



## NEWS & NOTES

■ Concerns about the loss of federal education funds have delayed movement of Tennessee's "bathroom" bill out of House and Senate Finance Committees. Tennessee Attorney General Herbert Slatery released an erroneous opinion Monday which stated that HB 2414, a bill that protects students' physical privacy in public school restrooms, violates federal law and puts Tennessee public schools' federal funding at risk. However, Title IX and its regulations state that a school receiving federal funds can "maintain separate living facilities for the different sexes" and "provide separate toilet, locker room, and shower facilities on the basis of sex" without putting its federal funding at risk, in spite guidance coming from the U.S. Department of Education and now the Tennessee attorney general.

Every federal court to examine the issue has con-

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**For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love ...** — 2 Tim. 1:7

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cluded that maintaining separate restrooms and locker rooms on the basis of sex does not violate Title IX. "Thus, under current law, states and school districts that enact laws and policies requiring students to use restrooms and locker rooms that correspond to their biological sex do not violate Title IX. The threats about losing funding are simply empty threats," said ADF Legal Counsel Matt Sharp.

In January, ADF sent a letter to all public school districts in Tennessee to explain that no law requires Tennessee schools to open restrooms to members of the opposite sex. The letter encouraged districts to adopt their own student privacy policies that accommodate students with unique needs, such as access to a unisex bathroom, while protecting other students' privacy rights in sex-specific restrooms and locker rooms. FACT, 4/15; ADF, 4/14

■ On Tuesday North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory partially amended House Bill 2 to allow private businesses to establish their own rules on bathroom use. Under the order, "private businesses can set their own rules for their own restroom, locker room and shower facilities, free from government interference." Three individuals, the ACLU and Equality North Carolina have sued arguing that the law discriminates against transgenders. In the wake of House Bill 2,

the Deutsche Bank said it is stalling its plans to expand in North Carolina. Despite doing business in countries that have severe penalties for being LGBT, PayPal announced that it was withdrawing plans to build a \$3.6 million operation center in North Carolina. The amended law also left the NBA "deeply concerned," and U.S. Soccer has said it may prevent future games from being played in North Carolina. RT, 4/14

■ As religious liberty bills continue to draw ire from big businesses in North Carolina, Georgia, and Mississippi, another state is bracing for a similar battle: Missouri. But unlike other states where the fate of the legislation was left to the governor, in Missouri, lawmakers want the people to decide. The religious liberty bill known as Senate Joint Resolution 39, would amend the state's constitution to ban government discrimination against people of faith because of their beliefs about marriage. Schools and charities, for example, would be protected from losing access to government programs because of their beliefs about marriage. The legislature must approve the bill before it can be placed a ballot initiative later this year. Already, big businesses are threatening boycotts.

Meanwhile, after almost a year, the First Amendment Defense Act designed to

safeguard religious liberty has gained significant support with 127 cosponsors but little momentum in the U.S. House of Representatives. The act would prohibit federal discrimination against individuals or organizations based on their support for marriage as exclusively between a man and a woman. The bill would bar the Internal Revenue Service, for example, from stripping a nonprofit of its tax-exempt status over the organization's views on same-sex marriages. Daily Signal, 4/13, 4/15

■ Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam has vetoed a bill that would make the Bible the official book of the state, saying that the bill goes against both the federal and state constitutions. In a letter addressed to Speaker of the House, Haslam wrote: "My personal feeling is that this bill trivializes the Bible, which I believe is sacred text. If we believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God, then we shouldn't be recognizing it only as a book of historical and economic significance." Despite vetoing this bill, Haslam said he strongly opposes those who are trying to eradicate religion from public life. "All of us should and must bring our deepest beliefs to the places we are called, including government service," he said. Polls have revealed that six in 10 Tennessee residents support making the Bible the official state book.

