

TAKE TWO: GIVE ONE TO A FRIEND

KANSAS FAITH AND FAMILY

MEMBER



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"LIVE BY THE SPIRIT, AND YOU WILL NOT GRATIFY THE DESIRES OF THE SINFUL NATURE." GALATIANS 5:16

Christian leaders urge protecting worshippers' rights after protesters interrupt service

By Giovanna Dell'orto

Several faith leaders called urgently for protecting the rights of worshippers while also expressing compassion for migrants after anti-immigration enforcement protesters disrupted a service at a Southern Baptist church in Minnesota.

About three dozen protesters entered the Cities Church in St. Paul during Sunday service, some walking right up to the pulpit, others loudly chanting "ICE out" and "Renee Good," referring to a woman who was fatally shot on Jan. 7 by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer in Minneapolis.

One of the church's pastors, David Easterwood, leads the local ICE field office, and one of the leaders of the protest and prominent local activist Nekima Levy Armstrong said she's also an ordained pastor.

The Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention called what happened "an unacceptable trauma," saying the service was "forced to end prematurely" as protesters shouted "insults and accusations at youth, children, and

families."

"I believe we must be resolute in two areas: encouraging our churches to provide compassionate pastoral care to these (migrant) families and standing firm for the sanctity of our houses of worship," Trey Turner, who leads the convention, told The Associated Press on Monday. Cities Church belongs to the convention.

The U.S. Department of Justice said it has opened a civil rights investigation.

The recent surge in operations in Minnesota has pitted more than 2,000 federal immigration officers against community activists and protesters. The Trump administration and Minnesota officials have traded blame for the heightened tensions.

"No cause — political or otherwise — justifies the desecration of a sacred space or the intimidation and trauma inflicted on families gathered peacefully in the house of God," Kevin Ezell, president of the North American Mission Board, said in a statement. "What occurred was not protest; it was lawless harassment."

Jonathan Parnell, the pastor who led the disrupted service, is a missionary with Ezell's group and serves dozens of Southern Baptist churches in the area. Cities Church, housed in a Gothic-style, century-old stone building next to a college campus on one of the Twin Cities' landmark boulevards, has not returned AP requests for comment.

Christians disagree on immigration enforcement

Christians in the United States are divided on the moral and legal dilemmas raised by immigration, including the presence of an estimated 11 million people who are in the country illegally and the spike in illegal border crossings and asylum requests during the Biden administration.

Opinions differ between and within denominations on whether Christians must prioritize care for strangers and neighbors or the immigration enforcement push in the name of security. White evangelicals tend to support strong enforcement, while Catholic leaders have spoken in favor of migrant rights.

The Southern Baptist Convention is the largest Protestant denomination in the U.S. and has a conservative evangelical theology.

Miles Mullin, the vice-president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, said faith leaders can and often have led protests on social issues, but those should never prevent others from worshipping.

"This is something that just shouldn't happen in America," Mullin said. "For Baptists, our worship services are sacred."

On Facebook, Levy Armstrong wrote about Sunday's protest in religious terms: "It's time for judgment to begin and it will begin in the House of God!!!"

But Albert Mohler, the president of The Southern Baptist Theological Semi-

nary, called the protesters' tactics unjustifiable.

"For Christians, the precedent of invading a congregation at worship should be unthinkable," Mohler said in an interview. "I think the political left is crossing a threshold."

Brian Kaylor, a Cooperative Baptist Fellowship-affiliated minister and leader

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Cities Church is seen in St. Paul, Minn. Where activists shut down a service claiming the pastor was also working as an ICE agent, Monday, January 19, 2026 in St. Paul, Minn.

Can a Christian Lose Salvation?

Based on the sermon by Pastor Colin Smith

One of the most emotionally charged questions in Christian theology is also one of the most personal: Can a person truly saved by Christ lose their salvation?

Many believers wrestle with this question in seasons of doubt, failure, or spiritual struggle. Others point to warning passages in Scripture—especially Hebrews chapter 6—as evidence that salvation can be lost. Yet when Scripture is read carefully and consistently, the Bible presents a clear and comforting answer.

Jesus' Promise: "My Sheep Shall Never Perish"

The foundation for understanding this issue begins with the words of Jesus Himself.

In John 10, Jesus declares plainly: "My sheep shall

never perish."

This is not a conditional promise. Jesus does not say His sheep might not perish or will not perish if they behave well. He says never.

From this promise, two unavoidable truths emerge.

When True Believers Fall, They Return

First, those who truly belong to Christ may stumble—even severely—but they will not be lost forever.

Scripture gives a powerful example in the apostle Peter. Peter denied Jesus publicly, repeatedly, and with oaths. Any observer would have concluded that his faith was gone for good. Yet Peter repented and was fully restored.

His restoration did not earn salvation back—it revealed that he had truly belonged to Christ all along.

True faith, while some-

times shaken, endures. Jesus does not lose a single one of His sheep.

When People Fall Away Permanently, They Were Never Christ's Sheep

The second implication of Jesus' promise is sobering.

If someone turns away from Christ and never returns—never repents, never seeks restoration—Scripture leads to a clear conclusion: that person was never truly Christ's sheep to begin with.

This distinction is essential. The Bible does not teach that salvation is fragile or reversible. Instead, it teaches that not all spiritual experience is saving experience.

What About Hebrews 6?

Hebrews chapter 6 is often cited as proof that salvation can be lost. But Scripture must always be interpreted in harmony with Scripture,

never in contradiction to it. The Bible also clearly teaches:

- Nothing can separate God's people from His love
- God finishes the work He begins
- Christ redeems His people completely
- Christ never loses His sheep

Therefore, Hebrews 6 cannot mean that Christ's true sheep perish, that God abandons His work, or that salvation is undone.

Rather, Hebrews 6 describes a far more dangerous condition: people who experience spiritual things without ever being truly converted.

They may taste truth, participate in religious life, and even appear sincere—but without saving faith, they remain spiritually lost.

Spiritual Experience Is

Not Always Saving Experience

This is the heart of Hebrews 6.

It is possible to be close to the gospel without belonging to Christ. And Scripture warns that such a position is one of the greatest spiritual dangers—because it can produce false assurance.

The warning passages of Scripture are not meant to terrify true believers, but to expose counterfeit faith and urge genuine repentance.

A Doctrine of Comfort, Not Fear

The doctrine of eternal security is not meant to encourage careless living or spiritual complacency. Instead, it offers assurance to

struggling believers who fear they have failed beyond recovery.

Salvation rests not on the believer's grip on Christ, but on Christ's grip on the believer.

Jesus does not lose His sheep.

A Final Encouragement

For those weighed down by doubt or failure, Scripture offers this reassurance:

If you belong to Christ, He is not finished with you.

And if someone walks away permanently, the call of Scripture is not despair—but repentance and true faith.

Faith that saves is faith that lasts—not because it is strong, but because Christ is faithful.



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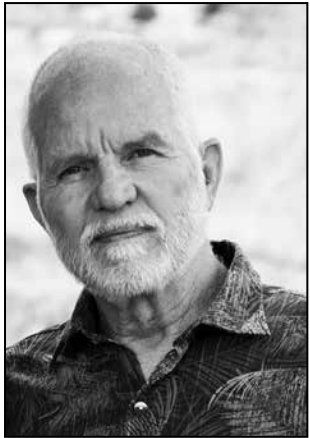
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This new season brings fresh opportunities, expanded coverage, and a renewed mission to highlight the people, ministries, and testimonies that inspire us all. We cannot thank you enough for your support, prayers, and encouragement as we begin this journey. We look forward to growing with you and bringing meaningful, faith-filled content to Kansas for years to come.

Faith BroKar

KANSAS FAITH AND FAMILY

You Can Tell by Their Fruit



By Carl D. Everhart

It may, or may not, surprise you to hear that not everyone who professes to be a Christian is a True Christian! Unfortunately, those who aren't often give True Christians a bad reputation. This is nothing new. Acknowledging that there are no "good" people (see Mark 10:18) and everyone is sinful, how can you identify a True Christian? Sometimes you think you can, then comes a surprise. While you may not always be able to tell for sure, the Bible gives much guidance. It instructs who to avoid, and specifically to avoid "bad company." To do that, you must first determine who you think is good and who is bad. You can learn the "Marks of the True Christian" by studying Romans

12, and the "Rules for Christian Households" by studying Colossians 3.

Paul told the Galatians (v. 5:22) that the Fruit of the Spirit is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control," Jesus said "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:34-35).

Before Paul wrote his letters to the churches, Jesus warned us about the fruit of false prophets (see Matthew 7). He said they would appear to be sheep but instead were wolves. "By their fruit you will recognize them [that is, by their contrived doctrine and self-focus]." Paul was very clear when he told the Ephesians (v. 5:11) to, "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them." This probably describes many of your neighbors, and some government and even church leaders today. Jesus went on to say, "by their fruit you will recognize them." With that, Jesus made it clear that you could identify the wolves by their negative fruit. With your open eyes, ears, and heart, you can identify the

wolves by their actions, much more than by their words. Having said that, simply displaying the "fruit" that Paul spoke of, does not, in and of itself, make anyone a good person or even a True Christian, any more than simply going to church makes you a Christian, or swimming in the ocean makes you a fish.

With all that said, you may be a good person, and maybe even a True Christian, if you exhibit the Fruit of the Spirit, but most likely you are neither one if you do not exhibit the fullness of the Fruit of the Spirit in your daily life. You may be a good person if you believe "in" God (even the demons believe), but you may be a True Christian if you "believe and trust" God. You may be a good person if you are at peace with yourself and with others, but you may be a True Christian if you are at peace with the one True God. You may be a good person if you know who Jesus is, but you may be a True Christian if you have a personal relationship with Him.

Possibly the first identifiable sign of a True Christian is friendliness. Do people identify you as being friendly, opening the door for conversation and for witnessing? Is your fruit showing? If so, what kind of fruit is showing? Is your fruit

growing? If your fruit is not visible and felt by others, you may wish to ask yourself this question: WHY NOT? With age, healthy fruit ripens (see Psalm 92:14); unhealthy fruit rots (see Matthew 7:17). If, in old age, one's fruit does not ripen, perhaps it is not healthy, or it was never good fruit to begin with.

Dear Heavenly Father, You know exactly who Your children are, now, and who aren't, yet. As we observe the fruit displayed by those around us, sometimes we see good fruit, and sometimes we see bad fruit. Where there is bad fruit, we know You will never give up on them; please help them to never give up on You, as Satan wants them to do. Every day we ask You to protect our family and friends from the world ... from Satan's influence over their lives. Lord, because of free will, we know You will never force anyone to come to You. We ask You to give them opportunities to see You and to come to You. We ask You to continue using us to talk to them about You. Lord, when they reject our words, and even Your Words, please make a way to open their eyes to Your Truth. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

To read more from this Prodigal son, lay pastor, apologist, and sinner (saved by grace), search: everhartandsoul.com (then select "Blog").



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Mike Winger exposé shows Bethel Church's 'extended mercy' failed victims



By Jono Hall

(Opinion) Bible teacher and podcaster Mike Winger has released a bombshell, a 5-hour 50-minute video that has sent shock waves through the charismatic movement. Called “The Skeletons in Bethel’s Closet are Now Going to Speak,” it exposes fraudulent prophecies and sexual misconduct by southern California prophetic minister Shawn Bolz.

Winger provides a convincing case that Bolz’s ministry — which was strongly promoted by Bethel Church in Redding, California — was based on data mining Facebook and other public sources. Winger also

documented several cases of alleged sexual misconduct by Bolz.

This was known to Bethel in 2020, and steps were taken in private to distance the church from Bolz. But in public, Bethel leaders continued to endorse Bolz and didn’t publicly distance themselves from Bolz until February 2025.

Winger released the video on Jan. 17. A day later at a Sunday service, Bethel pastor Kris Vallotton responded.

Revealing the Bethel operating system

Assuming he got to listen to all of Winger’s revelations only 30 hours after the video dropped,

Vallotton was processing in real time.

