

God in the Wasteland

By Bill Johnson

“God in the Wasteland” is the title of a book written by David F. Wells in 1994. Wells is the Andrew Mutch Distinguished Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts.

It’s a compelling title, as is the subtitle “The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams.”

This book had a strong impact upon me as I read it back in 1994. I saw it on the bookshelf as I prepared to write the front page of this newsletter and noted the defining headline so relevant to today, “God in the Wasteland.”

I commend the book to those of you who are burdened as I am in this regard.

Much of what we do here at American Decency Association is to encourage, exhort, inspire, convict, educate and to remind our listeners, readers, audiences to the reality and power of God in the universe and that He is available and calling out to you and me - to know Him, to follow and to serve Him. Yes, and to pursue holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.

Having once been a secularist back in the late 1960s and early 70s, I was saved out of that darkness - which I didn’t see as darkness - until I saw the light and began to learn to walk in it, though imperfectly as I, like all of humanity, am marked by sin having fallen short of the glory of God.

A product of secularism, humanism, darkness, the public schools, the public university, I understand that system all too well even though I am now far removed from it. Or am I?

No, I really am not far removed from it because its influence is deep, wide, and pervasive - pressing its politically-correct agenda of moral relativism - doing whatever seems right in one’s own eyes.

And this secular system grinds on and on seducing, deceiving, and deadening the moral/spiritual sensibilities of people from all walks of life, young and old, the educated and not so educated.

And as the darkness of the secular system has its way, it falls in line with the truth shed by Romans 1:19-23:

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ...

Repeatedly we see public officials make decisions that are “futile in their thinking” at best, and corrupt at worst.

Here is but one of the more recent examples:

As you read this, Michigan Governor Rick Snyder will have already spoken at the 53rd annual convention of The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) at the Cobo Center in Detroit on August 29.

How can he be oblivious to who ISNA is with all of the news of Islamic beheadings, the advancement of the Caliphate, terrorism, the oppression of Sharia Law, and the threat of open borders potentially bringing in countless terrorists?

How can we respect and honor those who have been elected to represent and defend us who so readily align with those who are bent on destroying us?

Here is what Governor Snyder is endorsing.

[ISNA is a Radical Muslim organization. Judicialwatch.org reports:](#) “*The Islamic Society of North America is a radical Muslim organization that owns and runs mosques throughout North America, functioning as an “umbrella organization” and “clearing-house” to connect all Muslim activities in the United States. Firmly believing in, and*



Michigan Governor Rick Snyder

supporting, extremist Muslim views, the group places radical leaders within mosques, sometimes replacing current religious leaders with those of a more extreme persuasion. The Islamic Society of North America is connected closely to the Saudi-Wahhabi form of Islam, an extreme version of Islam which teaches that all non-Muslims are enemies and heathens.”

On Tuesday, August 26, American Decency sent an alert to email subscribers asking them to contact Governor Snyder, stating in part: *I urge you to withdraw from addressing the Islamic Society of North America during their August 29th conference.*

You took an oath of office to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States.

The Islamic Society of North America wants to subvert the Constitution of the United States and essentially replace it with Islamic Sharia law.

In March 2011, Snyder also spoke to another Muslim Brotherhood front group: the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR)

Let Governor Snyder hear from you by mailing the enclosed postcard and expressing your indignation by calling his office at: (517) 373-3400.



From the desk of Bill Johnson

“The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams”

One of the great blessings in my life is grandchildren. Seeing through a grandparent's eyes I'm convinced is quite different from the perspective of a parent.

Parenting is down in the trenches. Grandparenting can be, and probably should be, more down in the trenches than sometimes it is.

Some of you know what I mean. We are meant to be influencers, shapers - speaking into their lives and living before them as godly examples. It can be hard work.

Buttressing truth into their lives. Instilling values. Confronting attitudes and actions is a vital part of coming alongside our adult children assisting them with their children.

