

HIGHER THINKING

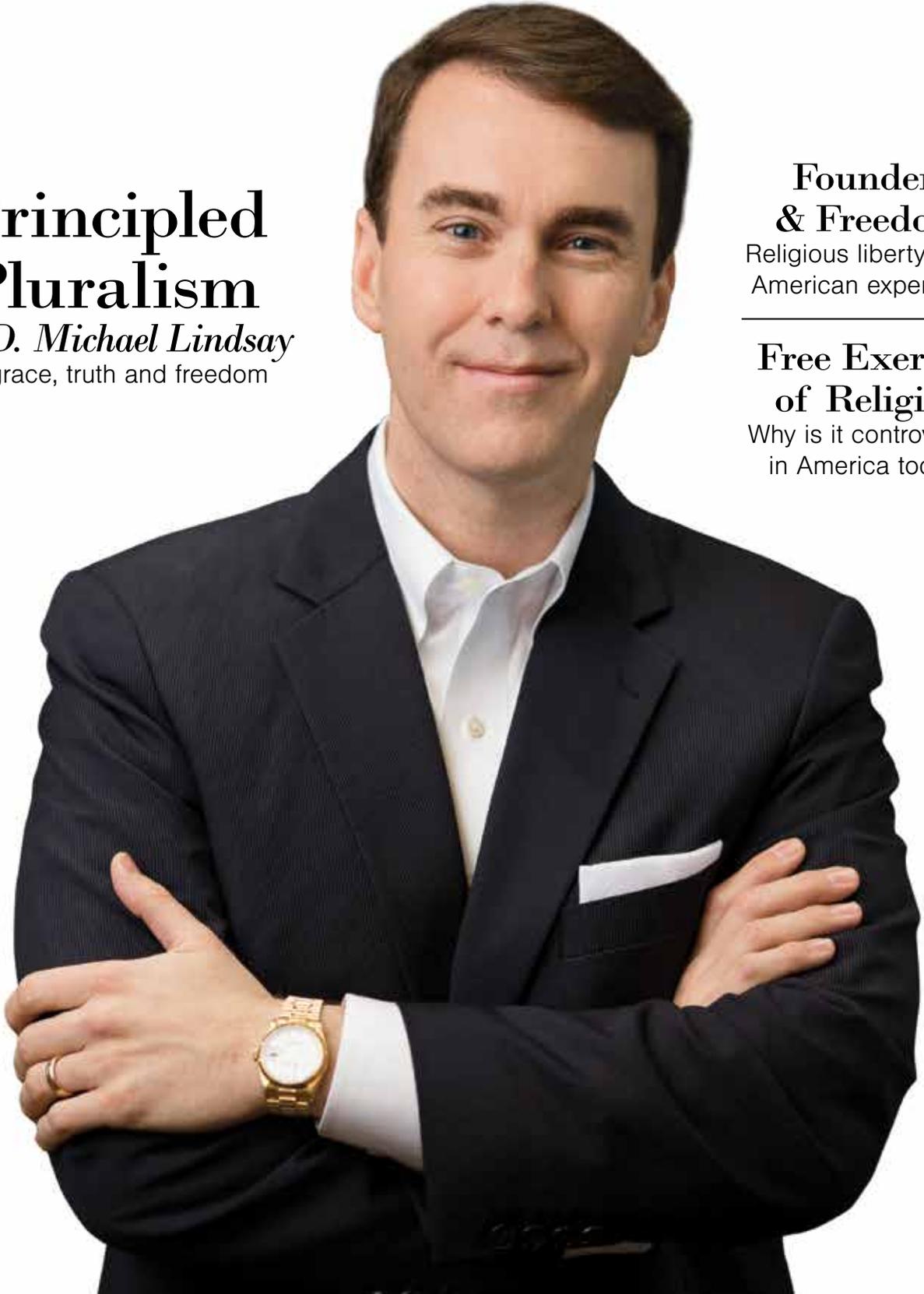
SUMMER 2016

outcomes

The Magazine of Christian Leadership Alliance

Principled Pluralism

Dr. D. Michael Lindsay
on grace, truth and freedom



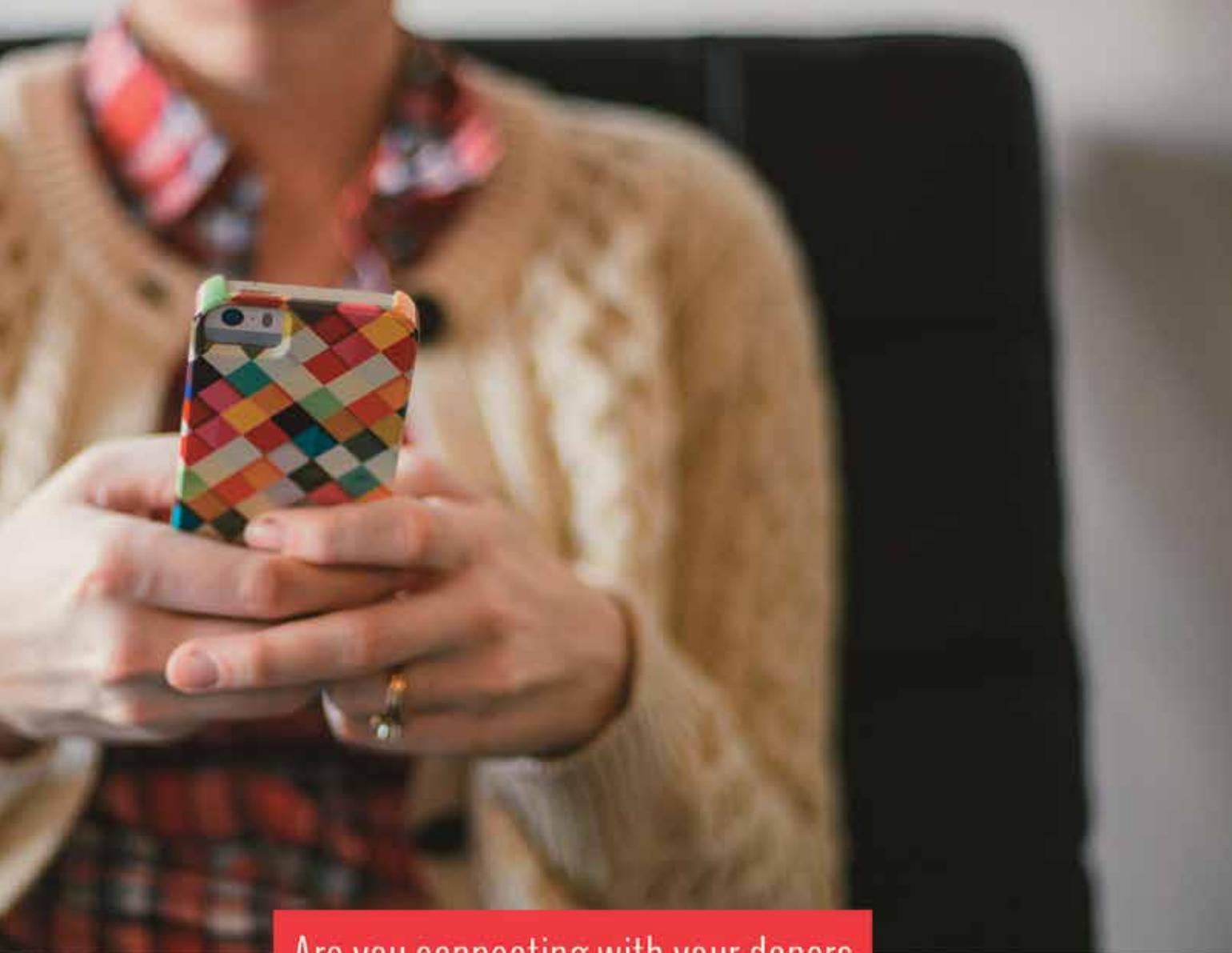
Founders & Freedom

Religious liberty in the
American experience

Free Exercise of Religion

Why is it controversial
in America today?





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Religious Freedom

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

(Josh. 1:9)

THE LORD'S CALL OF JOSHUA AS LEADER OF ISRAEL is inspiring. As Joshua assumed the weighty leadership mantle of Moses, God encouraged him to "be strong and courageous." Knowing the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead, God empowered Joshua with this promise: "As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Josh. 1:5b)

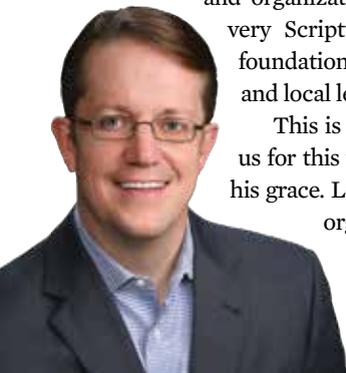
WHAT A GREAT MESSAGE FOR US AS CHRISTIAN LEADERS TODAY.

The theme of this edition of *Outcomes* is freedom — particularly religious liberty. As Christian leaders, our good deeds are rooted much deeper than mere philanthropic impulse. They reflect the clear teaching of Scripture, and echo the ages-long lineage of Christ-centered ministry to which we belong. That's why it is vital to protect religious liberty. Our society must not seek to embrace the good works of Christian leaders and organizations without respecting the religious freedom to live by the very Scripture that undergirds and inspires that work. However, this foundational religious liberty faces increasing challenges at federal, state and local levels. Religious freedom is also under dire threat worldwide.

This is our moment to lead with strength and courage! God has called us for this very time, as bold and winsome witnesses of both his truth and his grace. Let us heed the encouragement of the wise leaders and frontline organizations featured in this edition, and with Joshua move forward boldly, knowing that our God is with us wherever we go.

W. Scott Brown

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The purpose of *Outcomes* is to fulfill Christian Leadership Alliance's mission to equip and unite leaders to transform the world for Christ. *Outcomes* offers those whom Christ calls to leadership higher thinking and lifelong learning resources to equip them for excellence in kingdom service and stewardship.

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Principled Pluralism

Dr. D. Michael Lindsay on grace, truth and freedom

CLA PRESIDENT AND CEO TAMI HEIM recently interviewed Dr. D. Michael Lindsay, president of Gordon College, which recently celebrated its 125th anniversary. Gordon, based near Boston, offers a distinctive blend: an outstanding, nationally-ranked liberal arts college with an intentionally Christ-centered community (Gordon.edu).

Dr. Lindsay earned his undergraduate degree from Baylor University, graduate degrees from Princeton Seminary and Oxford University, and a Ph.D. in sociology from Princeton University. Prior to his appointment as president of Gordon, he served on the faculty of Rice University. Dr. Lindsay is author of two dozen scholarly publications, including *Faith in the Halls of Power* (Oxford University Press, 2007) and *View from the Top* (Wiley, 2014).

The theme of this edition of *Outcomes* is “Freedom,” with a particular focus on religious liberty. Dr. Lindsay spoke at The Outcomes Conference: CLA Dallas 2016 in April on the journey that he and Gordon College has traversed on that issue. We asked him to share insights with *Outcomes* readers as well.

Religious liberty and principled pluralism came front and center in 2014 for Dr. Lindsay and Gordon College when Dr. Lindsay, along with a number of other Christian leaders, signed a letter to President Obama, urging him to include a religious exemption in an executive order aimed at barring federal contractors from discriminating in hiring on the basis of sexual orientation. That precipitated public criticism of Gordon College, which like many Christian institutions, has a historic statement of faith, life and conduct governing standards on how the institution does life together as a Christian community.

Heim spoke with Lindsay on how he and Gordon College have navigated changing cultural tides while holding to biblical truth.

How can we promote grace and truth while protecting religious freedom in today’s challenging cultural milieu?

The Apostle John describes Jesus as being full of both grace and truth (John 1:14). John was a very careful writer, so I think that the order of those words mattered to him and should matter to us. John understood that you can’t appreciate the truth of Jesus Christ until you first appreciate his grace.

Much of the posture of the Christian church of the last 30 years has been committed to upholding the truth of the gospel in powerful and convicting ways. I certainly believe that is fundamental to our ability to bear witness to God’s work in our world. At the same time, Christianity has lost cultural sway in the hearts and minds of most Americans. Although we remain a nation where people profess a belief in Christ, for most of them it doesn’t make a significant difference in how they live day in and day out. Even more telling has been

the loss of cultural influence that Christian institutions once wielded.

After the media attention Gordon received in 2014, we found that there was far more openness to hearing our deeply felt, deeply held, theological convictions once people had developed a relationship with us. They needed to realize that we were their neighbors, their friends, before they could receive a strong or even prophetic word about their lifestyles. We must offer a gracious, loving and compelling Christian witness that draws people to the grace of Christ so they can appreciate the truths of the gospel.

I certainly don’t believe that we will win over all of our critics. For many who oppose the church’s historic teaching on human sexuality, this is a political battle where the winner takes all. But for those of us who follow Christ, there’s a much larger issue at stake. It’s not just about sexual mores or personal behavior — it’s about the relevance of the gospel in contemporary life. That requires us to have a gracious, soft answer, but also a willingness to speak truth. At Gordon we seek to embody grace and truth in the fullness we have experienced in the person of Jesus Christ.

How do we encourage what you have described as “principled pluralism”?

Perhaps there was a day in American society when the Christian church could unilaterally advance its particular vision for society, but that day has come and gone. We now live in a pluralistic world with widely divergent worldviews.

In this contemporary environment, people of faith must make space for all voices. When we stand up for Jews and Muslims to be able to share their religious convictions in the public square, we secure the right for Christians to similarly express their convictions. This is what principled pluralism requires.

We have to be fair and evenhanded in our public stance, creating space for people of all faiths, and of no faith, to share their convictions honestly and without limits. In order for our voice to be heard, we must make space for all voices at the table. In a day when people are intentionally seeking to silence Christian influence, the surest way to guarantee it remains in the public square is to support voices of those who have been marginalized.

As a very practical example, evangelical Christians on the campus of Princeton University have found more opportunity to share their understanding of human sexuality when they have linked arms with devout Muslims who share a conservative sexual ethic. On a campus like Princeton, it is difficult for the institution’s leadership to talk about the value of diversity without appreciating the religious sensibilities of their Muslim students. As Christians have spoken up in solidarity with people of

other faiths, they have also secured more opportunities for a vibrant Christian witness on campus. That's what principled pluralism is all about.

How has the crucible you went through in 2014 grown you as a Christian leader?

Leading Gordon through what was the equivalent of the hundred-year storm for our institution — where we faced unprecedented criticism, scrutiny and challenges on virtually every front of the institution's life — took an enormous toll on me personally. It was without a doubt the most challenging, humiliating and painful experience of my life.

I'm still assessing how that crucible shaped me. Time will tell if it has made me into a better man and leader. It has certainly deepened my sense of calling to the work we're doing at Gordon. It has elevated the importance of a vibrant Christian witness in New England and underscored the challenges that we will face as Christian leaders in the years ahead. I don't think any of us understand the amount of challenges Christian leaders are going to face over the next decade. We haven't experienced that in our lifetimes.

I'm hopeful that in walking through these cruciblelike experiences, we are refined to be better reflections of God's glory. That refiner's fire helps make us into more loving, thoughtful, Christlike leaders in our institutions and in the public square.

I've found that my prayer life was deepened significantly through this season. This crucible provided daily opportunities to practice the virtues that I claimed as vital to my life of faith. It became the proving ground for my faith.

How has this experience strengthened the Gordon College community?

In God's providence, this experience has created a renewed sense of commitment within the community. I think our faculty and staff are more dedicated to the mission of the college because it caused each of us to personally take stock and reassess whether we believe this is where God would have us at this time.

We sadly lost a few colleagues who determined that

this was not the place that they wanted to commit their time and energy. We wish them well. But in this refining process, I believe we have developed a much more engaged and committed group of colleagues on campus. We have also been able to draw a group of students who deeply believe in the Christian identity of our institution's heritage.

It has also allowed us to clarify how we bear witness to our faith in a very pluralistic part of the country. There is virtually no one in New England who doesn't know about Gordon College today. This experience raised the profile of this institution. It has also raised the stakes for us. They are watching to see how we live out our faith day in and day out.

It has also produced a flourishing for our campus. This past fall, Gordon had the largest campus enrollment in school history. We just completed the strongest fundraising years outside of a capital campaign in the institution's history. This year we have had a record number of applications and interest in the school. And we have never received more national awards or recognitions than we did this past year.