Instead of a response that would at least signal awareness that the accusations are serious enough to warrant careful handling, Vallotton gave an unscripted but revealing response.

And it is damning.

It shows how Bethel leadership thinks when confronted with documented patterns of abuse, false prophecy and institutional failure to protect victims.

They didn’t ask, “What did we miss?” or “Who did we fail to protect?” Instead, they asked, “Why is leadership so hard?” and “Why won’t people give us more grace?”

Here is the question that cuts to the heart of the matter: Do you love the body, or do you love your movement?

Vallotton’s Sunday evening sermon sadly answered that question. The movement must be protected. The prophetic min-

istry worldwide must not be damaged. The reputations of leaders must be preserved.

And the sheep? They can wait.

The wolf vs. broken person distinction

Vallotton sees the problem as divided into two categories of sinful leader: “wolves,” who are intentionally evil and “broken people,” who are unsafe but redeemable family members deserving extended grace.

How does someone qualify as a wolf? Almost every abuser has a broken background. Every predator can construct a narrative of trauma that “ex-

plains” their behavior.

Mass murderer Ted Bundy had a difficult childhood. Serial sex abuser Larry Nassar was described as kind by colleagues. The most dangerous people are often the most skilled at presenting their harm as woundedness.

Broken people who are promoted to positions of authority, and abuse that authority, become wolves, regardless of their intent. It is simple wisdom not to place broken people in roles where they can hurt others.

When leadership elevates someone, whose brokenness is known, and

that person then damages those under them, there is intentionality in that harm. And the intent belongs to the leaders who placed them there.

Sin happens, but what happens when the church does nothing?

This is the thread running through nearly every recent church abuse scandal. The original sin is often not the biggest problem. People sin. People abuse. That’s grievous, but it’s not what destroys faith and leaves lasting devastation.

The deeper wound comes when victims summon the courage to report

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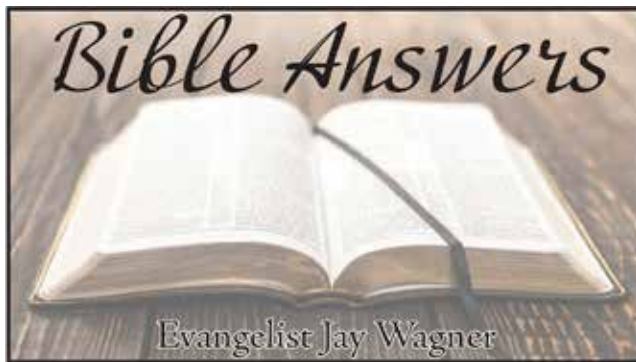
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Q: How can a believer get into the presence of God?

A: The first step is holiness. In Exodus we see times when people tried to enter God's presence without sanctifying themselves and died for their efforts. In their case there were rituals that had to be observed for someone to sanctify themselves, but Jesus simplified the process for us when He died on the cross, so now all we need to do is confess our sins (not necessarily one by one, there may be some we aren't even aware of, so confessing that we are sinners is enough) and asking forgiveness for them.

Next, we need to come with the right attitude. Psalm 100:4 says, "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name" Many churches begin each service with songs of praise and worship as a means of inviting the presence of God. We need to recognize who God is and remember what He has done for us and carry that in our hearts as we seek His presence.

Anyone who has ever heard me preach, whether live, on my website (www.mark1615ministries.org) or my YouTube channel (Mark 16:15 Ministries) has heard my admonitions to be in God's word and in prayer. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 says, "Pray without ceasing," which means to keep the lines of communications with God – both ways – open at all times. Being in His word and keeping those lines of communication open also help to invite the presence of God in our lives.

Psalm 16:11 says in part, "...in Thy presence is fullness of joy . . ." This does not mean that you will spend all the time that you are in God's presence laughing. The joy comes simply from being in His presence and may take any emotional form. I try very hard to practice the presence of God in my life, but one particular event that happened 33 years ago stands out in my mind. I was attending a church service in Purcell, Oklahoma, and when the pastor finished his sermon he was giving people who might not know Christ the opportunity to accept Him. God called me into intercession over someone there who was fighting the desire in his or her heart to go forward and accept Christ. In that intercession I was allowed to feel at least as much of what the Holy Spirit felt as I could stand, and it was the deepest, most excruciating pain I have ever felt. However, it was also the closest I have ever felt to God and my pain was overridden by an amazing joy.

I tell you about that because while you seek God's presence you need to be prepared for what that can mean, but you also need to know that even if you are brought into a painful presence, whether intercession for another or sorrow for something you may have done (or not done), the joy inherent in God's presence will override everything else you feel. Get into the word, get into prayer, get an attitude of praise and thanksgiving, and get ready for your greatest joy.

I welcome reader questions. E-mail your question to answer67547@gmail.com.

Service

Continued from page 1

of the Christian media organization Word&Way, called having an ICE official serve as a pastor "a serious moral failure."

But Kaylor, who has spoken out against the Trump administration's treatment of immigrants, said he was "very torn" by the protesters' action inside a church.

"It would be very alarming if we come to see this become a widespread tactic across the political spectrum," he said.

Federal protections for houses of worship

Many faith leaders were dismayed when the government announced last January that federal immigration agencies can make arrests in churches, schools and hospitals, ending the protection of people in sensitive spaces.

No immigration raids during church services have been reported, but some churches have posted notices on their doors saying no federal immigration officers are allowed inside. Others have reported a drop in attendance, particularly during enforcement surges.

Following the protest in

Cities Church, Harmeet Dhilon, the assistant attorney general for civil rights at the U.S. Department of Justice, said her office is investigating "potential violations of the federal FACE Act," calling the protest "un-American and outrageous."

The 1994 Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act prohibits interference or intimidation of "any person by force, threat of force, or physical obstruction exercising or seeking to exercise the First Amendment right of religious freedom at a place of religious worship."

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt warned in a social media post that "President Trump will not tolerate the intimidation and harassment of Christians in their sacred places of worship."

Several pastors called for better security in churches.

The Rev. Joe Rigney, one of the founding pastors at Cities Church in 2015 who served there until 2023, said safety would have been his first concern had a group disrupted service, especially since the fatal shooting at a Minneapolis Catholic school Mass last summer.

In a statement to the AP, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz's

spokesperson said that while people have a right to speak out, the governor doesn't support interrupting a place of worship.

Legal developments and protests in the Twin Cities

Also Monday, the Department of Justice notified a federal appeals court that it will appeal a ruling that federal officers in the Minneapolis area cannot detain or tear gas peaceful protesters who aren't obstructing authorities. The case was filed in December on behalf of six Minnesota activists who are among thousands of people observing the activities of federal immigration officers in the area.

Yet more protesters braved temperatures that dipped below zero (minus 8 Celsius) Monday to honor Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in St. Paul. Some waved signs from vehicles bearing messages including, "What did you do while your neighbors were being kidnapped?" and "We love our Somali neighbors."

Dozens of protesters also staged a brief sit-in at a Target store in St. Paul demanding that the retailer bar entry to federal agents. Target, headquartered in Minneapolis, has been criticized by activists after a video showed federal agents detaining two employees at a store in Richfield, Minnesota.

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"Quality Creates It's Own Demand"

Bethel

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to those they believe will make it right. They go to the shepherds. And the shepherds, rather than protecting the sheep, make the original wrongdoing infinitely worse.

They minimize. They delay. They urge forgiveness without repentance. They keep the matter confidential. They question the victim's motives or memory. They protect the institution. And through it all, they allow the wolf continued access to the flock.

This is where hope dies. The abuse itself is traumatic. But the betrayal by those who were supposed to protect you is soul-destroying.

Vallotton's sermon follows this pattern: Extended mercy. Confidentiality. Reluctance to expose. Concern for the accused's reputation. Sympathy for how hard it is to lead. Not a word about the victims whose trust was doubly

violated, first by the abuser, then by the shepherds who should have stopped it.

Confidentiality – mercy or a shield?

Vallotton argues church leadership must maintain silence, even when accusations of wrongdoing happen. That breaking confidence can “end a minister's life.” Leaders must rather “stay silent in the midst of accusation.”

This creates a system where the accused's privacy always trumps the congregation's safety. A pastor learns of predatory behavior in confidence. Under Vallotton's framework, exposing it “ends” his ministry. So, he stays silent and more people are harmed.

Winger's investigation includes leaked texts showing Vallotton himself privately banning Bolz from Bethel ministries, starting in 2020. But Bethel leadership never publicly warned the millions who follow Bolz's teaching. Moreover, Bethel lead pastor Bill Johnson

endorsed Bolz publicly as a “trusted friend” in 2023 on TBN.

How many more victims accumulated during those years of extended mercy? Every month of “time for repentance” is another month the congregation isn't warned, another month potential victims are unprotected, another month the pattern continues.

Does Vallotton believe the words of the New Testament?

“As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear” (1 Timothy 5:20). Public sin requires public address. The purpose isn't revenge. It's protection and warning.

Social media as the villain

Vallotton spent significant time lamenting how social media allows “unvetted stories” to spread globally, mixing truth with “fake news” and destroying reputations permanently.

Interestingly, he says

victims and whistleblowers could at least go to the news media. I can state clearly from personal experience that when victims have gone to the news media, it has elicited the same response from church leaders.

Many survivors go public precisely because internal processes failed them. When “biblical processes” become mechanisms for institutional self-protection, the press or social media becomes a sad necessity.

Plus, Winger's video isn't “unvetted.” It's the product of many months of research, victim interviews, leaked texts, and documented evidence.

Does Vallotton believe Jesus was correct when he called out the Pharisees publicly by name and practice? Paul publicly named Alexander the coppersmith as a troublemaker. Exposure of harmful leaders is a biblical pattern when private confrontation fails.

Extended mercy without boundaries

Vallotton admits Bethel erred by “waiting too long” but frames this as having the “right heart.” He cites Revelation 2:21, giving Jezebel “time to

repent” as justification for extended grace periods.

But he didn't include the rest of the passage: “but she refuses to repent ... I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation” (Rev 2:21-22). Time for repentance has limits. Ongoing tolerance of unrepentant sin isn't mercy; it's enabling.

Gifts separate from character

Citing Romans 11, Vallotton argues gifts persist despite character flaws. Judas ministered under Jesus. Solomon had wisdom despite immorality. Failed leaders' past work isn't invalidated, he says.

This brings up two questions. Can God use flawed people? Obviously yes. But should flawed people remain in leadership? Scripture says no.

Does Bethel follow Paul's requirements for being an overseer? “An overseer must be above reproach” (1 Tim 3:2). “He must have a good reputation with outsiders” (1 Tim 3:7). Gifts are irrevocable; leadership positions are not.

Why this isn't merciful
Vallotton frames his approach as “overly mer-

ciful,” erring on the side of grace. But mercy to whom?

It's not mercy to victims. Every month of extended grace is another month they're unprotected, unwarned, unbelieved.

It's not mercy to the congregation. They're kept ignorant of danger in their midst.

It's not mercy to employees subjected to sexual misconduct by a leader everyone trusted. Their suffering continues while leadership waits for repentance.

It's not even mercy to the abuser. Keeping someone in their sin isn't mercy. It's abandoning them to eternal consequences.

Vallotton's response was a real-time window into how Bethel's leadership processes accusations of cover-up: defend the institution, extend indefinite grace to the accused, reframe scrutiny as persecution, and never quite get around to the discipline Scripture commands.

What they believe is a framework where wolves are theoretically bad but practically impossible to identify. It's where victims are theoretically valued but practically silenced, and where church discipline is theoretically biblical but functionally nonexistent.

The biggest scandal in the church today isn't that people sin. It's that when the wounded come to the shepherds for help, the shepherds hand them back to the wolves.

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Out with the old, in with the “what?”

By Van Yandell

John 1:17 “For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

In the fall of 1991, I was teaching industrial arts. One cold early winter morning the school principal walked into my shop and told me the state had approved the plan for the construction of our new school.

The challenge was that traditional industrial shops were no longer approved. Technology labs would take their place. At the time I wasn’t too disturbed over that circumstance.

