

The Importance of Standing on Truth

By Steve Huston



Each month we bring our valued readers articles that inform, stir, and point to Jesus as our only hope. We painstakingly do so because it's important for Christians to stand on the truth, for the truth. God is the Author of truth and He alone sets the standards. As believers, it's our duty to discern good from evil, to teach the difference between the holy and profane, and to proclaim truth in a winsome manner. That means doing so with compassion in love. Neither we nor you can afford to remain silent in a time when evil is hardly discerned and confusion abounds; therefore, we must study the Word, be in prayer, and strengthen ourselves through daily devotions. That's our responsibility; God, in His sovereignty, keeps His word, meets our needs, upholds, strengthens, and sustains us.

What happens when a Christian neglects this sacred and sober duty of standing boldly on truth, diametrically opposed to falsehood? The answer is found in Judges 17:11-13; it's devastating to the believer (v. 11), gives the unbeliever a false sense of authority (v. 12), and gives the unbeliever a false sense of security, misrepresenting God and His Kingdom (v.13).

Each believer has something in common with the Levite priest of Judges 17. According to 1 Peter 1:9 we are also priests, "**But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people;**

that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:" It's my prayer that being part of a royal priesthood is as far as the similarity goes; for as the Family Worship Bible Guide states, "*The Levite was a religious mercenary who abandoned the God-given ministry that was his heritage to serve man-made gods for personal gain...He had no convictions or concerns apart from himself...True worship and true Christian service demand loyalty to God and His Word. We must be willing to pay the price of faithful discipleship that we may receive the 'well done, good and faithful servant' (Matt. 25:23).*"

What does it mean for Christians to belong to a royal priesthood, to be a peculiar people? Priests do not live for themselves; they live for the ones they serve. They were to serve God by representing Him; likewise, as we represent Jesus, His character is to be the defining quality of our lives. As one devotional writer put it, "Jesus is our High Priest. He placed himself between God and us and caused God's grace to meet our need, and therefore we were redeemed. As Christians we stand between Christ and his Cross on the one hand and the world in its lostness on the other. Our business is to cause that grace of Christ and the need of the world about us to meet. As the Father sent Jesus to us, Jesus sends us to his world and ours."

Jesus' life was a seamless whole. Whether he was showing compassion or dealing with sin or rebuking those who belonged to the "church," His life was one of worship and love for the Father and man. Likewise, worship and holiness, driven by love, must not be relegated to our "spiritual lives" alone. It must seamlessly weave its way through all our pursuits because our redeemed and sanctified life has its source and sustenance in the one, true God who is holy, holy, holy and is love. It's such seamlessness that causes us to stand boldly and definitively on the truth and for truth, regardless of temporal gain, loss, or persecution.

Now that we have a hold on who we are in Christ, let's look at Judges 17 to better understand the dangers of not "standing, having done all to stand."

First, it's devastating to the believer. Verse 11 teaches us that "the Levite was **content** to dwell with the man." It's a gradual road that leads to contentment in being unequally yoked. This Levite priest of the true and living God, one who served the Holy One of Israel, was content to turn mercenary, settling for a meager ten shekels and a shirt. His response, when approached by Micah to leave his priestly high calling to participate in idol worship, should not have been contentment; it should have been one of abject horror and righteous indignation. Don't

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Personal Note from the President



Is pornography victimless?
NO! A MILLION TIMES NO.

There have been so many names of individuals actively opposing pornography in the later part of the 20th century. How many of these have you heard of? Here is a very short list mostly on a national scale, but also some more localized. The fight was fought from near and far.

Alan Sears, former Director of the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography; Ed Meese, Attorney General under President Ronald Reagan; Bill Swindell, headed a national anti-pornography organization in Phoenix, AZ; Dr. Judith A. Reisman (deceased), author, researcher, educator and expert witness, exposing fraud in sex science and education since 1977. Dr. Reisman successfully spent much of her career laying the foundations for deconstructing both 'soft pornography' and 'Kinsey myths'. David Caton, former head of Florida AFA now heads Florida's Family Association; Phil Burress, former head of Citizens for Community Values (Cincinnati) and the DC group - a loose knit gathering of people from around the country that were opposing pornography in its different areas of impact: billboards, advertisements, porn shops, video outlets, TV programming, convenience stores. Loretta Detamore (deceased), faithful former leader of Muskegon Morality in Media; Pastor Bill Randall, former activist pastor assisting Loretta in Muskegon; Steve Ensley, former founder and longtime head of American Family Online; Jan LaRue, former attorney for various organizations, an effective voice applying law; Vern and Joann Haas (deceased), former heads of Greater Grand Rapids American Family Association; Lisa Van Houten, Executive Assistant American Decency Association - main organizer and former head of

campaign that drove Howard Stern off from mainstream radio; Karel Seger, Former head of Lansing American Family Association; Dr. James Dobson, former head of Focus on the Family and one of 12 individuals who were on the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography under AG Ed Meese (1987); Pat Trueman, former head of Child Exploitation and Obscenity Enforcement Section, DC; Bruce Taylor, Chief Counsel National Law Center for Children and Families, Fairfax, VA formerly one of America's most effective prosecutors of obscenity; Frances Boone (deceased), an effective and faithful local pro-decency activist, Linden, MI; Kenny Williams, an effective and faithful warrior against pornography, St. Genevieve, MO; Malcolm E. Smith (deceased), a producer of full-page ads targeting smutty magazines, Long Island, NY; Rob Showers, the first named Director of Child Exploitation and Obscenity Enforcement Section, Washington DC; William Wagner, former attorney for the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography; Donald E. Wildmon, former president and founder of American Family Association, Tupelo, MS; Allen Wildmon, former AFA staff and older brother of Don Wildmon; Buddy Smith, former AFA chapter coordinator; Brad Curl, former head of Morality in Media, New York; Dar VanderArk, (deceased) former founder and head of Michigan Decency Council, Grand Rapids; Ray Walsh (deceased), former chief out-country prosecutor, Wayne County (Detroit); Donna Rice Hughes, head of Enough is Enough; Bob Peters, former long term leader of Morality in Media, New York City; Bill Kelly (deceased), former longtime member of the FBI - he diligently fought pornography in his retirement years.

