

A BIBLICAL LOOK AT THE ISSUES
AFFECTING THE HEART OF OUR FAMILIES

FEAR
LESS
Family

EIGHT-DAY ELECTION PRAYER GUIDE

CISSIE GRAHAM LYNCH

“First of all, then, I urge
that supplications, prayers,
intercessions, and thanksgivings
be made for all people, for
kings and all who are in high
positions, that we may lead a
peaceful and quiet life, godly
and dignified in every way.”

1 Timothy 2:1-2, ESV



Introduction

It's hard to believe that we are already in another presidential election cycle, and yet the last four years feel like a lifetime when we reflect on the rapid decline we've witnessed in our country. Never before have we seen an American government express such an open disdain for the nuclear family and Biblical values as evidenced by the legislation that has passed and been proposed.

While all of this may seem like chaos to us, Satan is strategically making plans. We should never forget that we have a real enemy with a calculated scheme. It can become easy to lose sight of that because our nation's moral decline has happened slowly over decades. So many Americans have accepted—and even embraced—the deterioration of righteous behavior as the norm and have become tolerant of and comfortable with the culture.

I know many Christians who feel disheartened by the darkness. We've seen far too many divisions in our families, our churches, and our country. As a Christian woman, my prayer is that I will be faithful in serving the Lord and sharing the love of Jesus Christ. As a mother and wife, I could have never imagined how challenging such a simple desire would become for my family in this beautiful nation we get to call home.

There can almost be a sense of panic when it comes to raising kids in America today. How can we adequately equip and prepare our children for a society this godless and so far beyond anything we experienced when growing up? The answer is the same as it has always been. It's to make the truth of God's Word the cornerstone of our families. We should be doing this regularly in our homes and churches, but during an election year like this one, we also have a unique opportunity to do this by electing leaders whose views and voting records are friendly to people of faith.

I understand that people can be wary of politics and the ugliness of it, but what we are really talking about is governance. What I mean by that is you have an opportunity in this election to determine who will govern over you. Who do you

want making the decisions regarding your personal business? Who do you want making decisions about your children's education? Who do you want deciding whether your place of worship is essential? Who do you want determining which programs your tax dollars will fund?

Billions of people around the world don't get to choose their leaders, but in America, we have the responsibility and privilege of determining who will represent us to make the most important decisions in our country. This is why there is a real urgency to stand up and fight for the rights of our families. As parents, we can take a strong stand at the ballot box to protect the God-given authority that we have in our own homes. Through the power of our vote, we can elect leaders who respect the rights that we have as parents and believers to stand on the truth of God's Word and decide what's best for our children.

Today, we are surrounded by a culture, both inside the church and out, that continues to compromise on truth and morality. It feels as if the only sin in America today is to call something sinful! Marriage, gender, sexuality, equality, and justice are simple words that have been twisted and redefined in ways God never intended. People are choosing to be ruled by their feelings rather than truth. My grandfather once said, "The secret strength of a nation is found in the faith that abides in the hearts and homes of the country." We must have a strong faith if we want to have a strong nation!

As believers, our hope is found first and foremost in Jesus Christ, not our elected leaders. But we are also called to "*submit to governing authorities*" (Romans 13:1, NLT). How can we do such a thing when those governing authorities create policies that go against Biblical commands?

First, we must do our part to ensure that candidates who protect Biblical principles are voted into power. It's so important it's worth repeating—we are fortunate to live in a democratic republic where we are blessed with the right to have a say in our elected leaders. This is a privilege, and it is unfortunate that so many Americans do not appreciate the importance of using their voices at the ballot box. It is even worse when those who vote do not consider it a priority to be informed about the policies that candidates stand for. Choosing not to vote is wasteful of a hard-fought right, and voting while uninformed is reckless. Our votes matter.

Second, we must remember that our highest authority is God. This is true for us—and our elected leaders. And though many Christians may feel conflicted by Romans 13, the mandate is simple: obey God, then man. When man's orders

conflict with God's, who do we follow? God. This is why we must remember not only to vote carefully, but to **pray fervently**.

In 2 Timothy 2:1–2, Christians are instructed to pray for all who are in authority so that we may lead peaceful and quiet lives. But such peace will be hard to come by or it will come at an extremely high cost of compromise if government leaders continue to attack the nuclear family, restrict speech, limit religious freedom, and permit dangerous ideologies in our schools.

Throughout these pages, I hope to offer insight into some of the key issues at stake for our faith and for our families. As a mother, it's important that I maintain the right to raise my kids in a manner that honors the Lord—not as the governing authorities see fit. I hope you will find information that will help you make thoughtful and prayerful decisions as you consider the candidates and issues on the ballot. I also want to encourage you to do your own research rather than rely on heavily biased media outlets, the opinions of others, and social media. There's a great online tool available at ivoterguide.com that can help you determine which politicians on your ballot truly stand for Biblical beliefs.


Above all, remember this—God Almighty is on the throne. In fact, He already knows the outcome of the election! And while He can work through good and bad governments, I believe we have a clear responsibility as Christians to do everything we can to place godly leaders—or those with views friendly to our Christian faith—in power. This is one way we can try to fulfill the two greatest commandments: to love God and to love our neighbor.

By utilizing this resource you have already taken an important step to get informed and prepare for the election. Now, I invite you to look further as we examine eight important issues that will be impacted by this election: the economy, immigration, protecting the unborn, education, gender ideology, LGBTQ+ issues, protecting religious freedom, and defending marriage.

Let's dive in.

CISSIE GRAHAM LYNCH

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cissie". The signature is written in a cursive, lowercase style with a long horizontal line extending to the left of the first letter.



**“And if you are
untrustworthy about
worldly wealth, who will
trust you with the true
riches of heaven?”**

—LUKE 16:11, NLT

Day 1

ECONOMY

READING: Matthew 6:19-34

I'm not an expert on taxes, but I do understand grocery store and gas pump economics. It takes a lot to feed our family of five, and I feel like I'm always running to the grocery store or keeping our tanks full as we shuttle our children between school, activities, and church. I don't mind keeping things stocked up and topped off, but the rising costs have become painful these past few years.

I still remember when it first hit me. I was just picking up a few things from the grocery store, and when the cashier told me the total, it took a moment to register—I couldn't believe it. Eggs that cost just \$1.50 five years ago had more than doubled. Everything had skyrocketed, and I was hit hard with sticker shock. Even at the pump, I am spending an extra \$20 every time I stop to get gas than I did five years ago.

We have all felt the sting of inflation lately, and it seems the cost of living is continually rising, which can make it difficult to live generously the way that God intended.

Personal Stewardship

The first job that God gave mankind was to steward the earth (Genesis 1:26). We were to care for creation and to have dominion over everything. But the mandate given to Adam in Genesis didn't end there—we are all still responsible to steward the resources that God has blessed us with.

God also made His plan for the family clear. In the first pages of Scripture, we are told to “*be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it*” (Genesis 1:28, ESV). Sadly, more and more couples in America are choosing to forego children today because they think they can't afford it. The cost to raise a child these days is an estimated \$312,202, so it's no wonder that the choice to be childless is becoming the norm. In fact, 32% of Generation Z and millennial women are planning to never have children at all, with many citing financial reasons.¹ This was not God's plan. We are to trust Him to supply our needs. “*And this same God who takes care*

of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19, NLT).

God has also made it clear that we are to “*give generously to the poor, not grudgingly, for the Lord your God will bless you in everything you do*” (Deut. 15:10, NLT). We are to meet the needs of our own households as well as those around us.

This may feel impossible when you are just trying to put food on the table, but God promises to bless us when we give unsparingly and with a cheerful heart (see 2 Corinthians 9:7). This flies in the face of what we’re seeing happen around us today. A Giving USA report found that in 2023 Americans gave the lowest percentage of their disposable income to charity since 1995. Soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and other nonprofits struggle when Americans have to choose between their everyday needs and helping others.

When the economy suffers, churches do too. Last year, 50% of the pastors that Lifeway surveyed said the economic situation was hurting their churches.² People were still tithing, it just wasn’t enough to keep up with inflation.

Protecting the Next Generation of Americans

It feels like our country is in a big financial mess, and I don’t blame people for jumping at the chance for some relief. I understand why people look to the government for help, but all of that money has to come from somewhere, and it’s driving the national debt to unfathomable levels. As a nation, we are heading toward a \$50 trillion debt by 2033—five years earlier than previous estimates.³

This is not how God wants our families, much less our governments, to operate.

Scripture tells us, “*Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law*” (Romans 13:8, NIV). Proverbs 22:7 says: “*The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is slave to the lender*” (NIV).

I believe we should feel some level of concern when we see this happening in our own country as the U.S. racks up hundreds of billions of dollars in debt to countries like China and Japan.⁴ We may not see the

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—CISSIE GRAHAM LYNCH

effects of the debt load today, but our children and grandchildren will be saddled with this burden that will impact the quality of life in this country for generations to come. God wants us to be good stewards of our earthly resources and use them in a way that leaves the next generation unburdened by debt and in a position to work productively. Proverbs 13:22 says: “*Good people leave an inheritance to their grandchildren*” (NLT).

For centuries this is how many Americans have tried to manage money. It’s also why our nation has a legacy of being generous and sharing our time, talents, and treasures with the world. According to Charities Aid Foundation’s World Giving Index,⁵ the United States was the most generous country in the world from 2009 to 2018. But in recent years, the U.S. has been slipping from the top spot, and according to the latest report, we are now the third most generous nation.⁶

We can’t control circumstances outside of our country. Wars, energy disruptions, health crises, and supply chain breakdowns can have an impact on our economy, but we can control our country’s fiscal response to those global issues. This is why it is so important to have a presidential administration and members of Congress that are capable of providing a strong and stable economy.

When we head to the ballot box in November, we must look at the voting records of those who represent us. Do they support big government spending and borrowing or do they faithfully steward taxpayer funds and balance the budget? Do they offer full accountability and transparency with their spending? We should also research what initiatives our tax dollars are funding. Do they allow money for projects that directly contradict Biblical beliefs to be hidden in spending bills?

The Bible tells us to render to Caesar what is Caesar’s (Mark 12:17), so we must pay taxes. But as Christ followers, we don’t want the government to use taxpayer dollars for immoral causes. Nearly \$1.8 billion in taxpayer dollars went to Planned Parenthood from 2019 to 2021 alone. The U.S. government also currently sets aside \$2.6 billion for DEI—diversity, equity and inclusion—efforts worldwide.⁷ We need to know which causes our leaders are supporting and allocating funds to.

About 12.5% of the U.S. population suffers from food insecurity⁸—requiring outside aid to supply for their basic needs. I genuinely feel for their plight—and do not begrudge my tax dollars contributing to a better life for them and their families. I believe the body of Christ should certainly step in to help care for them. But others are looking to our leaders to provide assistance for their personal needs rather

than trusting God and taking responsibility for their own finances. God always has our best interest at heart. He should be our Source—not politicians who are often more interested in maintaining power than doing what’s best for our nation or our economy. This election, would you join me in asking God to raise up leaders who serve with a Philippians 2:4 attitude? “*Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others*” (ESV).

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we know all that we have is by Your hand. Help us not store up earthly things but rather to store up treasure in Heaven (Matthew 6:19–20).

