



NEWS & NOTES

■ PayPal withdrew plans to build a new global operations center in Charlotte that would have employed 400 people in the wake of the recently passed state Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act. Franklin Graham called out the hypocrisy of PayPal that operates in five countries with laws against homosexuality including the death penalty. The Obama administration has threatened to withhold federal funds for North Carolina schools, highways, and housing programs if the law is not repealed. Federal agencies have used the threat of lost money to pressure a handful of municipal governments in California and Illinois to change their policies and allow transgender students to use the restrooms of the gender they identify with. Gov. McCrory responded by saying, “Some have called our state an embarrassment. The real embarrassment is politicians not publicly respecting each oth-

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The creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. — Rom. 8:19 Vol. 22, Number 14

ers’ position on complex issues.” North Carolina Attorney General Roy Cooper announced he won’t defend the state in court. New York and Washington State governors have banned all travel to North Carolina by state employees. *FACT*, 4/8; *World*, 4/4; *NY Times*, 4/1

■ Tennessee House Bill 1840 protecting the religious liberty rights of professional counselors passed the House Wednesday 68-22. Under current state regulations, a counselor or therapist is potentially subject to discipline for referring a client whose goals and desired outcomes conflict with a counselor’s religious beliefs, even if the counselor lacks the competence to treat such a patient. Under the bill, no counselor or therapist shall be required to serve a client as to goals, outcomes, or behaviors that conflict with a sincerely held religious belief of the counselor, provided an appropriate referral is made. The bill will soon be on Gov. Haslam’s desk. Meanwhile Tennessee’s “Bathroom bill,” HB 2414, passed the House Education Administration and Planning Committee Wednesday with a vote of 8-4 and is headed to both the House and Senate Finance Committees.

FACT, 4/8

■ Against intense opposition, Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant signed the Protecting Freedom of Conscience from Government Discrimination Act, which prohibits state

and local governments from taking discriminatory action against people and organizations for the sincerely held religious belief that marriage is between one man and one woman, that sex is properly reserved for marriage, or that male and female refers to an individual’s biological sex. Advocates contend the law doesn’t force the religious to act against their principles, while critics say H.B. 1523 gives Mississippi faithful legal license to practice discrimination. The week before week, Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal vetoed reject a similar bill. Religious freedom bills similar to Mississippi’s were passed by lawmakers in Indiana and Arkansas a year ago. Met with substantial criticism upon the bills’ passage, the leaders of both states acted quickly to try and stem the avalanche of opposition. Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson changed his state’s bill to reflect the federal law on religious freedoms — and Indiana Gov. Mike Pence allowed for revisions out of concerns of what was best for his state.

FACT, 4/8

■ Parents at a middle school outside San Francisco are fighting against the LGBT’s planned “acceptance week” scheduled for Monday that is designed to teach their middle school students about the homosexual agenda. The concern as stated in the petition is that the curriculum “appears to indoctrinate our children, un-

dermine parental guidance and humiliate those with religious, cultural and personal convictions not in agreement or acceptance with the promotional campaign.” Parental concern has led to some minor revisions to the lesson plans and the ability for students to opt out, but these angry parents are prepared to support a walk out next week if demands aren’t met.

FACT, 4/8

■ Oral arguments began in federal court on Tuesday in the lawsuit brought by Planned Parenthood against the people of Tennessee. In their suit, pro-abortion activists claimed that the state’s method of counting votes on Amendment 1 unfairly favored supporters of the amendment. *FACT*, 4/8

■ Planned Parenthood and the ACLU are suing the state of Indiana over the state’s newly-signed law that bans abortions sought due to gender and genetic defects. The law also mandates that aborted babies must be either buried or cremated and cannot merely be disposed of, another aspect of the law that Planned Parenthood and the ACLU take issue with, stating that this requirement is not imposed in the case of other medical waste or operations. *Christian Headlines*, 4/8

■ California’s attorney general who commissioned the raid on the home of anti-abortion activist and undercover journalist David Daleiden is being criticized for a

conflict of interest in seeking to convict Daleiden. Kamala Harris is running for U.S. Senate, and her campaign website has a link to a petition in support of Planned Parenthood. Daleiden, who founded the Center for Medical Progress, said that the agents had “seized all video footage showing Planned Parenthood’s criminal trade in aborted baby parts, in addition to my personal information.”

