



# ILLINOIS Family Institute

Promoting marriage, family, life & liberty in the Land of Lincoln

Newsletter | September 2016

**VOTE**  
Your Values  
on **November 8<sup>th</sup>**



**PRO LIFE.  
PRO MARRIAGE.  
PRO FAMILY.**

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

If you do an internet search on the phrase “finding your purpose,” Google identifies approximately 264,000,000 websites, books, blogs, op-ed pieces, podcasts, academic papers, etc. that might help in the quest to determine what one’s purpose is in life. Without any internet help, I can tell you that the Westminster Shorter Catechism tackles this age-old topic with its very first question:

**Q.** What is the chief end of man?

**A.** Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.

The Baltimore Catechism answers the same question in this way:

**A.** God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in heaven.

It really is that simple. **God made us, and our purpose is to glorify Him by loving and serving Him on earth and then delighting in His presence for eternity in heaven.**

It should come as no surprise that our culture presents a competing purpose — in its opinion a better purpose — to find “happiness.” Today’s culture would like to convince us that its worldly-wise ways are best, but the narcissistic, hedonistic pursuit of happiness is ultimately a deeply unsatisfying alternative to the purpose God has designed for mankind.

Thousands of years ago, a very wise man wandered away from a life of substance and purpose to embrace the siren call of a worldly culture. He plunged into an existence defined by materialism, sensuality, even idolatry. As he gave himself over to indulging his every desire, he began to realize that his very life was evaporating into insignificance. Nearing the end of his days, the man repented of his folly and wrote a philosophical book which exposed the futility of the secular mind and

*Glorify*  
God



worldview.

Of course I am describing King Solomon and the book of Ecclesiastes. In this book of wisdom, Solomon chronicles his search for happiness. From sobriety to drunkenness, the worship of God to the worship of idols, the heights of philosophy to the depths of depravity, Solomon experienced all that the world had to offer. So what was his assessment of his exhaustive pursuit? “All is **vanity**” (Eccles.1:2.)

In the end, Solomon discovered that his striving was vanity — worthless, hollow, fruitless. The wisest man in the world concluded that his search had been an utter waste: all of his strength exerted for nothing, all of his wealth squandered for zilch, all of his mental energy spent pointlessly, all of his spiritual energy expended to no purpose.

Ecclesiastes is the account of Solomon’s life of empty endeavors. Yet, through this king and his sad story, **God teaches us that life apart from Him is vain**, hollow and worthless, **without purpose**. According to the book, unbelievers who search for wisdom might as well be chasing after the wind (Eccles. 1:14, 17), but Christian readers of Ecclesiastes, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, will discern that there are but two options: a life of hopelessness or the confident hope of a life entrusted to God. No hope or eternal hope — the choice seems obvious!

*continued inside...*

## 2 New features!



1

IFI is pleased to announce a new feature we are calling “Laurie’s Chinwags.” In light of changes in the way many Americans prefer to access information, we’re adding podcasts to our articles. Podcasts will accompany both our new articles as well as previous articles that are of particular importance and relevance. As we add podcasts to previous articles, we will republish them for our subscribers’ convenience.

We hope this new feature will serve the needs and desires of IFI subscribers, and we would appreciate any constructive feedback, ContactUs@illinoisfamily.org, [illinoisfamily.org/podcast](http://illinoisfamily.org/podcast). ★



2

**Illinois Family Spotlight** is a weekly podcast that provides analysis of and commentary on political and cultural events and issues.

The Illinois Family Spotlight podcast will highlight a specific cultural or political issue of which our listeners should be aware. Our discussions will be informed by a biblical worldview that will help expose the lies and distortions promulgated within secular culture. We will be interviewing policy experts and scholars whose knowledge and insights will help listeners form a wiser worldview.

Support for this program comes from your generous donations. You can learn more about our work at our website: [ifaction.org/podcast](http://ifaction.org/podcast). ★

## Fund me!



Communicating the conservative message to the masses, let alone the Christian Community, is a constant frustration. Reaching more of the uninformed and misinformed with facts is vital if we hope to see political or policy reform.