So having emerged from the crucible, we're seeing confirmations of God's blessing. That reinforces our sense of God's validation that he's doing something great on our campus.

What can other leaders learn from your experiences?

First, we are constantly in the preparation phase for the next crisis coming to our institution. We must make much of every moment we're given. I learned that the network of friendships and relationships established before the crisis were essential for the college to flourish under the glare of the media spotlight and withering public criticism. I encourage leaders to make sure they are actively cultivating friendships and relationships with community leaders and leaders of institutions very different from our own. You will rely upon those acquaintances and friends to help you when you need someone to speak up on the value of your institution and its mission.

Second is that crisis does not develop character; it reveals it. When we face a crisis, we rely on the spiritual and moral capital we've cultivated in our life. There is very little time to develop your character when your institution is fighting for its survival. The daily habits of spiritual formation, an active prayer life, daily time in Scripture, small group accountability, and Sabbath rest and worship, sustain you and become your lifelines when you're in the crucible of crisis. Leaders must develop those habits even in the midst of full schedules and other demands because they will become essential when you face tough times.

Third, reaching out to colleagues in your own respective universe of institutions is really important. No one was more helpful or encouraging during this season for me than other Christian college presidents. Presidents of institutions like Wheaton and Biola — with whom we compete fiercely for students, donors and national rankings — were incredibly helpful fellow pilgrims as I went through this season.

It's also important that when you see another colleague whose institution comes under a challenging time to intentionally reach out. Our natural inclination is to look away lest something like that come into our own lives. The real act of Christian ministry is to help in that very significant season of challenge and crisis. I am certainly more attentive to fellow college presidents when their institutions get into the news, and I'm grateful for colleagues who were willing to reach out to me in my season of need. We must mutually support and encourage one another in both good times and bad. ●



Photo Courtesy of Gordon College

The Silence of Friends

We must speak up for religious freedom worldwide.

*“Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering”
(Heb. 13:3, NIV).*

A RECENT PEW SURVEY REPORTED that over 70 percent of the world lives in a repressive regime that denies religious freedom. In my service in Congress and in visits I have taken around the world, I have found this to be true over and over.

This led me to leave the House of Representatives at the end of my 17th term to focus exclusively on human rights and religious freedom. In January 2015, I joined the 21st Century Wilberforce Initiative (21CWI), a newly created religious freedom organization, as distinguished senior fellow. Through domestic and international partnerships, the 21st Century Wilberforce Initiative is using advocacy, capacity building and technology to urge the church, people of all faiths, and political and cultural leaders to stand for religious freedom and against persecution both here in the United States and around the world.

During a trip to Nigeria in February 2016 with colleagues from 21CWI, we interviewed many Christians from the middle belt and the north. They told of people from their villages being harassed, kidnapped and killed in attacks from Boko Haram and Fulani herdsmen. They feel forgotten by their own government and by

the West. When 200 girls were kidnapped from their school in Chibok two years ago, there was a huge outcry in the West — #bringbackourgirls — an outcry since forgotten.

In China, Catholic bishops are under house arrest, and Protestant house church leaders are in prison. One hundred thirty Buddhist monks and nuns set themselves on fire to protest the oppression of the Chinese government.

In Pakistan, Asia Bibi languishes in jail under a death sentence after she refused to convert to Islam and was later convicted for blasphemy. While leaving his mother’s house in 2011, Shabbaz Bhatti, the lone Christian in the cabinet, and Minister for Minorities, was gunned down for speaking out about religious freedom abuses.

Last year, I visited Iraq with a team from 21CWI to investigate the plight of religious minorities. The Christian community there has fallen from 1.5 million in 2003 to 250,000 or fewer today. We were told that 17 families leave every day. In Syria today it would be dangerous to take the road that Paul took to Damascus.

President Ronald Reagan once said that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are a covenant, with not only the people of Philadelphia in 1776 and 1787, but with people all over the world. This means the people of Nigeria, Pakistan, China, Iraq and Syria.

Human rights and religious freedom were bipartisan issues in the 1980s and 1990s. Remember the work of Democrats Sen. Scoop Jackson and Rep. Tom Lantos, and Republicans President Ronald Reagan and Rep. Henry Hyde?

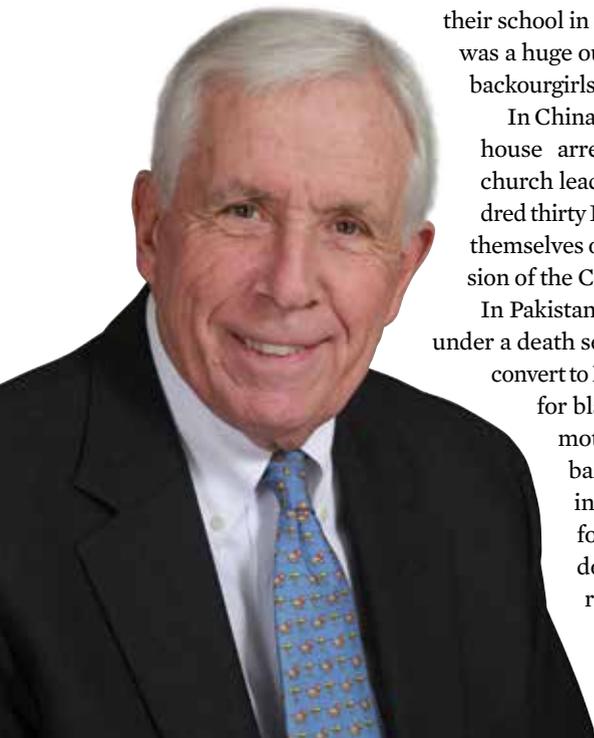
Today, defenseless religious communities are facing a crisis that threatens their very survival in the lands they have inhabited for centuries. I believe the church in the West is not burdened by the great injustice of religious persecution. Without hearing from the faith base, the political leadership won’t move on it.

There should still be an overwhelming interest and focus on these issues. Not because we are driven by guilt, but because we are motivated by our faith. Not because of some tired sense of obligation, but because of a vibrant biblical mandate.

Central to people’s dignity is their ability to worship according to the dictates of their conscience. As such, where religious freedom comes under attack, God’s law itself is violated. I am convinced that as these persecuted individuals become more than faceless, nameless victims in distant wars and hard-to-pronounce prison cells, and that as we commit to knowing their stories, weeping at their wounds and interceding on their behalf through prayer and advocacy, we will find ourselves shaped by these giants of faith. And if we are clear-eyed about the times in which we live, I believe these encounters will make our own faith more robust and strengthen us for the days ahead.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, “In the end, we will remember, not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.” ●

Known as the House’s “champion of human rights,” and “conscience of Congress,” **CONGRESSMAN FRANK R. WOLF** served Virginia’s 10th District for 17 terms, until January 2015. Wolf was co-chairman of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, a bipartisan organization that raises awareness about international human rights issues. In January 2015, Wolf joined the 21st Century Wilberforce Initiative as distinguished senior fellow, and he was appointed the Jerry and Susie Wilson Chair in Religious Freedom at the Baylor University Institute for Studies of Religion.



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No one thinks “me, me, me” when they remember that the whole world darkened, the earth trembled and the Son of God was given up to death for our salvation.

More likely, we see ourselves as part of a greater whole, a larger story. That's what researchers at the University of California, Berkeley found. They discovered that *awe* is one of the best antidotes for self-absorption. It often directs attention away from ourselves and toward others more deserving.

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Onward

Religious freedom, evangelicals and culture

DR. RUSSELL MOORE serves as the eighth president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) of the Southern Baptist Convention, the moral and public policy agency of the nation's largest Protestant denomination.

The Wall Street Journal has called Moore "vigorous, cheerful, and fiercely articulate," while The Gospel Coalition has referred to him "one of the most astute ethicists in contemporary evangelicalism."

An ethicist and theologian by background, Dr. Moore is also an ordained Southern Baptist minister and the author of several books including *Onward: Engaging the Culture Without Losing the Gospel* (B & H Publishing, 2015). He blogs frequently at his website (russellmoore.com) and hosts a program called *Signposts*.

Outcomes editor W. Scott Brown interviewed Moore regarding religious liberty issues facing Christian leaders today.

How can we best maintain a winsome gospel witness while advocating for religious freedom?

We have to be explicit about advocating for religious liberty for all, and not just those inside the Christian church. In an American system of government, religious liberty is everyone's problem because the state is accountable to the people, who are, ultimately, the governing

authorities. A Christian, then, who doesn't care about working for religious liberty is a Christian who is not only wishing to be persecuted and to consign others to persecution, but is also a Christian who wishes to be, by his silence, a persecutor of others.

So we have to be clear that what we are striving for is not some form of "Christian privilege" but freedom of conscience for all people. This advocacy isn't opposed to gospel evangelism but flows out of it: Because everyone is made in the image of God, and because it is the Holy Spirit who convicts of sin, and not the magistrate, we believe in religious liberty for all. We believe the gospel is big enough to fight for itself, so we believe in a free marketplace of ideas, and we contend for a free church in a free state for the sake of the advance of the gospel.

How is the ERLC doing that today?

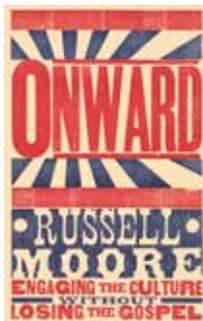
As an organization, we have a two-pronged approach. We daily work with media, legislators and all branches of government to try to pursue legislation and policies that promote religious freedom. But we are also directed toward our churches. We are regularly hosting events, creating content, traveling to churches and equipping them on the issues of the day that matter.

In *Onward*, you address religious liberty. How do you hope your book influences the thinking of readers on this critical topic?

My hope for *Onward* has been that it would help us gain a hopeful, forward-looking model for seeing our primary identity as not 1950s America, but as an embassy of the coming kingdom. If we gain that vision, then our defense of religious liberty won't be rooted in panic or hand-wringing outrage. We can advocate for religious freedom with confidence and kindness because we're not on the losing side of history. We're not slouching towards Gomorrah; we're marching towards the new Jerusalem.

Learn more at (ERLC.com).

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. RUSSELL MOORE



Milestones

DIED Jerry Bridges, author, Bible teacher and speaker who served with The Navigators discipleship ministry for nearly 60 years. His books included best-seller *The Pursuit of Holiness*. He was 86 years old.

DIED Gary Smalley, author of more than 60 books on Christian relationships, including *Making Love Last Forever*, and founder of Focus on the Family's National Institute of Marriage. He was 75 years old.

DIED Don McClanen, who founded the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) in 1954. He also founded the Faith and Money Network in the 1970s. He was 91 years old.

HEADLINES:

State Department Declares ISIS Responsible for Christian Genocide

In March, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry declared that ISIS, the Islamist extremist organization behind many of the major terrorist attacks in recent years, "is responsible for genocide against groups in areas under its control, including Yazidis, Christians, and Shia Muslims." The U.S. House of Representatives took his recommendation and unanimously voted 393-0 to declare the actions of ISIS against Middle Eastern Christians (and other minorities) officially "war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide." This is the first time since 2004 that the United States has declared genocide, which occurred amid the violence in Darfur, Sudan. "The United States will strongly support efforts to collect, document, preserve, and analyze the evidence of atrocities," said Kerry. "And we will do all we can to see that the perpetrators are held accountable."

While the declaration of genocide does not set a particular course of action, it does give the crisis more legitimacy worldwide. David Curry, CEO of Open Doors USA, explained

SCORECARD

IS RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ON THE DECLINE?

A study conducted by Lifeway Research, in which researchers surveyed 1,000 Americans in September 2013 and September 2015 and then compared the results, found that 60 percent of Americans now say that religious liberty is on the decline in America, up from 54 percent in 2013. They also say that American Christians complain too much, with the number who agree with that statement rising from 34 percent to 43 percent over the two-year span. These results suggest that Christians in the United States find themselves in a precarious position when it comes to advocating for religious freedom.

Percentage of Americans who agree/disagree/not sure:		
	2015	2013
Religious liberty is on the decline in America:	60/36/3	54/38/9
American Christians complain too much about how they are treated:	43/52/5	34/56/11

For more information on this study, visit (bit.ly/LR-Survey-Rel-Lib)



"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction."

PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

News for today's Christian leaders

the importance of the official label: "People need to understand that it's beyond a legal definition. It's much more of a political designation."

"It is my sincere hope that this bipartisan resolution will further compel the State Department to join the building international consensus in calling the horrific ISIS violence against Christians, Yezidis and others by its proper name: 'genocide,'" said U.S. Rep. Jeff Fortenberry, a Nebraska Republican who introduced the measure.

The Outcomes Conference 2016 Digital Pass

Christian Leadership Alliance (CLA) members can experience The Outcomes Conference: CLA Dallas 2016 through the Outcomes Conference Digital Pass. In these videos, Christian Leadership Alliance presenters, faculty and special guests focus on "Perspectives" on Christian leadership. You'll hear from high influence leaders who are serving on the front lines of ministry around our world today, as well as leaders working to support this kingdom outreach. This Digital Pass is offered exclusively to CLA members, for just \$199.00. Purchase your Outcomes Conference Digital Pass today. (www.ChristianLeadershipAlliance.org)

Mark G. Holbrook named 2016 CLA Consul

Christian Leadership Alliance (CLA) President and CEO Tami Heim named Mark G. Holbrook as CLA Consul, during the recent Outcomes Conference in Dallas, April 19–21, 2016.

Being named Consul is CLA's highest honor. It recognizes distinguished and exemplary service to the field of Christian nonprofit leadership. A CLA Consul, over at least a 40 year span of service, has provided substantial assistance to the work of CLA, and has represented the ideals of Christian nonprofit leadership in personal character and work.

Holbrook currently serves as vice-chair of CLA's Board of Directors, but he has served in various leadership roles (including board chairman) over more than 30 years.

Holbrook is the past president of Evangelical Christian Credit Union (ECCU), a role he held from 1979 through 2015. He currently serves as chairman of the board of managers of Ministry Partners Investment Company, LLC. Holbrook is also currently board chair of ECFA.

CLA's Higher Thinking Blog Named as a Top 100 Leadership Blog

In March, Feedspot.com named CLA's "Higher Thinking" Blog as one of the top 100 leadership

blogs for executives, managers and CEOs.

"CLA is honored to have our 'Higher Thinking' Blog named as one of the top 100 leadership blogs," said Tami Heim, CLA president and CEO. "It is a testament to the quality of the thoughtful Christian leadership insights Alliance members offer there each week."

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FREE TO S

The power of
principled pluralism



SERVE

By Dr Stanley Carlson-Thies
and Dr. Stephen Monsma

What lies ahead for Christian service ministries in a rapidly changing American society that is becoming more and more diverse in morality and beliefs, and less and less inclined to pay even lip service to biblical values? Will your organization remain free to serve as God has called you to serve? Or will it face a hard choice: adopt the latest sexual and spiritual views of the majority culture or else stop serving, charged with bigotry?

There are disquieting signs, but no cause for pessimism or retreat. Today's challenges should remind us of Christian faithfulness in other difficult times and places. Christian ministry to society has always operated in an environment that is at once welcoming and rejecting, with the proportions constantly changing. It is in the *midst* of political and social storms that God calls us to obedient service. We are called to wise and gentle speech and actions that testify to the faith that calls us into service, right where we are planted. It is here that we pray and act to seek a legal environment that enables us to serve consistent with that faith.

Ministries should not be passive and silent as laws and public attitudes shift in ways that make it more difficult for Christian service, and for service shaped by other religious convictions. Religious freedom is a foundational American principle. As our

society becomes more diverse religiously and morally, Christian ministries should with wisdom and gentleness help our state, local and national governments resolve new challenges and respond to new rights in ways that are fair for all, protecting the ability of people and organizations with vastly different identities and values to live by conviction.

SIGNS OF HOPE

Later we will explore why many faith-based organizations are rightly concerned for their freedom to follow their religious convictions. But the outlook is not completely bleak. There are signs of hope. What is commonly called the "faith-based initiative" has been embraced by three presidential administrations — Republican and Democratic — and is a major sign of hope. The initiative received its start during the Clinton presidency, as the federal government sought to reform the welfare system.