Indeed, once there was a stand against pornography! A valiant and effective stand! Obscenity was targeted as a top five law enforcement priority in the Justice Department back in the days of President Ronald Reagan (1981-1989) and George H. Bush (1989-1993). There was a section of the Justice Department called the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Enforcement Section. They targeted so-called pornography Kingpins.

During the years of 1985 through the

mid-1990s there was a window of opportunity to roll back the flood of pornography, that many of us thought would not end so soon, but with the advent of the Internet and its rapid acceptance, the tide was turned against promoting decency, guarding your heart, seeking purity, opposing pornography, obscenity and indecency.

Many local anti-pornography organizations were formed. American Family Association hosted annual AFA chapter meetings and hundreds gathered over the years for teaching, inspiration and encouragement. **Why all this energy? Why the concern then, but not so much apparently now?**

Then, and now even more: Pornography destroys lives.

The half has not been told in these days. All one has to do is think about images that you and I have personally been impacted by at some point in our lives. From advertisers, to movie producers, to pornographers (from one line of work to another), there are those who don't mean us well but rather mean us ill. They create images, movies, video clips, ads for the purposes of drawing us in visually, auditorily, totally. Even the young, or should I say, especially the young are naive and vulnerable taking nude or partially nude selfies of themselves to flirt, draw, engage with another. Pedophiles, pedophilia, sex trafficking. How do these such things come about?

The enemy of our soul coupled with sexual entrepreneurs guised as cool - predators, the weak, the godless, the damaged, the misled, the pornographers (for lack of a better word - those in it for the money using one means or another). The bottom line - they are coming after your children, grandchildren and even YOU - one way or another and now too through the dimensions of LGBTQ++++ and ... the remedy is found only in Christ! Pursue holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. Hebrews 12:14.

What Musk's Bid for Twitter Means for America

By Chris Johnson



As I write, the world's wealthiest man is attempting to buy one of the world's most influential social media platforms: Twitter.

Twitter has a unique position in the social media pantheon, not being oriented towards sharing images like Instagram, or videos like TikTok, or towards being a general use platform like Facebook, but it's instead designed to share pithy ideas, news links, and "hot takes."

It is widely used by news junkies, journalists, and political activists who all have the ability to wrap themselves in followers who are in lock-step with their thoughts and feelings on the issues. In spite of the wide range of ideologies represented on Twitter, users rarely have to come into contact with opposing viewpoints presented in good faith. When a disagreeable opinion is shared amongst a group in opposition to it, they are enabled to comment on it amongst themselves, deriding the opposing opinion holder as a wicked idiot or an idiotic fiend, while never actually having to interact with the opinion itself. Likewise, a terrible idea shared between likeminded friends and followers can be bolstered and encouraged and, with dissuasion being uncomfortable and socially unacceptable, the energy behind an idea, whether good or bad, is easily amplified.

That quick explanation is necessary for those of you who might not use Twitter to understand the narrative building tool that Twitter has become.

Here's one recent example, explained by the New York Post: "*Taylor Lorenz, the Washington Post's internet culture beat reporter, is being accused of 'doxxing' the anonymous woman who operates the popular Twitter account 'Libs of TikTok.'*"

"Lorenz, the former New York Times journalist who earlier this month broke down in

tears on MSNBC while recounting 'harassment' she has experienced online, published an article on Tuesday revealing the identity of the social media user.

"'Doxxing' is the term used to describe the act of posting the personal information of those who wish to remain anonymous..."

"In a segment that aired April 1 on MSNBC's Meet the Press Daily Lorenz revealed that online harassment targeting her and her family caused her to experience 'severe PTSD' and contemplate suicide in the recent past."

So, to summarize, at the beginning of the month Lorenz was bemoaning the harassment she had endured, and within a matter of weeks she was harassing the manager of an account she disagreed with in exactly the same way. But it's acceptable for her to do this because, within her tribe, the "Libs of TikTok" account is a "bad person." Libs of TikTok, simply shares videos posted by liberals themselves, primarily to TikTok to make people aware of what these radicals believe in their own words.

This is the same logic by which Twitter has censored other accounts - exclusively on the right - from fringe figures like Alex Jones to former President Donald Trump, while allowing radicals on the left to say literally anything.

Into this duplicitous throng steps Elon Musk, famously unpredictable founder of Tesla and SpaceX and co-founder of PayPal.

Musk's reputation on the Twitter platform has been capricious and humorous, often sharing memes and even Babylon Bee articles poking fun at socialism and woke attitudes in culture. At the beginning of the month, he tweeted a survey asking his followers what they thought of the state of free speech on Twitter, and teased about taking steps to turn it around when a large majority of respondents bemoaned how all of Twitter's censorship only ever hit on the right. A few days later, he bought over 9% of the company, turned down a seat on the board which would have limited his control, and made an offer to buy the company out-

right for \$43 billion, or almost 25% higher than its current valuation.

