

For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
*Romans 8*

# RECORD

Spring 2015

Newsletter of EVANGELICALS CONCERNED, INC., 311 East 72nd Street, New York, New York, 10021

**2015 marks the centenaries of two good friends of EC: Bob Rayburn and Charlie Shedd.** Bob was the first evangelical leader to encourage us in starting Evangelicals Concerned in 1975. Charlie keynoted EC connECtions in 1997 (East) and 1998 (West). Bob was founding president of Covenant College and Seminary and directed its D. Min. program. He was also pastor of Wheaton's College Church and wrote books on worship and on his Korean War experience. He died in 1990. Charlie and his wife, Martha, wrote many bestsellers on everyday Christian living. His radio program's popular sign-off was: "God loves you and so do I and there ain't nothin' you can do about it." He died in 2004.

Throughout the years, EC supporters and over 100 keynoters have included John Alexander, Harry Boer, Cynthia Clawson, Roy Clements, Don Dayton, Reta Finger, Nancy Hardesty, Phyllis Hart, Hendrik Hart, Walt Hearn, Wally Howard, Fisher Humphreys, Paul Jewett, Kay Lindskoog, Ken Medema, Eugenia Price, Ros Rinker, Letha Scanzoni, Lew Smedes, Chuck Smith, Jr., Dave Myers and Nick Wolterstorff.

EC's 73<sup>rd</sup> connection, May 29-31, will greet keynoters Carol Ann Vaughn Cross of Samford University and James V. Brownson of Western Seminary. EC's 13<sup>th</sup> Fall Festival at Ocean Grove will remember the centenaries of Anna Bartlett Warner, Fanny Crosby, W. H. Doane and Booker T. Washington. Ralph Blair will preach. Our 28<sup>th</sup> annual EC Winter Bible Study weekend was held in February and the focus was on hostility to Christ and the Gospel according to Matthew.

**The 2015 Gay Christian Network conference drew some 1,400 evangelical gay men, lesbians and family members to Portland in January.** They came from 46 states plus D.C. and 14 countries. Thousands more witnessed the event via live streaming. Vicky Beeching, Jeff Chu, Danny Cortez and Justin Lee were keynoters.

Several ex-"ex-gay" leaders who've long since denounced that failed movement attended, including Jeremy Marks, John Smid, John Paulk, Tim Rymel, Michael Rodgers and Anthony Scott.

GCN, founded in 2001 by Justin Lee, includes same-sex marriage supporters as well as gay folks committed to celibacy. Lee keynoted EC connECtions in 2005 (West) and 2007 (East). Ralph Blair is a charter member of the GCN Advisory Board.

**"Ten years ago this would have been unthinkable."** This is Peter Jones' misinformed response to *evangelical* support for gay and lesbian Christians. A Presbyterian Church in America minister and director of *truthxchange*, he laments an evangelical megachurch pastor's saying: "I refuse to go to a church where my friends who are gay are excluded from Communion or a marriage covenant or the beauty of Christian community." Jones derides this conviction as a "decision on emotive and subjective ground" but more and more evangelicals are seeing it as an application of the Golden Rule.

The direction that evangelicals have taken in affirming gay and lesbian Christians was predicted 37 years ago when Richard Quebedeaux, chronicler of evangelicalism, wrote: "Right and center evangelicals may continue to say 'no' to homosexual practice explicitly and homosexual orientation implicitly; but it seems that left evangelicals will finally come out closer to Ralph Blair than Anita Bryant".

***Bobbed Hair, Bossy Wives and Women Preachers*** is a popular book by John R. Rice, 20<sup>th</sup> century Fundamentalist, spelling out why he was against all three. His grandson, Andrew Himes, left Fundamentalism for Marxism and then left Marxist as but another fundamentalism. He later joined Microsoft and now speaks and writes on "reframing fundamentalism", i.e., "What is *fundamental* to you?"

After a serious motorcycle accident in 1980, he was inspired to see *compassion* as *fundamental*. He's now written a family history, *The Sword of the Lord* – the title of his granddad's periodical. Baylor's Roger E. Olson and other evangelicals endorse it.

In a TED talk, Himes gave a poignant glimpse of his devout Fundamentalist mom. Her photo, at 14, illustrated a proper hairstyle for her dad's *Bobbed Hair* book. Wife of a rural preacher, she struggled in poverty to rear their children and grieved five miscarriages.

