



ILLINOIS Family Institute

Boldly Bringing a Biblical Perspective to Public Policy in the Land of Lincoln.



Newsletter | Winter 2020

Sing praises to God, sing praises;
Sing praises to our King, sing praises.
For God is the King of all the earth;
Sing praises with a psalm of wisdom.
God reigns over the nations,
God sits on His holy throne. Psalm 47:6-8

Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!



pro life. pro marriage. pro family.

from the **Executive Director — David E. Smith**



Among the key themes in Scripture, God's **mercy** is monumental. The English word mercy appears some 341 times, and the four Hebrew and Greek words associated with mercy – often translated as kindness, lovingkindness, goodness, favor, compassion, and pity – appear 454 times.

In the wake of a very contentious and crooked national election and the unconstitutional COVID-19 lock-down mandates, it is easy to become discouraged or even depressed about the wickedness of the Left. But in response, it would be wise if we stop to consider just how merciful our God has been to us individually and corporately as a nation.

In Psalm 136 (NKJV), the word **mercy** occurs 26 times in the familiar, repeated refrain: **"For His mercy endures forever."** Repetition in the Bible often denotes an authoritative emphasis and is intended to draw special attention to the wisdom, or warning, that follows. Through the psalmist, clearly God wants us to focus and meditate on His infinite mercy.

While a dictionary or thesaurus can help us define mercy and its frequent companion grace, I like the simplicity of this statement from the devotional *Our Daily Bread*:

Grace is getting what we do not deserve. Mercy is not receiving what we do deserve. (July 12, 1998)

The undeserved mercy referenced in Psalm 136 is expressed by the Hebrew word **hesed**. It is a difficult word to translate precisely into English, as evidenced by the variety of words used in different versions of Scripture, but its frequent use in the Old Testament, 245 occurrences, certainly tells us that **hesed** is a core component of God's character.

At the second giving of the Law, God proclaims Himself to Moses as "abounding in" or "filled with" **hesed**:

"The LORD, the LORD God, merciful [hesed] and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy [hesed] for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin ..."
~ Exodus 34:6b-7a

In Exodus 20:6, God says He lavishes His **hesed** "for a thousand generations on those who love Me and obey My commands." And Moses appeals to God's **hesed** in his intercession for the people as he prays, "Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy [hesed], just as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now. (Numbers 14:19)

So, how should we respond to the limitless, everlasting mercy of God? Surely our response ought to be one of unending **gratitude** and praise to our merciful Lord!

We must not allow ourselves or others to be influenced by or fall victim to current cultural and social propaganda or the prevailing corruption, even violent, discontent that is promulgated in the public square. Such ideologies and abhorrent behavior are based on disinformation, half-truths, and outright falsehood, and they flourish in hearts that lack gratitude toward God.

Witnessing the spread of this evil, I have felt compelled to examine my own level of appreciation to Almighty God. As a result of my introspection, I have begun to regularly and intentionally check my level of thankfulness. I know I should live and pray with a grateful spirit in ALL circumstances – because God is Lord of ALL circumstances. I now better understand the need to celebrate God's goodness in my life: blessings, challenges, trials, bounty and provision. Everything

continued on page 5...

**For His mercy
endures forever.**



Election Fraud — a Myth?

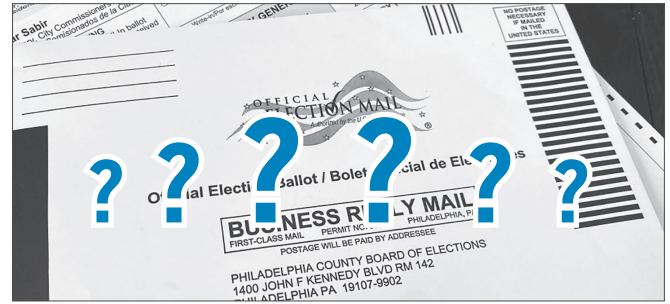
At the time of this writing, Project Veritas has received nearly 1,000 reports of election fraud for this past election.

Project Veritas “investigates and exposes corruption, dishonesty, self-dealing, waste, fraud, and other misconduct in both public and private institutions to achieve a more ethical and transparent society.” www.projectveritas.com

One of the past attempts at stealing the election that Project Veritas investigators uncovered was a ballot harvesting scheme involving paid political allies and associates of Rep. **Ilhan Omar** (D-MN) during her 2020 primary.

The crime involved going to the elderly and new immigrants at the onset of early voting, offering help and getting them to request a mail-in ballot. Once they received the ballot, the scammers would go back to take it from them unopened or help them fill it out. Then they would mail it – with their candidates selected.

A more recent scheme just uncovered this past election involves a whistleblower that works in the Traverse City, Michigan Post Office. He and his co-workers were instructed to go through the mail on November 4th (day after the election), pull out mail-in-ballots and hand-stamp them with the previous day’s date (November 3rd) and send them to the election authorities as express mail. The whistleblower said they were doing the same thing in another post office as well. When Project Veritas reached out to the



postal supervisor who gave the directive to get his comment, he hung up on them.

And perhaps the most shocking case is one that has been taking place in Texas for years. Raquel Rodriguez, **GOP consultant** to House candidate Mauro Garza, is running a well-oiled election fraud organization. She recently made \$55,000 for her team to deliver a minimum of 5,000 votes for Biden, 16 days before election day. She will sell herself and her team for any candidate of either party – ones running for judicial seats, state representative and senate seats, county races and even President of the United States. She trades her services for political clout. Judges, state reps and senators, etc., are beholden to her for favors. In an exclusive Project Veritas undercover video, she names the officials.

PROJECT
Veritas

To report election fraud, email veritastips@protonmail.com. *

COVID-19
survival rates
per CDC:

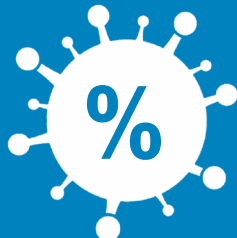
Ages 0-19: **99.997%**

Ages 20-49: **99.98%**

Ages 50-69: **99.5%**

Ages 70 & over: **94.6%**

Did
YOU?
KNOW?