That's a GREAT deal for investors, and should have warranted serious consideration on the part of Twitter's board of directors which supposedly acts on their behalf. And yet, the board instead within a day adopted a "poison pill" measure prohibiting Musk from purchasing an amount of shares that would give him control of the company. Almost as if the company's control over the national narrative is more important to the board than the financial benefit of the shareholders!

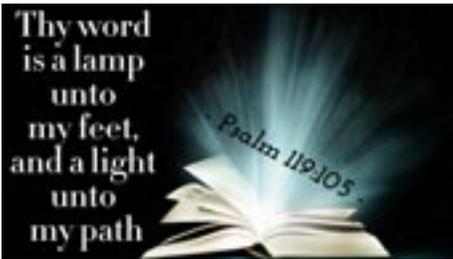
Twitter's policies have had a massively deleterious effect on national discourse already, from blocking the New York Post's breaking of the Hunter Biden laptop story in the weeks leading up to the 2020 presidential election to ousting former President Trump from the platform in the days following the inauguration of President Biden, to the censoring of out-of-favor data and research on the world's Covid-19 response.

As I write, Musk's attempts to buy the platform are ongoing; but regardless of the outcome, the response has already been telling. Besides the response of the board to Musk's potential free-speech motivated acquisition, "*four Twitter employees who spoke with Reuters said they were concerned about Musk's ability to influence the company's policies on abusive users and harmful content.*" Verified Twitter users, or "blue checks" as they're semi-derogatorily known on the platform, shared fears of what a Twitter which didn't censor unfavorable opinions might look like. Most alarmingly, within days of Musk making his offer, it was reported that the Justice Department would be beginning an investigation into regulatory issues involving his electric vehicle company, Tesla.

Really, what this story gives us ample evidence of is that Silicon Valley knows that while they control Twitter, they shape the national narrative. If they can shut down ideas they oppose before they gain popularity, or even just limit their reach, they're able to inject the "acceptable" arguments into society. If left in their hands, free speech is a thing of the past.

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be too hasty in casting aspersions upon this fellow without some honest self-examination. How often do we appear content before a watching world and our Savior's eyes when given the opportunity to stand boldly yet lovingly, responding with silence or a milquetoast word, fearing confrontation or rejection? I fear that our price is often much less than ten shekels and a shirt. For what do we trade our priestly high calling? Acceptance? Friendship? Position? Avoiding persecution? The possibilities are nearly limitless; may God forgive us and help us to do better.

In balancing the two greatest commands upon which hang all the law and the prophets (Matthew 22:37-40), let us take Puritan John Trapp's words to heart. "*Some warmth must be in a reproof but it must not be scalding hot.*"

Before moving on to verse 12, I want to remind you of the great necessity in keeping your ministry fervent and alive. Read these dangers with fear and trembling. "*Alas, how apt are the best to cool if they are not kept warm by a powerful ministry! We are apt to lose the hatred of sin, the tenderness of conscience, fervency in prayer, and the delights and power of heavenly meditations. How apt is faith to stagger if it is not powerfully undergirded. How hardly will we keep the heat of love, the confidence of hope, the resolution of obedience, without the help of a powerful ministry. Can any that are not blind or proud imagine that they are so holy and good that they are above the necessity of such assistance?*" (Richard Baxter) **Let us sit under sound, Biblical preaching that clearly applies truth to our lives, exhorting, convicting, and stirring us on to further personal study.** Let us similarly minister to others.

Next, verse 12 warns that our contentment

with sin and silence in rebuking it gives the unbeliever a false sense of authority; for we read, "And Micah consecrated the Levite."

Micah's consecration really meant nothing at all. Why? He had no authority from God to declare a renegade, mercenary Levite as set apart (consecrated) by God to the service of this idolatrous false religion. The Levite, by birth, belonged to God, set apart for His service. Through the Levite's contented compliance Micah believed that he had the authority to do as he wished.

How often is our silence and lack of "having done all to stand in this evil day" seen as a contented compliance that emboldens the enemies of God, giving them, in their own eyes, authority to continually reject the authority of God, the Word of God, and even the existence of God?

As a fire goes out both light and heat dissipate. Darkness has no power or authority over light and coldness is simply the lack of heat; yet as light and heat withdraw, darkness and cold take over. The same is true spiritually. When the light and warmth of holiness are ablaze within us there is no room for dark and cold. In Matthew chapter five Jesus said that we, as believers, are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Reader, we are meant to make a difference; when we go along to get along we are trying to hide our light under a bushel and our cleansing, preserving influence is lost.

Let me close this section with Psalm 119:105; "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." **Sometimes the world reacts violently to the light because we are shining it in their eyes instead of lighting their path.** It's also true that men love darkness because their deeds are evil; but we do not show people the way out of darkness by shining truth in their eyes so much as on their path, the destruction it leads to, and a better way.

Finally, we find that our silence, our lack of standing on truth and for truth, gives the unbeliever a false sense of security, misrepresenting God and His Kingdom. After the Levite was content to be unequally yoked (for a price) and after Micah usurped au-

thority, consecrating the Levite, we read, "Then said Micah, 'Now know I that the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest.'"

