



Merry Christmas!
& Happy New Year!

www.illinoisfamily.org



pro life . pro marriage . pro family .

Take heart! **BE STRONG** in the LORD

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

As you can well imagine, I have had a number of things on my mind lately. Yet, as all these issues swirl around in my thoughts, there is one topic that consistently rises to the top — **spiritual warfare**. I suspect I am not alone in my consideration of this subject, because a believer who is well-acquainted with God’s Word understands that spiritual warfare is **a reality in the daily life of a Christian**.

In my opinion, there are four battle plans for addressing spiritual warfare:

- 1.) We can **REJECT** it — we close our eyes, try to ignore it, and hope it will go away. *Warning* — this is a great way to get hurt, become distracted, be taken captive, or grow lukewarm!
- 2.) We can **RENAME** it — we tell ourselves that this is not really a battle or a war; it is simply a test, and no one is ever hurt in a test! It is as if we say, “No worries, I’m saved and that’s all that really matters.”
- 3.) We can **RESIST** it — we strive to stay far away from anything that might be difficult and we do our very best to keep our hands clean. *Or,*
- 4.) We can **RIGHTLY HANDLE** it — we approach the battle armed with an accurate biblical understanding and proper response based on what Scripture says about spiritual warfare.

Ephesians 6:10-17 describes battle plan #4, the plan every believer ought to implement:

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness,

against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of

righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

The older I get, the more I realize that our temporal life is, in fact, a battle. We are truly Soldiers of the Cross, engaged in non-stop spiritual warfare. But this is the Good News, our Heavenly Commander-in-Chief has given us supernatural power to demolish strongholds, to demolish arguments and every pretension that runs contrary to the Truth of God. He, working in and through us, gives us victory!

The apostle Paul tells us we cannot ignore spiritual warfare. We cannot ignore Satan and his schemes. We must suit up and prepare to do battle because attacks are imminent. If we are walking in the Spirit, armor in place, we will more readily recognize the snares of Satan — his temptations and lies that confront each one of us, every day.

We can clearly discern Satan at work in the ongoing cultural revolution that engulfs our state and nation even as



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Attorney General Fed Up with Hate Group Smears

For years, many Christian ministries, charities, religious liberty law firms and public policy organizations, including Illinois Family Institute, Alliance Defending Freedom and Family Research Council have been the target of a relentless smear campaign from a far-left organization known as the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC).

Before he resigned, U.S. Attorney General **Jeff Sessions** spoke out on these slanderous allegations. He is the highest office holder to take the SPLC to task for its actions. At a legal conference, Sessions told attendees that the SPLC uses the “hate” designation as a “weapon . . . against conservative organizations that refuse to accept their orthodoxy and choose instead to speak their conscience.” “We have gotten to the point where one group can actively target



religious groups by labeling them a “hate group” on the basis of their sincerely held religious beliefs,” Sessions said. “I have ordered a review at the Department of Justice to make sure that we do not partner with any groups that discriminate. . . . We will not partner with groups that unfairly defame Americans for standing up for the Constitution or their faith.”

Sessions acknowledged the SPLC’s positive history of exposing racism in the south many decades ago, but criticized the group that now has attacked religious liberty organizations like American Family

Association as a “hate group.”

The Family Research Council (FRC) suffered one of the most serious consequences of the SPLC’s campaign to foment hatred against conservatives in 2012. A gunman marched into the FRC’s Washington, DC, headquarters with more than 100 rounds of ammunition hoping to kill FRC staff members. **Leo Johnson**, a guard for the building was the first to be shot, but thankfully was able to restrain the shooter before he could kill anyone. Few in the mainstream media mentioned the shooter’s connection to politics as a homosexual activist who had the SPLC’s “hate map” to locate FRC by name and attempt his killing spree.

Attorney General Sessions made it clear that the Trump Administration, unlike the Obama Administration, would not be working with the SPLC or using their “hate group” reports or claims. ❄️



Marijuana on the ballot

Almost 60 percent of North Dakota voters said no a ballot referendum which would have legalized the recreational use of marijuana in their state, while 56 percent of Michigan voters approved legalizing recreational-use marijuana.

Voters in Missouri and Utah approved so-called “medical” marijuana by votes of 65 percent and 53 percent respectively. “Medical” marijuana will now be legal in 33 states and the District of Columbia. ❄️

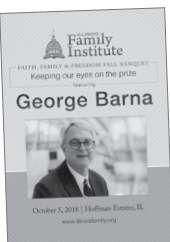
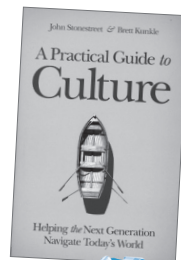


Gifts/Resources!

As a thank you for your donation of \$75 or more, we would like to send you *A Practical Guide to Culture: Helping the Next Generation Navigate Today’s World* by John Stonestreet **PLUS** IFI’s World

View Conference DVD with John Stonestreet.

As a thank you for your donation of \$30 or more, we would like to send you IFI’s 2018 Banquet DVD which features **George Barna** and his powerful analysis of the state of the church today in America. ❄️



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Biggest Matching Challenge Ever! *Written By David E. Smith*

I am pleased to announce that in an effort to help us raise \$200,000 by the end of this year, amazing generous donors have offered to match donations to IFI all the way up to \$100,000! So between now and the end of the year, you can double the impact of your giving!

Yes, you read that right! Every donation to IFI through the end of the year are **DOUBLED** upon receipt.