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Do you have a religious liberty, parental rights or other First Amendment concern that needs legal attention?

Contact the **Justice & Freedom Law Center** at 888-307-5259 or via email at contactus@jflc.us. *



Illinois Family Action is the non-profit legislative action arm of IFI. If you are interested in a more partisan and overtly political Christian response to the cultural chaos of the day, please visit their website often: ifiaction.org. *



We are proud to have over **13,000 subscribers to our channel** where we have content culturally relevant for today. During the winter months ahead, please check out our videos that feature Dr.

Michael Brown, Dr. Robert Gagnon, Dr. Erwin Lutzer, Dr. Wayne Grudem, Rev. Ceasar LeFlore, Brigitte Gabriel, Professor Anthony Esolen, Pastor Doug Wilson and many more! *

The Youngest U.S. House Member in Recent History

Written by Jenna Smith

Madison Cawthorn is the new U.S. Representative for the 11th Congressional district of North Carolina.

You may recognize the 25-year-old Cawthorn from speaking at this year's Republican National Convention.

When he was 18, Cawthorn was in a horrible car crash that paralyzed him from the waist down. He was given a one percent chance of survival. Cawthorn says that through the power of prayer he is here today. After a year in recovery, Cawthorn said he wanted to give up, but realized that God had spared his mind and his ability to speak for a reason: "My accident has given me new eyes to see and new ears to hear," he said in his RNC speech.

Cawthorn will be the youngest member elected to Congress in over 200 years, taking second place to William Charles Claiborne, who was just 22 when he replaced Andrew Jackson in the U.S. House of Representatives. (The history of Claiborne and how the Congress made an exception for him despite Constitutional requirements is quite fascinating.)

The far-left "news" platform, CNN, describes Cawthorn as "fiscally conservative, anti-abortion, pro-gun and an immigration hardliner," all of which



Cawthorn warmly embraces vocally and on his campaign website, especially when it comes to the sacredness of human life:

"I am a pro-life advocate. Life begins at conception and the protection of life ought to begin at conception as well. The current system of infanticide can no longer be tolerated under any legal or scientific standard."

Babies born as early as 20 weeks gestational age have gone on to be healthy, normal children. But it is perfectly legal to have an on-demand abortion until 26 weeks gestational age. These children, who would be able to survive outside the womb, are being brutally murdered simply

based upon their arbitrary location in their mother's womb. This is not a right or left issue, this is an American Epidemic. The U.S. is 1 of only 7 countries worldwide that allow abortions after 20 weeks, and 75% of Americans want new limits on abortion.

...

I will fight tirelessly to advocate for the rights of the unborn in the halls of the powerful. Their voices will not be silenced in Washington."

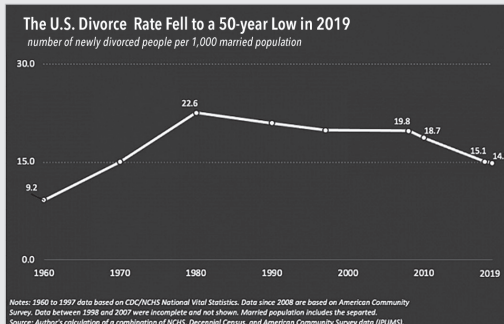
Madison Cawthorn is a bold, unabashed and hardworking Christian who will strive to fulfill 1 Timothy 4:12 "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."

As a young conservative who was homeschooled just like Cawthorn, I am inspired by his story and emboldened by his fearless stance for faith, freedom and family. I am looking forward to seeing him cause a ruckus in the U.S. House alongside the one-eyed Texan, Dan Crenshaw, and Illinois' very own newly elected Mary Miller. AOC and her squad better watch out. Some Proverbs' 28 lions are coming to Washington. ✨

The U.S. Divorce Rate Has Hit a 50-Year Low

The Institute for Family Studies (IFS) recently released a report which reveals that divorce in the U.S. has been falling, **hitting a low of 14.9 divorces per 1,000 marriages in 2019.** In 1980, the rate was 22.6 divorces per 1,000 marriages. Unfortunately, the IFS report also shows that marriage rates are also at an unprecedented low, with only 33 of 1,000 unmarried adults getting married. In 1970, that number was 86 of 1,000. ✨

He who finds a wife finds a good thing. And obtains favor from the Lord.
Proverbs 18:22



Vote Pro-Life Billboards

Written by David E. Smith

Thanks to a generous grant, IFI was able to post a vitally important message on four digital billboards: **Vote Pro-Life**. The billboards were displayed near highways in the southwest suburbs between October 19th and November 1st. Our hopes and prayers are that they were a source of motivation and conviction to would-be value voters.

Yard signs with the same message were also created and placed in many yards. If you'd like to purchase a yard sign for future elections, please give us a call during normal business hours at (708) 781-9328. ✨

Election Results: What We Know So Far *Written by David E. Smith*

The final results of the 2020 General Election may remain unknown until all legal appeals have been reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court. Our continued prayers are needed for our state and nation throughout the next several weeks. We must beseech God for honesty and fairness to prevail. Pray that voter fraud of any type would be exposed. The Bible tells us in Proverbs 20:23 that the Lord hates unequal scales.

We should not be surprised to learn how wrong the predictions of the establishment media and pollsters have been again. It is becoming abundantly clear now that many polls were designed to influence the outcome of national elections.

