

Changing Culture Requires Persistence



Cover Story

Paul penned his second letter to Timothy locked in chains, confined to a dank prison cell, hidden from the rays of the sun, and awaiting what would be his death at the hands of the Romans. Yet Paul, knowing he had fought the good fight, finished the race, and kept the faith, charged Timothy to likewise persist in his ministry, come what may (4:7). Paul's missionary journeys occupied decades of his life. His martyrdom was preceded by serious, painful persecution. Yet his steadfast refrain to Christians was to keep fighting, keep living, keep working, and keep obeying. Likewise, we are called to persist in a fallen world without regard for our self-preservation or comfort.

What better example could we follow

than Paul as we persistently work to affect the troubling issues that dominate our current political and social landscape? Let's look at four such issues where Christians can and are persevering in their efforts to change attitudes and actions in spite of relentless opposition and even oppression.

- Protecting the unborn
- Rebuilding a culture of marriage and family
- Protecting religious liberty
- Encouraging moral economics

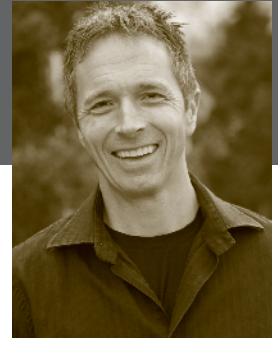
Who Is Human?

More than forty years ago when the Supreme Court gave legal cover to abortion, some thought the sharp public debate was over. Not so. According to a January

2013 Pew Research Survey, 47 percent of Americans think abortion is morally wrong, compared to 13 percent who say it's morally acceptable, and 27 percent who say it's not a moral issue.¹ Last year was a banner year for states looking to turn the tide of abortion-on-demand, utilizing pro-life allies in state houses across the country. This year looks to be much the same. In the first quarter of 2013, nearly 700 bills have been introduced in state legislatures across the country to make abortion less frequent; 47 percent of all health-related bills have focused on abortion.² The rising generation of millennials is commonly referred to as the "Pro-Life Generation."

from the president's desk

a word from dr. jeff myers



Anti-Christian Forces Are Winning: Victory Is Inevitable (P.S. — Don't Believe It)

Atheist and leftist views don't stand the test of reality, they are unlivable, and the people who embrace them are selecting themselves out of the population by not having children. By any reasonable standard they should be acknowledging defeat, but instead they are creating the illusion of victory through daily carpet-bombing accusations against those who disagree with them. They're *counting* on those with biblical convictions to surrender in confusion and disunity.

So will the Christian community give in? I'm talking to more and more believers who have lost hope. But giving up now shows that we don't understand history or how ideas move in the culture. It displays a lack of trust in God's sovereignty and his plan for the world.

Three thousand years ago the author of Psalm 78 narrated the tragic story of godly generations that turned back in the day of battle, snatching defeat from the jaws of victory. Don't follow their example, the writer implores: prepare the rising generation to put their hope in God.

At Summit we gain inspiration from the persistence displayed by the godly, courageous young leaders we've had the privilege of training.

Just one example: a Summit grad named Ben felt led to apply to the Air Force Academy. His odds were less than 10 percent. But then Academy

doctors learned Ben had suffered from childhood asthma. Case closed. Based on the vision for leadership he received at Summit, Ben persisted. After *months* of appeals and more medical tests, he just received confirmation of his medical clearance and subsequent appointment to the Academy.

Ben wrote:

I wanted to thank you for inspiring me to pursue my dreams, and not settle for something less than what God has in store for me. I know I will be looking back on my Summit experience as I stand as a light for Christ at the Academy. Thanks again for all of the help you have provided, and keep up the amazing work that God is doing at Summit Ministries.

Ben, you are certainly welcome (for Ben's full story, see page 7 of this month's *Journal*). And thank you for your example of never giving up, no

matter how great the odds. We'll be praying for you to be a godly, courageous leader for our times.

We don't choose our trials, but we do choose whether we will persist through them. In *The Lord of the Rings*, Frodo says, "I wish none of this had happened." Gandalf replies, "So do all who live to see such times, but that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us."

We have decided. We are going to follow Jesus until the lights go out. And then, as Doc Noebel always encouraged, we will light a candle.

Are there young people you want to prepare to stand with you on the ramparts? Send them to Colorado or Tennessee this summer. Only a handful of seats remain, but we want them all filled with young people desiring to live with purpose and love God with heart, soul, mind and strength.

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Dr. Jeff Myers

Yet, what has really changed the abortion debate has been the unwavering insistence that an unborn child is, in fact, human. Ultrasound technology shows mothers who are intent on abortion that their fetus is a living, breathing human. Summit alumnus Joe Baker (featured in the December 2012 *Journal*) and his organization Save the Storks exemplify the power of ultrasound technology. Pro-life apologists like Scott Klusendorf train people how to effectively and winsomely convince others that the key abortion question relates to personhood and that science and philosophy prove that the unborn are human.

While *Roe v. Wade* represented a major legal setback for protecting the sanctity of human life in the U.S., signaling a shift in public opinion that the most vulnerable among us are disposable, persistence on the part of Christians is helping stem the tide of the culture of death, made so evident by another Summit alum, Lila Rose, and her organization Live Action.

Rebuilding Marriage and Family Will Be an Uphill Battle

Perhaps the most difficult issue for Christians (especially young Christians) to speak into today is marriage and family. According to some, there's no such thing as a millennial who thinks same-sex marriage is a bad idea. As of press time, we're still awaiting the Supreme Court's decision on two pivotal marriage cases argued earlier this year. But the uncertainty of the legal picture — or the possibility of an errant ruling — isn't stopping a group of young Christians from trying to affect the marriage conversation.

Chris Marlink is one of the principal leaders of Marriage Generation (www.marriagegeneration.org), a website and

marriage generation

a movement of millennials who want to change the conversation about marriage and family and emphasize — through accessible, sound reasoning and good storytelling — why traditional marriage is a good thing for individuals, families, and whole societies. “So much is out of our control in terms of elections and how the Supreme Court is going to rule,” Marlink said. “But we understand our task as the same either way.”

Marlink — along with Marriage Generation collaborators Owen Strachan, Eric Teetsel (who will be speaking at our upcoming Engage conferences later this year in Dallas and San Diego), and Andrew Walker — thinks there are many young Christians who want to shape their spheres of influence on the marriage question but have been stymied by ruthless blackballing. Marriage Generation is a way for those Christians — and non-Christians who see the importance of traditional marriage — to begin a conversation within their own spheres of influence. “The only way we begin to counter that narrative is if our generation actually stands up and starts to lead,” Marlink said. “The older generations are not going to carry our water on this; not only do we exist, we're going to lead the discussion.”

If marriage and family is to become a flip-flop issue the way abortion did after *Roe v. Wade*, it will take years of long, persistent, and intentional work. “This is not

the work of election cycles or a few years. This is the work of a generation. We understand this is a long-term project,” Marlink said. The political changes we see now were really wrought by cultural changes decades ago, which flowed downstream into the realm of politics. Reversing those trends will require not only time but also courage to take an unpopular stand in the midst of name-calling and ostracizing.

Preserving Religious Freedom Is a Way to Love Our Neighbor

While some may question claims that religious freedom in the U.S. is eroding, last year's U.S. Department of Health and Human Services so-called contraception mandate signals otherwise. In recent years, several charitable adoption organizations — most notably Catholic Charities — closed their doors because state laws forbade them to refuse adopting children to same-sex couples on the grounds of religious beliefs. Seemingly small, rhetorical shifts like the move from “freedom of religion” to “freedom of worship” signal a devolved understanding of our first right. Words matter, and as Summit faculty member Dr. Michael Bauman says so often, when words lose their meaning, people lose their lives.

Preserving a robust freedom of religion doesn't benefit just religious groups in question; it benefits the whole of

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society, even those who consider themselves nonreligious, according to Wilfred M. McClay, writing in Union University's spring 2013 edition of *Renewing Minds*. He lays out five arguments for why religious liberty ought to be preserved. Perhaps most important is the argument that robust religious freedom allows churches and religious organizations in the U.S. to do the charitable, preservative work that they have historically done. McClay points out that while the HHS mandate most stymies Catholic organizations, the Catholic church is the largest private operator of educational and health care systems in the U.S, including 7,500 schools, 630 hospitals, 400 health centers, and 1,500 specialized homes.³ Handcuffing freedom of religion doesn't affect just Sunday worship; it hurts the millions of people helped by religious charities.

McClay also rightly points out that our religious institutions — and in the U.S. that historically means Christian institutions — are where moral conscience is formed, second only to the nuclear family.⁴ For that reason, religion should enjoy a special and revered freedom — as it has historically in the U.S. — in the corporate sense as well as in the individualistic sense. If freedom of religion is bound to

only an individual's freedom (and even that is under fire these days), it is no more than freedom of worship or freedom of conscience, which necessarily curtails the corporate good work done by religious communities in the life of a society.

Though moving at a slower pace, cultural and political trends are marching toward a much more restricted religious freedom. Christians will need to persevere in making reasoned arguments within their own spheres of influence as well as within the realm of politics and the courts.

Economics Is About Morality

Economics isn't simply about number-crunching. Economics is essentially a moral issue. Yet, Keynesian and state-centered economic programs seem to be proliferating in the West and the U.S. The rallying cry of folks like Jim Wallis of Sojourners is that more government intervention is the way to love our poor neighbors. Yet while welfare spending has catapulted since Lyndon B. Johnson's "Great Society" legislation, little headway has been made in truly helping the poor.