Would You guide us as we lead our children and future generations to use our resources for Your Kingdom purposes?

We pray for wisdom, humility, and resilience in our leaders as they consider the long-term effects that will come from the way they use the money entrusted to them. Help us to trust You to supply our every need as You promise in Philippians 4:19 and not look to politicians as our ultimate suppliers or savior.

We pray for leaders who will lift up the Name of Jesus and use our tax dollars on government projects that promote Biblical standards at home and abroad.

We know that Your Word says that to whom much is given, much will be expected, so please help us as individuals and as a nation to fulfill this responsibility well. ■

ENDNOTES

- 1 <https://fortune.com/2024/05/02/gen-z-millennial-women-choosing-dink-lifestyle>
- 2 <https://research.lifeway.com/2022/10/11/half-of-pastors-say-the-economy-is-hurting-their-church>
- 3 <https://www.crfb.org/papers/qa-gross-debt-versus-debt-held-public>
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- 6 Charities Aid Foundation, “World Giving Index 2022 Report” https://www.cafonline.org/docs/default-source/research-archive/giving-around-the-world/world-giving-index-reports/caf_world_giving_index_2022_210922-final.pdf
- 7 <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/mar-08-2022-us-government-announces-largest-ever-budget-request-26-billion-advance-gender-equity-and-equality-around-world>
- 8 <https://usafacts.org/articles/food-insecurity-in-the-us>



“For God is not a
God of disorder but
of peace.”

—1 CORINTHIANS 14:33, NLT

Day 2

IMMIGRATION

READING: Romans 13:1-7

Imagine you are sitting in your own home and all of a sudden, you hear someone fumbling with your front door. As you approach the door, wondering why someone is trying to get in your house, you hear the lock break and the door opens. Before you can make sense of what's happening, a family enters your home. You didn't invite anyone over. They are strangers and you have no idea if they are safe or dangerous, sick or healthy, if they genuinely need help or if they are looking to take advantage of the situation. On top of it, you are then expected to house and feed them.

As Christians, God's Word tells us to help those in need. We're called to a life of compassionate service, and in Matthew 22:39, we are told "*you shall love your neighbor as yourself*" (ESV). But does this mean we should leave our front doors unlocked for anyone and everyone?

This is the dilemma that our country is facing. Millions of people are crossing into the U.S., and many do not have permission to enter. When these migrants arrive at our southern border, many have no approval to stay, no work authorization, no driver's license, and no place to go. They come looking for opportunities but some are taken advantage of and suffer terribly on their journey to the U.S. Then when they arrive, they either get lost in an already overwhelmed immigration system or they try to bypass the legal process entirely by avoiding detection. This doesn't just hurt immigrants. Everyone suffers when stability and safety are damaged, and when resources are badly strained.

As believers, how should we respond to this crisis in a way that is loving to all those around us while remembering that 1 Corinthians 14:33 says: "*For God is not a God of disorder but of peace*" (NLT)?

We see this in how He established the universe and provided clear directives to the Israelites through the Ten Commandments. He gave strict instructions on how they were to organize their camp, deal with their enemies, and even set clear borders (Exodus 23:31). He did all of this for their protection. When we operate outside

of or contrary to God’s plan, confusion and chaos reign and people get hurt. Sadly, this is exactly what is happening in our country.

A State of Emergency

My father, Franklin Graham, has said that the job of the church is to love people but the job of the government is to provide careful security for its citizens—and I agree with that. Our first responsibility as Christians is to love and care for people, regardless of their immigration status. Scripture tells us: “*When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them*” (Leviticus 19:33, NIV).

Part of loving people is doing all we can to make sure that they aren’t being mistreated. Sadly, these scenes are playing out day after day throughout Latin America. Many of the women and children making the journey to our country are getting hurt. Sex traffickers and drug lords are preying on the vulnerable. There are countless stories of robbery and abuse. The ease of crossing our border is leading record numbers of people to put themselves in harm’s way and take great risks—this absolutely breaks my heart.

At the same time, as Christians, we have a responsibility to care about the state of our country and the safety of our own citizens. As a mother, national security is one of my greatest concerns. I am disturbed by the lack of vetting for those crossing our border. According to the House Judiciary Committee, over 5 million undocumented migrants have

“I am in favor of immigration, but I believe it must be legal. From its founding, America has welcomed migrants.”

—CISSIE GRAHAM LYNCH

crossed into our country over the past four years.¹ And during the 2023 fiscal year, U.S. Customs and Border Protection released a report stating that Border Patrol agents encountered 169 people on the terrorist watch list.² This summer, eight Tajikistan nationals with suspected ties to ISIS were arrested. They crossed the southern border and passed through the government’s screening process without raising any flags. It wasn’t until they made their way to New York, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia, that the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) took them into custody.³

There are real safety threats facing U.S. citizens and migrants alike. Police officers have been violently attacked, young women have been raped and murdered, and people have been killed in DUI crashes involving migrants. In addition,

financial resources and human services are being stretched critically thin in border communities and large cities as more and more people face the dangers on both sides of the border.

This is one of the biggest issues this election year, and it should be. A study by Lifeway Research found that evangelicals are “increasingly concerned about the number of recent immigrants to the U.S.” but still believe that “Christians have a responsibility to care for those who are in the country illegally.”⁴

In this same study, more than 9 in 10 evangelicals agreed it’s important that Congress passes significant immigration legislation in 2024, prioritizing the rule of law (93%), ensuring fairness to taxpayers (93%), respecting the God-given dignity of every person (91%), protecting the unity of the immediate family (91%), and guaranteeing secure national borders (91%).

America the Beautiful

I don’t blame anyone for wanting to move to the United States. It’s the land of economic opportunity—a country established by immigrants. For centuries, people from all over the world have come to this great nation because it offers better conditions for raising a family, access to quality health care, freedom of speech, religious rights, better treatment of the poor, and a democratic system. I am in favor of immigration, but I believe it must be legal.

From its founding, America has welcomed migrants. Healthy workers were needed to settle and farm empty land. Many of the migrants who helped build this country came through Ellis Island—the gateway to the American Dream. But immigrants didn’t just walk onto American soil without first being vetted. They were inspected for health issues, and some were detained or deported. More than 12 million immigrants passed through Ellis Island, and as many as 5,000 people a day were granted entry into the United States.⁵ The lawful immigrant population in the U.S. continues to increase,⁶ so there are many who are going through the proper channels and obeying the law of the land—subjecting themselves to our governing authorities (as we are instructed in Romans 13).

A Biblical Response

So how do we look at immigration from a Biblical perspective while protecting our children, other Americans, and those attempting to come into this country, both legally and illegally? I encourage you to look to God for wisdom. Let’s ask Him to show us how to love the foreigner while also keeping our nation secure.

As the body of Christ, our priority is living out the Gospel. This is why we must fearlessly share God's Word and faithfully meet the physical and spiritual needs around us. It's critical Kingdom work for our churches and our families, and if we want to do this in a place of stability, security, and safety, then we need to prayerfully vote for candidates this election who, in the spirit of 1 Corinthians 14:33, will help bring peace and not disorder.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the privilege we have of living in such an incredible nation that still offers us so much freedom and opportunity. Please forgive us when we take those liberties for granted.

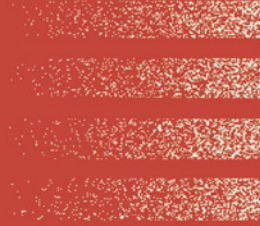
We know that as believers, we are called to show Your love to our neighbors. May we never forget that all people are precious in Your sight, regardless of nationality or immigration status. Help us to live out 1 John 3:18: "*Let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions*" (NLT).

Burden our hearts for those making the extremely difficult decision to leave their home country. We ask that their experience be legal and fair as they seek to gain entry into our beautiful country. Please help us show compassion as they attempt to rebuild their families' lives here in the U.S.

We know though, that while You are a God of love, You also require order and recognize the importance of boundaries. Please grant the leaders in our churches and government the wisdom to offer both compassion and parameters that foster an environment of safety. ■

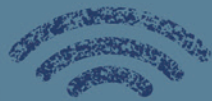
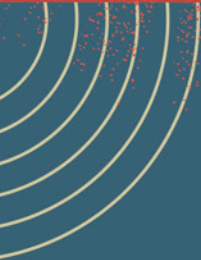
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- 1 October 9, 2023 (House Judiciary Committee): <https://judiciary.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/repUBLICans-judiciary.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/2023-10-09-New-Data-and-Testimony.pdf>
- 2 Fiscal year 2023 (CBP: Terrorist Screening Data Set Encounters): <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/cbp-enforcement-statistics>
- 3 June 11, 2024 (AP News): <https://apnews.com/article/islamic-state-border-fbi-homeland-security-7088e6f665f095ad38186cafe69bbddd>
- 4 February 28, 2024 (Lifeway Newsroom): “Evangelicals back immigration reform, increased border security” <https://news.lifeway.com/2024/02/28/evangelicals-back-immigration-reform-increased-border-security>
- 5 Library of Congress, “Ellis Island” <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/immigration/italian/ellis-island>
- 6 <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/07/22/what-we-know-about-unauthorized-immigrants-living-in-the-us>



“I knew you before I formed you in your mother’s womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations.”

—JEREMIAH 1:5, NLT



Day 3

SANCTITY OF LIFE

READING: Psalm 139:13-16

“**T**hou shall not kill.” Four simple words that have divided this nation and the churches within it. Intellectually it’s simple. Emotionally? You can twist this Scripture beyond recognition or ignore it entirely to achieve your personal goals. You might ask, “Well Cissie, what is your goal and how will you use these four words to achieve it?” That would be a fair question. So let me be completely transparent with you. My goal is to protect the unborn from their killers. If those sound like fighting words, you’d be right, but before I go on, I should confess something to you. I haven’t always had the same kind of courage and conviction. In fact, there were decades of apathy in my own life before the words you are reading today took root in my heart and stirred a realization that I too could make a difference.

As many of you know, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its historic and unconstitutional decision on *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, legalizing abortion throughout the United States. Growing up as a millennial, I thought abortion was the immovable law of the land, so I sat silent on the sidelines. Sadly, Planned Parenthood’s propaganda had worked. My peers and I accepted that this whole issue was simply a matter of “choice,” and that even though I couldn’t support it, I had no right to speak up. Like many of you I was still pro-life, and in fact, I was the devil’s favorite kind of pro-lifer; a polite one. I never spoke openly about abortion out of fear that it might make someone uncomfortable. I had friends in high school and college who had abortions. And when I learned what they’d been through, I loved and supported them as best I could. We likely all know someone—whether it’s a friend or family member—who has experienced the evil of abortion.

Then one day it all changed. I was now a mother who held my babies in my arms. I had seen the fragility of life throughout the world through my ministry work, and as I looked around me, I could see a new generation rising up—one that wasn’t going to accept *Roe* as the law of the land anymore. My heart was convicted and I was shaken from my apathy after attending the March for Life for the first

time in 2020. I heard thousands of voices in our nation's capital using reason and truth to firmly push back against the cultural majority, and I realized the pro-life issue isn't reserved for certain politicians or pastors—it is a fight that concerns us all. There are no sidelines and there is no justification for silence.

