisions of the **Motor Voter Bill** and the abolition of "disenfranchisement laws for felons." It also favors "same-day registration, in which citizens can register to vote on Election Day at the polling place itself."

• **Living Wage**: "To narrow the inequitable rich-poor gap and produce a more balanced and stable economy," ADA supports the requirement that all workers should be paid at least a "living wage," a term denoting the minimum hourly wage necessary for an individual to meet basic needs, including shelter, clothing, and nutrition.

• **Offshore Oil Drilling**: Due to "economic environmental concerns," says ADA, "no further offshore oil drilling should be permitted along the American coastline."

• **Employee Free Choice Act**: ADA "is committed to use every means at its disposal to work unceasingly and tirelessly" to pass this legislation, **which would deprive employees** of the right to vote for or against the unionization of their workforce by means of a secret ballot.

ADA is a **member organization** of the **National Jobs for All Coalition**.

For additional information about ADA and its policy positions, **click here**.

College May Be Dangerous for Men

SEPTEMBER 18, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

College is a dangerous place for men. They are not only a minority but they are victimized by discriminatory and unconstitutional anti-male rules. ·

In another striking proof that the Obama Administration is totally manipulated by feminists, the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights sent out a 19-page "DCL" (**Dear Colleague Letter**) to colleges and universities that should make men fear attending college at all. The letter adopts the feminist theory that in all sexual controversies or accusations, the man is guilty unless he proves himself innocent.

Phyllis Schlafly

This DCL carries the force of law since it purports to be an additional implementation of Title IX, the 1972 federal law that bans sex discrimination in educational institutions that receive federal assistance. But the DCL was never legislated by Congress, and it was not even launched as a regulation that requires posting for comment in the Federal Register.

The DCL is just a federal order, issued by a feminist bureaucrat named Russlynn Ali, which colleges and universities must obey under threat of losing their funding. Colleges have dutifully fallen in line by spelling it out in their fall orientations under the rubric of making campuses friendly to women and requiring sensitivity about offensive words and ideas.

The most unconstitutional part of Ms. Ali's impertinent DCL is that it orders colleges to reject use of the criminal justice standard of proof. The DCL rules that an accused man doesn't have to be judged guilty "beyond a reasonable doubt," or even the intermediate standard of "clear and convincing" proof.

Instead, Ms. Ali instructs colleges that they must judge an accused man based on "a preponderance of the evidence" standard. That means the campus disciplinary board (which may include feminist faculty from the Women's Studies Department) only has to believe that the female accuser is 51 percent likely to be truthful and accurate.

Furthermore, the DCL "strongly discourages" colleges from permitting an accused man "to question or cross-examine the accuser" during the hearing. And appeals must be available to both parties, which subjects the guy to double jeopardy.

The punishment of a man convicted under these DCL rules will far exceed what the campus disciplinary committee may hand out. He will likely be expelled, barred from graduate or professional school and some government jobs, suffer irreparable damage to his reputation, and possibly be exposed to criminal prosecution.

The feminist apparatus is constantly grinding out phony statistics about sexual assault and harassment, accusations that men are naturally batterers, and that women never lie or make errors in sexual allegations. The feminists are unrepentant about the way they and the prosecutors (toadying to the feminists) accepted and publicized lies that destroyed the reputations of the Duke Lacrosse men and of Dominique Strauss-Kahn.

Another monster that hangs over the heads of college students is the increasing evidence that college is a bad financial investment that will saddle students with debt they can never escape. Pro-college ads are seductive: "College graduates can make a million dollars more in their lifetimes than those who don't go to college."

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), 17 million college-educated Americans are now working jobs for which they are overqualified. The BLS reports that hundreds of thousands of college graduates are working as waiters, secretaries, receptionists, laborers, or janitors, all respectable occupations but not jobs that will enable them to repay their five- or even six-digit college loans.

The current student loan debt, now $830 billion, is bigger than credit-card debt and growing at the rate of $90 billion a year. Only 40 percent of that debt is actively being repaid, and students are not permitted to escape that debt burden through bankruptcy, so we may be headed for a student-loan bubble like the housing bubble.

The one project that received an increased appropriation in the bipartisan deal to raise the debt ceiling was more money to subsidize students to go to college. Loaning taxpayers' money to students to go to college makes no sense and is hurtful even to the students who get the money.

If students were working a 48-hour-a-week night job, as I did when I worked my way through college, they wouldn't have time to get into the mischief referenced by the recent DCL, or to

attend the drinking parties, and they wouldn't accumulate the indebtedness that will burden their lives for decades.

For encouragement, they can read Zac Bissonnette's helpful book,·***Debt-Free U: How I Paid for an Outstanding College Education Without Loans, Scholarships, or Mooching off My Parents***. Alternatively, students can get a job that doesn't require a college education.

Phyllis Schlafly has been a national leader of the conservative movement since the publication of her best-selling 1964 book, ***A Choice Not An Echo***. She has been a leader of the pro-family movement since 1972, when she started her national volunteer organization now called Eagle Forum. In a ten-year battle, Mrs. Schlafly led the pro-family movement to victory over the principal legislative goal of the radical feminists, called the Equal Rights Amendment. An articulate and successful opponent of the radical feminist movement, she appears in debate on college campuses more frequently than any other conservative. She was named one of the 100 most important women of the 20th century by the *Ladies' Home Journal*.

The Church's Moment in the Unraveling of the West

AUGUST 27, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

> *Editor's Note: The Church, the leadership and their people are being disobedient to God and the proof is all around us. Pastors have refused to stand against abortion, political corruption, and the schemes of the wicked, when will the patience of God run out..?*

I do not think it too strong or sensational to say that we are witnessing the collapse of Western civilization. Across the Western world, the fruits of apostasy and secularism are manifesting themselves in overwhelmingly destructive ways.

In my lifetime I have seen the rapid demise of the family. For the first time in American history, nonmarried households now outnumber married households (52 percent vs. 48 percent respectively). Today, only one-fifth of American households represent "traditional families—married couples with children" (*New York Times*, "Married Couples Are No Longer a Majority, Census Finds," May 28, 2011). Out-of-wedlock birthrates in the US have reached 40 percent following a similar trend throughout Western European countries, some of which are as high as 66 percent.

While out-of-wedlock births continue to rise, more and more people are simply not having children at all, leading to depopulation of the West on a scale unprecedented. Add to this the radical redefinition of marriage and family to include same-sex couples and the future of the natural family—an institution essential to a healthy society—only promises to worsen.

Our academic institutions have shifted from teaching virtues and the pursuit of truth to intolerant platforms for secularized political values and godless indoctrination. Students are taught—with self-assumed authority—that God does not exist, your life is your own, sin is an archaic myth, and morality is a matter of individual preference.

The fine arts have descended into prurience, voyeurism, gratuitous violence, godlessness, and mindless amusements. Revenue from the consumption of pornography exceeds that generated by all professional sports combined and the media, which was once governed by a modicum of journalistic integrity, has become another powerful force for indoctrination into socialistic *progressivism* and humanistic schemes.

Our political leaders have abandoned statesmanship and true public service for personal power gains and government-driven social and economic engineering. Corruption has replaced integrity and the virtue of stewardship is almost nowhere to be found. America finds itself entrenched in prolonged wars with an enemy that it refuses to call evil, pursuing unrealistic aims of democratization in a culture that has no interest in democracy. Our governments have become oligarchies of competing *political* interests with little regard for the good of the people.

Recently, Europeans (and some Americans) have descended into barbarism and anarchy, as the State proves incapable of serving as savior and provider. In the wake of supplanting God with the State, personal responsibility has been replaced by selfishness, dependency, and entitlement.

In the absence of any absolute moral and ethical foundations, our economic system is collapsing around our ears. Business is increasingly driven by personal greed and shareholder returns rather than hard work, creative excellence, love of neighbor, and service to mankind. The Western world has lived far beyond its means—both personally and nationally—to the extent that families and some countries find themselves on the brink of financial collapse. Fear and uncertainty have become the overarching features of our day.

Finally, the church—which was once the moral authority in the West—has rendered itself irrelevant and marginalized in the public square. Denominationalism and division are rampant. Theological vacuity, consumerism, and compromise dominate the spiritual landscape in America. So much so, that Christianity is the only religion in America in decline while every other false religion and new-age construct is spreading like wildfire.

In the wake of all that is happening, countless pundits and politicians have emerged to offer their man-centered analysis and prescriptions as to the cause and solution, none of which come close to the truth of our dilemma.

At the heart of all that ails us is our rejection of the Most High God! The Western world has rejected the biblical revelation as the source of truth in every area of public life—the very

foundation of its historic rise and prosperity. Therefore all of our social and cultural institutions, which now rest on a false interpretation of reality, are coming apart. Should we be surprised?

As for the church, we alone bear the responsibility for our own demise. The culture did not render us irrelevant—we did! We have been entrusted with the truth, the message of hope, and we have neglected this responsibility in exchange for security and comfort. We have tried, unsuccessfully, to build our lives in a way that seeks to comfortably balance the demands of following Christ with our own quest for personal peace and affluence. It doesn't work! You either love Christ or you love your own life.

In essence, we in the West are reaping precisely what we have sown. Mankind cannot construct a world devoid of subservience to God and hope to prosper. So in a seemingly sudden turn of events, the house of cards is folding. This should serve as the wake-up call—first to the church: repent and obey, and then to the world: man is *not* the measure of all things. This may be our generation's moment to be found faithful.

Let me just say that the solution is not to be found in the modernistic impulse of the institutional church; we can't just "craft a program." Rather, the solution is far simpler than that. It is found in Jesus's command to "go and make disciples." This can never be reduced to a program of the church but is instead a product of the organic church—individuals acting in obedience to Christ.

Practically speaking, this means each of us should endeavor to be in relationship with the community of God's people. We must place ourselves under the authority of the body of Christ, being discipled by those who are mature in the faith. Then we must form relationships with others whom we disciple. This is not a short-term enterprise but a lifelong effort. And then, we go forth into the world loving our neighbors. That may be just one or two people God has brought into your sphere of contact. It is with these that we share the love of Christ, bearing witness to his power in our lives, teaching them the truth of reality as revealed by God (making disciples) so that *he may build his church* (cf. Matt. 16:18).

Our present circumstances offer a bleak picture, to be sure, but our situation is only hopeless insofar as we continue to trust in the structures and schemes of godless men, rather than the eternal promises of God through obedience to Christ.

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Michael's weekly commentary, *Truth in Culture*, is published every Monday on Crosswalk.com, Christianity.com, and The Christian Post. Subscribe via **email** or **RSS**.

Lessons In Apologetics: Atheism

AUGUST 24, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: ESCHATOLOGY, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

If the Christian has no assurance that God will triumph from the way the world appears to be going, one would be better off hedging one's bets by siding with the Devil or sitting the whole thing out all together. There are those that attempt to do just that.

Atheism is the worldview that believes that God does not exist. Those embracing this perspective tend to do so over both objective and existential reasons.

Those claiming to embrace Atheism for objective reasons often concentrate their attacks on the more scientific approaches to the existence of God such as the cosmological argument. The cosmological argument for the existence of God holds that all contingent things must have a cause and that this cause is at the minimum Aristotle's Uncaused Cause and preferably the God of the Christian faith as expounded by Aquinas when he adapted these propositions for Christian usage. Atheists raise their hands and say hold on a moment to what they see as presumptuous conclusions.·

From the Christian perspective, since God exists beyond what we perceive as time, He is sufficient or necessary to jumpstart the universe and get the temporal ball rolling. However, the Atheist has no metaphysical problem with an infinite chain of causality. Yet the laws of thermodynamics might dictate otherwise as these fundamental principles of physics hold that there is only a finite amount of energy available within a closed system.·

So even though the Atheist may not have an intellectual objection to a material universe that is infinitely old, such an assumption smashes eventually against the hard wall of reality. However, seldom has that ever stopped anyone adamant about adhering to their favored delusions no matter what the evidence might say.·

The next set of arguments for Atheism against belief in God center around a set of moral objections. All must confess these have crossed our minds at low points in each of our lives.·

The most objective of these centers around the nature of goodness and God's relationship to it. This argument was developed by Bertrand Russell (218).·

The moral disproof for God states that good must result because either God decrees it or He does not. If good is good simply because God says it is and no one can argue against Him since He is the biggest guy on the cosmic block, good is not really good since God has willed it so arbitrarily. However, if God declares something good because of its own inherent nature or compliance with a

standard beyond Himself, doesn't that mean that the standard rather than God is ultimate? Thus, at best, God ends up being demoted to the status of Plato's less than omnipotent demiurge.·

Geisler counters, though, that this is really putting the ethical cart before the theistic horse. Geisler writes, "Rather than flowing from God's arbitrary will, the moral law may be seen as rooted in God's unchangeably good and loving nature, then the apparent dilemma is resolved (226)." Thus, good is something God is rather than something God decides or does. This brings to mind verses such as John 8:58 where God proclaims "Before Abraham was, I am."·

Other moral objections to the existence of God are a bit less ethereal and considerably more visceral and marked by the pain those leveling them have experienced or witnessed living here in an obviously fallen world. One such objection raised by Albert Camus in *The Plague* uses the backdrop of an epidemic to make the point that theism is inherently anti-humanitarian. The story posits the dichotomy that, if one assists the suffering, one is siding against God by interfering with the work of His judgment, and if one wants to be in His will and not stand in His way, one is therefore opposed to human well being (221).·

Other related objections to God over the problem of evil dismiss His existence all together. A number of Atheists deny the existence of God on the grounds that, because people often suffer disproportionately to what they have done wrong, an all powerful and all good God does not exist. It is argued a God possessing these attributes would not allow evil. But because evil is rampant, that is proof that either God is not all powerful and cannot do anything about evil or that He is all powerful but does not do anything about the evil in the world because He is not good enough to care.·

Though it is not always a comfort to someone that has befallen an overwhelming tragedy such as the murder of a loved one, the existence of evil does not by default disprove the existence of God. It does, however, toss the apologetic ball into the theist's court to provide a plausible reason as to why an all-powerful and all-good God would allow suffering to exist.·

Known as "theodicy", these explanations attempt to reconcile the simultaneous existence of both God and evil. It is at this point that the theist must counter claim that the evil in the world is solvable or redeemable. The Christian especially can point out that God has indeed done something about the evil by sending His only begotten Son into the world to do something about this tragedy in the most personable of ways.·

If the Atheist presses this objection too vigorously, the wily apologist ought to turn the argument back on his unbelieving compatriot. To even make the claim that God does not exist, because the world is not as good as we think it would be if He really did, is actually an indirect argument that He really does.·

For to argue that things are not good enough is to assume some kind of standard exists beyond the earthly fray we find ourselves in. If this material universe was all there ever was, the highest good we could ever know is what we see around us and we'd be unable to criticize anything as the "is" automatically becomes the "ought" in such a context.·

Yet there is a deep dissatisfaction that compels most human souls onward towards a better world. Romans 2:14-15 says, "…when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts…"·

Secondly, Atheists claiming disbelief in God because, in their view, He has not done enough to stop or prevent suffering in the world often want to have things both ways. These theophobes not only deny God over the imperfections they see in the world but then hypothesize that, if God existed, man would not be free because human freedom would be, as Geisler puts it, "circumscribed by his divine determination (231)."·

However, it is because God loves us so much and respects us as individuals that in the vast majority of instances He does not directly interfere with most actions but rather permits their outcome to propel the world onward to His ultimate plan for all of His creation. Geisler writes, "If love is persuasive but never coercive, then allowing men to freely determine their own destiny would seem to be the loving way to make them (231)."·

Unfortunately, some are in such a state of rebellion against God that they take this animus out on others. Foremost among such deeds would no doubt rank murder.·

Some would respond that, if God really loved the innocent, He would intervene to prevent this crime. However, as C.S. Lewis hypothesizes in *The Problem Of Pain,* for our own benefit God has created a world that operates in the vast majority of instances by a series of repeatable and verifiable principles.·

For example, according to this moral "steady-state theory", I am able to pick up a knife to either slice a steak or slit my neighbor's throat for the purposes of providing man with a rational world where we will not go mad. Faced with such, the Christian must embrace Romans 8:28 as a comfort in a world that often does not seem fair to our finite minds.