We will have to continue winsomely arguing that private economic growth (coupled with a necessary understanding and practice of virtue in the marketplace) is the best way to help the poor. The world population living in poverty was cut in half from the 19th century to the mid-1900s. It was halved again between 1980 and 2005, as the result of increased economic productivity. As the Acton Institute's Rev. Robert Sirico puts it, "While the price system in a free economy does not provide a moral foundation for a society, and while it doesn't remove opportunities for ill-gotten gain, it handily beats every form of socialism at providing moral and socially beneficent options for escaping poverty."⁵

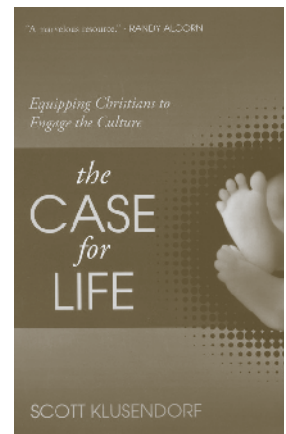
So how to be persistent in this case? Certainly politics has a major role to play; statism can be rolled back only by the state, ironically.

But the public needs to know how freer markets benefit the poorest among us, along with middle and upper classes. Those stories need to be told persistently, and those principles need to be persistently and winsomely argued.

Notes

1. Public Opinion on Abortion and Roe v. Wade, Pew Forum, January 22, 2013, <http://www.pewforum.org/Abortion/Public-Opinion-on-Abortion-and-Roe-v-Wade.aspx>.
2. The Guttmacher Institute is one of the leading pro-abortion organizations and tracks various abortion-related statistics. To see their publication bemoaning legislation is a good thing. "State Policy Trends 2013: Abortion Moves to the Fore," Guttmacher Institute, <http://www.guttmacher.org/media/inthenews/2013/04/11/index.html>.
3. Wilfred M. McClay, "What's So Special About Religion? Five or Six Answers," *Renewing Minds*, Spring 2013, 12.
4. Ibid, 10.
5. Rev. Robert Sirico, "The Role of Profits," *Religion and Liberty*, Volume 22, Number 4, The Acton Institute, <http://www.acton.org/pub/religion-liberty/volume-22-number-4/role-profits>.

Suggested Reading



The Case for Life
by Scott Klusendorf
Available at Summit's
bookstore:
summit.org/store.

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Chris Marlink

a look at our world

news and commentary



Editor's Note: Our President Emeritus, Dr. David Noebel, helps us with research by sending 20-30 pages of clippings of each month's news. To see the complete list of Doc's clippings, go to www.summit.org/resources/the-journal/, open the PDF, and scroll to page 9, or call us at 866.786.6483.

Marriage

Over the past few weeks, the “war on marriage” has turned into a blitzkrieg.

It's all designed to sway the Supreme Court, which will be hearing arguments this week on California's voter-approved constitutional marriage amendment and the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA).

A day doesn't pass without another bomb dropped on the oldest human institution. If it's not another slanted poll, negatively worded to elicit the “correct” response, it's a politician sharing his sudden revelation that God didn't know what He was doing when He created marriage as the union of male and female.

The American Academy of Pediatrics, one of many formerly credible professional associations compromised by political correctness and junk science, has announced that children no longer benefit from a mother and a father in the household. Any two adults will do. Mothers and fathers provide no unique influence.

If you believe that, ask yourself: If your father had been replaced by a lesbian, would your upbringing have been any different? Did your mother provide anything unique to you that your dad didn't? In the best interests of children, why create motherless or fatherless households by design?

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of Marriage Act is unconstitutional because it tramples states' rights. If you substitute “slavery” wherever Mr. Will uses the word “marriage,” you'll quickly see the absurdity of his argument.

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Mr. Will also ignores key Supreme Court cases, such as *Murphy v. Ramsey* (1885), in which the court held that Utah could not be a state until it abandoned polygamy. By Mr. Will's reasoning, that should be overturned.

In *Baker v. Nelson* (1972), the high court upheld the Minnesota Supreme Court's rejection of a comparison to the *Loving v. Virginia* (1967) ruling that struck down a ban on interracial marriage: “In common sense and in a constitutional sense, there is a clear distinction between a marital restriction based merely upon race and one based upon the fundamental difference in sex.”

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It's one thing to have unconditional love and compassion toward a friend or loved one, and another thing to redefine marriage for the whole nation. Public policy is the force of law. Civil libertarians who are jumping aboard the homosexual “marriage” bandwagon might want to stop and consider why this will lead to less freedom and more government.

Sundered by no-fault divorce and cohabitation, marriage as a “genderless” institution will lose even more legitimacy and contribute less to stability, prosperity and self-sufficiency. As nuclear families

fail, government grows to pick up the pieces -- and to enforce the new reality.

This brings us to the bigger picture. The left's drive for “gay rights” poses the greatest domestic threat to the freedoms of religion, speech and assembly. When traditional morality is equated with racist bigotry, civil rights enforcement becomes a gun aimed at the head of citizens, forcing them to choose between God and Caesar. That should never happen in America, where our Founders said rights come from our Creator, not capricious man, who can mistake fashion for morality.

In Massachusetts, which legalized homosexual “marriage” in 2004, public schools openly entice children to try homosexual behavior despite well-documented health risks. Penalties are enforced against dissenters. People are losing jobs. Catholic Charities, the largest Massachusetts provider of foster homes for orphans, closed its doors rather than give up placing children only in married, mother-father homes. Tyranny is masquerading as enlightenment.

Cases are piling up across the nation. Counselors are being denied certification. Christian wedding photographers in New Mexico were hauled into court and fined for declining to shoot a lesbian ceremony. A college official who merely signed a petition in Maryland to place marriage on a state ballot was suspended. The Boy Scouts have been pushed out of United Way chapters and denied corporate funding. Mayors of major cities have told Chick-fil-A that the fast-food chain is evil because its founder defends marriage as the union of a man and a woman. In Washington, D.C., the Family

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Research Council, thanks to courageous security guard Leo Johnson, narrowly avoided a mass killing by a shooter who cited as motive the Southern Poverty Law Center's slanderous designation of the council as a "hate group."

In New Jersey, the Southern Poverty Law Center is suing Jews Offering New Alternatives for Healing (JONAH) under consumer fraud law. They contend that no one can overcome this particular temptation, despite ample evidence to the contrary.

In California, legislators passed a law making it criminal for parents to take their children to counselors for help in overcoming unwanted same-sex desires -- even children who have been molested. A court has enjoined the law for now, but is this still America, land of the free and home of the brave?

Yet, conservatives, the GOP and even the Tea Parties are told they must bow before this increasingly intolerant movement. President Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Lady Gaga and the Democratic Party embrace homosexual "marriage," so it must advance conservative principles, right?

Laurie Higgins, a perceptive writer for the Illinois Family Institute, asks this question: "What if Portman's son had announced he was bisexual or polyamorous? Would Portman then seek to have the government recognize plural unions as marriages? Imagine if everyone decided that the 'Bible's overarching themes of love and compassion' and the 'belief that we're all children of God' compel us to affirm all the feelings, beliefs and life choices of our loved ones. The truth is, it is entirely possible to deeply love people while finding their feelings, beliefs and life choices disordered or false. In this wildly diverse world, most of us do it all the time."

Instead, we're being asked to repeal reality, which is an unreasonable and dangerous request.

— Robert Knight
The Washington Times
March 25, 2013

Religious Liberty

In the latest act of bruising intolerance being perpetrated by Muslims against Pakistan's besieged Christian community, a Muslim mob recently burned down over 150 Christian homes and two churches over allegations that a Christian man had committed blasphemy.

The rioting, which occurred in the Pakistani city of Lahore, began after a Muslim man accused Sawan Masih, a Pakistani Christian, of insulting the Prophet Muhammad, an allegation punishable by death under Pakistan's blasphemy laws.

Even though Pakistani police had swiftly arrested Masih, Christian families nevertheless hurriedly fled the area in fear of Muslim reprisals, an exodus which proved fortuitous given the ensuing Muslim rampage.

Once the mob's fury had been spent, Christians slowly made their way back to their burned-out homes, leaving one Christian surveying the destruction to lament, "Nothing is left here. I don't know why this happened."

The answer to that question, unfortunately, is exceedingly clear given the type of barbaric treatment routinely meted out by Muslims to those Christians and other religious minorities unfortunate enough to run afoul of Pakistan's notorious blasphemy laws.

Those statutes, first introduced in 1986 by Pakistani military dictator Muhammad Zia ul-Haq, can earn sentences of death or life in prison for those found guilty of

insulting Islam's Prophet Muhammad or desecrating its holy book, the Koran.

To that end, 20 Pakistanis convicted of blasphemy are currently serving life sentences while another 16 are sitting on death row awaiting their appointed date with the executioner.

Among those currently slated to die is Younis Masih, a Christian father of four who has been on death row since 2007 and Asia Bibi, a Christian mother of five, who in 2010 was the first Pakistani woman convicted for blasphemy and sentenced to death by hanging.

Younis Masih's heretical act occurred in September 2005 when he was arrested after he had reportedly asked a group of Muslims who were holding a religious service one evening in a nearby house to turn their music down.

Bibi's transgression against Islam came in 2009 after a verbal disagreement with some Muslim women in her village led Bibi to claim that Christians and Muslims are equal before God, an affront apparently stinging enough to lead to her being accused of having blasphemed against Mohammad.

It should be noted, that while Muslim nations throughout Africa, the Mideast and Asia — such as Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Iran — have similar blasphemy laws, few enforce those laws with the zeal of Pakistanis.

Perhaps that fervor stems from the fact that under Pakistan's blasphemy laws the burden of proof required to convict someone is exceedingly weak given there are no guidelines as to what constitutes blasphemy, no evidentiary standards, and no requirement to prove intent.