For more effective welfare assistance, many thought new providers of assistance, including faith-based organizations, needed to be recruited. For that, federal law had to be changed because the existing rules frowned on federal funds going to explicitly religious organizations. The answer was "Charitable Choice," language put into the 1996 welfare reform law and several other bills signed into law by President Bill Clinton. Charitable Choice states clearly that religious organizations can get federal

funds to provide services without suppressing their religious identity — while also ensuring that people coming for help are not turned away because of their religion or lack of faith, nor forced into religious activities.

The core idea was to protect both religious providers and the people who need help. It was so popular that in the 2000 presidential race, Democratic candidate Al Gore (Clinton's vice president) announced his intent to expand Charitable Choice to new federal programs even before Republican candidate George W. Bush proclaimed support for extended government partnerships with faith organizations.

Religious freedom is a foundational American principle.

President Bush energized the Charitable Choice concept by extending it through the regulatory process to all federal programs, and by creating a White House faith-based office and faith-based centers in major departments. Bush's faith-based initiative, a signature policy of his presidency, drew heated criticism and court challenges. But it also led to significant changes in how the federal government relates to faith-based providers of services: more partnerships, more creativity in drawing on the unique strengths of faith institutions and more innovation in federal social services — such as using diverse and far-flung religious institutions in African countries to deliver HIV-AIDS prevention and treatment services.

Maybe it shouldn't have been such a surprise, then, when Barack Obama, on the campaign trail in early July 2008, said he would maintain and improve the faith-based initiative. With a Democratic president in charge, heated criticism of the faith-based initiative died down almost immediately, except for one thing. President Bush had clarified that, as a general rule, a faith-based organization that receives federal dollars is free to maintain the practice of only hiring people who share the organization's convictions and values. Candidate Obama criticized this, but in fact has intentionally maintained the same policy, which has brought criticism by many in his own party.

Soon after taking office, President Obama issued an executive order on how the federal government should relate to religious organizations, amending a Bush executive order from 2002. A Democrat now had the chance to rewrite the Bush rules — but almost nothing was modified. Just recently, revised regulations based on President Obama's principles were announced, and they are little different than the regulations written by Bush's Republican administration. Government should pick the best service provider, whether religious or secular. A religious provider's religious identity is specifically protected. The religious rights of beneficiaries are also specifically protected: their freedom to be served without religious discrimination, their right not to be compelled into religious activities,

and their right to ask for a different provider if they object to a religious group. And, when the government funds services by issuing scholarships or vouchers, the person seeking help is free to choose a religious organization that incorporates religious teachings and practices into its federally supported services.

Ten years ago we worked together to create the Institutional Religious Freedom Alliance (IRFA), with Carlson-Thies as its head. It brings together diverse faith-based organizations to have a united voice to advocate for their religious freedom and to equip them to fully embody their faith-shaped standards and practices. IRFA's Coalition to Preserve Religious Freedom, a Washington D.C.-based network of faith-based providers, lawyers and religious freedom advocates, works with Congress and with the administration, this one just as the previous one, to promote a strong understanding of religious freedom when bills are considered and regulations are written.

Fairness for religious and for secular providers of services; fairness for religious and nonreligious people looking for help: These principles were built into Charitable Choice and the faith-based initiative. And so, although controversies have flared up, the same basic set of principles have now carried through three administrations: Democrat (Clinton), Republican (Bush), and Democrat (Obama).

REASONS FOR CONCERN

Previously the big question being asked was: "Is a faith-based organization just 'too religious' to be a legitimate partner of government, which is required not to 'establish' religion?" The balanced rules of the faith-based initiative largely resolved that question. Now, however, the key question being asked is: "Are faith-based organizations too out of step with contemporary views of human sexuality to be legitimate partners of government?" Are balanced rules possible here also, so that faith-based organizations with their differing views and practices about human sexuality can continue to flourish, whether in partnership with government or separate from government funding?

The Supreme Court's same-sex marriage decision, *Obergefell*, put this issue front and center. In the oral arguments, the Solicitor General of the United States said that he could not say whether or not a religious school that sticks with the traditional view of marriage would lose its tax exempt status. And the *Obergefell* dissenters, and the majority, too, noted that religious freedom questions cannot be avoided, even while affirming the legitimacy of the public's varying views about marriage.

And it isn't just same-sex marriage that is prompting a chorus of accusations that many Christian ministries are discriminatory and suspect. In our new book, *Free to Serve: Protecting the Religious Freedom of Faith-Based Organizations* (Brazos Press, 2015), we discuss a range of recent challenges to religious organizations. Christian student clubs have lost their status as recognized student groups because their policy of requiring leaders to adhere to basic Christian convictions is said to be discriminatory. The federal government has refused to fully exempt religious nonprofits from the health care law's requirement that employer health plans must cover contraceptives

and abortifacients. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops lost a major federal grant to serve victims of trafficking because this Catholic organization will not facilitate abortions – which was not even a requirement of the grant. And there are other difficulties. Yet at the moment the most pressing challenges have to do with views and practices concerning human sexuality: marriage, gender identity, sexual orientation, abortion and contraception.

Americans have long disagreed about matters of sexuality and intimate relationships. What's new is the growing practice of government and the courts to declare views out of the new mainstream not just different, but morally wrong and discriminatory. If a faith-based organization has a morally conservative employee conduct code, loud voices say, it is practicing discrimination, akin to racial or gender discrimination. Some school districts will no longer accept student teachers from Christian college education programs simply because the colleges are regarded as bigoted due to defense of historic Christian sexual norms.

President Obama, while not changing the rules about religious hiring for organizations that receive federal grants, did add a new requirement that federal contractors, including religious universities whose faculty do federally funded health research, may not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity when hiring. And the administration has, through regulations, redefined the ban on sex discrimination in federally funded programs to encompass discrimination based on gender identity, creating dilemmas for rescue missions and other religious organizations that want to serve all with compassion and respect but have a biblically based idea of human nature.

Americans are dividing into two camps: those who believe same-sex and opposite-sex relationships are morally equal and those who believe that God's (or nature's) design for human flourishing favors opposite-sex relationships in the context of marriage. Will it be possible for our lawmakers, regulators and courts to devise a way for these two camps to live together in peace – not to pretend that there isn't a deep and deeply significant difference between these views, but rather so that people and organizations on the opposing sides can follow their own convictions and continue the discussion about what is best in a respectful and civil way? Neither side should resort to the law or social force to try to compel the other to go against their deepest convictions.

In a country like ours that honors religion and living by conviction – and that's been well served by our flourishing civil society with its diverse schools, health institutions and charities – it should be possible to accept that some organizations will follow a conservative sexual ethic, while others will embrace all forms of sexuality and gender identity. Mutual respect will allow some adoption agencies to place children only with married father-mother families, while allowing other agencies to specialize in placing children in non-traditional homes. Mutual respect will allow private schools to reflect not only different religions but different concepts of what promotes human flourishing. Mutual respect will protect counselors and therapists who don't, as well as those who do, believe that all love is the same.

FAIRNESS FOR ALL

As society is quickly moving away from its previous, albeit thin, Christian consensus, efforts by Christians to preserve their religious freedom are more likely to be seen as anti-LGBT than pro-religious freedom. In *Free to Serve*, we urge Christian ministries and leaders to adopt the position of “principled pluralism.” This, we believe, is the bedrock conviction of Christians, who know that God respects obedience from conviction not convention. “Principled pluralism,” we write, “rejects both a secularized public square and a religious – or a Christianized – public square in favor of a pluralist public square. Our vision is of an America in which we live together in tolerance and mutual respect notwithstanding our differences of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation *and religion*. This vision means our public policies must reflect and accommodate this tolerance and mutual respect.”

One way Christian ministries can avail themselves of the religious freedom our society continues to honor is by ensuring that their policies and practices are clearly and openly aligned with the religious convictions those ministries profess. A chapter in *Free to Serve* recommends this and other practical actions that ministries can undertake to protect their religiously based beliefs and practices. Consistency with stated religious convictions is essential for legal reasons and essential for witness: letting your gospel light shine in our society.

It is in the midst of political and social storms that God calls us to obedient service.

Ministries must contribute to the future of the mutual respect we need by remaining firmly committed to biblical convictions and internal practices, while showing the love of Jesus to all who turn to them for help, and by speaking up wisely and gently on behalf of religious freedom not only for themselves, but for everyone. ●

DR. STANLEY CARLSON-THIES is founder and senior director of the Institutional Religious Freedom Alliance, a division of the Center for Public Justice (irfalliance.org). He helped to create the Bush administration's White House faith-based office and advised the Obama administration about government partnerships with ministries. **DR. STEPHEN MONSMA** is a senior research fellow at the Henry Institute for the Study of Christianity and Politics at Calvin College (calvin.edu) and professor of political science emeritus at Pepperdine University (pepperdine.edu). He is the author of numerous books and articles on faith-based organizations and church-state relations. Carlson-Thies and Monsma recently co-authored *Free to Serve* (Brazos Press, 2015).



SHAPING A NATION

Reading, living and sharing the Bible

By Dr. Roy Peterson

MUCH HAS BEEN SAID ABOUT the Bible's influence on the nation's founders, but let's pick up the story a generation later. In 1816, the year of American Bible Society's founding, what formative role did Scripture play as the United States of America grew?

Two hundred years ago, the young nation was still recovering from its second war with England. Many on both sides of the Atlantic thought the War of 1812 would undo the American Revolution. It nearly did. The nation's capital was captured and the White House burned, but the U.S. held onto its independence — and got a national anthem out of it, too.

In 1816, while the White House was being rebuilt, the nation elected its fifth president (James Monroe) and welcomed its 19th state (Indiana). The American West was still being explored and settled, far from being won.

This era saw several new challenges for Bible-believing Christians, issues that needed to be faced with creativity, diligence and love.

THE FIRST CHALLENGE: READING THE BIBLE

As the country pushed westward, people left their old communities — and their churches — far behind. The religious institutions at the center of society in the Eastern states had to be recreated in the new Western settlements. There was a dire need for Bibles as people sought to rebuild the foundation for religious life around Bible preaching and Bible-centered churches.

Many of the nation's founders and emerging leaders of that day such as Elias Boudinot, John Quincy Adams and Francis Scott Key worked together to establish American Bible Society in 1816 in order to address the needs of a growing nation. Bible salesmen were dispatched, especially in the Western U.S. Throughout the 19th century, efforts were made to ensure that every home had a copy of the Scriptures.

Schooling was often a major issue in these new communities. While there were many organized schools in the Eastern states, the frontier territories were still building their society. Education was mostly handled at home or in one-room schoolhouses, where

children of different ages would learn together. Bible education was routinely part of the curriculum in the early 1800s, and some of the most popular reading primers were Bible-based.

But having Bibles and knowing the Bible were only part of the challenge. People still needed to connect with God by reading it. “Camp meetings” sprang up around 1800. In Kentucky, Tennessee and other frontier regions, settlers would gather outdoors for worship services that lasted all day and sometimes for several days. Preachers would travel on horseback from one such meeting to another, expounding the Scriptures in three or four locations a day. New songs offered praise, exhortation and biblical content, often based on folk songs from various cultures. Camp-meeting revivals continued into the 1820s, paving the way for the powerful revival preaching of Charles Finney in western New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Historians talk about several “Great Awakenings” in American history — first in the 1730s and ’40s with Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield; the “Second Great Awakening” (about 1800 to 1840), including camp meetings and Finney; and a “Third Great Awakening” centered in New York City 1857 to 1859. All of these revivals involved a rediscovery of Bible reading and prayer. American culture easily settled into complacent religious observance, but these awakenings inspired personal re-evaluation and renewed discipleship. This pattern has continued throughout American history, with Dwight Moody in the late 1800s, Billy Sunday in the 1920s, Billy Graham in the last half of the 20th century and many others preaching a powerful biblical message.

THE SECOND CHALLENGE: LIVING THE BIBLE

“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says” (James 1:22). The Bible itself urges us to put its teaching into practice. That has been a regular part of biblical preaching through the past two centuries, but when it comes to applying the Bible to our behavior, we’ve had hits and misses.

The Bible played a critical role in shaping the American character, although there have been other influences. The circumstances of our founding and settlement inspired rugged individualism, thrift and perseverance. But at times these qualities drifted from their biblical roots and looked like selfishness, greed and inflexibility. Rightly applied, the Bible has helped to instill a sense of honesty, fairness, diligence, philanthropy and altruism into the character of this nation.

The Bible has also led believers to take courageous stands on various social issues. In the 1800s, biblical arguments were made for and against slavery — also Manifest Destiny, women’s suffrage, war, alcohol use and immigration issues. Whatever your political stand, chances were you could find a Bible verse to support you. The challenge was to get past proof-texts and dig for the “whole counsel of God” on such issues. That remains a challenge today.

Jesus said, *“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven”* (Matt. 5:16). In the last two centuries, Bible-inspired Christians have been doing just that. Since its arrival in America in 1880, The Salvation Army has merged biblical preaching with Christian love shown to the needy. Thousands of other churches, denominations and parachurch ministries have also done this through the years.

THE HUMAN HEART IS AT A CROSSROADS.

THE THIRD CHALLENGE: SHARING THE BIBLE

The modern missionary movement got its start in England with William Carey in the 1790s and was just taking root in America two centuries ago. The U.S. eventually took the lead in foreign missions, which usually involved Bible translation.

In 1816, Adoniram and Ann Judson were in Burma (modern Myanmar), studying the local language. Generally considered the first American missionaries to a foreign land, they eventually translated the Bible into that language.

This too has been a bumpy road. While American missionaries have helped communities around the world flourish with new levels of literacy and gospel evangelism, we have also been accused of advancing colonialism and disregarding local culture. But the last half-century has seen a substantial redefinition of the missionary role, especially regarding translation. Translators today can use technology to be more connected, efficient and accountable, taking care to empower local Christian leaders to translate the Bible and facilitate Scripture engagement.

In the last 50 years, we’ve also found that America itself is increasingly a mission field. Today we are translating God’s Word for new generations of Americans — not only into modern language, but also within the context of modern media. The newest challenge for those who promote the Bible is sharing the Scriptures in new formats that will change the lives of those who encounter them.

AT THE CROSSROADS OF HISTORY

Today is an unbelievably exciting time to be called to Bible ministry. The Bible stands ready to change the world as we know it.

Our nation is at a crossroads with an incredible opportunity for us to choose a path of growing Bible engagement or growing Bible skepticism. The human heart is at a crossroads. We see more and more people longing for the healing words of Scripture in the midst of extreme violence, poverty, oppression and trauma worldwide. And humanity itself is at a crossroads; for the first time since the tower of Babel, we have the incredible opportunity to see God’s Word proclaimed in every language on the planet. While there are nearly 1,800 languages that still do not have a Bible translation underway, we believe that by 2025 that number can be down to zero.

We at American Bible Society are grateful to God for the tremendous ways he has used this organization, its partners and its supporters over the last two centuries. My prayer today is — just as those who came before us over these last 200 years have done — that each of us can do our part in God’s mission to get his Word into the hands, heads and hearts of everyone on the planet. ●

DR. ROY PETERSON joined American Bible Society as president and CEO in 2014. Previously, he spent ten years as CEO of The Seed Company. He also held several leadership positions at Wycliffe Bible Translators, including president and CEO. Peterson and his wife, Rita, live in Philadelphia and have four children and five grandchildren.

Be Prepared

Five recommendations for Christian nonprofits

By Douglas Napier

“My clients would love to be a conscientious objector, but the government insists that they be a conscientious collaborator.”

Attorney Paul Clement to Supreme Court, *Zubik v. Burwell* (March 22, 2016)

On March 22, 2016, the United States Supreme Court heard oral arguments on behalf of several Christian nonprofit organizations that are being told by the federal government they must compromise their Christian values and comply with the federal abortion-pill mandate or pay huge, crippling fines — or go out of “business.” From private Christian colleges founded decades ago on biblical principles to the nuns known as the Little Sisters of the Poor, who provide nursing care to elderly patients, the government has gone all the way to the highest court in the land insisting Christian nonprofits simply need to get over it or get out. Neither option is workable. Neither option is just. The Court’s ruling will have a significant impact on thousands of Christian ministries.