Life is fast-paced. It is so easily squandered. It is our privilege and responsibility to train our children in the admonition and nurture of the Lord.

After all, if we don't fight for their spiritual/moral grounding who is going to? It is difficult work sometimes.

Before computers, cell phones, tablets, Ipads, iPods, laptops, smart phones, etc., many were, indeed, more attentive to those who come after us. There were fewer distractions.

We must call our loved ones away from conformity to the patterns of this world. David Wells, author of "God in the Wasteland" states: *Only those who are countercultural by way of being other-worldly have what modern culture most needs to hear - a Word from God that can cut through the deceits of modernity to reach the hearts that lie within. These are*

the people for whom God has weight (significance), and because of this, they themselves have meaning. In contrast, it is this worldly Christianity, not merely in the old liberal forms but increasingly in the evangelical church today, that produces weightlessness in God and its purveyors. It spreads something light and superficial, a mere gloss on modernity, under the illusion that it is actually offering the antidote to modernity (the spirit of our time).

So it is that evangelical faith and practice have unaccountably run aground in the shallow waters of modernity (spirit of our times). If we are to survive, we must return to the deep waters of God's otherness -- his holiness and truth - for that is where our safety lies.

I agree with what Wells is saying and have for a long time. Not only what we place before our eyes does impact, but how we spend our daily lives impacts.

One of my greatest desires as a former teacher was to instill in my students a love for reading. I believed then and still believe that independent readers are thinkers. It is rare today, however, to see kids reading a book for pleasure and to gain knowledge and understanding. But, they do exist. I see that quality in some of my own grandkids.

My wife tries to read to our grandkids daily - quality, meaningful books with compelling stories and life-changing messages.

We sit at the table at night. We pray before our meals at home and at restaurants.

They see us spend time with the Lord in the early morning hours.

We confront wrong attitudes and bring correction and confess our own sin before them when we sin (because we are all imperfect).

Our world is on fire. It is not a time for us to be duped, deadened, and fooled by modernity (the spirit of this age).

As Wells states: *If we are to survive, we must return to the deep waters of God's otherness -- his holiness and truth - for that is where our safety lies.*

In the August newsletter, we enclosed a postcard that we encouraged you to distribute to your pastor, inviting him to attend the Pastor's Briefing in Lansing on August 10-11. A great thanks to Michigan Renewal for hosting the outstanding conference. There were over 400 were in attendance - a good crowd.

Here is a brief overview of the Pastor's Briefing event, which I also attended. The briefing was very well organized, timely and content rich.

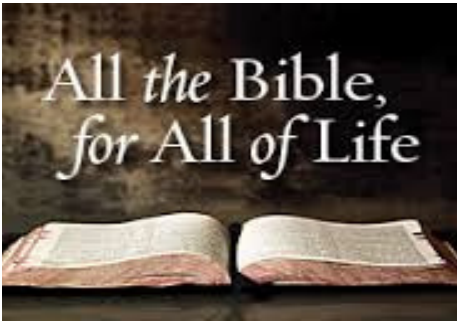
- Dennis Prager, nationally syndicated broadcaster who is also Jewish, was powerful, direct and made it very clear that in a faltering culture, we who are Christians must stand for God and His standards.
- Gov. Mike Huckabee was much stronger than I have ever seen him. His message was powerful and to the point.
- David Barton of Wallbuilders - powerful as always regarding America's history, documenting our Christian heritage
- Bill Schuette, Attorney General of Michigan - excellent commentary
- Brian Calley, Lt. Governor of Michigan - shared his testimony
- U.S. Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas), gave a powerful presentation with passion and conviction.
- Pastor Rafael Cruz (father of Sen. Cruz) provided a great example of a pastor not ashamed to preach the Gospel, yet doing so with application regarding Satan's assault upon the church and America.