- ✓ So if you give \$50 it becomes \$100.
- ✓ If you give \$100 it becomes \$200.
- ✓ If you give \$500 we realize \$1,000!
- ✓ If you donate \$1,000, it is the same as giving \$2,000, etc.

Despite the political environment and continual attacks on the natural family, the sanctity of life and religious liberty, the Illinois Family Institute refuses to back down. In fact, we are repeatedly told in Scripture to “stand firm” (Eph. 6:11; 1 Peter 5:9; 1 Corinthians 15:59 & 16:13; Philippians 1:27 & 4:1).

Will you join us as we seek to stand firm against the cultural degeneration as we seek to educate and active Christians to defend biblical truth, embrace a complete pro-life worldview, defend religious freedom, and respect the U.S. Constitution?

Stand with us by supporting the one organization in Illinois that is willing to expose the deception of the Left and offer a Christian lens through which to view, understand and respond to the culture!

For twenty-six years now, IFI has worked to counter the Left’s aggressive efforts to advance oppressive and pernicious legislation at the Capitol and to exploit public schools for the purpose of transforming the hearts and minds of other people’s children. The fact that we are always vastly out-spent and out-manned doesn’t dissuade us from fighting for what is true and good. We are accustomed to battling against great odds and have been able to stop or forestall many of their plans.

While it may appear that good work bears little fruit in Illinois, appearances can be deceiving:

What cannot be measured is where Illinois would be without resistance.

What would Illinois look like without your Illinois Family Institute pushing back hard against the ideology and efforts of Leftists?

What would the state look like if IFI were not here to alert, equip, and encourage Illinoisans?

IFI battles tirelessly for children, families and religious liberty because we know that our responsibility is to our Creator and the good works He has for us. We know our duty is to stand boldly and unequivocally for the dignity and rights of every person from birth to natural death no matter how challenging that task may be. We seek to please God over fallen man and in so doing uphold human flourishing.



Before December 31st!

Every dollar up to \$100,000 will be matched, with our goal of raising a grand total of \$200,000!



Every year we face an onslaught from the Left: relentless attempts to maintain and fund the so-called “right” to destroy unborn lives; to erode conscience rights and religious liberty; to enlist government schools in the effort to normalize the “trans” ideology and homosexuality; to expand marijuana use and increase gambling locations; and to eliminate all public recognition of sex differences—which includes 005Adrafting our daughters into military service and sexually integrating all sex-specific private spaces and activities.

The stakes in 2019 will be higher than ever. We must be prepared to counter their message with our message of hope and truth! Will you stand with us in 2019 and double the impact of your donation today? Donate online today!

Please join us to make sure we can start next year strong by making a special tax-deductible gift *before December 31st*. **Every dollar up to \$100,000 will be matched, with our goal of raising a grand total of \$200,000!**

Next year, there will be tremendous opportunities for effecting positive cultural change. It is only through your support that we are able to work tirelessly to promote pro-family views.

With your prayers and support, IFI will continue to speak unashamedly and unequivocally about the fundamental truths concerning life, marriage, faith, freedom, decency and the natural family.

Please use the enclosed reply device, donate online, or call the IFI office at (708) 781-9328 to support our work. **Donations by mail must be postmarked on or before December 31st.**

Thank you for your support! We look forward to partnering with you in 2019 to stand courageously and winsomely for the values we share.

May God bless you during this Advent and Christmas season. ❄️





Election 2018 Recap

Written by David E. Smith

The blue wave that was predicted to sweep Democrats into office on the federal level wasn't as large and impressive as many were predicting. However, here in Illinois, we got soaked with a blue tsunami, giving Democrats complete control of state government. Not only does one party control the offices of Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Comptroller and Treasurer, but one party will have veto-proof super-majorities in both the Illinois State Senate and the Illinois State House in the next session (2019-2020).

The National Picture

U.S. Senate, Presidential Appointments and Nominations —

Voters in key states across the nation gave Republicans a secure majority in the U.S. Senate. This is important because the members of this legislative body have the responsibility to confirm or reject the President's nominees for Ambassador, all federal judges in the judicial branch and specified officers in cabinet-level departments, independent agencies, the military services, the Foreign Service and uniformed civilian services, as well as U.S. Attorneys and U.S. Marshals. Of course, this also includes nominations for justices to the U.S. Supreme Court.

We have good reason to believe that President Trump will continue to appoint constitutionalist, pro-life conservatives to the vacancies in government offices. This is especially good news for our federal courts where there are well over 350,000 cases heard each year, whereas the U.S. Supreme Court hears only about 80-100 cases per year.

Control of the U.S. House — Voters handed control of the U.S. House of Representatives to Democrats, giving them a slim majority.

This is concerning because a number of Democratic leaders have pledged to launch a series of investigations into the Trump administration over the next two years. Some of these leaders have openly called for the impeachment of the president. It may be a non-stop media circus.

Democrats needed 23 seats to take control of the U.S. House, and they picked up between 35 to 40 seats. Historically, the party of the president, more often than not, losses seats in midterm elections. In President Obama's first midterm election in 2010, Democrats lost 63 seats. In President Clinton's first midterm election in 1994, Democrats lost 54 seats. In President Reagan's first midterm, Republicans lost 26 seats.

U.S. House Losses — Here in Illinois, **Peter Roskam** (R-6th District) and **Randy Hultgren** (R-14th District), two conservative Congressmen, lost their bid for re-election to their Democratic challengers. That will change the make-up of the Illinois Congressional Delegation to include 13 Democrats and only 5 Republican federal lawmakers. Illinois will lose one or two Congressional seats in the next Census because so many Illinoisans are leaving the state.