Frederick Meekins is a worldview consultant and Internet columnist. He holds a BS from the University of Maryland in Political Science/History and a MA in Apologetics & Christian Philosophy from Trinity Theological Seminary. Frederick holds a Doctor of Practical Theology through the Master's Graduate School Of Divinity in Evansville, Indiana. His research interests include Worldview Application, Christian Apologetics, The Implications of Aberrant Theologies & Ideologies, Futurology, Eschatology, Science Fiction, Terrorism Studies, Environmentalism, Education Policy and America's Judeo-Christian Foundations. Dr. Meekins is also an ordained

Non-Denominational Minister and listed in “Who’s Who In America” and in “Who’s Who Of Emerging Leaders”. Media inquiries can be directed to: **americanworldview@hotmail.com. americanworldview@hotmail.com.** This e-mail address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view it His books “Yuletide Terror & Other Holiday Horrors” and “**Provide For The Common Defense: Thoughts Concerning The Nation’s Enemies**”
Visit his blog, **The Epistolizer**.

Or Else – Doing the Right Thing

AUGUST 10, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW, CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Folks, the signs of the times are clear. Is anyone in this country reading them?

During the course of any given month, publishers send me dozens of books to review. I don't get the time I'd like to even page through most of them, but the other day one caught my eye. It's called "After America: Get Ready for Armageddon."

Now, I'm not into sensationalism, but the book was written by conservative commentator Mark Steyn. In the first chapter, Steyn penned something that stopped me in my tracks. He's identified the source of our economic and governmental woes. And, I'm not shy to add, I've been talking about this for two years now.

Here's what Steyn had to say:

"When government spends on the scale Washington's got used to, that's not a spending crisis, it's a moral one. . . It's not just about balancing the books, but about balancing the most basic impulses of society. These are structural, and ultimately, moral questions. Credit depends on trust, and trust pre-supposes responsibility. So, if you have a credit boom in an age that has all but abolished personal responsibility, it's not hard to figure how it's going to end."

Precisely.

How did we get into this economic mess? The denizens of Wall Street, Capitol Hill, and yes, Main Street, U.S.A., cast prudence and responsibility to the curb and chased dollars, votes, and the good life. And it all came crashing down around our heads.

And have we learned anything since the crisis struck? Apparently not, as the recent escapades surrounding the debt ceiling show all too clearly.

Steyn predicts that if Americans do not change course—personally and corporately—the America we know will collapse within years, not decades.

While I'm not in the "within years," column, I do believe that unless we can summon the courage to stop spending money we don't have and to place the common good above purely personal interests, then yes, we are doomed as a nation and a society.

Three years ago, when I and Princeton professor Robby George and others began brainstorming what is now our "Doing the Right Thing" DVD series on ethics, we didn't know just how critically important and timely it would be.

"Doing the Right Thing" is a clarion call for Americans of all creeds or no creed at all to re-embrace the moral and ethical principles upon which our nation and Western civilization were built. We discuss how we can know truth and the moral law, how we pursue virtue, what human flourishing means, and ethics in the market place and public life.

And on September 24th, I will be hosting a nationwide simulcast on Doing the Right Thing. Please, find out how you, your church, your school, or your business can host it in your community. Just go to Doing the Right Thing Event.com.

And, to show you just how powerful "Doing the Right Thing" is, I have a moving preview for you on today's Two Minute Warning. It features a military surgeon describing a life-or-death decision he had to make during Vietnam. It shows just how critical it is that we understand right from wrong—how important it is to do the right thing. That's on today's Two Minute Warning at ColsonCenter.org.

Folks, time is running out. We do the right thing, or we perish.

Chuck Colson – BreakPoint

BreakPoint is a Christian worldview ministry that seeks to build and resource a movement of Christians committed to living and defending Christian worldview in all areas of life

- **After America: Get Ready for Armageddon**
  Mark Steyn | Running Press Book Publishers | 2009
  Doing the Right Thing Simulcast Event
  Join Chuck Colson, Robert George, and others September 24, 2011
  Life or Death, What Would You Do?
  Chuck Colson | Two-Minute Warning | August 10, 2011

A Fool's Tower

JULY 31, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW, CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

BreakPoint

The clock is ticking. The United States is on the verge of default. Congress and the president seem unable to come together and find an agreement avoiding an economic catastrophe.

How in the world did we get into this fix? Well, it didn't happen overnight. It's been coming for a generation. For years, fiscal conservatives have warned about the dangers of out-of-control borrowing and spending, but current and previous presidents and congresses have ignored them, rolling up a massive national debt.

The bigger question is why did the American people stand for this? The answer is painfully clear. Because the people themselves were busy borrowing and spending like fiends.

Americans as a rule used to be a frugal people. They believed in the Protestant work ethic — an honest day's work for an honest day's pay, save for a rainy day, don't go deep into debt. But something changed, and *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman — whom I respect though often disagree with — hit the nail on the head.

"The generation that came of age in the last 50 years," he writes, "will be remembered most for the incredible bounty and freedom it received from its parents and the incredible debt burden and constraints it left on its kids." Friedman calls this the "clash of generations." The greatest generation scrimped and saved; their kids, the boomers, went on a big shopping binge.

This is what happens when a false worldview comes home to roost. Remember that it was in the 1960s that existentialism and relativism took over college campuses. If there truly were no God and life were devoid of meaning, well, live it up while you can. Throw off the burden of moral restraints, of civic duty and responsibility. Find fulfillment in pleasure and self-actualization; not

in service to others or in building a good and just society. Thus was ushered in what Christopher Lasch called the age of narcissism.

There's only one problem with the existentialist/relativistic worldview and the self-centeredness it breeds: It doesn't work. It doesn't foster the self-discipline, prudence, and moral character that individuals and societies need in order to flourish.

No wonder then, according to the Department of Commerce, when adjusting for inflation Americans spent more than they earned in most months from 2000 through 2008. Even without adjusting for inflation, monthly personal saving was usually less than three percent. This means people were borrowing more than they could repay.

Jesus asked the right question. Who would set out to build a tower who did not "first sit down and estimate the cost" (Luke 14:28). Actually, we're worse off than that. We borrowed heavily to build the tower, only to find out now it is about to be repossessed!

Not all the news is bad, though. Since 2008, Americans have awakened to reality and begun to spend less and save more. We've put off that vacation, coaxed a few thousand more miles out of the old car. We've tightened our belts. Now it's time to make sure the government does the same.

Are folks beginning to figure out that we've been building a tower on a false worldview? That chasing self-fulfillment and living for the moment lead inevitably to moral and economic poverty? Well, we'll see.

But it's a fair question, and we, the Church, must raise it again and again. For our good and for the good of all.

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The Clash of Generations

Thomas L. Friedman | New York Times | July 16, 2011

The Culture of Narcissism

Christopher Lasch | W. W. Norton & Co. | 1991

Wake Up and Smell the Corruption!

Chuck Colson | Two-Minute Warning |July 25, 2011

Nothing Like It Before

Chuck Colson | BreakPoint.org | July 27, 2011

Chuck personally invites you to become a charter member of the Colson Center for Christian worldview. This is where we equip Christians to effectively engage and impact our culture. Go to **Join Colson.com** to learn more.

Colson founded Prison Fellowship®, which, together with churches of all confessions and denominations, has become the world's largest outreach to prisoners, ex-prisoners, and their families, with ministry taking place in 113 countries around the globe.

Today Prison Fellowship has numerous ways for Christians to join in ministry that is not only transforming prisoners and their families, but also transforming the criminal justice system, our communities, and the culture itself: From in-prison Bible studies and mentoring programs to helping the children of prisoners understand how much God loves them, from advocating for biblically based justice reforms to promoting a biblical worldview.

In November of 2009, Chuck Colson and a dozen evangelical, Catholic, and Orthodox leaders faced the microphones and announced the release of an historic document—one of the most important documents produced by the American church, at least in our lifetime. It is called the Manhattan Declaration, and signed by over 140 leaders representing every branch of American Christianity.

The Manhattan Declaration is a wake-up call—a call to conscience—for the church. It is also crystal-clear message to civil authorities that we will not, under any circumstances, stand idly by as our religious freedom comes under assault.

Are Christians Contributing to Unbelief?

JULY 24, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Every indication suggests that America is becoming increasingly secular. However, if we mean increasingly secular in the sense that more and more people are now irreligious, secularism has a long way to go. In fact, 78.4 percent of Americans still describe themselves as Christian and ninety-one percent say they believe in God, according to a 2011 Gallup survey. Only 1.4 percent of Americans identify themselves as atheists and another 2.4 percent claim to be agnostic, according to the latest Pew Forum research. Granted, assent to belief in God can (and often does) include those completely unrelated to faith in Jesus Christ and nominal Christians, but that is not my point.

Americans actually remain strongly "religious" and the only change has been in the fact that we are seeing an increased level of comfort among the unbelieving to express themselves. Simply consider the popularity of prominent atheist writers such as Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins, and Sam Harris—all of whom have published books that made it onto the New York Times Best Sellers list.

This raises the obvious question: If Americans remain so staunchly religious then why do books such as Hitchens's God is Not Great or Richard Dawkins's The God Delusion, as well as many others challenging faith, seem to be gaining popularity? Why are so many Americans who evidently claim to believe in God and describe themselves as having religious faith buying books attacking the existence of God? These are very important questions for the church to grapple with and not ignore.

J. David Kuo, who served in the Bush White House for two and a half years as a special assistant to the president and eventually as deputy director of the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, offers one possible suggestion as to why this may be. According to Kuo, a self-professed conservative Christian, growing interest in questions about God's existence may be the result of a "backlash against the mingling of religion, politics and public policy," and this idea that "Jesus was about a particular conservative political agenda." In essence, Kuo suggests that the actions of some Christians may be encouraging the spiritual seeker to further doubt the existence of God.

Some of us may be tempted to become defensive in response to these statements, but I want to encourage you to look beyond your emotions and return to the question at hand. For the Christian, there is a persistent imperative for self-critique in the light of the Bible, and we must be willing to face the toughest questions about ourselves first. As Christians we must constantly test our attitudes and actions against the truth of scripture and be prepared to abandon our positions when found to be in conflict with the Bible. Furthermore, I am not suggesting that Kuo is, in fact, correct, merely that his suggestion warrants objective examination by those who are truly committed to living in obedience to Christ.

Could it be that our own actions are causing the religiously inclined but nonetheless lost to doubt the existence of God? Is it possible that we are pushing people toward unbelief by virtue of our approach to culture and engagement with the world? Has Christianity become so politically defined that true faith and the person of Jesus Christ is obscured in the minds of many? Is it possible that Christians are conducting themselves in such a way that the spiritually seeking are looking everywhere else but to Christ? Of course, I don't know for sure but I certainly think it is possible—and that is enough to make me examine myself in light of these questions. It should cause us all to examine ourselves.

This growing interest in questioning the existence of God seems to parallel the decline in church attendance or more precisely, those leaving the institutional church. According to Reggie McNeal, author of The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church, "They are not leaving because they have lost their faith. They are leaving the church to preserve their faith." McNeal adds, "They contend that the church no longer contributes to their spiritual development." This would certainly be the natural consequence of a Christianity that has lost its Christ-centeredness.

McNeal goes on to say, "The bottom line is that the bottom is not looking too good … Underneath the semblance of an American culture influenced by Christianity, the tectonic plates have shifted."

What is the cause of this shift? The blame, once again, seems to lie with us and not some externally imposed force. According to McNeal—and I think he's right—"The North American church culture unfortunately now reflects the materialism and secularism of the modern era." In

other words, the church has in many ways conformed to the world and this conformity will not capture the attention of the lost, much less the commitment of the faithful.

In so many churches today we have unwittingly reduced the gospel to a "come to Jesus and be happy" proposition (the therapeutic Jesus) rather than a "call on the name of the Lord and be saved" reality. Additionally, many churches have become so reliant upon modern methodologies, growth strategies, and best practices that they operate like well-ordered corporations that, practically speaking, think they have no need of God.

We seem to be suffering from a fundamental failure to define the church. Is the church a club that we invite people to join or is the church the living body of Christ sent out into the world? How we answer these questions will necessarily produce two very different churches, one institutionalized and dying (world come to us) and the other missional and vibrant (go to the world).