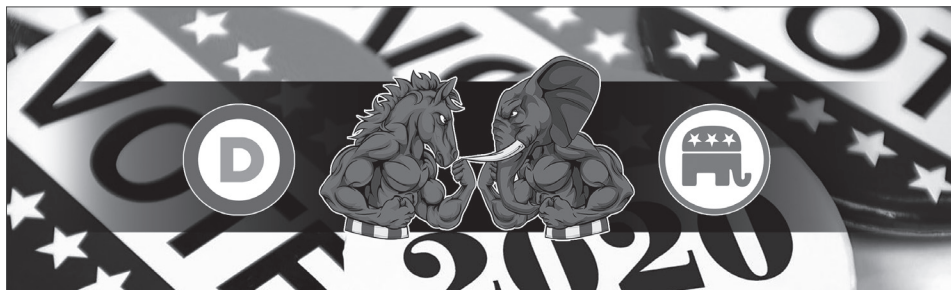
The radical Left has infiltrated and corrupted every major institution in America, including the church. Christians continue to fail to be culture-makers and have instead allowed secularists to indoctrinate our children and grandchildren. The growing embrace of socialism and so-called “social justice” is appalling.

There is no other explanation for our state of affairs today: If Christians voted their values in this national election, **Joe Biden** and the Democrats would not be this close to electoral victory. This is why IFT’s worldview training and articles on our corrupt culture are so very important. Understanding the times in which we live, equipping our children and grandchildren so that they aren’t susceptible to the lies being sold must take precedence in our lives. If we don’t, more and more of our family members will fall victim to godless ideologies and agendas.

National Picture

On Saturday, November 7th, the national and local establishment media gleefully reported that Joe Biden clinched the win. Yet in Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Georgia, Nevada and Michigan hundreds of cases of election fraud are being investigated.

What will remain in dispute over the coming weeks will be interpreted by numerous courts. Provisional, military,



absentee and mail-in ballots will need to meet criteria that certifies them as valid (and that standard differs in each state). Of course, all ballots cast legally and timely should be counted.

Counting that includes the addition of votes cast *after* Election Day is nothing more than a calculated effort to interfere with the will of the people. Republican officials across the nation are crying “foul,” claiming election fraud.

Conservatives appear to have retained control of the U.S. Senate, however there are still two races that have not been decided – both in the state of Georgia. It is vital that liberals fall short of taking control of the upper chamber in order to prevent Leftists from being able to “pack the U.S. Supreme Court.”

Mixed Bag in Illinois

The good news in Illinois is that the “progressive” tax referendum failed to make the 60 percent threshold, so Springfield politicians will not have new



taxing authority to nickel and dime us to death.

In the northwest suburbs, **Jim Oberweis** (R-North Aurora) challenged incumbent **Lauren Underwood** (D-West Chicago) in the 14th Congressional District. As of this writing, the race has still not been called for either candidate. Mail-in ballots and a recount may determine if this seat flips back to red.

Unfortunately, we lost the opportunity to keep or add some great pro-life candidates, including close races. Our hero,

Jeanne Ives (R-Wheaton), fell short in the 6th Congressional District and **Esther Joy King** (R-East Moline) came very close to bumping off a high-profile Democrat incumbent in the 17th Congressional District.

Illinois General Assembly

On the flip side, we are pleased to report the pick-up of pro-life lawmakers for the Illinois House: **Chris Bos** (R-Libertyville) in the 51st District, **Seth Lewis** (R-Bloomington) in the 45th District, **Amy Elik** (R-Alton) in the 111th District and **David Friess** (R-Red Bud) in the 116th District.

Successfully holding off aggressive challenges from the Left, these pro-life incumbents have secured another term in the General Assembly: **Amy Grant** (R-Wheaton) in the 42nd District, **Deanne Mazzochi** (R-Westmont) in the 47th District, **Tom Morrison** (R-Palatine) in the 54th District, **Steven Reick** (R-Woodstock) in the 63rd District, **Dan Ugaste** (R-St. Charles) in the 65th District, **John Cabello** (R-Loves Park) in the 68th District, and **Mark Batinick** (R-Plainfield) in the 97th District.

We are saddened to report that **Jeanette Ward** (R-North Aurora) lost her race for Senate District 25 and that **Peter Breen** (R-Lombard) couldn’t regain control of House District 48. Incumbent **Allen Skillicorn** (R-Crystal Lake) lost House District 66 by less than 2000 votes.

In the next General Assembly (2021-2022), the Democrats will still have a supermajority of 72-46 in the Illinois House and 41-18 in the Illinois Senate.

With regard to the Illinois Supreme Court races in the 3rd and 5th Judicial Districts, **Michael Madigan’s** candidates were both defeated. ✨

from the **Executive Director** — **David E. Smith** *(continued from page 1)*

that He pours out for my physical and spiritual well-being extends beyond me and my family and is made manifest for the well-being of the community. His mercies overflow to benefit the state and nation.

Should our level of gratitude decrease at times, Scripture is replete with reminders of God's abundant mercy and goodness to us:

Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed,
Because His compassions fail not.
They are new every morning;
Great is Your faithfulness. ~ Lamentations 3:22-23

The Lord is good to all,
And His tender mercies are over all His works. ~ Psalm 145:9
But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting
On those who fear Him,
And His righteousness to children's children, ~ Psalm 103:17

Likewise, in these excerpts from a sermon on Psalm 136, **Charles Spurgeon** exhorts us to banish ungrateful attitudes:

"Let us not refuse our sonnets of thanksgiving. Glory be to God, we have been redeemed from the power of our corruptions, uplifted from the depth of sin in which we were naturally plunged. We have been led to the cross of Christ; our shackles of guilt have been broken off, we are no longer slaves, but children of the living God."

"Even now by faith we wave the palm branch and wrap ourselves about with the fair white linen which is to be our everlasting array, and shall we not this day give thanks to the name of the Lord whose redeeming 'mercy endureth forever?'"

God's mercies never end! When our young people grow old, the mercy of the Lord will endure. As those of us who are middle-aged enter our senior years, the mercy of the Lord will still endure. And when our parents and grandparents approach the threshold of eternity, the mercy of the Lord also will endure with them as they pass through the valley of the shadow of death into everlasting life and light.