With the phrase "Now know I," it would appear that he had known that his idol making and worshiping was sinful; prior to his hiring of the Levite he had fear of judgment. Apparently he knew that Levites had been set apart to the priesthood and ministry of the sanctuary; so now having acquired one he feels a sense of security, albeit a false one. The Levite neither stood on nor for the truth of the second commandment; "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." His silence led to his active participation which led Micah to believe that the Lord would bless his false worship. In refusing to declare and define the difference between the holy and the profane, in refusing to stand in love for God and in compassion for wayward men, we lend a false sense of security that their sin against a holy God is okay. As part of the royal priesthood we need to recognize that our silence and lack of action not only gives a false sense of security but misrepresents our thrice holy God.

We cannot afford to sit in silence. Paul asks, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" and explains the importance of speaking the truth to meet man's only true need, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Let us not be ashamed of the gospel but speak it clearly and winsomely, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Live holy. Stand boldly. Speak with love.

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Be All That You Can Be

By Steve Huston



BE ALL THAT YOU CAN BE! Turns out that the United States Army and transhumanists have the same slogan. Whether melding man and technology or genes are manipulated to create “super-soldiers,” knock out cancer, or enhance other desirable traits within a person, we had better be a thinking, praying, and discerning people.

Technocracy covers an extremely wide area of topics and subtopics; each of which demands deep ethical consideration and, for the Christian, thinking within Biblical parameters to the glory of God and to the meeting of man’s deepest need - salvation. Transhumanism, the blending of man and machine, and its incompatibility with Christianity’s theological precepts is my focus here.

Technology, including that specifically related to transhumanism, is promoted as a matter of convenience and often accompanied by false promises of freedom. While there’s no denying that technological advances have often brought convenience and ease to our lives, it’s also true that with these conveniences we’ve given up an element of control which translates into a loss of freedom. We need to think Biblically and critically, realizing that if these new technologies are put into the wrong hands a technological fence is put around us to control us; thereby stifling the ability to be all that we can and all that God intends us to be.

I am not against technology, but I do take issue with it when it runs contrary to God’s plan or is designed to draw men away from their need for God, salvation, sanctification, or keeps us from following the command to “set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” When we better understand the tenets and goals of transhumanism (and those of Christianity), we’ll realize that

while one can be a Christian and secondarily a technophile, one cannot be a Christian transhumanist anymore than we can be a Christian Muslim, Christian Buddhist, or a Christian witch. This will sound like science fiction, yet much of it is already here on some level and readily desired and accepted by the masses thanks to the propaganda put out by Hollywood.

When one considers that man was created in the image of God – that we are image-bearers of our Creator - one is flabbergasted at the hubris of the transhumanists. Being evolutionists, they have a sense of duty to use science and technology to transcend the so called limitations of the human existence, speeding up the process and recreating mankind into the image that they think it needs to be. **Indeed, one can become as God, increase one’s knowledge, and find “eternal life” here on earth.** Sounds a lot like the serpent’s false promises to Eve in the garden, doesn’t it?

Lest you think I’m making this up, gubernatorial and presidential candidate, Zoltan Istvan, is a transhumanist who wrote in the Huffington Post (2016): *“We must force our evolution in the present day via our reasoning, inventiveness, and especially our scientific technology. In short, we must embrace transhumanism—the radical field of science that aims to turn humans into, for lack of a better word, gods.”* He continues, *“Obviously, the human body is a mediocre vessel for our actual possibilities in this material universe. Our biology severely limits us. As a species we are far from finished and therefore unacceptable. The transhumanist believes we should immediately work to improve ourselves via enhancing the human body and eliminating its weak points. This means ridding ourselves of flesh and bones, and upgrading to new cybernetic tissues, alloys, and other synthetic materials, including ones that make us cyborg-like and robotic. It also means further merging the human brain with the microchip and the impending digital frontier. Biology is for beasts, not future transhumanists.”*

Four years later Elon Musk stated that with synthetic mRNA/DNA you can basically do anything. He said it’s like a computer code

that could stop/reverse aging or do anything you want. It could even “turn you into a freaking butterfly if you want, with the right DNA sequence.”

Whether inserting chips, injecting nanobots, or using CRISPR technology to edit/manipulate DNA sequences, transhumanism attempts to remove God from the equation, focusing on the materialistic. In trying to circumnavigate God, man attempts, by his own strength, to reverse the effects of sin, ignore the value of redemptive suffering, refuse the need for divine forgiveness, and attain eternal life without humbling himself to the atoning work of Christ upon the cross. Christians must recognize the futility of such actions. Whether we live 50, 100, or 1,000+ years we will still stand before God and give an account of our lives; God will be the Judge. There is only one way to salvation and that is through Jesus, God’s only begotten Son. Even if one could “live forever” on this earth through “digital immortality” (uploading one’s mind into computer programs) or cryogenics, this earth will one day pass away and they will still give an account of what they have done with their soul.

Christians are not meant to be carried away on wings of ease or so focused on their own physical longevity/health to the ignorance of those still bound by the chains of sin. The goal of transhumanism is to make us more than human and modify our behavior; yet Christ died for those who are human.

Wesley J. Smith, writing for First Things Magazine, so well contrasts the fundamental principles of transhumanism and Christianity that I will close with his words: *“First principles matter, and those of transhumanism and Christianity could not be more contradictory. Transhumanism is materialistic. Christianity is theistic. Transhumanism is utopian. Christianity sees the fallen world realistically. Transhumanism perceives immortality as something that can be achieved by men. Christianity identifies eternal salvation as the mercy of a loving God. Its eschatology focuses on God’s promises, not upon advanced scientific applications.”*

The Longing for Identity

By Lisa Van Houten



In March, many who once identified as transgender declared a De-Trans Awareness Day, flooding social media with their experiences. They spoke of the social pressure to embrace transgenderism and the permanent bodily changes they regret. **Regret was a common theme.**

As one girl wrote: *“When I was 15, lonely, and hated my body, I got sucked into gender ideology online. My school encouraged me and I was easily prescribed a high dose of testosterone at 18, and it was very damaging. This is not rare.”*

Indeed, it isn’t rare. Between 2016 and 2017, the number of gender surgeries for females in the U.S. quadrupled; in the United Kingdom the rates of “gender dysphoria” in teenage girls have increased over 4,400% over the previous decade.