Every year, hundreds of thousands of Christian nonprofit ministries and organizations provide billions of dollars of care, services, education, support, food and charitable kindnesses to all manner of people, and especially to those who have no place else to turn. As with most Christian nonprofits, it is not just the physical and material needs that are met, but the spiritual and emotional needs as well. How could anyone doubt the social value of Christian nonprofits? Yet in recent times so many Christian nonprofits have been targeted by the radical left for “reform” or elimination. They are being told to be less Christian, less religious *or else*. Why are governments and regulators trying to force ministries to either compromise their values — *the very values that compel them into Christian service* — or shut their doors? The answer may not be simple or even obvious, but the effects are far reaching. It is the people on the receiving end of these ministries who are ultimately hurt the most. Sadly, many of these threats come as a surprise to nonprofits that are ill-prepared to deal with the relentless assaults.

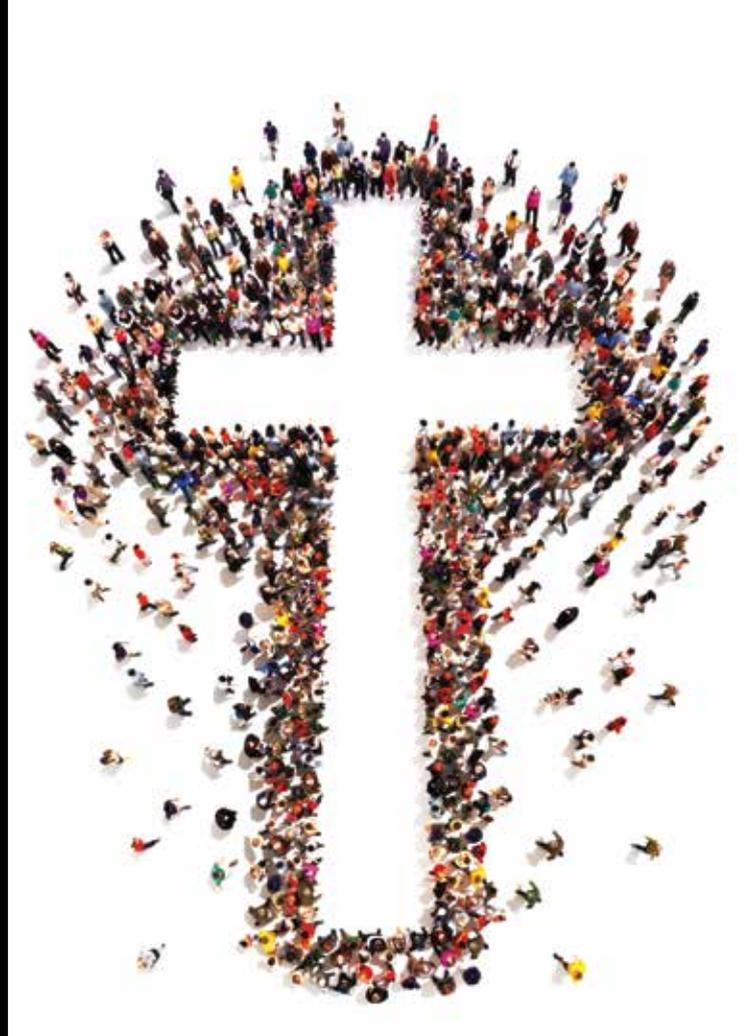
But there is hope. There are many practical measures that Christian nonprofits can and should take to prepare for and defend against the inevitable clash between government overreach, cultural currents and the core values of Christian ministry. Here are five steps which, at a minimum, Alliance Defending Freedom would recommend every Christian ministry take. For a detailed explanation and sample language, download “Protecting Your Ministry” at (www.adflegal.org/campaigns/pym)

FIVE THINGS EVERY CHRISTIAN NONPROFIT SHOULD HAVE IN ITS BYLAWS

1. Statement of Faith

A statement of faith should serve as the foundational document for every Christian ministry. Such a statement not only expresses the organization’s core religious beliefs, but also serves as clear evidence of those beliefs should they ever be questioned in a lawsuit. Generally, courts will not question an organization’s self-proclaimed religious beliefs, particularly if they appear in a statement of faith or other governing document.

The statement of faith should cover a broad range of religious beliefs and practices — and the more detailed, the better. Because of the current cultural climate, three topics deserve particular mention. Where applicable, it should include a statement on marriage, gender and sexuality. It should also include a statement identifying who the final authority is on matters of faith and conduct. This can be a board of directors or denominational leadership, if affiliated. Lastly, it should include



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BACKGROUND: Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) is an alliance-building, nonprofit legal organization that advocates for the right of people to freely live out their faith. Founded in 1993, ADF has become the world’s largest Christian legal advocacy organization, with offices in seven countries, over 50 full-time attorneys and a network of over 3,000 volunteer allied attorneys. ADF has achieved a God-given record of success, including important roles in 47 victories at the U.S. Supreme Court.

WEBSITE: www.ADFlegal.org

a statement of religious belief on the sanctity of life, which would come into play in the current Obamacare dispute.

2. Religious Mission Statement

Extending from the Statement of Faith, your ministry should articulate the distinctly religious purpose for its existence through

a mission statement. For example, a Christian school's purpose might be, in part, to "train the next generation of Christian leaders and equip them for a life of service to their Savior, homes, churches, vocations and communities."

Ronald Reagan warned us, "As government expands, liberty contracts."

When possible, include within the mission statement a speech component — some message the organization wants to communicate to the outside world through its speech and conduct. For example, a Christian ministry operating a wedding chapel might see its purpose, in part, as communicating the theological belief that marriage is solely the union of one man and one woman, which reflects Christ's relationship with his Church. Also include an associational component within the mission statement — that is, a desire to associate with likeminded people who will further the organization's religious purpose and beliefs.

Place the mission statement in the organization's bylaws, governing documents, and employee and volunteer handbooks. It would also be good to have this mission statement visible to the public, such as on its website, flyers or other publications.

3. Religious Employment Criteria

Federal law prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin or age. However, "religious organizations" may consider an applicant or employee's religious beliefs in hiring and firing. Under a doctrine known as the "ministerial exception," churches, Christian schools and other qualifying organizations are exempt from employment nondiscrimination laws for hiring and firing their ministerial employees. Including the specific religious criteria for each position is important in protecting your right to select employees who are aligned

with your statement of faith, mission and ministry values.

4. Facility Use Policy

A facility use policy is critical for any ministry that owns a building and permits its facilities to be used outside of normal business operations either by employees/volunteers or third parties. Your policy should limit all uses of the facility to those activities that are consistent with the mission of the organization.

There is no "one-size-fits-all" policy for all religious groups. The important point is to create a policy that covers situations unique to your organization's ministry and mission, buildings or facilities, and religious beliefs. Take the time to craft a specific policy addressing each of these areas for your organization.

5. Code of Christian Conduct

Christian ministries should adopt a code of Christian conduct, grounded in the statement of faith, that establishes parameters for acceptable behavior.

In light of current issues with sexual orientation and gender identity, this code of conduct should address: (1) dressing in conformance with one's biological sex; (2) using the restrooms, locker rooms and changing facilities conforming to one's biological sex; and (3) abstaining from all intimate sexual conduct outside the marital union of one man and one woman. Cite the organization's statement on marriage, gender and sexuality to highlight why this conduct is biblically required. Wherever possible, tie these requirements to scriptural or ecclesiastical teaching.

The code should also address nonsexual behaviors such as cheating, stealing, respect for authority and so forth. Include an explanation that the conduct of each person reflects the values and character of the ministry; therefore, it is important that conduct be consistent with the values of the ministry. Include a warning that the ministry has the right to discipline or terminate employment for misconduct or for any reason.

Be Prudent but Not Paralyzed

The objective of this advice is to place the ministry in the best position should it be confronted with a complaint, a challenge or a request that would undermine its

character and purpose. Knowing that you have taken these measures will hopefully allow you to focus on the important work of your ministry without being paralyzed by the fear that you are vulnerable and unprotected. While none of these suggestions will guarantee absolute success, the more preparation you do now, the easier it will be for attorneys to represent your ministry later should an issue arise. Should you run into any issues, get legal advice as soon as possible.

Ministries are called to share the love of Christ, but without compromising the truth

Ministries are called to share the love of Christ, but without compromising the truth of Christ.

of Christ. And that means not compromising the principles of truth in the operations of your ministry. As directed by Christ, we will render to Caesar what is Caesar's, but we must render to God what is God's. Unfortunately, Caesar seems to think more and more belongs to him. Ronald Reagan warned us, "As government expands, liberty contracts." Therefore, we must be vigilant to keep the unjust demands of government in check so we can be about God's business without unreasonable interference. Be prepared. Be prayerful. And then go be productive for the kingdom of God.

DOUGLAS NAPIER is senior counsel and executive director of Alliance Defending Freedom International (ADF). In 2007, after 16 years of private practice focusing on litigation and trial work, Napier joined ADF, where he has served as the head of U.S. and international legal advocacy. Napier resides in Scottsdale, Ariz., with his wife and two children.

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Article I

FOUNDERS & FREEDOM

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN THE
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE



By Dr. Daniel L. Dreisbach

The pursuit of religious freedom is a defining theme in the American political experiment. In the traditional telling of the story, early colonists crossed the Atlantic Ocean's treacherous waters to escape religious persecution in the Old World and to search for religious liberty in the New World. The opportunity to worship God and exercise one's faith according to the dictates of one's conscience, without fear of restraint or persecution, drew many settlers to America's shores (and continues to attract immigrants in the 21st century). The result was an extraordinary diversity of religious sects in the New World, which initially required Americans to work out the terms of religious toleration and, eventually, religious liberty.

In places where citizens and their rulers are all of one faith, there is little demand for a policy of religious toleration. But in societies where citizens come from many denominations and where multiple sects compete for followers and public favor, peaceful coexistence requires a workable policy of toleration. Europeans learned this in the wake of the Reformation, which produced fractures in Christendom, and in the bloody wars of religion that followed. And very early in their experience, American colonists began to grapple with these vexing issues, culminating in bold and innovative policies of religious liberty.

TOLERATION VERSUS LIBERTY

When patriotic Americans, believing they had been deprived of their rights and liberties as Englishmen, fought for and secured independence from Great Britain, they identified religious freedom among the "blessings of liberty" they sought to protect in their new constitutional republics. The sacred rights of conscience were featured prominently in post-independence state declarations of rights and constitutions.

In Virginia, for example, George Mason took the lead in crafting a provision in the Virginia Declaration of Rights of 1776

protecting religious toleration. Although his proposal reflected the most enlightened, liberal policies of the age, it did not go far enough to satisfy a young James Madison. Religious *toleration*, he astutely recognized, differs from religious *liberty*.

In his first important public act, Madison successfully moved to replace Mason's tentative statement, "all Men shou'd enjoy the fullest Toleration in the Exercise of Religion, according to the Dictates of Conscience," with the phrase, "all men are equally entitled to the full and free exercise of [religion] accord[ing] to the dictates of Conscience." He feared that the word "toleration" dangerously implied that religious exercise was a mere privilege that could be granted or revoked at the pleasure of the civil state and was not assumed to be a natural, infeasible right.

The right of religious exercise, Madison thought, was too important to be framed as a grant of governmental benevolence. Instead, he viewed religious liberty as a fundamental and irrevocable right, possessed equally by all citizens, located beyond the reach of civil magistrates and subject only to the dictates of a free conscience.

The following year, 1777, Thomas Jefferson drafted his celebrated "Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom," which was eventually enshrined in Virginia law on January 16, 1786. In an eloquent preamble, Jefferson set forth reasons for religious freedom, among them that "Almighty God hath created the mind free"; the purest religion is propagated by reason and not by coercion; and it is "sinful and tyrannical" to compel a person to support a religion that "he disbelieves."

Therefore, the statute provided that "no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry..., nor shall otherwise suffer, on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities."

These discussions in Virginia and the other states regarding the definition, scope and application of religious freedom set the stage for the adoption of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1791, with its prohibition on laws “respecting an establishment of religion” or inhibiting “the free exercise thereof.” Although there was no consensus then (or now) as to the precise meaning of this constitutional language, there was broad agreement that it meant at least this:

- 1. It prohibited the creation of a national church, like the ecclesiastical establishments in most European countries.** The nonestablishment provision, however, did not require civil government to hold all religion in utter indifference or to strip public life of all religious discourse, values or symbols.
- 2. The amendment protected the free exercise of religion.** Although the precise definition and scope of this freedom is far from clear, the language of “free exercise” suggests protection for actions motivated by religion and not merely the freedom to believe. It affirmed a right to practice one’s religion according to the dictates of conscience, free from interference, discrimination, coercion or punishment by the national government.

THE INDISPENSABLE SUPPORT OF RELIGION

The attention the founding generation focused on the prudential and constitutional role of religion and religious liberty in their new constitutional republics reflected a belief that religion was vital to their novel experiment in political self-government. The religious beliefs of the founders ranged from orthodox Christianity to some form of rationalism. Despite these differences, there was broad agreement that religion and morality (informed by religious values) were, in George Washington’s words, “indispensable supports” for social order and political prosperity. Indeed, this was a virtually unchallenged assumption of the age.

The challenge the founders confronted was how to nurture social order and personal discipline in a system of self-government. Tyrants use the whip and rod to compel their subjects to behave as they desire, but this approach is unacceptable for a free, self-governing people. The founders preferred that a pervasive civic virtue incline citizens to be self-controlled, self-regulating. Accordingly, either for genuinely spiritual or merely utilitarian reasons, the founders looked to religion — specifically Christian morality — to provide the internal moral compass that would replace the external coercion of the whip and rod and prompt citizens to behave in a disciplined, responsible manner and, thereby, foster the social order that gives citizens a capacity for self-government.

Historian James H. Hutson has called this “the founding generation’s syllogism”: “Virtue and morality are necessary for free, republican government; religion is necessary for virtue and morality; religion is, therefore, necessary for republican government.” Many founders took this one step further, arguing that *religious liberty* was a desirable precondition for an effective republican government insofar as it unleashed religion and religious expression and their beneficent influence in society.

The political literature of the founding era is replete with expressions of religion’s vital role in a regime of republican self-government.

They knew from history that religion could survive in the face of state persecution; however, they also believed that freedom — freedom of religious belief and expression — could facilitate a vibrant religious culture that, in turn, fostered civic virtue.

The political literature of the founding era is replete with expressions of religion’s vital role in a regime of republican self-government. The idea was espoused by Americans from diverse religious, intellectual and political traditions; various walks of life; and different regions of the country. David Ramsay, a delegate to the Continental Congress and the first major historian of the American Revolution, expressed this idea succinctly, writing in 1789: “Remember that there can be no political happiness without liberty; that there can be no liberty without morality; and that there can be no morality without religion.” Benjamin Rush, a venerated signer of the Declaration of Independence, opined in 1786: “Without [religion], there can be no virtue, and without virtue there can be no liberty, and liberty is the object and life of all republican governments.”

For this reason, public acknowledgments, exercises and expressions of religion were not merely tolerated by the civil state out of benevolence or as a matter of human rights; rather, the founding generation believed the expansive influence of religion in the polity and a vibrant religious culture were indispensable to the very survival of republican self-government. A healthy republican government, in other words, could be maintained only where religious morality permeated the community, informed public values, softened the people’s prejudices, guided the consciences of political leaders, and shaped law and public policy.

CONCLUSION

Freedom of religious belief and exercise in American public life is more imperiled today than at any time in living memory. As George Mason famously counseled in the Virginia Declaration of Rights, at another time when the liberties of Americans were under assault, it is proper to make “recurrence to fundamental principles.” In our own time, when once again the commitment to religious liberty is endangered, it is fitting that we reflect on the origins and understandings of that most fundamental of American principles — religious liberty. ●

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Being a "Daniel" After *Obergefell*

Living
faithfully and
fruitfully in exile

By Scott J. Ward and Stephen H. King

GOD'S PEOPLE HAD JUST SUFFERED A CRUSHING DEFEAT. Disoriented and disillusioned, they found themselves surrounded by a culture that felt deeply alien. They were coming under increasing pressure from society and state alike to compromise their unique identity and life as followers of the one true God and to embrace the relativistic and morally diverse surrounding culture.