The first verse of Psalm 136 proclaims the beautiful pairing of God's **goodness** and **mercy**, and indicates our proper response:

Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is good!*
For His mercy *endures* forever.

For His mercy
endures forever.

Forever. Consider that word for a moment. There has never been a time when God has not been good and merciful and there will never come a time when He will cease to be good and merciful. Truly, His goodness and mercy endure forever.

Without His inherent goodness, it would be impossible for Him to be merciful. His mercy is His character in action, the manifestation of His goodness in an active and vital way.

Throughout Scripture we read that God is unchanging. Hebrews 12:8 tells us that God is the same yesterday and today and *forever*. God's good character does not change because He does not change. And because His character never changes, the natural outworking of His goodness, His mercy, will never change either. We can fully trust our unchanging, faithful, good and merciful God!

Praise God – the Lord God, His goodness, and His mercy will endure forever! As He is the "King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God" (1 Timothy 1:17) and He is "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Timothy 6:15), we should therefore "give thanks to the Lord of lords: for His mercy endures forever." (Psalm 136:3)

As he began by extolling the goodness and enduring mercy of the LORD, the psalmist closes out his song of praise in much the same way – with a call to acknowledge God's faithful goodness and mercy to us and an exhortation to proclaim our gratitude:

Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven!
For His mercy *endures* forever.

Heavenly Father, we give You thanks and praise for Your great mercy to us. As we reflect on the joys and challenges of this year and look ahead to what the new year may bring, I pray that our hearts will be content, filled with peace and faith and overflowing with gratitude for your never-ending goodness and mercy. Amen. ✨



President Trump has inspired me and the other women about what we can get done if we ignore the establishment and work for the people.

“**Mary Miller** (R-Oakland, IL),
Congresswoman-elect mom of seven
and grandmother of 17.”

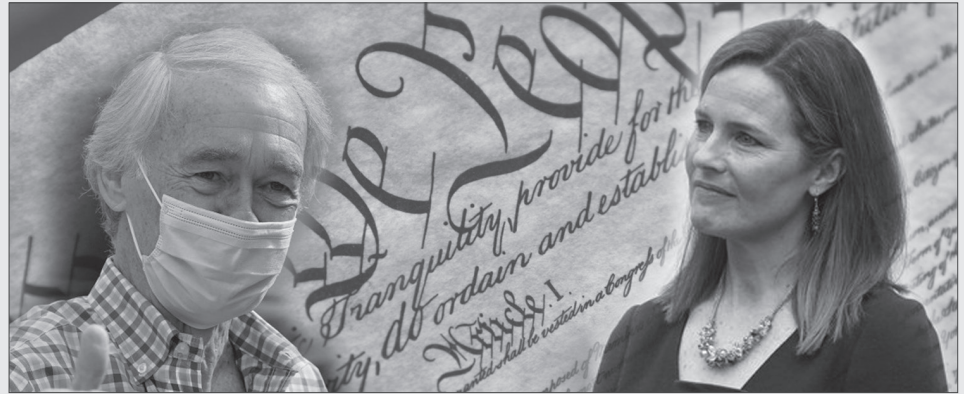
Originalism is Racist and Sexist, Claims Radical U.S. Senator

Written by Alex Newman

Still reaching for peak absurdity with ever more zeal, elements of the radical left are now smearing an honest interpretation of the Constitution and those who support it as “racist,” “sexist,” “homophobic,” and more. In fact, those are the exact words used by U.S. Senator **Ed Markey** (D-Mass.) to describe originalism — the widely accepted judicial doctrine holding that the words in the U.S. Constitution should be interpreted and understood as intended by the authors and ratifiers. The revolutionary view offered by Markey and others like him is a threat to America and every single American, fellow lawmakers warned.

Amid the nasty confirmation fight over U.S. Supreme Court Justice **Amy Coney Barrett**, Senator Markey unleashed vitriolic and hateful comments against her “originalist” view on interpreting the U.S. Constitution. “Originalism is racist. Originalism is sexist. Originalism is homophobic. Originalism is just a fancy word for discrimination,” Markey claimed in an October 26 tweet, essentially smearing as racist, sexist, “homophobic,” and discriminatory, Justice Barrett and the tens or even hundreds of millions of Americans who believe the words in the Constitution mean what they say. Originalism now joins math, objectivity, individualism, milk, lower taxes, babies, Star Wars and more in being called “racist” by the far left.

In comments made on the Senate floor, Senator Markey echoed that bizarre view after noting that Amy Coney Barrett proclaimed that her judicial philosophy was the same as the late Justice Antonin Scalia's view, originalism. “As Judge Barrett described so-called originalism, it means she is supposed to interpret the Constitution's text to have the meaning it had when the Constitution was ratified,” Markey said, falsely claiming that various categories of people such as women and homosexuals had “no rights” when the U.S. Constitution was ratified, and omitting the fact that the Constitution has been amended repeatedly since then.



Markey's summary of what originalism means is relatively accurate. The elected representatives who wrote and voted to ratify that governing document delegating “few and defined” powers to the federal government did so with the understanding that the text meant what it said. No sane or sensible person would ever vote to empower a government, with all its dangerous and coercive powers, under a Constitution in which the words had fluid meaning — or no meaning at all. It would be the equivalent of handing that government a blank check with unlimited power over life, liberty, property and more — something only a fool or a suicidal madman would even consider.

And yet, this is obviously how Senator Markey and other leftwing extremists seeking control over Americans believe the Constitution ought to be understood. Common sense and basic decency would dictate that if Senator Markey and his far-left allies would like to change the Constitution, they should do so honestly, using the amendment process outlined in the document itself.