I would argue that the "world come to us" approach has largely stripped the church of authentic faith in Jesus Christ and replaced it with a club mentality that seeks like-minded club members, people who already share our values and are looking to be with their own kind. The "go to the world" or missional approach presses into the world among those not like us, seeking to share the love of Christ through word and deed. Given these two approaches, do you think it possible that the club approach coupled with the growing reaction to the politicized Christian right might send outsiders into questioning the existence of God?

Regardless of where you are in relation to politics or the kind of church you attend, the question we must each ask ourselves everyday is this: "Is my life and conduct drawing people toward Christ or pushing them away?" I pray for my own sake that it is the former.

Source: **Battle for Truth** **© 2011 by S. Michael Craven**

The Center for Christ & Culture was established in response to the spiritual apathy, theological confusion, and cultural indifference of the professing Christian church in America.

Why Should We Redeem Society?

JULY 16, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

It seems necessary to address why and even if Christians should be involved in redeeming society and culture. There are many who deride such activity as being a diversion from the "real" work of the church, which in their minds is nothing more than articulating the personal plan of salvation (or "gospel," very narrowly understood).

However, I would counter by saying that such a distinction is more accurately rooted in pagan dualism than scripture. Platonism divides reality into two spheres: the material and the nonmaterial—with the nonmaterial, or spiritual, being superior.

This classical Greek view offers a completely unbiblical understanding of reality. Its practical acceptance by many in the church has only served to further the irrelevance of Christianity in the modern West.

The Bible offers no such separation of spiritual and physical and, in fact, regards mankind as being unique from every other in creation precisely because of our combined natures. God's ultimate act of atonement for the sins of men was to become flesh—a real man living in the real world dying a real death and being physically resurrected. Secondly, God is very much interested in his physical creation, as it remains an object of redemption, which will be completed in the new heaven and earth.

To reduce the gospel to nothing more than the personal plan of salvation (a strictly spiritual good) is to minimize God's ongoing relationship to the world and Christ's authority over same. The

“good news” established at the appearance of Christ is that our God reigns! Both the alienation of mankind from God and the *groaning* of creation find their remedy or redemption in the work of Christ. Men and women are set free from eternal bondage to sin and enlisted in the service of the King as the body of Christ to “do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10 NIV).

These good works naturally include acts of mercy, charity, and service to individuals but also those efforts that seek to remedy the effects of the fall upon the whole society. In other words, redeeming the institutions of culture and the conditions of society that affect people by bringing them into conformity to biblical principles as a sign and foretaste of God’s rule and reign.

Our neglect in this area of redeeming culture only communicates that we—and worse, God—are not interested in the real world or the actual conditions that adversely affect human beings. This sentiment prompted Dorothy Sayers, a friend and peer of C. S. Lewis, to say, “Why would anyone remain interested in a religion that seems to have no interest in nine-tenths of his life?”

By not embracing the full scope of the gospel *of the kingdom*—that certainly includes saving grace but is not limited to it—we end up communicating that the only real gain of the gospel occurs after you’re dead, when you get to go to heaven! Such reductionism only fortifies Platonic dualism within the church and this reinforces the world’s impression that Christianity is nothing more than a privatized religious belief and not a public truth that applies to all of life.

By resuming a redemptive approach to the whole world—in which we take on real social problems, addressing not only the person but also the forces affecting him—the church can, once again, assume a viable role in society and the plausibility of Christian truth claims will rise. When I say “redemptive approach,” I am referring to a conscious effort aimed at bringing the institutions of culture under the guidance of a biblical worldview and working to remedy societal ills and human suffering through systemic changes to the conditions producing these ill effects.

Historic examples of this would include the actions and efforts of countless Christians, including William Wilberforce, to bring about the abolition of slavery. It was Christians who fought for and succeeded in bringing about much-needed reforms to the nineteenth-century penal system and child labor laws. It was Christians like as George Mueller who tackled the problem of orphans by building orphanages and caring for tens of thousands of previously indigent children. Despite her dubious soteriology, Clara Barton was nonetheless motivated by Christian faith to provide humane care for soldiers, prisoners of war, and veterans, and thus organized the American Red Cross; she was also instrumental in the United States’ ratification of the rules of the Geneva Conventions.

These were real conditions affecting real human lives and it was Christians, motivated by the love of Christ, who provided real solutions thereby bearing witness to the redemptive love and power of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, if we understood our redemptive role in the world as being inclusive of both people and the societies in which they live, I contend that the culture would find it far more difficult to marginalize Christianity and the church. This *demonstration* of the gospel would then provide conditions far more favorable to the proclamation and reception of the gospel.

Let us abandon this Platonic dualism that so infects us and apply the good news of the kingdom to the whole of life—personally, culturally, and socially. What are the problems in your community that the Lord desires you to change? I would encourage you to ponder this question and seek God's heart on the matter. Imagine this nation in which every professing follower of Christ sought the Lord's will in this area and acted upon the desire to glorify Christ by becoming a redemptive influence in his or her community. It might just restore the church's public witness and draw people into the kingdom—and glorify the King!

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Battle for Truth

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The twentieth century saw unprecedented cultural and religious upheavals throughout the Western world and America. Secular humanistic modernism replaced the Christian social and moral consensus while the church became increasingly a-theological and culturally indifferent at best and antagonistic at worst. Evangelicalism, generally speaking, descended into a sophomoric shadow of its former self, offering little in the way of a meaningful response to its myriad of ideological and spiritual challengers. The gospel of the kingdom was reduced to the gospel of personal salvation, therapeutic goods, and decisional theology. The American church went from being an essential social institution and morally authoritative community to a socially irrelevant organization made up of voluntary members absent any cultural authority. Increasingly detached from historic orthodoxy, Christianity in America drifted toward politicization—intent on preserving certain values through the power of the state—rather than advancing an alternative kingdom: the kingdom of God.

When God is Silenced – The Empire Falls

JUNE 25, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The Fall of Empires

by Michael Craven

A Study of History by Arnold J. Toynbee (1889-1975) is acknowledged as one of the "greatest achievements of modern scholarship." Toynbee's book, huge in scale, achieved wide prominence but he was more admired by the history reading public than by his fellow historians, who criticized him for contorting information to fit his alleged patterns of history. I suspect this criticism stems largely from the fact that Toynbee likely viewed the patterns of history through the redemptive theme of Scripture.

In *A Study of History*, Toynbee details the rise and decline of twenty-three civilizations about which he wrote, "Of these, sixteen are dead and nine of the remaining ten—all, in fact, except our own are shown to have already declined." He did suggest then that we may have passed our zenith. Were he alive today he would likely move Western civilization into the category of those in decline.

Toynbee's over-arching analysis centered on the moral and religious challenges within a given society, and the response to such challenges, as the reason for the health or decline of a civilization. He described parallel life cycles of growth, dissolution, a "time of troubles," a universal state, and a final collapse leading to a new genesis. Toynbee argues that our own time of troubles began during the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, which produced a tolerance, "based

not on the Christian virtues of faith, hope, and charity but on the Mephistophelian (devilish schemes) maladies of disillusionment, apprehension, and cynicism."

I dare say that these devilish schemes have, with nearly unabated force, led us to the tolerance of that which was once thought to be morally repugnant such as abortion, pornography, sexual licentiousness and more recently the legitimization of homosexual behavior at the expense of marriage.

Toynbee added that civilizations arose in response to some set of challenges of extreme difficulty prompting "creative minorities" to devise solutions that would reorient the entire society. When a civilization responds to challenges, it grows.

Conversely civilizations declined when their leaders stopped responding creatively or with wisdom. Our culture today is rife with moral and religious challenges and scarcely do our leaders demonstrate a coherent understanding of the challenges much less offer real wisdom. All too frequently, the emphasis within the church tends toward technique and methodology instead of intelligent theological teaching and wisdom. Toynbee points out that in the wake of such an inadequate response, the civilizations in question sink due to nationalism, militarism or the tyranny of a despotic minority.

It seems that we, as a nation, have arrived at the level in which a "despotic minority" is in the process of reorienting our entire society, that minority being those who advocate a natural and now constitutional right to homosexual behavior.

At the heart of this debate lies the question, "Why does it matter?" Those in favor of same-sex marriage claim that the inclusion of gays in the marital relationship will not affect anyone else and in doing so, the sky surely won't fall! Those opposed argue that the very act of redefining marriage will render the institution meaningless and thus nullify its essential societal benefits.

In ascertaining the truth, history offers us invaluable insight. In Gibbon's famous *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* we learn that the breakdown in sexual morality began after the Punic Wars ended in 146 B.C. In the ensuing years, sexual immorality became so widespread that it likewise threatened the institution of marriage. As one historian noted, "There was nothing in which they did not indulge or which they thought a disgrace." So severe was the effect on marriage and society that Caesar Augustus enacted *lex Julia de Adulteriis* in 18 B.C., a law aimed at curbing the people's licentious behavior. Of course this law had little effect and the descent continued. I think laws protecting marriage today, while I support them, will fail similarly because they cannot arrest the broader moral decline that initiated the shift to begin with.

Alvin J. Schmidt, Illinois College professor of sociology, points out that as a result of sexual extravagance, "Roman marriages had greatly deteriorated; they had become a loose and voluntary compact and religious and civil rites were no longer essential" (*How Christianity Changed the*

World, p. 80). In essence, marriage became meaningless and its resultant social benefits disappeared. Family dissolution increased—fracturing the cornerstone of society—crime exploded, productivity and creativity diminished, cynicism and apathy ensued; the Empire began to crumble.

As if utterly blind to the past, the American empire is now following the Roman road to self-destruction, proving again what Toynbee said, "Civilizations die from suicide, not by murder." However, that was not the end of the story, for out of the collapse of one kingdom there arose another kingdom without end: the Kingdom of God. Despite the sexual anarchy of the Roman world, the Christian church stood in stark contrast to the decaying culture and would go on to flourish while the former would fall. This is the "new genesis" that Toynbee observed, which would proceed to shape and build a better civilization to come. Not perfect but a society in which Christianity would rise to become the dominant philosophical and moral influence, an influence that at its best would promote peace, prosperity and justice.

Just like the early Christians under Rome, we may not live to see the restoration of our civilization. Morally and spiritually, this nation may continue to deteriorate, ushering in an insurmountable host of deleterious effects. On the other hand, the Lord may pour out His mercy upon this nation as he has in prior Great Awakenings. Toynbee himself observed that within history, this cyclical pattern of rise and fall has been broken. Regardless of what the Lord in his providence may do, our mission and calling remains the same: "be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace" (2 Peter 3:14).

Next week, I will address the "spotted" nature of the church as one possible cause of our ineffectiveness in arresting the culture's moral decline.

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Bringing the Gospel of the Kingdom into the Marketplace

MAY 15, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Last week I shared Dr. Samuel Gregg's insightful commentary, Christians in a Post-Welfare State World. In it, Dr. Gregg argues, "the Social Democratic/progressive dream of a welfare state … has clearly run its course. It will end in a fiscal Armageddon when the bills can't be paid, or when political leaders begin dismantling the Leviathans of state-welfare to avert financial disaster. Either way, the welfare state's impending demise is going to force Christians to seriously rethink how they help the least among us."

Given the economic teetering-on-the-brink now threatening Europe and with similar realizations emerging in many American cities and states, Gregg's prediction is hard to argue against. Generous social-welfare programs funded by an entity (i.e., the state) with no actual means of creating wealth are simply unsustainable. You just can't keep paying for burgeoning public entitlements that depend on the earnings of fewer people than the state provides for.

Despite the pending failure of Democratic Socialism, Americans' faith in the free market system is also falling. According to a poll conducted by GlobeScan, a polling and consultancy firm, only 59 percent of Americans agreed "strongly" or "somewhat" that the free market was the best system for the world's future. That's a significant drop from 80 percent in the 2002 poll. Among those earning less than $20,000 a year, the drop in confidence is even more dramatic, falling from 76 to 44 percent between 2002 and 2010, according to the poll. GlobeScan released the latest figures this month after conducting its research between June and September of 2010.

This shouldn't come as a surprise given the Great Recession of 2008, considered by many economists to be the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The collapse of our nation's most venerable financial institutions, the unbridled greed of Wall Street, and systemic incompetence among government authorities decimated trillions of dollars in personal savings and private assets. While there were no doubt many complex economic factors involved—at the heart of what went wrong is widespread moral failure.

From unqualified home buyers borrowing more than they could afford and defaulting on their loans to banks, and Wall Street investors recklessly leveraging their assets for high risk gains, the entire system became a house of cards ultimately doomed by rampant greed, selfishness, and irresponsibility.

At this point, you may be tempted to think, *What does this have to with Christian faith or theology?* In short, everything! I believe the free market economic system is the best available for promoting human creativity and flourishing, creating a sustainable and stable society, and alleviating poverty. However, I also believe that free market capitalism is among the most monstrous and oppressive systems when severed from a coherent ethical framework and compelling moral restraint.

This has become the case in the West. As society increasingly rebels against the authority of God and the church is less capable of integrating complex theological truths into every aspect of life and society, our economic philosophy has become Darwinian. The self-proclaimed titans of industry and business exalt themselves as the "most fit"—predators among prey—justifying their rapacious consumption and self-indulgence as a right of their station in the "food chain."

As such, there is perhaps no other area of society and culture where the church can make a tangible impact for good and offer a visible witness of the kingdom than by reforming business through the principles of Christianity.

This has been a growing interest of mine over the last two years, as business remains the one area of culture where Christians maintain a broad presence. The fact is, it would take generations just to penetrate, much less transform, the cultural spheres of academia, the arts, and media. It will also take generations to impact the arena of business and government if we continue to languish in theological vacuity and therefore fail to integrate biblical values into our economic structures.

However, our very presence in the marketplace puts the church far ahead in this effort. What remains is a renewed theological focus reclaiming *business as mission* combined with an effective means of engaging Christian business leaders. This has been the focus of my time, energy, and study for more than two years, and recently I have identified what I believe is the final piece necessary to implementation.

I am not quite ready to share the details today but they will be forthcoming in the next few weeks and the program ready to unveil by June 2011. There have been just a few times over the last twelve years when the Lord has made my vision so clear and my resolve so established. I can say that this is one of those times. For those who love the Lord, their desire is to make a difference, to see the Lord glorified and his church faithful. This is certainly my desire. I don't travel, study, write, speak and teach because I have nothing else to do; I do this because I am driven by a burden to see God's church quickened and renewed so that Christ may be lifted up in a meaningful way. I believe what we are about to launch will contribute mightily to this vision.