The Shocking Numbers

An estimated 65 million American babies have been legally aborted and destroyed since the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision.¹ Those aren't just numbers, those are people made in the image of God. Boys and girls that could have sat next to you in your classes growing up or who could be sitting next to you at your next staff meeting or church service. But instead of becoming women and men you might have shared life with, you never met them, or they, you. Everything you were ever told about being special, about having some unique gift to offer the world, it was true for them too. We didn't kill them, but for many, our silence did.

The Battle Is Far From Over

Many people I run into nowadays are still basking in the victory of *Roe v. Wade* being overturned two years ago. But the truth is having *Roe v. Wade* overturned wasn't a victory in the way many people believe. It was nothing more than a battle relocation. On June 24, 2022, in the landmark decision of *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, the U.S. government did not decide to uphold every American's constitutional right to life. Instead, it turned the legality of abortion over to the states. This means, that for the first time since 1973, who you vote for locally will be the deciding factor as to how many unborn children will live or die in your state over the coming years.

In this election, many states will vote on measures that will decide the fate of millions of Americans yet to be conceived. This is why it's critical that we understand where the candidates on the ballot stand, regardless of the political party they represent or the religion they claim to practice. These new laws aren't just being presented to ban or preserve abortion. In some cases, they are proposing, or have passed, even more extreme access to abortion in states such as Illinois,² New York,³ Minnesota,⁴ Maine,⁵ and California.⁶

Illinois has become a destination for those seeking an abortion in the wake of Midwestern and Southern states tightening access after the reversal of *Roe v. Wade*. Planned Parenthood Great Rivers rolled into Chicago, Illinois, to offer free vasectomies and medication abortions while the Democratic National Convention

was in town in August. At least a dozen people received—or signed up to receive—pregnancy-ending pills at their mobile clinic, parked just down the street from the gathering.⁷ What political party cultivates an atmosphere that welcomes that type of behavior? One that prioritizes and celebrates the liberty to choose what a woman can do with her body—and cost savings—more than it values human life. How did we get to a place where late-term abortions are touted from the national stage of a presidential debate? It shows the depth of depravity in some of our leaders. What many women did in private out of shame and guilt is now championed and paraded around. My heart feels pity for a single woman who's scared, but it's pure evil to celebrate death.

We should require better of our leaders—whatever party they represent. Killing babies, while others in the same parking lot enjoy music and dine on tacos, is not something to be praised.

Misinformation

Not surprisingly, the *Roe v. Wade* decision received a huge amount of press, resulting in a tsunami of misinformation flooding social media—that has and will continue to affect the way people vote. Not long ago, numerous politicians decided to build their entire midterm campaign on the promise to protect “reproductive rights.” The governor whose state's motto is translated as “the life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness” recently bragged that they were the first to legalize abortion.⁸ Talk about irony.

We are seeing the same strategy in this year's election too, despite the fact that abortion is not a top voting issue for most Americans. According to a recent Gallup poll,⁹ abortion isn't even one of the top 10 issues that Americans are concerned about. The truth is, despite the hysteria in the media, Americans aren't nearly as worried about abortion access than, say, immigration or the economy. Why? Because they still have it. In fact, though 14 states¹⁰ have enacted near-total abortion bans and another seven¹¹ have placed restrictions based on gestational age, statistics show that this evil industry is doing just fine. Sadly, there has been a 10% increase in abortions over the past three years.¹² You may have heard of the dozens of abortion clinics that closed post *Roe*, but are you paying attention to the millions of dollars that pro-abortion states are allocating for the construction and expansion of new clinics, many of which are being strategically placed near state borders? Chances are you live in one of these states and your tax dollars are funding their construction.

What Does God Say?

We know from Scripture that life is a precious gift from God and that our individual value is determined by Him because we bear His image (Genesis 1:27). The state does not determine human value, nor does the mother. An unborn baby does not lose their worth in God's eyes when a woman feels coerced, unprepared, scared, or repulsed at the idea of having a child. This is why “choice” is not the issue, life is.

Psalm 139 says that God knits us together in our mother's womb and determines our days before we are even born. Each unborn child has a plan and purpose that no one has the right to take away, no matter the circumstances. However, the devil enjoys nothing more than to destroy that which God loves, and as the master of lies, he confuses, distorts, and dresses up the vilest of actions with attractive words. This is why abortion advocacy groups cannot use the true language that describes what they fight for. They say “choice” when they mean “death.” After all, no one chooses to stay pregnant any more than they choose to digest food. Once you've eaten, the body does the rest. Likewise, once a baby is conceived, the body takes care of the fetal development process until birth. The choice to interfere and destroy that which God has designed is the only choice they are referring to.

The truth is each one of us still battles between the choice to either submit to God and make Him Lord of our lives, or to make ourselves into our own god instead. The slaughter of innocent children is something that should be grieved and repented of, instead, we see women celebrating on the steps of the Supreme Court and bragging on award shows about their abortions. Nothing quite demonstrates how godlike we think we are more than holding the power of life and death over an unborn child. But when all the pretty words are peeled back, we see abortion for what it really is—children being sacrificed on an altar of our own convenience and comfort. It reminds me of 2 Timothy 3:1–2, which says, “*There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves*” (NIV).

Grace for Women

I know these Biblical beliefs on abortion aren't popular in America today, but though our culture may be confused, the church should not be. One out of three women sitting in a pew at church have had an abortion, and God offers them grace and forgiveness. And to the pregnant women who are scared or conflicted, He offers truth, courage, and love.

“Psalm 139 says that God knits us together in our mother’s womb and determines our days before we are even born. Each unborn child has a plan and purpose that no one has the right to take away, no matter the circumstances.”

—CISSIE GRAHAM LYNCH

As the church, we must be a people who speak the truth with grace. We can tend to lean too far in either direction, becoming either too soft or too harsh, which can leave a bad taste in someone’s mouth. But Jesus demonstrated the perfect balance of both truth and grace. He’s the strong King who crushed death itself, yet Isaiah also described Him by saying “a bruised reed He will not break, and a smoldering wick He will not quench.” If we want to be like Christ, we should be strong, and yet tender.

So what can we do? We can start by advocating for education that shows women that abortion is not the only option available to them. We also need to be quick to offer love and forgiveness to women who are struggling with regret and are haunted by the decision to abort their child. We can let them know it is never too late for God’s grace.

I believe abortion continues to be one of the greatest evils in America, and we have an opportunity before us this election to try and create a culture of life. Is abortion on the ballot in your state this year? If so, I would encourage you to do your homework and vote for the candidate who will preserve and protect the most vulnerable people in our society. Maybe you are like me and you’ve sat silent but now feel the conviction to stand up for life. You don’t have to be an activist, but I believe we do need to act with our votes.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the gift of life that flows through each one of us—may we never take it for granted. We thank You for placing us in a time when medical advancements can save the most high-risk pregnancies and offer hope to the most vulnerable. Please shake us from our apathy and forgive us for the times when we were silent but should have spoken up for the unborn. Please grant us the wisdom to navigate this divisive topic with sensitivity, truth, and love.

Lord, we know that You are sovereign over all and that You know us right down to the number of hairs on our heads. And though we love our unborn neighbors, how

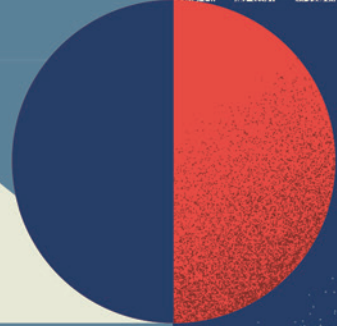
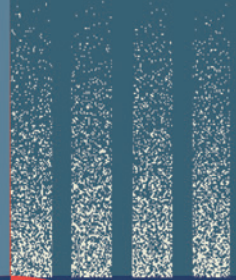
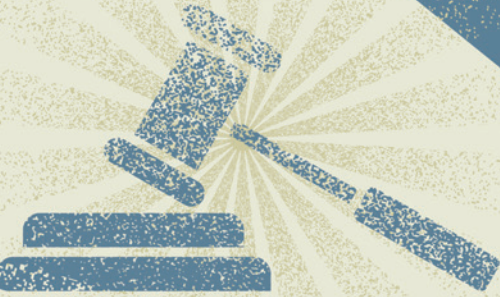
DAY 3

much more do You love the precious lives that have been cast aside in the name of “autonomy” and “choice?”

Please lift the veil of deception over our country so that evil would no longer be called good, and please bring forth a boldness in Your church to speak up. For we know that Your ways are higher than our own, and one day, every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. ■

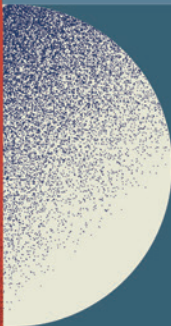
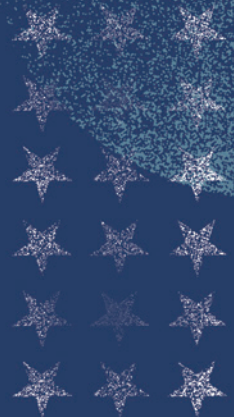
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“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.”

—PROVERBS 22:6, ESV



Day 4

EDUCATION

READING: Ephesians 6:1-4

A friend of mine lives in Oregon with her husband and four children. While the state is known to have a strong focus on agriculture and preserving nature, it has also become a hotbed for a secular, progressive agenda. Last year, my friend and her husband were horrified when they heard about a sexually explicit assignment at their children's public high school.

Alarmed parents brought their concerns to the Eugene 4J school board. While board members acknowledged that the assignment was problematic, rather than accepting responsibility and offering a solution, they stated that it was simply a part of the district's approved comprehensive sexual education program.¹ Can you believe that? It makes what was already a disturbing and perverted situation even worse! I couldn't agree more with the parent who told board members, "We should be focusing on academic readiness in our classes instead of asking our students to describe their sexual fantasies to our teachers. There is no excuse for this kind of sexually explicit assignment."² When my friends discovered the depravity that their children were being exposed to in the public schools—with no action from the board to correct the problem—she and her husband agreed to their teenage sons' request to be moved to private school.

As it turns out, Eugene was not the only district in Oregon under fire from parents who were fed up and ready to take action. It also came to light last year that public high schools in the Portland area carried a litany of books filled with pornographic imagery, including *Gender Queer*, *Fun Home*, and *Flamer*. The district's online portal for tracking books revealed there were deeply concerning titles about gender ideology even present in the district's elementary schools.³

Last year, parents, candidates, and political groups began pushing for more transparency regarding the curriculum and the books available in Oregon's school libraries, particularly on topics like sexuality, racism, and gender. As a result, Senate Bill 409 passed last fall, requiring every school district's website to include a link to an Oregon Department of Education page that lists textbooks and

recommended materials. While that's a move in the right direction, the problem is that information still isn't easily accessible to parents. It's hard to find, even when intentionally searching for it.

The battle over indoctrination isn't just happening on the West Coast. Just last year, the school board for Maryland's largest public school system voted to discontinue the opt-out policy for classroom instruction covering sexuality and gender. Fortunately, that decision was challenged by hundreds of parents. They filed a suit against the county's superintendent and school board because they believe the responsibility for educating their children on sexual issues falls to them—not the school.