Perhaps one of the most intriguing messages was given by a former drug addict and drunkard who, upon nearly losing his wife through his addictions, turned his life over to Christ. Decked in blue jeans, cowboy boots and hat and with a cowboy swagger, he used an example of a horse he was trying to train for his foster son which refused to submit to its master, as an analogy of God bringing correction into the lives of His people. He spoke powerfully, directly, and boldly to pastors - urging them to stand for such a time as this.

Such Pastor's Briefings are being coordinated in swing states throughout America. We were blessed to have these speakers address a core of pastors. Give a hearty thanks to your pastor if he responded to the call.

Needed: Fearless Shepherds

by Lisa Van Houten



Recently while reading in Ezra I was struck by the phrase *“fear was on them because of the peoples of the lands”* (Ezra 3:3) In case you don’t recall the context of the book of Ezra, God “stirred the spirit” of the pagan King Cyrus of Babylon to free God’s people and return them from exile to the land of Judah.

However, they weren’t just being freed from captivity; they were charged by God, through Cyrus’ proclamation, to rebuild the temple – the house of the Lord. But while the returning exiles, led by the priests and the Levites, did lay the foundation of the temple, *“the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah and made them afraid to build and bribed counselors against them to frustrate their purpose.”*

The people of Judah had witnessed the incredible moving of God upon the heart of a foreign king to end their 70 year exile, and had even seen Cyrus order and provide for the rebuilding of the temple, yet when faced with opposition from their pagan neighbors, they abandoned the work to which God had specifically called them. In other words, they feared man more than the God.

Juxtapose that account from ancient Judah with the results of a two-year study by George Barna, the highly-regarded researcher of modern American Christian trends and statistics. This study of theologically conservative pastors reveals a vast majority seem to also fear man more than God.

George Barna told OneNewsNow: *“What we’re finding is that when we ask them about all the key issues of the day, [90 percent of the pastors are] telling us, Yes, the Bible speaks to every one of these*

issues. Then we ask them: Well, are you teaching your people what the Bible says about those issues? – and the numbers drop ... to less than 10 percent of pastors who say they will speak to it.”

Barna went on to observe: *“So the thing that struck me has been that when we talk about the separation of church and state, it’s that churches have separated themselves from the activities of the state – and that’s to the detriment of the state and its people.”*

Notice that statement: the church has separated itself from the state – to the detriment of the state and its people.

The state hasn’t so much coerced that separation, rather the church has retreated.

Of course there has been opposition from the secular world, especially in recent years. However, instead of boldly standing for Truth, for the most part the church has turned tail in the face of opposition – too concerned about how it will be viewed by the outside world, and perhaps by some within its own walls. *“Fear was on them because of the peoples of the lands.”*

Take a look at Barna’s results again. 90% of conservative pastors agree that the Bible speaks to every issue of the day. What are the issues we are facing in 2014 America? There’s the obvious ones such as the sanctity of life, homosexuality, and same-sex ‘marriage.’ Then there’s the assault upon the family via pornography and indecency over the internet and television, biblical manhood and womanhood, materialism, allowing ourselves and our children to conform to the culture. We could add to the list the threat of Islamism, the issue of racism, the assault upon religious liberty, the border crisis. What should be the Christian response to these concerns?

Does the Bible speak to these issues? Of course! These are no more “political” issues than was the issue of slavery to the church in the mid-19th century or the issue of Nazism to the church in Germany of the 1930s. The apathetic churches of those times have rightly been condemned by history.

So, why do only 10% of pastors speak to such issues? And when we say “speak,” we do not merely mean affirming the rightness or wrongness of the issue.

It’s not enough for pastors to say homosexual ‘marriage’ goes against God’s Word, rather what is needed are pastors who teach their flock how to wisely and gently espouse a biblical worldview on such issues in their individual communications and actions outside of the church.

The people of God need our pastors to help us be salt and light, to apply the Word to the concerns which assault our families and fill the headlines. We need fearless shepherds to lead us in developing a biblical response to the issues of the day, shepherds who will build up God’s people - His temple - to think and act biblically in a culture that does neither.

