



Impact

NEWS & NOTES

■ Many sailors expressed anger, dismay and confusion at the Navy's announcement last week that it was abandoning the service's century-old enlisted rating system. U.S. Navy Secretary Ray Mabus approved the ending of 91 titles to identify enlisted personnel Thursday, overhauling a structure that has been in use since the Continental Navy. The only title with "man" remaining is "seaman" — and that is solely for certain ranks. For instance, "Fire Controlman 1st Class Joe Sailor" would become "Petty Officer 1st Class Joe Sailor" effective immediately. The Navy Times reported. The Marine Corps, which is also under Mabus' leadership, has eliminated "man" from most of its occupation titles. Meanwhile, starting this month, taxpayers will pay for transgender soldiers' sex change operations to the tune of \$8.4 million per year. Beyond the cost, the new

healthcare mandate affects military readiness, since sex-change surgeries require a minimum of 21 days of medical leave plus 90 days of disability. Stars & Stripes, 10/2; FACT, 10/7

■ Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore was suspended without pay for the rest of his term last Friday for telling Alabama probate officers that an Alabama Supreme Court order, issued prior to the U.S. Supreme Court's Obergefell decision, was still in effect after the Obergefell decision. and that they should not issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples when a federal court, after the Obergefell ruling, had ordered them to issue such licenses. It was for telling probate officers to ignore a federal court order, not his criticism of the Obergefell ruling per se, that spelled Moore's doom. It was the second suspension for the outspokenly conservative Moore. Earlier, he was sanctioned for refusing to remove a monument of the Ten Commandments in a state building. Moore is appealing the ruling to the Alabama Supreme Court.

FACT, 10/7; Reuters, 9/30

■ The University of Michigan is calling all students and faculty to pick their person pronoun in the month of October in order to bring "inclusiveness" to campus. Students can choose from the traditional "he" and "she" or opt for the "gender-neutral" pronoun "ze." The

administration's email to the campus body explained, "Asking about and correctly using someone's designated pronoun is one of the most basic ways to show respect for their identity and to cultivate an environment that respects all gender identities." FACT, 10/7

■ While Michigan students have the freedom to express themselves through their own personal pronouns, pastors and congregants in Massachusetts could be jailed and/or fined for discrimination for failing to use a transgender's preferred pronoun at "secular" events that are open to the public. These "secular" events could be something as commonplace as an evening fish fry or spaghetti dinner to something more extensive, such as church-based day care or soup kitchens. A church might be liable even for statements by its congregants (and not just its volunteers, who are acting as agents) that are critical of transgender people. Pastors and congregants accused of discrimination could be fined \$2,500 and/or jailed for up to a year. Under the new law, all places of public accommodation must allow everyone to use restrooms, locker rooms, or changing rooms "consistent with their gender identity," regardless of how they "act, dress, or groom." In other words, if a man wants to use the women's locker room the only criteria

necessary is that he "internally" identifies as a woman.

FACT, 10/7; The Weekly, 10/7

■ After being forced out of his own company (Firefox browser) for standing for traditional marriage, Brandon Eich seems to be at the top of his game again just two years later. Eich launched a new open-source Internet browser called Brave that boasts an almost ad-free and tracking-free browsing experience, faster speeds, and privacy and security features.

FACT, 10/7

■ A new study published in *JAMA Psychiatry* reveals that women on hormonal contraception were far more likely to develop depression than those who used non-hormonal methods. This was a large study, containing over a million female Danes between the ages of 15 and 34, and each case was followed for 13 years. Investigators discovered that women who take combined oral contraception were overall 23% more likely to receive a diagnosis of depression. Women on Depo Provera were the most likely to require an antidepressant. Teens were 80% more likely to develop depression on the combined pill, and twice as likely on progestin only.

Big Think, 10/4

■ In response to undercover videos by David Daleiden with the Center for Medical Progress that exposed the selling of baby

body parts by Planned Parenthood, California has made it a crime to record "confidential communication with a health care provider" and publish the recording in any way, including "web sites and social media." "It is clear that Planned Parenthood does not want to be held accountable to the public, whose taxpayer money it gladly takes by the hundreds of millions, and will even attack freedom of speech and the freedom of the press in order to maintain its own arbitrary levels of secrecy," Daleiden said.