But Markey and others know that Americans would never willingly tolerate many of the changes that “progressives” would like to bring about. And so, like communists and revolutionaries have done for generations, Senator Markey proceeded to accuse originalists of exactly what progressives have been doing for decades. “It has become a hazy smokescreen for judicial activism by so-called conservatives to achieve from the bench what they cannot accomplish through the ballot box,” Markey claimed.

Of course, in reality, the exact opposite is true. For instance, much of Markey's bizarre rant centered on “LGBT” issues and the supposed right to a homosexual so-called “marriage.” And yet, it was only through judicial activism that this mockery of the people's wishes and God's design for marriage could be implemented. Indeed, even in California, perhaps the most liberal state in America, voters rejected so-called “gay marriage” when given the opportunity at the ballot box. In states like Alabama, over 8 in 10 voters supported real marriage. Only through the rogue U.S. Supreme Court were “progressives” able to defy the will of the people and impose faux marriage on

“I hope, expect, and demand that Senator Markey retract his statement. It is irresponsible; he can't defend that.”

— U.S. Senator **Mike Lee** (R-Utah)

America. The same is true with legalizing the murder of unborn babies.

Fellow U.S. lawmakers expressed outrage and shock over Markey's words. “Of all the irresponsible and inflammatory statements I've heard over the last few weeks, and I've heard some doozies, this might well be the worst,” U.S. Senator **Mike Lee** (R-Utah), a former clerk for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito, said on Fox & Friends in response to his Democrat colleague's accusations. “I hope, expect, and demand that Senator Markey retract his statement. It is irresponsible; he can't defend that.” Despite having sworn an oath to the Constitution, Markey has so far refused to apologize.

continued >>>

Senator Lee, among the most faithful members of the U.S. Congress when it comes to respecting his oath of office, also highlighted the implications of Markey's dangerous narrative. "If you think about what he is really saying there, Senator Markey has essentially said that our Constitution is racist, and [that] an effort to understand it, understand its words at the time they were written, is itself racist and bigoted," Lee noted. "I can't think of a statement that has a greater tendency to undermine the foundation of our constitutional republic." Perhaps that was the goal.

The reason why Markey and others are so triggered by originalism is clear, too. "They don't want the courts to be limited to judicial institutions; they want them to be institutions of social change, of social policy, they want them to take debatable matters beyond debate and, so, that is why this isn't satisfying to them," Lee explained, adding that they want to go far outside the bounds of what the U.S. Constitution allows without having to get the consent of Americans through the amendment process. "Justice Barrett sees the elegant simplicity of the fact that you want judges to interpret the law based on what it says."

Interestingly, pinned at the top of his Twitter page, Sen. Markey has an article promoting universal dependence on the federal government through monthly payments to every American. The propaganda comes from the fringe leftwing "Jacobin" magazine. That magazine is named after the monstrous revolutionaries known for their "Reign of Terror" during the French Revolution — a murderous orgy of violence that resulted in mass murder, tens of thousands of beheadings, savage persecution of Christians, destruction of civilization and other bloody horrors from which France never fully recovered.

Unfortunately, if Americans do not restore respect for the Constitution and bring the domestic revolutionaries represented by Senator Markey and Jacobin magazine to heel, similar horrors could eventually be seen in the United States. Simply consider the recent violence and hatred already unleashed by **Antifa**, the **Marxist** group **Black Lives Matter**, and other revolutionary movements that have been burning American cities and murdering innocent people for months. All of that was done while American cities still have police. Yes, the stakes are really that high. Act accordingly — and urgently. ✱

State Department 2020 Report on Human Trafficking



Secretary of State Mike Pompeo acknowledged during the launch ceremony that we must realize that human trafficking does not just happen in other countries.

The U.S. Department of State estimates that 25 million adults and children are victims of sex trafficking or forced labor across the world. The Department's recent release of its 2020 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report marks the 20th anniversary of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act — a crucial anti-trafficking law, which established the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and made this annual report mandatory.

The 2020 TIP Report covers 188 countries and evaluates them based on the three Ps: how well they prevent trafficking, protect victims and prosecute traffickers. The Report then places the countries in one of three tiers by comparing the country to its own efforts in the previous reporting period. Countries in Tier One fully abide by the minimum standards to eliminate trafficking, while those in Tier Three are restricted from receiving non-humanitarian, non-trade-based aid from the United States. The goal of the Report is to provide foreign governments with data and recommendations to make necessary changes in their efforts to combat human trafficking.

The U.S. Department of State held a launch ceremony in July honoring this year's ten Trafficking in Persons heroes. During the ceremony, Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, John

Cotton Richmond, declared, "The call of the 20th anniversary is clear. We must commit ourselves to our goal of freedom. What traffickers are doing is an affront to the dignity of every human life, and we can stop traffickers, protect victims and work to prevent this crime."

Secretary of State **Mike Pompeo** acknowledged during the launch ceremony that we must realize that human trafficking does not just happen in other countries; it happens right here in the United States too. In response to the 2020 TIP Report, the Polaris Project, an initiative that runs and produces data based on the Human Trafficking Hotline, noted that areas of concern within the United States still exist. Despite our nation's status in Tier One, there are issues relating to lack of prosecution on labor trafficking and long wait times for trafficking visas that enable immigrant victims of trafficking to remain in the country and take part in prosecuting their abusers.

As Secretary Pompeo said, "desecration of the inherent value and immeasurable worth of human beings, each of us created in the image of God, makes human trafficking a truly wicked act."

The sanctity of human life demands that we stand against any form of human trafficking, just as we do for every form of abortion. ✱

What Is True About God Right Now?

Written by Jonathan Lewis

We're living in turbulent times. Between the ongoing pandemic, a contentious nation's election, racial tension, riots, wildfires, hurricanes and more, we have plenty to challenge and concern us.

On top of the issues that have consumed our national attention, we also may have personal challenges that occupy our minds and trouble our hearts. Family challenges. Health issues. Financial problems. We live in a sin-cursed world that dishes out its share of trials.