Pray for your pastor. Encourage him to do more to respond to the issues of our day from a biblical perspective. We also encourage you to order the DVD “Pastors and Patriots” as a gift for your pastor and follow up by discussing it with him after he’s viewed the material. To order “Pastors and Patriots” call us at 1-231-924-4050.

Also, coming next month we will be offering an excellent DVD, “A Time to Speak - the Threat to Religious Liberty in America.” Look for more information in our October newsletter.

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What presents the biggest threat to the purity of the “average” American family?

by Bill Johnson

Indecency/pornography? Who cares?

by Bill Johnson



immoral behavior, every self-destructive behavior, every opportunity for unlimited content and the quantity of time invested using the Internet means the Internet is by far the winner (loser in this case). Every depraved behavior you can imagine is totally and easily available on the Internet. This serves to normalize and mainstream behaviors that just a generation ago would have been unthinkable. Yes, the Internet is worse than books, videos, movies, shock radio and adult stores all combined - because it is so easily available.



What presents the biggest threat to the purity of the “average” American family?

The above question needs to be asked regularly. Below I offer just a few possible answers. I asked a person who I have immense regard for and who has great expertise in technology to respond to that very question.

My friend, Steve Ensley, is the founder and President of American Family Online. Steve has been the most staunch, faithful man of God that I have had the pleasure to meet, who also fights for holiness (purity) more than any individual that I know of via the ministry that he so capably leads – American Family Online (www.afo.net).

I urge you to give very serious attention to his response to my two questions below.

Question #1: What presents the biggest threat to the purity of the “average” American family?

- Cable?
- Television?
- Cosmopolitan magazine?
- Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition?
- Sex shops, i.e. adult book stores?
- The Internet?

Answer (Steve Ensley): *Wow, this is a loaded question! The only possible answer is the Internet!*

Q. Explain your answer:

A. Based on sheer volume alone, every

Question #2: What can one person do to protect themselves and loved ones and why do so few do so?

Every responsible adult has to be aware first of all, then they must take action to use every tool and safeguard available. This includes filtering, education, self-discipline and, yes, sometimes even denial of access to family members or self.

We filter our water, lock medicine cabinets, force all kinds of driver training. We think nothing of implementing all these measures for physical safety. How much more important is the moral and spiritual safety of our families.

In closing (Bill Johnson):

If this brief interview hits home regarding the protection of yourself or those you love, I urge to go to www.afo.net and sign up for online filtering protection via American Family Online for your family’s computers, smart phones, and tablets.

**To find out more, call AFO at:
1-850-362-6180.**



I received an encouraging call recently. It was a call from a mother of four children aged 10 and under.

Her call was because the grocery store where she shops has indecent magazines at the checkout counter.

In a culture where the vast majority are desensitized and accommodated to this world, here is a woman hungering for purity.

To make a long story short: This godly mother was fighting a war for the purity of her children. She does not want her children and family to have magazines featuring filthy images and words foisted before their eyes and spirits!

What a contrast to so many who are compromised.

Choices matter. Keeping yourself pure, as the Scripture tells us, matters. Pursuing holiness matters for it matters to God and for all eternity.

Who cares? God cares. Do you?

God says in His word “Pursue holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.” Hebrews 12:14]

Target has marriage in its crosshairs

by Lisa Van Houten



The Target Corporation has traditional marriage in the crosshairs of its bulls-eye.

Target has now declared its support for homosexual “marriage.” However, the Minnesota-based retailer has gone past the point of articulating support for gay “marriage” and has jumped into the fray to wield its influence with the courts on this issue.