— Frank Crimi
FrontPage Magazine
March 14, 2013

Protzman's Example of Persistence Is One for Us All

Ben Protzman's story embodies a crucial lesson for all Christians: we must never give up.

Ben used to suffer from asthma. Used to. For the last several years, though, he hasn't experienced the tight-lunged, oxygen-choking condition at all. He runs competitively for his high school track and cross-country teams. While attending Summit in Manitou Springs last summer, he arose each morning and ran at the beautiful Garden of the Gods park — at more than a mile elevation — with nary a problem.

But the pulmonary disorder made an untimely comeback a few months ago — even if only on paper — and almost wrecked his dream of attending the Air Force Academy. Almost.

After returning from Summit and receiving some gentle prodding from family and church mentors, Ben decided to apply for the Academy. He recalled a talk Dr. Jeff Myers gave on calling: "He said God has a design for us. We shouldn't be hesitant in pursuing that design. God doesn't steer immobile objects."

"If you're doing God's will, there's no need to be worried."

Ben Protzman

So, prayerfully, Ben worked on his application, which included securing Congressional nominations. Ben applied with his U.S. representative and both U.S. senators. That in itself required several essays



Ben Protzman

and long interviews with each Congressman's staff. "Having one or two isn't bad," Ben said, "but doing several is tedious." A few weeks later he learned he'd received two Congressional nominations.

Ben submitted his application, but officials quickly flagged it. Apparently his medical records never reflected the fact that he had grown out of his childhood asthma, a common occurrence. Before he could gather materials needed to secure a medical waiver (like testimonials from his cross country coach and teammates), the Academy closed his application. His dream was seemingly over.

"That was probably my lowest point throughout the application process," Ben said. Dogged by the longing not to disappoint his parents, he initially hid the medi-

cal disqualification. But again he recalled Myers' talk: "God doesn't steer immobile objects." Ben called the Academy, desperate for any way to prove his lungs were okay. There was one shot, an Academy specialist told him: he could take an intensive lung function test. Ben would be sealed in an airtight chamber and subjected to several rounds of testing, including five doses of a drug specifically designed to cause an asthmatic reaction. If his lungs constricted too much, his dream would be officially dead.

Ben told his parents, and off they went to take the test. Amazingly — but not surprisingly — Ben passed the lung function test. Now his application to the Academy was open again. And the waiting continued. A week later: the Academy granted Ben a medical waiver, but still no word on his acceptance as a cadet.

Then on March 18, nearly a month later, Ben came home from school and opened his e-mail. He had a message from the Air Force. Sitting before his computer keyboard, wondering what the message said, he closed his eyes, bowed his head, and prayed: "God, may your will be done."

Click.

Accepted.

The dream Ben had been nursing thanks to encouragement from his parents and closest mentors was going to come true. Through the highs and lows of the months-long ordeal, even at his worst, Ben persisted with the knowledge that God was in control.

"What the world says and what my surroundings look like aren't what define the situation," Ben said. "God defines the situation. If you're doing God's will, there's no need to be worried."



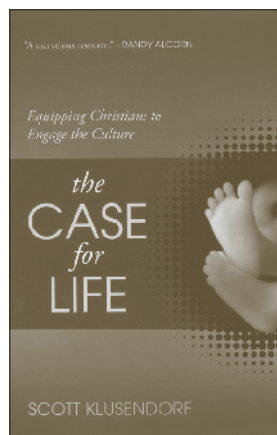
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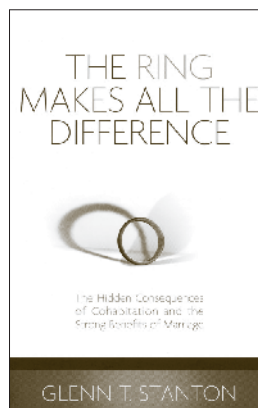
More Resources at the Summit Bookstore — summit.org/store



The Case for Life by Scott Klusendorf

Author Scott Klusendorf simplifies the debate. The debate turns on one key question: What is the unborn? Readers learn how to engage the great bio-tech debate of the twenty-first century, how to answer objections persuasively, and what the role of the pro-life pastor should be.

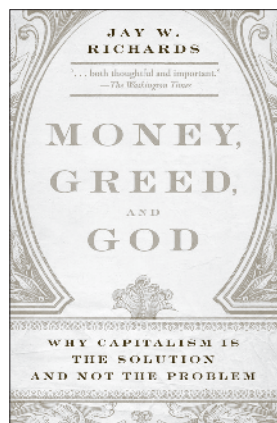
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The Ring Makes All the Difference by Glenn Stanton

Author Glenn Stanton offers a compelling factual case that nearly every area of health and happiness is increased by marriage and decreased by cohabitation. With credible data and compassion, Stanton makes a case for why marriage is still the best arrangement for the flourishing of couples and society.

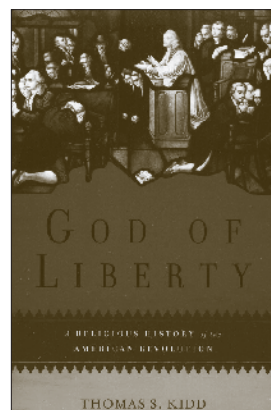
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Money, Greed, and God by Jay W. Richards

Jay Richards presents a new approach to capitalism, revealing how it's fully consistent with Jesus's teachings and the Christian tradition, while also showing why this system is our best bet for renewed economic vigor.

\$10.55



God of Liberty by Thomas S. Kidd

Historian Thomas S. Kidd offers the first comprehensive account of religion's role during the transformative period of the American Revolution.

\$12.75

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a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel

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temptation, despite ample evidence to the contrary.

In California, legislators passed a law making it criminal for parents to take their children to counselors for help in overcoming unwanted same-sex desires -- even children who have been molested. A court has enjoined the law for now, but is this still America, land of the free and home of the brave?

Yet, conservatives, the GOP and even the Tea Parties are told they must bow before this increasingly intolerant movement. President Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Lady Gaga and the Democratic Party embrace homosexual "marriage," so it must advance conservative principles, right?

Laurie Higgins, a perceptive writer for the Illinois Family Institute, asks this question: "What if Portman's son had announced he was bisexual or polyamorous? Would Portman then seek to have the government recognize plural unions as marriages? Imagine if everyone decided that the 'Bible's overarching themes of love and compassion' and the 'belief that we're all children of God' compel us to affirm all the feelings, beliefs and life choices of our loved ones. The truth is, it is entirely possible to deeply love people while finding their feelings, beliefs and life choices disordered or false. In this wildly diverse world, most of us do it all the time."

Instead, we're being asked to repeal reality, which is an unreasonable and dangerous request.

— Robert Knight
The Washington Times
March 25, 2013

Anyone who thinks that same-sex "marriage" is a benign eccentricity which

won't affect the average person should consider what it has done to Massachusetts since 2004. It's become a hammer to force the acceptance and normalization of homosexuality on everyone. The slippery slope is real. New radical demands never cease. What has happened in the last several years is truly frightening.

On November 18, 2003, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court announced its Goodridge opinion, declaring that it was unconstitutional not to allow same-sex "marriage." Six months later, despite public outrage, homosexual "weddings" began to take place. And that was just the beginning...

The public schools

The homosexual "marriage" onslaught in public schools across the state started soon after the November 2003 court ruling.

- At my own children's high school there was a school-wide assembly to celebrate same-sex "marriage" in early December 2003. It featured an array of speakers, including teachers at the school who announced that they would be "marrying" their same-sex partners and starting families, either through adoption or artificial insemination. Literature on same-sex marriage - how it is now a normal part of society - was handed out to the students.

- Within months it was brought into the middle schools. In September 2004, an 8th-grade teacher in Brookline, Mass., told National Public Radio that the marriage ruling had opened up the door for teaching homosexuality. "In my mind, I know that, 'OK, this is legal now.' If somebody wants to challenge me, I'll say, 'Give me a break. It's legal now,'" she told NPR. She added that she now discusses gay sex with her students as explicitly as she

desires. For example, she said she tells the kids that lesbians can have vaginal intercourse using sex toys.

- By the following year it was in elementary school curricula - with hostility toward parents who disagreed. Kindergartners in Lexington, Mass. were given copies of a picture book, *Who's in a Family?*, telling them that same-sex couples are just another kind of family, just like their own parents. When David Parker - parent of a kindergartner - calmly refused to leave a school meeting unless officials agreed to notify him when discussing homosexuality or transgenderism with his son, the school had him arrested and jailed overnight.

- The next year, second graders at the same school were read a book, *King & King*, about two men who fall in love and marry each other, ending with a picture of them kissing. When parents Robb and Robin Wirthlin complained, they were told that the school had no obligation to notify them or allow them to opt their child out.

- In 2007 a federal judge ruled that because of "gay marriage" in Massachusetts, parents have no rights regarding the teaching of homosexual relationships in schools. The previous year the Parkers and Wirthlins had filed a federal civil rights lawsuit to force the schools to notify parents and allow them to opt out their elementary-school children when homosexual-related subjects were taught. The federal judge dismissed the case. The appeals judges later upheld the first judge's ruling that because same-sex marriage is legal in Massachusetts, the school actually had a duty to normalize homosexual relationships to children; and schools have no obligation to notify parents or let them opt out their children. Acceptance of ho-

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mosexuality had become a matter of good citizenship! Think about that: Because same-sex marriage is “legal,” federal judges have ruled that the schools now have a duty to portray homosexual relationships as normal to children, despite what parents think or believe!

- The judges also allowed the school to overrule the Massachusetts parental notification law on this issue, with the claim that homosexuality or same-sex marriages are not “human sexuality issues” (to which the law refers).