The parents asked for advance notice when books, such as *Pride Puppy!*, would be read to their children, and they wanted the ability to remove their pre-K to fifth grade students from activities or instruction that violated their religious faith. Thousands of parents showed up at rallies, but sadly, their voices were not heard. A federal appeals court recently ruled that the parents must accept the LGBTQ+ affirming curriculum and cannot pull their children out of class when those themes are taught,⁴ further emphasizing the need for Christian parents to be diligent when researching and voting for school board candidates.

For centuries, the responsibility of moral training and character development has rightfully fallen to parents, however, as with all cultural changes, families have incrementally given up their ground and handed it over to the government. Our education system has systematically adjusted curriculum and changed many policies so parents are less aware than ever of what happens in the classroom. Young minds are being indoctrinated far beyond the scope of basic reading, writing, and arithmetic. Between the addition of diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) and “sexual health” classes—and the days that are set aside to celebrate the Earth or gay pride—our children are going through what could be better described as an “enculturation” program rather than an educational one.

Don't Tell the Parents

When virtual teaching was in full swing in 2020 and we were all scrambling to adjust to the new normal, one public educator famously tweeted about his concerns with parents listening to classroom discussions. He tweeted,

So, this fall, virtual class discussion will have many potential spectators—parents, siblings, etc.—in the same room. We'll never be quite sure who is overhearing

the discourse . . . I am most intrigued by the damage that “helicopter/snowplow” parents can do in the host conversations about gender/sexuality. And while “conservative” parents are my chief concern—I know that the damage can come from the left too. If we are engaged in the messy work of destabilizing a kid’s racism or homophobia or transphobia—how much do we want their classmates’ parents piling on?”⁵

It turned out that this teacher wasn’t alone in his concerns as his tweets were met with a mixture of condemnation and emphatic agreement from other teachers. One thing is for sure, parents did get a glimpse into the classrooms of their children during these virtual teaching days and many of us were not happy with what we saw.

Abraham Lincoln once said, “The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next.” This is what’s happening in America today, and as a Christian mother, I am deeply concerned by the dangerous philosophy that believes the state—not the parents—should be the primary educator on gender, sexuality, and racial issues.

Not surprisingly, there was a significant spike in the number of students who became homeschooled in 2021 as parents became much more reluctant to send their children back into the beast of public education.⁶ And although that number has gone down as fears surrounding the pandemic dropped, we remain at an all-time high with over 2.7 million registered homeschool students in 2023 compared to just 1.5 million in 2019.⁷

Thankfully, parents are waking up and getting more involved than ever. It is becoming common to see viral clips of parents sharing their concerns and at times, their disgust at public school board meetings. Many times, these parents simply read from the books in the school library that contain graphic violence and sexually explicit content. The material is often so disturbing, it makes board members squirm in their seats. In Nevada this summer, one school board meeting stopped twice after lurid and obscene passages were read from the district’s school library books.⁸

I recently experienced this in my own community when our local school board wanted to dedicate an entire month to LGBTQ+ history. As part of the curriculum, children of all ages would be taught this sexual ideology. I attended the school board meeting to voice my concerns and opposition. It is the job of the parents—not the school—to teach our children about gender and sexuality. If kindergarten-age

students can't tie their own shoelaces, why would we think secular educators should teach them about various sexual orientations or multiple gender options? Living in a conservative area of Florida, I never imagined I would be having conversations like this, but the school district that we live in—just like so many other environments surrounding our children today—is compromising with the culture.

Discipleship Begins in the Home

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” (Deuteronomy 6:5–7, ESV).

As parents, our highest priority and privilege is to teach our children to love and obey God and to train them up to be virtuous adults. To do this, we need to guide and lead them through every matter that affects their lives—from the simple to the eternal. But our time to do this is limited. Our children are in the care of school teachers, coaches, and club sponsors for up to 40 hours a week, and some of them intentionally withhold critical information about our children from us. Then, when our kids get home from school, their evenings are filled with homework, extracurricular activities, screen time, and dinner. It can feel like there isn't much time left for us to have meaningful and intentional conversations with our kids.

Discipleship begins at home, so even though time is short, we have to make it count. Corey and I have found that one of the best places to tackle difficult questions is around our kitchen table. Psalm 128:3 says, *“Your children will be like olive shoots around your table”* (ESV). I love this picture of a family coming together to share a meal—and so much more—as a family. Gathering around the table like this can be an incredible mission field because casual conversation and tough dialogue can be exchanged in a safe and loving environment. We need to do this regularly because many of our children are going through educational systems that are constantly trying to program them to think in ways that are contrary to Scripture. Schools and sports teams have become ground zero for battles over bathrooms and pronouns. Marriage, gender, and sexuality are being twisted and redefined in ways God never intended. And the political leaders who are supposed to serve and represent us have mistakenly placed themselves in the parent's seat regarding these very personal topics.

We must confront these issues facing our children head-on, and it's easier to

accomplish this when we have spent years listening to them and building trust. Then when the difficult questions and conversations come, our kids will be much more willing to hear our answers. The more we can provide a foundation of Biblical truth for our children, teaching them not only what we believe, but why we believe, the more it will help them understand God's Word for themselves—and reject the lies of the world.

How Do We Protect and Prepare Our Children?

So how do we stand against a culture that rejects anything related to Biblical morality when it comes after our kids?

- We need to know the truth of God's Word so we can easily identify counterfeit messages. Without knowing and understanding God's truth ourselves, how will we ever be able to share it with our children?
- We need to get comfortable with being uncomfortable. Christian parents cannot sit silent on tough cultural and sexual issues. If we don't teach our children—someone else will. We have to be prepared to discuss any topic so our children don't go elsewhere for their information.
- We must be willing to make necessary adjustments to our children's environments—school, sports, friendships, health care—even when it's unpopular with our children and their peers. Our job is to remove them from any setting where they are being inundated with messages that oppose God's Word. We wouldn't leave our children unprotected in a dangerous physical place, such as the middle of a busy street, and the same goes for dangerous spiritual environments.
- We need to know who is teaching our children and what they are teaching them. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, at least 23 states have lowered teacher qualifications amid teacher shortages.^{9, 10} We also need to know the exact curriculum they are using in school. It seems educators are more worried about teaching children emotional intelligence, critical race theory (CRT), and other agenda-based topics than they are in helping them learn to read and write and understand subjects like science, history, and math.
- Just as we need to know our children's teachers, we also need to make sure we know their coaches, dance teachers, tutors, youth pastors, piano teachers, and whoever has influence in their lives. Those who oversee our kids' interests, hobbies, and talents can sometimes have an even bigger impact than teachers

because our kids want so badly to please those who might hold the key to their biggest dreams and aspirations.

Our Vote Matters

We have an opportunity to protect our children and our parental rights at the ballot box this election.

Our education system is actively promoting anti-Biblical, anti-American destructive ideologies from CRT, to gender theory, to social Marxism. These are critical issues, and I believe our children's conversations about these things should be taking place at home—not in secret with state-run schools. We owe it to our kids, especially during the most impressionable and formative years of their lives, to be the primary teachers shaping and molding their worldview.

Sadly, in 39 states, there are no statutes that expressly define and protect parental rights. What's more, 47 do not allow parents to review learning materials and activities in advance, and 12 do not allow parents to be involved in the sex ed curriculum at their student's school. There is hope though. Some states have recognized the parents' right to know what their children are learning in classrooms, and Florida and North Carolina are among them. One of the primary sponsors of the recently passed North Carolina "Parents Bill of Rights" legislation said: "Parents are the primary decision makers with respect to their minor children, not their school ... The government is not a partner in raising our children."¹¹

We should consider supporting candidates for office that support school choice or who are willing to explore and promote creative ways to spend federal and state dollars on education and who are not totally beholden to the public school system as the one option for funding. For decades, when it comes to everything from academic performance to morality to safety and fairness, public schools fail to make the grade.¹²

This is why it's imperative that we research where political candidates stand on these issues. We must read their campaign points and review their voting history to make sure that their words match their actions. This election is our opportunity to vote for candidates who support transparency in our schools and who will uphold our right to have a say in what our children are being taught in the classroom.

Prayer

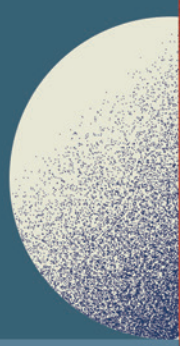
Heavenly Father, we thank You for the gift of free public education for all in this country and for the freedom to educate our children at home if we wish to. Please

help us as parents to rise to the challenge of truly discipling our children so that they will be prepared to stand for You, even if it means standing against the culture. Please help us to gain confidence and clarity when it comes to teaching our children what Your Word truly says about challenging and important topics such as justice, equality, race, gender, and sexuality.

We pray that those who are elected will lead by seeking Your wisdom and will uphold the rights of parents and the protection of children. We know that You can use anyone to fulfill Your will—good leaders as well as bad—and we trust in Your sovereign hand. ■

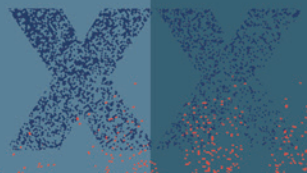
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“So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”

—GENESIS 1:27, NLT



Day 5

TRANSGENDER

READING: Genesis 1:26-28

“Can you provide a definition for the word *woman*?” This simple question made headlines in March 2022 when Ketanji Brown Jackson, now a Supreme Court justice, responded during her confirmation hearing by saying, “No, I can’t. I’m not a biologist.” Yet most of us know a woman is an adult female with two X chromosomes.

Jackson’s refusal to answer the question allowed her to avoid the fury of transgender advocacy groups—activists who are in the minority, yet have some of the loudest voices. This is hardly surprising when we are describing a politically active group of individuals who no longer believe in the foundational idea of objective truth. Of course, Jackson still fumbled by making the mistake of referencing biology in her response. The entire point of gender ideology is that gender is completely distinct from biology. There is zero scientific evidence to support this, yet it is being taught as if it’s a fact in our most elite universities, and it’s even gaining a legislative foothold in our country.

Before gender identity was ever a political issue, it was a Biblical issue. God created gender. He designed us to either be male or female. His Word is clear about this, so it should come as no surprise that this is the very thing that the evil one is trying to confuse. My heart breaks for people who feel like they are stuck in the wrong body. It must be a crushing experience to believe there is something wrong with you because your mind doesn’t match your biological gender. This kind of confusion can cut to the core, but it doesn’t change the truth that we are all made in the image of the God who loves and cares for us. We don’t define our gender. The government can’t define it. Only God can define who we are, and we can trust Him because He is loving and good in all that He does.

The role of God in the transgender debate matters because one could argue that it isn’t about “gender” at all. Instead, it represents a recurring theme in our culture of people wishing to be like God themselves. When something doesn’t feel right about their gender or their body, they simply put themselves in the place of

God to rewrite reality and redefine their own identity. This puts individuals in the “creator” seat rather than the correct one of the “created.” This is why there is now an astonishingly long and ever-growing list of pronouns that one can choose or create and then demand others use on any given day. This pain-fed confusion is exacerbated when it is confronted by confounding biological evidence, such as DNA, that cannot be changed.