In 2002, she visited Himes. He took her to a nonprofit's fundraiser and introduced her to two of his lesbian friends, a committed couple. "Robin had been trying to have a baby for years [and] earlier on the day she met my mom, Robin had a miscarriage. Robin and Cambrea were both devastated. The three women – Cambrea, Robin and my mom – sat on the couch talking softly, holding hands and crying together." He says: "My mom wasn't trying to save, judge, convince, condemn or convert anyone. Instead, she was just a woman who understood suffering, who loved Robin and Cambrea and shared their loss and sorrow. And ever since, Cambrea and Robin have felt a powerful bond with my mom." Says Himes: "I am convinced that along with the three heartbroken women sitting on that couch years ago, there was a fourth, unseen presence – Jesus, who had promised my mom, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you'."

**Misty Irons shares wisdom she's learned in a decade of blogging on homosexuality "as a straight evangelical Christian".** "1. No straight person can fully appreciate how difficult it is to be gay in a largely heterosexual world. 2. As soon as someone equates 'homosexuality' with 'having gay sex', the rest of what they have to say on the subject will be pretty much useless. 3. When some Christians hear the word 'love', all they think is 'liberalism'. 4. 'Gay Christian' – until you can think of a better, more accurate term, it stays.

5. You can't understand someone else's sexual orientation unless you first understand your own. 6. Christians who are determined to be persecuted by gays can't be convinced otherwise. 7. How much you believe God loves and accepts others in Christ is a reflection of how much you believe he loves and accepts you. 8. Love begins with listening to what people have to say about themselves. 9. Conservative Christians should have no problem with celibate gay Christians, unless they have a problem with the gospel. 10. Don't assume God brought someone gay into your life so you can teach them. Chances are it is the other way around."

**"Imagine a group of biblical scholars clustered around a mouse hole in a barn."** This is what an evangelical Christian blogger asks readers to ponder as he notes that the mouse hole affects about 4 percent of the population – roughly the proportion that's gay. "Behind [these hovering scholars], a barn door is open to any sort of sex before or after marriage, for 100 percent of the population.

"The scholars hang on every syllable of Paul as if it is absolutely authoritative for determining the boundaries of the mouse hole: 'If Paul meant X by *arsenokoitai*, we would have to disallow gay unions, but if he meant Y, then ...'. Yet they feel no corresponding need to scrutinize the barn door. The hurricane blew it open and, well, there it stands. No need for proof texts either way. Call it turning a blind eye, call it being 'realistic', whatever. Let's get back to scrutinizing the mouse hole."

**Franklin Graham warns: "Gays and lesbians are in politics."** So, says he, it's imperative for antigay Christians to get into politics to push against "all the anti-God people." Addressing the Oklahoma State Evangelism Conference, it seemed to some that he called for return to the counterproductive politics of the '70s and '80s Religious Right.

Political philosopher Greg Forster's new book, *Joy for the World: How Christianity Lost Its Cultural Influence and Can Begin Rebuilding It*, calls evangelicals to an earlier way: "generous neighborliness". No fan of gay marriage, Forster nonetheless adds: "We need to say to [gays], not begrudgingly but sincerely, that we want to find a shared way of life that affirms their dignity as human beings and their equality as American citizens. And we

need to say that we have not done a good enough job of that."

**At least 9 percent of New York's marriages have been same-sex couples since the state's marriage equality law in 2011.** That's nearly 37,000 marriages among the some 413,000 in the state during that time. In New York City the same-sex marriage figure is 11 percent. But, since the law allows couples to register as "unspecified", the same-sex figure may be higher, as about 12 percent checked "unspecified".

**The Gallup Poll finds 55 percent of Americans favor marriage for gay couples** while 42 percent oppose it. The U.S. Supreme Court will rule on the matter later this year.

Meanwhile, U. S. District Court Judge Callie Granade, appointed by George W. Bush, overturned Alabama's ban on gay marriage. So, Alabama is now the 37th state where gay couples can wed legally. However, in 52 of Alabama's 67 counties, judges refused to process marriage requests from same-sex couples after Alabama's chief justice, Roy Moore, claimed that "men and their daughters" would be next. Known for his Ten Commandments fight, Moore had ignored that Law Code's Preamble. In the current conflict, Moore ignores the summation of that Law: *Love God and love your neighbor as yourself.* (Lev 19:18; Mk 12:30f; Gal 5:14)

**"If you are in the moment feeling an attraction for a person of the same sex, that's an occasion for repentance."** Attendees at the 2014 Evangelical Theological Society convention heard this from Denny Burk of Southern Baptist Seminary. And, if one says, "Well, I didn't choose that", Burk replied: "That's still an occasion for repentance", claiming even the *attraction* is sinful. Fellow panelists, Preston Sprinkle of Eternity Bible College and Wesley Hill, celibate gay faculty member at Trinity School for Ministry, argued it isn't.