Working to overturn the vote of the people regarding the true definition of marriage, Target has filed an amicus brief with the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals pushing for so-called marriage “equality” regarding the ban on same-sex marriage in Wisconsin and Indiana. (The case is before the Circuit Court on appeal, after a federal court in each of these two states unilaterally overturned these states’ affirmation of marriage as the union of one man and one woman.) In an example of sticking its nose where it doesn’t belong, this case doesn’t even affect Minnesota, the home of Target’s headquarters, where gay marriage is already legal thanks to the state’s legislature vote in 2013.

While Target has long offered health benefits to the “partners” of its LGBT employees, the corporation has for the most part stayed neutral in declaring support for gay “marriage.” In 2012 Target refused to take sides when a state referendum sought to ban same sex “marriage” in Minnesota. In fact, all of the state’s largest companies stayed neutral on the issue – except General Mills which has long supported gay “marriage.” (The referendum was narrowly defeated.)

At the time, in 2012, Target stated: *“We*

recognize that there is a broad range of strongly held views on the Minnesota Marriage amendment.”

Now, two short years later, Target states: *“It is our belief that everyone should be treated equally under the law, and that includes rights we believe individuals should have related to marriage.”*

Someone should explain to Target that “equality” doesn’t mean sameness. I as a female may be equal in worth to a man, but I am not the same. There are many things we as individuals are not legally allowed to do without meeting certain criteria – that does not mean we aren’t treated equally under the law. And certain criteria and limitations have always applied to marriage in this nation of freedoms. Any adult can be married – as long as they meet the criteria. And the criterion that has stood since God ordained the institution of marriage is the union of a man and a woman.

Some reports claim this latest move by Target to push the homosexual agenda is an effort to win back support from the LGBT community. However, with the recent survey results from the Centers for Disease Control revealing that less than 3% of the United States population identifies as gay or bi-sexual, and 96.6 % of Americans label themselves as heterosexual, why is Target more fearful of offending LGBT shoppers instead of Christian shoppers?

Perhaps we Christians don’t have enough of a reputation of putting our money where our mouth is. In fact, we often don’t put our mouth where our beliefs are.

As we see those beliefs under attack with growing intensity each day, I pray we will yet wake up, speak out, and act in defense of biblical Truth – and that includes applying biblical stewardship to where we shop.

A spokesperson for the Minnesota Family Council, which led the fight against homosexual marriage in Minnesota warned:

“This is a very risky business decision and ultimately the wrong one because it is

families that shop at Target. People in Minnesota are still deeply divided on this issue.”

A 2013 Star Tribune Minnesota poll revealed that 46 percent of Minnesotans supported legalized same-sex marriage, but 44 percent were opposed, with 10 percent undecided. Yet Target is willing to offend basically half of the population in Minnesota, as well as the populations in other states where the opposition to homosexual marriage is often even higher.

One person commenting on a Minnesota Star Tribune report, stated:

“I would rather Target (and all companies) spend more of their time selling me their products and less of their time selling me their politics. If individuals at the company want to donate or sign on to issues or whatever, fine. But we need to get away from asking companies what they expect from their government and back to asking the people.”

Another person writing on Target’s webpage is putting their money where their beliefs are:

“Just lost my business. I hold to the truth that God designed marriage and not man and that God set up marriage between one man and one woman. Sorry Target, I will not shop in your stores again.”

Besides not shopping at Target, here are a couple of other suggested actions to take:

- If you have a Target credit card, cut it up and return it to the company, or send copies of past receipts, with a note expressing your displeasure with the company choosing to align with the LGBT agenda instead of remaining neutral on this issue.
- If you know of a family member planning a wedding or expecting a baby, urge them not to use Target’s bridal and baby registry.

The Heart of Ferguson

by Chris Johnson



I have, until now, resisted writing about the tragedy in Ferguson mostly because I'm a white guy, and it's easy for us white guys to say things out of ignorance and lack of experience that can be misunderstood as prejudiced. God knows (and I mean that) that the last thing I would ever want is for someone to believe that I thought less of them simply because of the color God chose to paint them.