Of course, this describes Judah following its conquest by the Chaldean emperor Nebuchadnezzar at the beginning of the Babylonian captivity. But these words come uncomfortably close to describing the church in North America today. The Supreme Court's 5-4 decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* in 2015 seems to many a modern moral analogue to the fall of besieged Jerusalem, heralding a sea change in legal and cultural understandings of marriage and human sexuality. As attorneys who have represented ministries for decades, we view *Obergefell* as one (but only one) significant milestone of declining respect and protection for the free exercise of religion.

But in the midst of the disorientation, disillusionment and even despair that can accompany such changes, it is easy to lose perspective. Among biblical examples, the prophet Daniel,

literally dislocated from Jerusalem to Babylon early in the captivity, provides powerful insights into how to live faithfully and fruitfully in cultural exile.

For some, *Obergefell* has been profoundly unsettling, and the response has been uncertainty, fear, even lamentation. Yet Daniel begins not with lament, but rather a sober assessment of the situation and a strong certainty of God's sovereignty: "*And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into [Nebuchadnezzar's] hand....*" (Dan. 1:2, KJV). God was sovereignly at work even in a devastating defeat. Like Daniel, we must remind ourselves that God is not surprised by these changes, but remains sovereignly at work for good.

FROM JERUSALEM TO BABYLON

Like Daniel, we are now living through cultural transition, dislocation and disorientation. We have moved "from Jerusalem to Babylon" — from a culture that to a degree reflected Christian values to one in which those values are often disregarded and even denounced. *Obergefell*, like Daniel's relocation to Babylon, is a defining moment in that transition.

In Daniel 1, God's people had suffered a massive military defeat — the dominant world power had conquered Jerusalem.



There followed a major dislocation — the Babylonians forcibly relocated leading youth from Judah to Babylon to the emperor's house. Their names, which reflected their God, were replaced with names evoking Babylonian deities. This was a brilliant strategy to co-opt and inculcate each conquered nation's young leaders in Babylonian values.

In the thousand-year-old capital city, Daniel encountered monumental displays of the empire's power — military and economic — and multi-cultural diversity from the nations Nebuchadnezzar had conquered. Daniel also encountered multiple deities and mounting decadence. Babylon's diverse people brought their local gods with them, supplementing the dominant Chaldeans' many deities. This multiplicity of deities (many connected to fertility rites) brought substantial sexual promiscuity and moral confusion.

The Babylonian regimes sought to assert their earthly power over all other sovereigns, including Daniel's God. Three episodes display this attempt at mirror-image deification, the replacement of God by the state as ultimate sovereign. In Daniel Chapter 3, the state declares that all must worship only the emperor or be cast into the furnace. In Daniel Chapter 6, the state declares that all must pray only to the emperor or be sent

into the lions' den. In Daniel Chapter 5, the emperor profanes holy vessels captured from the Jerusalem Temple at his dissolute celebration of his own power. In each episode, the state asserts that it replaces God and reigns over God's people. In each, Daniel and his friends remain faithful to God, whatever the cost. In each, God has the final word.

There are two meta-dynamics at play here. The first is the relativizing of objective transcendent values. The second is the absolutizing of the state, as it attempts to fill this vacuum and serve the ordering role in society previously filled by displaced transcendent values. We can see similar dynamics at play today.

LIVING FAITHFULLY AND FRUITFULLY IN EXILE

Daniel provides wisdom for living in such a time as this. Daniel did not attempt to escape from his culture, but rather strove to be equipped with God's truth to engage his culture. These are four ways in which Daniel lived faithfully and fruitfully in exile:

1. SOVEREIGN STABILITY

Daniel faced sobering realities — devastating defeat and exile — with calm certainty that God remained sovereignly

Daniel provides wisdom for living in such a time as this.

at work for good. Throughout the book, Daniel expounds God's sovereign authority, boldly proclaiming that God alone controls the rise and fall of regimes and rulers, reveals mysteries and is the source of all authority, greatness and even breath.

2. IDENTITY INTEGRITY

Daniel focused on maintaining his identity in the midst of a culture and state aggressively seeking to co-opt it. Although he could not refuse his new Babylonian name, Daniel never forgot his true identity. The book (written in part by Daniel) consistently uses his Hebrew name. Belteshazzar may have been his legal name, but Daniel — “God is my Judge” — was his identity.

3. PRINCIPLED PRUDENCE

Daniel also demonstrates profound prudential wisdom in knowing when and how to effectively engage an unfriendly regime. That principled prudence was reflected in Daniel's:

- **Creativity:** Faced with an apparently irreconcilable conflict between his faith and the regime's requirements, Daniel's response was neither capitulation nor complaint, but creativity. Daniel prayerfully proposed a creative solution that better accomplished the state's legitimate purposes, while fully honoring God (Dan. 1).
- **Carefulness:** Daniel was careful, wise as a serpent yet innocent as a dove. He engaged those in authority respectfully. He prudently foresaw trouble, such as Belshazzar's dissolute feast and avoided it until expressly summoned (Dan. 5:13-17).
- **Consistency:** Daniel's consistent faithfulness was legendary, as even his enemies could find no fault apart from his consistent obedience to God (Dan. 6:4-5). When they tricked Darius into forbidding prayer to any god but the state, Daniel's response was not protest, but simply to continue to pray “*just as he had always done*” (Dan. 6:10 MSG/NIRV).
- **Community:** It is not coincidental that the first three chapters focus not only on Daniel but also his three young Hebrew friends, who helped preserve their shared faith by remaining devoted to each other. Together, they committed not to defile themselves, sought God's mercy to interpret dreams, resisted the command to worship the state and were delivered by God from the fiery furnace.
- **Courage:** Sometimes, obedience to God means being willing to be thrown into fiery furnaces and lion's dens.

Hebrews 11 reminds us that such faithfulness can result in two primary outcomes — amazing deliverance or agonizing death. Hebrews and Daniel alike remind us that true victory is not coming out of such places, but going in.

- **Civility:** Daniel was a man of unwavering conviction, yet expressed his convictions respectfully, contending for truth without being contentious. He did not pursue civil disobedience but never shrank from divine obedience. Whenever possible, he pursued creative, civil resolutions of conflicts with the state's requirements.
- **Clarity:** The Babylonians likely thought that Daniel was a quaint relic of a dying culture; that he was “on the wrong side of history.” But Daniel was unconfused about what is permanent and what is passing. A central theme in the book is that today's dominant regime or ideology quickly becomes but a memory. Only God endures, eternally. This is seen repeatedly in the dreams Daniel interprets and the visions he receives, which predicted, with stunning accuracy, the rise and fall of empires. Daniel survived and served at least four different rulers and regimes. In the most dramatic example, regime change happened literally overnight (Dan. 5:30). By morning, Belshazzar's regime was history, but Daniel remained.

4. PERSISTENT POWERFUL PRAYER

Above all, Daniel was a man of prayer. The second half of the book is all about Daniel's prayers — and, even more, God's amazing responses.

The book does not record Daniel excoriating Judah or Babylon. But it repeatedly shows Daniel on his knees praying for both. Daniel humbled himself, fasted and prayed for his people, repenting not only of his own sins but of theirs. Daniel prayed boldly, with a vision shaped not by the power of empire(s) but by a deep awareness of the sovereign power of God. Daniel prayed on a vast scale, for the destinies of nations. But as God responded, Daniel came to see that God was painting on an infinitely vaster canvas. God's responses were about the redemption of humanity across all time through the promise of his Messiah, Jesus Christ.

It is Daniel's promised Messiah whom we seek to follow faithfully today. When we contend for religious liberty in this season of cultural confusion, like Daniel, we are contending for the immediate and the ultimate good of those who contend against us. We seek that they and we alike may enjoy the same freedom of religious exercise to choose to follow (or not follow) God without coercion. ●

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RELIGIOUS LIBERTY?

The growing battle over your right to obey God



By Jeremy Dys

RECENT BATTLES OVER THE ISSUE OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY reveal that the government is attempting to redefine the meaning of religious liberty and its role in protecting this vital freedom. Today's Christian leader must understand this phenomenon and prepare to act accordingly.

President James Madison observed that religion is an inalienable right "because what is here a right towards men, is a duty towards the Creator." Madison gets straight to the heart of the debate over religious liberty in an ordered society: whether government will respect and protect the obligation of its citizens to recognize a higher authority than the government.

Traditionally, America afforded its citizens freedom in matters of religion because our Constitution limited the power of the government, especially in religious affairs. Our founders recognized that government should stay out of issues between man and God. This is why our Constitution forbids the government from establishing religion or punishing the free exercise thereof. American liberty recognizes that there is something greater than government to which citizens must be free to obey.

How government balances its limited mandate to govern, while respecting its citizens' obligations to God, is both delicate and increasingly controversial.

PUNISHING NUNS OVER THEIR FAITH

Nuns provide an apt example. The Catholic order of the Little Sisters of the Poor are required by their faith to respect

the value of every human life as they minister to the elderly across the country. But the government requires these nuns to purchase and provide contraception that, according to their religious beliefs, may cause an abortion.

These nuns have a duty toward their Creator and a moral objection to providing contraception, abortion-inducing drugs and sterilizations — and they are not alone in their concern. Dozens of religious ministries have filed 92 lawsuits against the government, declaring that they are under an obligation to a higher moral law than "Obamacare."

A government that respects religious freedom would recognize that a significant number of its citizens hold firm religious beliefs similar to the Little Sisters of the Poor, and prevent the violation of their religious conscience. Instead, our government has worked to force these ministries to comply or face crippling fines.

That is neither freedom, nor liberty. And it is directly contrary to what our founders envisioned in the Constitution. In contrast, our government now asserts there is no higher authority to which duty is owed than government itself.

This assertion was reinforced when, during oral argument before the Supreme Court of the United States, the government said it could require *churches* to obey the contraceptive mandate, implying that the only reason churches are exempt is because of the government's magnanimity. This view is proposed by a government that thinks itself atop the moral ladder, with the right to grant or withhold religious liberty as it desires, rather than a limited government that respects and protects the conscience of all citizens.

SHUTTING DOWN A BAKERY OVER RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

It is not only in the world of nuns and contraception in which we find a state claiming unlimited authority in matters of religion. Aaron and Melissa Klein face a similar problem. Like so many Americans, Aaron and Melissa are unassuming people who sought to turn their talents and dreams — in this case, Melissa's baking talent — into a successful small business. Their Oregon bakeshop, "Sweet Cakes by Melissa," was to be a family business in every sense of the term. Aaron would take the orders and deliver the cakes and cookies Melissa made. Together, they would teach their sons and daughter the trade.

Importantly, the business would be run in all matters according to the dictates of their religious conscience.

Aaron and Melissa, bound by their religious conscience, politely declined business seeking their participation in a same-sex marriage. The exercise of that religious belief resulted in a \$135,000 penalty against Aaron and Melissa and the forced closure of their bakeshop. By penalizing Aaron and Melissa, Oregon has asserted itself to be the highest authority to which duty is owed.

The rights of conscience understood by Madison, and reflected in the First Amendment to our Constitution, recognize that the American government should respect and protect the rights of people of faith to fulfill their sacred obligation to God, under whom we are one nation, without penalty. Oregon, instead, argues counter to our American tradition of respecting and protecting religious liberty: believe as we permit you to believe, or you will be penalized, ostracized and worse.

Stiff penalties do little to resolve the tension between the role of government and right of its citizens to religious liberty.

America was founded as a nation committed to recognizing that people may disagree with the beliefs of the king and yet contribute to the common pursuit of happiness and virtue. By demanding its citizens believe *only* what the state sanctions, government embarks down a perilous path of authoritarianism repugnant to our democratic republic.

HISTORY SUGGESTS HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Yet, there is hope. The First Amendment still holds sway in our courts. Hundreds of laws protect Americans — at least on paper — of all stripes seeking to live lives of obedience to both church and state. Conscience-bound soldiers may conscientiously object to participation in war. Federal corrections officers whose beliefs reject capital punishment are protected against participating in executions. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 exempts religious colleges from compliance if that would require the school to compromise its religious beliefs.

In 2011, the Supreme Court of the United States unanimously upheld the right of churches to make employment decisions based upon the religion undergirding that ministry. In *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. EEOC*, the court explained that employment law might deprive a church or ministry of control “over the selection of those who will personify its beliefs.” Rather than force churches to lay aside any duty to government and demand obedience to the state, the court recognized America’s longstanding tradition of respecting the right of a church to govern itself — including in matters of employment.

The court’s decision was rooted in the balance foreseen by Madison. Protecting against employment discrimination is both valuable and necessary, and citizens ought to be obedient to such laws, *so far as* their conscience allows. Yet, churches also have an obvious duty to God. Thus, it is right that government respect the

obligation churches have to obey their conscience when selecting, as the court explained, those “who will preach their beliefs, teach their faith, and carry out their mission.”

Just four years later, the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in *Conlon v. InterVarsity Christian Fellowship* extended from churches to the broader category of religious ministries this “ministerial exception.” Judge Batchelder, writing for a unanimous panel, explained: “The ministerial exception is a structural limitation imposed on the government by the Religion Clauses [of the First Amendment], a limitation that can never be waived.”

The Sixth Circuit, like the Supreme Court of the United States, appropriately recognized that the Constitution limits the government, requiring government to respect the right and obligation of its citizens as they act in higher obedience to God.

The history of our country ought to encourage us that the laws and courts have traditionally protected rights of conscience. But liberty, and the tradition of a limited government respecting matters of religious conscience, can never be assumed. Rather, freedom of conscience — religious liberty — requires our active protection as citizens and the respect of a rightly limited government. ●

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The Religious Freedom Restoration Act

A complicated legacy for Justice Antonin Scalia

By Kim Colby

As irreplaceable as he was irrepressible, Justice Antonin Scalia's intellect and wit dominated oral arguments before the United States Supreme Court. His brilliance was exceptional, even on a bench composed of nine highly accomplished individuals. Since his death, it has been both satisfying and surprising to witness commentators' consensus in honor of his steadfast dedication to the Constitution's text.

But brilliance is not infallibility. Unfortunately, religious liberty fell victim to one of Justice Scalia's most grievous errors. In 1990, he authored the opinion in *Employment Division v. Smith*, dramatically narrowing the protection that the Constitution itself (at least as interpreted by the Supreme Court) provides to religious liberty. The current religious liberty battles that we have witnessed in Indiana, Georgia and other states, directly stem from the *Smith* opinion.

Before 1990 when *Smith* was decided, the Supreme Court's test for protecting the free exercise of religion allowed the government to burden a citizen's (or religious institution's)

religious exercise only if the government demonstrated that it had a compelling interest that justified overriding the individual's (or institution's) religious conscience. The *Smith* decision reversed this traditional presumption: the government no longer had to show a compelling reason for overriding religious convictions. If a law was neutral and generally applicable, a citizen must obey the law, even if obedience violated core religious convictions, and even if the government could easily accommodate the religious convictions if it wished to do so.

The *Smith* decision created a gaping hole in the Constitution's protection of religious liberty, although some remnants of constitutional protection survived. If the government acted out of hostility to religion, singled out religion for separate treatment or prohibited religious conduct while permitting analogous secular conduct, the law was unconstitutional. But if the law was neutral on its face toward religion and was generally applicable to all citizens, the religious citizen or institution must obey the law no matter how great the burden on religious exercise or how trivial the government's interest in enforcing the law.

Long a part of American legal tradition, constitutional exemptions for religious exercise are essential to preserving religious liberty. An example of a religious exemption is found in Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution itself, which allows the President to “swear (or affirm)” his oath of office. Without the ability to “affirm” rather than “swear,” some Christians would be disqualified from serving as president because they could not take the oath of office.

But how could Justice Scalia, who truly was a staunch proponent of religious liberty, write such a damaging decision? The best explanation lies in Justice Scalia’s belief that the Constitution gives legislatures, not judges, the authority to balance the relative merits of citizens’ religious claims against the government’s various interests. As a result, in *Smith*, he condemned constitutional exemptions, as “created” by judges, while simultaneously endorsing statutory exemptions, as created by Congress or state legislatures.

In direct response to the *Smith* decision, Congress passed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (“RFRA”). A 68-member coalition of diverse religious and civil rights organizations, including the Christian Legal Society, encouraged Congress to restore substantive protection for religious liberty. Senator Kennedy and Senator Hatch led the bipartisan effort to enact RFRA, which passed the Senate 97-3 and the House by unanimous voice vote. President Clinton proudly signed RFRA into law.