What’s behind this epidemic leading adolescents to adopt a transgender identity, willingly undergoing life-altering hormone injections and the amputation of body parts? Is it merely the fact that in our now LGBTQ-affirming culture thousands of previously closeted “transgenders” now feel the freedom to come out? If that were the case, that trend would be seen among all demographics, which it isn’t. Rather, the dramatic explosion of transgender identification is occurring mainly among teenage girls.

After noticing “clusters” of teen girls in the same friend groups who all of a sudden begin to identify as transgender, Dr. Lisa Littman, a professor and public health researcher from Brown University, began to study that odd statistical phenomenon. In 2018 she released a study showing that the transgender craze among teens was a form of “social and peer contagion” affecting vulnerable and suggestible teenagers. In the

recent past, other forms of “social contagion” such as anorexia and self-cutting became trends among teen girls. Now as girls navigate through puberty struggling with anxiety, poor self-image, and a plethora of social pressures unique to this social media-driven culture, transgender identity has become the new form of self-harm, leading girls to take testosterone and undergo mastectomies.

Abigail Schrier, author of *Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters*, writes: *“Their stories follow a pattern: A girl never expresses any discomfort with her biological sex until puberty, when anxiety and depression descend. The girl struggles to make friends. She immerses in social media and discovers transgender gurus. Or her school holds an assembly celebrating gender journeys, or hosts a Gay-Straight Alliance club pushing gender ideology. At first, she tries out a new name and pronouns. Her school encourages her, keeping all this a secret from her parents. Then, she wants more. ...”*

Teens who crave acceptance are finding it by embracing the trendy identity of transgenderism. On the victimhood scale of intersectionality, there’s nothing much better than being part of the transgender community. As Schrier also explains: *“Teens today spend far less time in person with friends than any previous generation. Most of their social life occurs online, where feelings of inadequacy run wild and the challenge of making and keeping ‘friends’ never lets up. One of the surest ways to win friends and followers is by declaring a glamorous new gender identity, and so they do. Anything to feel lonely no more. But for many of these girls, the new identity provides no cure. The distress that catalyzed their gender journeys remains.”*

Adolescents, seeking to escape reality, become immersed in virtual online communities where transgender ideology is especially prevalent. Helena Kerschner, who de-transitioned after identifying as a “trans boy,” is now speaking out about the cultlike dynamics of sites such as Tumblr where those who are uncomfortable with themselves and their bodies are persuaded

that those feelings are a sign that they’re transgender. As a girl named Jessie writes: *“The lgbt community online brainwashed me into thinking my confusion and pain was gender dysphoria at 16-18 ...”*

This ideology has infiltrated schools, entertainment, social media, corporations, and even the medical field. Planned Parenthood is one of the largest suppliers of testosterone to confused girls. They dole out dangerous hormone treatments, not based on a medical diagnosis, but based on the girl’s *self-diagnosis* of gender dysphoria – called “informed consent.” In what can only be described as malpractice, medical doctors are prescribing puberty-blockers to children and plastic surgeons are performing medically unnecessary mastectomies on girls as young as 15, even as the American College of Pediatricians warns that puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones can have negative side effects, including osteoporosis, mood disorders, seizures, cognitive impairment, sterility, and an increased risk of heart attacks, stroke, diabetes, blood clots and cancers.

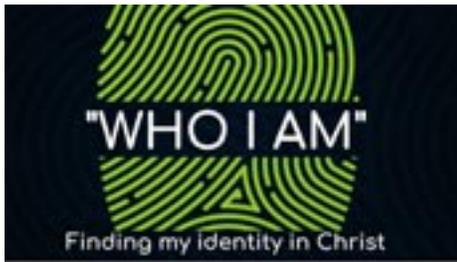
Many public schools are also complicit as teachers and counselors persuade adolescents to embrace a transgender identity without parental knowledge or consent. For example, Wisconsin teachers underwent training where they were instructed to hide a child’s transgender identity from parents. The training stated: ***“Remember, parents are not entitled to know their kids’ identities. That knowledge must be earned.”*** In Florida, a school counselor encouraged a 12-year-old girl to embrace a transgender identity without alerting the parents. The school called her by a new name and encouraged others to refer to her as a “boy.” The parents found out only after the girl attempted suicide while at school.

School officials and doctors are telling parents they should help their troubled children transition to a transgender lifestyle through medical intervention. While many parents resist this advice from “professionals,” many other parents believe the lies that the “loving” thing is to affirm their child’s confusion.