Burk rejected "homosexual" *identity*. But Hill cautioned: "To say that Christians will simply avoid altogether the language of sexual orientation — gay, lesbian, homosexuality — that would mean, in my own experience, forfeiting a lot of conversations with people from my own generation since that's just the language they speak." He said: "I want to be able to say to someone who expe-

riences no shift at all in their unchosen patterns of same-sex attraction, that a life of faithful, Christian holiness is still open to them, every bit as much as if they experienced a dramatic shift in their sexual attraction or their sexual desire."

Sprinkle's "Sexual Orientation in Paul's World: It's Not What You Think" noted that there's an absence of understanding of sexual *orientation* as *identity* in the first century. All who rely on naively quoting Bible verses miss this crucial hermeneutical insight.

**"Should the Church Speak of 'Gay Christians'?"** is an article in the *Journal of the Council for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* by CBMW president Owen Strachan of Southern Baptist Seminary. "Believers who face same-sex attraction must repent of both the practice of homosexuality and the desire. ... An orientation is nothing other than a pattern of inborn desires. We cannot morally endorse a pattern of desires that are called by Scripture an 'abomination' and 'dishonorable passions'".

**Over a third of America's children live in homes without fathers.** In 1965 Daniel Moynihan warned that black families were in trouble because the out-of-wedlock birth rate of blacks was 25 percent. Now, 40 percent of *all* babies born in America are born outside marriage – about 30 percent of non-Hispanic whites, more than 50 percent of Hispanics and more than 70 percent of blacks. Contrary to Religious Right propaganda against *same-sex* marriage, none of this family fragmentation is *caused by same-sex marriage*. But *some* of it is due to homosexuals having been pressured into a mixed-orientation marriage by antigay upbringing in the church and the "ex-gay" movement's false and devastating promises pushed by conservative Christians.

**"A lot of churches are going to say, 'we're not going to do it,'"** says a mainline Presbyterian Church (USA) man now that the denomination has approved gay marriage. But Carl Trueman, an Orthodox Presbyterian Church pastor and church history professor at Westminster Seminary, responds: "Why is it that disagreement over the issue of the Bible's teaching on homosexuality has become the apparent bridge too far for the evangelicals in mainline denominations? ...

Sexual morality is not the only, or even the central, thing. ... Given the long-standing existence within mainline churches of all manner of heresy, I have to confess to being as confused as many in the Gay movement over the evangelical histrionics surrounding the issue of the Bible's teaching on homosexuality: if all manner of blasphemy is acceptable in the church, why make homosexuality *the* issue to fight over? Indeed, these days I find myself in the strange situation of having to agree with many of the gay critics of the stance of evangelicals in mainline denominations: the unique status evangelicals seem to have decided to accord to homosexuality makes it look to the wider world as if their motives are not those of consistent care for Christian orthodoxy but homophobia, pure and simple."

**"I could affirm domestic partnerships** as a way of protecting people's legal and economic security", Michael Horton wrote in 2012. The J. Gresham Machen Professor of Theology and Apologetics at Westminster Seminary (California) said "legalization of same-sex marriage [can be supported by] appeal to neighbor-love". ... The ban seems arbitrary. Why isn't there a campaign being waged to ban providing legal benefits to unmarried heterosexual couples? Or to make divorce more difficult? It just seems more symbolic than anything else: it looks like our last-gasp effort to enforce our own private morality on the public."

**"At Least Hide the Children."** That's D. G. Hart's *Patheos* headline on what's "not PG material" in the Bible. Citing Hagar and Ishmael, he asks: "What about two-parents and family values?" An Orthodox Presbyterian elder and historian, he writes: "If you tend to regard the Bible as a manual of moral instruction, you might be tempted to do for the Old Testament what Thomas Jefferson did for the New", i.e., take a knife to many pages. Elsewhere, Hart asserts: "Efforts to use Christianity for public or political ends fundamentally distort the Christian religion." Here he follows Machen, Westminster Seminary's founder, where he used to work. He now teaches at Hillsdale College.

**Constitutional lawyer Ted Olson and the Religious Right's Tony Perkins sparred over gay marriage** on Fox News. Olson, with David Boies, suc-

ceeded in making the legal case against banning gay marriage in California and Virginia. Olson told Perkins: "No harm whatsoever has been done to heterosexual marriages as a result." Perkins shot back: "That's not true!" and he wisecracked: "I guess Ted's okay with [a *New York* magazine report that] an 18 year-old daughter wants to marry her biological father!" Olson feigned surprise and quipped that Perkins now believes what he reads in *New York*.