- School libraries have also radically changed. School libraries across the state, from elementary school to high school, now have expanding shelves of books to normalize homosexual behavior and “lifestyle” in the minds of kids, some of them quite explicit and even pornographic. Parents’ complaints are ignored or met with hostility.

- A large, slick hardcover book celebrating Massachusetts homosexual marriages began to appear in many school libraries across the state. Titled *Courting Equality*, it was supplied to schools by a major homosexual activist organization. Its apparent purpose was to teach kids that “gay marriage” was a great civil rights victory.

- It has become commonplace in Massachusetts schools for teachers to display photos of their same-sex “spouses” and occasionally bring their “spouses” to school functions. At one point, both high schools in my own town had principals who were “married” to their same-sex partners who came to school and were introduced to the students.

- “Gay days” in schools are considered necessary to fight “intolerance” against same-sex relationships. Hundreds

of high schools and even middle schools across the state now hold “gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender days.” In my own town, a school committee member announced that combating “homophobia” was now a top priority. The schools not only “celebrate” homosexual marriage, but have moved beyond to promote other behaviors such as cross-dressing and transsexuality.

- As a result, many more children in Massachusetts appear to be self-identifying as “gay.” According to the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey, given to students in high schools across the state, between 2005 and 2009 both the percentage of kids “identifying as gay” and who had same-sex contact rose by approximately 50%. Although this bi-annual survey is unscientific and largely unreliable, it still shows a disturbing trend among those students who chose to answer the questions in this way. (At a minimum, it implies that these answers are being encouraged.)

- Once homosexuality is normalized, all boundaries begin to come down. The schools have already moved on to normalizing transgenderism (including cross-dressing and sex changes). The state-funded Commission on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth, which goes into schools with homosexual and transgender programs and activities for children, includes prominent activists who are transsexuals.

- In 2006 a cross-dressing man undergoing a sex-change operation was brought into a third-grade class in Newton to teach the children that there are now “different kinds of families.” School officials told a mother that her complaints to the principal were considered “inappropriate behavior”! She ended up removing her

child from the school.

— Brian Camenker

“What Same-Sex Marriage Has Done to Massachusetts”

p. 1,2

Editor’s Note: Mr. Camenker is making his 14-page essay available free as a download at: www.massresistance.org, or contact him at: PO Box 1612, Waltham, Massachusetts 02454

Dozens of prominent Republicans — including top advisers to former President George W. Bush, four former governors and two members of Congress — have signed a legal brief arguing that gay people have a constitutional right to marry, a position that amounts to a direct challenge to Speaker John A. Boehner and reflects the civil war in the party since the November election.

The document will be submitted this week to the Supreme Court in support of a suit seeking to strike down Proposition 8, a California ballot initiative barring same-sex marriage, and all similar bans. The court will hear back-to-back arguments next month in that case and another pivotal gay rights case that challenges the 1996 federal Defense of Marriage Act.

The Proposition 8 case already has a powerful conservative supporter: Theodore B. Olson, the former solicitor general under Mr. Bush and one of the suit’s two lead lawyers. The amicus, or friend-of-the-court, brief is being filed with Mr. Olson’s blessing. It argues, as he does, that same-sex marriage promotes family values by allowing children of gay couples to grow up in two-parent homes, and that it advances conservative values of “limited government and maximizing individual freedom.”

Legal analysts said the brief had the

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potential to sway conservative justices as much for the prominent names attached to it as for its legal arguments. The list of signers includes a string of Republican officials and influential thinkers — 75 as of Monday evening — who are not ordinarily associated with gay rights advocacy, including some who are speaking out for the first time and others who have changed their previous positions.

Among them are Meg Whitman, who supported Proposition 8 when she ran for California governor; Representatives Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida and Richard Hanna of New York; Stephen J. Hadley, a Bush national security adviser; Carlos Gutierrez, a commerce secretary to Mr. Bush; James B. Comey, a top Bush Justice Department official; David A. Stockman, President Ronald Reagan's first budget director; and Deborah Pryce, a former member of the House Republican leadership from Ohio who is retired from Congress.

Ms. Pryce said Monday: "Like a lot of the country, my views have evolved on this from the first day I set foot in Congress. I think it's just the right thing, and I think it's on solid legal footing, too."

Jon M. Huntsman Jr., the former Utah governor, who favored civil unions but opposed same-sex marriage during his 2012 presidential bid, also signed. Last week, Mr. Huntsman announced his new position in an article titled "Marriage Equality Is a Conservative Cause," a sign that the 2016 Republican presidential candidates could be divided on the issue for the first time.

"The ground on this is obviously changing, but it is changing more rapidly than people think," said John Feehery, a Republican strategist and former House

leadership aide who did not sign the brief. "I think that Republicans in the future are going to be a little bit more careful about focusing on these issues that tend to divide the party."

Some high-profile Republicans who support same-sex marriage — including Laura Bush, the former first lady; Dick Cheney, the former vice president; and Colin L. Powell, a former secretary of state — were not on the list as of Monday.

But the presence of so many well-known former officials — including Christine Todd Whitman, former governor of New Jersey, and William Weld and Jane Swift, both former governors of Massachusetts — suggests that once Republicans are out of public life they feel freer to speak out against the party's official platform, which calls for amending the Constitution to define marriage as "the union of one man and one woman."

By contrast, the brief, shared with The New York Times by its drafters, cites past Supreme Court rulings dear to conservatives, including the Citizens United decision lifting restrictions on campaign financing, and a Washington, D.C., Second Amendment case that overturned a law barring handgun ownership.

"We are trying to say to the court that we are judicial and political conservatives, and it is consistent with our values and philosophy for you to overturn Proposition 8," said Ken Mehlman, the former chairman of the Republican National Committee, who came out as gay several years ago. He is on the board of the American Foundation for Equal Rights, which brought the California suit, and has spent months in quiet conversations with fellow Republicans to gather signatures for the brief.

In making an expansive argument that

same-sex marriage bans are discriminatory, the brief's signatories are at odds with the House Republican leadership, which has authorized the expenditure of tax dollars to defend the 1996 marriage law. The law defines marriage in the eyes of the federal government as the union of a man and a woman.

Polls show that public attitudes have shifted drastically on same-sex marriage over the past decade. A majority of Americans now favor same-sex marriage, up from roughly one third in 2003.

While Republicans lag behind the general population — the latest New York Times survey found a third of Republicans favor letting gay people marry — that, too, is changing quickly as more young people reach voting age. Several recent polls show that about 70 percent of voters under 30 back same-sex marriage.

"The die is cast on this issue when you look at the percentage of younger voters who support gay marriage," said Steve Schmidt, who was a senior adviser to the 2008 Republican presidential nominee, Senator John McCain of Arizona, and who signed the brief. "As Dick Cheney said years ago, 'Freedom means freedom for everybody.'"

Still, it is clear that Republican backers of same-sex marriage have yet to bring the rest of the party around to their views. Mr. Feehery said there are regional as well as generational divisions, with opposition especially strong in the South. Speaking of Mr. Boehner, he said, "I doubt very seriously that he is going to change his position."

Experts say that amicus briefs generally do not change Supreme Court justices' minds. But on Monday some said that the Republican brief, written by Seth P.

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Waxman, a former solicitor general in the administration of President Bill Clinton, and Reginald Brown, who served in the Bush White House Counsel's Office, might be an exception.

Tom Goldstein, publisher of *Scotus-blog*, a Web site that analyzes Supreme Court cases, said the amicus filing "has the potential to break through and make a real difference."

He added: "The person who is going to decide this case, if it's going to be close, is going to be a conservative justice who respects traditional marriage but nonetheless is sympathetic to the claims that this is just another form of hatred. If you're trying to persuade someone like that, you can't persuade them from the perspective of gay rights advocacy."

— Sheryl Gay Stolberg
The New York Times
February 25, 2013

Religious Liberty

In the latest act of bruising intolerance being perpetrated by Muslims against Pakistan's besieged Christian community, a Muslim mob recently burned down over 150 Christian homes and two churches over allegations that a Christian man had committed blasphemy.

The rioting, which occurred in the Pakistani city of Lahore, began after a Muslim man accused Sawan Masih, a Pakistani Christian, of insulting the Prophet Muhammad, an allegation punishable by death under Pakistan's blasphemy laws.

Even though Pakistani police had swiftly arrested Masih, Christian families nevertheless hurriedly fled the area in fear of Muslim reprisals, an exodus which proved fortuitous given the ensuing Muslim rampage.

Once the mob's fury had been spent,

Christians slowly made their way back to their burned-out homes, leaving one Christian surveying the destruction to lament, "Nothing is left here. I don't know why this happened."

The answer to that question, unfortunately, is exceedingly clear given the type of barbaric treatment routinely meted out by Muslims to those Christians and other religious minorities unfortunate enough to run afoul of Pakistan's notorious blasphemy laws.

Those statutes, first introduced in 1986 by Pakistani military dictator Muhammad Zia ul-Haq, can earn sentences of death or life in prison for those found guilty of insulting Islam's Prophet Muhammad or desecrating its holy book, the Koran.

To that end, 20 Pakistanis convicted of blasphemy are currently serving life sentences while another 16 are sitting on death row awaiting their appointed date with the executioner.

Among those currently slated to die is Younis Masih, a Christian father of four who has been on death row since 2007 and Asia Bibi, a Christian mother of five, who in 2010 was the first Pakistani woman convicted for blasphemy and sentenced to death by hanging.

Younis Masih's heretical act occurred in September 2005 when he was arrested after he had reportedly asked a group of Muslims who were holding a religious service one evening in a nearby house to turn their music down.