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The Longing for Identity

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This generation of youth is being lied to and manipulated by the adults in their world who are supposed to protect them. Left in the wake are thousands of victims whose lives will never be the same. Here's just one heart-wrenching account: *"I finally realized I'm not a boy and I don't know where to go from here. I am almost 16 years old and have identified as trans for most of the last six years. ... My parents were very supportive... They called me by my new name and pronouns, and even let me get top surgery last year: [mastectomy] My chest is maimed with heavy scarring... I hate the way it looks. ... Now that I am flat-chested I can pass as male and I realize I don't actually like presenting as male ... I miss being feminine... From the second I woke up in the operating room I knew it was a mistake... Everyone was congratulating me and saying how happy they were for me but I didn't share their enthusiasm. It felt like I had just jumped off a cliff and everybody else was standing on the cliff looking at me on the rocks below, and clapping.*

Yet there are glimmers of hope that this insanity is being recognized for what it is. The United Kingdom's High Court affirmed what should be obvious in December 2020: *"There is no age-appropriate way to explain to many of these children what losing their fertility or full sexual function may mean to them in later years."* In the U.S., states including Alabama, Arizona and Arkansas have passed laws banning the prescription of cross-sex hormones and puberty blockers to minors and Texas Gov. Greg Abbott directed all state agencies to consider transgender drugs and surgeries for minors as illegal child abuse.

Yet President Biden described these state efforts to protect children and ban the surgical mutilation of their bodies as "hateful." His administration is actively pushing the idea

that children as young as ten years old should have access to irreversible mutilative genital surgery and seeking to codify it into law. It's no surprise that the party that advocates for the murder of unborn children would have no qualms about destroying children's lives after they're born – all to advance an agenda.

Tens of thousands of these young people have expressed regret of their "gender transition" on sites such as Reddit, revealing the destruction this ideology has caused. As one person wrote: *"What was I seeking ...? A feeling of wholeness and perfection. ... I chose an irreversible change before I'd even begun to understand my sexuality. ..."* **The good news is that the wholeness that these youth are longing for can be found – not in a new gender identity – but an identity in Christ.** We know the Antidote to their dysphoria and we're called to point the lost and hurting to Him. As C.S. Lewis wrote: "God can't give us peace and happiness apart from Himself because there is no such thing."

The Battle Has Only Begun

By Lisa Van Houten



Pro-life Americans are waiting with hopeful anticipation for the Supreme Court's ruling on *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* that should be announced in June. Will the conservative majority have the courage to overturn the horrific and unconstitutional decision of *Roe v. Wade*? If the U.S. Supreme Court does recognize that abortion is not a constitutionally-protected right, the legality of abortion will once again become an issue for individual states to decide. Several states are not waiting for the Supreme Court and have recently passed legislation, such as heartbeat laws, to significantly limit abortion. However, while

these limits are encouraging and will save some lives, we shouldn't be satisfied with just saving "some" babies. Sadly, some liberal states have already enacted state constitutional provisions enshrining the so-called "right" to an abortion.

In Michigan, an 1846 law banned abortion. That law was never repealed. In 1972, Michigan voters rejected a ballot proposal to legalize abortion through 20 weeks of pregnancy, upholding the state's abortion ban. Soon after in 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court invented a national right to abortion. However, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled in *People v. Bricker* that *Roe v. Wade* is only blocking enforcement of Michigan's law; *Roe* did not repeal Michigan's law. If *Roe* is now overturned, our state's ban on abortion would stand!

That is, unless Governor Whitmer gets her way. Whitmer is once again abusing her authority and has filed a lawsuit to ask the Michigan Supreme Court to "find" a right to abortion within Michigan's Constitution, overturning the 1972 election and 175 years of legal precedent.

And if that scheme doesn't work, Leftists who want to protect the slaughter of babies in the womb have another ploy up their sleeves. Planned Parenthood is striving to amend Michigan's Constitution, legalizing **unlimited** abortion in the state. They're seeking to collect 425,059 signatures to put this amendment on the ballot in November. Michigan Right to Life warns that this proposed amendment is written so broadly that it would legalize the killing of babies throughout the nine months of pregnancy and even beyond to those already born by redefining 'fetal viability.' *"Instead of it meaning the point children can survive outside the womb—about 23 weeks—it would mean children that require significant medical care are not considered "viable," like for example every child in the NICU."*

We fervently pray that the evil decision of *Roe* is overturned. Yet, if that happens, the battle to protect the unborn won't be over. We can't become complacent, but must renew our resolve to continue to defend the defenseless.

Christ, Our Cupbearer

By Chris Johnson



This article was originally something of an Easter meditation which we sent out on Good Friday, but – as my pastor reminded our congregation on Easter Sunday – every Sunday is “Resurrection Day.” We gather on the first day of the week in the tradition of the early church to commemorate His resurrection, as described in the New Testament. Of course, the good news of Christ’s death on our behalf and His resurrection as the “first fruits” is not seasonal, but eternally and constantly relevant. So if you get our email and have déjà vu reading this article, you’re not going crazy and if you don’t get our emails this is some of what you’re missing! Email us at kimberly@american-decency.org to get signed up today.

The Bible relays the stories of several cupbearers within its volumes. Nehemiah was the cupbearer to King Artaxerxes when he was moved by God to return to rebuild the city walls of Jerusalem. Going back a thousand years, Joseph met a cupbearer in prison whom he asks to petition the Pharaoh for Joseph’s own freedom.

In those times, a cupbearer, when he brought the king his cup, would test it himself for poison leaving the king’s own life completely in the hands of the cupbearer.

While these are the only occasions where “cupbearers” are mentioned in the Bible, there are a few times when the responsibilities of the office of cupbearer are referred to, although we might not immediately recognize them. In these cases, the “cup” is delivered by God Himself.