Having already explored computer aided drafting, computer graphics and other applications, I saw the change as an opportunity for my personal learning as well as my students.

The next four years (beginning in August 1992) I taught technology education. Many of the students were excited, I was excited, and our lab was one of the first three in the state and set an example for others developing such facilities.

There was a constant flow of visitors from other schools, the State Department of Education and even schools in surrounding states. Being afforded the ego-pleasure of expounding my knowledge of the transition was a thrill and of course I am always eager to teach. Adults also benefit from teachable moments.

However, as the years passed, we became aware of what the youth were missing by not having the traditional subjects normally taught in industrial education.

Classes in woodwork, metals, architectural and engineering drafting and design, electricity/electronics provided a value to students

that apparently few had realized in past years.

Was it assumed fathers would teach their children how to repair furniture, change electrical switches and receptacles, or install a float valve? And more pressing, where would the next generation of tradesmen come from?

We were raising a generation of mechanical and practical illiterates but were preparing a generation of video game professionals! Where were the future carpenters, cabinet builders, electricians, welders and block/brick layers to develop?

They certainly are not going to come from history or music class. The studies of history and music are needed (I wish I knew more) but these areas do not build buildings, bridges or needed consumer products.

Change is not always good. Other subjects suffered as well. Home economics is another example. Are life skills and home skills in budgeting, planning and child rearing no longer important?

We are constantly seeing failures in parenting. A child bringing a weapon to school and injuring or taking the life of another child or teacher is a parenting failure. Many of the behavioral problems teachers face every day are parenting failures.

The constant need for more prisons and juvenile detention centers are partly the results of poor parenting. But many thought vocational home economics was not needed?

The technology lab served a purpose, but its worth compared to the industrial arts shop is certainly debatable.

Here we are one-third of a century later and the topic of technology is an ongoing de-

bate. Technology definitely has its good points, but it also creates problems.

We are being watched constantly. Conversations in our homes are being heard to bombard us with commercials for products we may mention. Greed has smothered free enterprise and consumer needs.

We have no privacy, no secrets; our computer searches are recorded to monitor our shopping and buying habits. AI does our thinking rather than the human brain creating a farther dumbing down of the population.

I mentioned to wife Margie the possibility of replacing a bathtub with a shower. By the end of the day we were receiving ads for shower installers. What was listening; the TV, phone, computer, possibly all three?

The church has a similar problem. I usually ask, when called to substitute preach, “Do I need to bring a children’s sermon?” Two of the last three times I’ve asked, I was told “We don’t have any children.”

Where are the young people with children? Do they have no need for God? This is serious and urgent!

Also, recently we’ve become aware of a severe shortage of pastors, missionaries and evangelists in America. In one area we frequent, one-third of the churches in a denominational group are without pastors. We have a problem and when the time comes and someone wakes up and realizes this, it will be like dropping a bomb.

If there are so many churches without young adults with children, where

will be found the next generation of pastors? The simple answer to this is, there won’t be any and there appears to already be a shortage! And consequently, the church will continue to decline.

It is time to start taking the Great Commission seriously! Acts 1: 8 “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

The uttermost part of the earth is no longer the other side of the planet. It is here! It is inside the walls of the church and in the communities! The church has a problem and as a matter of survival, it must be addressed and action taken.

We must always teach that

eternal salvation is attained by a faith-based belief (Ephesians 2: 8) in Christ Jesus crucified (Matthew 27: 35) for the remission of sin (1 John 1: 9), resurrected (Matthew 28: 6) and ascended alive in to Heaven (Acts 1: 9).

Acts 4: 12 “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Christians must take this seriously! If we do not tell the world about Jesus, who will?

“Out with the old, in with the new” sounds good, but is it?

Van Yandell is a retired Industrial Arts teacher, an ordained gospel evangelist and commissioned missionary. His email is vmy3451@gmail.com.

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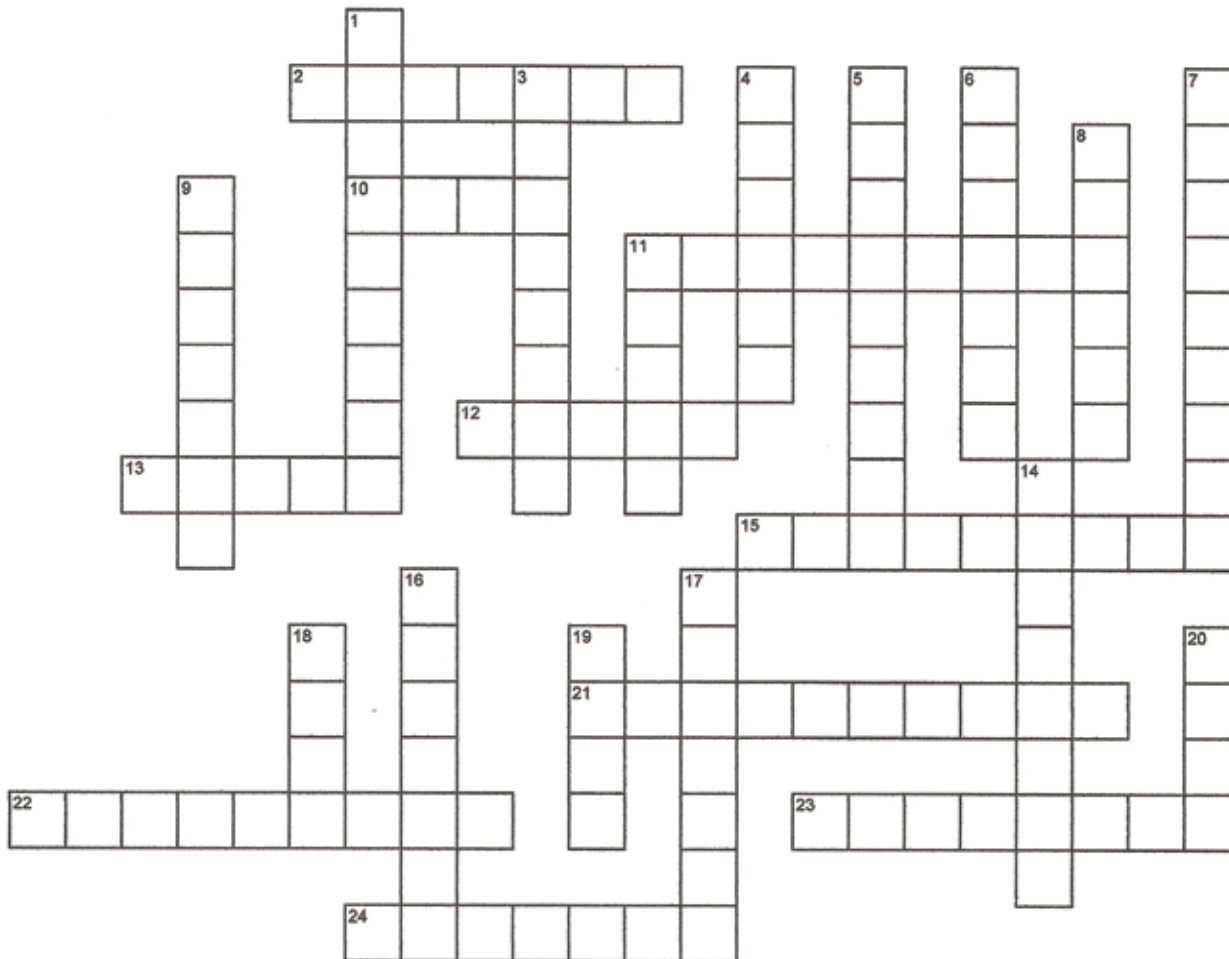
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A Little Bit of Laughter and Fun

Proverbs 17:22 – “Laughter is like taking a good medicine.”

CITIES OF THE BIBLE



ACROSS

- 2 The walls fell after Joshua's army blew trumpets
- 10 Paul was under house arrest in this city
- 11 Birthplace of Jesus
- 12 A people of noble character lived here
- 13 A disciple named Tabitha lived here
- 15 The name of this city occurs 806 times in the Bible
- 21 Paul was taken there by soldiers at nighttime
- 22 Jesus healed a blind man here
- 23 Samson slew thirty men in this Philistine city
- 24 Paul wrote to the church in this place while on his third missionary journey

DOWN

- 1 Where Abraham and Abimelech settled their differences over a well of water
- 3 Paul spent more than two years in a jail in this city
- 4 Visited by Philip
- 5 Where Absalom held the feast of sheep-shearing
- 6 Home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus
- 7 After leaving Nazareth, Jesus went to this place
- 8 Two disciples met Jesus on the road to this place
- 9 Modern day Iraq
- 11 The Lord confused the language here
- 14 The church here was lukewarm
- 16 A battle during the end times will happen here
- 17 Paul started his missionary journeys from this city
- 18 Where Samson was imprisoned
- 19 Jesus' first public miracle took place here, with water...and wine
- 20 Jesus raised the widow's son here

**Answers in next
month's issue**

Mikey's Funnies

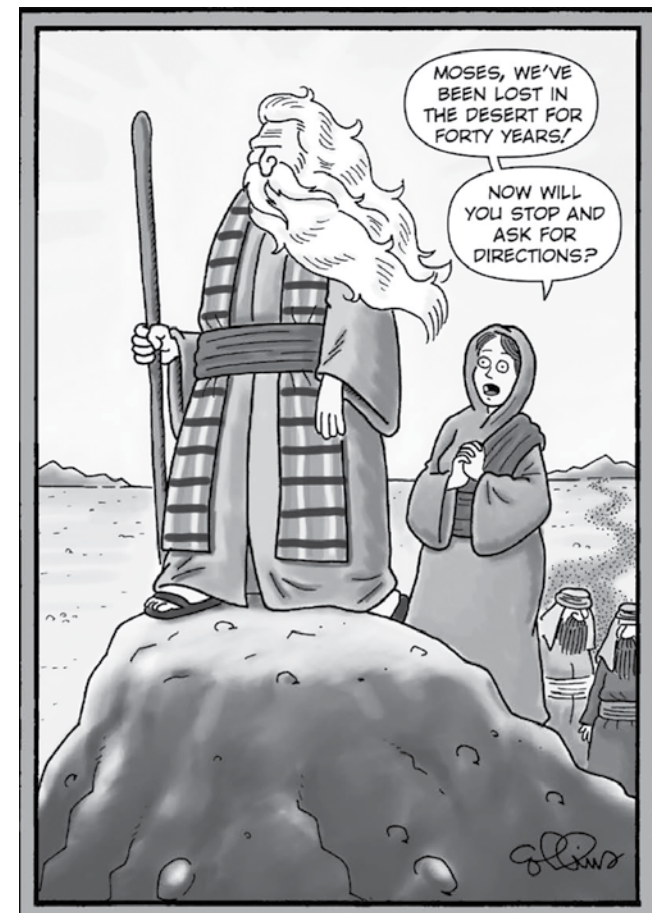
Several women were visiting an elderly lady who was ill.

After a while, they rose to leave and told her, "We will keep you in our prayers."

"Just wash the dishes in the kitchen," the ailing woman said, "I can do my own praying."

Did you hear about the Buddhist who refused Novocain during a root canal? He wanted to transcend dental medication.

My goal for 2026 is to accomplish the goals of 2025 which I should have done in 2024 because I made a promise in 2023 and planned to do in 2022.



The Growing Influence of Discernment Ministry in the Digital Age

Over the past several years, many Christians have noticed a growing presence of discernment ministry voices across podcasts, YouTube channels, and social media platforms. As online content continues to shape how people learn, worship, and engage with faith, more believers are turning to these ministries for help navigating a crowded and often confusing Christian media landscape.

Discernment ministry, at its core, involves carefully examining teachings, movements, and messages in light of Scripture. While the concept itself is not new, digital platforms have given discernment-focused voices an unprecedented reach. What once took place primarily in classrooms, books, or small church settings now unfolds daily through videos, livestreams, and podcasts accessed by viewers around the world.