Early Voting — which includes votes cast at early voting sites



and vote-by-mail ballots, continues to grow in popularity. In this 2018 General Election, well over 1 million Illinois voters took advantage of early voting, surpassing the 791,000 total early votes cast in the 2014 election.

Turnout — The Chicago Board of Election Commissioners announced an unofficial turnout rate of 55.6 percent, the highest midterm turnout in 32 years. In suburban Cook County, officials reported that more than 850,000 voters cast ballots — well above the roughly 696,000 ballots cast in the 2014 gubernatorial election.

Governor's Race — In this election there were a total of 4.4 million votes cast for the office of Governor. The vast majority coming from Cook County where 1.275 million ballots were cast.

DuPage County came in with 350k ballots cast

Lake County came in with 245k ballots cast

Will County came in with 243k ballots cast

Kane County came in with 166k ballots cast

McHenry County came in with 115k ballots cast

Cook County and the collar counties combined came in with 2.4 million ballots cast of the 4.4 million total. This is down from the 2016 Presidential General Election in which more than 5.5 million Illinoisans cast ballots, but it is up from other recent gubernatorial general elections:

2014 Total votes cast for Governor — 3.6 million

2010 Total votes cast for Governor — 3.4 million

Ralph Reed, who headed up the Christian Coalition during the 1990s claims that white evangelical turnout in states like Florida, Georgia, Indiana and Missouri helped pro-life Republicans edge out their pro-abortion Democrat challengers in highly competitive races.

According to Reed's polling, 86 percent of conservative Christians said they voted for Republican candidates for Congress, while 12 percent voted for Democrats. As 80 percent of white evangelical voters said they voted for Republicans in congressional races, about 76 percent of non-white evangelicals voted for Democrats for Congress.

The State Picture

During the 100th General Assembly Session, we had 63 Democrats and 51 Republicans in the Illinois House, and 37 Democrats and 22 Republicans in the Illinois Senate. In this new 101st session, preliminary results show there will be 75 Democrats and 43

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... Democrats will have little to stop them in advancing their liberal agenda.

Republicans in the Illinois House and 40 Democrats and 19 Republicans in the Illinois Senate.

To put that in perspective, a piece of legislation needs 60 votes to pass in the Illinois House and 30 votes to pass in the Illinois Senate. But passing with simple majorities, a governor can veto a bill, sending it back to both chambers. In order to bypass a governor's veto, a 3/5 majority vote is needed to override. After the 2018 general election, Democrats will have veto proof majorities in both chambers. A veto-proof majority in the House is 71 and in the Senate it is 35. Essentially, Democrats don't need one Republican to vote on their bills. And with a liberal Democratic governor in office, Democrats will have little to stop them in advancing their liberal agenda. ❄️

Gambling



According to the 2018 "Wagering in Illinois" report, video gambling in Illinois continues to grow from 26,873 slot machines in 2017 to 29,283 so far this year. While Illinois has 10 casinos in operation, state authorities equate the number of machines to having 24 casinos throughout the Land of Lincoln.

Professor **John W. Kindt** of the University of Illinois has repeatedly warned that "the ABCs of legalized gambling are addictions, bankruptcies and crime."

Wisely, voters in Palos Heights and Forest Park voted to ban video gambling within their communities. ❄️

What Will You Do About It?

Written by Kathy Valente

Are you aware that legalizing high potency marijuana is one of **JB Pritzker's** top priorities when he is sworn in as governor in January? Are you concerned about your children or grandchildren getting hooked on drugs or putting more drugged drivers on our roads?

There is no question about the negative impact legalization of high potency marijuana is having in other states. The social costs are staggering.

IFI has been working hard to make people aware of the dangers associated with high-potency marijuana. We have established a dedicated page to help Illinois residents understand this issue better, so they will be equipped to speak out before it is too late. We encourage you to visit this page on our web site, titled [Truth and Consequences of Marijuana RESOURCES](#).

We have organized this page by category to navigate readers easily through the links. The categories include the general effects on society; the health effects; mental health issues; marijuana-related deaths and suicides; impaired-driving accidents, including fatalities; marijuana's effects on children, adolescents and schools; marijuana's effects in the workplace; and marijuana's effects on law enforcement and the medical community.

Additionally, we want to urge you to look at a series of webinars created by **NoWeedIllinois.com**, a coalition of organizations that are opposed to the legalization of recreational marijuana.

These webinars offer troubling information that may surprise citizens. For example, Dr. **Karen Randall**, from the 3rd busiest emergency department in Colorado, testifies how they are seeing psychosis, acute cardiac issues, hyperemesis, and overdoses on high potency marijuana *daily*. Many of these people are homeless, having moved there for the legal weed, which is putting a



tremendous burden on hospital resources.

In another webinar, Dr. **Ken Finn** highlights marijuana's negative effects on the heart and lungs, the increase in driving fatalities and the increasing problems of youth use. He dispels the myth that marijuana can stop the opioid crisis. There are record opioid deaths since legalization in Colorado.

Perhaps the most shocking webinar features Dr. **Mourad Gabriel** who exposes an unfolding environmental disaster as many marijuana growers are poisoning the soil and water supplies and are killing California wildlife.

We cannot stress enough the importance of learning what may be coming our way in the very near future.

After you watch these videos, please pray that this push for legalization fails. Immediately thereafter, please ask your state rep and state senator to watch these videos: www.noweedillinois.com. Then once they do, **ask them to let you know how they will vote on high potency marijuana legalization.**

Don't believe the marijuana proponents. They have one goal — to make a ton of money.