What do we do in times like these?

A few years ago, during a particularly difficult personal challenge, I was given a question by a godly man that has been helpful to me on more than one occasion. During a difficult, disheartening time, simply ask yourself the question, *"What is true about God right now?"*

Sometimes when we ask that question of ourselves (especially if we're discouraged or in a bad mood) we can be tempted to give a flippant or half-hearted answer—the kind of answer that's true, but not very specific or personally meaningful. We may be answering the question grudgingly because we'd rather wallow in our pain than shift our focus onto God and who He is. It takes hard work to change our focus.

Because of that, it can be helpful to ask the follow-up question, "What else is true about God right now?" The more times you ask the question, the more you force yourself to get increasingly specific and personal, and the more your focus shifts

from your problem and pain to who God really is.

It works like this:

"What is true about God right now?"

"He loves me."

"What else is true about God right now?"

"He loves me like a good father loves his children."

"What else is true about God right now?"

"He loves me like a good father loves his children and He knows what I'm going through."

"What else is true about God right now?"

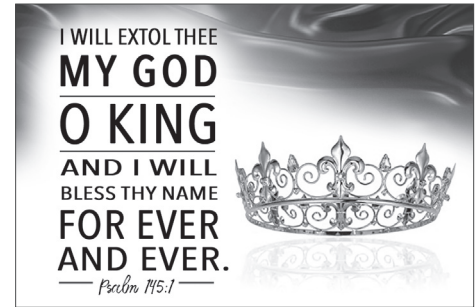
"He loves me like a good father loves his children, He knows what I'm going through, and He's able to either solve the problem or give me the grace to get through it."

You can keep asking the question until you've made the answer as clear, relevant and personal as you can. The goal is to shift our attention away from our own problems and pain and onto God. But it's important to go through the process in an intentional, mindful way. If you answer the question half-heartedly or by rote, it's not going to help as much.

I'm reminded of what the Bible says in Isaiah 26:3: "You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you."

Choosing to focus on what is true about God in the midst of the problems that worry you is a great way to find peace because it moves your attention from the problem and onto God.

Now, don't get me wrong. I'm not



saying we should have a "just-focus-on-God-and-don't-try-to-solve-the-problems" attitude. God has put us on this earth to be fruitful and productive. Solving problems that confront humanity is part of what we're supposed to do.

But we'll be more equipped to tackle problems—both private and public—if we're operating from a place of peace and rest in God rather than a place of fear, panic, worry, or desperation.

One truth that I think is particularly relevant right now as Christians living in a troubled world is found in Psalm 29:10: "The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD is enthroned as King forever."

In times like these, it's encouraging to know that God "is enthroned as King forever."

No matter who wins the election.

No matter what happens with the virus.

No matter what happens in the world around us.

God is King.

Forever.

Donald Trump isn't king.

Joe Biden isn't king.

My problems aren't king.

God is.

Lord, please grant us perfect peace as we trust in You. ✨



SCOTUS Hears Foster Care Case

Written by James M. Odom, Esq.

On November 4th, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) heard oral arguments on a case that will affect whether a foster care provider can continue operating based on its religious beliefs. The case of *Fulton, et. al. v. City of Philadelphia* began in 2018 when the City of Philadelphia demanded that Catholic Social Services (CSS) change its religious practices or close.

As part of the Catholic Church, CSS

believes that marriage is between one man and one woman, and will not place children with same-sex or unmarried couples. CSS indicated that if these couples ever came to them, they would help them find another agency – any of the other 29 in their community. The City stopped all foster care referrals to CSS, even though CSS served all children in need, regardless of race, religion, or sexual orientation.

In response to the City's policy, Becket

– a non-profit, public-interest legal and educational institute – filed a lawsuit on behalf of Catholic Social Services and foster care mothers Sharonell Fulton and Toni Simms-Busch, who have partnered with CSS and fostered over 45 children. The lower courts upheld the City's policy, but Becket appealed to the SCOTUS. The Court decided to grant a hearing.

During oral arguments, **Lori Windham**, senior counsel at Becket, declared, "Religious organizations should" (Cont'd) >>>

★ ★ ★ **B A L L O T** ★ ★ ★ I N I T I A T I V E S



Life Wins on the Ballot in Louisiana By a huge 65 to 35 percent

margin, voters in Louisiana approved an amendment to their state constitution that reads:

Nothing in this constitution shall be construed to secure or protect a right to abortion or require the funding of abortion.

The amendment was written by Democratic State Senator **Katrina Jackson** for the purpose of keeping policy decisions regarding abortion in the hands of the state lawmakers and not judges. “Our body of pro-life laws ensure that women are empowered with the truth about their pregnancy prior to an abortion, that minors seeking an abortion have parental consent, and that babies born alive following a botched abortion receive immediate medical care. Our law also makes sure that not a dollar of your state tax dollars fund abortion. Yet these laws and others are at risk unless we pass Amendment 1,” Jackson was quoted as saying in a November 3rd article by The Federalist.

Praise God for this huge win for Life!

Other State Ballot Initiatives

Alaska defeated a measure to raise taxes on oil production.

Arizona legalized “recreational” marijuana.

California’s Prop 22 passed, allowing

companies like Uber to classify drivers as independent contractors rather than employees. Groups supporting and opposing combined spent over \$226 million according to the *Los Angeles Times*. California also voted to keep an affirmative action ban in place, which bans entities receiving government funds to discriminate based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin.

Colorado rejected a 22-week ban on abortion when unborn babies can feel pain with 60 percent opposing the measure.

Florida approved a gradual minimum wage increase to \$15.

Massachusetts rejected rank voting, a system requiring people to cast ballots by listing candidates in order of favorite to least favorite. To win, the candidate would have to receive more than 50 percent of the vote.

Mississippi legalized “medical” marijuana. On a brighter note, they approved a new state flag, featuring a magnolia blossom surrounded by 20 stars (as the 20th state added to the union) that included “In God We Trust” in the design.