That being said I will now, with great humility, add my voice to the confusing din surrounding the shooting of black youth Michael Brown by white police officer Darren Wilson, with the hope that it will add clarity.

As a product of what has to be one of the least diverse communities in the country, I would by no means be considered an expert on "race relations," but perhaps I have some less common insight to delve into.

I am the youngest of four children, two of which are Korean by birth. I grew up looking into faces that didn't look like mine. I had hair so blonde it was almost white and my siblings' was jet black. They had Asian features, and I looked like I should be wearing wooden shoes in front of a windmill, but it never occurred to me to think of them as being any different from myself. There was never any question that they were just as human as I am, as American as I am, and as Johnson as I am and it is perhaps that perspective which graciously muddles my understanding of racism.

The very concept of racism is built on the idea that there are different races, which is unbiblical and kind of stupid. The Bible's commentary on race is short and sweet and

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

There's no room in that statement for declaring people as separate "races" based on our different physical features. God made us humans - not blacks, whites, or Asians or anything else. He made all of us in His Image.

That is not to discount the fact that our genetic makeup or our perceived "race" can often affect our experiences, it is just to disprove any foundation such prejudice might have.

When we take "race" out of the equation in Ferguson, and all of the politics that go with it, we are left with a simple tragedy. Whether or not Darren Wilson fired in self defense, one of God's crowns of creation was killed. Whether or not Michael Brown had just robbed a gas station, he was a young man whose life never saw its full potential. Whether or not Michael Brown had his hands in the air when he was shot, he left behind a grieving mother to bury her son and that should never be.

As Christian artist Lecrae stated on Instagram, "*Regardless of your view on #Ferguson. If [you] have zero compassion for that community you are not loving your neighbor as yourself. ...*"

That is a raw and honest expression of grief by a very godly black American. No matter what our opinion is about what the facts of the case point to, we ought to be able to empathize with a close community that has lost one of its sons.

If Wilson was a bigoted or trigger-happy officer and that played into this shooting in any way, he ought to feel the full weight of the law. Justice must be done.

However, the temptation to rush to make this tragedy into an argument for any particular idea ought to be resisted until all the facts are known, as Albert Mohler aptly explains, "*The one thing that Christians committed to a biblical worldview have*

to understand is that the facts never cease to be important. We simply cannot move to judgment until we know exactly what took place and why. Thus we have to resist the very real temptation to say too much... Actually, my point here was very well made by President Obama himself—because in statements made earlier this week responding to the situation in Ferguson, the President said, "I have to be very careful about not prejudging these events before investigations are completed." The President continued, "I've got to make sure I don't look like I'm putting my thumb on the scales one way or the other." That's a very good and important statement from the President of the United States. And quite frankly, it's a statement all of us should take to heart."

I mourn for the death of Michael Brown and the fact that his mother had to bury her child. That has happened in my family and it is unimaginably painful. The idea that Darren Wilson saw a large black man and thought, "threat" is deplorable to me, but as the past makes clear, not at all outside the realm of possibility.

But equally deplorable to me is the idea that because he is white and a police officer Darren Wilson is necessarily racist. I think that is what prevents many white guys like me from yelling "justice for Michael Brown." But we are afraid that by indicting Wilson before we know exactly what happened and why it happened, we are indicting ourselves.

As unfair as it for a black man to be considered a threat because of the way he was born, I think it is equally as unfair if I'm considered prejudiced because of the way I was born.

I mourn the loss of Michael Brown, regardless of the circumstances, but I don't want to be judged by the color of my skin either.

Having explained my reticence to join in the public outcry, I will exhort those in my position to at least join in a public mourning.

[Continued on page 7]

Navy Raises White Flag

by Lisa Van Houten



Perhaps you've heard this quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer: *"Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: ... Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act."*

Or you may know the familiar quote from Edmund Burke, *'The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good housekeepers to do nothing.'* Okay, I may have paraphrased that a bit.