What’s more, the proponents of gender ideology often take advantage of people when they are young, vulnerable, and at the very height of their confusion. They are promised the impossible—happiness through gender transition. It’s an empty promise because no one ever truly transitions. Gender cannot be genetically modified—it is physically impossible to change your chromosomes, cells, and biological sex.

Rather than broadening our understanding of gender roles, gender ideology places the idea of “female” and “male” in extremely small, stereotypical boxes that one must either fit into or get out of. Young men who prefer fashion over sports, or young women who prefer video games over Barbie® dolls are pushed out of the narrow box of “male” or “female” and fed devastating lies that cause them to doubt their gender and biology.

But God’s Word provides a clear answer to all the confusion—there are only two genders. “*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them*” (Genesis 1:27, ESV). And, though there are certain traditional roles that men and women were designed to fill, the way that we express our God-given genders may not always look like the rigid, one-size-fits-all approach that ironically, transgender ideology proponents support.

“The proponents of gender ideology often take advantage of people when they are young, vulnerable, and at the very height of their confusion. Adolescents in puberty are promised the impossible—happiness through gender transition.”

—CISSIE GRAHAM LYNCH

Protecting Women

For centuries, common sense has prevailed. A person could identify as male, female, or whatever they chose, but when it came to keeping individuals safe in private spaces, such as bathrooms, locker rooms, homeless shelters, and prison cells, the

only thing that mattered was biological body type. I believe even the most open-minded person can see that placing a man in private, female spaces puts women at a gross disadvantage, both in competitive sports and in situations where self-defense may be needed.

Simply look at the Olympic records for men and women over the last 75 years and you'll see we don't need any new scientific research to demonstrate that men competing in women's sports would be unfair and would steal championships and scholarships from women.

Women have fought for equality for too many years for us to allow this to happen now. When President Richard Nixon signed Title IX of the Civil Rights Act on June 23, 1972, it prohibited sex-based discrimination in any school or educational program that receives federal funding. This was meant to level the playing field for women. It wasn't intended to mean if you have an all-women's soccer team or an all-women's lacrosse team that they should be playing on the same field against men who identify as female. However, that is exactly what the current administration is attempting to push into Title IX, which was recently overhauled and broadened to include gender identity and sexual orientation.

Protecting Children

The issue of gender isn't just about a cultural phenomenon, marketing, or the media. It is an issue of legislation, and when it comes for your children, will you be able to protect them? Our current presidential administration has already announced that it intends to make it possible for officials to remove children from their parents if they choose not to affirm their child's gender identity. It would be extreme to jail a parent for this, and while it may sound like something that would never happen here, it's already taking place in Canada.

Six years ago, Canadian father Robert Hoogland advocated for his 13-year-old daughter to receive mental health support before she underwent irreversible medical interventions to try and become a man. He eventually filed suit after a children's hospital injected his daughter with testosterone—without his consent. But the court allowed her to move forward with the treatment and forbade the father from publicly referring to his daughter as a girl. When he spoke about his daughter in an interview, Hoogland was jailed for contempt of court—cited as committing “family violence.”¹

The hospital was operating within British Columbia's Infants Act, which permits minors to consent to their own transition treatments if their doctor

thinks it's in their best interest. What's even more appalling is that this law deems parental consent irrelevant.²

Fortunately, we are not yet to this point in the United States, but we are already seeing troubling instances where parents are losing custody of their children when they disagree with letting them undergo extreme medical treatments for gender dysphoria. This nightmare proved to be a reality for one family in Montana this past February. Krista and Todd Kolstad lost custody of their 14-year-old daughter when they refused to affirm her gender preference to be a male.³

And in Texas, Jeff Younger fought to protect his biological son after the child's mother began insisting that the boy identified as a female. Three years ago, the court awarded full custody of the 8-year-old to his mother—but required Younger's permission to use puberty blockers or perform any gender surgeries.⁴ A year later, shortly after Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a law making California the first sanctuary state for families of children seeking gender-affirming healthcare,⁵ the child's mother abruptly moved with the child and his twin brother to California. She said she feared a possible investigation under Texas state law for child abuse. Younger filed a petition with the court seeking to return his son to Texas, but it was dismissed.⁶ He lost custody of his

son because of his refusal to take part in his gender transition and because he has publicly shared his concerns as a father against the will of the court.⁷

Although the child has socially transitioned, meaning the boy's appearance and pronouns have changed, Younger has vowed to continue to fight to protect his biological son from a medical transition. He even unsuccessfully ran for the Texas statehouse a few years ago, campaigning against gender-affirming treatments for children.⁸

I believe there's nothing more evil or anti-God than supporting children—whose minds are not fully developed—in their decision to mutilate themselves. Minors do not possess the intellectual capacity to weigh the future ramifications

“The issue of gender isn't just about a cultural phenomenon, marketing, or the media. It is an issue of legislation, and when it comes for your children, will you be able to protect them?”

—CISSIE GRAHAM LYNCH

of their present decisions.⁹ There are hundreds of stories of people who have detransitioned after regretting the decisions they made when they were younger and confused. When we pursue desires that are in conflict to God's design, it often leads to harmful consequences. *"For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do"* (Galatians 5:17, ESV).

Responding to Objections

1. So what about people who are born with ambiguous genitalia or chromosomal abnormalities? Shouldn't they be able to choose their gender?

Gender ideology separates the concept of gender from biological sex. But gender is not something that only exists in the mind, it's physical. Our bodies have sexual organs and characteristics that have been created by God. Even in the extraordinarily rare cases where there are chromosomal abnormalities or ambiguous genitalia, those individuals typically still demonstrate a dominant sex trait.

2. But isn't this a real problem?

When a young person feels like they are in the wrong body, this is known as a genuine mental disorder known as gender dysphoria. It is a tragic situation that some individuals battle with, but there is hope for them through counseling and by allowing puberty to run its course. Gender dysphoria is also often linked to other mental health issues such as depression and anxiety.

3. Isn't it cruel to deny these people surgery and hormones?

Some people genuinely wrestle with gender dysphoria and biological abnormalities. My heart breaks for them. This can make navigating life significantly challenging. However, I believe that a disorder of the mind should be treated in the mind, not through irreversible physical surgery, a lifetime of hormone therapy, or by denying basic biological facts. Research shows that the majority of children (84.2%) grow out of the discomfort from gender dysphoria in adolescence and adulthood.¹⁰

When I was 12 years old and started my monthly cycle, I begged my mom for six months to allow me to get a hysterectomy. My mom had one, and I saw that she no longer had to deal with the monthly aggravation and embarrassment. At the time, I didn't understand all of the side effects this surgery brings; I could only see the relief that I desperately wanted. I don't even want to think about what my life would look like today if I'd had "supportive" parents who allowed

me to make such a life-altering change to my body. I believe it is cruel to sit idly by and do nothing when we see children mutilating themselves during the time of adolescence.

4. Denying people the right to medically transition will make them suicidal.

Doctors and activists often create a false dilemma by making statements such as, “Would you rather have a living trans son or a dead daughter?” This is emotional manipulation. While reports show that transgender youth and adults have higher rates of suicide and attempted suicide, gender affirming care is not the cure to this mental anguish. A nationwide study done by physicians in Texas found that adults who underwent surgery for gender transition were 12 times more likely to attempt suicide than the general population.¹¹

What Is the Christian Response?

Advocates for this destructive, anti-science, gender ideology are pushing for legislation in America today that will cause even more confusion among our children. When the government allows people to do what only God can do—define who we are as gendered individuals—there is a devastating impact. Families are destroyed, young women are put in danger, and there is inequality in sports and every other place that should be a protected space for women.

In this election year, it will be a high priority for some legislators to advocate for gender ideology that contradicts our God-given genders. Over 20 states have passed laws restricting gender-affirming care for minors—many banning puberty blockers, hormone treatment, and surgery for those under 18. But those laws have come under fire from transgender advocates, and the Supreme Court has agreed to hear a case from Tennessee this fall that challenges the constitutionality of state bans on gender-affirming care for transgender minors.¹² The current administration has joined the lawsuit.¹³ Will Tennessee and other states have the freedom to protect children and youth from reckless experimentation? In California, Gov. Gavin Newsom has signed a historic, first-in-the-nation bill that bans educators from notifying parents and guardians of their child’s preferred gender or if they ask to be identified by a different name.

As voters, we must ensure our parental rights are protected and we must do our part to guard our children from this evil. Satan is targeting our children who are created in God’s image. We must take a stand against any politician or political platform that condones children cutting off body parts or receiving toxic,

“As voters, we must ensure our parental rights are protected and we must do our part to guard our children from this evil. It’s important that we understand where federal and state candidates stand on this moral issue.”

—CISSIE GRAHAM LYNCH

everyone else. We know that each of us is unique and though our culture might create stereotypes, You do not.

Please help us to stand boldly, and speak clearly and graciously as we defend one of the most basic truths of humanity that some are wrestling with today. May we never forget that our identity is found first and foremost in You as our Creator. We know that You do not make mistakes, and that You offer hope, healing, and restoration to those struggling with gender confusion.

Please protect our children from the lies of this false ideology and grant us the empathy and compassion needed to respond to this crisis without compromising on truth. Burden our hearts for those struggling with gender confusion that they would accept Your peace of mind and heart that the world cannot give (John 14:27).

We pray that we might be a generation of people who joyfully identify ourselves with the way that You intended rather than defiantly choosing an identity of our own making.

We pray that our legislators will protect children, religious freedom, and parents’ rights when it comes to decisions that affect education, medical care, athletics, and private spaces. ■

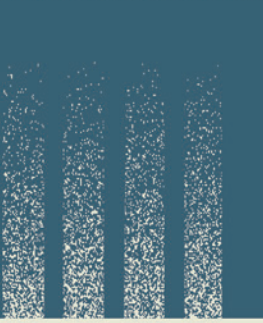
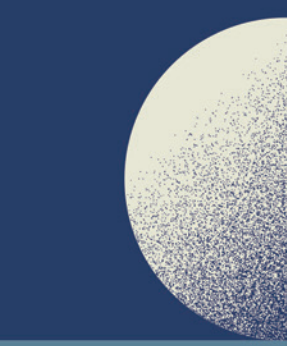
life-altering hormone injections. It’s important that we understand where federal and state candidates stand on this moral issue. We can’t sit by as the government—at any level—seizes our rights as parents to care for and protect our children.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for creating us all differently, and for providing space for us to express our femininity and masculinity in a God-honoring way that doesn’t need to look exactly the same as

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“But if you cause one of these little ones who trusts in me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to have a large millstone tied around your neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea.”

—MATTHEW 18:6, NLT



Day 6

LGBTQ+

READING: Romans 1:18-32

Don't Incubate, Inoculate

I remember being a kid in the early '90s when my family was in Minneapolis to hear my grandfather Billy Graham—or Daddy Bill as we called him—preach. At the time, the city was a hub for the homosexual community, and we happened to be there during a Pride parade. I remember seeing two men dressed up as sexualized firemen. They wore short shorts and were kissing on the back of a firetruck. This is one of my most vivid memories of the whole trip, which shows the power of images—and sin—on a young mind.