Christian Headlines, 4/15

■ The U.S. Committee on Energy and Commerce's Select Investigative Panel on Infant Lives headed by U.S. Congressman Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) will hold a hearing on Wednesday, April 20 on the pricing of fetal tissue to determine whether abortion clinics and businesses acting as middlemen were making a profit from the transfer of aborted baby parts in violation of federal law. FACT, 4/15

■ On Monday a federal court threw out an ACLU lawsuit that sought to force a Catholic hospital system and its staff to commit abortions regardless of their religious and pro-life objections. The U.S. District Court called the ACLU's claims of harm from the hospital system's pro-life position "dubious," explaining that they haven't satisfied the legal requirements to demonstrate such

harm and therefore bring a lawsuit. Trinity Health Corporation operates 90 hospitals in 21 states. ADF, 4/11

■ On Tuesday, North Dakota agreed to pay \$245,000 to lawyers representing the state's lone abortion clinic over an ill-fated law that attempted to ban abortions when a fetal heartbeat is detected. The clinic in Fargo sought litigation costs from the state after the U.S. Supreme Court in January rejected the state's appeal of a lower court ruling that the 2013 fetal heartbeat law was unconstitutional. The law never took effect but would have banned abortions as early as six weeks of pregnancy. Republican Gov. Jack Dalrymple has called the law "a legitimate attempt by a state Legislature to discover the boundaries of *Roe v. Wade*." AP, 4/12

■ Canada's new assisted

It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seemed as if all the world were growing religious, so that one could not walk thro' the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street." — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

In his autobiography, Franklin comments about the effects of the Great Awakening, ignited by British evangelist George Whitefield, whose sermons he printed. In 1739, Whitefield set out for a preaching tour of the American colonies. Whitefield selected Philadelphia as his first American stop. But even the largest churches could not hold the 8,000 who came to see him, so he took them outdoors and held them spellbound. Whitefield also made the slave community a part of his revivals. The response was so great that some historians date it as the genesis of African-American Christianity. Before his tours of the colonies were complete, virtually every man, woman, and child had heard the "Grand Itinerant" at least once. The Great Awakening became one of the most formative events in American history with its first cultural hero. Indeed, before Whitefield, it is doubtful any name, other than royalty, was known equally from Boston to Charleston.

suicide law announced on Thursday excludes non-Canadians, which means Americans won't be able to travel to Canada to die. The law also excludes those who experience mental illness or psychiatric conditions. It will also ban advance consent (i.e., requests to end one's life in the future). Canada's Supreme Court last year struck down laws that bar doctors from helping someone die, but put the ruling on hold while the government came up with a new law. Assisted suicide is legal in Switzerland, Germany, Albania, Colombia, Japan and in five U.S. states. The Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg allow doctors, under strict conditions, to euthanize patients whose medical conditions have been judged hopeless and who are in great pain.

AP, 4/12

■ A federal appeals court overturned a district judge's ruling on Thursday, and declared that same-sex "marriage" in Puerto Rico is constitutional. Judge Pérez-Giménez had upheld Puerto Rico's marriage law in March, reasoning that the Obergefell decision does not necessarily apply to an unincorporated territory. The First Circuit Court of Ap-

peals overruled his judgment. LifeSite News, 4/12

■ Fifty years ago this month, *Time* magazine published one of its most famous and controversial covers. Splashed in bold red print across a black background was an intensely provocative question: "Is God Dead?" The authors seemed to imply that the idea of an omnipotent creator could be heading for history's dustbin. But Pew's 2014 Religious Landscape Study shows that nearly nine-in-ten American adults say they believe in God or a universal spirit, and 63% "believe in God with absolute certainty," down from 71% in 2007. Pew, 4/7

■ Last year, the Bible Societies translated the Bible into 50 different languages represented by nearly 160 million people, with 11 communities receiving their very first full Bible and six receiving the New Testament. At the end of 2015, in total, the full Bible was available in 563 languages spoken by nearly 5.1 billion people.

RT, 4/13

■ By using handwriting analysis technology, Israeli scholars from a number of fields have concluded that certain ancient biblical texts are older than originally thought. Scholars have long

debated over whether certain biblical texts--from the book of Joshua through the book of Second Kings--first began to be compiled before or after the Israeli exile to Babylon in 586 B.C. It was originally thought that the texts were written after the exile, when the people of Israel had time to reflect on what had happened to them. The findings from the handwriting analysis, however, suggest that the texts were written before the exile to Babylon. Christian Headlines, 4/12

■ A recently released report by Human Rights Watch states that the Nigerian terrorist organization Boko Haram is responsible for the lack of education available to one million children in the country. More than 910 schools have been targeted by Boko Haram whose name means "Western (or non-Islamic) education is a sin." Access to education in Nigeria has also been restricted due to the Nigerian army's policy of using schools as military bases. 2.2 million people are reported to have been affected by the fighting and displaced from their homes, including 1.4 million children. Meanwhile, 219 or nearly 300 Chibok school girls captured two years ago by Boko Haram remain missing. Nigeria is making headway against Boko Haram and has set up a rehabilitation camp to repatriate surrendered Boko Haram fighters and encourage others to abandon the insurgency.