FACT, 10/7

■ Last Friday marked the 40th anniversary of the Hyde Amendment—one of the nation's most important pro-life laws, credited with saving the lives of over two million unborn children. Shortly

after the Supreme Court proclaimed a right to abortion on demand in 1973, leaders in Congress sought to at least prevent American taxpayers from being forced to pay for such life-ending procedures. Multiple studies show that when the Hyde Amendment took effect, the birthrate among women on Medicaid increased by an average of about 13 percent. That means in U.S. states that do not fund abortion through Medicaid, one in every nine people born to a mother on Medicaid owes his or her life to the Hyde Amendment.

Daily Signal, 10/5

■ Just 49 percent of Americans say they support capital punishment, according to a Pew Research Center poll conducted from late August to early September. That

All at once it seemed as if something supernatural was in my room. I was afraid to open my eyes. ... How I longed for Gods mercy! Just then, in the very height of my distress, it seemed as if a hand was laid upon my head and these words came to me: 'My son, thy sins which are many are forgiven.' ... I jumped from my knees. I paced up and down my cell. A heavenly light seemed to fill it. .. I clapped my hands and shouted, 'Praise God! Praise God!'"

— JERRY McAULEY

Jerry McAuley was a bad lot through and through, the kind of person we call "impossible." Born in Ireland in 1839 he was eventually shunted off to relatives in New York. He ran away and lived by stealing -- drifting in and out of jail. When he was nineteen, authorities, only too happy to get him off the street, convicted him on trumped up robbery charges. He was sentenced to fifteen years in Sing Sing prison. He began reading the Bible and tried desperately to pray, finally receiving forgiveness and salvation one night in his cell. Pardoned by New York Governor Horatio Seymour, he went free on March 8, 1864. After a renewal of his faith, McAuley began to work for God. He saved money and on this day, October 8, 1871, opened the Water Street mission in New York City to reclaim men like himself. Set in an old dance hall, it was the first rescue mission in the United States, the forerunner of many more.

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represents a seven-point decline in about a year and a half. Just 34 percent of Democrats support the death penalty today — less than half as many as in 1996. Support for the death penalty peaked at 80 percent in 1994 and has had majority support among Americans for 45 years.

NY Times, 10/3

■ An Illinois judge dismissed a lawsuit against the pro-life group Created Equal. They were sued for defamation by Stericycle, the waste company that handles the remains of Planned Parenthood's aborted babies. Created Equal had engaged in an extensive public relations campaign against Stericycle, including sending out postcards connecting Stericycle to abortion and Planned Parenthood.

FACT, 10/7

■ A Pew survey of American opinion on religious liberties reveals that two thirds of Americans say that health care plans should be required to be required to provide contraception coverage, but Americans are more evenly divided in requiring businesses to provide wedding services to same sex couples, and in allowing transgenders

to use the restroom/dressing facility of their choice. Only about one in five said they could sympathize with both sides of these debates.

Christianity Today, 9/29

■ A new study that looked into the budgets of more than 1,200 large churches across North America found that 1) church size is the primary factor in predicting pastor salaries; 2) 49 percent of the church budget goes toward staffing costs; and 3) only 52 percent of churches spend 10 percent or more of their budget on ministries outside the church itself.

Christian Headlines, 10/3

■ An American missionary has been charged with violating Russia's new anti-evangelism laws, and although he has appealed the charge, his appeal was rejected. Pastor Donald Ossewaarde has been living in Russia for nearly 15 years and was recently accused of posting "two Gospel tracts to a bulletin board at the entrance of an apartment building," he said, and "of conducting a religious service in a private home, which they said was a violation of the new anti-missionary law."

Christian Headlines, 10/5

■ Famine-like conditions in the former stronghold of Boko Haram militants in northeast Nigeria could kill 75,000 children over the next year if they do not receive aid, the United Nations children's agency said on Thursday. Some 15,000 people have been killed and more than two million displaced during a seven-year insurgency by the Islamist militant group that has been pushed back to its stronghold in northeast Nigeria. UNICEF has said 400,000 children aged under five would suffer from severe acute malnutrition in those states, which have been worst hit by the insurgency, and more than four million people faced severe food shortages in the region.