RFRA once again placed the burden on the government to demonstrate that a law was sufficiently compelling to justify burdening a citizen’s or institution’s religious freedom. But four years later, in 1997, the Court ruled in *City of Boerne v. Flores* (with Justice Scalia joining the majority opinion) that RFRA applied only to federal law, not to state and local law. Consequently, since *Boerne*, 22 states have adopted their own “state RFRAs” to protect their citizens against state and local laws that burden religious exercise.

As heretical as it may sound, RFRA, not the First Amendment, provides the primary protection for Americans’ religious liberty as to federal laws and regulations. It is critical that religious liberty supporters internalize this fact. Sentimentality must give way to the cold hard fact that the First Amendment no longer adequately protects religious liberty.

When state legislatures consider legislation to protect religious liberty, religious liberty opponents’ argument that statutory protections are unnecessary because “the First Amendment already protects religious liberty” must be countered by two basic facts. First, after *Smith*, inadequate constitutional protection for religious liberty must be supplemented by statutory protections. Second, the federal RFRA protects religious liberty only as to federal law. Without state statutory protections for religious liberty, very little protection exists to guard religious liberty from burdensome state and local laws and regulations. The argument that new statutory protections for religious liberty are unnecessary because “religious liberty is already protected by the Constitution” is a siren song that

threatens to dash religious liberty against the rocks of a culture increasingly hostile to traditional religious beliefs.

To be fair to Justice Scalia, the *Smith* decision arguably was a well-disguised blessing. Without *Smith*, there would have been no RFRA. While paying lip service to strong constitutional protection for religious liberty, the pre-*Smith* Court usually diluted the constitutional protection in actual cases. In contrast, when implementing RFRA’s statutory protections, the Court has issued three remarkably robust religious liberty decisions. In 2006, in *Gonzales v. O Centro*, and again in 2014, in *Hobby Lobby v. Burwell*, the Court rejected the federal government’s attempt to claim a compelling interest in overriding citizens’ religious practices. In 2015, in *Holt v. Hobbs*, the Court applied the RFRA analysis in a case involving RFRA’s sister statute, the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, to rule unanimously in favor of a prisoner’s religious exercise.

Independent of RFRA, in 2012, in *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. EEOC*, a unanimous Court rebuffed the government’s argument that the *Smith* decision meant that the First Amendment provided no special protection for a church’s decisions regarding hiring and firing its ministers. During oral argument, Justice Scalia scoffed at the government’s argument that the *Smith* decision meant that neutral and generally applicable nondiscrimination laws trumped a religious congregation’s First Amendment right to determine who should serve as its ministers.

Before Justice Scalia died, the Court agreed to review two religious liberty cases. The *Little Sisters v. Burwell* case was heard March 23, 2016, and will decide whether

RFRA protects religious nonprofits from being forced to allow the government to use their insurance plans to provide contraceptives to their employees despite the religious institutions’ religious beliefs. After oral argument, the Court ordered supplemental briefing in an apparent attempt to avoid a tie vote. A decision is expected in June.

This fall, the Court will hear arguments in *Trinity Lutheran Church v. Paulsen*. A church preschool was denied participation in a state program that gives grants to nonprofits wishing to purchase recycled tires for playground surfaces. While the federal constitution permits such grants, Missouri claims that its state constitution prohibits grants to a church preschool. While a 4-4 tie is conceivable, surely all eight justices should be able to agree that children deserve the safest playground possible, regardless of whether they attend a secular or religious preschool. Just imagine the fun Justice Scalia would have had during that oral argument. He will be sorely missed.

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Unfortunately, religious liberty fell victim to one of Justice Scalia’s most grievous errors.



a WORLDWIDE *perspective*

Religious freedom insights from Open Doors

By David Curry

There is only one road from Nairobi to Garissa, Kenya, along the Somali border. It's a long road, requiring nearly 10 hours of consistent driving. There are several military checkpoints along the way. Recently, I took that long and dangerous drive in order to visit a handful of Christian leaders still living and surviving in this dangerous Somali border town. It was in this place, just one year ago, that 142 disciples of Jesus were killed. A group of Al Shabab terrorists stormed into the university, separating the student body between Muslims and Christians. I stood in the very spot, a center atrium of the dormitory, where all 142 followers of Jesus were forced to lie on their face. There they were summarily executed for their faith.

When I visited, the university was just days away from opening and we were the first group of Christian leaders to visit and pray over the area. It was a sobering and chilling visit. It gave me a glimpse into what it is like to be a leader

in a region where being a Christian is violently opposed. What happened at Garissa University, while a singularly tragic event, was not an isolated incident of persecution in this region. I was part of a team from Open Doors visiting the 13 churches in that city where we saw a faith under siege. Churches are only allowed to open for a couple hours

on Sunday morning, only when there are military guards in place, often only a single guard, 18 years of age, who then leaves as soon as the service begins.

The 2016 World Watch List, produced each year by Open Doors to measure the levels and kinds of persecution Christians are facing, shows a dramatic increase in violence against Christians. For perspective on how religious freedom is under attack, it is

important to look at the research. The Open Doors World Watch list measures and ranks persecution in the 50 countries most inhospitable to Christian faith, assessing laws, violence and oppression in every sphere of life.

**We must avoid
developing
an unbiblical
response
to persecution.**

What happens when a person becomes a professed follower of Jesus in one of these countries? In many places conversion to Christianity is illegal. This means that on the most basic level, people are not allowed to decide for themselves what they believe. In many Muslim areas and countries, atheism and other religious faiths are also prohibited. There is a lack of freedom to believe in anything other than the proscribed faith of Islam.

Beyond the national scope, Open Doors researchers delve into the personal, family and community factors within each region. Persecution is often done at the most personal level. The most common and tragic level is that of the family. In many countries and regions around the world, a person will be ostracized and kicked out of the family at least; beaten, raped or murdered at worst, for deciding to follow Jesus. These are not rare occurrences; they happen daily and often go unreported.

Persecution also happens at the community level. Last year in Pakistan, a couple was burned alive in a kiln when a mob from the community heard that two people had committed “blasphemy” because of their faith. Pakistani law currently allows for this kind of persecution of Christians and opens the door to the vigilante justice that it so often provokes. Many other countries have blasphemy laws, and similar events happen each year, although perhaps not as notable as being burned alive.

When people think of persecution of Christians, they think of the dramatic violence that they hear about on television. In some regions, the violence against Christians has become medieval in its brutality, but there are regions of the world where there is no violence on a public level, yet there is nonetheless massive oppression of Christians. Saudi Arabia is one such example, ranking consistently in the top 15 countries on the World Watch List, yet with very little public violence. The reason there is no violence is that every public expression of faith has long been banned, so violence is no longer needed to keep it in check. There are no churches to raid or bomb and no pastors that can be executed. So violence is not a factor in its ranking, yet the national laws, culture, and family and community pressure on Christians is immense. Control is complete.

All this raises the important question: what are we to do?

First, it is important to note that while Open Doors has been working in persecuted areas for more than 60 years, beginning with a radical Jesus follower named “Brother Andrew” smuggling Bibles into the former Soviet Union, we have never tried to “eliminate” persecution. That is not possible, and it’s not biblical. We know that when people are living their faith, following Jesus, they will be persecuted just as Jesus was persecuted.

Our goal, and the goal of all who follow Jesus, should be to fully strengthen and support the global church. This means advocating, preaching, teaching and sharing the story of the Jesus

followers who are persecuted daily. It means praying for them daily and making support of our brothers and sisters in Christ a regular part of our personal and community devotion. In essence, it means the best thing we can do is to be fully devoted followers of Jesus and to love like he loved. And therein lies the problem. Instead of responding to persecution as Jesus has commanded us to do, many Christian communities are seemingly hunkering down.

Missions spending for the Middle East is a fraction of that for other parts of the world, and that is certainly a factor in the drop of the Christian population in that region, from more than 20 percent 100 years ago, to less than 3 percent today. Further, a movement, which even a segment of evangelical Christians seem to support, is underway in the U.S. to close borders, outlaw the building of Muslim mosques or condemn them if they exist.

We must avoid developing an unbiblical response to persecution. Religious freedom in the United States is as much at risk from some Christians’ intolerance of other religions as it is from the unreasonable assault of aggressive secularism. We can expect, and should prepare for, the continued assault on churches and businesses that refuse to endorse interpretations of morality that run contrary to biblical principles. Yet a biblical response need not be a “fortress Christianity” where we hunker down and block out all competing ideas and religions.

Disciples of Jesus should stand firmly for the freedom of every person to decide what they believe and to peacefully practice their faith. That means defending the rights of Muslims, Hindus and others. If we don’t defend religious liberty for all, both in word and at the election box, it will have a ripple effect on the rest of the world. In order for our voice to be heard on the issue of persecution, we have to be a credible voice echoing the words and actions of Jesus. Loving like Jesus has never been more important or as stark a contrast to what is happening in the world.

Followers of Jesus here in America and throughout the Western world must stand with our persecuted brothers and sisters. Every church should inform and motivate their congregation to be knowledgeable and prayerful about the ongoing assault on Christian faith. Likewise, we must also be a clear voice for affirming the freedom of religion for all faiths and to reach out in love to Muslims, Buddhists, atheists and others who don’t share our beliefs.

Jesus has called us to love in a dangerous world. ●

DAVID CURRY is president and CEO of Open Doors USA, a ministry that advocates on behalf of those who are persecuted for their Christian faith. Curry is the author of several books and holds a bachelor’s degree from Northwest University in Seattle and an honorary doctorate of humane letters from Faith Evangelical College and Seminary, based in Tacoma, Wash.

A SERVANT *of the* GOSPEL

The faithful legacy of Jerry Bridges

By Becky Grosenbach

When author Jerry Bridges passed away March 6 at the age of 87, his wife, Jane, had a large folder filled with legal documents and handwritten notes. The papers detailed who he would like to speak at his funeral, what songs to sing, what publishers to inform of his death.... It's no surprise Jerry was that organized. He was an administrator, a businessman.

But even though his service was meticulously planned, the content of every message, prayer and hymn focused on his passion — the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jerry-Bridges-the-businessman is a side of Jerry not as well-known as his ability to write about doctrine and spirituality in a way that spoke to the average Joe. He contributed significantly to the business side of ministry, not only at The Navigators where he served for 60 years, but in the wider Christian community, being instrumental in establishing Christian financial and insurance organizations. He humbly followed God's leading to serve behind the scenes, crunching numbers and generating reports. God honored his obedience and faithfulness, eventually making Jerry-Bridges-the-author known around the world.

Jerry was born and raised in Tyler, Texas, where he lived in a four-room house with his parents and older brother. He'd grown up attending church, but it wasn't until college that he made a firm, clear commitment to Jesus Christ. On June 4, 1951, Jerry graduated from the University of Oklahoma, Norman, with a degree in general engineering, and on the same day was commissioned as an ensign in the Navy.

Shortly thereafter, Jerry met a fellow naval officer who invited him to a Bible study led by The Navigators, a Christian discipleship ministry that was — and is — very active among military personnel. The clear Bible teaching and emphasis on Scripture memory was just what Jerry needed to grow in his faith. "From the first night I was hooked," Jerry once said. The Navigators carries out that same kind of discipleship ministry today in more than 100 countries, working on college campuses, in churches, office buildings and high-rises — serving next door to everywhere.

When a hearing test revealed deafness in one ear, Jerry received a medical discharge from the Navy after only two years of service. He accepted that as God's direction.

Soon after, he settled in southern California and started working with Convair, an airplane manufacturing company. He was assigned the task of writing technical instructions for shop and flight line personnel. He credited this experience

with making him a good writer, teaching him to write about complex processes for mechanics with a fifth grade reading level. "God put me there to teach me how to clearly explain complicated information," he said.

During those years, he lived with a Navigator couple, a common practice in The Navigators ministry in the 1950s. His mentor, Glen Solum, brought Jerry to a Navigator conference in Colorado Springs in 1955. There Jerry met The Navigators founder Dawson Trotman, who asked him to join the team.

Jerry came to Colorado Springs for work and training, fully expecting to be sent overseas for ministry. Instead, he received a home office assignment. While initially disappointed, Jerry eventually realized he was perfectly suited for administrative work, and that this was how he could make his best contribution to God's kingdom.

Jerry spent the next four decades in various administrative posts at The Navigators, including headquarters office manager, treasurer, and vice president for corporate affairs — work he found both challenging and fulfilling. He believed one of his most important accomplishments was starting The Navigators retirement program.

U.S. President of The Navigators Doug Nuenke said, "My most significant memory of Jerry will be his humility and service to the Lord for more than 60 years. Even after becoming a well-known author, his humility and God-focus was always evident."

Jerry White, international president emeritus of The Navigators, said, "Jerry always did what needed to be done, from being treasurer to being one of our most respected speakers and writers. I will miss his quiet humor and his godly insights."

Jim Downing was Jerry's boss at The Navigators in the 1950s and '60s. Now 102, Jim looks back on those early days with admiration for Jerry's hard work and natural ability. "He could figure out anything," Jim said. "In the course of time, I turned over several jobs to him and found out he could do it better than I could. Jerry was so meticulous, lest he offend the Lord by making a decision that would not honor Him."

Jerry was one of the founding board members of the Evangelical Council on Financial Accountability (ECFA) in 1979 and served on the board until 1994. Paul D. Nelson, ECFA president emeritus said, "The Christian world knew Jerry as an author and teacher. I knew him as a personal friend and confidant. His commitment to integrity, fairness, attention to detail, and 'getting it right' was unwavering. His public and personal life were identical and a model for all Christian leaders."

While working at The Navigators U.S. headquarters in the '60s and '70s, Jerry also spoke on spiritual life topics at the Glen Eyrie Conference Center in Colorado Springs, another ministry of The Navigators. When some of those presentations were published in booklet form, Jerry was encouraged to try writing a book. So Jerry gave it a try, writing about holiness, a topic he'd spoken on for years. The result was *The Pursuit of Holiness*.

Dan Rich, the founding publisher of NavPress, remembers those days. "While Jerry had never written a full-length book, many of us had experienced him firsthand as a Bible teacher," Dan said. "We felt that if we could capture his depth and his heart in written form, it would be a solid book. Who could have guessed we were publishing a classic in Christian literature?"

Since its 1978 release, *The Pursuit of Holiness* has sold more than 1.5 million copies. Jerry followed that book with nearly 20 others including *The Discipline of Grace*, *Trusting God*, and *Respectable Sins*. His final book, *The Blessing of Humility*, was released by NavPress in June. Find Jerry Bridges' books at (NavPress.com).