Coming from a small mountain town in North Carolina, I'd never seen anything like this, but my parents, in their wisdom, didn't incubate me from it. Instead, they used that experience as a teachable moment, something to inoculate me against far worse things that they knew I would eventually be exposed to. Though the event shook me, I was in a safe environment with parents who had anticipated my questions and were ready to guide me.

Fast forward a few decades, and I was watching the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade with my own daughter, Margaret, who was about the same age that I had been on that day in Minneapolis. One of the musical acts in the program was from a popular Broadway show. It featured two girls attending prom as a couple, and the performance ended with a romantic kiss between the two. When my little girl asked me about what we had just seen, I turned off the TV and looked at her innocent face and braced myself for the fact that I couldn't shelter her from the world forever. Selfishly, a part of me wanted to brush the whole thing off, maybe even pretend it had never happened. But I knew this would be a disservice to my daughter who was far too intelligent and inquisitive to simply let something like this go. So, we talked about it.

Of course, there's a time and place for every conversation, and I'm certainly not advocating for exposing our young children to unnecessary depravity. But the fact is, they are living in a world far more confusing than ours ever was. Things I never saw

on a screen growing up are commonplace today. A third of all films and TV shows released in the USA recently included LGBTQ+ characters,¹ and is it any wonder? Same-sex marriage has now been a federal right for nearly a decade. That is all that the next generation has known, so we as parents must be prepared to have hard conversations about these issues with our children. We should be the first to discuss sexuality and gender with them, and we need to do it in a way that leaves room for their questions, and even objections. After all, these conversations often open up great opportunities to guide our kids toward the solid truth found only in God's perfect plan for us.

A Master of Confusion

First Corinthians 14:33 reminds us, “*For God is not a God of confusion but of peace*” (ESV). God didn't leave anything to be redefined or reidentified when He designed sex. His Word is clear—He made sex to be between a biological male and a biological female within the framework marriage. Acting on the desire for anything else is sin. But where there is clarity with God, the evil one sows confusion and chaos. Jesus described Satan as the father of lies (John 8:44). The devil loves it when we question or twist the truth in God's Word.

Unfortunately, we are now at a point in society where people aren't just questioning God's design for our bodies and sex, they are rejecting it altogether.

According to a Gallup poll conducted in February 2023, 7.1% of U.S. adults now identify as LBGTQ+, which has doubled over the past decade.² That's a high number, but if you want further proof that the “Love is Love” campaign is working, just ask Gen Z—nearly 30% of that generation currently identifies as part of the LGBTQ+ community.³ Walk into any high school, college campus, or church youth group—yes, even youth groups—and roughly 1 out of every 3 students you encounter will tell you that they are either gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans, or another one of the dozens of terms now used to describe various sexual identities and orientations. How do we begin to navigate this topic that can seem so sensitive and complex? The answer is simpler than you may realize.

A Misdiagnosed Problem

The problem isn't just a matter of gender and sexuality. Look a little deeper and you'll see that it's about people searching for identity and relevance—two things that nobody wants more than our youth. Long gone are the days when people were ostracized for obscure sexual preferences. We are now living in a time when

our children are more likely to be ignored by their peers if they are a “normie” or a heterosexual. This is seen as being too vanilla, too boring.

Pair that desperate desire to forge your own path with the deceptive marketing campaigns of the Pride movement and with school libraries that are carrying sexually graphic LGBTQ+ material, and the end result is a generation of very confused kids.

To make things even worse, many of us who are supposed to offer protection and clarity for our children have been shamed and silenced into believing that we are hateful or bigoted if we don't accept a lifestyle that God calls sin. And so, we stay quiet in an effort not to offend anyone.

The New American Religion

If we want to reach people with truth and love, it helps to know what they believe. The LGBTQ+ movement's golden calf is “expressive individualism.” If you've never heard of this term before you've certainly encountered its application. Here are the three key doctrines of its belief system:

1. Only you can decide “who” you are.
2. Your true identity is inseparable from your desires.
3. You can only live as your true self by freely expressing yourself however you wish with unconditional affirmation from those around you.

This belief system is America's new religion. It is dogmatic, intolerant, and it is being fed to our children by the government all the way down to the kindergarten classroom. It is the reason drag queens are celebrated for reading stories to children in taxpayer-funded libraries. It's why public nudity that should be banned is instead applauded at “family-friendly” Pride events. It's the reason you don't see any other ideological flag flying on a government building besides the rainbow flag.

We even see this new American religion in our children's health care. I recently read about a mother who took her child to the doctor because he was sick, and the office had a sign with a rainbow pride flag that said, “This is a safe and free space.” When the parent expressed her concern, the doctor said it was their job to teach kids about sexuality in a safe place. The mother responded, “No, it's your job to tell my kid if he has strep throat.” This story represents the very tip of the iceberg when it comes to how health and education providers now view their role as subcontractors—or even our replacements—in the ethical development and training of our children.

Preservation of Innocence

As Christians, we must be bold enough to proclaim God’s truth in a world that wants a customized Christianity. One that says, “You can have Jesus and your rainbow flag too.” But we need to take a stand against this false teaching that has become the norm in our country. We must be people who don’t just share the truth in the privacy of our homes, but with our neighbors and in our communities too. We may be in the minority, but we shouldn’t be a silent one.

The largest LGBTQ+ media advocacy organization in the world, GLAAD, is certainly using its voice to shape our culture. The group’s mission statement is clear.

“The politicians that we will be voting for this year will have the power to take a stand for truth on these issues or they could pass legislation that continues to diminish our ability to share our beliefs.”

—CISSIE GRAHAM LYNCH

It “envisions a world with 100% LGBTQ acceptance.”⁴ For this to be true, there must be a 0% acceptance of Christians who believe the teachings of the Bible. While older generations of Christians aren’t as likely to change their convictions about sexuality, younger generations are much more open to it. This is why we see so many LGBTQ+ advocacy efforts moving toward young minds to try and achieve a full and complete acceptance of their agenda.

I was recently chatting with my hairdresser about Pride Month. She was feeling somewhat conflicted as a single mom of two young girls because she has close friends who are part of the LGBTQ+ community—as many of us have. At the same time, she feels like LGBTQ+ activists are targeting our children and seeking to redefine the modern family with the onslaught of television programs and commercials. She asked for advice on how to balance teaching her children truth while continuing to express love for her colleague. I explained that we live in a world that doesn’t seem to know God’s truth any more. This is why I teach my children what the Bible says about God creating men and women in His image. It is also why I emphasize Christ’s teaching about loving our neighbors.

We are called to show compassion but not at the expense of compromising what we believe—just like Jesus. When the woman caught in sexual sin was thrown before Him, He didn’t condemn her, but He also didn’t affirm her sin. Instead, He told her, “*Go now and leave your life of sin*” (John 8:11, NIV).

My hairdresser is not a believer, but she indicated an appreciation for my response. There are people in our communities searching for truth, but it feels as though few people are speaking it. As Christians, we have to step up and have those hard conversations, or activists will fill the information gap.

Protecting God's Design

Living outside of God's design is dangerous, because the further we stray from it, the easier it becomes to sin. "Do what is right in your own eyes," the world says. We are told to create an identity that fully expresses our desires so that we can be true to how we feel. But this kind of advice is dangerous. In 1 John 2:15–16 we are warned against following the way of the world and its lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and its pride of life.

But this is where so many people in America today are finding their identity—in our own broken desires and our own truth—rather than God's truth. This is one of the reasons the LGBTQ+ movement is always expanding, adding new letters all the time. It seems there is always some new form of sexual expression to be discovered and explored. Always some new sexual identity waiting to be claimed and championed.

When we stop calling out sin and start accepting and affirming everyone's lifestyle without distinction, where will that take society? If we are to live by the world's definition that our identity is inseparable from our desires—and to unconditionally accept them—where does that leave us on issues such as child molestation and other indecent acts? There are many different kinds of sexual desires, and even identities, that run contrary to God's Word. Instead of continuing to move the goalposts in the name of love, we would be wise to remember the warning attributed to John Wesley: "What one generation tolerates, the next generation will embrace."

In our nation's quest to say that all sexual identities and activities are welcome, we are coming dangerously close to falling off the moral cliff. In Germany and several other countries in Europe, the age of consent is 14, allowing adults to legally have sex with girls and boys who are still far too young to drive or vote. I don't know about you, but that is not the kind of sexual "freedom" that I want for my kids or the future children of this country.

God has given us clear boundaries for sexual expression, and as we see time and time again throughout the pages of Scripture, there are devastating consequences anytime sexuality is used in a way other than what God intended.

A Vote for Real Love

In recent years, LGBTQ+ issues have been championed in many government offices and within political groups. All of this is wrong and it should concern us, but we must remember that people who are gay, lesbian, transgender, or anything else aren't our enemies. Even though there is a political movement and a legislative agenda associated with the LGBTQ+ community, its advocates are people who were made and created by God, the same as you and me. Even though we can't affirm their sinful lifestyles, we can affirm the worth and value that they have as people who are loved by God and made in His image. It's our job to speak the truth in love. We need to be bold enough to tell people in this community the truth—we don't choose our own identities, God does—but we also need to be kind and do it in love (1 Corinthians 13).

The politicians that we will be voting for this year will have the power to take a stand for truth on these issues or they could pass legislation that continues to diminish our ability to share our beliefs. Like Päivi Räsänen, a long-serving member of the Finnish Parliament, whose Bible-tweet concerning sexuality and marriage resulted in criminal charges and years of the threat of a conviction in the court of law,⁵ our freedom of conscience and belief is incrementally being chipped away by our own government. The outcome of this election can either help our freedom to practice our Christian faith or it could continue to embolden a culture that contradicts God's Word. Now is the time to hold politicians accountable at the ballot box and vote for candidates who honor God's design for us.

If you believe that a person's identity is grounded in their Creator, rather than their sexuality, if you believe that there is no place for LGBTQ+ marketing and indoctrination in our schools or media, and, if you believe that health care providers shouldn't get to decide what's in your child's best interest, pay attention to who you put in power with your vote. The time is urgent and the stakes are high—government institutions are indoctrinating our children without our knowledge and consent. It may cost you time to research the candidates, but failing to do so may cost you even more. Express your voice through your vote.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we are so grateful to know that You are not a God of confusion or hate, but one of truth and love. Help us to be brave enough to have uncomfortable discussions with the ones we love who are living in unrepentant sin. Give us a Colossians 4:6 attitude so that our conversations may be gracious and attractive so

that we will have the right response for everyone.

Help us to love fiercely and to pray and cry with those struggling with confusion in this area. We need Your wisdom to know how to lovingly share the truth of Your Word with those who are trying to reject and redefine an identity that You have already given them. And help us comfort those who are broken over the choices that loved ones are making, always keeping You, Jesus, in the center. Please help us to extinguish the lies that Satan has used to pour fuel on our communities and churches.