Reuters, 9/29

■ A Chinese pastor who was imprisoned and tortured for his Christian faith is now reportedly suffering from serious diseases. While in prison, authorities extracted a confession of guilt from Yang Hua, the leader of a house church in China's Guizhou province, through use of torture. In a letter to his wife, he writes, "I am grateful for what God has given me; let's carry the cross and hasten down the road to heaven, until the day we meet the Lord."

Christian Headlines, 10/3

Early Voting begins
October 19
Are you registered?

THE WAGES OF DOCTRINAL DOCILITY

Americans Fail Theology 101

by Eric Metaxas

Could you pass a basic theology quiz? Several thousand Americans just tried. Uh-oh. Too bad God doesn't grade on a curve.

One thing is certain: Americans love the Bible. A recent report from The American Bible Society and Barna Group finds that two-thirds of the nation believe the Bible contains "everything a person needs to know in order to live a meaningful life." And a vast majority of folks in this country still consider themselves Christians. But just how deep does their Christianity run?

Not very, according to the results of a survey released late last month by LifeWay Research. The survey, commissioned by Ligonier Ministries, asked 3,000 participants a set of 47 questions about foundational Christian beliefs. Many of the answers revealed a mishmash of heresy and confusion about Christianity's most basic doctrines.

Seventy percent of Americans agree there's only one true God—one in essence, three in person: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Yet almost the same number believe God accepts the worship of all other religions, even those that deny the Trinity or worship other deities. Sixty-one percent correctly say Jesus is both human and divine, but half think that He's also "the first and greatest being created by God," rather than existing eternally, as Scripture and the ancient creeds of the faith teach.

More bizarre contradictions emerged: Over sixty percent of Americans say that God, Who cannot err, is the Author of the Bible. Yet fewer than half are willing to affirm that the Bible God wrote is "one hundred percent accurate in all it teaches." Two-thirds admit everyone sins, yet also insist that most people are good by nature! Perhaps most oddly, half of Americans believe that only those who accept Jesus will be saved, yet sixty percent also say everyone will eventually make it to Heaven.

So what about professing Christians and especially evangelicals? Surely they did

much better on basic doctrines of the faith. Uh, no.

Lifeway identified 586 of the three-thousand respondents as "evangelical." These are folks who believe the Bible is their highest authority, that personal evangelism is important, and that trusting in Jesus' death on the cross is the only way of salvation.

Yet huge percentages of these folks appeared to affirm major tenets of ancient heresies like Arianism. An astonishing seventy percent, for instance, say Jesus is a created being. Fifty-six percent say the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, "is a divine force but not a personal being."

Evangelicals, by definition, believe trusting in Jesus is the only way of salvation. Yet two-thirds of evangelicals—more than Americans as a whole—claim Heaven is a place where all people will ultimately be reunited with loved ones.

It's not just the departures from these historic doctrines that should concern us, but the contradictory answers. It shows not only that Americans in general and evangelicals in particular have the wrong answers on basic Christian doctrines, but that they don't really understand the concept of doctrine itself.

Howard Snyder, director of Manchester Wesley Research Center, attributes this widespread cluelessness to churches having basically abandoned theological education. Catechesis has fallen by the wayside.

Folks, if we hope to preserve not only evangelical faith in the generations to come, but also the "mere Christianity" expressed in the Nicene Creed, we have to take theological instruction seriously again.

If you think you need a little help, come to BreakPoint.org and we'll link you to resources that'll equip you, your family, and your church not just to pass any test, but to confess, along with Christians down through the ages, "the faith once for all delivered to the saints."

Breatpoint Commentary, 10/6/2016

ENTERTAINMENT NOTES

★★NEW MOVIES

	Quality	Moral	Age
<i>Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life</i>	PG	+2	-3 12+
<i>The Girl on the Train</i>	R	+2	-3 A
<i>The Birth of a Nation</i>	R	+3	-4 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; pluggedin.com