Montana legalized “recreational” marijuana.

New Jersey legalized “recreational” marijuana.

Oregon became the first state to decriminalize the possession of small amounts of all illegal drugs. This includes hard drugs like heroin and

methamphetamine. It also legalizes the “therapeutic” use of psychedelic mushrooms. It all started with so-called “medical” marijuana.

Puerto Rico narrowly approved a non-binding measure toward statehood.

Rhode Island removed “Providence Plantations” from their official state name, which was adopted in 1636 when a British royal charter joined two separate colonies to create the state.

South Dakota legalized “recreational” marijuana.

Washington D.C. decriminalized magic mushrooms and other psychedelic drugs.

More Illinois Suburbs Vote to Allow Recreational Marijuana Businesses

Despite marijuana being a federally controlled Schedule 1 Drug, voters in six suburban towns approved ballot measures allowing recreational marijuana sales: Auburn, Batavia, Elk Grove Village, Glen Ellyn, Mount Prospect, Park Ridge, Westfield and Wilmette.

Fortunately for Germantown Hills, Murphysboro, Tolono and Western Springs, voters rejected ballot questions to allow marijuana retail businesses.

Marijuana is a Schedule 1 Drug according to the United States Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). A Schedule 1 Drug is any drug that “has a high potential for abuse. ...no currently accepted medical treatment use in the U.S. ... [and a] lack of accepted safety for use under medical supervision.” *



be free to serve the public, regardless of their beliefs. The public square is big enough to accommodate everyone who wishes to do good – and that should be especially true when it comes to taking care of children in need.”

Justice **Samuel Alito** got to the root of the issue, stating, “If we are honest about what’s really going on here, it’s not about ensuring that same-sex couples in Philadelphia have the opportunity to be foster parents. It’s the fact the City can’t stand the message that Catholic Social Services and the Archdiocese are sending

by continuing to adhere to the old-fashioned view about marriage.”

Even Justice **Stephen Breyer** acknowledged that “what’s actually bothering me quite a lot about this case is I think that no family has ever been turned down by this agency. Indeed, none has ever applied, no gay family, no gay couple.”

The impact of the decision of *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia* will go far beyond this particular case. Alliance Defending Freedom is representing two faith-based adoption and foster care providers – New

Hope Family Services and Catholic Charities West Michigan – that are in similar situations as Catholic Social Services. This case will impact the future of these two ministries and many more faith-based providers across the nation who seek to act according to their faith, and should not be forced by the government to give up their religious beliefs to continue their services.

The Court is expected to reach a decision by the end of June of 2021.

Please pray for the nine justices of the Roberts Court. *

Jill Rose Quinn *Written by Laurie Higgins*

Running unopposed, “Jill Rose Quinn”—formerly **Peter A. Lombardo**—was just elected to preside over a Cook County Circuit Court. Quinn is a man who due to cross-dressing, cross-sex hormone-doping, and cosmetic surgery kinda, sorta passes as a woman. He recently married his second wife, but since he pretends to be a woman, he also pretends to be a lesbian. In reality—where science-respecting people live and move and have their being—Quinn is a 65-year-old white, heterosexual man with a 33-year-old daughter who has culturally appropriated the attributes of women, which presumably includes accessing women’s private spaces.

When asked by WTTW host **Brandis Friedman** what Quinn’s win means to him, he replied,

**We all know that diversity’s really important.
... If a system is not diverse, it’s not legitimate.**

It’s surprising to hear a judge make such a patently foolish statement. Surely Quinn knows that there is nothing intrinsically good about “diversity.” Diversity simply means having variety. Having a “diverse” system is not necessarily important, and the presence of “diversity” does not automatically confer legitimacy on any system, institution, organization, or community. Absent identification of what condition is being discussed, such a statement is meaningless.

If a “system” like, for example, the judiciary, doesn’t include open, affirming polyamorists, is it illegitimate? Is it important for corporations to include sibling-lovers on their boards? Are school faculties diminished by the absence of racists or drunks?

What Quinn means but neither states nor proves is that cross-sex impersonation constitutes a condition that is intrinsically good and should be affirmed by all of society. To Quinn, in order to be “legitimate,” systems must include people who experience gender dysphoria and engage in “trans”-cultic practices. But is that an objectively true claim?

If there’s a mismatch between a person’s subjective, internal feelings about his maleness and his objective, healthy, properly functioning body, might the disorder reside in his thoughts and feelings rather than his healthy body? If so, wouldn’t “trans-cultic practices be disordered? Must a system affirm “trans”-cultic beliefs and practices to be legitimate?

Quinn said he was motivated to run for the circuit court after meeting “the first openly transgender judge in the country, who is Phyllis Frye, ... at an LGBT bar association convention” who introduced Quinn to the “second openly transgender judge in the country” who told Quinn that he “had to be third.” Judge #2 told Quinn that “We have to be visible. We can’t be in stealth mode.” Quinn explains that another part of “acceptance is visibility.”

To be clear, Quinn is not referring to accepting *people*. He is not referring to accepting that all humans are created in the image of God—an image that fallen humans mar through sinful choices. No, Quinn is referring to accepting as good the sin of rebelling against God’s bodily design for men and women. In a



non-rational society that refuses to engage in moral discourse, visibility and emotional pleas for acceptance will persuade the morally malleable to view evil as good and good evil.

Quinn asserts that “My message is that there’s nothing about me that’s not normal.” Such a bizarre claim raises the question of how Quinn defines normal. Clearly, he’s not using any dictionary definition. A man passing as a woman is far outside the statistical norm. He is not conforming to a usual or typical standard. Cross-sex hormone doping and lopping off healthy, properly functioning body parts is not natural—at least not in the sense of functioning in accordance with a naturally occurring design. Treating healthy anatomy and physiology as diseased does not reflect a healthy ordering of thought or feeling, no matter what our prejudiced professional mental health communities have concluded.