Lord, we pray that You would grant us the boldness to hold fast to Your truth even when it's unpopular and that we would be unoffendable when dealing respectfully with those who hold opposing views. We love You and know that Your ways are higher than our own. Please help us to show love and compassion to our neighbors who experience same-sex attraction for we know that none of us are perfect, and Your love and Your identity for us is greater than any love or identity we could ever try to experience or find ourselves. ■

ENDNOTES

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**“How beautiful are the
feet of those who preach
the good news!”**

—ROMANS 10:15, ESV

Day 7

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

READING: 2 Timothy 3:10-17

In January 2020, I watched as the progressive voices that stand in direct opposition to God’s Word set themselves on a mission to kick my dad’s God Loves You Tour out of the United Kingdom. Their stance was that preaching God’s truth was “hate speech.” One by one, venues succumbed to the pressure of the local LGBTQ+ communities and ultimately canceled their contracts to host the events.

But my dad didn’t just accept the situation. He fought for the right to preach the Gospel in the public square—and the courts ruled in favor of his right to exercise religious liberty. As a result, he has been able to return to the United Kingdom and share the Good News of Jesus Christ through multiple evangelistic events. I thank God for this because it has also encouraged and emboldened Christians across the U.K. who felt like they couldn’t preach the Gospel outside the walls of their churches.

The attempt to restrict religious freedom in England is nothing new. In fact, that’s why the Pilgrims fled and came to our shores in 1620. Religious liberty is part of the very bedrock on which the United States was founded. It was so important, our Founding Fathers included it in the very first sentence of the First Amendment of the Constitution. These men never envisioned that we would live out a quiet, hidden faith, but one that could be expressed boldly without fear of being censored, canceled, expelled, or fired. Their vision has protected the church from the government, allowing Christians for centuries to freely live out our faith in our schools, our jobs, and the public square. But this is changing. After years of erosion and compromise, today we see serious cracks in our nation’s bedrock. Federal, state, and local government agencies are passing policies that are chipping away at our religious freedoms, and judges are reinterpreting the Constitution with devastating consequences.

If the pandemic taught us anything, it was exactly what our governing authorities think of the church: “nonessential.” While crowds of rioters hit the streets, church doors were shut. In California, two megachurches temporarily

labeled themselves as entities that were permitted to stay open while churches had to remain closed.¹ Some pastors opened their churches in spite of the lockdowns and faced legal retribution—but most complied with little resistance.²

Many people wanted to be sensitive to the situation and believed the best way to love our neighbor was by staying home. But as the two-weeks-to-flatten-the-curve turned into 52 weeks, only a very few churches called out the double standard observed between which indoor gatherings were considered at risk and which weren't. Sadly, 2020 revealed that not only did the government consider churches “nonessential” but many people who say they are Christians thought that too.

The Target on Our Backs

Since the U.S. Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage nationwide with its ruling on *Obergefell v. Hodges* in 2015, Christian business owners have been specifically targeted by members of the LGBTQ+ community. Activists have gone out of their way to demand that business owners, such as Jack Phillips and Barronelle Stutzman, provide services for same-sex weddings, despite the fact that these ceremonies violate their religious beliefs.^{3, 4}

To be clear, these Christian business owners are not discriminating against their customers because of their race, religion, or sex. Each of these business owners would happily provide a birthday cake or graduation bouquet to LGBTQ+ customers. Where they draw the line, however, is when these services are required for ceremonies, like same-sex weddings, that go against their Christian beliefs.

For example, in 2012, Jack Phillips, a baker from Colorado, was approached about making a wedding cake for a gay couple. After refusing, he was sued. But Phillips wasn't singling the men out. He simply doesn't make anything that conflicts with his religious convictions. This is also why he won't make divorce celebration cakes or anti-American cakes. Five grueling years later, Phillips' case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. And though the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Jack Phillips by protecting his right to religious freedom in 2017, the decision went against the cultural majority.

However, that same year, Phillips came under attack again when a transgender attorney asked him to make a cake to celebrate the anniversary of the lawyer's gender transition. That case is still being investigated by the Colorado Supreme Court.

In another case, Barronelle Stutzman, a great-grandmother from Washington, faced backlash in an unprecedented lawsuit initiated by the attorney general in

“Let us stand for political freedom, moral freedom, religious freedom, and the rights of all Americans ... and let’s never give in to those who would attempt to take it from us.”

—BILLY GRAHAM

Washington when she declined to make floral arrangements for a same-sex wedding. Although they had been longtime customers of her shop, Stutzman drew a line and cited her Christian beliefs when they requested arrangements for their wedding. After a decade-long legal battle that culminated in two devastating losses that were handed down by the Washington Supreme Court, she chose to retire at the age of 77.

Faith-based nonprofits have also been targeted. In Anchorage, Alaska, Sherie Laurie directs the Downtown Hope Center, a shelter for homeless women, many of whom are victims of

sexual abuse. One day, a biological man, in a drunken and injured state, claimed to be a woman and demanded to spend the night at the shelter. The overnight facilities are reserved for women only because they sleep in the same room and are in various stages of undress. Laurie declined the injured man’s request and paid for a taxi to send him to the hospital. Days later the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission asserted the Hope Center violated the law by not admitting the man. A Christian legal advocacy group then had to step in and file a federal lawsuit to allow this ministry to continue to operate according to its Biblical beliefs.⁵

These are only a few examples of how the right to freely exercise our religious beliefs is under attack. But in all of these cases, we see faithful Christians who have stood boldly for their beliefs by not endorsing acts that are contrary to Biblical teaching.

The Future of Religious Liberty

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits places of “public accommodation” from discriminating based on race, color, religion, national origin, or sex—defined at that time as male or female. However, it does not give the right to compel people to provide services for events and ceremonies that are antithetical to their religious beliefs. But there are many politicians who think Christian beliefs should be restricted—not protected.

In 2019, a presidential candidate said he would take away tax-exempt status from religious institutions if they opposed gay marriage.⁶ During a town hall discussion, he said, “There can be no reward, no benefit, no tax break for anyone or

any institution, any organization in America that denies the full human rights and the full civil rights of every single one of us.” He continued by saying, “And so as president, we’re going to make that a priority and we are going to stop those who are infringing upon the human rights of our fellow Americans.”

Dismantling religious liberty in the name of antidiscrimination is discriminating against the very religious beliefs the First Amendment was designed to protect. The religious freedoms that we enjoy in the U.S. serve as a beacon of hope for other people in countries experiencing religious persecution around the world. It’s what makes it possible for churches to send more missionaries than any other country. It’s why organizations like the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association have been able to share the Gospel in more than 185 countries and territories. The religious liberties that we have here at home are even what give me the ability to share this election prayer guide with you.

We can’t take this freedom for granted. If you believe it’s important to defend our right to express our beliefs, not just in our churches, but in the public square, then we have to take a stand by electing those who will protect and preserve religious liberty. This is the foundation that has served as a hope for our nation and so many others, and if we lose it, the impact will be felt around the world.

In the words of my grandfather Billy Graham: “Let us stand for political freedom, moral freedom, religious freedom, and the rights of all Americans ... and let’s never give in to those who would attempt to take it from us.”

Why Must We Live Out Our Faith Publicly?

Though it might feel more comfortable to retreat from the public space and keep religion inside the four walls of our homes or churches, this is not what the Bible commands. Instead, Jesus calls us to go and be His witnesses in the Great Commission.

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19–20, NIV).

Prayer

Heavenly Father, our foundation as believers is grounded in Your truth—no matter how far our nation drifts from it. We ask that You transform our nation through a spirit of humility and repentance into Christ’s image.

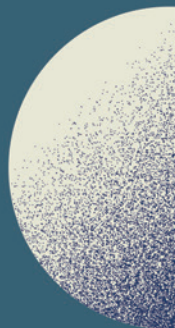
We pray for those who are being persecuted, that they will remain faithful to Jesus and not grow weary. Please provide them with the funding and best legal representation possible to defend the right to religious freedom.

Give us the wisdom, discretion, and courage to know when to stand and when to shake the dust off (Acts 13:51)—all while maintaining a focus on proclaiming Christ. Helps us remember that the Gospel thrives in persecution even as we seek to preserve and expand freedoms.

We pray that we will be a generation of Christians who are willing to stand for Jesus. Give us eyes to see the people around us who are desperate to hear truth and the reason for it. And we ask that You bless us with strong leaders who know Christ as Lord and, like our Founding Fathers, understand the importance of allowing people to freely live out their faith. ■

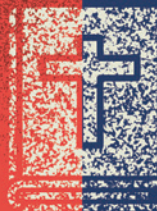
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“And he said, “This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.” Since they are no longer two but one, let no one split apart what God has joined together.’”

—MATTHEW 19:5-6, NLT



Day 8

MARRIAGE

READING: Genesis 1:27-28 and 2:18-25

How can you stabilize and perpetuate society? Through the nuclear family. It really is that simple. When men and women commit to a loving, lifelong relationship they tend to be more stable economically and emotionally. Crime goes down when personal responsibility goes up and young people have consistent, healthy role models in the home. Naturally, this puts married heterosexual couples in the perfect position to raise, provide for, and educate the next generation of responsible, contributing citizens. Want to destabilize a society? Attack the nuclear family. Make it easy to get a divorce, redefine who can be legally married, incentivize women to depend on the government economically, encourage the mass genocide of the unborn, and celebrate sexual experimentation and promiscuity among the youth.

Some of you may be asking, “Who would intentionally seek to destabilize a society?” The answer is anyone who wants power or who hates God’s design. Sound dramatic? I wish this was unrealistic and overblown, and yet, year after year legislation is passed in our country that promotes exactly what I’ve just described. Destabilization is never the outspoken goal. In fact, many of the people who advocate for these things don’t even see it that way. They simply believe they are championing a better vision for America. But regardless of the motives or intent behind the legislation, the outcome remains the same. When the nuclear family is dismantled, society crumbles.

In particular, the progressive movement has been relentlessly attacking the nuclear family. Until recent years, the Black Lives Matter website even listed the destruction of the nuclear family as one of its objectives. This kind of Marxist ideology that calls for the abolition of the family has consequences. Fostering a culture that promotes unions between same-sex couples, bodily mutilation that prevents reproduction, and pushing an agenda of self-focus rather than healthy marriages between a man and a woman are all contributing to our nation’s severe decline in population growth.

Fewer than 3.6 million babies were born last year. The U.S. birth rate has dropped to 1.6 children per woman—the lowest rate on record and far below the fertility rate needed to ensure healthy population growth.¹ The U.S. baby boom is long gone. Instead we are facing the concerning realities of a baby bust.

Economically, this will cause massive problems for society. It takes a consistent flow of workers from upcoming generations to replace those who are aging out of the workforce. If there are not enough taxpayers contributing to an economic system, then over time, you cannot sustain a country's supplemental and social programs. This leaves older people in an especially precarious situation because they don't have a state system or children to take care of them as they age.

South Korea is dealing with this issue right now. It has the world's lowest fertility rate as millions of its residents struggle to find a balance between maintaining a career and a family. Lee Joong-keun, the chairman of the Booyoung Group, one of the largest construction companies in the country, said, "Korea will face a crisis of

national existence 20 years from now, including a decline in the economically productive population and a shortage of defense personnel to ensure national security and maintain order."

Politicians there are calling the low birth rates a national emergency, and government leaders in Seoul are currently investing more than a billion dollars in a Birth Encouragement Project to financially help families have more children.² Corporations are also

"The U.S. birth rate has dropped to 1.6—the lowest rate on record and far below the fertility rate needed to ensure healthy population growth."