Bibi's transgression against Islam came in 2009 after a verbal disagreement with some Muslim women in her village led Bibi to claim that Christians and Muslims are equal before God, an affront apparently stinging enough to lead to her being

accused of having blasphemed against Mohammad.

It should be noted, that while Muslim nations throughout Africa, the Mideast and Asia — such as Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Iran — have similar blasphemy laws, few enforce those laws with the zeal of Pakistanis.

Perhaps that fervor stems from the fact that under Pakistan's blasphemy laws the burden of proof required to convict someone is exceedingly weak given there are no guidelines as to what constitutes blasphemy, no evidentiary standards, and no requirement to prove intent.

Moreover, Pakistan's blasphemy laws also contain no provisions to punish a false accuser or false witness. As a result, the laws are often used to settle personal scores rather than to defend against perceived slights to Islamic piety.

In fact, the Muslim rampage in Lahore reportedly had less to do with offending Islamic sensibilities than it had to do with personal score settling. According to a bishop in Lahore, Masih's Muslim accuser had levied the blasphemy charge against Masih the day after the two men had gotten into a fight while drinking.

Perhaps not surprisingly, those accused of blasphemy, more often than not, never see their cases settled by a Pakistani court but instead are forced into hiding or killed by mobs before they even stand trial.

Since 1990 at least 60 Christians accused of blasphemy have been killed by enraged mobs or individuals, extra-judicial justice perhaps best explained by the fact many Pakistani Muslims believe killing a blasphemous person earns a heavenly reward.

While Pakistan's religious minorities, such as Christians, Hindus and Ahmadis,

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have been the disproportionate targets of blasphemy allegations, Muslims who violate the blasphemy laws aren't immune to mob reprisal.

For example, in December 2012 several hundred Muslims in the Pakistani province of Sindh dragged a man suspected of burning pages of the Koran from police custody, where they summarily beat him before then burning him alive.

That display of Islamic tolerance was preceded in July 2012 when Ghulam Abbas, a 40-year-old mentally impaired Muslim man, was accused of burning a copy of the Koran in the Pakistani city of Bahawalpur.

Incited by local Muslim clerics, a mob numbering in the thousands stormed the police station where Abbas was being held, whereupon they dragged Abbas to the spot where he purportedly desecrated the Koran, poured gasoline over him, and then burned him to death as he screamed for help.

So given all that it's not terribly surprising that Pakistan's religious minorities, as well as some Muslims, are attempting to amend the blasphemy laws, efforts which can carry some deadly consequences.

In 2011, two Pakistani Christian politicians attempting to repeal the blasphemy laws were assassinated: Punjab Governor Salman Taseer, the only Christian minister in Pakistan's Cabinet, was shot and killed by one of his own guards; two months later Shahbaz Bhatti, the Minister for Minority Affairs, was gunned down by Islamists.

Yet, there are those in Pakistan who contend that tentative signs are emerging that signal a weakening of support for the blasphemy laws, change prompted in part by the international outrage generated by

the case of Rimsha Masih.

Rimsha, a 14-year-old Pakistani Christian girl afflicted with Down syndrome, was arrested in August 2012 after she had been accused by a local cleric of burning 10 pages of the Koran.

Rimsha, who worked as a maid, denied any blasphemous wrongdoing, claiming through her attorney that she was simply burning garbage and "did not know a Koranic book was among the papers because she cannot read."

Nevertheless, Pakistani police quickly brought Rimsha into custody, persuaded less by her illiteracy and mental impairment and more by a swelling Muslim mob gathered outside her home bent on torching the entire Christian community if the young girl was not immediately arrested.

Yet, while imprisoned, the cleric who accused Rimsha was himself arrested and charged with planting the burned pages, the result of which led Pakistan's Supreme Court in January 2013 to acquit Rimsha of all charges of blasphemy.

Then, shortly after Rimsha's acquittal, Barkat Masih, a Hindu who had converted to Christianity and spent 18 months in prison after he was accused of blasphemy in 2011, was acquitted in February 2013 by Pakistan's Supreme Court and released.

Finally, in March, Karma Patras, a 55-year-old Christian pastor charged in October 2012 with blasphemy, was released on bail as he was awaiting his trial because his accuser had acknowledged that he had mistakenly accused Patras of committing blasphemy.

Still, while that decision was a stunning rarity given that victims of false accusations of blasphemy are usually denied bail, Patras is still mired deep in the Pakistani judicial woods.

Specifically, an accuser cannot drop the charges once they have been filed, so Patras will still have to stand trial, where if convicted he will face up to ten years in prison.

Moreover, being granted bail may not be the act of judicial mercy it appears to be on the surface given that after his arrest, Muslims in his village tried wrest Patras from police custody. Failing that, the mob settled instead on forcing his five married sons and their families to leave the area by threatening to burn them alive.

Tragically, for Pakistan's Christian and other religious minorities, that Muslim bellicosity is more than a menacing threat but a terrifying reality come to fruition.

— Frank Crimi
FrontPage Magazine
March 14, 2013

Black clad Muslim terrorists attacked Christians in the Northern Nigeria State of Kaduna on Saturday night, 23 February. Witnesses said that the gunmen spoke in Fulani. The majority of the Fulani tribe are Muslim. The assailants carried sophisticated weapons and shot up the Christian village on a 3-hour killing spree.

Without Warning John Audi, of St. Patricks Church said: "The raid came as a shock, as area Christians had been living without enmity toward anyone. We were all scattered, and some that were shot were crying. We all ran for cover where we believed we could avoid being hit by the bullets."

Failure of Security Forces Bishop Danlami Bello, of the First African Church commented: "This village was attacked for three hours, yet no help came to our people here. These attacks have gone unhindered without security agencies com-

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ing to the scenes of the attacks to assist the Christian victims. There is no doubt that this attack, like many others on Christian communities in Northern Nigeria, were by Muslim leaders in Nigeria to Islamise the country by force; forcing Christians into submitting to Islam.”

Victims of Jihad

Rev. Casmire Yabo, of the First African Church Mission in Aduwan, said that church members who hid in the bushes reported seeing 10 assailants leaving after the attack. Amongst the slain was an infant, Alexander Blessed and a young girl, Happiness Adamu. 22-year old Felix Saul of Rebok village was killed in the attack. He was a final year student at a public high school and a member of the church choir. Also killed were Theresa Bulus, 35-year old member of the Baptist Church of Kagaro, and 20-year old, Yacham Ayuba, of the First African Church Mission in Mado-biya. At least 5 people from 5 different churches were killed during this terrorist raid and 11 Christians were hospitalised. Martha Blessed was shot as she tried to protect her infant son. Bullets broke both legs of a 13-year old Christian girl, Gloria Livinus.

Church Bombed The Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) auditorium was damaged in a bomb blast. Cracks caused by the explosion have destabilised the structure which could fall at any time. Bishop Bello called for sustained prayer for Christians under attack in Northern Nigeria and urged Christians worldwide to call on their governments to assist the Nigerian governments in defending against such Islamic terror attacks.

Do Christians Care About Their Persecuted Brethren? Nigerian Christians who visited our Mission last night

expressed their frustration at how so many Christians in the West seem to ignore the rising tide of anti-Christian violence throughout the Middle East. The Church is meant to be one Body. Where is the love and concern for our brethren? Many Christians seem to want to delude themselves that Islam is a peaceful and tolerant religion. It is a good thing they are peaceful and tolerant - imagine if they were violent! “Their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.” Romans 3:15-18

Pray for Nigeria It is so important for our brethren in Northern Nigeria know that they are not alone, that they are not forgotten.

Christian Civilisation at Risk Our Nigerian brethren are also deeply concerned over the Islamic invasion of much of Europe and North America. They fear that Europe will become Eurabia, and that parts of America and Canada will fall under Shari’a law. Many Christians are having such small families and the Muslims are having such large families. Because of this massive migration by Muslims into Western countries which have traditionally been Christian, the whole demographics of Europe and North America are in danger of shifting. The faith and freedoms of those countries which are traditional Missionary sending nations are being undermined. There is an urgent need for Church to wake up and understand the true nature of Islam and the crisis threatening churches worldwide.

Persecution Today More than 400 million Christians in 66 countries worldwide suffer under religious persecution. Yet little is heard about this and many

churches give little, or no, attention to remembering the persecuted, praying for the persecuted and serving the persecuted Churches.

“Remember the prisoners as if chained with them - those who are mistreated - since you yourselves are in the body also.” Hebrews 13:3

— Peter Hammond
Frontline Fellowship
March 22, 2013

Sexuality

On July 1, 2012, a law went into effect in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts titled “An Act Relative to Gender Identity.” The law added the term “gender identity” to the state’s antidiscrimination statute, joining far better known terms like “race,” “religion,” “sex” and “national origin.” The statute now also applies to “gender-related identity, appearance or behavior; whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance, or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person’s physiology or assigned sex at birth.” The common term these days is “transgender.”

The need for this addition to the antidiscrimination law was never clear. The existing statute appeared to apply to every citizen of Massachusetts who could conceivably be the object of discrimination. “Sexual orientation” was already on the menu.

The new law’s strongest proponents estimated that no more than 33,000 people would come under the umbrella of those having “gender identity” concerns. That means the statute was rewritten to cover 0.51% of the state’s population (6,464,144 as of July 2012, according to the U.S. Census Bureau), even though advocates for the change were never able to show evidence of widespread transgender

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discrimination.

There was always a hint of the absurd in the movement for “An Act Relative to Gender Identity.” Now the absurdity has come to the fore with the Massachusetts Department of Education’s directives for the treatment of transgendered public-school students under the law. It’s not clear how many students are among those the law is intended to protect, but the education bureaucrats are looking out for them. The 11-page directive, released on Feb. 15, reads like it was written by someone who believes that anatomical and biological differences between the sexes are about as significant as the differences between individuals in shoe size or hair color.