The only way to stop this drug tsunami heading our way is if every person reading this newsletter relentlessly presses both their state rep and state senator to **OPPOSE** legalization.

We need a deafening hue and cry from citizens across the state. ❄️





Illinois Malaise

Written by David E. Smith

Every two years, all 118 seats in the Illinois House of Representatives come up for re-election. But in this recent election cycle you may be surprised to learn that [55 candidates ran unopposed](#) — 39 Democrats and 16 Republicans. That means 47 percent of state representatives were unchallenged in their quest to take office.

Looking at the other chamber of the General Assembly, 39 of the 59 Illinois Senate seats that were up for election this election cycle, [20 candidates were unopposed](#) — 14 Democrats and 6 Republicans. A majority of senate candidates seeking office, 51 percent, did not face an opponent.

The fact that so many candidates waltz into office unchallenged is alarming. This situation only serves to reinforce the notion of Illinois' infamous "bi-partisan combine" or the age-old, exclusionary "good ol' boy" network.

To not offer the citizens of all legislative districts a choice is un-American. With the majority of these unopposed candidates being pro-abortion liberals, pro-life citizens found themselves out in the cold on November 6 with no option to vote for a contender who represents their values. Faced with this unacceptable reality, I believe it is vital that every race in the Illinois General Assembly fields a pro-life/pro-family challenger — if for no other reason than to advance the pro-life narrative.

Hockey Hall of Fame center **Wayne Gretzky** wisely observed, "You miss 100 percent of the shots you don't take." Whether on the ice or in the more slippery arena of politics, *we can't succeed unless we try.*

If seventy-five individuals had been willing to run as competition in those uncontested races, the political makeup of the 101st General Assembly might be different.

In a letter to his son, Founding Father **John Adams** makes a powerful case for citizens of integrity to become involved in public service:

Public business, my son, must

always be done by somebody ... If wise men decline it, others will not; if honest men refuse it, others will not.

In my opinion, Adams' quote perfectly sums up why Illinois faces a perpetual fiscal and moral crisis. For far too long, the reins of power in Springfield have been held by countless unwise and dishonest political leaders. And why is this the lamentable case? It is because wise and honest candidates are not stepping up to serve.

This problem does not manifest itself only in the statehouse in Springfield,



but also in local elections for school and library boards, village or township trustees, and more. Candidates for these positions are gearing up right now to run in the April 2, 2019 Consolidated Election, but there is certainly room on the ballot for more candidates — most especially men and women who uphold Judeo-Christian values and stand for honesty, decency and common sense.

The adage "all politics is local" still rings true. Many of the decisions made at the local level affect our day-to-day lives much more than national issues. Real estate taxes, for example, are the result of decisions made by our local elected officials, and local school boards determine their own policies regarding restroom and locker room use by self-professed transgender students. It is imperative for the voting public to be actively involved in the political process at the municipal, township, and county level.

Perhaps the strongest argument for a full slate of candidates for every office is this: **without competition, public policy stagnates and leaders become complacent.** No matter how good

an incumbent may be in representing the constituents of his or her district, a challenger can bring new ideas, perspectives, and issues to the attention of the citizenry.

Competitive elections take a stand against the hackneyed protest "this is the way it's always been done" or the classic Chicago gem, "we don't want nobody that nobody sent." Competition also discourages the frequent practice of "handing down" an elected office to a relative or protégé.

Further underscoring the need for wise and honest people to challenge the status quo, statesman **Edmund Burke** said, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." When good people declare "enough" on de facto one-party rule, genuine competition ensues and the electorate as a whole is likely to become more engaged.

So, what do we need to do to achieve fully-contested elections in Illinois? I suggest that **every conservative voter in Illinois consider taking their political involvement (or cultural engagement) to the next level.**

Imagine the various groups of people at a football game. The largest group is the fans in the stands. They attend the game to cheer and support their team. This group represents the voting populace; they have an allegiance to their team/candidate/party and their vote reflects that commitment.

The next group of people is the support staff and leadership for the team — grounds crew, equipment managers, athletic trainers, team doctors, coaches, managers and ownership. All of these individuals do whatever it takes to make sure the team is prepared to meet their opponent and come away victorious. In a political context, the support staff for a candidate or party consists of campaign volunteers, precinct committeemen/women, accountants, analysts, campaign managers, and more. These people are focused on promoting the candidate and party by informing, motivating, and mobilizing voters.



We encourage you to move up to the next level of public service and run for an elected office.

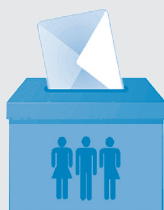
The final group is the athletes. In our comparison, these are the candidates who run for public office — the men and women in the political arena. Out of all three groups, these individuals are the ones who have the most “skin in the game.” They willingly make a significant sacrifice in order to earn the privilege of serving the public. Ideally, their service is born out of a desire to govern wisely, with the best interests of their constituents at heart, but sadly, in Illinois, many public “servants” run for office primarily with the intent of realizing personal gain.