Source: **Battle for Truth**

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Michael's commentary, "Truth in Culture," is published every Monday on Crosswalk.com, Christianity.com, and The Christian Post.

The Fear of God – The Beginning of Understanding

MAY 8, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Obedience is more than sacrifice (I Sam. 15:1-35) The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.– (Josh. 24:24)

Throughout the Jewish scriptures we learn that "the fear of God is the beginning of understanding… wisdom… knowledge." Indeed, the fear of God is a primary theme throughout the entire Old Testament:

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline (Proverbs 1:7).

The Fear of God – The Real Meaning

In these "Fear of God" scriptures, the word "fear" is derived from Hebrew words such as *yir'ah* (Proverbs 1:7; 9:10; Psalm 2:11; 19:9; 34:11), *yare*' (Psalm 33:8; 86:11; Jeremiah 5:22; Ecclesiastes 12:13) and *pachad* (Job 23:15), which actually mean "fear," "terror," or "dread." Although many Christian teachers will downplay the "fear of God" and use replacement words such as "respect," "reverence," or "honor," the Hebrew language is pretty clear. In addition, there are other Hebrew words that portray softer meanings, such as *kabad* (Exodus 20:12 – "Honor your father and your mother…" Proverbs 3:9 – "*Honor* the LORD with your wealth…")

The Fear of God – The Rest of the Story

The good news is that the fear of God is only the beginning of understanding. We've got to read the rest of the story! In fact, the *great* news is that the Love of God reflected through Jesus Christ in the New Testament scriptures has the power to cast out this fear and set us free!

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love (1 John 4:18). *Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us* (1 John 4:7-12). *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us* (Romans 5:8). *"Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends"* (Jesus to His disciples in John 15:12-13).

The Fear of God – The Love of God

How can we comprehend the utterly Great News of Jesus Christ if we don't first appreciate the fear of God? Without total awe, wonder, terror, dread, reverence, and respect for a perfectly holy, righteous, and just Creator, can we truly appreciate what Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did for us on Calvary's cross?

It ultimately comes down to perspective and position. Who is God and what is my perspective on His nature, power, and justice? Who am I and what is my human position relative to this Almighty God?

Once we understand and accept the entire story, we can walk out our lives in a special appreciation of co-existing truths — the "Fear of God" and the "Love of God."

Let those who fear the LORD say: "His love endures forever" (Psalm 118:4).

The LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love (Psalm 147:11).

He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water" (Revelation 14:7).

Learn More About God!

Holding the Line: An Interview with R. Albert Mohler Jr.

APRIL 30, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

TT: In 1993, shortly after your appointment as president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, there was substantial faculty fallout and a sharp move in an orthodox direction. Would you give us a glimpse into that time for you and how a seminary could do an about-face in such a short span of time?

AM: My election as president of Southern Seminary came in the course of a larger movement within the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) — a movement that was specifically an attempt to bring the denomination back to its theological roots and especially to ground the denomination and its schools in a very clear affirmation of biblical inerrancy.

The seminaries of the SBC had drifted considerably to the left over the previous half-century to the point that, in many ways, they were almost indistinguishable from mainline Protestant institutions. My election in 1993 did not occur in a vacuum. It was very much a part of this effort, and everyone knew what was at stake. I think I was elected, at least in part,

because I had a very clear plan for how to bring a theological correction to an institution like Southern Seminary, the mother seminary of our denomination. It would be costly, it would be controversial, and it would be extremely difficult. But the only way to reform an academic institution and to bring it back to a clear affirmation of biblical orthodoxy was to make clear that we were a confessional institution that held to those doctrinal parameters.

It was indeed a very difficult time. The controversy and the conflict were, in human terms, almost unbearable, but it was clear to those who love biblical truth that it would be far better for the institution to die than for it to continue in the direction that it had been headed for several decades. Those of us who undertook this task understood it was a great risk, but we also understood that it simply had to be done. Institutions move left progressively, inch by inch. They move in a more liberal direction compromise by compromise. But you cannot correct an institution the same way. Confessional integrity is not something that can be accommodated to a progressive timeline. There is no way to say, "We are tolerating less and less heresy and false teaching." If confessional integrity is to mean anything, it must stand as an absolute standard. For that reason, we went through five or six years of very intense controversy, and on the other side of it, we were able, by God's grace, to emerge with a very clear confessional identity. We have a faculty of incredible scholars who are committed to teach within our confessional statement, and thousands of students have come to Southern knowing exactly where we stand.

Continue to the rest of the interview on Ligonier Ministries…

The Glorious Power of the Resurrection

APRIL 24, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

As we begin this Holy Week there is no other issue, no other thought more demanding of our attention than that of the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. On these facts—and most especially the resurrection—rest the whole Christian faith, mission, and message.

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:18–23, NIV 2011).

Paul reminds us that Christ's resurrection witnesses to us that if we place our trust in him, we, too, will experience resurrection power in our own lives—resurrection from death in every form, including our own sin and the sins of others such as betrayals and broken relationships. But Jesus' resurrection is not for us alone. It is as Paul so clearly states, a resurrection of all creation, including the corrupted ideologies, institutions, structures, and systems within society that oppress and hinder God's whole creation from being what it and we were designed to be.

Because of the resurrection, we are more than conquerors at any work to which God may call us, because the risen Christ is in the business of redeeming all of the created order!

You and I, as those empowered by the redeeming power of Christ who is alive and reigns at the right hand of the Father do not bring forth the kingdom of God. This is the work of Christ alone, whose reign will only be fully realized by God's final intervention in human history. But we are Christ's body—servants of Almighty God—who are called to be a sign and foretaste of his kingdom, peacemakers bringing *shalom* to every relationship and to every sphere of life and creation!

If we commit ourselves to work for *shalom*—seeking first his kingdom—driven by God's vision for people and the world, we will transform dark places with the light of Christ and the world will see evidence that Christ is alive! That is the Great Commission to which we have been called. Easter reminds us of the great privilege we have been given as we surrender our lives to follow the *resurrected* Jesus into his world, seeking its transformation into God's shalom community.

I pray you take time to stop and reflect throughout this week—be reminded of your first love and his kingdom, which you are to seek first as you press into this world bearing witness to the glorious power of the resurrection!

Source: **Battle for Truth**

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Michael's commentary, "Truth in Culture," is published every Monday on Crosswalk.com, Christianity.com, and The Christian Post.

Why Radical Obedience Is the Key to the Good Life

APRIL 17, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

From **The Christian Post**:

God has a good life for us. We can live with real peace and joy every day. John 10:10 says Jesus "came that may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)" (The Amplified Bible). And in John 17:13, Jesus prayed that His joy would "be made full and complete and perfect" in our lives. God's plan is to bring you out of the bondage of sin so He can bring you in to the good life of peace, joy and righteousness that He offers. And radical obedience to God's will and His Word is the key to experiencing it.

Obedience isn't a topic that usually makes people excited. But the benefits of obeying God – righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit – are greater than any sacrifice or suffering we may go through when we receive His Word and choose to follow His commands (see Romans 14:17). And it is a choice we make – God will not force us to do what He wants us to do.

A Milestone Moment in My Relationship with God

It's important for us to understand that God gives us His commands because He loves us and knows they are good for us. Anything He asks us to do is for our good. The truth is, obedience to God changes us and makes our lives better. And true obedience begins with our thoughts, attitudes and the motives of our heart – our inner life.

Continue for **full post on the Christian Post**

Joyce Meyer Ministries 1-800-727-9673 www.joycemeyer.org

Bad News for Planned Parenthood, Good News for Parents

APRIL 10, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Ever since its entry into public education in the early 1990s, Planned Parenthood (PP), the leading advocate of "comprehensive sex education"—a morally void approach, which began in the 1960s under the leadership of former PP medical director, Dr. Mary Calderone—have condemned abstinence-centered education as ineffective, and even dangerous. Planned Parenthood, which continues to lobby state legislatures and local school boards, distributes brochures claiming:

> (also see **related Obedience to God articles**)
>
> Rigorous research shows that abstinence-only programs do not delay the initiation of sexual activity, they do not cause sexually active teens to 'return' to abstinence, and they do not decrease the number of sexual partners among young people. Abstinence-only programs do not reduce the number of teen pregnancies.... These programs do nothing to keep young people safe.

In their ongoing effort to portray proponents of abstinence-centered education as backwoods moralizers who are ignorant of the facts, Planned Parenthood has repeatedly argued that "Every reputable sexuality education organization in the United States, as well as prominent health organizations like the American Medical Association, has denounced abstinence-only education programs and supported comprehensive sex education" (Planned Parenthood brochure).

I imagine the folks over at Planned Parenthood are desperately trying to figure how they can best spin the latest results from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), released last month. According to a 2006–2008 survey commissioned by the CDC to the National Center for Health Statistics, sexual activity among teens has dropped dramatically. According to the study, 68 % of boys and 67 % of girls (age 15 to17) have never had sexual intercourse. This information corroborates another CDC report released just last week showing that teen birth rates have reached their "lowest levels in nearly 70 years" following a 37 % reduction since abstinence education began (CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, "Vital Signs: Teen Pregnancy—United States, 1991—2009," April 5, 2011).

Amazingly, the mainstream media and PP have been noticeably silent about the report. I did however find one creative journalist, writing for the "venerable" *SMU Daily Mustang* who haphazardly declares that the decrease in teen pregnancy is "due in large part to the economic downturn." Oh sure, that makes sense. Teens probably whip out their checkbook during foreplay, discover they're broke and say, "I'd better wait; I ain't got no money!" I know that was a little snarky—but seriously?!

As my good friend, Dan Bailey, executive director of **Just Say YES** states, "This report challenges the theory that anti drug and alcohol programs can change teen behavior but for sex education programs, just give them a condom." He adds: "Even in the midst of our sexually saturated society, teens are choosing to avoid sexual activity. As educators, parents and mentors, we should be providing resources and messages that promote this positive trend."

Another national survey in 2009 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services indentifies what may be the most significant contribution of abstinence education: it fosters increased communication with parents on the subject. The report states:

> Adolescent exposure to specific topics related to sex and abstinence in a class or program was strongly associated with higher adolescent-reported communication levels with parents about those topics.... In general, our findings indicate that adolescent attitudes about sex and abstinence are more subject to influence from parents than to messages about sex and abstinence delivered in the context of classes or programs. However, adolescent receipt of information about sex, abstinence, and sexual values in a class or program was associated with increased levels of adolescent communication about sex and abstinence with parents... (*National Survey of Adolescents and Their Parents: Attitudes and Opinions about Sex and Abstinence*, February 26, 2009, Prepared for Family and Youth Services Bureau Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services).

In short, parents (and not the state) remain the most influential factor in shaping their teen's values and choices and abstinence-centered education stimulates the conversations that most parents and teens otherwise tend to avoid.

That's the good news! Now the bad news: Despite the dramatic decrease in teen pregnancy, out-of-wedlock birthrates have reached record levels among adults. Forty-one percent of children were born out of wedlock in 2008! This number has increased every year since 1970, bringing roughly one million children into fatherless homes each year hence. This represents a fourfold increase in out-of-wedlock births since 1970, a figure that remained relatively stable (around 5%) for centuries until the 1960s. Historically, teenage mothers were the greatest source of out of wedlock births. Today however, 60 percent of out-of-wedlock births are to women between 20 and 29 and the remaining 17 percent are to women over 30. The fact is, more people are choosing to bear children without marriage.

Given the overwhelming and indisputable social research linking family dissolution and single-parenthood with increased crime, child poverty, economic inequality, and substance abuse, this is a disastrous societal trend proven throughout history to correlate with cultural demise (see J. D. Unwin, P. Sorokin). It begs the question, "What is happening here?" How can we be experiencing such dramatic reductions in premarital teen sexual activity while adults are going in the opposite direction?

In essence, while we are succeeding in getting kids to make wiser choices when it comes to sexual activity, our culture continues to disassociate sex and child rearing from marriage. Marriage remains an ideal but a greatly diminished ideal, which more and more people feel is no longer necessary for sex or parenting. Furthermore, if marriage is no longer linked to procreation, limited to one man and one woman, then what is marriage? Marriage has become a loose and voluntary compact, thereby losing its social, moral, and economic qualities essential to a healthy society. Beginning with the divorce revolution to its radical redefinition, marriage—stripped of it social force and support—is becoming meaningless.

Finally, the recovery of cultural values that exalt marriage and the natural family will not occur in the legislature or courts but in the church. It is in the daily life and practice of the church that marriage and family must be modeled first. This means that Christian husbands and wives must submit to one another, cease being selfish, and stop *sinning* by abandoning their marriages! And pastors and elders must stop being cowardly when the situation demands intervention and/or church discipline.

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Consumers or Creators: Being of the World or Being God's People

APRIL 3, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

After more than ten years of serious study and careful examination of culture—what it is, how it's formed and its present influence on the church—I find that Americans generally flow in one of two directions. They either tend toward being consumers or being creators.

Consumers, the overwhelming majority of late, could be characterized by an inclination to formulate their sense of self from the outside in. The true self remains hidden—in many cases unknown—and serious self-examination is hindered by countless distractions and diversions. Contrary to the quiet life, consumer's lives are intentionally filled with noise, activities, and things that aid in avoiding serious thought, introspection, or reflection.

Instead, consumers survey their surroundings in constant search of things, experiences, and associations to construct their self-image. They choose fashions and possessions not because they satisfy an aesthetic appreciation or meet quality standards as much as they serve to convey a particular image of themselves to others.

Consumers tend to seek experiences or, more accurately, replicate the experiences of others whose image they think is popular, cool, or "hot." This is the impetus for the interest in no-real-accomplishment-necessary celebrities. Does *anyone* really admire Mike "The Situation" Sorrentino from the MTV series *Jersey Shore* or Paris Hilton because of any serious achievement or virtue? However, head to Florida or South Padre Island over spring break and you will see this imitation of

vacuous experience on a grand scale! Visit your local university or high school—including many church youth groups—and you'll see it institutionalized as "youth culture."

Additionally, because consumers tend to live on the stage of the superficial, they frequently fail to form real or meaningful relationships. Instead, being self-absorbed, consumers tend to see people in terms of *network connections* whose ultimate purpose is to benefit *them*, either now or at some point in the future. In essence, consumers tend to see relationships as merely a means to their own selfish ends. Sadly, American culture, by and large, encourages and promotes this consumptive approach to understanding ourselves and society. This may help explain the decline of community in America that contemporary sociologists have observed.