Why Discernment Content Is Growing

The rise of discernment-focused content reflects a broader concern among Christians who are trying to remain biblically grounded in an age of information overload. Social media algorithms reward emotionally charged or simplified messages, and not all Christian content circulating online is

rooted in sound doctrine. As a result, many believers are seeking resources that encourage careful study, theological clarity, and biblical accountability.

Podcasts and YouTube channels offer an accessible way for Christians to explore these issues. Long-form discussions allow teachers to explain doctrine in depth, while shorter videos address trending topics, viral sermons, or popular Christian influencers. For many viewers, these platforms function as supplemental tools — not replacements for local church involvement, but aids for learning and discernment throughout the week.

Notable Voices in the Online Discernment Space

A number of ministries and content creators have become well-known for their emphasis on biblical discernment. These include Justin Peters Ministries, which focuses on evaluating modern teaching through Scripture, and Fighting for the Faith, a long-running program known for sermon reviews and theological analysis.

Other voices such as Melissa Dougherty and Revealing Truth have gained attention for addressing doctrinal issues and cultural trends from a biblical worldview.

Channels like Longfor-Truth1, Daniel C, and Honest Youth Pastor also contribute to the broader conversation, each with a distinct approach and audience.

Within this growing ecosystem, smaller channels — including A Faithful Review — reflect how everyday believers are engaging Scripture thoughtfully and sharing their perspectives with a wider audience.

A Call for Wisdom and Balance

While discernment ministries can be helpful, many church leaders caution that discernment should always be paired with humility, grace, and a commitment to the local church. Scripture calls believers not only to “test everything” but also to pursue unity, love, and spiritual maturity. Healthy discernment builds up the body of Christ rather than fostering suspicion or division.

For readers navigating Christian content online, wisdom remains essential. Not every voice claiming discernment speaks with biblical care, and not every disagreement signals false teaching. Prayerful evaluation, regular Bible study, and accountability within a church community remain foundational.

Looking Ahead

The continued rise of discernment-focused

Christians divided over how and whether to protest ICE operations

Religious leaders debate how to balance Jesus’ teaching about protecting the vulnerable and the need to protect societal order

By Michelle Boorstein

The immigration crackdown in Minneapolis is revealing divisions among Christian leaders across the country about appropriate religious responses to ICE’s most aggressive enforcement tactics.

Episcopal bishops in New Hampshire and Minnesota have in recent days told their flocks to be prepared even for death in order to protect the vulnerable. Clergy members are among those, along with union leaders and others, calling for a general strike Friday to protest U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. A network of progressive groups that had urged members of the clergy to come to Minneapolis later this week said its event was spurred by “a crisis of faith communities failing to live into a vision of Beloved Community,” advertising the call to action as an extension of the religious mantle of

podcasts, YouTube channels, and social media pages suggests that many Christians are asking serious questions about truth, doctrine, and faithfulness in a rapidly changing world. As digital platforms evolve, so too will the ways believers learn, discuss, and apply Scripture.

At its best, discernment ministry encourages Christians to become thoughtful, Scripture-centered followers of Christ — rooted in truth, guided by love, and committed to growing in faith together.

the 1960s civil rights marches.

But an anti-ICE protest that took place inside a St. Paul church Sunday has drawn outrage from conservatives as well as skepticism from some ICE critics, who say a sacred space shouldn’t be a protest target. The Justice Department has launched a civil rights investigation of the noisy demonstration inside the Southern Baptist church. On Thursday, Attorney General Pam Bondi announced on X the arrests of three protesters, including Nekima Levy Armstrong, the organizer of the demonstration. Bondi did not specify what the charges were.

“No cause — political or otherwise — justifies the desecration of a sacred space or the intimidation and trauma inflicted on families gathered peacefully in the house of God,” Kevin Ezell, head of the Southern Baptists’ missionary arm, wrote in a statement Monday.

Some say that failing to protest — even in uncomfortable ways — is a betrayal of basic Christian precepts.

“I believe that if someone professes to represent the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to preach it, that they should not be allowing ICE agents to drag people out of their homes,” Levy Armstrong, who is also an ordained minister, said Wednesday on the left-leaning show “Democracy Now!”

The Trump administration’s Operation Metro Surge, which has resulted in the arrest of more than 3,000 people in the Twin Cities in less than two months, is putting new pressure on age-old tensions between the Christian mandate to aid the poor and vulnerable and the conservative views of many U.S. Christians who want to show support for law enforcement. While many agree with the administration’s

stated goal to arrest and deport undocumented people who have committed crimes, nearly two-thirds of Americans oppose such treatment of people who have no criminal record, the firm PRRI found last month. That split is pressuring Christian Americans to choose how to respond to ICE’s behavior and the increasingly confrontational actions of protesters.

“The Reformation was based on protests,” said Trey Turner, executive director of the Minnesota-Wisconsin arm of the Southern Baptist Convention, one of the biggest conservative Christian bodies in the country. “I would expect any Christian protester to represent the Lord with the same character traits described in scripture and not simply the parts about turning over tables.”

Christians he knows, Turner said, are torn between wanting to take a clear moral stand and not wanting to be part of a slide toward lawlessness.

“I believe many Christians struggle with how to view protests and protesters,” he said.

Two days after Minneapolis protester Renée Good was shot and killed by an ICE officer, New Hampshire Episcopal Bishop Robert Hirschfeld announced a stark message: He’d told his priests to “get their affairs in order.”

Speaking to a crowd at a vigil in Concord, Hirschfeld said he’d told his priests “to make sure they have their wills written, because it may be that now is no longer the time for statements, but for us with our bodies, to stand between the powers of this world, and the most vulnerable.” Hirschfeld’s address has been watched mil-

Continued on page 11

ICE

Continued from page 10

lions of times on social media.

“Someone who says ‘I am willing to put my body on the line’ doesn’t mean they will impede law enforcement, it means they may lawfully videotape, go to hearings,” or do trainings about how to protect the human dignity of migrants as well as law enforcement, the Rev. Gabriel Salguero, an Orlando pastor and leader of the National Latino Evangelical Coalition, told The Washington Post.

“But it is urgent. There is a renewed sense of urgency now,” he said, adding that the vast majority of people being detained and deported are Christian.

“You are leading to the destabilization of our churches and our families and our schools,” Salguero said. “We’re all for the deportation and detention of violent criminals, but this indiscriminate action, we don’t support that. And we won’t be silent.”

Faith leaders from more-conservative groups say their role is to provide direct support to families and congregations

affected by deportations, detentions and fear but not to protest in a way that could be seen to challenge law enforcement’s legitimacy.

Turner said Tuesday that about two-thirds of the Southern Baptist Convention churches in Minnesota are majority non-White. Some SBC churches are not meeting because of fear and rumors of immigration actions, he said.

“We are a conservative denomination. I think for that reason there is a pretty close alignment with law enforcement,” Turner said. “Yet we know our brothers and sisters are hurting. We see them and are not ignoring their very real distress and needs.”

The anti-ICE protest inside a St. Paul SBC church Sunday served as a new flash point in the debate over what role churches and clergy should play at this moment. Organizers of the protest picked Cities Church after learning that the acting director of ICE’s local field office, David Easterwood, is a pastor there.

In a statement Tuesday, Cities Church Pastor Jonathan Parnell, who was leading the service when about two dozen

protesters entered, said activists “accosted members of our congregation, frightened children, and created a scene marked by intimidation and threat. ... Invading a church service to disrupt the worship of Jesus — or any other act of worship — is protected by neither the Christian Scriptures nor the laws of this nation.”

Other faith leaders echoed Parnell’s anger.

Robert Barron, a Minnesota Catholic bishop and well-known conservative media figure, posted on X on Monday that “I don’t care what is animating or annoying you, I don’t care what your political persuasion might be, invading a church is unacceptable and is a violation of religious liberty.”

Asked whether he thought protesting inside a church crossed a line, Hirschfeld said that he doesn’t know enough about the Cities Church protest but that “I hope the sanctuary and autonomy of churches, synagogues, mosques can be respected by all.”

Research shows Americans are divided in multiple ways over Trump’s enforcement policies.

A CNN poll conducted after

4 Recommended Resources on Knowing God’s Will

By Karrie Hahn

In a fallen world, perhaps there’s no practical question more commonly asked than this: How can I know God’s will? After all, we face many difficult and complex decisions throughout our lives. We know that our God possesses perfect knowledge, acts in perfect wisdom, and sees the end from the beginning, but as finite, fallen creatures, we often struggle to connect the truths of God’s Word to our specific circumstances. Whether you’re asking this question yourself or helping fellow brothers and sisters in

Good’s death found 42 percent of Americans overall saying that they approve of the administration’s actions on immigration, down from 51 percent in March. That fall seems to have begun after a Maryland man, Kilmar Abrego Garcia, was illegally deported in March.

Christ as they seek God’s will, these resources, curated by the Ligonier editorial team, can help shed light on the path to knowing and doing God’s will.

1. God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in All of Life by Gene Edward Veith Jr.

This work is a comprehensive overview of the doctrine of Christian calling. Turning to the Scriptures, Dr. Gene Edward Veith examines what the Bible says about the various callings God gives to us in the church, in the family, as citizens, and as laborers in the workplace. He also provides guidance on how we can find our vocation, looks at how the Lord works through human beings in their vocations, and considers what it looks like to bear the cross as we work unto the glory of God in many different spheres.

2. Discovering God’s Will by Sinclair B. Ferguson
Dr. Sinclair B. Ferguson

considers how to discern God’s will for our lives, looking at how God guides us through His Word and through His providence into the calling He has for us.

3. Can I Know God’s Will? by R.C. Sproul

This practical booklet by Dr. R.C. Sproul considers the misunderstandings that many people have about the will of God and provides clear, practical biblical principles for accurately discerning it. It shows that knowing God’s will requires no mystical insight or extraordinary revelation.

4. Called to the Ministry by Edmund P. Clowney

How does a man know when God is calling him to vocational ministry? This helpful work by Edmund P. Clowney considers the signs of calling to vocational ministry one should look for and the church’s role in affirming this calling.

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Christian game creator TruPlay accuses Google, TikTok of censorship

By Leonardo Blair

TruPlay Games, a Christian digital media company that creates educational Bible-based video games and entertainment, has accused American technology company Google and popular social media platform TikTok of systematically censoring Christian content and has asked Congress to intervene.

In a five-page letter to House Judiciary Chair Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, on Wednesday, officials at the American Center for Law & Justice, which is representing TruPlay Games, says that since 2023, Google has rejected dozens of TruPlay's advertisements under a policy labeled "Religious belief in personalized advertising."

"In practice, however, Google applies its 'Religious belief in personalized advertising' policy to reject advertisements because they contain religious content, regardless of how the audience is targeted," ACLJ Executive Director Jordan Sekulow writes, along with Nathan J. Moelker, senior associate counsel, and Mark Kelly, the organization's director of government affairs.

"TruPlay's ads do not target audiences based on religious belief — they advertise Christian gaming content to general audiences interested in family entertainment, children's education, and mobile gaming."

The ACLJ officials said Google rejected advertising such as: "Turn Game Time Into God Time," "Christian Games for Kids," and "Safe Bible Games for Kids."

"These ads target general demographics (parents, families with children, mobile game users) and geographic regions — not audiences selected based on religious be-

lief. Yet, Google has continued to reject them under the religious belief policy," they argue.

"TruPlay's campaigns do not use religious status as a targeting criterion. This suggests Google interprets 'personalized advertising' so broadly that virtually any advertising for 'religious products or topics' is prohibited, regardless of whether religious groups are targeted at all," they add. "If this interpretation is correct, then Google's policy effectively bars practically all advertising for religious content, while the policy language suggests only audience-religion-based targeting is restricted.

Officials at ACLJ argue that TikTok treated TruPlay in a similar fashion as Google and permanently suspended the company's advertising account for "repeated violations."

"TikTok even refused to allow TruPlay to run ads if TruPlay included a cartoon image of Jesus on the cross as one of the Apple App Store preview pictures, regardless of the content of any particular advertisement," they note. "Simply having a picture of Jesus was enough to ban advertisements. After multiple ad rejections, TikTok escalated its enforcement by permanently suspending TruPlay's

advertising account, citing alleged 'repeated violations' of its advertising policies."