Christian Headlines, 4/8

■ Since 2008, government-issued citizenship tests required applicants to circle “freedom of worship” to correctly answer a question about what rights Americans have under the First Amendment [which does not even mention “worship”]. Last year, a senator disputed the wording of that answer, noting Americans actually have “freedom of religion”—a discrepancy the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agreed this week should be fixed. “The ‘freedom of religion’ language reflects our

right to live a life of faith at all times, while the ‘freedom of worship’ reflects a right simply confined to a particular space and location,” explained Sen. James Lankford, R-Okla. The DHS, changed “religion” to “worship” eight years ago to be more “inclusive” on its naturalization test study materials. *World*, 4/8

■ An Indiana state trooper has been fired for evangelizing while on the job, according to Fox59 News. Senior State Trooper Brian L. Hamilton, 40, allegedly used a traffic stop to share his faith with a citizen. The complaint was from a woman that Hamilton had issued a warning for speeding and afterward asked her what church she attended and whether she was saved. The ACLU filed a claim her behalf, leading to the officer’s firing.

Christian Headlines, 4/8

■ A member on the board of the National Association of Evangelicals is hoping to repeat what Promise Keepers did almost two decades ago

The chief dangers of the 20th Century will be religion without the Holy Spirit, Christianity without Christ, forgiveness without repentance, salvation without regeneration, politics without God, and Heaven without hell.”

— WILLIAM BOOTH

Millions of people in 118 countries are helped by The Salvation Army, founded by William Booth, who was born April 10, 1829. He and his wife Catherine were moved to minister to the poor, drunk, outcast and wretched on the dirty and dangerous streets of London’s East End slums. Together they fought to end sex-trafficking and child prostitution in England. In 1884, they established the first rescue home for women and girls escaping sex trafficking which grew in 30 years to 117 homes around the world. In 1880, The Salvation Army opened work in the United States, followed by missions in over 100 countries.

— bring a massive crowd to the National Mall this July. Nick Hall says he feels the country is too divided, needs to come together in faith, and he is seeking both men and women for the “Together 2016” event on July 16, 2016. RNS, 4/8

■ A couple in Greenville, N.C., are opening the first safe house in the U.S. for sex trafficked boys. According to one study, as many as 50 percent of sexually exploited minors are males and yet there are few resources for them, including residential treatment facilities. Local county residents have resisted the home and erected a banner that read, “No sex trafficking lodge here.” Other signs posted by opponents littered main roads. In spite of opposition and other obstacles, the Anchor House is set to open in late 2016. World, 4/8

■ Evangelical Christian inspiration and apologetics are filling theater seats, with two films in the top five for box office last weekend. “God’s Not Dead 2” and “Miracles from Heaven” came in fourth and fifth, earning \$60 million and \$46.8 million, respectively, so far. USA Today, 4/5

■ The number of children adopted internationally by

Americans fell 12 percent last year to the lowest number since 1981, according to new U.S. State Department figures. Americans adopted 5,648 international children during fiscal year 2015, down from an all-time high of 22,884 in 2004. China accounted for almost half of the children adopted in 2015. Adoption advocates say the drop is the result of a web of factors, including both internal U.S. policies and external factors that have closed or slowed adoptions in other countries. In 2008, the U.S. adopted the Hague Convention, an international agreement on standards and practices for intercountry adoption. The convention’s goal is to establish guidelines that prevent the abduction, sale, or trafficking of children. World, 4/8

■ During the Southern Baptist Convention’s Great Commission Summit, a three day event which was held from March 29-31, leaders urged the American Christian community to welcome refugees because God welcomes those who are outcast. “It is a sure sign of American self-centeredness that we would take the suffering of millions of people and turn it into an issue that is all about us,” said David Platt, president of the SBC’s Interna-

tional Mission Board. Other leaders at the summit noted that many Christian Americans’ approach to the refugee crisis is “far more American than it is biblical.” Christian Headlines, 4/7

■ After 10 months of urban conflict in Turkey’s war-torn southeast, the government has expropriated huge sections of property, apparently to rebuild and restore the historical centre of the region’s largest city, Diyarbakir. Unfortunately, some churches – some of which pre-date Islam – have been seized. Few Christian houses of worship exist in Turkey’s southeast. Although it is the ancestral homeland of Syrians and Armenians, well over a million of these ethnic Christians were massacred and sent on death marches during the final years of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the 20th century. World Watch Monitor, 4/6