We would love to have the ability to place pro-family messages on billboards (traditional or digital) across the state of Illinois proclaiming politically incorrect truths. Please join the fight! ★

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**Take no part** in the unfruitful works of darkness, **but instead expose them.**

— Ephesians 5:11

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

Knowing that life lived apart from God is vanity, **how then should we live and to what purpose?** The Word of God instructs us to “number our days” (Ps. 90:12), “to work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men” (Col. 3:23), and to “lay up treasures in heaven” (Matt. 6:19-21). If we are not consumed with the pursuit of material things that will burn up at the end of this age, **shouldn’t we be laser-focused on doing the Lord’s work, laboring for what will last, and seeking His will in our every endeavor?**

Of course we should! We ought to be the most intentional and diligent people on the face of the earth, purposefully and persistently seeking God in everything we set out to do, always aware that we are ambassadors of His Kingdom. But do our lives and our priorities reflect this ideal? Do we truly strive to glorify God in every aspect of

our lives?

With ever-increasing intensity, our culture is attempting to force Christians to adopt its distorted and depraved worldview regarding marriage, family, abortion, sexuality, gender identity, religion, and absolute truth. Don’t fall for the lies or succumb to the pressure! We must jettison anything that distracts, degrades, and deters us from glorifying God, and instead wisely double down on what matters — what we know is true and what we know has eternal value.

In the end, unlike those of our culture, **our efforts will not be in vain.** When we refuse to run after empty, hollow, worthless endeavors (with the help of the Holy Spirit), we will leave futility and vanity behind and **find genuine happiness in fulfilling our chief purpose — to love, serve, and glorify God as we do His will.** ★

## SAVE THE DATE!

Third Annual  
**WORLDVIEW CONFERENCE**  
Biblical Training for Today’s Culture

Featuring  
**DR. FRANK  
TUREK**



**Saturday, February 18, 2017**

Village Church of Barrington

10:00 AM – 3:30 PM

For more information,  
visit [www.illinoisfamily.org](http://www.illinoisfamily.org)  
or call 708-781-9328

# “ VidAngel: Be Entertained Without Affronts to Your Worldview ”

By Tami Jackson

**In this day and age American culture is a virtual assault on the Christian/biblical worldview: movies, music, and television serving up a tsunami of offensive themes and language.**

Even many films with redeeming storylines push the language envelope. Think American Sniper or Forrest Gump: both tremendous movies with some blue language and/or nudity. Yet their themes—patriotism, heroism, self-sacrifice, loyalty, courage—are uplifting and intrinsically good.

We're instructed in Philippians:

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Phil. 4:8

Adherence to the Apostle Paul's admonitions has become pretty tricky in post-Christian America. Parents who are mindful to safeguard the media consumption of their children run a virtual gauntlet, filtering out objectionable material at breakneck pace.

It seems moms and dads must constantly discern between entertainment offerings which might support or attack their biblical worldview. And even the adult who wants uplifting, non-compromising entertainment may have a struggle finding films.

## VidAngel

Now, to the rescue, an ingenious digital developer has created VidAngel (VidAngel.com).

VidAngel is purely inspired, allowing the consumers to choose the filters they prefer. The service offers a wide range of movies to buy. At that level, it is indistinguishable from other services such as Netflix or Amazon.

But VidAngel departs from the standard movie rental/purchase format with their filters and their buy-back policy/feature.

Here's the drill. You purchase a movie (\$20) from VidAngel, stream it with your personal filters on your preferred device. You may choose exact words to delete; you may choose to delete nudity. YOU control what is filtered so that what remains is entertainment which is not at odds with your worldview and values.

Once you've watched the movie, VidAngel will buy it back within 24 hours for 18 movie credits, leaving you less than a \$2 charge for the rental. Those refunded movie credits can be used to pay for your next movie.