However, one hotel housekeeper recently chose to do something - rather than nothing - when faced with a moral dilemma.

In June, housekeepers at U.S. Navy hotels and lodges were ordered by Navy officials to remove Bibles placed by the Gideons in the hotels and lodges on U.S. Naval bases. One housekeeper did not remain silent.

As AFA reported, the U.S. Navy had *"instructed housekeepers to remove Gideon-placed Bibles from every hotel room on its military bases after it received a letter from the atheist group Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF).*

"We were told today, June 23, 2014, that due to a new policy by the CEO of NEXCOM, Rear Admiral Robert J. Bianchi, we were to remove the Bibles from the rooms," a housekeeper told AFA in an email. "They told us to put them in boxes, where they would be taken to a donation center somewhere."

NEXCOM (Navy Exchange Service Command) issued the directive to bases offering hotel accommodations, ordering them to impound Bibles from 34 Navy Lodge locations and 24,000 Navy Gateway Inns & Suites guest rooms on Navy bases worldwide.

The directive orders lodge managers to contact base commanders and Chaplains and facilitate removing the Bibles and other "religious material currently in the guest rooms."

The Air Force tried unsuccessfully to remove Bibles from its lodgings in 2012, but after public outcry, the Air Force reversed itself."

We at American Decency joined American Family Association and other ministries in expressing great concern about the removal of these Gideon-placed Bibles in naval lodges. As we wrote in an email alert:

"On the U.S. Navy's own website is the Navy's official hymn, "Eternal Father, Strong to Save." This hymn - in essence a prayer - is still sung at the U.S. Naval Academy. Here are the lyrics to verse one:

*Eternal Father, strong to save,
Whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
Who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep;
Oh, hear us when we cry to Thee,
For those in peril on the sea!*

Now the U.S. Navy, who seeks God to bind the restless wave, is seeking to bind God's Word."

The atheist organization, Freedom From Religion Foundation, gleefully rejoiced at their seemingly successful effort to get the world's mightiest navy to kowtow to their demands.

And this was not the first time our military, under the leadership of our current president and commander-in-chief, has followed the directives of this atheist group.

As Ron Crews, executive director of the Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty, stated: *"This is just one more assault by military leaders against anything Christian. It's getting tiresome to see senior military leaders cave in to those who appear to be offended by Christians, by Christian symbols and now by the Bible itself."*

However, the Freedom From Religion Foundation did not have long to rejoice. Within days of being inundated with phone calls and emails from those responding to call for action from ADA, American Family Association, and other ministries, the U.S. Navy surrendered and stated that the decision to remove the Bibles was made without consulting senior leadership. According to Navy spokesman Comdr. Ryan Perry, the *"religious materials removed from Navy Lodge rooms will be returned."*

Look what happened when one lone housekeeper did not remain silent. What impact could you and I have if we, too, choose action over apathy?

The Heart of Ferguson

[Continued from page 6]

Pastor Thabite Anyabwile would have a different perspective on this than my own, but this we agree on:

"...we all know that the morality of an action isn't determined by the proliferation and multiplication of facts. Multiplying facts only help us determine whether the particular situation has some exculpatory features. That's useful in a particular criminal trial. But the basic right and wrong of a situation is as clear as "Thou shalt not kill." One fact, one sentence above all others roots our moral understanding. Therefore, we can at least speak a lament for the basic wrong of killing that has happened, without suspending the relevance of all other facts in determining the next righteous (we hope) reaction. These basic facts alone mean we should say something—at least "We mourn with you" or "We will pray for you" or "We're here for you." Evangelical silence in the face of these basic facts is deafening. The pretension to dispassionate objectivity in the face of a tragic death must itself be the height of privilege, a privilege Michael Brown's family certainly doesn't have. When silence is only broken to tell the broken that their speaking is wrong, then you have multiplied the injustice by not listening to the grieving. You're Job's friends darkening counsel."