"This is repeated behavior in the dozens," TruPlay CEO Brent Dusing told FOX Business. "We would get rejections multiple times a week."

Dusing insists that he's pushing for fairness because both Google and TikTok represent a significant share of the digital advertising market.

"When you lose those platforms, you lose a massive ability to reach your potential audience," he told FOX Business.

The ACLJ is now calling on the House Judiciary Committee to investigate the two companies to ensure fairness in access to digital content.

"We respectfully urge the Committee to investigate Google and TikTok's religious content advertising policies and their application. We also suggest that the Committee promptly hold hearings regarding these restrictions so that solutions can be found to ensure that the digital marketplace remains open to those with religious beliefs and viewpoints," they argue.

"The systematic suppression of Christian content — particularly family-friendly content designed for children — represents a serious threat to religious liberty in the digital age."

Christian lecturer sacked over comments on homosexuality continues appeal

By Staff Writer, Christianity Today

A Christian lecturer was in court this week to appeal a tribunal decision that upheld his dismissal from a Bible college for a social media post expressing traditional evangelical views on sexuality.

Dr Aaron Edwards argues that the ruling by the Sheffield Tribunal upholding his dismissal unlawfully undermined his freedom of religion and expression.

The Christian theologian was sacked by Cliff College in Derbyshire after tweeting comments defending the biblical view of sexuality in response to a debate in the Church of England in February 2023 to allow same-sex blessings.

In his tweet, Dr Edwards said, "Homosexuality is invading the Church. Evangelicals no longer see the severity of this b/c they're busy apologising for their apparently barbaric homophobia, whether or not



Dr Aaron Edwards, 37, worked for Cliff College for seven years prior to his dismissal.

it's true. This is a 'Gospel issue', by the way. If sin is no longer sin, we no longer need a Saviour."

His comments prompted

widespread comment and reaction on social media, with some critics accusing him of homophobia. In sub-

Continued on page 17

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West Africans find hope amid horror



A woman and her child sit during a training in West Africa. Violence has left many women as widows and children as orphans. Trauma healing workshops hosted by Katee Sheppard and national believers help survivors process their grief and trauma.

By Tessa Sanchez.

Editor's Note: Last month, IMB missionary Katee Sheppard was featured during the Week of Prayer for International Missions. As you learn more about her ministry and continue to pray, please remember the harsh reality of many who have no hope apart from the Good News.

**Warning: Story depicts scenes of graphic violence*

Yacouba couldn't stop the tears from flowing.

He heard there had been an attack on his brother-in-law's village by a terrorist group. They hadn't been able to get in touch with him, so he and his wife went to the village to search for her brother.

Yacouba found the village plundered. To his horror, he and his wife found her brother's body. His head had been decapitated, but propped back up on the body, facing east toward Mecca, the Muslim holy city.

He couldn't get the image out of his mind. He closed his eyes, and the scene was once again before him.

When Yacouba and his wife returned home, they couldn't find their son, Saidou, who was around age 6. They searched for several days before they found him, buried, but still alive.

Saidou buried himself under a pile of sand with his head sticking out so he could breathe.

He said he was hiding from the terrorists.

Katee Sheppard didn't make eye contact as she shared this story and other stories over a video chat as she sat in her car. Sheppard, a missionary with the International Mission Board, facilitates trauma healing workshops in West Africa. Sheppard said she can't share the stories she's heard without crying.

She looked up and over to one side and shared how she heard story after story about the women who witnessed the slaughter of their husbands and their worst nightmare becoming a reality when their children fled in fear. Many have not been reunited.

"The stories are horrific," Sheppard's voice caught, and tears swelled. "They've seen their family literally killed in front of their eyes. They've lost their homes. They've lost whatever food they had. They lost whatever cattle they had. They have no place to live, no means to eat."

Terrorists often enter villages and kill the men, leaving villages of widows and children. The attack on Yacouba's brother-in-law's village was just one such event. Male survivors opt to sleep in trees out of fear of the terrorists returning.

Sheppard is always amazed to hear participants say in trauma healing trainings, "Now we

understand." They state this after they've heard the stories of everything Joseph, from the Bible, endured in his life, and that God was still with him in every crisis.

Participants resonate with what Joseph told his brothers, "Do not be afraid. You meant to harm me, but God used what has happened for good – not just for me – but so that many other people could be saved."

"With that understanding of the story, they leave with hope," Sheppard said.

The seven-session training, which focuses on a different Bible story each week, is called New Hope. Sheppard said that's exactly what happens. Some participants come with suicidal thoughts but leave with a new hope.

The training teaches participants to be good listeners when others share their traumatic stories. New Hope teaches believers to look back at what has happened, look up to see what God has for each participant and then look forward to what is next.

Sheppard said, "Hearing the stories of their personal trauma and then hearing their personal testimonies of how God's stories have transformed their lives, given them hope and allowed them to move forward is beyond anything she's experienced. They come together with

absolutely no reason to smile, yet they do when they leave."

When asked if Sheppard could share the story of someone who went through the training, she paused a long time. The silence was heavy before recounting Yacouba's story of finding his brother-in-law.

Sheppard heard Yacouba's story from a New Hope training that was led for pastors and their wives. During one session, Yacouba stood.

"I need to talk, I need to say something," he said.

Sheppard got choked up as she shared the next part.

"I have to tell you, I have hope now. I'm not healed yet, but we can now begin to heal," Yacouba shared.

Six generations and counting The New Hope training is one piece of a multi-generational tapestry of men and women who've received training from Sheppard and her national partners during her 27 years of service.

Sheppard has seen six generations of West African believers trained in oral storying methods. Most people in West Africa prefer oral communication methods over written ones, and Sheppard facilitated trainings to help people learn about God and the Bible, equip believers to share their faith and find healing from trauma.

Her storying training began



Two men bow their heads in prayer during a training in West Africa. IMB missionary Katee Sheppard hosts several trainings, including the New Hope training that helps survivors of trauma.

with West African truck drivers who took the Gospel on their trade routes across country lines.

From this initial ministry, national partners, now equipped in these methods, went to a pastoral training school. This group was the beginning of the second generation of believers training others using adult stories from God's Word.

"Our focus from the beginning is we train nationals, and we get out of the way," Sheppard said.

Her current role involves encouraging those who have been

trained and continuing to cast vision.

They've trained Baptist pastors in two West African countries in oral storying trainings. Believers have the tools to reach unengaged and unreached people groups and are currently doing so.

A ministry that started with truck drivers is now an interconnected network of West Africans who are sharing their faith and the new hope they've found in the Man of Sorrows, Jesus.

Some names changed for security.

OPPOSING VIEWPOINTS

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'Holy' Transgenderism

Dr. Rodney Crowell

Bob Unruh of World Net Daily (11-14-25) reports, "A collective of religious organizations has issued a statement declaring transgenderism 'holy' and confirming that God makes mistakes, but they are such that man can fix them." He's describing an attempt by ultraliberal Protestant and Jewish groups to rebuke a vote by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops which bars transgender procedures in Catholic health care facilities. But their attempted rebuke only demonstrates how these groups have abandoned Scriptural teaching.

Who issued this pronouncement? Officials from the Episcopal Church, Presbyterian Church USA, the United Church of Christ, the Unitarian Universalist Association, the Union for Reform Judaism, an association of Quakers, plus others. They said, "We raise our voices in solidarity to unequivocally proclaim the holiness of transgender, non-binary, and intersex people, as well as the recognition of the entire spectrum of gender identity and expression Our faiths, our theologies, and our practices of prophetic witness call on us to say with one voice to transgender people among us: 'You are holy. You are sacred. We love you. We support you, and we will protect you.'"

This is wrong on so many levels – as Mr. Unruh hints above – that one scarcely knows where to begin. First and most obvi-

ously, why bother worshipping an incompetent 'god' who puts us in the 'wrong' bodies at birth such that they must be 'fixed' by hormone therapy, surgery and a lifetime of antibiotics? For being male or female is embedded in every nucleated cell of our bodies, right down to our DNA. Having a Y chromosome makes you male, while having only X's makes you female. Genesis 1:27 says male and female are both created in God's image and are good; so, the transgender body-switching god is a false one. Fearing to admit this theological problem, they just quietly refer to 'god' less and 'holiness' more. Better to rest content with "a form of godliness" (2 Timothy 3:5) than face the problems caused by the unskilled deity they have invented!

Secondly, transgenderism TRIVIALIZES the real issues behind gender dysphoria by making outrageous claims that hormone therapy (riddled with side effects) and gender surgery (ditto for infections) will help in any lasting way. They don't. When "the thrill is gone" of transitioning, the storm of problems hits and no shrink or surgeon wants to violate woke protocols and risk lawsuits by helping people reverse the change. They thus abandon the very ones they claim to "support...and protect" precisely when they need real help the most. Nor will they refund the money and big pharma kickbacks they reaped in the process! It's a cruelly

hypocritical scam from start to finish. Addressing the underlying issues of school bullying, social media influence, family dynamics, fetishes or poor self-image would help far more.

Now let's consider the issues of self-declared 'holiness.' Frankly, that is GOD'S call, not ours, to make. In an absolute sense, only God is holy ("For you alone are holy," Rev. 15:4). Holiness isn't God's conformity to some external law, it's rather intrinsic to His nature as morally pure, without sin and opposed to all that IS sin, as demonstrated in the words and works of His Son Jesus Christ. However, because God is gracious, and because He has given the command to "be holy, for I am holy" (Lev 11:44-45; 1 Peter 1:15-16), He provides the means throughout history for His covenant people Israel and His grafted-in covenant people the church to share in His holiness through faith in Him and obedience to His commands, which include the forsaking of sexual immorality and godlessness (Hebrews 12:14-16). Through obedience to the moral and ceremonial laws given through Moses, Israel demonstrated their promised obedience to God's covenant (Exodus 19:8, "We will do everything the LORD has said"). So, God called them "a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6). But when they rebelled, God warned them, punished them, and yet restored them after their

repentance. The same happens to Christians in the church; much of living in real fellowship with God and one another involves the ongoing confession of sin, repentance from it, and correction of life according to the full teaching of Scripture. Failure to repent automatically moves us in God's sight from being "godly" in our daily walk of faith to being "ungodly." While still loved and heirs of eternal life, we nonetheless move from being obedient children to disobedient ones requiring discipline: "God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness" (Hebrews 12:10b). Accepting the Lord's discipline is required for Him to declare us holy or unholy – so it's GOD'S call, not ours, to make. Paying attention to God's written Word is as important for sanctification (growing in holiness) as for our salvation. Far from being a blanket endorsement of every

sexual identity under the sun, God's grace "teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age" (Titus 2:12). Christians have believed this for centuries; it's nothing new!

However, one looks in vain for any of this historic, orthodox teaching in the pro-transgender church, for their only sin is a sin "against love," which means anything less than total acceptance of transgenderism. Try finding that anywhere in the Bible! Which is why one crew-cut lesbian pastor of an

ultraliberal church warned visitors, "You won't ever find me mentioning sin or repentance, just total acceptance of people as they are!" How sad! Having rejected God's written revelation, what else can she do but become a rigid enforcer of woke pagan revelry?

Abraham Lincoln reportedly originated the riddle, "If you call a tail a leg, how many legs does a dog have?" His answer was, "Four – because calling a tail a leg doesn't make it one!" So with holiness. It's what GOD says about us, not what we say, that matters most.

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US Mobilizes as Iran Crackdown Intensifies; Reports Cite Hospital Killings

By Chris Mitchell

JERUSALEM, Israel – The United States has assembled a massive military presence in the Middle East, raising speculation that President Trump may be preparing for a potential strike against the Iranian regime.

President Trump told reporters he is closely monitoring developments in Iran as U.S. naval forces move into position.

“You know, we have a lot of ships going that direction, just in case. We have a big flotilla going in that direction. And we’ll see what happens. It’s a big force. We have a big force going toward Iran. I’d rather not see anything happen, but we’re watching them.”