Some of the highlights include allowing transgendered and gender-questioning students to use the bathrooms of their choice or to play on sports teams that correspond to the gender with which they identify. Schools are directed to eliminate gender-based clothing (at some graduations, boys wear blue robes and girls wear white, or they used to) and gender-based activities (including not having boys and girls line up separately to leave the classroom).

Transgender students are those whose assigned birth sex doesn’t match their “internalized sense of their gender,” the directive says, and they “range in the ways in which they identify as male, female, some combination of both, or neither.” Therefore, “the responsibility for determining a student’s gender identity rests with the student.”

Under the order of the guidelines, a 16-year-old high-school junior who says that he believes he is a girl has the right to use the girls bathroom and locker room. (But before boys who are unconfused

about their gender get any bright ideas, the guidelines are ready: The transgender feelings must be “sincerely held.” School staff can challenge anyone who seems to be making the assertion for “some improper purpose.”) If a female student feels uncomfortable and objects to the boy’s presence when she is in the bathroom, the rules say, the complaint “is not a reason to deny access to the transgender student.”

It is a given that nearly all teenage girls will feel deeply uncomfortable having an anatomical male of any sort using the same bathroom or locker-room shower. That is the reality of human life, and no young woman should be forced to endure such embarrassment. As for an anatomical but transgender girl showering in the boys locker room, that hardly bears contemplating.

At least the guidelines seem to recognize the trouble they invite: “The Department strongly recommends that districts include an appropriate number of gender-neutral restrooms commensurate with the size of the school, and at least one gender-neutral changing facility, into the design of new schools and school renovations.”

But what the guidelines don’t recognize is that it is impossible to erase the differences between the sexes, even if a politically connected few would wish it so. It is entirely possible, though, to erase common sense and replace it with a policy that gives transgender students more rights and privileges than their classmates.

— James Erhard
Wall Street Journal
March 4, 2013, p. 13

Lady Gaga may belt out that gays are “born this way,” but questions about the origin and unchangeability of homo-

sexuality are central to at least five lawsuits, including two before the Supreme Court next month.

A key argument in the battle over same-sex marriage is whether homosexuality is inborn and “immutable,” and whether gays, as a class of people, need special protection or “heightened scrutiny” from the courts on equal-rights issues.

Attorneys David Boies and Theodore Olson made these exact points in their new brief to the Supreme Court in *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, the California case challenging a proposition passed by state voters essentially blocking same-sex marriage.

“Because of their sexual orientation — a characteristic with which they were born and which they cannot change — plaintiffs and hundreds of thousands of gay men and lesbians in California and across the country are being excluded from one of life’s most precious relationships. They may not marry the person they love,” the attorneys wrote Thursday on behalf of the American Foundation for Equal Rights, an organization that seeks to overturn the state’s Proposition 8 and legalize same-sex marriage in the state.

“Sexual orientation is ‘immutable’ or beyond the group member’s control,” the brief added, one key reason that the high court should give heightened scrutiny to the gay respondents’ claims that they face discrimination under the Constitution.

Opponents of same-sex marriage reject the central premise of the challenge, countering that homosexuality is neither permanent nor inborn.

Thousands of individuals with unwanted same-sex attraction “have made the personal decision to leave homosexuality,” and this “ex-gay community” is receiving “growing recognition” in courts, govern-

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ment and business entities, attorney Dean R. Broyles wrote in his brief for Parents & Friends of Ex-Gays and Gays, in support of Proposition 8.

The brief tells the stories of two men and two women “who have done exactly what” a California federal judge said they couldn’t do: “They chose to change their orientation and now live in opposite-sex relationships despite having been deeply entrenched in same-sex relationships,” Mr. Broyles wrote.

A struggle to define

Science doesn’t agree on a definition for homosexuality, bisexuality or even sexual orientation, Dr. Paul McHugh, a psychiatry professor at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, said in a brief filed by Gerald Bradley of Notre Dame Law School in support of Proposition 8.

The high court should resist taking “the momentous step” of assigning “heightened scrutiny” to people based on sexual orientation, Dr. McHugh advised. A legally protected classification must be “discrete” and “determined solely by accident of birth,” like race or national origin. “Sexual orientation fails that test,” he said.

The Supreme Court is set to hear arguments on these issues March 26 in the Proposition 8 case, and March 27 in a separate case, *Windsor v. United States of America*. In the latter case, Edith Windsor of New York is suing to overturn the federal Defense of Marriage Act of 1996 because it blocked the federal government from recognizing her Canadian marriage to her longtime lesbian partner and cost her more than \$363,000 in federal estate taxes.

The Obama administration, which has announced that it would not en-

force the act because of doubts about its constitutionality, formally urged the high court to strike down the portion of the law barring the federal government from recognizing the rights of gays married in states where same-sex unions are legal.

The 1996 law “denies to tens of thousands of same-sex couples who are legally married under state law an array of important federal benefits that are available to legally married opposite-sex couples,” the brief read in part. Because this discrimination cannot be justified as substantially furthering any important governmental interest, [the section] is unconstitutional.”

Many legal observers think that if the high court finds sexual orientation to be a protected class deserving of heightened scrutiny, the court will hand the gay clients victories and overturn both marriage laws.

Therapy lawsuits

Three more lawsuits revolve around whether homosexuality is innate and unchangeable.

In California, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco is slated to hear arguments the week of April 15 in two lawsuits against SB 1172, a California law that forbids teens and children from receiving sexual-orientation change efforts. The law is not being implemented as the legal challenge plays out.

The law was enacted out of concern that gay children and teens are harmed by efforts to change their “normal” and “natural” same-sex attractions, according to legal briefs, including one filed by four gay men who “survived” sexual-orientation change efforts and the sister of a gay man who committed suicide when the efforts didn’t work for him.

California Gov. Jerry Brown’s administration is defending the law, and 10

professional, medical, mental health and child-welfare groups recently filed a brief in support of it.

These 10 briefs “underscore the unified message” that “efforts to change a child’s sexual orientation are cruel, damaging and have no place in the provision of mental health care,” said Shannon Minter, legal director for the National Center for Lesbian Rights, a co-sponsor of the law.

Supporters of sexual-orientation change efforts, who like many gay marriage opponents say same-sex attractions are not permanent or inborn, argue that youths who want to escape such attractions should be able to receive counseling to support that goal, and SB 1172 illegally interferes in that free and protected speech. Therapist David Pickup, who benefited from sexual-orientation change therapy, is one of the supporters in the lawsuit filed by Liberty Counsel. Therapists Donald Welch and Anthony Duk, and counselor-in-training Aaron Bitzer are plaintiffs in a second lawsuit against the law, this one filed by the Pacific Justice Institute.

In New Jersey Superior Court in Hudson County, the Southern Poverty Law Center is seeking damages and the license revocation of Jonah, an organization formerly known as Jews Offering New Alternatives for Healing.

In *Ferguson v. Jonah*, four gay men and their family members say they suffered consumer fraud when Jonah’s paid counselors failed to help the men change their sexual orientations. The “therapy” caused deep psychological scars, said plaintiff Sheldon Bruck, who talked with a Jonah-recommended therapist for several weeks when he was 17.

Charles LiMandri, president of the Freedom of Conscience Defense Fund, is

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representing Jonah and its officials, Arthur Goldberg and Alan Downing. If legal principle establishes that homosexuality is fixed and immutable, “the adverse consequences for religious liberty, freedom of conscience and freedom of speech will be simply staggering,” he said Friday. “We’re in the thick of it.”

— Cheryl Wetzstein
The Washington Times
March 14, 2013, p. 16

Liberal Theology

When evangelical preachers lose their way and turn their backs on biblical Christianity, why is it they end up in the Episcopal Church?

As a preacher who traveled in the opposite direction and left the Episcopal Church 22 years ago—or I should say the Episcopal Church left me—I think I have a clue.

On March 18, the Huffington Post reported that Rob Bell, the one-time evangelical pastor who rejected the core of Christian faith, has endorsed homosexual marriage.

Where was that endorsement made? Surprise, surprise: Grace Cathedral, the Episcopal Cathedral of the Diocese of California. Grace Cathedral is located in San Francisco, the Mecca of homosexuality and all things anti-biblical.

Bell is now living in California, where he’s promoting his book, *Love Wins*. The book has propelled Bell to a stardom of sorts, even though it rejected a cornerstone of Christian faith—that no salvation is possible except through faith in Jesus Christ. Ultimately, that rejection caused his split with mega-church Mars Hill Bible Church in Grandville, Michigan.

The solid cliff of the Christian gospel

that Bell has jumped off is the same cliff that I held fast to when I left the Episcopalian Church. I chose the way of Jesus. Unfortunately, Bell and others have chosen the way of Judas.

“Shock jocks” in the church are not new. They love to make a splash on their way from light to darkness.

In fact, I venture to say that most of them—like Bell and Bishop Spong before him—traveled alongside those in the light, but in reality, were never in the light themselves. They faked their evangelicalism until they could fake it no more. The pressure to be accepted by modern society became too great, and the wolves had to remove their sheep coverings and come out. Then they often found a welcoming audience in the Episcopal Church, who also had long ago given into the need for acceptance from the world.

However, Mr. Bell’s pronouncement of the demise of Bible-believing Christianity may be premature. To be sure, statistics back his assertion that many people are rejecting biblical faith. But that only serves to strengthen true believers.

From the beginning, Jesus taught that true believers would always be small in number, but their impact would be inversely proportional to their size.

After all, martyrdom served as the seed of the church, and it may do that again.