For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup with foaming wine, well mixed, and He pours out from it, and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs. Psalm 75:8

Wake yourself, wake yourself, stand up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the hand of the LORD the cup of his wrath, who have drunk to the dregs the bowl, the cup of staggering. Isaiah 51:17

The cup in the LORD’s right hand will come around to you, and utter shame will come upon your glory! Habakkuk 2:16

Thus the LORD, the God of Israel said to me: “Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it.” Jeremiah 25:15

In the Old Testament, throughout the prophetic books, this image of God serving His wine to Israel and to the nations is repeated over and over. And in every example, God’s cup is a cup of “wrath” or of “staggering” leading to shame.

So, it’s Easter weekend. And, if church historians were 100% accurate with their dating methods, 1,990 years ago today, Christ was crucified in our place. And, the night before, he knelt in the garden to pray with His disciples and ask, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will but as You will.” And then, He “drunk to the dregs, the bowl, the cup of staggering.”

God gave the nations His cup to drink, but Christ, our cupbearer, drank it in our place.

In the story of Joseph, while he was in prison, Joseph asks a favor of Pharaoh’s cupbearer: “Only remember me, when it is well with you...” Of course, the cupbearer famously when he was restored to His position forgot all about Joseph. *Our cupbearer did not forget!* Joseph’s request is almost exactly echoed by the thief on the cross who asked our cupbearer, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” And Jesus assured Him, “Today, you will be with me in Paradise.”

While Christ drained the cup of wrath Himself, He served His disciples a cup as well, saying, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”

That was the end of the article for the email

alert, but let me share another thought with our newsletter readers.

The parallels between the stories of Joseph and Christ are truly amazing, and yet another reminder that the Author of history is telling a story and we are in it. God is not biting His nails, hoping that someone out there will step up. Rather, He’s using our best efforts, our failures, our cowardice, our flashes of rebellion where we don’t know what came over us, our wisdom, our ignorance, our virtue, and our shame, all of it – He’s working it all together for His glory and our good and according to His wisdom. Of this wisdom, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2:8, “None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” Or, as Joseph told his brothers in Genesis 5:20, “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.”

Having drunk the fatal cup, Christ - like Joseph - ascended from his unjust punishment to reign, not at the right hand of Pharaoh, but of God. As Joseph gave his cup to his little brother as means of bringing him back to live with him, Christ gave us His cup as a means of uniting us to Himself. Our Cupbearer is ascended to a position of “all authority,” and still He serves us His cup, uniting us to Himself even to the point that we are His body and He is our head. May we be united in Him and to Him, fulfilling His goals out of gratitude for His sacrifice.



National Day of Prayer - May 5, 2022 at Noon in Fremont, MI

By Bill Johnson



It doesn't take the likes of me to tell you that America and American freedom is on the precipice of either collapsing from within or being destroyed from without and/or a combination of both. You know it (especially if you not only receive our newsletters but read them earnestly). Let me give you an explanation of why I am addressing NDOP this way this year.

Over the years as I began to see America slipping into increasing levels of incivility, party division, and the degradation and corruption of the mainstream media as it became politicized and in total lockstep with the left, I noted at our NDOP gatherings that it seemed like just a polite formality. The greatest generation was largely deceased and with them the sense of godliness and sober mindedness seemed to be slipping away. As I led our local events, increasingly I began to ask God, "How long are you going to be so gracious to America?" And I wondered why? We seemed to still be the strongest nation in the world militarily. The people still prospered and could move about freely and have a sense that all was well even though it was becoming clear that there were warning signs all about us. One thing, though, did stand out. Pastor John MacArthur had spoken at a NDOP event in Colorado Springs (perhaps 15 years ago) stating that God had taken His hand of protection off from America as America had become a reprobate nation. Over these years I share MacArthur's view. I believe that America has been under God's judgment (wrath) for a long time - allowing things to unfold as we as a culture have chosen the death culture over life. MacArthur has also said that it is too late. Too late to fix things. Many may argue with that, but I just report this because if it isn't too late, it is very late and only the Lord can revive this spiritually bankrupt nation. It is

as if the Lord is saying: "You want same sex marriage even knowing that I detest it. It goes against my holy plan. Take it then, but live with the consequences - much deeper and wider will be its natural out workings. You want to make abortion legal even up to the moment of birth and beyond? You reject my love and my goodness to you. You will not be able to stop the wickedness and the evil this will bring to your family and many others.

What: National Day of Prayer

When: Thursday, May 5, 2022

12:00 - 1:00 PM

**Where: American Decency
Fremont, MI 49412**

The event will include:

Congregational Singing - Led by Bob Azkoul (noted pianist, concert leader, international tour guide)

Bill Johnson - **A CALL TO PRAYER** - Our Father Who Art in Heaven ...

Kamal Saleem - (virtually) PRAYER - Declaring God's warning signs for spiritual decline for families (founder of Koome Ministries, Colorado)

Prayer for:

- * **Persecuted church and American churches:** Pastor Vern Picknally, Pastor Bethel OPC Fremont, MI
- * **Ukraine and Ukrainians** - Lena Picknally
- * **U.S. military** - Tricia Luchies - mother of an active duty serviceman
- * **Those in the battle for broken lives - those assaulting the Image of God** - American Family Studio's Michael Perkins is the Producer of the movie: "In His Image"
- * **Children and families.** - Chris Johnson Prayer for educators, government officials, etc.. **Prayer for America.**

Pastor Gene Walter, Pastor Fruitland Baptist Church, Whitehall - important word regarding living Christianly in a post-Christian America

Prayer: Thy Kingdom Come Thy Will be Done - Steve Huston

GR/Minneapolis - NO!