**"If complementarianism falls**, then the last bastion of resistance to full-fledged endorsement of both homosexual and transgender identity falls with it. This is it. We're down to the last refuge." This is the warning of Southern Baptist Owen Strachan. But wide research finds that traditional marriages, where husband is dominant, are between 300 and 400 times more likely than egalitarian marriages to involve wife abuse. Of course, many evangelical scholars *don't* hold to "complementarianism". Among these *egalitarians* are Gil Bilezikian, Greg Boyd, Gordon Fee, Craig Keener, Scot McKnight, Roger Olson, Aida Besancon Spencer, Linda Belleville, Ben Witherington III, N. T. Wright and many more. And they're hardly hearty supporters of same-sex marriage.

**Southern Baptist blogger Jim Denison says JCPenney "stock nosedived" when its ads were "endorsing homosexuality"**. Ads showed gay male couples and lesbian couples, all with their kids. Denison links the nosedive to those ads and thinks that, with new JCP ads, the founder's Christian spirit is back. Yet he fails to say that J. C. Penney's first stores were called *Golden Rule* stores and surely both heterosexual and same-sex couples want to be treated justly.

Denison objects to this application of the Golden Rule to marriage equality, just as another Southern preacher/theologian objected to its extension to slaves. In 1867, R. L. Dabney, wrote: "The rule of our conduct to our neighbour is not any desire which we might have, were we to change places; but it is *that desire which we should, in that case, be morally entitled to have.*" He ended the last sentence of his 356-page attack against abolitionists by predicting that he and his fellow anti-abolitionists would win "in the pages of impartial history, and in the Day of Judgment." Seven years earlier, another Southern theologian, Thomas Smyth,

preached this on the Day of Humiliation and Prayer in Charleston: Abolitionists "forget that the condition of slavery has been and is recognized and regulated by God, who first ordained that it should come to pass ... for the good of all; that he has twice embodied it in the moral law, and has thus environed it with immutable and eternal sanctions; that men perfect before God, friends of God and beloved by God, lived under it, ruled over it, and consecrated it with God's blessing, promises and protection; ... the Scriptures of his inspiration are closed and sealed up from all addition or subtraction - by men of perverse minds who would be wise above that which is written, and wiser than God - with the recognition and regulation of slavery as a civil and domestic institution."

**Andrée Seu Peterson dismisses same-sex marriage as merely "men [who] copulate with men"**. Yet, in the same *World* essay, she repeatedly insists she's "not a Hater" - mocking what she assumes she seems. And, to such "copulators", she's made a plea packed with misused Bible verbiage: "Even if you, homosexual, believe you have a legal right to practice homosexuality and to even marry, would you consider ... choosing to 'suffer wrong' and to 'be defrauded'? Would you put away your desires for a greater good, and avoidance of harm?" And would *she* put away her mere *opinion* for the sake of *their* meeting their most basic needs for closest human intimacy?

**The 42<sup>nd</sup> March for Life in Washington was younger and more diverse than ever.** Gallup finds that millennials are more pro-life and supportive of restrictions on abortion than were their parents' generation. No wonder: the *science* for pro-life is increasingly undeniable. March for Life is Washington's biggest annual event.

Again, PLAGAL - Pro-Life Alliance of Gays and Lesbians - was among the hundreds of thousands who marched. Pro-Life Allies (*non-traditional*) along with PLAGAL, were Feminists for Nonviolent Choices, New Wave Feminists, Secular Pro-Life, Democrats for Life of America, Pro-Life Outreach and "And Then There Were None".

**World magazine asks: "Where Are They Now?"**, i.e., *World's* "Daniels of the Year". Since 1998, *World* has selected an annual *Daniel* - "one Christian from the millions around the world

who have put their faith in God and gained the strength to stand up against ungodly trends”.

Along with its 2014 choice, *World* gave “Updates from some past Daniels of the Year”. “Some” includes *every* “Daniel” from 1998 through 2010. Why stop there? Well, the 2011 “Daniel of the Year” was Alan Chambers. He was then head of the Exodus “ex-gay” network. Shortly thereafter, he made an honest public apology for the “dishonoring and unbiblical” damage Exodus had done in promising “deliverance” that was never delivered. Exodus then closed after 37 years of failure to change anyone’s homosexual orientation. *World* apparently won’t apologize.

**It “leads to a dead end” – literally.** This is from yet another ex-“ex-gay” leader. “His death shook me to my core and made all the questions I had been asking even more stark, consequential, and pressing”, Randy Thomas says. Executive Vice President of Exodus when it closed, he writes of the suicide of a friend who’d failed to reconcile his faith and his being gay. Thomas now affirms: “I am gay. I am ok with who I am.”