Bell refers to biblical Christianity as a “dying” subculture, but he of all people should know what Jesus said. For Bell once opened the Bible and taught from it.

We know that the sheep and the goats will get mixed up until God begins to separate them. The wheat and weeds will grow together until harvest time, when the angels will bind the weeds and bundle

them for the eternal fire.

Therefore those who remain Bible-believing Christians should never panic nor be surprised when we see the weeds revealed. We should not be surprised, but neither should we gloat. Far from it.

It is a tragedy. We should grieve and weep and feel the depth of sorrow for them. May God have mercy on us all.

— Michael Youssef
Townhall.com
March 24, 2013

Philosophy

Richard Dawkins is a scientist who is apparently either extraordinarily bored with his discipline, or hopelessly oblivious to its limits.

From his tireless defenses of atheism to his recent tweet on abortion, Dawkins, you see, spends very little time, it seems, sticking to what he knows. Instead, he is busy away treating his background in science as the supreme credential for making pronouncements on all matters religious and moral.

Dawkins’ is a textbook case of Amateur Philosopher Syndrome (APS)—the delusion that because one is an expert on the physical, one is an expert on the metaphysical—the stuff that scientists have traditionally left to the philosophers and theologians to study.

Just this past weekend, he got people talking about him after he fired off a tweet regarding abortion in which he said that “any fetus is less human than an adult pig.”

When a biologist, as a biologist, uses the term “human,” we expect for it to refer to that which is, well, biologically human. A human fetus, then, is obviously more human than a pig, for the latter isn’t human at all. Dawkins, however, uses “human”

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here in a moral sense, for he is interested in showing that abortion is permissible. “Human’ features relevant to the morality of abortion,” he tweets, “include [the] ability to feel pain, fear etc & to be mourned by others.”

To be clear, there is nothing in the least bit scientific or descriptive about Dawkins’ comments on this score. His training in science no more qualifies him to speak to the moral standing of abortion than does a person’s experience as a janitor or a dishwasher endow him with any special authority to do the same.

And his handling of the abortion issue shows this in spades.

Dawkins reasons here as if what he’s said hasn’t been said thousands of times over by abortion apologists. Worse, he proceeds as if he was utterly ignorant of the fact that even those philosophers who have used his argument have conceded that it is fraught with pitfalls. This ignorance, though, is a common symptom of APS.

If Dawkins is correct and an entity is human only if it is sentient (able “to feel pain, fear etc.) and “be mourned by others,” then our duties to pigs, rats, bats, and all sorts of other animals are no different than those that we owe to one another, for all of these are sentient and, in the right contexts, capable of being enjoyed and mourned by others. Furthermore, those members of the human race who are less sensitive to pain than others must thereby be deemed less human than others, and those humans whose sufferings or death fail to elicit the sympathies of their fellows must then be relegated to the ranks of the non-human.

This is where Dawkins’ logic leads. But afflicted as he is with APS, Dawkins apparently hasn’t thought it through.

Dawkins’ position on abortion is just as amateurish as his stance on the question of theism, belief in God’s existence. Not unlike most people, Dawkins thinks that science has it within itself the ability to undermine belief in God’s existence. This is probably the one big blunder of which both theist and atheist alike are guilty. The reality is that science can no more disprove or prove God’s existence than can a painting of the ocean establish the number of gallons that the ocean contains.

In short, in theory science has no bearing on religion, for each speaks to a world separate from the other.

The world of the scientist is an abstraction. It consists of causes and effects, bodies, structures, processes, material forces, objects and categories of various sorts—e.g. genera and species, etc. By definition, this is a “natural”—a purely natural—world, a universe that doesn’t allow for any intelligence or mind that isn’t ultimately reducible to matter in motion. The methods of science ensure this.

In contrast, the world of religion (and morality) is comprised of, not causes, but reasons; not matter, but mind; not objects, but subjects; not forces and processes, but intentions and purposes. It is a world of believers and unbelievers, moral agents and moral patients, virtues, vices, duties, rights, good and evil.

In conflating these two worlds into one, Dawkins destroys them both. In bringing morality and religion before the tribunal of science, Dawkins betrays an astonishing ignorance of the characters of morality, religion, and science.

This, though, is exactly what we should expect from one ravaged by Amateur Philosopher Syndrome.

— Jack Kerwick

FrontPage Magazine

March 22, 2013

Radical Environmentalism

Electric cars are promoted as the chic harbinger of an environmentally benign future. Ads assure us of “zero emissions,” and President Obama has promised a million on the road by 2015. With sales for 2012 coming in at about 50,000, that million-car figure is a pipe dream. Consumers remain wary of the cars’ limited range, higher price and the logistics of battery-charging. But for those who do own an electric car, at least there is the consolation that it’s truly green, right? Not really.

For proponents such as the actor and activist Leonardo DiCaprio, the main argument is that their electric cars—whether it’s a \$100,000 Fisker Karma (Mr. DiCaprio’s ride) or a \$28,000 Nissan Leaf—don’t contribute to global warming. And, sure, electric cars don’t emit carbon-dioxide on the road. But the energy used for their manufacture and continual battery charges certainly does—far more than most people realize.

A 2012 comprehensive life-cycle analysis in *Journal of Industrial Ecology* shows that almost half the lifetime carbon-dioxide emissions from an electric car come from the energy used to produce the car, especially the battery. The mining of lithium, for instance, is a less than green activity. By contrast, the manufacture of a gas-powered car accounts for 17% of its lifetime carbon-dioxide emissions. When an electric car rolls off the production line, it has already been responsible for 30,000 pounds of carbon-dioxide emission. The amount for making a conventional car: 14,000 pounds.

While electric-car owners may cruise around feeling virtuous, they still recharge

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using electricity overwhelmingly produced with fossil fuels. Thus, the life-cycle analysis shows that for every mile driven, the average electric car indirectly emits about six ounces of carbon-dioxide. This is still a lot better than a similar-size conventional car, which emits about 12 ounces per mile. But remember, the production of the electric car has already resulted in sizeable emissions—the equivalent of 80,000 miles of travel in the vehicle.

So unless the electric car is driven a lot, it will never get ahead environmentally. And that turns out to be a challenge. Consider the Nissan Leaf. It has only a 73-mile range per charge. Drivers attempting long road trips, as in one BBC test drive, have reported that recharging takes so long that the average speed is close to six miles per hour—a bit faster than your average jogger.

To make matters worse, the batteries in electric cars fade with time, just as they do in a cellphone. Nissan estimates that after five years, the less effective batteries in a typical Leaf bring the range down to 55 miles. As the MIT Technology Review cautioned last year: “Don’t Drive Your Nissan Leaf Too Much.”

If a typical electric car is driven 50,000 miles over its lifetime, the huge initial emissions from its manufacture means the car will actually have put more carbon-dioxide in the atmosphere than a similar-size gasoline-powered car driven the same number of miles. Similarly, if the energy used to recharge the electric car comes mostly from coal-fired power plants, it will be responsible for the emission of almost 15 ounces of carbon-dioxide for every one of the 50,000 miles it is driven—three ounces more than a similar gas-powered car.

Even if the electric car is driven for 90,000 miles and the owner stays away from coal-powered electricity, the car will cause just 24% less carbon-dioxide emission than its gas-powered cousin. This is a far cry from “zero emissions.” Over its entire lifetime, the electric car will be responsible for 8.7 tons of carbon dioxide less than the average conventional car.

Those 8.7 tons may sound like a considerable amount, but it’s not. The current best estimate of the global warming damage of an extra ton of carbon-dioxide is about \$5. This means an optimistic assessment of the avoided carbon-dioxide associated with an electric car will allow the owner to spare the world about \$44 in climate damage. On the European emissions market, credit for 8.7 tons of carbon-dioxide costs \$48.

Yet the U.S. federal government essentially subsidizes electric-car buyers with up to \$7,500. In addition, more than \$5.5 billion in federal grants and loans go directly to battery and electric-car manufacturers like California-based Fisker Automotive and Tesla Motors. This is a very poor deal for taxpayers.

The electric car might be great in a couple of decades but as a way to tackle global warming now it does virtually nothing. The real challenge is to get green energy that is cheaper than fossil fuels. That requires heavy investment in green research and development. Spending instead on subsidizing electric cars is putting the cart before the horse, and an inconvenient and expensive cart at that.

— Brian Lomborg
Wall Street Journal

March 11, 2013, p. A 15

Last week, Bjorn Lomborg, the

widely published Danish professor and director of one of the world’s leading environmental think tanks, the Copenhagen Consensus Center, published an article about the Philippines’ decision, after 12 years, to allow genetically modified (GM) rice -- “golden rice” -- to be grown and consumed in that country.

The reason for the delay was environmentalist opposition to GM rice; and the reason for the change in Philippine policy was that 4.4 million Filipino children suffer from vitamin A deficiency. That deficiency, Lomborg writes, “according to the World Health Organization, causes 250,000 to 500,000 children to go blind each year. Of these, half die within a year.”

During the 12-year delay, Lomborg continues, “About eight million children worldwide died from vitamin A deficiency.”

“Golden rice” contains vitamin A, making it by far the most effective and cheapest way to get vitamin A into Third World children.

So who would oppose something that could save millions of children’s lives and millions of other children from blindness?

The answer is people who are more devoted to nature than to human life.

And who might such people be?

They are called environmentalists.

These are the people who coerced nations worldwide into banning DDT. It is generally estimated this ban has led to the deaths of about 50 million human beings, overwhelmingly African children, from malaria. DDT kills the mosquito that spreads malaria to human beings.