That God would be glorified!

by Bill Johnson



I took a family vacation last week. It was a very active time of driving go karts, swimming, more go kart driving and more swimming, and time walking the streets of Gatlinburg, TN, and, fellowshiping around the dinner table.

You know you're getting older when:

(1) As you get out of the car you are stiff from your feet to your knees, to your hip and throughout (and it takes a good ten minutes to get loosened up).

(2) You know you're getting older when you see people just a few years younger getting to the front door of the rest stop area in a third of the time that it takes you.

(3) You know you're getting older when a loved one says "*You're showing more your age these days.*"

I could easily expand the list. However, I must also say, too, that there are immense positives to getting older. Here are just a few.

(1) You have what seems an increasingly high view of the preciousness of life: both young and old.

(2) You have an increasing gratitude for health, vitality and well-being which the young take so much for granted. This comes with seeing things change on a dime. All was well and then a tragedy strikes turning happiness into great sorrow.

(3) You have an expanding concern for children and grandchildren and other people's children. You see more clearly than ever before that decisions have serious implications either for the good or the bad.

(4) You have more resources to draw from regarding the changing trends and/or tide of the culture. You can look back and see how rapidly we are in decline as a culture which gives you greater concern for the potential (likely?) downfall of our culture if immense spiritual change doesn't occur very, very soon.

(5) Things that once were so important become less so (sports, accumulating things, entertainment for entertainment sake).

(6) Love for God and personal relationship with Him grow, I believe, in the heart of those who truly know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

(7) Your burden for God and country grows deeper than ever before as decisions that are made at the highest levels have such serious implications far more for those much younger, who will likely have to face many things that my generation will not have to face: Lawlessness at the highest levels, a diminishment of the authority of the Bible and the U.S. Constitution, the assault upon Biblical marriage, the growing threat to national security, etc.

(8) An ever increasing love and appreciation for your spouse.

This list could be so easily expanded. Getting older clearly can have its advantages. I say CAN, not always does.

I remember my dad just a few short years ago (he passed in 2008) as dementia was setting in and he was more and more confined to a wheel chair. He would often say: "Bill, I have no squawks. I've had a wonderful, wonderful life."

I visited with Charlie (80 years old) who has done 12 mission trips including two this past year. He is already planning his next one. Tears come to his eyes as he talks about a mother tearfully thanking him for the house he helped to build in some remote village in South America.

I think of Diet Eman (a name familiar to

many) who served in the Dutch resistance during World War II saving many Jewish families from concentration camps. At 94 years old, Diet just served on a short-term mission in the Dominican Republic. An auto accident occurred that brought temporary hospitalization. Her life has been one that God would be glorified until He calls her home. Diet has taken risks all her life.

I say all of this to say this: No matter our age or stage, life is worth the living. May those of us who have life and breath and who are blessed to have Christ in our hearts find ways to feed those around us with the life-giving bread of life found ultimately only in Jesus Christ: "The way, the truth and the life!"

The need is great. I am convinced the hour is late. May God keep that purpose stirring in our hearts - That God would be glorified!

Irreplaceable

One of the great concerns we have here at ADA is the destruction of the family unit and the impact on our culture.

Focus on the Family has produced an outstanding film entitled *Irreplaceable* which asks the questions "What's wrong with the Family? And what can we do about it?" *Irreplaceable* will equip you with the facts, information and real-life stories needed to better understand God's design for family and help you confidently engage your neighbors, friends, sons and daughters on issues like casual sex, marriage and fatherlessness.

We will be showing this powerful film in our auditorium on Friday, September 12 and again on Friday, September 19 at 1:00 PM and 7:00 PM. For those in the area, we urge you to join us here at American Decency, 203 E. Main, Fremont MI 49412 for one of these showings.

To schedule a showing of *Irreplaceable* in your church, call 1-800-991-6011.