On the other hand, there are those who today are truly countercultural; they are *creators*. Rather than draw their identity from outside themselves, they attempt to develop their sense of self from the inside out. Creators bring things to fruition. They don't look at the world as something to posses or see people as a means to an end. Instead they see the potential for what can be in the world and believe relationships with people are the desirable end itself. Creators are thinkers; they reflect on themselves and the world around them. They are curious to know why things are the way they are and what can be done to improve the world where improvement is needed. Creators attempt to discover what is true, do what is good, and bring forth beauty.

Suffice it to say that of these two categories, Christians should be creators. But what does this mean? Am I speaking of creators in strictly an artistic sense? Not necessarily. I am speaking of Christian creators in the sense of bringing *shalom* into the world. The Hebrew word *shalom* is most often translated into English as "peace," but this hardly does justice to its full biblical meaning. "Shalom is an exceedingly rich concept, a comprehensive word dealing with and covering all the relationships of daily life, expressing the ideal state of life in Israel and, indeed, the entire world" (Linthicum, *Transforming Power*, p. 36). *Shalom* is an all-encompassing concept that concerns personal health (Ps. 38:3), security (Judg. 6:23; Dan. 10:19), long life (Gen. 15:15), prosperity (Job 5:18–26; Ps. 37:11; Lam. 3:16–17; Zech. 8:12), and successful completion of an endeavor (Judg. 18:5; 1 Sam. 1:17). In other words, shalom is God's best for the entirety of life—personally and socially.

As God's people, we are called to the universal ministry of *shalom*-making (*peacemakers*, Matt 5:9), bringing God's vision of reality to bear on the world. We do this in two directions. First, within the church we are to work for *shalom* in our corporate life together—being one, meeting one another's needs, caring for widows and orphans, bearing one another's burdens, and so on. Second, we proclaim the vision of God's kingdom and work to bring the reconciling ministry of Christ to all things (see Col. 1:20). This is what Jesus means when he says, "seek first the kingdom" (Matt. 6:33, ESV).

The kingdom of God is the progressive establishment of *shalom*—the proper ordering of life, relationships, and creation (i.e., reconciliation) until Christ returns. This *shalom*-making work of the church is to be a sign and foretaste of the ultimate peace to come when Christ returns. Today however, this activity is often discounted as good works, secondary to the gospel message. However, I would argue that this neighbor-loving creation of *shalom* cannot be separated from the gospel and as such is essential to the authenticity of our message (see John 13:35, 17:20–23; 1 Pet. 2:12, 15–17).

In contrast to consumers, who neglect their interior life through distraction and amusement, Christians are to create space for God to work in their lives through prayer, solitude, and contemplation. In contrast to forming identities through the imitation of others, Christians establish their identity in Christ. Rather than living for themselves, Christians work for *shalom* in the lives of those they encounter and the communities in which they live. This is the same task to which the Israelite captives in Babylon were called. God told the Israelites to "seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper" (Jer. 29:7, NIV©2010). Our calling in whatever situation God might have us is to seek that community's *shalom*. This includes the proper ordering of relationships and functions within our families, churches, vocations, schools, communities, and the nation whenever and wherever we have the opportunity and means.

I confess that it is far easier to write about putting the kingdom first and working to create *shalom* than actually doing so. There are times when I am more consumer than creator. Regrettably, I too often consider my own peace, comfort, and security rather than work to create the same for others and the institutions that affect them. However, I am—by God's grace—learning to be *small*, meaning to think less about my own life and interests and more about Jesus' life and interests. In the beginning, this can seem like a loss but in reality it is the path to being what God wants us to be; and being what God wants us to be is where *real* peace, security, and comfort are found (John 14:27). It takes faith to follow Christ down this road, and while I've seen the Lord strengthen my faith, I still struggle. It is a process, but a process in which we must, if we truly love Christ, actively participate by continually seeking, knocking, and asking him to give us what we lack in faith and ability.

In conclusion, I have learned this: there is no good end to being a consumer; it is a vacuous life far less than God intends. To become a creator who works for the transformation of people, forces, and structures with the love of God (*shalom*), we must submit to Christ, the church, and the care of others.

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Country a Mess? Blame the Church

MARCH 27, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW, CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

> *the disobedience of the present church is the cause of the country's moral slide*

As our great country accelerates its slide into economic and moral Hell, be careful whom you blame. The present boldness of liberals and timidity of conservatives are only the secondary causes. Much of the blame can be placed at the foot of the church.

Related Obedience to God articles

When I say the church, I don't mean an institution like the Roman Catholic church, but the entire body of believers – those from all denominations who believe that the Bible is true, that people are sinners, that God sent the perfect God-man, Jesus Christ, to redeem us from our sins, and that we are charged with spreading that message and reforming society.

Believers are God's ambassadors here on earth, called to be salt and light in the world and to the world. When we follow our calling,individuals are transformed and societies with them. Our country is failing because too many believers have abandoned this calling.

They began abandoning it in earnest in the 1920's. That's when an anti-intellectual movement called fundamentalism led believers to separate from society rather than reform it, and to bifurcate life into two separate spheres—the sacred and secular. Reason was given up for emotionalism, and only activities that directly saved souls were deemed sacred. Everything else was considered secular. Careers in clergy and missions were glorified at the expense of everything else. That led too many believers to leave public education, the media, law, and politics in the hands of the unbelievers. Is it any wonder why those areas of our culture now seem so Godless? Take the influence of God out, and that's what you get.

Secularizing public education has been the key to our nation's moral demise. Once public education went secular, the rest of society eventually did, especially when the products of that

system became our leaders. As Abraham Lincoln once observed, "The philosophy of the schoolroom in one generation will be the philosophy of the government in the next."

The philosophy of the schoolroom is atheistic. The question of God's existence—the most important question regarding how we should live—is not studied or debated in our public schools. Atheism is just assumed to be true and with it moral relativism. That's a major reason why immorality dominates our schools and why our kids know more about political correctness than truth. It's also why we have a new generation of voters more enamored with "hope and change" than defending our changeless rights from an overreaching government. G. K.Chesterton's observation about Russia has come true here, "Once abolish the God, and the government becomes the God."

How did this happen? In the early 1960's, the Supreme Court,consisting of newly trained secularists, banned devotional Bible reading in our schools (apparently, for the 180 years before that,people just didn't understand the Constitution!). That decision, and several others, has stifled virtually any mention of God or the Bible in our public schools. In effect, the most influential book in the history of the world is ignored in our educational system. What kind of a quality education is that? It's certainly not what the folks who settled this land had in mind for public education. In fact, the first public school in the new world began as a result of the "Old Deluder Satan Law." That 1647 Massachusetts law established the school to teach kids how to read the Bible so that old deluder Satan could not deceive them.

Likewise, most of our first universities were established to teach and propagate a complete Christian worldview. Harvard's charter read,"Let every Student be plainly instructed, and earnestly pressed to consider well, the main end of his life and studies is, to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life (John 17:3) and therefore to lay Christ in the bottom, as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and Learning."

The founders of Harvard knew that all truth is God's truth. There is no bifurcation between the sacred and the secular. According to the Bible, every vocation, every discipline, and every person is sacred. Nothing is secular. In sharp contrast, those running our country now say that everything is secular. That's a long way from our founding.

"So what?" you say. "Who cares about morality and God?"

That's exactly the problem: Who does care? When the church separates from society, it takes its moral influence with it. But respect for the moral principles upon which out nation was founded —life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—is essential to its survival. Our founders knew this.

Following the Constitutional convention, a woman asked Benjamin Franklin what kind of government he and his fellow founding fathers created for the nation. Franklin replied, "A republic, if you can keep it."

Franklin knew that freedom must always be defended; that the unalienable rights for which our founding fathers pledged "their lives,fortunes and sacred honor," were never secure unless an informed electorate held their representatives accountable to uphold those moral rights.

Recognizing that only a religious and moral people will maintain a good government, George Washington declared in his farewell address,"Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity,Religion and Morality are indispensable supports." His successor, John Adams, wrote, "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other." In other words, even the best Constitution cannot prevent immoral people or politicians from destroying a nation. That's why the church cannot abandon its calling. But it has.

So if you're a believer who is upset that life is not being protected; that marriage is being subverted; that judges routinely usurp your will; that our immigration laws are being ignored; that radical laws are passed but never read; that mentioning God in school(unless he's Allah) results in lawsuits; that school curriculums promote political correctness and sexual deviance as students fail at basic academics; that unimaginable debt is being piled on your children while leftist organizations like Planned Parenthood and ACORN receive your tax dollars; and that your religion and free speech rights are about to be eroded by "hate" crimes legislation that can punish you for quoting the Bible; then go look in the mirror and take your share of the blame because we have not obeyed our calling.

Then start over. Reengage at every level of society. Treat every job and every person as sacred. Be a beacon for Christ and truth in whatever you do and wherever you are.

There is hope if you act. After all, we believe in redemption.

Read more…

Compliments of *Correct, not Politically Correct*, authored by Frank Turek. For more information, visit www.impactapologetics.com.

Empowered to Act: Why Christians Should Change the World

MARCH 20, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The idea that Christians are to bring healing into the world—the restoration of people and the reformation of systems that hinder them—seems reasonable enough (in thought, anyway). It is certainly biblical. Reality, however, is another story. The moment one ventures out into the world—either physically or through the lens of the media—you will no doubt be thrown back by the overwhelming suffering, injustice, and evil that frequently seems to rule the day. Islamic terrorists—an enemy with no intelligible goal other than destruction—remind us that evil is real, ruthless, and well-supplied with volunteers. Incomprehensible poverty in India, despotic regimes in the Middle East, and Mexican drug wars us that injustice still reigns throughout much of the world.

Just recently, in my own community, a twenty-nine-year-old pastor was brutally murdered in his church and his sixty-seven-year-old female assistant was nearly beaten to death for a few dollars.

Within our own church communities, we see families torn apart by sin, abuse, and divorce. We often pray without result as our friends and loved ones succumb to disease and death. Many are suffering distress as their children wander from the faith and countless others are struggling with job loss and the economic hardships brought on by prolonged unemployment. Mindless acts of evil, moral failures, indiscriminant suffering, and tragic loss bombard our lives. It is no wonder that many of us feel overwhelmed by a sense of despair and may think that improving these conditions is not only futile but also pointless. Some may even begin to doubt that God is real or that he loves them. Sadly, the church is full of discouraged and often defeated Christians.

Such pessimism is incongruous with the new life in Christ. The epistle to the Hebrews, which exhorts believers to be faithful in "the last days," is as relevant today as it was then. Most scholars believe Hebrews was written between A.D. 80 and 85. This would place its writing at least eleven years after the brutal persecutions of Nero had ended in A.D. 69. Wisely, Nero's successor, Vespasian sought to establish peace and stability and was considered a virtuous man of upright character (Michael Grant, *The Twelve Caesar's* , 219). In essence, the Christians to whom this epistle was written were living in a period of relative peace—free from persecution.

Numerous passages in Hebrews attest to the fact that the problem confronting these Christians was not persecution but apathy, and/or outright spiritual sloth. The anxieties of life had overtaken many and some were in danger of drifting away from the gospel (2:1). Others were at risk of being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin (3:13). Some had abandoned corporate worship (10:25) or were faltering in their spiritual zeal (12:2). Many were guilty of failing to learn the doctrines of scripture. "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food" (5:12, ESV). In summary, the church was in an awful state. The reprieve from persecution had enticed them to become complacent, lazy, and apathetic.

This seems to closely parallel our own times. We are not being put to death for our faith. In fact, American Christians live in relative peace and prosperity. Our "sufferings" that are common to life in the fallen world generally pale in comparison to the abject suffering of so many others now and throughout history. We, too, have become complacent, often indifferent toward the world and those who suffer. However, this complacency may have more to do with how we understand our mission and purpose than it does the absence of persecution. If, as I have said before, we hold a view of the gospel that only emphasizes personal conversions, the world around us will descend—unabated by the church—into evil, injustice, and oppression. This neglect defies Jesus' commandment to love our neighbors because it ignores the conditions, systems, and institutions that hinder human flourishing and cause suffering. It is very hard for people to believe that Jesus loves them when his followers show little or no concern for the very things that are hurting them.

If, on the other hand, we embrace the *gospel of the kingdom*, then the encouragement from the writer of Hebrews makes more sense. Remembering that we have been given new life and now live under the authority of the good King who is over all kings, the writer encourages us to "be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken" (12:28 ESV). Here is our hope: The unshakable kingdom of God has come into the world to oppose and tear down the kingdom of Satan—those conditions, systems, and institutions that harm and enslave God's creation. This gratitude due the kingdom of God finds its cause in God's *desire* and *power* to change the world. This is God's continuing act of redemption, its intended scope being the restoration of the whole creation to its proper harmony (cf. Col. 1:19–22).

Throughout Scripture, our attention is drawn again and again to the kingdom; Jesus built his theology around the concept of the kingdom of God. Robert Linthicum summarizes the meaning of the kingdom in his seminal book, *Transforming Power*:

> It takes very little reading of the Gospel accounts…to recognize that what Jesus meant by the kingdom of God was simply the full living-out of *shalom* upon the earth, in its private and public dimensions, in its personal and corporate dimensions, and in its political, economic, and religious systemic dimensions (Linthicum, *Transforming Power*).

In other words, the unshakable kingdom has come is coming and one day will come fully when Christ returns. The mission of the body is to proclaim God's message of hope, share his love, and restore the peace of God (*shalom*) to all that sin has unsettled. We are sons and daughters of the Most High God; we have nothing to fear from the world (cf. Rom. 8:15; 2 Tim. 1:7)! It must also be understood that while we work for *shalom*, we will suffer failure and disappointment. There will be days when the kingdom seems so small and evil so large. But the timing and effect of God's will on earth belongs to him and our faithfulness is measured in the effort, not the result.

As citizens of God's kingdom, we cannot and should not be shaken by this world and all of its woes, but go by faith with boldness, bringing the love, beauty, justice, peace, and mercy of God's kingdom to every corner of the earth.