President Trump said Iran’s regime cancelled more than 800 executions on Thursday. However, reports from inside Iran indicate that Iranian forces continue to kill their own citizens, even in hospitals and the medical workers treating them.

This week, the Iranian government officially admitted to killing more than 3,000 people, but the United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iran says the actual death toll could exceed 20,000. And the Human Rights Activists News Agency reports nearly 26,500 people have also been arrested.

Tensions escalated further after a spokesman for Iran’s armed forces warned the United States against taking action that could harm Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, threatening consequences if such a move were made.

Many Iranians are looking to the U.S. to come to their aid.

In Davos, Switzerland, on

Thursday, President Trump launched the Board of Peace to oversee the administration of the Gaza Strip.

“Once this board is completely formed, we can pretty much do whatever we want to do. And we’ll do it in conjunction with the United Nations.”

One issue the Board of Peace could address is the fighting in northeast Syria, where the Syrian army is attacking the region, which has served as a democratic, independent enclave for more than 10 years.

Reports from the area describe mass displacement, kidnappings, arrests, executions, and killings.

Pastor Majed Kurdi told CBN News that believers are urgently asking for prayer.

He explained, “They are calling for help, and they are calling the churches around the world to pray for them so that the Lord may interfere in the situation and stop what is going on at the moment because there is no doubt there will be another genocide.”

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Christianity's numbers stabilize; Gen Z's faith picture complicated

By Aaron Earls

The latest Pew Research study finds Christianity remains stable after decades of decline, while the story for young adults remains complicated.

Since 2020, the percentage of Americans who identify as Christian has hovered in the low to mid-60s. Those with no religious preference have consistently made up almost 30 percent of the population, while those of other religions comprise less than 10 percent.

Currently, 62 percent of U.S. adults say they're Christian, 28 percent are religiously unaffiliated, and 8 percent belong to other religions.

Additionally, other religious practices have also remained steady. The percentage of those who pray daily has been in the upper-40s, now at 46 percent. The percentage of Americans who say religion is very important in their lives has been in the mid-40s, now at 43 percent. And the percentage of those who attend religious services at least once or twice a month has been in the mid-30s, now at 34 percent.

But what about Gen Z? How do they compare with previous generations?

Gen Z's religious status

Based on some specific findings and anecdotal evidence, many have purported that young adults are experiencing a religious revival. While Pew allows that some changes may be taking place that have yet to be captured in national surveys, they say there is "no clear evidence that this kind of nationwide religious resurgence is underway."

Despite the general pronouncement, there are some noteworthy happenings in the religious landscape of Gen Z.

The population-wide stability has extended to Gen Z, which is noteworthy in and of itself. After years of younger generations growing increasingly secular, the past five years have been remarkably steady for Gen Z.

The gender gap in American religion has narrowed among younger generations, according to Pew Research. For adults born since 2000, men are just as likely as women to identify

with a religion (58 percent v. 57 percent). Much of that, however, has not come from an increase among young adult men but rather larger declines in religiosity among women.

Young adults are still far less likely than older Americans to identify with a religion, pray daily, and say religion is very important to their lives. They are, however, nearly as likely to attend religious services at least monthly.

The research seems to indicate a much smaller percentage of nominal Christians among younger generations.

Among Americans 60 and older, more than 4 in 5 identify with a religion, almost 3 in 5 pray daily, and more than half say religion is very important in their lives. But, around 2 in 5 attend religious services at least monthly.

The gap between identification and practice is much smaller for those 30 and younger: 57

percent identify with a religion, 32 percent pray daily, 33 percent say religion is very important in their lives, and 31 percent attend religious services at least monthly.

In terms of church attendance, young adults are just as likely to show up at least monthly as all but the oldest adults. Among those 18-30, 31 percent regularly attend, compared to 29 percent of those 31-40, 31 percent of those 41-50, 33 percent of those 51-60, and 36 percent of those 61-70. Only those 70 and older (43 percent) have significantly higher attendance rates.

But there is some movement that could give churches hope for shifts among the youngest adults.

Early indications of a revival?

Pew's findings seem to indicate the youngest adults are slightly more religious than those slightly older than them.

This could be signs of a Gen Z religious rebound.

Compared to those born from 1995-2002, those born from 2003-2007 are slightly more likely to identify with a religion (61 percent v. 55 percent), pray daily (35 percent v. 30 percent), and say religion is very important to their lives (37 percent v. 32 percent). They are much more likely to say they attend religious services at least monthly (41 percent v. 26 percent).

As a word of caution, the youngest age group also includes those adults who may still live at home, so they may be more likely to attend with their parents than the age group directly above them.

Additionally, a similar phenomenon has happened before. In 2007, those born from 1985-1989 were slightly more likely than those born from 1977-1984 to say they regularly attended religious services (52

percent v. 49 percent). By 2014, both age groups had dropped, but the youngest dropped more, so they became less likely to attend at least monthly (40 percent v. 45 percent).

Warning signs

While there are some areas of hope, the Pew Research data also reveals some areas of concern for churches.

Young people today are generally less religious than young people in 2007 and 2014. They're less likely than 18-24-year-olds in previous generations to identify with a religion, believe in God with absolute certainty and pray daily.

Currently, far more young adults are leaving Christianity than joining it. Among those 18-34, 5 percent became Christian after having not been raised Christian, while 26 percent left Christianity after having been

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This week's Torah reading is Parashat Vaera (Exodus 6:2-9:35). Read on Shabbat, January 17, 2026 / 27 Tevet 5786. The following is a special devotional drawn from this week's reading.

"God spoke to Moses and said to him, I am the LORD. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by My name the LORD I was not known to them" (Exodus 6:2-3).

Parashat Vaera marks a turning point in the story of redemption. God reveals Himself more fully to Moses and declares His commitment to deliver Israel from slavery. Though the people are discouraged and Pharaoh's heart is hardened, God remains steadfast. He repeats His promises and reaffirms His covenant, reminding Moses that liberation is rooted not in human strength but in divine faithfulness.

The plagues that follow are not random acts of power. They are signs meant to reveal who God is and to expose the emptiness of false authority. Each plague confronts Egypt's confidence and challenges its gods. At the same time, God is shaping Israel's identity, teaching them to trust Him even when deliverance seems slow or costly. Redemption unfolds step by step, often amid resistance and uncertainty.

This portion speaks to seasons when progress feels stalled and hope feels fragile. Moses struggles with self-doubt. The people grow weary of waiting. Yet God continues to act, revealing His presence and power in ways that cannot be ignored. Vaera reminds us that God's timing is purposeful, and His promises remain firm even when circumstances appear unchanged.

Some may be facing obstacles that seem immovable or voices that resist change. This portion encourages perseverance rooted in trust. God sees the full story when we see only a moment. Others may be witnessing small signs of movement after long waiting. Let these moments strengthen your faith and remind you that God is at work even when the process feels slow.

As this Shabbat arrives, take time to remember where God has already revealed His faithfulness in your life. Speak gratitude for past deliverance, even as you wait for new freedom. Choose one way to trust God more deeply this week, whether through patience, prayer, or obedience.

Let your heart rest in the truth that the God who appeared long ago still acts with power and mercy today.

Prayer

Lord, thank You for revealing Yourself as faithful and strong. Help me trust Your promises when the path is difficult and the outcome unclear. Strengthen my faith as I wait for Your deliverance, and let my life reflect confidence in Your redeeming power. Amen.

Appeal

Continued from page 12

sequent tweets, he defended his comments as reflecting "the conservative view" on these issues, and insisted it was "not homophobic to declare homosexuality sinful".

He refused requests from Cliff College to remove his posts and was later investigated by the college, before being sacked for misconduct for "bringing the college into disrepute".

He already received limited permission to appeal his sacking and appeared before the Employment Appeal Tribunal in London on Thursday seeking to expand

Gen Z

Continued from page 16

raised in it. Around 2 in 5 (41 percent) were raised Christian and still are, while 28 percent were not raised Christian and still aren't Christian.

That does, however, represent some improvement over those born in the 1990s. Among 24-34-year-olds, 3 percent converted to Christianity, 31 percent left Christianity, 42 percent remain Christian, and 23 percent have never been Christian.

The youngest adults are slightly more likely to include new Christian converts and less likely to have those who leave the faith.

Again, the findings don't give a simple picture of religion in America or among young adults. There are reasons for optimism and concern.

While continuing to reach out to new young adults, churches should seek to capitalize on the apparent fervor and devotion of those already attending. Congregations may not be filled with young adults, but the ones they have are likely fully invested in faithfully following Jesus.

the grounds of his appeal, which the judge agreed to.

Speaking ahead of the hearing, Dr Edwards said he was praying for "justice".

"My legal case is essentially about challenging compromise. Cliff College seems to think you can still brand yourself 'evangelical' while thinking or saying nothing about the threat to the Gospel posed by the radical incursions of LGBT ideology into previously faithful denominations, churches, and colleges today. They fail to see that compromise is 'a gospel issue'," he said.

He added, "I hope and

pray for justice this week."

Dr Edwards is being supported in his case by the Christian Legal Centre (CLC), which says he has been unable to work as a Bible college lecturer since his dismissal and has suffered financial hardship and serious stress-related health issues.

Commenting on his case, CLC chief executive Andrea Williams said that "reputational concern" was "not a legitimate basis for penalising protected Christian expression".

"Dr Edwards was dismissed for expressing an entirely mainstream Christian belief grounded in bib-

lical morality. This is not a marginal or extremist view, but one protected under UK equality and human rights law," she said.


She went on, "This case raises serious questions about freedom of religion, freedom of expression, and the lawful limits of institutional authority.

"If Christian academics cannot express orthodox Christian convictions in so-called Christian institutions without fear of sanction, then the legal protections afforded to religious belief are being hollowed out. We will stand with Aaron until justice is done."

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Resolve to Fight Lies with Truth in 2026

By Chris Larson

Many people are setting goals for the new year. However, Christians are called to a higher level of commitment than just exercising more or organizing the closet. We are called to live with a dedication to truth as ambassadors for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our King has covenanted for our salvation, resolving to love His people to the end (Matt. 28:20; John 13:1). Since Christ is faithful, let us strive to serve Him faithfully this year in thought, word and deed. And may we be resolved to build one another up in our most holy faith.

I pray that our monthly updates uphold this resolution, even as Ligonier Ministries seeks to impart sound words that build people up in the truth (Eph. 4:29; 2 Tim. 1:13). And I believe a similar resolution drives friends like you who financially support this unique teaching fellowship.

As a supporter of this ministry, you help bring truth to Christians worldwide. Thank you for your generosity in spreading trusted Bible teaching to more people. When you step forward to support Ligonier with a donation this month, we'll send you four books from Ligonier to extend your personal ministry in the cause of truth.

As we begin a new year, we confront a world ensnared by deception. We see it in the commitments people make and the resolutions that govern their lives.

- The resolution to reject accountability before God, resulting in atheism.

- The commitment to overthrow the authority of God's Word, yielding cults.

- The demand to worship a god made in our own image, leading to false religions.

- The drive to self-indulge and deny God's good design,

culminating in sexual sin. What underlies each of these corrupted priorities? Lies about who God is and who we are as people made in His image. Their deception promises pleasure and fulfillment—yet it results only in sorrow, corruption, and God's righteous judgment.

To a world enslaved by deception, our faithful Savior proclaims: "The truth will set you free" (John 8:32). As Christians prepare to reach out to our neighbors in the coming year, we need renewed resolve to know God's truth so we can share it effectively and confront the false ideas that surround us.

Ligonier's beloved founder demonstrated this holy resolve by God's grace. Dr. R.C. Sproul said, "To be uncompromising with the truth of the gospel is a virtue and is demanded of all who would be servants of Christ."

R.C. contended for the faith without being contentious. While he remained unyielding when the gospel was threat-

ened, he was kind to people who came with honest questions, displaying Christlike compassion for sheep without a shepherd (Matt. 9:36). Following this example, Ligonier is resolved in 2026 to help build up Christians in the truth so they can answer the lies of this world with God's liberating truth.