What group best describes you? Are you sitting in the stands, watching the game, but only occasionally leaving your seat to cast your vote? **We need you to take the next step and move closer to the action!** Or are you already on the sidelines or in the front office, actively working to support and elect men and women of honor and integrity? Great! **We encourage you to move up to the next level of public service and run for an elected office.** Illinois needs more conservative voices in every area of government. Some of you who are reading this are athletes — **we thank you for your selfless service and dedication to the citizens of Illinois and the governing bodies of our communities and our state!**

Whatever your level of political involvement, Illinois Family Institute is glad you are aligned with us as we promote life and liberty, marriage and family in the Land of Lincoln! ❄️

Transgender Rights on the ballot

Approximately 70 percent of Massachusetts voters said “yes” on a referendum question to uphold a 2016 state law that created special rights for those who self-identify as transgender people, including their use of public bathrooms and locker rooms that align with their gender identity. ❄️



Dutch Man, 69, Starts Court Battle to “Identify” Legally as 49

Written by Laurie Higgins

Some years ago I asked why, in light of the premises of the “trans” superstition, a 50-year-old man with Age Identity Disorder (AID) who identifies as a 17-year-old, has had “medically necessary” face and knee lifts and chemical peels, takes Human Growth Hormone, has had hair transplants that he styles into a pompadour with tapered fade, and wears camo joggers and hoodies couldn’t get a spanking new birth certificate and driver’s license with his authentic and deeply felt age marker. And why shouldn’t such a man be able to enroll in high school and date high school “peers” who must treat him as the age he identifies as? After all, there are no rational reasons for compelling society to pretend that men are women that wouldn’t similarly compel society to pretend that old men are young whippersnappers.



Well, peeps, the Age of Unreason and Deep Feeling is fully upon us.

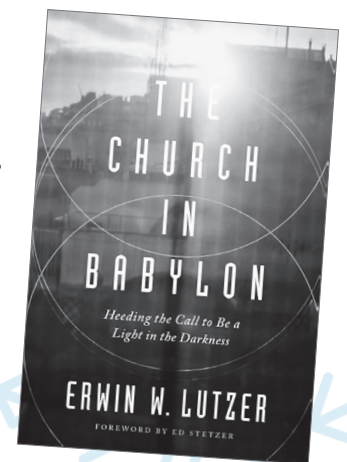
Emile Ratelband, a 69-year-old Dutch “positivity guru,” is petitioning a court in the Netherlands to have his birth certificate changed so that it identifies him as 49 years old. Ironically, the judge, who presides over a court in a country that allows “trans”-identifying citizens as young as 16 to obtain falsified birth certificates, asked Ratelband, “how his parents would feel about 20 years of Ratelband’s life being wiped off the records.” Hmmm. Does anyone ask teenage boys who masquerade as girls how their parents feel about having their sons erased?

Not to be deterred, Ratelband offered this frightening Nietzsche-esque response: “It is really a question of free will.” ❄️

Christian Life in Exile with Dr. Lutzer

This last election cycle in Illinois is an indictment of our culture’s attitudes and beliefs. More and more of our neighbors, friends and family members are rejecting Biblical principles and values. The challenges we face today, and will face in the future, supersede politics.

Join us to hear from Dr. **Erwin Lutzer** as he teaches from his latest book, “The Church in Babylon,” answering the question, “How do we live faithfully in a culture that perceives our light as darkness?” Dr. Lutzer will exhort us to stand firm while engaging our culture without compromise. ❄️



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2019

Jubilee Bible Church in Medinah, IL

7:00 PM

[Please stay tuned for future dates in Peoria and Collinsville]



Which “Trans” Reality Matters: Biological or Phantasmical

Written by Laurie Higgins

Those who claim to be “trans,” say that being “trans” is their “reality” and that everyone should respect that.

“Trans”-cultists fail to clarify, however, what kind of phenomena they are referring to when they talk about their “reality.” As with all Leftist ideas about sexuality, terms must be defined and used consistently. Reality can describe one’s subjective, internal feelings or desires, or it can denote objective, immutable material phenomena. The use of the term “reality” or “real” with respect to subjective, internal feelings simply means that the person claiming to experience a feeling or desire actually experiences it. His desires could be good or bad, morally neutral or reprobate, consonant with objective reality or delusional. Accepting that a “trans”-identifying person’s subjective internal desires are real is a morally neutral act. For example, no one should have any moral qualms about accepting Bruce Jenner’s claim that his reality—used in the sense of describing his subjective desires—is that he is female. Everyone can justifiably accept that he really *does* desire to be female or thinks he is.

But there are other phenomena that the word “reality” points to: that is, objective material things, like Jenner’s biological sex. Jenner’s desire to be a woman and his attempts to conceal that he’s a man do not make his bodily reality female. And not even commitments to respect—which means to hold something in esteem—require others to treat Jenner’s biological sex as if it didn’t exist or weren’t important. Quite the contrary, commitments to treating others with respect require that we do *not* deny reality.

When “trans”-identifying persons try to badger others into treating their “reality” as if it were real, they are not saying they want others merely to believe they want to be or think they are the sex they are not. No, they are saying they want all others to treat their objective biological reality as if it were not real. They are claiming that respect requires all others to treat their

phantasmical experience—that is to say, their rejection of biological reality—as if it were true.

When it comes to objective material reality, there is no “my” reality. There is only reality. Each person’s subjective desires—especially delusional or disordered desires—place no ethical obligations on others. That means, for example, that others have no ethical obligation to use incorrect or newly invented pronouns that reflect a set of arguable beliefs about disordered desires. Reality—the real, extant, material world—includes the sexual embodiment of all humans. It is neither compassionate nor good to treat delusional desires as if they reflect objective material reality. Knowing what is compassionate and good depends on knowing first what is real and true—as opposed to “truthy.” <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/truthiness>

The truth is no man can know that he feels like a woman, because no man can

When it comes to objective material reality, there is no “my” reality. There is only reality.

know what or how a woman feels. How could he, given that no man has been a woman? Men who identify as women can only truly say that they *assume* their feelings are the same kind of feelings women have or that their feelings are like those they *imagine* women feel.