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Being For People and the World Rather than Against

MARCH 12, 2011
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Last week I attempted to outline the daily life and duty of every Christian rooted in the two "great commandments" of Jesus and the kingdom principle of restoration. I wrote: "We enter the world each day as ambassadors of Christ and his kingdom—sensitized to the effects of sin—loving others by seeking their welfare through the proper ordering of things and relationships. We look for and respond to opportunities to bring relief to those who are suffering.

We seek the good of others and when possible, we create systems and institutions that serve the common good and promote human flourishing. We work for remedy in the daily situations and when necessary, the reformation or abolition of whole systems that oppress. We disciple people in the Truth, showing them the way that leads to a life that thrives through having a right relationship to God, to self, to others, and the rest of creation."

However, to do this will require many of us to reexamine our attitudes and conduct toward the world and those outside the church. Too often, our attitude toward the surrounding culture and those who make it up is judgmental and condemning. We thoughtlessly criticize anything that isn't distinctly Christian. When met with opposing ideas, we draw cultural battle lines and those on the other side are considered *the enemy*. We vilify and ridicule the representatives of "godless culture" and rather than engage with and love the lost, we take offense and withdraw into our Christian enclaves. Practically speaking, many Christians live as if they really don't like the world or anyone in it!

We are often doing precisely the opposite of what Jesus did. He did not come to condemn the world but to save it (see John 3:17). Sinners didn't offend Jesus! These were the very people to whom he was drawn and engaged with—the dirty, the broken, the vulgar, and the immoral. Zacchaeus the tax collector was the Bernie Madoff of his day, a traitor cheating his own people (Luke 19). The Samaritan woman at the well was the town "slut" (John 4) and the woman the Pharisees were preparing to kill was actually caught in the act of adultery (John 8). Jesus didn't condemn these, he engaged them, ate and drank with them, defended them against their accusers—he loved them and because he first loved them, they in turn repented and followed him. Jesus wasn't afraid of getting "dirty" by consorting with sinners.

In contrast, Jesus *was* offended by the self-righteous: the religious zealots who sought to keep themselves "unspotted from the world" by having nothing to do with sinners. The Pharisees criticized and condemned anything and everyone who didn't conform to their standards. If we don't see that we, too, are sinners—no better than others—then we are Pharisees judging others while deceived about our own condition.

Not only are we frequently judgmental, our thinking has become so clouded by political rancor and the cultural struggle that we refuse to acknowledge any contribution to what is true, good, and beautiful by non-Christians.

I recall publishing an article several years ago in which I praised Katie Couric, who, when asked by reporters if she would travel to Iraq, said she would *not*, "because a single mother of two had no business taking such risks in a chaotic war zone." I simply shared in the reporter's praise of Ms. Couric who "put the well-being of her two daughters above her career." I received reactions from many Christians who expressed anger at *me* for praising a "left-wing liberal feminist" like Katie

What Does the Christian Do?

MARCH 7, 2011

CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The goal of knowing oneself is—practically speaking—to get yourself out of the way so you can grow in your relationship with God (cf. John 3:30). This relationship is not established in the apprehension of some facts about God but is rather a relational intimacy characterized by love: God initiates and demonstrates his love for you and in response you love God. As to the nature of this love, which transcends emotional feelings or admiration, Jesus connects true love of God with obedience.

He says quite plainly, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Jesus reiterates this point three more times during the same discourse saying, "Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me" (John 14:21), and "If anyone loves me he will keep my word…" (John 14:23), and then in the negative saying, "Whoever does not love me does not keep my words" (John 14:24).

At this point one has to ask, "What words?" All of them, of course! However, Jesus summarizes his commandments and our corresponding obedience in two directions: loving God and loving others. In Matthew chapter 22, Jesus is confronted by a Pharisee, an expert in Mosaic law who asks, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law" (Matthew 22:36)? To which Jesus responds, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 37–40). In his response, Jesus is teaching that the whole duty of man, the whole moral-spiritual law, can be summed up in one word: love (cf. Rom. 13:9–10; 1 Cor. 13) and that this love should be directed toward both God (Deut. 6:5) and man (Lev. 19:18).

It is here that we gain clarity in our responsibilities and better understand our duties as Christians. If "all the Law" hangs on loving God and loving others, then to love God is to obey him and to obey him is to love others. But what does it really mean to love others? Should you walk down the street hugging everyone you meet saying, "I love you"? Should loving others be accompanied by feelings of affection? Are these *feelings* essential to loving others and if absent does this mean you're not being loving? Here again, knowing yourself becomes vital because if you truly know yourself then you know that you are not *by nature* able to love as described in 1 Corinthians 13. If you're anything like me, you know that you fail daily in your thoughts and attitude to be patient and kind. In my mind, ugly pride arises to boast of its superiority, insisting on its own way, at times resentful of others, and quietly delighting when the mighty are brought low. In my flesh, I am anything but loving.

Many Christians who expressed anger at *me* for praising a "left-wing liberal feminist" like Katie Geneva. This attitude is contemptuous and self-righteously conveys the notion that only distinctly Christian conduct is worthy of praise. This is sheer nonsense lacking in grace; for Christians to diminish the good done by non-Christians makes us look narrow-minded, petty and hateful. This certainly isn't consistent with the attributes of love that are listed in 1 Corinthians 13.

The consequence of this posture is devastating to the church and its mission. As a result, we increasingly find our message and ourselves unwelcome. In short, many Christians are not only rejecting Christ's command to obey God by loving others, because of these attitudes and conduct, we are increasingly unlikeable. Sadly, this is becoming the predominant view of Christians by those outside the church.

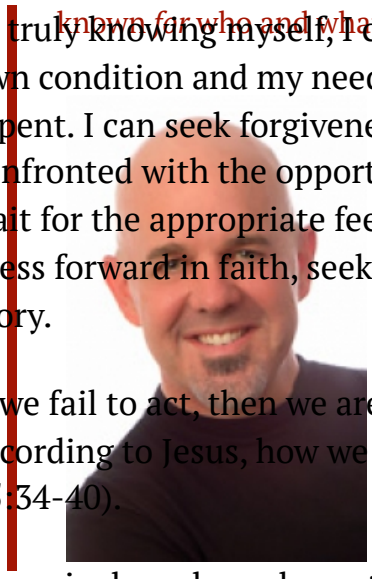
In 2006, researchers at the Barna Group surveyed 16 to 29 year-olds and discovered that 38 percent claim to have a "bad impression" of Christianity and only 16 percent reported having a "good impression." A full 49 percent reported having a "bad impression" of "Evangelical Christians" with only three percent claiming to have a "positive impression" (Kinnaman & Lyons, UnChristian: *What a New Generation Really Thinks About Christianity* 24). Only ten years earlier, a similar study revealed that 85 percent of those outside the faith held a "favorable" impression of Christianity.

For the Christian who spends any effort trying to engage the lost, you are no doubt well acquainted with this sentiment.

Fortunately, there is a new movement of Christians rising to counter this condition (you may be among them); one hopes they will change this perception. Gabe Lyons refers to these as "restorers" in his recent book, *The Next Christians: How a New Generation is Restoring the Faith*.

This growing group of believers has taken their impetus from their rediscovery of the *gospel of the kingdom*. Rather than withdrawing from the world waiting for evacuation, they take seriously Jesus' command to *occupy* until he returns. They understand the extraordinary implications of God's redemptive kingdom come into the world and so they work to infuse the world with God's love, beauty, grace, and justice. They live, act, and speak as if they are *for* people and the world because Christ is. Where others take offense and withdraw, they are provoked to engage and remedy. Where others are prone to judge and condemn, they offer grace and mercy. Where others only see the profane, they choose to find the beauty that expresses the creative image of God. As Christians, we should look for common ground rather than focus on differences; we should build bridges that bring us together rather than walls that keep us apart!

Those compelled by their love for Christ and his world are shattering negative stereotypes and seeing the restoration of people and places. They are reaching a new generation through serious dialogue without moralism and judgment and drawing them into authentic communities of faith in Christ. People are in need of hope, not condemnation. As those who follow Christ, we know where and from whom this hope—our only hope—can be found. We are living in a potentially pivotal moment in history. If we are faithful to Christ and that which constitutes true Christianity (see Matthew 25:41-46), we can, once again, become the people of God animated by love and



known for who and what we are for rather than who and what we are against
Source: **Center for Christ and Culture**
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Michael's commentary, "Truth in Culture," is published every Monday on Crosswalk.com, Christianity.com, and The Christian Post. Subscribe via **email or RSS**

In truly knowing myself, I cannot be surprised by these thoughts. They merely remind me of my own condition and my need for mercy and grace so that I turn away from myself toward God and repent. I can seek forgiveness and ask God for a heart that compels me to *act* with love. When confronted with the opportunity to demonstrate Christ's commandment to love others, we don't wait for the appropriate feelings to emerge. Instead, we recognize the providential moment and press forward in faith, seeking God's grace to love so that it is his love that is manifested to his glory.

If we fail to act, then we are not trusting in Jesus. Our actions reveal our trust in Jesus and according to Jesus, how we treat others ultimately demonstrates how we treat God (cf. Matthew 25:34-40).

So again, how do we love others? In Luke 11, Jesus links love with justice. In condemning the conduct of the Pharisees, Jesus says, "But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God" (Luke 11:42). Jesus is obviously referring to something beyond the concept of punishing disobedience or *retributive justice*. Clearly Jesus wasn't rebuking the Pharisees for failing to punish wrongdoers—they excelled on this point! The punishment of sin is no doubt an essential aspect of God's justice but it isn't the only aspect. The Scriptures reveal that the justice of God through Christ Jesus is also creative, liberating, and restorative.

In affirmation of the Messianic fulfillment in Jesus, Matthew cites the prophet Isaiah, who wrote, "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth" (Isaiah 42:1–4 NIV 1984; see also Matthew 12:18–21). At the commencement of his earthly ministry Jesus asserts his messianic role saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1:15). Recall, Jesus did not come in to the world to condemn it (see John 3:17). Mankind was already living under condemnation for his sin (see Gen. 3:14-19). Therefore the mission of Christ to "establish justice on earth," which satisfied the retributive justice of God also begins the restorative or redemptive justice of God through the appearance of God's reign: the kingdom.

The prophet Micah, who spoke of God's coming kingdom and the king who would be born in Bethlehem, similarly affirmed the correlation of love and justice. In rebuking the Israelites, Micah condemns religiosity, which neglects justice, saying, "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8). To "do justice" is to seek the proper ordering of things, setting right what sin has set wrong. If the restoration of people and the world ruined by sin is the purpose of Christ and his kingdom, then it is also *our* purpose.

Returning to our headline (what does a Christian do?), the answer is this: We enter the world each day as ambassadors of Christ and his kingdom—sensitized to the effects of sin—loving others by seeking their welfare through the proper ordering of things and relationships. We look for and respond to opportunities to bring relief to those who are suffering. We seek the good of others and when possible, we create systems and institutions that serve the common good and promote human flourishing. We work for remedy in the daily situations and when necessary, the reformation or abolition of whole systems that oppress. We disciple people in the Truth, showing them the way that leads to a life that thrives through having a right relationship to God, to self, to others, and the rest of creation.

Source: **Center for Christ and Culture**

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Virginia Christian Alliance Presents Focus on the Family's The Truth Project®

NOVEMBER 6, 2010
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

From Focus on the Family's The Truth Project®

The Barna Research Group recently surveyed professing Christians and found that less than 10% had a thoughtful and consistent understanding of their biblical faith.
Because of this, today's believers think and live very similarly to non-believers. A personal sense of significance is rarely experienced, we spend our money and time on things that fail to satisfy and we begin to wonder what life's ultimate purpose really is.

In Romans 12:1-2 we are instructed to "not be conformed to the world but to be transformed by the renewal of our minds". If our hearts and minds are not being renewed we will be unable to fulfill Jesus' command to be His ambassadors in this needy world.
The Truth Project challenges everyone to consider the claims of Christ and their implications and applications in our every aspect of our life and thinking. See below: trailer of this series and a short clip from each foundational area of life.
This 13 week DVD series is intended to be used in a small group setting. It lets us join Dr. Del Tackett as he teaches his students each week. The series incorporates fascinating interviews with leading Christians and atheists highlighting the various perspectives that are prevalent in our culture. After the video presentation there is a lively thirty minute question and discussion time.

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Each week the series explores foundational areas of life:

Veritology: Is there Truth? unavailable It was removed following a copyright removal	**Philosophy and Ethics: Says Who?** unavailable It was removed following a copyright removal
Anthropology: Who is man? (clip)	**Theology: Who is God?** (clip)
Science: What is real? (clip)	**History: What Purpose? (clip)**
Sociology: The Divine Imprint? (clip)	**The State: Whose Law? (clip)**
Labor: Blessing or Curse?	**Community Involvement: Why care?**

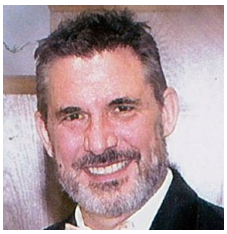
This program will challenge and expand your thinking about the integration of your faith and the whole of life. It is suitable for Christians and non-Christians alike.
The presentation and discussion lasts about 90 minutes and is usually hosted at someone's home, business or church.

If you would like to be involved please contact:

In Richmond, Va. Mr Harry Hanger, call 804-790-9149	In Fredericksburg, Va. Mrs. Donna Moore, call 540-548-3908

	or **hhanger1@gmail.com**		or email **donnamoore02@juno.com**

	In Richmond, Va,. Mr. Jasen Glasbrenner, call 804-236-8898 or email **jasen@ywamva.org**		In Harrisonburg, Va. Mrs. Janet Welty call 540-438-8966 or email **family@valleyfamilyforum.org**

	In Fredericksburg, Va., Rev. Michael Hirsch, **mshsbhccc@aol.com**

The Truth Project - What is Truth?
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God Says vs What Man Says

SEPTEMBER 25, 2010
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: ABORTION, EVOLUTION, ISLAM, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Greene Hollowell, a resident of Chesterfield County and a member on the Board of Directors for the Virginia Christian Alliance responds to recent issues on the Religious Herald. Those issues arise from our disobedience to God's Word and an unrepentant people pursuing lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life . (1 John 2:16)

Recent issues of the RH have reported on Abortion, Homosexuals, Evolution, Muslims, Obama and Church/State Walls and the controversies that surround them.

Consider:

ABORTION: God calls it murder;

We call it 'choice'.