US News and World Report writer Carrie Lukas reported in 2010, “Fortunately, in September 2006, the World Health Organization announced a change

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in policy: It now recommends DDT for indoor use to fight malaria. The organization's Dr. Anarfi Asamoah-Baah explained, "The scientific and programmatic evidence clearly supports this reassessment. Indoor residual spraying (IRS) is useful to quickly reduce the number of infections caused by malaria-carrying mosquitoes. IRS has proven to be just as cost effective as other malaria prevention measures and DDT presents no health risk when used properly."

Though Lukas blames environmentalists for tens of millions of deaths, she nevertheless describes environmentalists as "undoubtedly well-intentioned."

I offer two assessments of this judgment.

First, in life it is almost always irrelevant whether or not an individual or a movement is well intentioned. It is difficult to name a movement that has committed great evil whose members woke up each day asking, "What evil can I commit today?" Nearly all of them think they're well intentioned. Good intentions don't mean a thing.

Second, while environmentalists believe they have good intentions, I do not believe their intentions are good.

Concern for the natural environment is certainly laudable and every normal person shares it. But the organized environmentalist movement -- Lomborg specifically cites Greenpeace, Naomi Klein and the New York Times -- is led by fanatics. The movement's value system is morally askew. It places a pristine natural world above the well-being of human beings.

The environmentalist movement's responsibility for the deaths of tens of millions of poor children in the Third World is the most egregious example. But there are

less egregious examples of the movement's lack of concern for people.

Take the Keystone XL pipeline, the pipeline the Canadian government wants built in the US in order to send Canadian crude to American refineries. It would be a 1,179-mile, 36-inch-diameter crude oil pipeline, beginning in Alberta, and ending in Nebraska. The pipeline will be able to transport about 830,000 barrels of oil per day to Gulf Coast and Midwest refineries, reducing American dependence on oil from Venezuela -- Iran's base in the Western Hemisphere -- and the Middle East by up to 40 percent. It will also provide Americans with many thousands of well-paying jobs.

Approving this pipeline is a moral and economic necessity.

The American economy needs the pipeline -- even big labor wants it; it vastly reduces American dependency on countries that wish to hurt us; it helps our ally and biggest trading partner, Canada; and if America doesn't use that oil, China will.

But the Obama administration may (again) veto the Keystone XL pipeline -- for one reason: environmentalist fanaticism.

The employment of thousands of Americans, the well-being of the American economy and American national security -- all of these concerns are secondary to the environmentalist movement's view of nature *uber alles*.

There are many fine people who are concerned with the environment. Indeed, we should all be. But the movement known as environmentalism is not only a false religion, it is one that allows human sacrifice.

— Dennis Prager
The Washington Times

March 4, 2013, p. 28

Marxism-Leninism

There's an old joke from the Cold War. It went like this: Hardline East German communist Walter Ulbricht (who erected the Berlin Wall) died and went to hell. There, the devil gave him a choice between the socialist sector and the capitalist sector. Devoted to the end, Ulbricht stuck to the faith, saying: "I'll go to the socialist sector." "Good choice," averred the devil. "Over in the capitalist sector, they're getting the full hellfire treatment. But in the socialist sector, they've run out of coal."

Say what you want of Hugo Chavez, of his tactics, of his beliefs, and (as many are doing) of perhaps where he might be right now, but this much is certain: he stuck to the faith.

Many of us were downright amazed when Chavez, in his late 50s and desperately ill from cancer, opted to go to Cuba for treatment. It was a surefire death sentence. Only the most hopelessly devoted communist would be so naïve. Loaded with vast wealth he stole from his people, Chavez effectively chose acupuncture over the 21st-century healthcare widely available anywhere in the West.

And yet, the Venezuelan dictator clung to his religion. He went to Havana.

Chavez apparently gained some measure of comfort near the aging breast of his dying, beloved Fidel. He had so much in common with Castro, admiring the totalitarian's unparalleled, unprecedented seizure of power and resources, all in the name of redistribution and "social justice." Like Fidel, he pilfered enough riches from the ostracized affluent class to make himself one of the world's wealthiest leaders. As he did, he churned the propaganda, blaming his nation's every ill on his prede-

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predecessors and on the alleged criminality of the very same rich—as Fidel has done, as the left generally has done.

A few years back, my wife and I were in Washington meeting with an old friend from grad-school days, a native of Venezuela named Daria. When we introduced her to another acquaintance, she remarked with a sad smile, “I’m from Venezuela. We’re communist now.”

In Chavez’s partial defense—and this isn’t saying much—he never achieved the scales of collectivism and depths of depravity of Fidel Castro, or of the world’s really bad communists. Venezuela didn’t become Cuba or the Soviet Union. Needless to say, Hugo Chavez was no Joe Stalin—even as, remarkably, he died on the 60th anniversary of Stalin’s death.

Nonetheless, like any man of the left, he had his enemy groups, and he used them to full advantage. Some of these assorted villains were flagged in a curious Washington Post obituary which headlined Chavez as a “passionate” albeit “polarizing” figure. What earned him even this slight compliment from the Post? Who knows? The same article noted that Chavez referred to the Catholic Church hierarchy as “devils in vestments.” But perhaps the Post was impressed less with Chavez’s opprobrium for the Catholic Church than his encomiums for Barack Obama.

Of course, Chavez was a big fan of Obama. He made this clear the first year of Obama’s presidency. In an extraordinary statement at the United Nations that September, Chavez sniffed, “It doesn’t smell of sulfur here anymore.” This was a swipe at former President George W. Bush. Waxing almost spiritual, Chavez mused: “It smells of something else. It smells of hope.”

Yes, even to Hugo Chavez, Barack Obama equaled hope; the theological virtue of Obama. The Venezuelan caudillo inspiringly appealed to David Axelrod’s legendary campaign slogan.

And like Obama, Chavez just as quickly jettisoned the words of hope when less-inspiring rhetoric better suited his intentions. He excelled at blaming things on the rich, on profit seekers, on greedy corporations, on nefarious jet-owners and millionaires and billionaires, on banks, on investors, and, of course, on George W. Bush. Unlike Obama, who he spoke of in angelic terms, Chavez called George W. Bush a “devil.”

Chavez often seemed to invoke the devil.

Alinsky-like, Chavez constantly isolated his targets and demonized them, calling them “degenerates,” “squealing pigs,” and “counter-revolutionaries.” It was pure demagoguery.

In this, and more, Hugo Chavez was faithful to the very end. Did he really think he would be healed in Havana? Was there no other hope? Or, in the end, maybe faith was all that Chavez had. He should have learned from millions of Cubans over the last 50-plus years: faith in Fidel leads only to destruction and death.

— Paul Kengor
Townhall.com

Law

Denver television station CBS4 reports that Colorado has seen a sharp spike in marijuana use among teenagers since Colorado voters passed Amendment 64 last November legalizing recreational use of the drug. As described in *The Economist*, along with a Washington State measure also legalizing marijuana, Amendment 64 is “an electoral first not only for

America but for the world.”

That means two American states are to the left of the Scandinavian countries, Holland, and every other liberal country regarding marijuana.

CBS4 quotes a number of local high school students:

“I’ve seen a lot more people just walking down the street smoking (joints),” high school student Irie Johnson said.

“In high school it has kind of gotten out of hand,” student Alaina Tanenbaum said.

According to the CBS4 report, based in part on data from a local drug testing lab: “Experts say the test results show that children are getting higher than ever with alarming levels of THC, marijuana’s active ingredient, in their bodies.”

The massive increase in both the number of users and the amount of marijuana used by young people is precisely what I, and many others, predicted.

It was easy to predict.

When something desirable is made easier to obtain, more people will obtain it. It is difficult to imagine an exception to this common sense observation.

So, legalizing marijuana is foolish because it leads to far more use of the drug and the availability of ever more potent forms. But the foolishness doesn’t end there. Equally foolish is that as a society we have made peace with marijuana while making war on tobacco. This has been a classic example of upside down thinking, and we are reaping exactly what we have sown. We have produced a generation of young Americans who would never put a cigarette or cigar near their lips but who increasingly get high on pot.

Yes, tobacco -- specifically cigarettes -- kills and marijuana doesn’t. But, forgive

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the ultimate political incorrectness, young people would do much better in life if they smoked tobacco rather than weed.

First, tobacco doesn't kill young people. When it kills, it generally kills much older people. Moreover, according to a recent issue of the New England Journal of Medicine, if you stop smoking cigarettes by age 44, you will lose only one more year of life than a person who never smoked.

Second, regular pot smokers increasingly tune out of life, becoming what are known as potheads, or, to put it bluntly, losers.

Third, as noted in the CBS4 report, "new studies that have been published say the risk of a car accident increases two-fold after someone consumes pot." In other words, innocent human beings -- sometimes whole families -- are more likely to be maimed, paralyzed and killed by pot smokers than by cigarette smokers.

For myriad reasons, then, I would far prefer my teenager indulge in cigarettes -- not to mention cigars -- than pot. Anyone who thinks that pot is less harmful to a teenager than tobacco is fooling himself -- and his teenager.

If this is not obvious, ponder these questions: Would you rather your airplane pilot smoke pot or tobacco while flying? How would Britain have fared in World War II if Winston Churchill had smoked pot instead of cigars?

In terms of the effects of tobacco and pot on the smoker while smoking, there is simply no comparison between pot and tobacco.

What the left has done to America's youth in the last 40 or so years is so damaging as to be unforgiveable. They have ruined public school education; left them with so much debt that they will likely

be the first American generation to live materially inferior to their parents; and robbed their innocence with sex education classes, now beginning in kindergarten in Chicago and elsewhere. Now they are making marijuana available to more kids and in greater potency than ever before.

But they have left them with higher self-esteem.

— Dennis Prager
Townhall.com
March 15, 2013