Many “trans”-cultists claim to know they are the sex they aren’t based on their interest in activities associated with the opposite sex. But that contradicts “progressive” claims that there is nothing intrinsically male or female about, for example, toys or clothing styles. “Progressives” claim the gendered associations that exist are arbitrary and culturally imposed. If that’s the case, then interests say nothing about intrinsic



maleness or femaleness.

That’s not the only contradiction. “Trans”-cultists continue to look to hard science in a desperate quest to prove their metaphysical claim about their subjective, internal, non-material feelings. In the meantime, however, they put their faith in unreliable social science as their unreliable arbiter of ultimate truth.

And the culture suffers. Big Brother has outgrown his—I mean zir’s—already enormous britches and is foisting language rules on everyone, starting with government employees. Surgeons and sex hormone manufacturers are making bank on the surgical mutilation and chemical sterilization of healthy children. Boys, girls, men, and women are being forced to relinquish their privacy in spaces where they undress and engage in bodily functions. The government has been enjoined to participate in fraud by providing falsified birth certificates and driver’s licenses to facilitate sex-“passing.” Women’s sports at all levels are being ruined. Parents are concealing the sex of their children—even from the children themselves. Adults are saying absurd things like “Women can have penises” and “Men can ‘chest-feed’ babies.” Children are being re-educated into believing that subjective, internal feelings about femaleness and maleness supersedes in value and relevance biological sex, including in private spaces. The eradication of *all* public recognition of sexual differentiation is almost here.

Our ignorance of the incoherence and implications of the “trans” ideology along with our cowardice has already started us slip-sliding away, down that proverbial slicked up slope. And who are being hurt the most? Children as usual. And still we say nothing. ❄️



Take heart! **BE STRONG** in the LORD

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

(continued from page 1)

it consumes the entire world. This revolution is better described as a rebellion because it is a conscious, deliberate rejection of God and His Word. Do not be naive or complacent! The rebellion has already taken captive the hearts and minds of some of our family members, friends, and neighbors, and its “deceive and destroy” mission is far from over. If we are foolish enough to think we are perfect, obedient servants of Almighty God and therefore, immune from rebellious attitudes, thoughts, and actions, we are, at the least, intellectually dishonest and, at worst, utterly heretical.

Dr. Del Tackett calls the armed confrontation between Christians and Satan the “cosmic battle” — a battle of Christ-followers who uphold God’s truth versus the father of lies and his forces of evil. Satan knows he has been defeated, but he is a very bitter, sore loser and he wants to exact maximum damage as he goes down in flames.

Revelation 12:17 says that Satan, after he was expelled from heaven, was greatly enraged that he could not thwart God’s plan of salvation:

So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

Make no mistake — Satan is at open war with God, and his main target is mankind, God’s crown jewel of creation. His command to be fruitful and multiply was given in order to fill the earth with images of Himself because He desires and deserves an earth filled with worshippers.

Conversely, Satan is feverishly working overtime to bring death, destruction, disease, disorder, distractions, delusions, and disabilities in an attempt to limit and eliminate the number of God-worshippers on earth. The second part of verse 17 makes it clear — **Satan is targeting those “who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.”**

Our enemy is opposed to Kingdom expansion. He does not want the Gospel to spread throughout the world or for God’s will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. Satan does not want us to grow in sanctification and become strong, effective warriors; he is overjoyed when new believers remain immature, fruitless, and sidelined from the battlefield. One of Satan’s primary objectives is to entice followers of Jesus to pursue vain and temporal goals so we will be distracted and indifferent to the battle that wages around us.

Spiritual warfare has always existed, but I sincerely believe we have entered a time of heightened spiritual warfare — a time that will profoundly test the faith of man. Furthermore, I believe that God is allowing Satan to sift His church and, at the same time, He is looking for those whose hearts are faithful to Him.

Unsurprisingly, a good portion of spiritual warfare in our nation and the world today is waged on multiple levels, both culturally and politically. I believe this battle is exacerbated and

accelerated by ignorance of the Word of God. Paul’s warning in 2 Timothy 4:3-4 remains as true in 2018 as when he wrote his epistle:

For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths.

Brothers and sisters, that time is NOW. A recent Barna study reveals that only 14% of American adults use the Bible daily, while 13% use it several times a week, 8% once a week, 6% about once a month, and 8% only three to four times a year. Additionally, the study reports that “Bible use has remained relatively consistent since 2011.” That is a diplomatic way of saying that Bible use among American adults is flat or stagnant — there has been no appreciable growth.

The Bible declares that the Word of God is our spiritual sword (Eph. 6:17) and the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword (Heb. 4:12). Yet, how can we fight a spiritual battle without a sword? How do we stand firm against the relentless schemes of the devil if we are unarmed? Sadly, how can some of us justify possessing the most powerful weapon in the world, but never unsheathing it? Simply put, we cannot. Without the sword we are defenseless; we will be in constant retreat, beaten down, or defeated. In order to take up the sword and fight, we must know the Word of God and handle it rightly!

Scripture fittingly calls Satan the father of lies (John 8:44) because he actively attacks faith (1 Thess. 3:5; 2 Cor. 11:3), binds the minds of unbelievers (2 Cor. 4:4), exploits a lack of understanding (Matt. 13:19), misuses Scripture (Matt. 4:6), and hinders the spread of the Gospel (1 Thess. 2:18).