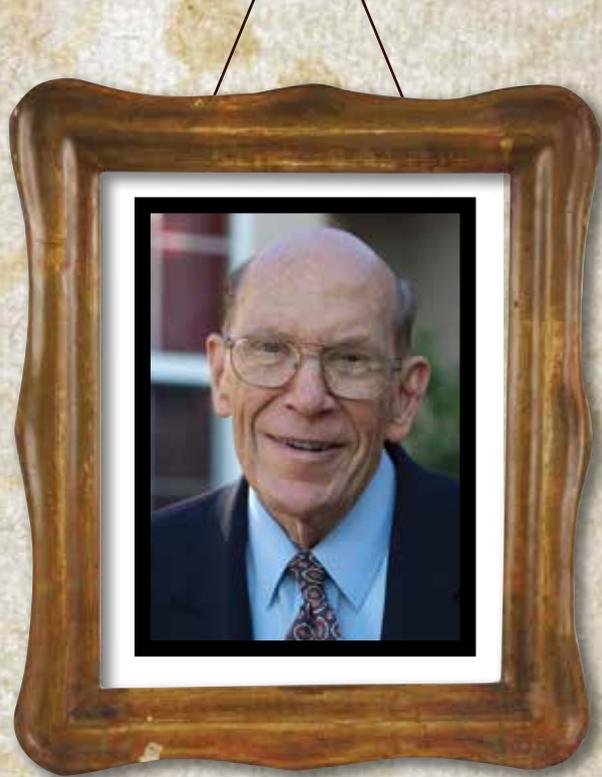


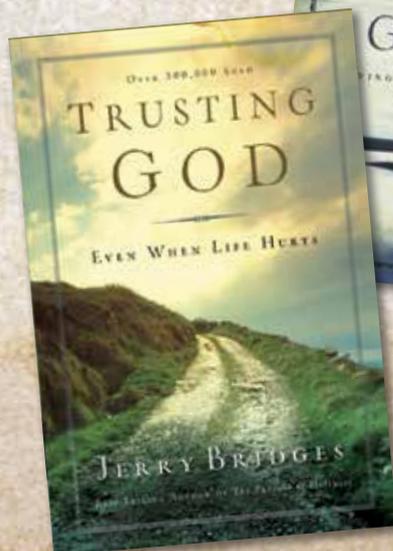
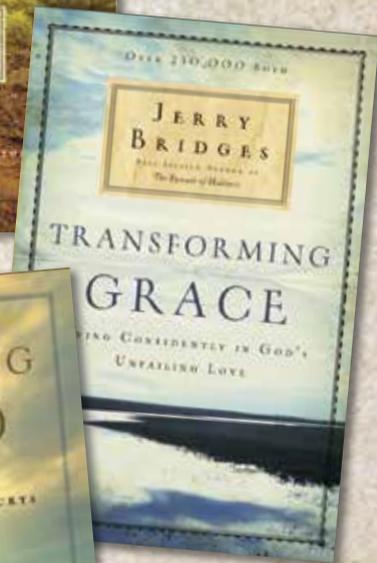
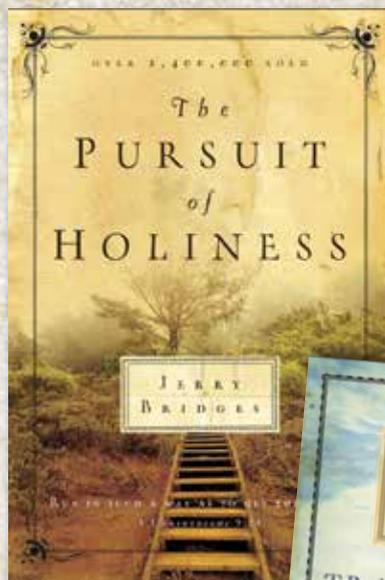
PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NAVIGATORS

While his books made Jerry famous, he always remained a quiet, dedicated teacher, known for encouraging believers to "preach the gospel to yourself every day."

Bible teacher and author R.C. Sproul spoke of Jerry's legacy, saying, "Jerry Bridges reminded the evangelical church that holiness was not just a doctrine to be studied but a calling to be pursued. And he modeled that pursuit with a humility grounded in a deep-seated grasp of God's glory, our frailty, and the victory of Jesus. He was, in these dark times, a light in defense of the gospel, and a joyful recipient of the gospel. He will be missed, though his legacy will continue to bear fruit for the kingdom."

While his books made Jerry famous, he always remained a quiet, dedicated teacher known for encouraging believers to "preach the gospel to yourself every day."

Pastor and radio teacher Alistair Begg said, "In the calling of Jerry Bridges into the nearer presence of Jesus, we have lost a friend, brother, and Christian statesman. Jerry embodied the fruit of the Spirit, and in an age of large egos, he was the epitome of selflessness. He leaves us all in his debt and ever grateful for his writing which, as has already been seen, will stand the test of time. His gentle spirit and manly godliness will be long remembered and cherished." ●



BECKY GROSENBACH has worked with The Navigators since 2004, currently serving as communications manager. She worked previously for *Christianity Today* as managing editor of *Today's Christian Woman* magazine (Navigators.org).

Faith and Prayer

The bedrock of our nation's character

FROM THE PLANTING of a cross and the prayers that were offered at Jamestown, site of the first permanent English settlement in 1607, people in this country have placed their fervent trust in God. This simple act of humble faith has given America strength in wartime, dignity and compassion toward those less fortunate, and hope in the face of unprecedented challenges. President Ronald Reagan understood, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction" and that, "...without God, democracy will not and cannot long endure... If we ever forget that we are One Nation Under God, then we will be a Nation gone under."

Throughout U.S. history, our leaders have offered prayers as petition and thanksgiving, to embrace our grief and sorrow, for our troops in harm's way and first responders, in times of uncertainty and crisis, during war and in peace, for protection, provision, guidance and the acknowledgement that in and of ourselves, we are wholly insufficient. This spirit is derived from principles woven into the very fabric of our founding documents and through the legacy of the men and women who helped shape this country.

Yet there has been a steady undercurrent of targeted efforts to remove God from every vestige of American life and culture. These battles confirm a tangible reality — the things we hold sacred are eroding all around us. Thankfully, a new generation of leaders is now emerging to stand in the gap. The Congressional Prayer Caucus (CPC) — an official caucus of the United States Congress — was created in 2005 for this purpose. With nearly 100 members, led by Co-chairs Congressman Randy Forbes and Senator James Lankford, many of whom gather to pray before each legislative session in Room 219 in our nation's Capitol, CPC members fight to protect our religious freedoms and help restore Judeo-Christian values to their rightful place in the marketplace of ideas.

The Congressional Prayer Caucus Foundation (CPCF), a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, was established to work alongside the Congressional Prayer Caucus by building and supporting a nationwide network of lawmakers and citizens who are committed to prayer and action. The American Prayer Caucus Network (APCN) now has more than 650 members of likeminded national and state government leaders who are the frontline defenders advancing religious freedom and America's Judeo-Christian heritage.

At the recent LIFFT America Religious Liberty Summit, hosted by the Congressional Prayer Caucus Foundation, members of the APCN gathered for a strategic meeting focused on proactively challenging the

anti-God, anti-faith agenda. With widespread agreement that people of faith can no longer remain silent, the government leaders launched PrayUSA: Government Leaders Calling the Nation to Prayer (PrayUSA.com). It began with government leaders signing the Call to Prayer for America Proclamation. Today churches nationwide are scheduling PrayUSA Sunday Spotlights, where pastors and government leaders are standing side-by-side in a show of unity and humble petition before God, inviting congregations to sign the Call to America Proclamation and commit to unceasing prayer for our nation.

This initiative is now exploding throughout the United States, and the numbers continue to grow. To date, more than 1,000 government leaders, 50 leading organizations and more than 140,000 citizens have said, "Yes" to this historic movement, engaging churches across the country and in the spirit of 2 Chronicles 7:14: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land".

Thankfully, a new generation of leaders is now emerging to stand in the gap.

Many citizens are battle weary and discouraged, some have given up and others are writing our challenges off as God's judgment on a country that is walking away from him. However, nowhere do the Scriptures tell us to shrink back. The truth is that those who oppose religious liberty are counting on people of faith to be intimidated, passive, unorganized, underfunded and to lack the resolve and determination to engage in the public arena. We cannot and must not allow that to happen! With each passing week, we are edging precariously closer to the unthinkable, a tangible and serious loss of our long-held religious liberties.

America can still be a city on a hill and a light to the world, but it is imperative that we pray for our national and state leaders and for our country — their voices are needed now more than ever. ●

LEA CARAWAN is president and executive director of the Congressional Prayer Caucus Foundation, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization established to unite and mobilize government leaders nationwide who are committed to advancing religious freedom, prayer and America's Judeo-Christian heritage. Learn more at (CPCFoundation.com) or (facebook.com/CPCFoundation). Lea earned a master's degree in Christian theology at Regent University. She is also an executive coach, speaker and consultant.



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Culture Matters

How mentoring can transform your organization

As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others.

Bill Gates

YOU HAVE AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE. It began the day your organization did. Whether you have carefully cultivated it or you have passively allowed it to develop, you have an existing culture. You and the people in your organization all bring perceptions, attitudes, values, learned behaviors, dreams and goals to the work environment. Choices are made. Actions are modeled and copied. Attitudes are caught.

Understanding and cultivating a healthy ministry culture is not an optional luxury that you can choose to pay attention to when things slow down or when it is convenient. You have a culture right now: one that defines what is possible, what is accepted, valued and promoted. It is perpetual and permeating. It is too influential to ignore.

On the positive side, the output of great ministry cultures is improved retention, laser focus on God's calling, production of quality services, attraction of avid supporters and protection of a strong ministry reputation. It resonates with your people. People want to live in a vibrant, staff-valuing environment. It attracts innovators and hard workers. So how can we be more intentional about our cultivation of this type of ministry culture?

INTENTIONAL CULTURE BUILDING

Any ministry that desires to make the impact on the world that God has led you to embrace will need to be intentional about cultivating a God-honoring culture. A culture that supports ministry success where your staff is as healthy as the ministry they are providing. A culture where instead of employees losing their individual unique contribution, they actually step more deeply into who God has created them to be. A culture where they find security in the central mission and values, and then apply their strengths and abilities to that common core.

Culture transformation that empowers all of your staff must come through the structures within. One of the most critical structures I have found is that of mentoring. A strong mentoring culture empowers all of the people in your organization. It encourages all of the people in your organization to become all that God has created them to be and to live out the influence and world change that God desires, joining him in the work of his heart.

THE MENTORING CONNECTION

Through my work across six continents and numerous industries, I have found that one of the most influential things you can do to create an empowering culture is to encourage mentoring, both in structured initiatives and in unstructured support for learning from others. Mentoring does not need to be a complicated process or program. In fact, within certain parameters and given good preparation, it is one of the most basic, organic forms of learning available. Mentoring can be a great way to connect, encourage and motivate your workforce to support a desired culture through proactive relationships. Mentoring raises the levels of engagement, loyalty, retention, leadership succession success, personal and professional development, and overall ministry effectiveness.

In fact, when peer mentoring is done effectively, the "average engagement capital" can increase by 66 percent. People are 77 percent more likely to stay in a job if they are in a mentoring relationship — particularly younger generations ("Corporate Leadership Council, The Power of Peers: Building Engagement Capital through Peer Interaction, 2011"). Further, 35 percent of employees who do not receive regular mentoring look for another job within 12 months (Emerging Workforce Study by Spherion, 2012).

Mentoring that becomes a part of the culture raises engagement levels, increases productivity and can help you strengthen the aspects of culture that your ministry needs to move forward.

MENTORING EMPOWERS LEADERS

Leadership, especially for the younger generations, looks different today. With less focus on hierarchy and more focus on what is working, new models of empowerment are emerging. Consider what the effect would be of having all of your staff involved in supportive and accountability-filled relationships that stretch them to maximize their skills and gifting and to be active participants in integrating best practices into your ministry culture.

Everyone in your organization has to own the job of continuing to make your culture strong. Through actively engaging in mentoring and empowering all of your staff to live out the influence God has uniquely given each person, you will be taking the first step in creating a healthy ministry culture. One that is sustainable, vibrant and effective in the years to come. ●

DR. LIZ SELZER has trained and spoken on leadership development, mentoring and spiritual development on six continents, for four universities and is the author of three books expanding on those topics. She now works for The Uncommon Individual Foundation as vice president of mentor education.

Visit (OutcomesMentoring.org) to learn about CLA's dynamic Outcomes Mentoring Network.





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*As iron sharpens iron,
so one person
sharpens another.*

—Proverbs 27:17

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Book Discussion:

Good Faith

Authors David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons share perspective from their newest book.

DAVID KINNAMAN AND GABE LYONS recently co-authored *Good Faith: Being a Christian When Society Thinks You're Irrelevant and Extreme* (Baker Books, 2016). Kinnaman is president of Barna Group (barna.org), a leading research and communications company that works with churches, nonprofits and businesses ranging from film studios to financial services. Lyons is the founder of Q (qideas.org), a learning community that educates and mobilizes Christians to think well and advance good in society. Kinnaman and Lyons previously collaborated to author the best-seller *unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity... and Why it Matters* (Baker Books, 2007).

Outcomes editor-in-chief W. Scott Brown spoke with David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons about *Good Faith*.

What inspired you both to research and write *Good Faith*?

Gabe Lyons: We sensed the building tensions for Christians in American life through the work we do at Q, and the work David does at Barna. The times are changing for Christians and people of faith. Our history together has been to try to describe those times and encourage the church to know what to do. So it made sense for us to try to assess and better understand how the church could respond. We must keep in mind that God is on the throne. We don't have to be fearful of changes. There's a way to step forward into them hopefully. That inspired us.

David Kinnaman: We were working on a private research study looking at religious liberty and how Christian organizations are facing questions about sustainability and their ability to operate in an increasingly skeptical culture that's unclear about, or even antagonistic to, public expressions of faith.

We felt the project would have far-reaching implications. We did this research and learned that a majority of practicing Christians feel that they're being persecuted, misunderstood or sidelined in terms of their faith. Gabe and I are careful not to use the term "persecuted" as a descriptor, but it's the term a lot of Christians are feeling. They feel persecuted. They feel as though their faith doesn't have the traction that it did, or is now unwelcome.

We decided there was urgency to talk about the findings with a broader population, and a book is a great tool for that.

What compelling findings stood out to either of you? What surprised you?

David Kinnaman: The thing that surprised me most was the degree to which there is a new moral code. We describe it in the book as a spirituality of self fulfillment, in which the self is center for a majority of Americans — and for a majority of practicing Christians.

I think the other piece that's very concerning is the degree to which specific activities and beliefs of traditional Christianity are now viewed to be socially extreme by a majority of Americans. More than 60 percent of Americans say that to share your faith to try to convert others is a socially extreme way to express your faith. To pray for others in public, to hold to historic teaching on sexuality — believing that same sex relationships are morally wrong, to quit a good paying job to pursue missions work — a whole range of things are now viewed as socially extreme.

Gabe Lyons: It was surprising for me to see how practicing Christian millennials are feeling. You would expect older evangelicals and practicing Christians to feel the effects of a changing culture, but millennials have grown up in this. It's not a completely new world for them. They've grown up in more diverse environments. They probably understand pluralism better than most.

That 38 percent would describe themselves as afraid to speak up now, or 60 percent describe themselves as persecuted — in line with how adult evangelicals were feeling — was surprising to me.

Sometimes we think of the next generation as being more liberal on a lot of different beliefs and thoughts, and yet they're saying they feel just as strongly that they don't have a voice, that they don't know how to speak up because they're worried they're going to say the wrong things.

I think another interesting fact was that 52 percent of American adults believe marriage is a covenant between a man and a woman before God. So a majority of Americans still believe that fact, regardless of the Supreme Court ruling. If you just watched the news or listened to pop culture, you would think it would be like 20 percent of Americans believe that now.

We seek to help people deal with the facts, versus hyperbole or opinion. The data helps us do that.

Your book shares that many today believe that faith-driven organizations are irrelevant in terms of charity. Can you expound on that?

Gabe Lyons: Americans believe that most of the charity that takes place in the country would go on without the church and religious organizations, that government would just continue doing it. They have very little understanding of the impact faith communities are having. Part of that is because faith communities, by virtue of their identity, are humble. We're not out promoting ourselves and the good work we're doing because getting credit for it is not our first priority.

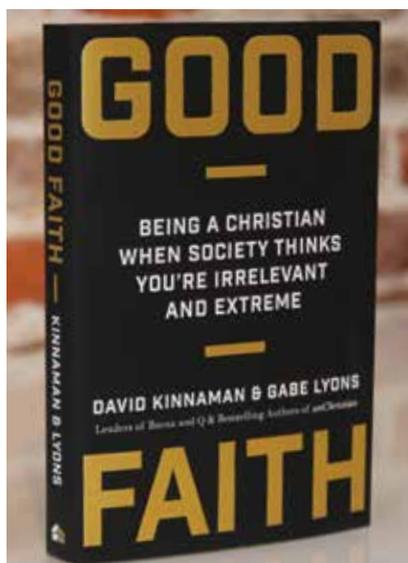
One of the things David and I talk a lot about is how the Christian faith has been so formative of Western society. It has created the underpinnings for a flourishing society. We take our education system for granted. We take laws that protect women's rights for granted. We take a lot of ways in which we get along as communities for granted. But, so much of that has been based on a Christian worldview. Most people in America today don't recognize it as such. They're enjoying the benefits of Christian thinking in their flourishing communities, but don't realize its roots.

The Christian faith has been so relevant that it has become irrelevant. Today, 42 percent of Americans say that people of faith are part of the problem in our culture. It's going to take a lot of conversations with our friends to help reorient Americans to understand how much faith is motivating our actions. Those stories need to be told so people start to see that faith is motivating a lot of good activity in our country, and more good can be done if we recognize it and help support it.