HOMOSEXUALITY: God calls it an abomination;

We call it 'an alternate life style'.

EVOLUTION: Gods says He created the world and us (in His Image) in six days;

We say it evolved with out His help over billions of years and we evolved from a monkey.

MUSLIMS: God says He is GOD and there is no other:

We say there are 'many ways' and Allah is one. And, Oh! Don't be concerned about 1400 years of violence and honor killings, 9/11 and threats to destroy America, we know some very nice, peaceful Muslims and we need to dialogue with them and seek common ground.

OBAMA: God has greatly blessed America:

Obama says we are no more just a Christian nation and we agree with him. He also supports abortion and homosexuals, and the majority of Americans agree.

CHURCH/STATE WALLS: God says He is supreme and you will obey Him;

We say God has no business in our national affairs and we don't want His moral demands on our backs and certainly not taught to our children.

It would seem like these are 'no brainers' but this is where America stands.

God told Cain- 'your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground!' How much more does the blood of 50,000,000 babies, slaughtered by their own mothers, fathers and 'doctors of death' cry out to God.

I believe God is using the financial collapse to hopefully bring us to our knees. I also believe if we stop the slaughter and return to him He will listen.

Greene Hollowell

Richmond, VA 23225

Promoting Obedience to God and the Preeminence of Jesus Christ as Revealed in the Holy Bible

AUGUST 10, 2010
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD, VCA 7 ISSUES

Introduction

Jesus never said it would be easy. In fact, He said it would be difficult. In John 15:20, Jesus says, "If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also." Furthermore, 2nd Timothy 3:12-13 says, "In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived." Doesn't this last verse ring true, considering the present state of the world? Matters have gotten worse, and Christians are persecuted more than ever before for proclaiming the Good News and upholding God's law. We truly live in a world of darkness, where enemies conspire against us for following God. Jesus knew this would happen, as he said, "They hated me without reason" (John 15:25).

During such dire times, it is crucial to declare the preeminence of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Holy Bible, and to address the issues of apologetics (defending one's faith) and the various shapes and forms the enemies of Christ have adopted. This is essential so that we are prepared to face the adversary's of Christ. A great battle is being waged on earth between the forces of good and evil, and God has called us to be beacons of Light in the surrounding darkness. Will we defend our faith and declare the Gospel in an increasingly hostile world that needs the Good News more than ever before? Will we show people the way to salvation or sit back and allow sin to overrun God's good earth?

The Authenticity of the New Testament

The New Testament's authenticity is essential because it is the foundation of our faith. If one does not believe in the Bible's accuracy, how can they believe in Christ's preeminence? So often it seems questions surrounding the New Testament documents' authenticity lead to doubt and open rejection by would-be believers. This is partly due to misinterpretation and lack of historical and contextual knowledge. There is a great deal of evidence pointing to the New Testament's validity:

1. The source pool of documents for the New Testament is *extensive*. In fact, there are over 5,000 Greek manuscripts detailing the New Testament.
2. Every part of the gospel record, going back to even the most primitive documents, comes to the same conclusion: Jesus Christ was the Son of God and the Messiah. He is never depicted as less than God in the form of a man.
3. Much of the New Testament was written while people still remembered the stories actually happening. Therefore, it is strongly based on eyewitness accounts.
4. Early non-Christian writers do not dispute that Jesus performed amazing miracles. Even early *Jewish* writings do not deny His special powers, although they attribute them to sorcery.
5. Many scholars and historians consider the Gospel of Luke one of the greatest historical texts of all time for its undisputed accuracy.

The Preeminence of Jesus Christ

The opening passage of the Book of John states, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning" (1:1-2). This passage, among others in the Bible, refers to the theme of unity – the Holy Trinity, consisting of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. The Word refers to Jesus. Jesus was with God, and Jesus *was* God. Furthermore, John 1:14 says, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of Grace and truth." God came down to earth in the form of a man, and He was called Jesus. And before the birth of Jesus, His preeminence was foretold in Matthew; chapter one, verse 23 says, "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" – which means, "God with us." And even Jesus spoke of His identity as not only the Son of God, but also God, although He was discrete and cautious, often speaking in parables, which only those who believed in Him could understand. At times, however, He was more straightforward: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matthew 28:18). Clearly, there is substantial evidence in scripture pointing to the preeminence of Jesus Christ.

Even Satan's minions could not deny the power and righteousness of the Christ. Luke 4:33-37 depicts a riveting scene in which Jesus exercises a demon from an innocent man. Speaking through the possessed, the demon says, "Ha! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have

you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God!" Jesus, commanding absolute authority, calls the demon out of the man, and it has no choice but to obey, for evil cannot exist in the presence of such righteousness. Luke 4:36 says, "All the people were amazed and said to each other, "What is this teaching? With authority and power he gives orders to evil spirits and they come out!"

But of all the miracles Jesus performed – like healing the sick, driving out demons, or providing food to thousands of people from a small basket of fish and bread – nothing confirms His preeminence like the Resurrection. In John, chapter two, verse 19, Jesus says to the Jews, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days," meaning, "Kill my human body, and in three days, I will rise from the dead." And He did. Jesus, entirely blameless in the sight of God, was crucified, bearing all of the world's sin. He was publicly humiliated, mocked, tortured, and pierced. His blood paid the price for all sins – past, present, and future. Jesus went into the depths of hell in our stead and returned to claim His rightful place beside the throne of God so that we might have eternal life (Luke 24:1-8). There is no one greater than He.

Obedience to God

If Jesus is truly preeminent, unsurpassed in excellence, the ruler of the entire universe, then we certainly owe Him our love and respect. With being in relationship with God comes the call to obedience. Not only is it righteous to obey God's commands, but it is also for our own good to obey Him, as it says in Matthew, "Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (5:19). After the resurrection, Jesus tells His disciples to spread the Good News of His life and resurrection, instructing people to obey His Father's commandments (Matthew 28:19-20). This is our calling.

While the Bible does proclaim that our salvation is not based on works – rather, on faith – it is still important for us to respect God's wishes, since we are born again with Christ dwelling within us. After all, He knows what is best for His children. Also, concentrating on our Father's commandments will drive us closer to Him. Our priorities will become more God-centered. Following God should be our sole purpose in life. We live to know and serve Him. By obeying God, we become more Christ-like and enter into deeper relationship with our Father. This leads to sanctification – the process of becoming more like Christ – so we are saved by faith in Christ and not by the good things we do.

Humanism and Materialism in Modern America

The prevailing mindset of modern America can easily be categorized under Humanism, a complete emphasis on the self. Merriam Webster's Dictionary defines Humanism as, "A doctrine, attitude, or way of life centered on human interests or values: a philosophy that rejects

supernaturalism and stresses an individual's dignity and worth and capacity for self-realization through reason." At first glance, this might not look so bad. Human dignity? Human values? Self-realization? These phrases do not immediately conjure up negative images. The allure of Humanism is that it seems okay, and it seems okay to us because it feeds our conceit. It tells us what we want to hear – that we are deserving. But it's not okay because of its solid rejection of God, and we are far from deserving. On the contrary, we are all sinners in need of God's grace. Many individuals have turned their backs on God, choosing to live for themselves rather than their Maker. We think we can get by in life without any help from a higher power. We put our hope in our own devices. We don't pray; we don't help other people; we only help ourselves. Our resistance to God is prideful. Many Christians even struggle with ignoring God and shrugging off their dependence on Him.

Materialism, which is closely related to Humanism in that it, too, is fueled by human conceit, is another major problem in America. We live in a society driven by desire for material possession. Everyone is in competition to own more things. According to allaboutphilosophy.org, American Materialism is on the rise: "The pursuit of the American dream has become rather costly in that it is fraught with a large quantity of material possessions… The increase in high tech, computerized, and digitized devices in the areas of electronics and household appliances has altered the landscape of the American home and family." Materialism has had many negative effects on American society, such as increases in teen suicide, depression, divorce, the disintegration of the family, bankruptcy, and despair. Even though possessions do not fulfill us, we continue to buy more things.

Jesus spoke about materialism in the Book of Matthew:

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (6:19-21)

Here, Jesus speaks about the condition of our hearts. We want things that will not last – earthly possessions we can take with us neither to the grave, nor heaven – because we believe they will bring happiness and fulfillment. Our compulsive, selfish behavior comes from our longing for God, although we often don't realize it. As if a brand new sports car or the newest videogame console will bring eternal joy. Only relationship with God can accomplish such a feat. Jesus says, "Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?" (Matthew 6:25). We must look beyond society's definition of success and happiness, turning to God's definition, instead. By setting our gazes towards heaven, we will find eternal fulfillment.

Other Things to Watch Out For

Nowadays, it is even easier to fall into the Humanism trap without realizing. There are plenty of liberal religious denominations that either promote or tolerate homosexuality, abortion, and evolution. While no church is perfect, every church should be brave enough to proclaim God's truth despite its unpopularity. In addition, some churches spend more time trying to help people fix their problems than they spend leading people to God through scripture. These are important things to watch out for when choosing a home church.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is another organization we must resist, because it promotes sin under the guise of civil rights. It is steeped in Humanism, always self-seeking, pushing God as far away as possible. In his book, In America We Betrayed, Peter S. Grasso says the ACLU is "cloaked within the pretense of civil liberties" and has "followed the path of least resistance by leveraging liberal judges to rule and judicially create law to circumvent the will of the people, establish new precedents in constitutional law, and undermine our constitution." It is also interesting to note that the ACLU's founder, Roger Baldwin, "was a professed communist" and an anarchist who sought to abolish the State. The following is a list of just a few of the ACLU's cases or policies:

1. The legalization of prostitution.
2. Fighting against legal prohibitions on the distribution of obscene material, including child pornography.
3. The decriminalization and legalization of all drugs.
4. Trying to take away a parent's right to shield their children from exposure to pornography.
5. The promotion of homosexuality.

The list goes on, but from these five issues alone, the ACLU's mission is clear. Furthermore, the ACLU is guilty of religious persecution. The "suppression of religious freedoms" is one of their primary goals. Grasso writes, "…the "separation of church and state" Supreme Court Ruling of 1947 was the result of the ACLU's successful ploy to move this country away from the common law at that time, which was God-centric, to that of a secular humanistic policy and mindset."

Conclusion

We live in a dangerous world where Satan and his minions run rampant, whispering words of deceit, causing people to fall further from God. The state of man has always been sinful, but still, the founding of organizations like the ACLU and the development of new technologies that offer people opportunities and outlets through which they can feed their conceit like never before, have made matters so much worse. The curse of Adam and Eve brings us into this world with a sinful nature, so we are naturally selfish beings. Therefore, we must ask God for the strength to

resist worldly temptations. Only by receiving Jesus as our Savior and living for God alone will we find ultimate fulfillment.

The world is changing rapidly, and we must keep up the pace, always ready and willing to resist those who openly encourage sin and shun God. We have turned our backs on our Father long enough. He's given us a charge to declare the Good News to all the nations, to uphold His good name and to show people the way to truth and salvation. If Christians will not lead America back to God…who will?

F.F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1981), 10.

Ibid., 30.

Ibid., 7.

Ibid., 67.

Ibid., 81.

Peter S. Grasso Jr., *In God We Betrayed* (Xulon Press, 2006), 44.

Ibid.

Ibid., 49-50.

Ibid., 48.

Christian Politics: A Question of Obedience

MAY 31, 2010
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW, CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW, OBEDIENCE TO GOD

The Christian view of politics accounts for God's sovereignty and our dependence on Him. We understand that God instituted government to promote His justice. We also understand our God-given obligation to respect, obey, and participate in governments that serve His will (**Romans 13:1–2**). Our obedience minimizes the need for increased governmental authority.

Our duty to promote justice and preserve order, however, does not require that we blindly follow leaders who stray from their responsibility to God. Rather, we must hold them accountable by our participation in government—voting, petitioning if necessary, running for political office, or serving in non-elected positions where we may be able to influence those in power (**Proverbs 29:2**).

Christian Politics – Ultimate Duty to God

However, the Bible clearly instructs us to obey God even when His commands conflict with the state. For example, when Peter and John were commanded by the Sanhedrin to stop teaching about Jesus, they replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey man rather than God" (**Acts 4:19**). We are required to obey God even when our reform efforts through political channels fail. If the system of government remains unjust, we may be required to engage in civil disobedience in order to remain obedient to God. Francis Schaeffer says, "The bottom line is that at a certain point there is not only the right, but the duty, to disobey the State."[1] Our disobedience to the state may even result in death, but in such instances it is better to die than to

live. Daniel understood this truth and chose death over worshiping a king (**Daniel 6:1–10**). God honors such commitment.

SOURCE: **All About Worldview**, **All About God**

Notes:

Rendered with permission from the book, Understanding the Times: The Collision of Today's Competing Worldviews (Rev. 2nd ed), David Noebel, Summit Press, 2006. Compliments of John Stonestreet, David Noebel, and the **Christian Worldview Ministry** at **Summit Ministries**. All rights reserved in the original.

[1] Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto,* 93. An example of the proper time for disobedience recently arose when the American government (through its public health services) advised churches to amend their attitude toward homosexuality. The Bible clearly dictates the proper Christian response to homosexuality (see Romans 1 and Jude 1), and the church must stand firm in her commitment to obey God's commands even when they conflict with the State's. Later the U. S. Supreme Court placed its stamp of approval on sodomy in the Lawrence and Garner v. Texas decision (Case no. 02–0102), overturning an earlier Court decision in Bowers v. Hardwick.

What Do You Read? It Makes a Difference in Your "World Views".

MARCH 18, 2010
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Christians and The Culture: "Defending Faith, Family and Freedom"

March 2010

I read years ago that "Leaders are Readers and Readers are Leaders". Makes sense doesn't it? It makes a difference what we read. We are influenced by what we read and therefore we must always seek the truth in all things. "Wise people store up knowledge" (Prov. 10:14).

The number one thing we should read – daily – is the Bible and probably a daily bible study or devotional. Everything else we read should be filtered through our "biblical world view". We live in the world, so we need to keep up with the world going on around us. To be informed, we should read a newspaper daily – not just the sports, flair or headlines. We need to read the editorials and commentaries and we should try to understand the motivation of the writers of our news and commentaries.

The Bible says "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6).