—CISSIE GRAHAM LYNCH

trying to strengthen the country's future by bolstering the economy and workforce. the Booyoung Group is offering employees a \$75,000 bonus for each new child that they raise. The company is also planning to provide an additional incentive—tax- and maintenance-free housing for employees with at least three children.³

But even with incentives like that, the birth rate remains shockingly low, and it is having a devastating impact as people age. Nearly 40% of South Korea's elderly population is impoverished—one of the worst poverty rates in the developed world.⁴ Since these seniors don't have children who can help them, crowds of elderly people—some of them nearly 100 years old—wait in long lines for hours, relying on soup kitchens and churches to survive.⁵

This should be a cautionary tale for America. We too will pay a high cost if we continue to devalue and dismantle the truth. One of the primary reasons God created marriage was so we could have children.

As a Christian, I don't think babies should be the byproduct of government or corporate incentives. Instead, children are meant to be the blessing and the fruit of healthy marriages. Psalm 127:3 says, "*Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him*" (NLT). It should come as no surprise that the first thing that God told Adam and Eve after He created them was to "*be fruitful and increase in number*" (Genesis 1:28, NIV). God wants to bless us our marriages and our families with good things, but we have to do it His way.

America's Break Up With Marriage

Christians often think that marriage came under attack when same-sex couples wanted equal access to it. However, marriage started to become less meaningful as early as 1969, when the then California governor, Ronald Reagan, signed the first no-fault divorce bill. This decision alone resulted in a massive cultural shift in how Americans viewed marriage, and by 2010 no-fault divorce was legal in all 50 states.⁶ This was the first major piece of legislation that actually redefined marriage long before the legalization of same-sex unions on June 26, 2015.

Once the American people reached the conclusion that a marriage could be terminated for no reason, it became nothing more than a promissory note that lasted as long as the romantic feelings did. In many cases, it's easier to break a marriage contract today than it is a business one.

Sadly, the church let this cultural shift happen, and what's worse, the divorce rates in the church didn't look much different than those outside the church. With over 40% of all marriages ending in divorce today, it shouldn't be a surprise that about 85% of Gen Z and millennials believe marriage is completely unnecessary for a fulfilled and committed relationship. Too many have watched their parents' marriage end in divorce, skewing their view of what should be a sacred union.

The concept of marriage had been so weakened in society, by 2015 when Christians protested the Supreme Court's legalization of same-sex marriage, it fell on deaf ears. After all, if marriage is simply a temporary promise based on romantic feelings that exclude God, there really is no reason to deny it to anyone who has romantic feelings for someone of the same sex. Love is love, right?

Today we are living in a society that says a family can look however you want it to, so long as it feels good for the couple, and the minute it doesn't, you can move

on. Marriage is seen as a relationship that you can sever when life gets tough rather than the covenantal bond that God intended.

It's no wonder young people are getting married much later in life or they are choosing to not get married at all. They want friends and a career—with no spouse or children to hold them back. A friend of mine once said, “You can have it all; you just can't have it all at once.” Sadly, we've cultivated a narcissistic society that wants it all now. I don't know about you, but I don't want my children to grow up in an America that teaches us to look out for ourselves rather than others.

God's Plan for Marriage

The Bible describes a much better plan for families through marriage. It's one of selflessness, not selfishness. When Paul addressed marriage in Ephesians 5:21, he encouraged husbands and wives to “*submit to one another out of reverence for Christ*” (NLT). The Biblical picture of marriage is also one of unshakable unity. Genesis 2:24 says, “*Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh*” (ESV). And in the New Testament, Jesus affirmed this by saying in Matthew 19:6, “*What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate*” (ESV).

As Christians, we know that God designed marriage to be between one man and one woman, for a lifetime. However, when two people of the same sex wish to stand before God, or government, to be “married,” they stand in direct rebellion against God's plan for marriage. If that sounds controversial, it is. But there's more—well-meaning attendees of these ceremonies watch and celebrate as this rebellion against God's design unfolds with a beautiful cake, clothes, flowers, gifts, and music.

Is this a simple matter? Regarding God's instructions—yes. Regarding how individuals feel about their own sexuality and idea of marriage, not at all. This is why we must always approach this subject, and the tension that it can raise with

“Today we are living in a society that says a family can look however you want it to, so long as it feels good for the couple, and the minute it doesn't, you can move on. Marriage is seen as a relationship that you can sever when life gets tough rather than the covenantal bond that God intended.”

—CISSIE GRAHAM LYNCH

loved ones, with great sensitivity. We should be the first to share God’s plan for marriage and the family with love, patience, and grace, but never at the expense of truth.

Beyond the practical means of marriage as a way to perpetuate and stabilize society, the Bible also stresses that marriage is ultimately a reflection of Christ’s love and union with His people—the church. Paul explained this to the believers in Ephesus, saying, “*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.*” *This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church*” (Ephesians 5:25–32, NIV).

Marriage and Government

Despite the fact that women who are married with children are statistically much happier than their single counterparts,⁷ our politicians remain consistently resistant to creating legislature that supports this kind of traditional lifestyle. Why? The price would be high to oppose sexual “freedom,” and candidates fear a loss of popularity in the polls. This is why it is so important to be informed about whether your vote in this election will go toward a voice that will stand with God’s plan for marriage or against it.

Now is the time to pray—and vote—for leaders who believe in the sanctity of marriage and who understand that raising children in a loving household with a mother and a father can have a positive societal and spiritual impact on the future of this nation. The nuclear family and the Biblical principles on marriage are absolutely essential for society.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we know that our government didn’t give us marriage, You did.

You ordained marriage and defined it be a covenant between one man and one woman, before their Creator, for life. Please forgive our negligence in protecting and honoring this sacred covenant that You instituted. As the government and

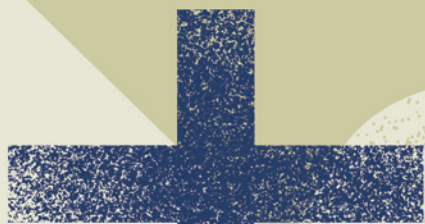
society try to redefine marriage, please grant us the boldness to hold fast to Your truth against the cultural majority. Help us demonstrate compassion and grace when dealing with others who hold opposing views.

Would You give special grace and healing to all those who have been hurt by divorce, so that they would find peace and hope in You? Help us be devoted to our marriages so they reflect the same love that Christ has for His bride—the church—making them a strong witness to those who don't know You.

Root our marriages so deeply in Christ that “*though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken*” (Ecclesiastes 4:12, ESV). ■

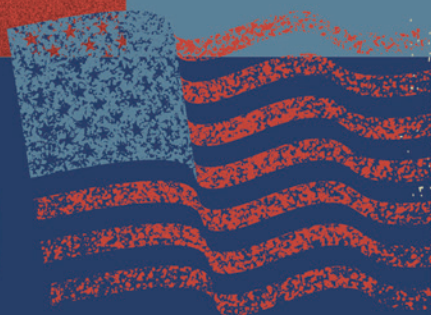
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**“The grass withers, the
flower fades, but the
word of our God will
stand forever.”**

—ISAIAH 40:8, ESV



Vote

THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION

The topics covered in this guide are weighty issues that will directly influence our future as a nation. These are Biblical, moral issues that have been placed in the hands of politicians, and with each passing year, our nation is moving further away from God's truth. Religious freedom has been the bedrock on which our country was built. Much has changed since those seeking religious freedom first arrived at our country's shoreline, but that precious freedom is at risk more now than ever before, so unless we want to see the complete erosion of it, believers must be vigilant and get involved.

Second Timothy 4:3–4 warns: *“For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths”* (ESV). Parents and grandparents must be diligent in raising our children and grandchildren—the future generation—to know and live out God's absolute truth. He alone gives clarity, peace, and order.

Our enemy is the author of confusion and chaos. Unfortunately, much of the world seems to be buying Satan's lies as truth. Many of our elected officials are pushing unhealthy political agendas that are damaging the soul of our nation, and we are consistently told that we must accept everyone's personal truth as absolute or we are intolerant. But Isaiah 5:20 tells us: *“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!”* (ESV).

Even the American flag has been a target. Our country's flag has always symbolized hope and security. It's why people from all over the world want to come to the United States. I grew up feeling safe in this country—at home, at school, in church, and in my community—but it feels as if true security no longer exists.

Recently my son, Austin, was playing with his little army guys when he looked up at me and asked, “Mom, where do I put my flag?” I wanted to turn this opportunity into a teachable moment, so I explained the emotion the American flag can invoke

and the value we should place on it. “You have to put the flag where it can be seen to give people hope, but also protected where the enemy can never get it.” Then we watched the ending scene of the iconic movie *The Patriot*, where the soldiers were ready to give up and retreat until the main character grabbed the flag and encouraged them to continue the fight. I shared with my son that since the beginning of our nation, more than a million Americans have given up their lives to defend our freedoms from physical threats, and we must continue the spiritual and moral fight for our country today.

As Christians, we know that true freedom is found in God’s great love for us, and the cross embodies our greatest hope. Jesus Christ spread His arms out wide for the entire world and gave up His life on that cross to win our freedom from sin and death (Galatians 5:1). He alone provides freedom for our souls. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, and He calls us to be salt and light in this increasingly dark world. Just like Christ, we can be compassionate without compromising God’s truth. There are people around each of us who are seeking truth. They are also trying to figure out how to respond to the cultural issues that are impacting their families. We need to be ready to present the truth to them in a gracious manner. We don’t know whether they will reject it or accept it, but we have to be courageous and dive into those tough conversations to point people to the hope that’s only found in Jesus Christ.

During this critical time for our country, let’s ask God to stir up a hunger and thirst for righteousness among His people, and to transform many hearts throughout our land with the Gospel. Our battle is not between political parties—it’s a matter of good versus evil. Truth versus lies. And God’s absolute truth never changes—no matter how our culture tries to redefine it. “*The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever*” (Isaiah 40:8, ESV).

Jesus Christ alone is our salvation, not politicians. Only He can save us from our sins and offer us eternal life. We cannot place our faith in elected officials, but we can ask God to raise up godly candidates to serve as our leaders in government. We need leaders who will ensure the protection not only of our nation and our families, but above all, our right to freely live out our lives as bold and faithful followers of Christ—so that all may see and hear of His Hope within us.

Make no mistake, if we remain silent, the evil one will continue to weaponize society’s confusion and Biblical illiteracy to chip away at our families, our freedoms, and our nation. As the president of a political advocacy group stated: “It was just a few years ago that we were debating gay marriage, and now we’re debating sex changes for minors. I mean, that’s exponential movement in terms of culture.”¹ I cannot even

imagine what may come next. It's not going to stop. The call for action is now and it is urgent. We must act with our prayers, our voices, and our votes. It's time to protect our families and maintain our right to develop and train our children by taking a stand for them at the ballot box.

Together, we can make a difference, and not just for our country, but for God's kingdom.

A Prayer for Our Nation

“Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven.” ■

ENDNOTES

- 1 <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/us/texas-transgender-youth-medical-care-abuse.html>

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