What foolhardy person would dare to come out against the father of lies alone and unarmed? We would be foolish indeed if we thought we could successfully engage Satan in battle without a solid knowledge of the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Reflect once more on Paul’s words as he urges us to rely on God’s power:

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. ~ Ephesians 6:10-11

The battle rages around us, but retreat and defeat are unacceptable options. We must engage the enemy, clad in the full armor of God.

Take heart! “Be strong in the LORD and in HIS mighty power!” ❄️





For the Love of Marriage

Written by Jonathan Lewis

Marriage is increasingly marginalized in our culture. It's time we stand up and celebrate the wonderful gift it is.

The average age for first marriages in the U.S. keeps going up. The latest data I've seen puts the current age at 29 for men and 27 for women. In 1990, it was 26 for men and 23 for women. Rewind a few more decades to 1960, and it was 22 for men and 20 for women.

The common reasons given for this trend are that young adults are waiting to marry until they complete their education and gain some financial stability. In the aftermath of the Great Recession, the explanation goes, all of that has been taking longer.

Maybe so. But I can't help wondering if there are other issues at play as well. With the stigma against premarital sex all but gone, there's no perceived need for the current generation to get married in order to satisfy their sexual desires. And with the rise of cohabitation, there's no need for an expensive wedding or longer-term commitment in order to experience some version of life with a partner.

On top of this, we've witnessed the decline of a Biblical worldview in our culture for many years. The Bible teaches the inherent goodness of marriage. Is it possible that our rejection of the Bible has contributed to marriage (and starting a family) slipping down the list of priorities in our culture?

Let's be clear: the Bible doesn't command—or even recommend—a certain age for marriage. But the continuing trend of delaying marriage strikes me as problematic, and perhaps not a coincidence that it's happening at the same time that our culture is becoming increasingly secularized.

I understand that education takes time. I also understand that a certain level of financial readiness is wise before marriage. And I also understand that God's timing is perfect, and sometimes He doesn't bring the "right one" to us until later than we might have expected. But with all that said, I can't help but think that the overall trend in our culture toward later marriage is a symptom of a declining

Biblical worldview in which marriage and childbearing is losing significance.

With all that in mind—and as a thirty-something millennial who has been happily married for seven and a half years—I'd like to take a few moments to celebrate the blessing of marriage.

The Goodness of Marriage

As I said a moment ago, the Bible teaches the inherent goodness of marriage. Proverbs 18:22 tells us that "He who finds a wife finds what is good . . ."



Marriage was created by God as the final culmination of His work during creation week. I once heard someone point out that God repeatedly observed the goodness of all He had made—until He was nearly finished with His work. Then, seeing Adam alone, He said "*It is not good . . .*" Just when God seemed to be at the very pinnacle of His efforts—the creation of man—He says that something isn't good. Remarkable! If that doesn't give us a glimpse of the ultimate and fundamental goodness of marriage, nothing will.

Turning back to Proverbs, we find God (through Solomon) instructing men to "rejoice with the wife of your youth." Marriage was designed by God to be a source of joy, fulfillment, and blessing.

The long-persistent popular culture representation of marriage as a sure way to misery isn't meant to be true.

God's Purposes for Marriage

Besides the fact that a godly marriage is a blessing to both husband and wife, the Bible teaches multiple purposes for marriage. Let's take a look at them.

Companionship: As we noted earlier, God Himself said it's not good for man to be alone. While companionship undoubtedly wasn't the only factor God was thinking about, I'm sure it was on His mind. "Two are better than one," the Bible tells us in Ecclesiastes 4:9. Having someone to share life with is far more satisfying and emotionally fulfilling than being alone.

Godly Children: Marriage is also intended to produce another generation of godly children. This is stated clearly and forcefully in Malachi 2:15 where we're told that the purpose of marriage is to produce godly offspring. It's simple, but true: of the three institutions God created (family, government, and church) only the family has the capability of creating new little people. Pretty amazing, right? Of course, along with that power of creation comes the responsibility to teach and train.

Antidote for Temptation: Paul suggests in 1 Corinthians 7:9 that part of the reason for marriage is to avoid sexual temptation. This brings up an interesting point worth considering. As we noted at the start of this article, the average age for first marriage in the U.S. has been increasing. Yet over time, the average age for puberty has been decreasing. Put these trends together and young people are now facing sexual pressures—without the legitimate outlet of marriage—for far longer than in the past. That's not an excuse for moral failure or lack of personal responsibility, but it's still true that God gave us marriage as a natural, appropriate, and righteous outlet for the sexual appetites He also gave us. Unfortunately, the current trends of our

(continued on page 11)



culture put our young people in a more susceptible position for a much longer period of time compared to just a few generations ago.

The truth is, marriage is the only valid context for men and women to experience the pleasure and physical release of sexual intimacy. God created us as physical beings, and as such, we have physical appetites that we can choose to either legitimately fulfill or sinfully abuse. The good news is that God gave us a wonderful gift in marriage that allows us to experience the joy of intimacy in a context He not only approves but that He created.

An Illustration of Christ and the Church: Lastly, marriage is a picture of Christ and the church. When a husband and wife are living in harmony and unity as God intends, their relationship is a living illustration of the love, self-sacrifice, and submission that exists between Christ

.....
...to all you twenty-somethings out there wondering if it's really worth it, I say simply yes, it is. Absolutely yes.
.....

and His bride. We're not perfect and will never be a perfect picture, but it's an ideal to pursue as we seek to honor God through our marriages.

As I said earlier, I'm a thirty-something millennial who has been happily married for seven and a half years. My wife has been an incredible blessing to me and I can't imagine my life without her (and I hope I don't flatter myself too much to say that the reverse is true as well!).