<https://youtu.be/wvcF4x1d0xo>

**Brilliant. Great movies your way.**

Thankfully, more and more gifted people of faith—artists, musicians, screenwriters, directors, actors, producers—

are producing quality movies. Yet the preponderance of films are still offered up by Hollywood, and Hollywood separated from moral moorings decades ago.

Sure, there are MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America) film ratings: G (General), PG (Parental Guidance Suggested), PG-13 (Parents Strongly Cautioned - Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13), and R (Restricted - Under 17 - requires accompanying parent or adult guardian). But with the progression of the years, those ratings have become a general guideline as the movie creators' morés further depart from a once-moral foundation.

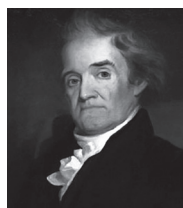
VidAngel offers a customizable and affordable solution.

Thanks to VidAngel, Christians and others seeking uplifting and inoffensive movies have an option that will allow us to watch “whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely.”

Isn't innovation married to virtue a wonderful thing? ★

*Tami Jackson is Executive Editor of BarbWire. Tami is an Evangelical Christian and Second Amendment aficionado. She is also editor of SavingOurFuture.com, Editor-in-Chief/Owner of RightVoiceMedia.com, and Content/Media/Marketing for Robar Guns.*

“ **In selecting men for office, let principle be your guide.** Regard not the particular sect or denomination of the candidate — look to his character. . . . When a citizen gives his suffrage to a man of known immorality he abuses his trust; he sacrifices not only his own interest, but that of his neighbor, he betrays the interest of his country.



— Noah Webster

### Pot & Psychosis

**Cannabis use triples psychosis risk and high potency strains are responsible for 24% of new psychotic mental illness cases.**

24%

(The Lancet 2-18-15)

# Prayer Requests . . .

*“These are the times that try men’s souls.”* — Thomas Paine

**E**very election cycle seems to dub itself, “the most important election of our lifetime.” Well, if we really believe that — or even tend to think it is in the top three, we would do well to find a quiet place to get on our knees and beseech the Lord’s mercy and pray fervently for our state and nation.

Psalm 85 is a good template. In it, the Psalmist asks God to revive the land again and show the people mercy. But the prayer also is a prayer for repentance and righteousness.

Please commit to praying for our state and nation as we head toward the November 8th General Election. Pray that American Christians will stand with – and vote for – men and women who share their values and want to protect the foundational truths behind our nation, truths that show our trust is in God, not ourselves. ★



## Please Pray...

### ...for State General Assembly Elections:

- Pray that God-fearing candidates are elected and serve honorably. This legislative body can have a great impact on religious liberty, families and freedom throughout the state.

### ...for County Elections:

- Pray for wisdom and guidance for county elections throughout the state and that voters would take the time to learn about their choices and vote wisely. Pray for leaders who will make decisions in the best interest of the people and not themselves.

### ...for Current Leaders:

- Pray for our current leaders, both local and national. Pray for their safety, the wellbeing of their families, but most of all, pray for their salvation. Pray for the governor, treasurer, school leaders, as well as President Obama, the U.S. Supreme Court justices, and other judges.

### ...for Military/Police/Fire/Emergency services:

- Pray for our military and first responders. Pray for their safety in these turbulent times and for good judgment as they serve our communities and our country. Thank God for them, their tremendous sacrifice each day, and the sacrifices of their families.

### ...for Religious Freedom:

- Pray for the freedom in Illinois and throughout the country to worship, live, and work according to one’s deeply held religious beliefs. Pray for courage for those who are under pressure to amend their sermons, work ethic, or other practices to comply with cultural whims. Pray that laws, ordinances, and policies will protect religious freedom on all levels of government.

### ...for Christian Unity:

- Pray that the witness of Christ in the public square would be pure and untarnished.

### ...for the Protection of Life:

- Pray that Christians would embrace the sanctity of life as their own personal mission and speak out in the public square against the tragedy of abortion. ★

“*Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people both now and forevermore.*”

— Psalm 125:1-2

## Stay up-to-speed on news impacting the family



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