Christian Headlines, 4/13; RNA, 4/13; World News, 4/8

## THE SECRET OF JACKIE ROBINSON'S GREATNESS

### Turning the Other Cheek

by Eric Metaxas

Some Christians are heroic because they fought back against evil. Find out about a hero who was great because he didn't fight back.

If you happen to have watched a Major League Baseball game on TV Friday night, you notice something unusual about the players' uniforms. Every major leaguer wore the number 42.

That's because 69 years ago, April 15, 1947, Brooklyn Dodgers great Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier.

It's almost impossible for us today to imagine what Robinson endured as the big leagues' first black ballplayer. But his ordeal is captured brilliantly in the biopic film "42," which came out just a few years ago.

As good as the film is, it all but omits the most significant factor in Jackie Robinson's ability to turn the other cheek; to endure almost unbearable insults and physical attacks on the field without lashing out himself. That factor was Robinson's strong Christian faith.

As I note in my book, "7 Men: And the Secret of Their Greatness," while he was a student at Pasadena Junior College, "Jackie met a Methodist preacher named Karl Downs. Downs knew that Jackie was a Christian and taught him that exploding in anger was not the Christian answer to injustice. But he explained that a life truly dedicated to Christ was not submissive; on the contrary, it was heroic.... Downs eventually led Jackie to a deeper faith in Jesus Christ. He began to see that the path to justice would be done not with fists and fury but with love and restraint."

As "42" opens, we see Jackie Robinson sitting in the office of Brooklyn Dodgers general manager Branch Rickey as he hears the incredible news that Rickey wants him to play for the Dodgers. Then Rickey acts out the vicious varieties of bigotry Jackie will face from white hotel managers, restaurant waiters, and fellow ballplayers--insults he will have to face with dignity.

How much more dramatic this scene would have been had "42" told the whole story. Rickey knew that Robinson shared his Christian faith, and wanted to reinforce the spiritual dimensions of the battle both men were sure to face. Rickey pulled out a copy of a book by Giovanni Papini, "Life of Christ." He flipped to the passage in which Papini discusses the Sermon on the Mount. There he referred to Jesus' call to "turn the other cheek" as "the most stupefying of [Jesus'] revolutionary teachings."

Rickey's faith told him that injustice had to be fought wherever it was found. As for Jackie Robinson, he believed that God had chosen him for this noble purpose. And he knew that if he committed himself to doing this great thing, God would give him the strength he needed to see it through.

Day after day, Jackie Robinson's faith fueled his ability to play great baseball. Night after night, he got down on his knees, asking God for strength in the face of unrelenting hatred.

Now the reason that I included Jackie Robinson in a book about some of the greatest men who ever lived is not just because he played great baseball, but because he engaged in a heroic sacrifice. While he did not have to, Jackie Robinson followed Jesus and sacrificed his right to fight back.

If you've got young baseball fans in your family, or among your friends, I would highly recommend renting "42," which is rated PG-13 because of the evil language that's shouted at Robinson on the ball field. And then I hope you'll also consider giving them a copy of my book, *7 Men: And the Secret of Their Greatness*. Chuck Colson is in there as well.

If they read the book they'll learn why Jackie Robinson changed America for the better. He did it by living out, on and off the baseball field, the revolutionary words of Jesus: Turn the other cheek.

Breatpoint Commentary, 4/15/2016

#### ENTERTAINMENT NOTES

##### ★★NEW MOVIES

	Quality	Moral	Age
<i>The Jungle Book</i>	PG	+4	+1 10+
<i>Barbershop: The Next Cut</i>	PG-13	+4	-2 T/A
<i>Criminal</i>	R	+3	-2 OT/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](http://movieguide.org)