In an age when marriage is being delayed, avoided, and dishonored, I'd like to stand up and be counted among those who say that marriage is emphatically wonderful. And to all you twenty-somethings out there wondering if it's really worth it, I say simply yes, it is. Absolutely yes. ❄️

Political Trivia



- ✓ Governor-elect **J.B. Pritzker** will become America's wealthiest politician in the United States. He is ranked 251st on the Forbes richest Americans list, worth an estimated \$3.2 billion. (Donald Trump is listed at 258).
- ✓ Various news sources have reported that Pritzker donated more than \$161 million of his fortune to his crusade for governor (\$175 million total campaign fund).
- ✓ Outgoing Gov. **Bruce Rauner** donated \$58 million of his fortune to his campaign (\$80 million total campaign fund.)
- ✓ According to the *Daily Herald*, Pritzker donated over \$13.2 million to different political campaigns and organizations over the past two years.
- ✓ Rauner donated more than \$14.5 million to Republican interests in Illinois over the past two years. ❄️

Married Families Play a Role in Public Safety *Written by Micah Clark*

The Institute for Family Studies has an interesting article called *The Wealth of Nations Begins at Home* detailing several areas in which married two-parent families play a positive role in societies around the globe. One of the areas where economics professor **Joseph Price**, and **W. Bradford Wilcox** found this impact was in the area of public safety.



They found that marriage and stable families help to reduce crime in two primary ways: **1)** by discouraging men's involvement in criminal activities and **2)** by reducing children's risk of involvement in delinquency and crime as adolescents and young adults. They point to neighborhood-level data from the U.S. and Canada, which indicates an association between more married families in a community and less crime.

But what about violent crime at the global level? Using data from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime they found a strong negative association between the proportion of children raised in two-parent families and homicide rates in 83 countries, including countries in Africa, North and South America, Europe, and Asia. They found that the average homicide rate is more than four times larger in countries in the bottom third in rates of children living with two parents compared to countries in the top third with higher traditional family rates. ❄️

"Our greatest fear should not be of failure but of succeeding at things in life that don't really matter."

Francis Chan

IllinoisFamily.org @ProFamilyFI

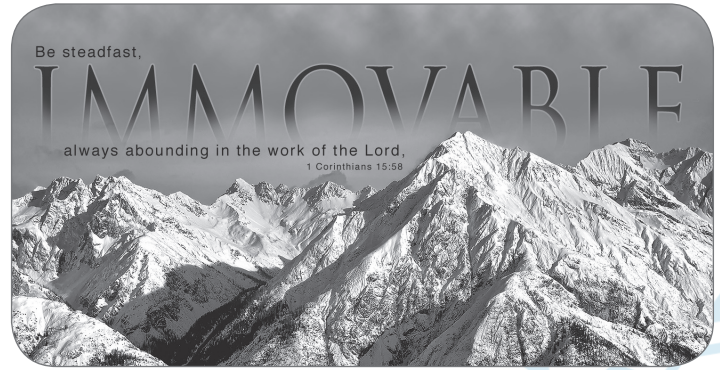


Prayer Requests . . .

In the wake of the recent election in Illinois, it is easy to feel discouraged and frustrated. Evil ideas and policies continue to advance in our state, and enemies of God continue to flourish, gaining political power. At the same time, too many Christians are distracted by vain pursuits and/or are indifferent to our cultural drift away from God.

While we certainly would like to realize political victories, our priority as followers of Jesus Christ is to be faithful to His calling in our families, churches and communities. Of course, this includes remaining diligent in political matters despite the disintegration of Judeo-Christian thinking. Stewardship of the gift of self-government cannot be disregarded.

The Apostle Paul tells us to “be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is



not in vain in the Lord.” (1 Cor. 15:58) In other words don’t give up (and don’t move! ☺)

We have lots of work to do, including encouraging and strengthening our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. This begins by being faithful and fervent in prayer:

Please Pray...

...for the Protection of Life

- Pray that all Illinois citizens would understand the implications of the belief that life begins at conception — even in the terrible circumstances of rape or incest.
- Pray that Illinois citizens would not buy the lies of “Death with Dignity” organizations who want to legalize physician assisted suicide in every state in the nation.

...for the Sanctity of Marriage

- Pray that young people would choose to get married early in life and not delay starting families. Pray that churches and pastors would strive to uphold God’s purpose and definition for marriage.
- Pray that Christian families would counter worldly messages about sex and instead emphasize abstinence until marriage as the only biblical option.

...for Illinois Families

- Pray that God would awaken more Christian families to the importance of family worship in their homes. Pray that fathers would faithfully spend time with their family — reading, teaching and singing God’s Word. Pray that we are diligent in passing on a godly heritage and biblical worldview to the next generation.

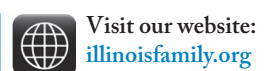
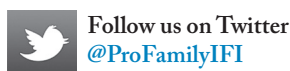
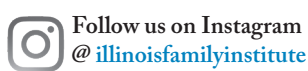
- Pray that recreational marijuana legislation will fail in Springfield. Pray that lawmakers would realize that passing such a bill will lower perceived risk and increase marijuana use among adolescents and teens creating more addicts and government dependents.

...for Illinois Family Institute

- Pray that Illinois citizens would grasp the magnitude of God’s plan and the importance of building a solid biblical worldview in their families and in our churches.
- Pray for strength, wisdom, and integrity for the IFI staff and board in their mission to bring a biblical perspective to public policy. ✨

*“Then
you will know
the truth,
and the truth
will set you free.”*
~ John 8:32

Stay up-to-speed on news impacting the family



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