You share in this holy resolve through your financial support. Your generosity helps to equip God's people for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:12) as you propel crucial Bible-teaching outreach:

- Empowering the next generation at our Always Ready youth conferences. Over the next three years, we plan to reach 15,000 teenagers worldwide, demonstrating to students that they are not alone and encouraging them to stand courageously for Christ.

- Gathering disciples around the truth at many other training events and conferences globally. In a few short months, our 2026 National Conference will focus on the

theme of Crucial Questions to embolden Christian witness in the world. (Will we see you there?)

- Providing an unparalleled Bible study platform with enhancements to the free Ligonier app. We seek to provide even greater access to the ministry's wealth of digital teaching resources to arm Christians with truth for the spiritual battles they face.

- Expanding our multi-language discipleship library now that Ligonier is releasing new teaching weekly in the world's top 20 languages. To prepare for years of ministry

and training, Lord willing, we're increasing our strategic focus on Africa and Southeast Asia.

With every outreach, Ligonier seeks to extend the ministry of Christians so they may think biblically, live faithfully, and fight falsehood courageously with the truth.

Yet "unless the Lord builds the house," all our efforts are in vain (Ps. 127:1). Above all, our efforts rely on His gracious provision and blessing. Please resolve to pray for Ligonier throughout 2026 so that God will grant this ministry fruitfulness.

In God's providence, your donation today accelerates outreach in 2026. When you give in support of Ligonier, we'll send you four books from our library: two copies of A Field Guide on False Teaching and two copies of A Field Guide on Gender and Sexuality. I trust these timely resources will help extend your personal ministry this year, equipping you and a friend to engage the lies of our culture with God's life-changing truth.

Let's run our race with renewed resolve for the gospel of Christ that frees souls.

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‘We bagged him and put him in the freezer’: Ex-Planned Parenthood worker haunted by aborted baby remains

‘We were just like robots’

By *Samantha Kamman, Christian Post Reporter*

When Nallely Perez started working for Planned Parenthood, she believed she was stepping into a job that would support her family while she was helping other women. Initially indifferent to abortion, Perez’s views changed the day she was required to rinse and bag the remains of a 16-week-old aborted baby.

Perez accepted a job as a receptionist at a Planned Parenthood facility in Santa Maria, California, in the late 2000s because she believed the position would provide stability and help her support her children.

The former abortion worker had been a teen mom after becoming pregnant at 14, and after learning about her daughter’s pregnancy, Perez’s mother had offered to take her for an abortion.

Fourteen-year-old Perez, however, kept the baby after her boyfriend — who eventually became her husband in 2016 — told her that he would take the baby and

raise it so Perez could “live the life [she] want[ed].”

“And I was like, ‘No, that makes no sense.’ So, you know, I fell in love with that baby after that. And at seven and a half months, I had her, and she changed my life completely,” Perez told *The Christian Post*.

By the age of 19, Perez had four children and a fragile relationship with the man who would later become her husband. After studying to become a medical assistant, Perez worked at a low-income clinic, but the salary wasn’t enough to support her family.

“When my review came up, they gave me like a 10-cent raise, and I was like, ‘I need more. I have kids,’” Perez told CP. “So, I started looking for a job, and I found that Planned Parenthood was hiring. It said that it was hiring for a receptionist. So I was like, ‘OK, let me apply.’”

For Perez, the receptionist job at Planned Parenthood seemed too good an opportunity to pass up, as it promised

better pay than she earned at the low-income clinic.

At the time, Planned Parenthood’s role as an abortion provider didn’t bother Perez. During the job interview, Perez was asked how she felt about abortion, and her answer came easily: “As long as I don’t have one, I support others who choose it.”

She also viewed Planned Parenthood as an organization that helped individuals with family planning, as her husband had gone there in 2006 for a vasectomy after the couple had their fourth child.

“And I was like, ‘You know, if they help me not to have kids, I can go and help people not to have a lot of kids,’” Perez said about her mindset at the time.

The mother of four started working at Planned Parenthood two weeks after her interview and worked there for a year. The facility trained Perez as a receptionist first, then asked whether she was interested in training for a counseling position.

“I had no idea what that

was, but then I started training,” the mother said.

As a counselor, Perez would take women who had received a positive pregnancy test to a room to discuss their options: parenting, adoption and abortion. Perez said that she was taught to emphasize the urgency of scheduling an abortion, telling women they could end up having to travel far to have one if they waited too long.

“If they wanted information about adoption, we gave them a pamphlet,” the former Planned Parenthood worker recalled. “If they wanted to parent, we’d give them a pregnancy test confirmation, and then they’d be out. But most of our clients stayed to listen to the abortion options.”

Perez’s role at the facility evolved, and she eventually started working in the recovery room, monitoring women after abortions, and in the procedure room where the abortions took place.

“There were a lot of wom-

en in there who looked like they didn’t really want to be there, because they were crying,” Perez remembered about the procedure room. “Some women were there holding a rosary. Some women asked, ‘Hey, can you hold my hand while I’m going through this?’”

“And I was like, ‘Why are you asking this of me? You’re here; you made this decision,’” Perez remembered thinking about those women. “My heart was so hard at the time. I had no feelings — nothing made me feel bad about what I was doing.”

Planned Parenthood also assigned Perez to work in the products of conception lab, the room where the remains of the aborted children are counted to ensure nothing has been left inside the woman.

“I can’t even describe the smell. It smelled like metal,” Perez said about the POC lab.

After each abortion, a jar containing the remains of the

aborted child was brought into the lab, she recalled. Perez’s task was to empty the contents into a petri dish lying under a bright light, and then an abortionist would come and count the pieces of the baby.

Then it was Perez’s job to rinse the remains, seal them into a red bag, and place them in the freezer. By the end of the day, there were usually around 13 or 14 bags filled with remains stacked inside.

“We were just like robots,” she said. “We were just handed the jar, we emptied it in the POC lab, had the doctor come in, and then we did that for the next one, and then the next one, and then the next one. It was just non-stop.”

As is the case with most abortion facilities throughout the country, the Planned Parenthood where Perez worked had a pro-life presence outside of the facility. Perez remembered seeing two dif-

Continued on page 21



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Ye That Love the Lord, Hate Evil, Part 1

By Rev. Fred Di Lella, B.S., M.A., Th.M.

“Ye that love the LORD, hate evil:” (Psa. 97:10).

In the 19th Century Ignaz Semmelweis served as a physician in Hungary. One of his deepest concerns was that almost one-third of the new mothers on the maternity ward of the hospital were dying. Dr. Semmelweis began to wonder if there was any pattern to the procedure of these deaths. As his investigation progressed, he noted that the patients contracting fatal or near-fatal illnesses were seen by doctors who had very recently performed autopsies. The more he studied, the more convinced he became that there was a connection between the autopsies and the sickness and death of the maternity patients.

This led Dr. Semmelweis to institute a radical procedure. Whenever he performed an autopsy or visited a highly contagious patient, he would wash his hands. Needless to say, the doctor observed immediate and favorable results. While the death rate of the other doctors' patients was still soaring, none of Dr. Semmelweis' patients were

even becoming ill.

With all his well attested and indisputable research data and the well-known marvelous results of his innovative hand-washing procedure, Ignaz confidently and joyfully approached his medical colleagues. Much to the shock of the conscientious doctor, though, his cohorts reacted with great fury. They immediately removed him from his post at the hospital and cancelled his license to practice medicine. Although Dr. Semmelweis had preserved the health and lives of many of his patients, he lost his job and died a broken man.

Why did Ignaz suffer such ill treatment at the hands of his fellow physicians? Believe it or not, he had grossly offended them. You see, everybody knew that a gentleman has clean hands. Oh, it didn't matter that Semmelweis had purged much disease and death from their midst. No, that simply did not carry much weight. What did matter to them was that Dr. Semmelweis might possibly have tarnished their image as delicate gentlemen. For Ignaz even to imply

that the other good doctors, “gentlemen,” could have had soiled hands was a “dreadful” and “hateful” accusation.

This true story is almost too hard to swallow. How could these doctors place a higher value on being delicate, polite gentleman than on doing all within their means and power to rid the hospital of disease, death, and destruction?

Yet, as incredible as this historical narrative may seem, today, a considerably worse form of misguided politeness and delicacy is bringing forth far more disastrous and dangerous malignancies. Because of this high premium being placed upon being a gentleman, disease, death, and destruction abound all around us. In the name of politeness, “meekness,” “liberty

of conscience,” and “charity”, many in the church are sinfully and tragically being polite about far greater cancers than those that merely attack our physical well-being. They are compromising with and tolerating all types of false doctrine and false worship.

Just as Dr. Semmelweis urged his brethren to wash their hands and purge out the deadly disease that was wreaking havoc all around them, the Scriptures continually command and emphatically exhort us to hate and remove all spiritual poison from our midst. May we not be like the indignant, offended, delicate doctors of old. Rather, let us passionately hate evil and diligently strive to remove it.

Bible Trivia

1. Who are the only two characters in the Bible named “the son of perdition”?

2. Who are the only two persons in the Bible whom Satan himself is thought to possess?

Answer

If you answered Judas Iscariot and the Antichrist, you're correct. Then Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot, who was numbered among the twelve. So, he went his way and conferred with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him to them. (Luke 22 verse 3-4) Scriptures go on to say: After Judas hanged himself, he went “to his own place” (Acts 1 verse 25)

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Freezer

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ferent types of pro-lifers during her time with Planned Parenthood.

One group of demonstrators would block the parking lot entrance, or they would scream at abortion-minded women or the Planned Parenthood employees entering the facility.

Perez remembered one day, when she was walking a girl to her car, one of the more aggressive protesters shouted at her, "There's a special place in hell for you."

"And I was like, 'What does that even mean? I'm not doing anything bad. I'm just helping women,'" she remembered thinking to herself at the time.

The group of pro-lifers who stood out to Perez, however, were those who stood across the street and quietly prayed. Some in this group would bring an image of the Virgin Mary, which Perez could see from a window in the lab facing the street.

The image infuriated Perez at the time, even though she considered herself Catholic.

"I would get so mad," she said. "I'd think, 'Why did

they bring her here? We're not doing anything bad.'"

Her apathy fractured following an abortion being performed on a woman who was 16 weeks pregnant, four weeks beyond the facility's usual 12-week limit, because someone had made a mistake when reading the woman's ultrasound.

The Planned Parenthood in Santa Maria always had traveling abortionists, and the one who was there that day insisted that he was trained to abort babies beyond 12 weeks. After the abortion, Perez handled the remains in the POC lab, as she had always done, only this time, things were different.

"In the past, I would see little arms, little legs, but this baby, his head was complete," Perez said, crying at the memory. "The baby was just sitting there, and his arms were a little longer than the other babies."

"You could even see his little spine, his little legs, and everything was just so fully formed. You could see the place where his little eyes were going to be," she continued. "And the doctor came in and, just like with any other baby, he counted the pieces. And then we

bagged him up and put him in the freezer."

That night, Perez had a dream about the aborted baby in the petri dish. The next day, she asked one of her co-workers at Planned Parenthood if she felt disturbed by what they had seen.

"She told me, 'No, this is normal. We do it all the time,'" Perez said. "She kind of just blew it off, but for me, this baby was always in my head. I couldn't get it out."

In 2009, the father of Perez's children began restoring his relationship with God. As he grew in faith, Perez felt something stir inside herself, and she began to question her work.

Eventually, she gave her two weeks' notice and left Planned Parenthood.

Years later, Perez connected with Abby Johnson, a former Planned Parenthood clinic director and founder of the pro-life group And Then There Were None. Perez had seen a trailer for the movie "Unplanned" during a 2019 youth conference in Los Angeles. The movie tells the story of how Johnson became pro-life and left the abortion industry.

After googling who Johnson was and learning more

about her story, Perez realized there were wounds from her time at Planned Parenthood that had yet to heal.