David Kinnaman: There are a number of strategic implications of the skepticism and lack of knowledge around the connection between faith and charitable work.

As Gabe said, we've got to tell our story effectively, but that has to be done in a way that breaks through people's frozen perceptions. To a certain degree, people do understand that Christians are doing good things. People sort of view Christianity as part of the fabric of America. So, the fact that Christian nonprofits are doing good work isn't a surprise. But there is a great divorce between that, and recognizing the underlying gospel motivation — the reasons our beliefs would compel us into giving up ourselves, our comforts and our extra cash to serve others. It's very countercultural.

It is very important to communicate in new and fresh ways. Legal questions are likely to continue to be raised around faith driven organizations, particularly on Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender (LGBT) questions, because the majority of Americans now view it as extremist to try to prevent people from living the life that they want.



We need to talk more about our history and the good things Christianity has done, while also creating a new social fabric that allows Christians to pursue good in their communities. We're trying to help people get comfortable with this increasing tension — not to wring their hands and feel persecuted — but to recognize that there's a real gospel opportunity in this normative skepticism.

Your book encourages Christians to build relationships that bridge divides. Can you talk about that?

David Kinnaman: Relationships are the bridges people in different generations, different faiths and different perspectives can cross in order to communicate in more human ways.

One reason the church is struggling today is that we haven't had strong enough relational bridges to people who disagree with us. Consequently we just keep talking to ourselves and about ourselves. We're not really participatory in broader communities. The evangelical community must make better friends and colleagues. We need deeper partnerships with the Catholic community. We need to understand that even as we may disagree theologically with Mormon, Islamic or Jewish leaders on many things, we have a lot of shared points of view about marriage. We need to work hard at developing healthy relationships that can help us as Christians not only build bridges for the sake of Jesus, but also be more capable of communicating what it is we're about as Christians in the world.

One of the challenges with Christian organizations is that we've been so insulated. We haven't been in relationships and friendships with people who are different. That's going to be a key skill set to develop in this new era of skepticism.

Gabe Lyons: We describe a new skill set needed to accommodate people of different faiths or no faith at all. That's something many Christians in America haven't had to think much about. Yet many of our Christian brothers and sisters around the

world have grown up learning to live that way. They recognize that a lot of people aren't going to think the way they think, or believe in the morals they embrace. This involves learning how to listen to others without a knee jerk reaction to convert them to our way of thinking upon first conversation. We've atrophied in some key areas in which our Christian friends around the world have remained strong.

How will the perceptions of Christianity that your book highlights affect support for religious liberty in the U.S.?

Gabe Lyons: There's no question that the perceptions have impacted it. If 46 percent of Americans believe religion is part of the problem in our society, then

If 46 percent of Americans believe religion is part of the problem in our society, then there's not a lot of incentive to try to protect religious expression.
(Gabe Lyons)

there's not a lot of incentive to try to protect religious expression. Part of what we argue in this book is that we have to appreciate the real fundamental human right called the freedom of conscience. James Madison talked about it in the founding of our country. It's something the United Nations even enshrined into human rights declarations — that every human being has the right to live by their conscience and not to be coerced by a government, or anyone, to go against it.

A lot of Americans don't understand that human rights perspective. We've got to do better job explaining what it means to live by our conscience. We also should be the first to stand up for people in different religious communities to have that same right. We need to protect the right of the Muslim and the mosque in our community to have freedom of expression.

We must recognize that a lot of the debate is around the LGBT clash, where religious freedom has been framed as discrimination against individuals. We have to deal with that perception, yet also get below that to understand that religious freedom gives people this option to live by their faith convictions. Navigating that in the public square is difficult. There will be differences of opinions among Americans about how best to do this.

We describe in our book my having a friend who says “as a baker I would always bake the cake for a gay couple because that's how I'm building friendship and relationship in my community. I think that's the most Christian thing to do.” But then I have other friends who say: “I can't bake the cake and participate in the wedding because I can't participate in that expression. That goes against my conviction.” The point is the government shouldn't be able to force or coerce that to take place. We need the rights for both of those citizens to exist, so they can practice their faith how they see it.

We have a nice history in America of doing that, like with pacifists having the option of not serving in a war because of their religious convictions and beliefs. It's just that a lot of Americans can't see through the headlines and the noise to try to get to the real substance of what's at risk.

David Kinnaman: There's a growing segment of people who think you shouldn't criticize someone else's life choices, and that you can believe what you want as long as those beliefs don't affect the broader society.

There's a lot of really shallow thinking about the context for religious liberty.

If you're placing bets on the probability of religious liberty surviving, you're taking a big risk because the very soil in which religious liberty grows is changing. We're growing in a different kind of social environment that's going to be very toxic to people trying to persuade others that there is a better way to live on a variety of issues.

Part of the challenge for the evangelical community is that we're public persuaders. The very nature of our faith compels

us to try to change people's opinion about not only Jesus, but a wide range of things: fatherhood; the value of the disabled; and a countercultural view towards sex (that it's not just about pleasure and your own personal journey, but sex and sexuality relate to who God created you to be, and

that future generations depend on you stewarding your sexual choices well).

Evangelicalism and orthodox Christianity make bold claims about society and how people and communities can work best — a biblical concept of flourishing. That's increasingly at odds with the broader cultural point of view that you should live and let live, and that people should have as much enjoyment and pleasure as possible. So it's not just that people don't understand religious liberty, but that increasingly it's like trying to sell umbrellas in Southern California. It's like people don't have a concept for a world that rains. That's part of the challenge. It's not just a question of can we try really, really, really hard to convince people to believe us, but it's that the very nature of the public faith expression of evangelicalism is beginning to challenge culture. We're trying to help raise the awareness of that through this project.

What is your ultimate hope and goal for the book?

David Kinnaman: To give Christians confidence that faith matters in the world, and can and does have a place for good. A lot of millennial Christians are beginning to lack confidence that their faith can matter, that their beliefs should make sense to culture or be something to stand up for. Nothing is new under the sun, but that doesn't give us an excuse not to understand what's happening in our time. We have to think clearly about zeitgeist and how we can be a prophetic subculture.

Gabe Lyons: The average Christian right now hungers to know how to grapple with these topics and how to engage difficult conversations. We find through the research that most evangelicals don't know how to have a conversation with somebody unlike them, whether it's an atheist or agnostic, a nun, an unaffiliated millennial, a person in the LGBT community or a Muslim. Today, we're one of the most ill equipped groups in our society to have these conversations.

We want to equip Christians to not only know how to live, as Francis Schaeffer says. We think that's critical, but we need to also know how to converse in order to make what we believe real. We want people to know how to invite others into that, how to live counterculturally but for the common good of everyone. We want to include more people in this way of life that we think brings more abundance and a more fulfilling, meaningful life than what the world is promising. Our hope is that it encourages people to be bold with their witness, to know what they believe and how that will help people and be good news. ●

Learn more at (goodfaithbook.org).

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ARE YOU MAXIMIZING

Christian Leadership Alliance (CLA) equips and unites leaders to transform the world for Christ. We move beyond good Christian management to empower Christian leadership that's catalytic in its transformation of people, their organizations, and ultimately the world. We are an alliance of mission focused Christians who lead in today's high-impact Christian nonprofit ministries, churches, educational institutions, and businesses.

Here you will find all the lifelong learning resources and experiences CLA has created for you.

CLA RESOURCES AND EXPERIENCES

CLA offers leadership training in eight core tracks: Executive Leadership, Resource Development, Financial Management, Board Governance, People Management and Care, Internet and Technology, Communications and Marketing and Tax and Legal.

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There is something exciting happening every day!

ANNUAL

- **Outcomes Conference** — CLA members rank the annual Outcomes Conference, CLA's national conference, as CLA's top leadership training event, with 100-plus innovative workshops, ITI seminars and more. (OutcomesConference.org)
- **Outcomes Academy (Conference)** — CLA's 'graduate school' for Christian leaders offers in-depth, 12.5-hour courses from CLA's eight core leadership disciplines. Offered as a part of CLA's Outcomes Conference.
- **CLA Professional Credential** — The CLA Credentialed Christian Nonprofit Leader (CCNL) program provides a path for a professional credential for individuals dedicated to learning the core disciplines for exemplary Christian nonprofit leadership. (ChristianLeadershipAlliance.org/CCNL)
- **Compensation Survey Report for Christian Organizations** — In collaboration with Compensation Resources Inc., CLA produces an annual compensation survey report for Christian organizations that includes data on ministry salaries and employee benefits.
- **Outcomes365** — This year-long initiative leverages the best of CLA's leadership training to provide you with a customized leadership growth experience. Outcomes365 represents the most transformational training experiences offered by Christian Leadership Alliance. The synergy between these nine experiences will elevate your personal leadership skills and perspective.



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CLA RESOURCES AND EXPERIENCES continued

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- **Outcomes Magazine** — CLA members rank *Outcomes* magazine as CLA's top educational resource. *Outcomes* offers access to top thought leaders in Christian ministry today. (OutcomesMagazine.com)
- **Outcomes Academy (Online)** — CLA offers a new set of dynamic and interactive 10-hour online learning modules each quarter. These modules are powered by Azusa Pacific University College.

MONTHLY

- **Outcomes Mentoring Network** — CLA's NEW mentoring network offers you the opportunity to be mentored by some of today's high influence Christian leaders, or to leave a legacy of leadership by mentoring the next generation. New mentee cohorts begin each month! To learn more visit (OutcomesMentoring.org)
- **Leader2Leader (L2L)** — A peer advisory group experience for senior executive nonprofit leaders. Meetings are held monthly for half a day. Interested in joining or starting a group? We are here to help make that happen for you.
- **Christianity Today** — CLA makes monthly editions of *Christianity Today* available for our members.
- **OutcomesOnline** — Delivered by email directly to your inbox, enjoy this access to timely articles and insights that can have a direct impact on your life as a Christian leader.

WEEKLY

- **Upcoming Event E-blasts** — We work hard to keep our members in the know about upcoming events and learning opportunities.

DAILY

- **CLA Website** — Check out CLA's Website! It is our premier digital footprint and our primary source for up-to-date information and upcoming events.
- **CLATV** — Are you watching CLA's NEW 24/7 eStation? It offers you the best in Christian leadership through video and radio, with new content available each week! Special thanks to CLATV founding sponsor Metro World Child. (CLATV.org)
- **CLA Blog** — CLA's Blog offers another way that we can be an insightful Christian leadership presence in the daily lives of members and the world at large. We want this to be a tool to daily coach, inspire, and challenge Christian leaders on their journey.
- **Christian Leadership Alliance Daily Electronic Paper** — This daily digital paper aggregates Twitter and RSS feeds we identify. It publishes daily and has the potential to reach hundreds of thousands of people in a 24-hour period.
- **Social Media posts** — CLA is active on the core social media sites: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+ and Pinterest. Our goal is to raise awareness of CLA, who we are, and who we serve. We want to not only be in digital conversations, we want to be the voice leading them.

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CLA's **Outcomes Mentoring Network** offers you the opportunity to be mentored by some of America's most experienced Christian nonprofit leaders. *CLA accepts new mentee applicants each quarter! Mentor profiles are accepted any time.*

Many outstanding mentors have signed up, but we're also seeking more! Share your legacy. Visit CLA Central to learn more about the **Outcomes Mentoring Network**, or go to our website: www.OutcomesMentoring.org.



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ChristianLeadershipAlliance.org/Membership

Free Exercise of Religion

Why is it controversial in America today?

POLITICS IS STILL RELATIVELY new to me, but politics is not new for ministers. Obviously, church politics is its own special variety of politics, but for more than two centuries, ministers have also served in Congress, including the very first Speaker of the House of Representatives in 1789. Before I sensed a call to a new ministry in our nation's capital, I spent 22 years in church ministry, including the last 15 years as director of student ministry at the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma and director of the Falls Creek Youth Camp, the largest camp in the United States.

One of the many issues that drew me to politics was the need to defend religious freedom in America. For whatever reason, America has become afraid of religious liberty, and our culture doesn't appreciate our nation's deep foundation of the right to live your faith freely.

In the 1786 Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom, which became the basis for the Constitution's First Amendment, Thomas Jefferson wrote, "...all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities."

The First Amendment went even further and affirmed the right to live a life according to your faith. It reads, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Most politicians, on both sides of the aisles, have supported religious liberty for years. The 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act passed the Senate 97-3, unanimously in the House of Representatives, and was signed into law by President Clinton.

Unfortunately, the definition of religious liberty is quickly changing. Some government leaders believe religious liberty is confined to a particular space and time (freedom of worship) rather than the ability to live your faith in any location at any time (the free exercise of religion). Freedom of religion has been twisted by some into a message of exclusion, rather than a way to guard the souls of people from government intrusion.

This debate is one of the reasons for the creation of the Congressional Prayer Caucus, which I serve as co-chair. The Caucus was founded by Virginia Congressman Randy Forbes in 2005 to protect the fundamental human right of religious freedom and guard the right of individuals to pray and practice their faith freely.

In recent years, the Prayer Caucus successfully advocated for change in Air Force regulations governing religious expression; passed legislation to reaffirm "In

God We Trust" as our national motto; and reversed a Walter Reed Medical Center policy that prohibited individuals from using or distributing religious items during hospital visits.

The Caucus has defended the right of religious student groups to operate on secular campuses according to their faith; protected religious nonprofit hiring rights; and supported legislation to ensure that all child welfare service providers have the equal opportunity to serve children and families.

One of the many issues that drew me to politics was the need to defend religious freedom in America.

However, more challenges remain.

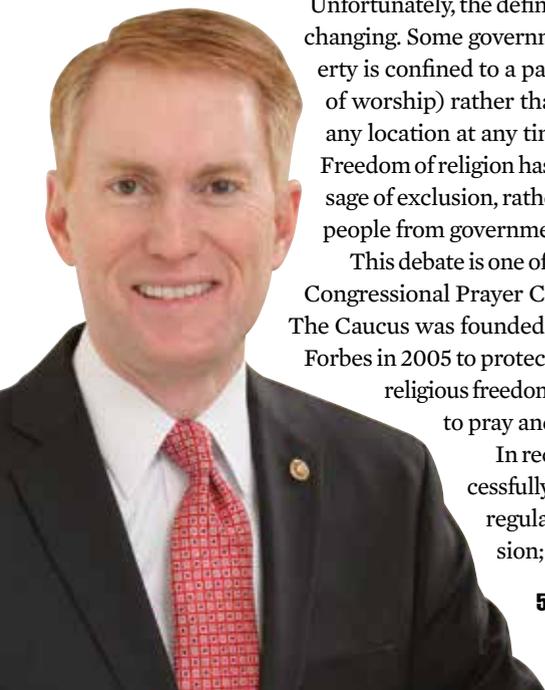
Earlier this year, I submitted an *amicus* brief, signed by 207 Members of Congress, to the U.S. Supreme Court for the *Zubik v. Burwell* case, in support of religious nonprofits. Their case challenged the Affordable Care Act's Health and Human Services mandate to provide insurance coverage for abortion-inducing drugs and contraception.

The Conference of Catholic Bishops, a few years ago, had a major grant to combat human trafficking, but it was later denied because the bishops dared to operate according to their deeply held religious beliefs regarding life. Also a few years ago, the Obama Administration argued all the way to the Supreme Court in the *Hosanna-Tabor* case that the administration has the right to control the hiring practices at religious institutions; thankfully, the administration lost that argument 9-0.

True diversity in America makes room for various beliefs, religions and ideas. The government should not coerce religious institutions to change their practice because it does not line up with the preferences of a government entity.

Faith-based entities are more efficient and more effective in local communities. Their work should be praised, not demeaned. For all the people who serve in faith-based institutions, thank you for how you serve people. As we defend the "free exercise of religion" in the public square, the success of your work is the best case for why faith-based organizations are needed in America. ●

After serving four years in the U.S. House of Representatives, **JAMES LANKFORD** was elected to the U.S. Senate on Nov. 4, 2014, to finish the remaining two years of retiring U.S. Sen. Tom Coburn's term, which will end January 2017. U.S. Sen. James Lankford lives in Edmond, Okla., with his wife Cindy. They have been married for more than 20 years and have two daughters: Hannah and Jordan.





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