■ The Sudanese government signed an action plan with the UN to end the use of child soldiers in the country. But advocates question the official commitment to the agreement, noting the government’s participation comes after years of denying its use of child soldiers, even as some rebel groups in the country already signed similar deals. Sudan is the last of eight countries of concern to sign the plan. Thousands of children have been recruited as child soldiers since the start of the war between Sudan’s government and various rebel groups in 2003. World, 3/30

PARTICIPATING IN GOD’S PLAN WITHOUT OVERSTEPPING

Who’s Restoring What?

by John Stonestreet

Christians can and must make a difference in the culture. But we never impose, we only propose. “When you talk about Christians restoring the culture,” I’m sometimes asked, “do you mean that we should take over the laws and run society? Because, you know, that’s been tried before, and it didn’t go so well.”

I can understand the confusion. One source of the confusion is that there are some Christians who do propose something like R. J. Rushdoony’s Christian reconstructionism. Others just use language like “taking back America” or “conquering the seven mountains of culture.” They seem to imply a sort of Christian takeover of the key segments of culture.

Another source for the confusion is eschatology, or competing visions about the end times. And yet another source would be mainstream media outlets, particularly those on the far left, who are constantly worrying about Christians conspiring to impose a theocracy—typically through a candidate they do not like.

I understand where this confusion comes from. But I’d like to offer what I think Chuck Colson meant when he called for Christians to make a difference in the culture.

The Gospel, as described in the Holy Scriptures, can be said to have four chapters: creation, fall, redemption and restoration. It’s easy to get the impression from how Christians talk about the Gospel that it only has two chapters: fall and redemption, or sinner and salvation.

But it’s important to include the first and fourth chapters for a number of reasons. Most important because they’re there in the Scripture. The Bible begins by describing in great detail what God intended for His creation—for the world He created and for the image bearers He created to take care of it. In fact, it’s the brilliance (or to use biblical language, “the very goodness”) of God’s creation that makes the fall such a tragedy.

God loved His world, and especially His image bearers, so much that He set in place

His plan to redeem through His Son what was fallen. That redemption was accomplished when He defeated sin and death and rose from the grave.

But even that isn’t the end of the story. In fact, in his sermon in Jerusalem after receiving the Holy Spirit, Peter preaches not only that Christ had risen from the dead but that He had ascended to take His seat at God’s right hand, who had put everything under His feet. In other words, Christ’s resurrection led to Christ’s enthronement.

“Ha!” you say. “See—that sounds like you think Christ is King of everything and that we ought to force everyone to think like you do.” Well, yes, Christ is King of everything. But no, Christ’s Kingdom advances now not by force, but by love.

Christ’s rule will fully be recognized when He, as the apostle John quoted Jesus as saying, “makes all things new.” Jesus will make a new creation, culminating in a new heaven and new earth. That’s how the story ends—and it’s brilliant. In fact, don’t take my word for it, do a study comparing Genesis 1-11 with Revelation 7-21 and read for yourself how the Kingdom is ultimately the restoration of God’s creation. It’s incredible!

Now what’s this have to do with us? Well, we live in this story, and our moment is between redemption and restoration. And Paul describes that in 2 Corinthians 5, that those of us who have been reconciled ought to become those who reconcile. We participate in God’s plan.

And we do it like our Savior did, through love, through sacrifice, through making wrongs right, through pointing people to the One who makes them right with their Creator, who is their Creator.

My colleague Warren Cole Smith and I fully lay out this vision, and what it calls us to, in the first part of our book [Restoring All Things](#). And thanks to our publisher, Baker Books, you can get a free downloadable pdf of the introduction and first chapter. Just go to BreakPoint.org/free to request a download.

ENTERTAINMENT NOTES

★★NEW MOVIES

	Quality	Moral	Age
<i>The Boss</i>	R	+3	-3 OT/A
<i>Hardcore Henry</i>	R	+1	-4 A?

A- Adult, T-Teen, OT- Older Teen

Film “Quality” is an estimate (+1 to +4) of appeal for the intended audience or age group. “Moral” rating ranges from extremely objectionable (-4) to very good (+4). movieguide.org