She confessed to a priest but still didn't feel forgiven. Eventually, she reached out to Johnson's organization, which invited her to a healing retreat for former abortion workers.

Surrounded by other former abortion workers who knew the sounds, the smells, the machinery, the memories, something finally shifted.

"There was no shaking of the head, no 'Oh, gosh, I can't believe she did that,'" Perez said. "There was no shame."

For the first time, Perez felt forgiven, but she was also compelled to act.

While certain sights still trigger memories from her time at Planned Parenthood, such as bright lights and, one time, an ultrasound at a pregnancy center, Perez is no longer alone in carrying her guilt and pain.

At the end of 2025, Perez accepted a promotion as operations manager of ProLove Ministries, which includes LoveLine, a national hotline that Johnson founded to help connect pregnant women and

families with resources. The mother of four now counsels women and offers encouragement by sharing her own experiences as a teen mom, a far cry from her work at Planned Parenthood.

Perez also speaks at pro-life events, and she appeared in the 2023 mini-documentary, "She Was Stronger," which highlighted the stories of several former abortion workers and how Johnson's

ATTWN ministry helped them.

"God has uniquely equipped Nallely and redeemed every area of her life: in her faith, her family, and through her work in this ministry," Johnson said in a statement provided to CP. "Her unique experience on both sides of this issue makes her an invaluable voice for the mothers and families we serve every day."

A father in the shadows: How hostage Liam Or-Nassar's heritage was hidden to protect him

When the Jewish-Arab family realized their son had been kidnapped on Oct 7, Ramzi Nassar decided Liam's part-Arab identity must be concealed, to prevent Hamas from treating him as 'a son of a traitor'



Released Gaza hostage Liam Or-Nassar is embraced by his father Ramzi Nassar at the Hatzetim airbase, early November 30, 2023.

By TOI Staff

When his son was dragged from his home in Kibbutz Re'im into Gaza as a hostage on October 7, 2023, Ramzi Nassar quickly understood that his own identity could put his son's very life in danger.

As an Arab Muslim man married to a Jewish woman, he feared his 18-year-old boy could be viewed by the Islamist terrorists not just as a hostage, but as a symbol of ostensible defection and disloyalty.

And so, hostage Liam Or-Nassar became simply Liam Or in all state and media mentions, while his father made the difficult decision to hide himself and not campaign publicly for the release of his son.

"If Hamas knew, it could hurt Liam. It's not something that would have been well-received on the other side, that his Muslim father is married to a Jewish woman, even though there's no such prohibition in Islam. The boy could have been considered a traitor, a son of a traitor," Nassar told the Ynet news site. "I acted entirely out of a cold and painful calculus."

"We also didn't want them to assign him a 'higher value,' to hold on to him longer, if it turned into some major media

event here in Israel."

The interview, published on Friday, was the first time Nassar publicly identified himself as Liam's father since the abduction.

Nassar, his wife Dana Or and their children all lived in Re'im. During the October 7 onslaught, as the kibbutz was being invaded by Hamas terrorists, Nassar contacted Liam, who was living a short distance away in the youth neighborhood. At first, his son answered.

"We were texting, and he told me he could hear people

outside, footsteps, shouting, bursts of gunfire. I... urged him to stay in the safe room. He wrote back, 'Dad, I'm scared.'"

Later, Liam stopped answering. His parents, hiding in their own safe room with their other kids, tried frantically to call and text him, to no avail.

"I texted him several times to answer, but there was no reply. I checked his phone location, it was still in his room. We were getting messages about terrorists in homes, about fires. The couple of friends with us in the safe room received horrifying updates from the Nova [rave], and on TV we saw the [Hamas] pickup trucks in Sderot. We didn't understand, we couldn't believe it, we waited for the army in terrible helplessness that's hard to describe — and we had no contact with Liam."

Eventually, the terrifying news came through.

"Liam's girlfriend called, crying, and told me that a classmate had sent her a picture of Liam. She was in shock and couldn't send it to me. I called the boy and asked for the photo. I looked at it: Liam, in just his boxers, tied up in a tunnel. One part of my mind said, 'That's

Liam, your son.' Another part said, 'It's fake, impossible.' But my heart said — Ramzi, you know that's your boy. Guy, Liam's brother, was next to me. He saw the picture and let out a chilling scream."

Eventually, army forces arrived and cleared the kibbutz of Hamas invaders. Evacuated to central Israel, the family now had to contend with their new plight. The decision to hide Liam's identity came hours after he was abducted. As part of that decision, the family officially removed the "Nassar" from Liam's surname.

"We created a precedent in the State of Israel, changing an adult's name without him present," said Nassar.

As for his own decision to remain in the shadows, Nassar said it "hurt deeply."

"I was devastated that I had to stay silent because of my identity, my origins, in the very country I live in, out of fear that it could harm my son, whether in Gaza or here in Israel. It made me ask what kind of reality I am even living in. Changing the family name was an extremely painful decision, but every decision we made was

solely to protect Liam."

Liam was eventually released during the weeklong truce-hostage deal in November 2023, after 54 days in captivity.

"It's hard to describe the feelings on the day of his release," Nassar recalled. "The closest thing I can compare it to is the birth of a child."

"I was waiting for a photo, something tangible, to know the boy was okay. I remember seeing a picture of him in the van, nodding to a soldier who was there, and then moving on. Nothing compared to that. When we finally met, I ran to him, he ran to me, we hugged. The first thing Liam said to me was, 'I'm okay, Dad, I'm okay.' ... That was the moment I felt like I could breathe again."

Nassar added: "When Liam was freed, he was given an identity card at the hospital and was surprised to discover the name change. I explained to him why we did that. He un-

derstood, but he asked to have it changed back. It was fixed that same day."

Liam was released along with his younger cousins, Noam and Alma Or. Noam and Alma were abducted from their home in Kibbutz Be'eri, where their parents, Dror and Yonatan, were murdered. Dror was the brother of Liam's mother Dana. His body, which was snatched to Gaza, was returned only this past November as part of the current truce deal.

Since returning, Liam has found solace in travel and in his favorite basketball team, Hapoel Tel Aviv, Nassar said.

"There's a huge difference between the boy who was abducted and the young man who came back from captivity... In some ways, despite returning physically, he still hasn't really come back," Nassar told Ynet. "He's returned to Kibbutz

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Shadows

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Re'im and wants to settle down there. He has dreams he wants to fulfill and develop. He does what makes him feel good and smile."

Liam is the eldest of Nassar's three children with Re'im native Dana Or. The couple met in Tel Aviv, where Nassar worked in television production and Dana ran a catering company that fed television crews. They moved to Re'im a year after Liam was born, seeking a "moral, supportive community" for their children, Nassar told Ynet.

Nassar himself was born in the German Colony in Jerusalem, an upscale, predominantly Jewish neighborhood in the city center.

"It wasn't a religious home. We didn't go to mosque every day, and we didn't live according to edicts, but the customs of the Arab world and of Islam

were present — in food, in hospitality, in conduct," he said. "We spoke primarily Arabic, but Hebrew and English were also present."

He attended Jerusalem's Anglican International School, where strict discipline ensured "racism was not an issue."

"I met racism mainly outside school," said Nassar. He recounted first feeling abused for being Arab while working a summertime job in Jerusalem's central Postal Bank branch, when he was 14 years old.

"One day, all the kids were talking and getting to know each other. One of them asked me, 'What's your name?' I replied, 'Ramzi.' He looked at me and said: 'No way, you're an Arab'," said Nassar. "I didn't understand what he wanted. What's the matter with me, what's the problem? He asked, 'How do I know you're a good Arab, that you won't murder me with a knife?'"

"I was shocked. It stayed with me as the first moment where suddenly something felt

wrong with me," he said. "But soon enough I understood: I'm perfectly fine. The problem is not with me."

"That moment exposed me to the conflict that we live in," he said. "One country, we're all citizens, but there's history, and there's baggage."

Of his own identity, Nassar said: "I am the father of Liam, Guy, and Rani. I am Israeli, I am Arab, I am Muslim, I am a kibbutznik. I am a friend, I love parties — that's where I feel free."

"Priorities are different now. Part of the rehabilitation process is creating a new routine, because life won't be the same as it was before... There's an effort to find or create some peace of mind at home, with family, at work. In every area. There's a desire to enjoy things... We've seen how uncertain tomorrow can be, how many surprises the future holds."

Finding Strength in God's Presence Every Day

In the rush of daily life, it's easy to become overwhelmed by responsibilities, worries, and interruptions that feel bigger than we are. Yet Scripture reminds us that God is not distant from our struggles — He walks with us moment by moment.

One timeless truth for believers is found in the invitation of Jesus: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give

you rest." This call, recorded in Matthew 11:28, is not merely an offer for future hope but a present reality. In the busyness of life, we can pause and acknowledge our need for God's strength and peace.

Christian writers have long encouraged believers to draw from God's living water daily — to continually seek His presence and allow His Spirit to refresh our souls. Like grass that withers without water, our spiritual vitality depends on staying connected to Christ, not just once or occasionally, but constantly.

This doesn't mean life becomes easy or that problems disappear. Rather, it means we face daily challenges with a confidence rooted not in our own abilities but in God's unchanging love and faithfulness. Choosing to look beyond our circumstances and place our trust in Christ reshapes how we live each day.

As believers, we are invited not simply to believe in God's presence but to rest in it — to live with the assurance that He knows our struggles, hears our prayers, and walks with us through every season.

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'Nuremberg' Film Sparks Sharp Reflection on Holocaust as Antisemitism Rises Yet Again



By Paul Petite

When Hollywood releases a historical drama, it often reignites conversations about the past. The psychological thriller "Nuremberg" is doing just that.

The film stars Russell Crowe as Nazi leader Hermann Göring and recreates the postwar Nuremberg trials that exposed Nazi atrocities against Jews to the world. With antisemitism again making global headlines, the film has struck a powerful chord with audiences in Israel.

"I think everyone needs to see this movie," said moviegoer Itto Newman. "It's living evidence that everything can happen again."

Another viewer, Deborah Cohen, described

the film as authentic and emotionally impactful. "It was very genuine," she said. "It was very real."

For some viewers, the film provides a jarring visual depiction of genocide. Newman said that while Holocaust education is common in Israeli schools, the film offered a new perspective.

"We've been to Poland in high school in Israel," he said. "But I think it was the first time I got to see an authentic German reaction to that. That was very surprising."

Others see the film as a reminder of the massive scale of Jewish suffering. "The 'Final Solution' — six million people were killed in six years," said Judith Heisler, another moviegoer. "I hope this movie does well for the

sake of the world, for humanity, for the sake of the Jews."

The film portrays Göring as a central architect of the Nazis' so-

called "Final Solution," the systematic obliteration of Europe's Jewish population.

Dr. Charles Asher Small, founder of the Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy, said the film underscores how civilization itself was shattered under Nazi rule. "Not only were six million Jews murdered," Small said, "but civilization was destroyed."

Small emphasized the importance of Holocaust education, noting how a democratic society was undermined by extremism. He added that the Nuremberg trials became a foundation for modern international law.

"The Nuremberg laws gave way to international

human rights laws and the creation of the United Nations," Small said, which he said was intended to defend against radical, anti-democratic ideologies and promote human rights.

Eighty years later, antisemitism is again surging worldwide — a reality that resonates deeply at Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial. "Yad Vashem has the biggest Holocaust archive in the world," said Malky Weisburg, a guide at the memorial whose parents both survived the Holocaust.

Room by room, visitors confront the raw reality of Nazi hatred. Weisburg described how the Nazis' goal was annihilation. "No Jew will remain alive

anywhere in the world," she said. "That gives us a very clear definition of genocide."

Yad Vashem documents how the Holocaust began with bias, misinformation, and dehumanizing language. "It shows the way Hitler and his collaborators were able to take words and turn them into murder," Weisburg said.

As antisemitism continues to rise globally, many hope "Nuremberg" will do more than entertain — and instead educate a new generation about the consequences of unchecked hatred.

"We have to educate. We have to disseminate the information," Weisburg said. "And yes, we have to fight antisemitism. I remain hopeful."

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