It is true. We Americans and Christians are not well-informed about current issues or our Nation's Christian heritage. Too many Christians are reading People Magazine instead of World Magazine, or Time and Newsweek instead of Charisma and Townhall. Look at the newsstands. What is being offered? One must "seek wisdom" and we have to search for Biblically-based news to know the truth about where we as a people are, and where we are headed.

So much happens in Congress, and locally here in the Virginia General Assembly, that we never hear about. These issues affect our daily lives and threaten our Christian faith. How can you

respond to the issues if you don't know them? How do you know who is right and who is wrong on the issues? It goes back to your Biblical filter. The Bible says that a time will come when "wrong will be right and right wrong." We are in those times now. Look at the news. What Christians know to be Biblical truths are under attack. Full frontal assault. The enemy is relentlessly out to silence the Christian voice.

Let's assume we know the issues, know the right side to be on etc. How do we respond to make our views known? Christians need to come together in support of our faith and beliefs. Christians need to come forth in large numbers to stand for Biblical principles. This means leaving your comfort zone to write, call, attend meetings – do something. Those who oppose our Biblical world view are much smaller in numbers, but they are united and relentless in their quest to humanize our Nation.

1. Make your views known to your family and friends. We are to influence others and our culture.
2. Write, call, e-mail your elected officials your point of view.
3. Write letters to the newspaper.
4. Pastors and lay leaders need to speak out – publicly.

IT'S TIME TO ROCK THE BOAT!

Many Christian-based web news outlets are available at a click of your computer mouse. In January I suggested several. You can sign up for e-mail news – free – from the below listed on the **Virginia Christan Alliance LINKS page**.

Words Have Real Meanings

MARCH 18, 2010
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Christians and The Culture: "Defending Faith, Family and Freedom"

February 2010

We all say things – words – that we often would like to take back, sometimes as soon as they exit our mouths, or soon thereafter. We have short-term brain to mouth disconnects. I am not talking about those kinds of words.

I would like to look at words – one at a time – and how our world culture uses words to change our thoughts and to desensitize us to "their" world view. We have to first, recognize these words and, second, not accept the use of these words.

Let's look at some words that are in front of us everywhere: television, newspapers, magazines, movies, advertisements, hotel rooms, family, friends and co-workers.

Pro-life means Pro-life.

Pro-choice really should be Pro-death; one is either one or the other.

Drug user/drug addict, or the politically correct – "partier".

Drunk/alcoholic or politically correct, "Good Time Guy".

Adulterer or politically correct, "player" or "philanderer".

Pornography or politically correct, "adult entertainment".

Bad behavior is bad behavior whatever its name.

Probably the worst use of behavioral words are these, and these words are a plague on our Christian Culture: LGTB – Lesbian, Gay, Transgender and Bi-sexual. The behavior is homosexuality. The word "homosexuality" is "harsh" and "truth-telling". It is not "so bad" to be a "lesbian" or "gay". We do not hear or read about "homosexual rights" but "gay rights". We don't read about "homosexual marriages", but "gay marriages". It is not "homosexuals" in the military, but gays and lesbians in the military.

In the first week of March the headlines were "Gay Couples Line Up In D.C. for Marriage Licenses", "Gay Marriage Now Law in Mexico City", "Maryland to Recognize Same-Sex Marriages from Other Places", "Gays Want to be a 'Protected Class' in Virginia" and "Democrats Pledge Quick End to 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell".

Sin is sin no matter what name it is called. We are all sinners and all sin separates us from God. It is logical to think that some sin is worse than other sin in the damage that is caused, especially when special attention is called to it in the Bible. See Leviticus 18:22, 24, 25 and Romans 1:26-27.

Did you think our nation would be here a few years ago? How about 10, 20 or 30 years ago? Where will the misuse of words take us as a people? Others, especially those with an agenda, will continue to mislabel bad behavior, but we as Christians need to speak truth to the world. A spade is a spade – and always will be a spade, no matter what some call it.

P.S. What are you reading? Look at **links on Virginia Christian Alliance**.

Obedience to God

FEBRUARY 26, 2010
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

How important is obedience to God in my daily walk?

Obedience to God is very important in your Christian growth. No one in this life will ever become sufficiently sanctified to the point where they are always obeying the law, but we can honor and maintain obedience to God by pondering on, or meditating on, the words of Jesus. The term "to ponder" means *to weigh in the mind, to think or reflect, especially quietly and deeply.* To ponder on something is like meditation which implies a definite focusing of one's thoughts on something in order to understand it deeply. The author of Proverbs 14:15 makes a good point: "A simple man believes anything, but a prudent man gives thought to his steps."

The greatest commandment is to love God by keeping His commandments. Matthew 22:36-38 says, "'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment.'"

You ask, "How important is obedience to God?" In the gospel of John, obedience to God is underscored time and time again. John 14:15 says, "If you love me, you will obey what I command."

The great commandments are reiterated in Matthew 22:36-40 which says, "'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' Jesus replied: '"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.'"

Jesus is very concerned about us and He wants us to do more than participate in good works, He wants us to believe in Him. He wants us to come up higher and be "like" Him. When we are being obedient to God, we are doing just that: knowing Him, loving Him, and having a personal, intimate relationship with Him. To do this, we must be attentive to God's laws. This is not an option, because you can't have an intimate relationship with Jesus and trample on the words He taught. Being obedient to God is not the same as sticking to the speed limit because you get a fine if you disobey. Obedience to God is living God's Word because you want to and enjoy being filled with the love of Jesus.

We must believe in Jesus, we must have faith in Him, and we must trust Him! Calling ourselves a Christian on its own won't do. Following the commandments step wise won't do. Reading the

Bible diligently won't do. We have to take the Word into our hearts. When we make the transition from calling ourselves a good Christian to being someone who is having a deep personal and intimate relationship with the Lord, then we can have the highest of joys, the deepest of peace, and receive the fullest measure of God's love and power each and every day of our lives.

We need to enter into God's rest and be less concerned with worrying about what else we could do to make Jesus love us more. Hebrews 4:10 says, "For anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his." It would be invaluable if you were to spend time reading God's Word and ponder on one aspect as you walk. Step into the scene, imagine what it might have been like to be there, create Jesus in your mind, feel the love, and experience a deep intimate relationship with the Lord.

That is the essence of obedience to God.

Learn More about Spiritual Maturity!

Thinking Small Can Change the World

FEBRUARY 26, 2010
CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

S. Michael Craven

The Center for Christ and Culture

Mark Penn, author of *Microtrends: The Small Forces Behind Tomorrow's Big Changes* (Hachette Book, 2007), is widely regarded as one of the most perceptive pollsters in American politics. It was Penn who identified "soccer moms" as a crucial constituency in President Clinton's 1996 reelection campaign. The unique feature of Penn's approach is that he looks for and has been able to identify, with some success, small patterns of behavior that wield great influence in our culture. According to Penn, "*Microtrends* is based on the idea that the most powerful forces in our society are the emerging, counterintuitive trends that are shaping tomorrow right before us … In fact, the whole idea that there are a few huge trends that determine how America and the world work is breaking down."

Penn points out that "changing lifestyles, the Internet, the balkanization of communications, and the global economy are all coming together to create a new sense of individualism that is powerfully transforming our society. The world may be getting flatter in terms of globalization, but it is occupied by six billion little bumps who do not have to follow the herd to be heard … In fact, by the time a trend hits one percent, it is ready to spawn a hit movie, best-selling book, or new political movement. The power of individual choice is increasingly influencing politics, religion, entertainment, and even war." In summary, Penn writes, "In today's mass societies, it only takes one percent of the people making a dedicated choice—contrary to the mainstream's choice—*to create a movement that can change the world*."

I find this assertion intriguing. It runs counter to popular thinking. I think we tend to believe that in order to effect long-term change, there must be a massive shift in thinking that achieves majority consensus before real change can occur. In other words, we gravitate toward grand initiatives that promise sweeping results and we're generally not interested in anything less. (We do this in our increasingly program-oriented churches as well.) I think this might explain, in part, why we are drawn to and often settle on politics.

Political leaders promise grand initiatives aimed at this or that problem with the implicit promise of producing sweeping changes. Framed in such altruistic terms as "Hope for tomorrow" and "Change you can believe in," the promise becomes almost salvific. However, sweeping benefits

rarely occur and what we often discover is that the only real "sweeping" needed is that of removing self-serving politicians from office!

The political process, for many, offers an easy response to our social and cultural problems. However, in practice all most of us do is vote periodically, express support for a particular candidate or party, and sign the occasional petition. But given the massive complexities of a large-scale society such as ours, doesn't this strike you as rather simplistic? How do these political activities actually shape the philosophy of public education or the philosophical worldview on our nation's college campuses? How do these activities work to shape jurisprudence, or form the sexual ethics of society, strengthen the social commitment to marriage, or resist the cultural shift toward redefining marriage altogether? The present battle to redefine marriage did not emerge as a political initiative—the politics of homosexual activism followed an earlier (small and well-orchestrated) shift in our culture's moral philosophy. How can political activism counter the scientific worldview that reduces life to its utilitarian purposes or redefines the meaning of human dignity? How do political activities actually shape any ethical matter? They don't!

Politics can and often does become an endless battleground, warring over the same turf with control constantly being wrestled back and forth. Meanwhile, the institutions and mechanisms that actually shape our culture are ignored—except, of course, by those small movements of people committed to changing them. Our present drift toward state-sponsored entitlements and wealth redistribution is not the innovation of one political party or administration but rather the by-product of a generation that has been systematically conditioned to favor socialistic schemes.

Don't misunderstand what I'm saying—I'm not suggesting that we stop participating in the political process. I am suggesting that we have to do much more. The fact is, by the time social issues manifest themselves in the realm of politics, it's too late—by then you're fighting from a deficit. The ideas that produced these political points of conflict began long before and the process of affecting real change occurs over a generation or more, not one political term.

Abraham Lincoln made this point quite succinctly when he said, "The philosophy in the classroom of this generation is the philosophy of government in the next." Holocaust survivor Dr. Viktor Frankl underscores this point even more powerfully:

> I am absolutely convinced that the gas chambers of Auschwitz, Treblinka, and Maidanek were ultimately prepared not in some ministry or other in Berlin, but rather at the desks and in lecture halls of nihilistic scientists and philosophers (*The Doctor and the Soul*).

He is absolutely correct. The Nazi's "final solution" did not emerge out of a vacuum; it began decades before, almost imperceptibly, as a new worldview began to supplant another. By the time

the National Socialist Party (Nazis) came on the scene, the Germans had already been inculcated with a view of reality that would render them receptive to racial arrogance and justify their barbarism. Consistent with Penn's findings, these monstrous ideas began small—and they certainly changed the world!

This idea of "small movements" is also consistent with the nature of God's kingdom. The Jewish expectation was a kingdom that would come in great power, changing the political order, displacing all human rule and authority, but as George Eldon Ladd points out in his classic work on the kingdom:

> The Kingdom of God is here; but instead of destroying human sovereignty, it has attacked the sovereignty of Satan. The Kingdom of God is here but instead of making changes in the external, political order of things, it is making changes in the spiritual order and in the lives of men and women (Ladd, *Gospel of the Kingdom*).

This is the "mystery" of the kingdom to which Jesus referred. God's kingdom is at work among men in two different stages. The world has yet to see the coming of God's kingdom in its full and final power, but the mystery, the new revelation announced by Jesus, is that God's kingdom has come to work among men but in an unexpected way. It has come quietly, unobtrusively offering to men the present blessings of God's rule, delivering them from the power of Satan and sin. The kingdom is here not with power as when Christ comes again and every knee will bow, but with the counterintuitive display of love, righteousness, peace, and justice through a people set free, by grace, to live under his lordship.

As Penn notes, small things do matter. What if each of us started with the small step of *truly* loving our neighbor? What if we just taught our own children to think christianly? What if we ran our businesses as *communities* that bore witness to the reality of God's kingdom come into the world? What if we were simply faithful in the small things—seeking first God's kingdom? Would this change the world? Of course it would! Christ's kingdom has been changing people and the world for more than 2000 years! The ultimate question is this: "Will I *enter* his kingdom—*follow him*—and be saved?" or will I, like the rich young ruler, cling to my earthly life and perish—knowing Jesus but never following him?

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What Do You Believe and Why?

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CATEGORIES: OBEDIENCE TO GOD
TAGS: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Christians and The Culture: "Defending Faith, Family and Freedom"

January, 2010

There have been several articles in newspapers lately about what Americans believe. The USA Today December 10, 2009 had a long article about the findings of a survey by the Pew Forum on religion. Here are some of the findings of the survey:

Christians – 23% believe "the position of stars/planets can affect people's lives" (astrology);

Christians – 22% believe "people will be reborn again and again";

Christians – 17% believe "people with the 'evil eye' can cast curses or harmful spells".

The article states that 92% of Americans have an "allegiance to someone they call God" however, the survey said "70% believe many religions can lead to eternal life" and 68% said "there is more than one true way to interpret the teachings of their religion".

Albert Mohler, President of the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville says he sees "rampant confusion" about faith revealed in the Pew findings. He says "This is a failure of the Pulpit as much as of the Pew, to be clear about what is and is not compatible with Christianity and belief in salvation only through Christ."

Why do Christians "blend with the culture? Is it because the "church" has failed to teach from the pulpit? Is it because Christians are not grounded in their beliefs, and are confused by public opinion and political correctness? Is it because Christians have lost their bearings and can no longer recognize truth from the lie? Right from wrong? Yes.

Last week there were several articles in the paper with the following headlines: "Creature Appears to have Emerged 397 Million Years Ago", "Hubble Captures Universe as Toddler…600 Million Years after the Big Bang". These articles and others, almost weekly, proclaim as fact what they report. Where does that leave the Book of Genesis?

As Christians, we need to know what we believe and why, and we need to speak out for the Biblical truth of our faith.

Charles Stanley, the great Southern Baptist preacher formerly of The University of Richmond and Grove Avenue Baptist Church, says "All people have a belief system…what we believe affects every area of our lives and shapes every decision we make, yet few of us take the time to really think about what we accept as true." We as Christians need to develop a "truth filter" and look at everything through a Biblical World view. There are a lot of resources to guide us. Check out these websites and get on their e-mail lists: **The Truth Project**, **American Family Association**, **Family Research Council**, **Heritage Foundation** and other **links on Virginia Christian Alliance**.