By Bill Johnson



The recent effort to recreate the BLM chaos of Minneapolis (George Floyd) in Grand Rapids.

I recently did a brief repost on my personal Facebook platform. It simply displayed a picture of Patrick Lyoya's mugshot and a breakdown of his arrest record in Kent County (Grand Rapids, MI). Domestic violence; obstructing justice/failure to appear; suspended or revoked license; hindering and opposing a police officer; obstructing justice/failure to appear;

I posted this because this incident was not covered very adequately by media after he was shot and killed by a Grand Rapids Police officer. The local Grand Rapids media was doing what mainstream media often does. Jump to the aid of the "victim" and raising questions about the police officer - fomenting the public by skewing the evidence against law enforcement. On my Facebook page I merely wrote these words: **"Perhaps this was why Lyoya refused to respond to the police officer in Grand Rapids - request after request. 'Get in the car. Stop. Let go of the taser' - over and over again."**

I had watched the video provided by the Grand Rapids police which included (1) the police officer's video from the stationary car that the officer left as he approached the parked car. (2) the officer's personal video camera on his body, (3) the video taken by an innocent bystander. The video lasted several minutes.

The officer approached the driver, Patrick Lyoya and told him to get back in the car. He didn't. The officer asked if he spoke

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A Word Regarding Finances

By Bill Johnson



One of the highest joys in my tenure as founder and president of this pro-decency (anti-pornography) organization has been to experience and watch the hand of God move upon His people through financial sacrifice since the inception of this ministry back in 1987 (first as American Family Association of Michigan - 1987-1999 and then through the American Decency Association - 1999-to the present.

I recall the days while I was still a teacher in the Fremont Public Schools of sensing God's call into launching out in faith and taking the step of trusting God and believing that He would take care of me and my, then, young family. I recall the call from a well-meaning person that said "Bill: don't do it." He related that a friend of his had stepped out in faith and that the support failed and he had to leave his ministry work. That has not been our experience. Yes, there have been times of financial testing even, years ago, not being able to pay myself and another staff member for a couple of pay periods. But, God showed Himself strong then and His assurances and faithfulness have been true from the very beginning.

Yet, in saying this, we have remained a smaller organization that is not a financial power house. And, that has never been our intention to be building up a "war chest", but rather to never forget where our help comes from and humbly seek God's favor and support through people who trusted in God and who trusted God in our work and ministry. As I think you know by now, we are a thankful team at ADA and an important part of our work is to express that thankfulness in the gifts that we receive - and it is a joy to do so. Again, we know where our help comes from. It comes from the Lord!

So on behalf of the staff and the ADA board, I want to thank you for your faith in God and your trust in the manner in which you support the American Decency Association.

At the same time, I think it is important for me to tell you with clarity that we don't take financial support for granted despite years of the gracious and generous support of you, His people. With times now upon us the likes of which we have never seen before, I want to just ask you to keep us in your prayers and to please continue to stand with us as God leads you in your financial support of this ministry! We have been noting over the last couple of years reduced giving in many months. We believe it is clear that it is because of the changing times brought on by the evil agenda of the current administration. There is a globalist move in conjunction with socialistic intentions to tear down the economy, to target fossil fuels in the interest of bringing the middle class to their knees and make us increasingly dependent upon and subservient to the federal government. Much more could be said in this regard and we hope to say more even as we hear more and more in the media regarding bitcoin and other discussions regarding cryptocurrency. The dollar is under increasing attack internationally and at home. If our currency is changed that our monies are handled digitally whereby the government can put monies into our "digital banks" it can also be taken out at their whim (or their pleasure - if we are not compliant with the worldview of those in control.)

Lastly, and more applicable at the moment, is the growing concern regarding inflation.

We are not oblivious to the higher costs that you are having to pay at the pump, at the grocery store, etc. Boy are we not oblivious as we see the elevated price of chicken and beef (for example) and ... you name it.

Let me close by saying that we understand! There are many worthy ministries and causes. We are thankful that you recognize us as one of them! As you trust God and trust God's working in us, we trust God working in you - that He will lead you in what and whom you support. We can all only do what we can do on so many fronts including finances. May God continue to lead us, too, at ADA, and show us the way

in all of life including our finances. Thank you for reading this request.

GR/Minneapolis - NO!

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English. Lyoya answered affirmatively. Yet Lyoya did not get back in the car after the officer directed him to get back in the car. Lyoya ran off and the officer pursued him calling out to him to stop. The officer upon catching up with him wrestled him to the ground. Lyoya got a hold of the officer's taser. The officer asked him to let go of the taser. He repeated it several times. The taser is considered a weapon whereby Lyoya if he got possession now puts the officer in a vulnerable position. The officer shot Lyoya killing him. The officer clearly had all he could handle. He was fighting off Lyoya and trying to keep possession of the taser. Lyoya had fully shown his hand. He was forcefully resisting and he initiated the physical engagement.

Several people commented on Facebook by saying. "We never hear about this in the news." Another person wrote: "I watched the videos; the officer gave him chance after chance! He took the taser in his hand fighting the officer. All he had to do was stay in his car, or simply COOPERATE!"

Why make this a racial incident? Patrick Lyoya is a human being who resisted the police officer's requests. Please pray that somehow the predictable efforts of Al Sharpton - doing the funeral - and BLM's efforts to politicize this into another trumped up white supremacist incident will not be successful in the weeks ahead. This incident and the media's portrayal of law-breakers as victims and law enforcement officers as aggressors shows the increasing downfall of our reprobate nation.