What Quinn’s election will do is turn up the heat under the simmering water in which our amphibious culture is boiling—and most will not even notice that they’re being turned into frog soup. ✱

According to the *Chicago Sun-Times*:

Of the Illinois State Senate’s 22 members who had races, eight ran unopposed on this year’s ballot.

In the Illinois House of Representatives, 44 of the 118 seats were in uncontested races. Additionally, one Justice in the Illinois Supreme Court, P. Scott Neville, Jr., ran unopposed.



We shall go forward together.

The road upwards is stony.

There are upon our journey dark and dangerous valleys through which we have to make and fight our way. But it is sure and certain that if we persevere — **and we shall persevere** — we

shall come through these dark and dangerous valleys into a sunlight broader and more genial and more lasting than mankind has ever known.

“Winston Churchill



IFI Appeal

This year, "2020 The Terrible" has been just that in so many ways, "terrible."

As Executive Director, I am at a loss for words. What can I say to you, our faithful supporters, during this truly unusual time in our world's history? The witch hunt and impeachment of President Trump, the fearmongering about COVID-19, the unconstitutional lock-down resulting in an economic plunge and an upswing in suicides and drug use, and the uncovering of widespread election fraud and corruption.

These situations touch each person differently, and we can't begin to know the impact on your family. One of the many ways my world suddenly flipped upside down was the birth of our son, **Owen**, in late January. Besides

being born with Down Syndrome, he had some other significant health challenges that have required



multiple surgeries and long stays at the hospital. These developments were not expected, but we can look back now after four surgeries and praise God for all the answered prayers, and for a little boy who brings us so much joy.

Yet, we are also aware of the brutal financial toll COVID-19 has had on many families. As a result, IFI has felt this pain too, as we are well behind in fundraising compared with previous years.

There's no question our nation is walking through heartbreaking pain and loss. Yet in the midst of the suffering, we see poignant reminders of why life, freedom and family remain first principles. When other institutions (brick-and-mortar schools and many community businesses) are forced to close, the institution of the family, the first place of education, still stands. While our nation is engaged in a complex, passionate debate over the most ethical response to the virus—at the heart of it all is a profound desire to protect the most vulnerable of human life.

One silver lining here may be the

growth and interest in home education. Far too many of our students have been indoctrinated in our government schools. These young people do not understand history and wrongly believe that socialism (bigger government and redistribution of hard-earned wealth) is the way to go. This naivety is also seen in their voting patterns.

That's why, at Illinois Family Institute, we're diligently keeping our eyes on the mission—reminding our supporters how these values directly connect to protecting the preborn and equipping families to think Biblically. Even as I write this, the Illinois General Assembly has many bills in various committees that will harm the family, as well as threaten religious liberty and parental rights.

Our adversaries are full of bad ideas that would take away our corporate and individual freedoms. Destructive ideas like transgenderism, critical race theory, the Green New Deal, population control and drug legalization are on the rise because of bad education and liberal brainwashing.

Christian conservatives must step up, teach and encourage whatever is true, noble and pure. Whatever is lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy. These are the things that made America great.

Your support of IFI helps us to stand and speak "boldly for biblical principles in the public square."

It enables us to produce cultural commentaries, email alerts, video reports, podcasts, pastors' breakfasts, special forums and host worldview conferences.

It enables us to lobby in Springfield in defense of life, religious liberty, education choice and parental rights.



You and I must be better prepared and ready to fight back in every way we can. We must equip our children,

Whatever is lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy. These are the things that made America great.

grandchildren and our like-minded neighbors to defend what is good and right in America.

Together we can step up our efforts to the next level of defense of our faith and freedoms. Your tax-deductible donations will determine how aggressive we can be in 2021 and beyond.

Don't stand by and let liberals destroy the state and nation we love. ✨



“ John Chrysostom (347-407)

He who is not angry, **whereas he has cause to be, sins.**

For unreasonable patience is the hotbed of many vices, it fosters negligence, **and incites not only the wicked but the good to do wrong.**

Prayer Requests . . .

If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it. — Jeremiah 18:7-10

Our nation is broken. Its foundations are crumbling. We have forgotten God and His commands, and to make matters worse, the Church has largely embraced worldliness. The fact that so many church leaders refuse to stand against the wickedness of the day and speak truth to is disheartening.

It is vitally important that we pray for our leaders — both political and religious. We must pray that God's people turn from their worldly ways, repent and recognize Jesus as Lord of ALL (not just some) of life. It's the only way. Only God can bring the healing we so desperately need in our families, churches and in our nation.



Please Pray . . .

- Thank God for religious liberty and the gift of self-government. Pray that churches throughout the state will use that freedom to preach the full Gospel of Jesus Christ despite the hostility of a politically correct culture. (Romans 1:16).
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would stir up a courageous attitude within Christians so that they will boldly stand for truth at home, in the workplace, and especially in the public square. (Joshua 1:9).
- Pray that God would use the Church to create a dramatic cultural transformation in our state and nation. (Romans 12:2).
- Pray that any and all attempts to corrupt and steal elections in Illinois or the United States would be exposed, dealt with properly and legally, and those behind it would be brought to justice. "The Lord hates dishonest scales." Proverbs 11:1
- Pray that father's hearts would turn to their children, and that they would teach them God's ways, as this pleases our Heavenly Father.
- Pray that God would use grandparents to fearlessly proclaim the Word of God regarding our need for a Savior and God's love. Pray for their role in the training of their grandchildren and wisdom on how to instill a Biblical worldview.
- Pray that God would use your family to spread the truth and light of the Gospel.
- Pray that the federal government's investigation into political corruption at various levels of government in Illinois would root out self-serving wicked incumbents and government employees. ✨

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore *we will not fear*, though the earth should change
and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea...

(Psalm 46:1-2)

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