And Christian Schizzel says that after seven years of “ex-gay” effort through Janet Boynes Ministries and the Bachmann Counseling Centers, he, too, renounces the “ex-gay” treatment he’d advocating. He warns others away from all the misery he went through. “When I was trying to be ‘straight’, I spoke to youth, churches, camps, on television shows and even shot documentaries in hopes of proving my worth to my Christian community and God.” He says he doesn’t want to “be a weapon any more.”

**John Evans, a gentle Christian artist and an early EC supporter, has passed away at 80.** In the early ‘70s, he was in a Bay Area Bible study when a preacher turned it into an “ex-gay” group. Evans soon saw that the false promise did damage, including the suicide of one of the men. Evans left. But it’s taken the “ex-gay” movement four decades to admit the horrible mistake of the “ex-gay” effort. Although its major network closed with apologies, some still push the old double-talk of “change”.

In those early days, Evans had found a copy of *An Evangelical Look at Homosexuality* by Ralph Blair. Evans prayed and then read it. “I was both

shocked and refreshed. ... I had never heard a different point of view from another evangelical Christian.” He and some friends then met with Blair in San Rafael and formed another local chapter of EC.

**An “Ex-Gay” billboard claims: “Nobody is Born Gay”.** The billboard, along I-95 in Virginia, hypes “Identical Twins: One Gay, One Not” and pictures “the twins”. But *they’re not twins*. The “twins” are the *same man*, Kyle Roux, a South African model. And he is *not* an “ex-gay” – he’s *gay!* Roux: “I’ve lived my life openly gay and happy for my entire life.” As a model, he’d simply posed for stock photos 10 years ago.

A spokesman for the billboard’s sponsor, Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays, defended the ad: “The issue isn’t the photo on the billboard, but the actual science”. This retort is *also* misleadingly.

**TLC’s “My Husband’s Not Gay”** is a heartbreaking “reality” show about Mormon men who, although they’re sexually attracted to other men, are in marriages with women who know that the men are attracted to other men. All the couples are LDS friends. One of these husbands rationalizes: “There’s no marriage that is perfect.” One of the wives admits: “I get a little defensive when someone calls my husband gay.”

**They’re 2 to 3 times more likely to end in divorce** – i.e., Mormon marriages of gay men with heterosexual women. This contrasts with the 25 percent of other Mormon couples that divorce. The finding is based in an in-depth survey of 1,612 same-sex attracted Mormons and former Mormons, thought to be the largest study ever conducted with this population. A Utah State University doctoral student, with a retired Brigham Young professor, did the research. More than 70 percent of LGBT Mormons leave the LDS and only 4 percent achieve *integration* of their sexual and religious identities.

**Discordant-orientation marriage doesn’t sound like a great idea to most folks.** It’s certainly not something they desire for themselves. Yet, in a recent blog, a Southern Baptist Seminary grad student interviewed a Christian couple in just such a marriage and asked if they’d *recommend* such a marriage to others. “It’s kinda hard to

answer this question. First of all, many LGBT people really don’t have any desire to pursue a mixed orientation marriage, and there really should be nothing strange about that. ... We know that this path probably isn’t one many LGBT people will take, so nobody should use our story to prescribe an opposite-sex marriage for all LGBT Christians.”

They say they “know that lots of families have been torn apart because one of the spouses wasn’t up-front and honest with the other about his or her orientation. When trust is broken, it’s very often impossible to restore good communication, and we don’t want to minimize how painful and impossible this reality seems in these situations. At the same time, we think that with humility, honesty, support (not only within the marriage, but also drawn from close, same-sex friendships outside the marriage), and consistent communication — all good things for any marriage! — mixed orientation marriage should be reconsidered as a beautiful and viable vocation for non-straight people. It won’t be for many, and that’s fine, but it may be for some. A non-straight orientation can make things somewhat more challenging, but not impossibly so ... as long as the same-sex attracted individual truly loves the opposite sex partner, and neither of them are expecting marriage to be a ‘silver bullet’ solution... because it won’t!”

**The focus of four of “The Top 20 Most-Read Christianity Today Articles of 2014” is homosexuality.** No.14: “Matthew Vines rehashes older gay-friendly arguments for a modern audience. But those arguments still don’t square with Scripture” by Moody Bible Institute teacher and celibate gay, Christopher Yuan. No. 9: “As a leftist Lesbian professor I despised Christians. Then I somehow became one.” by Rosaria Champagne Butterfield. No. 3: “How I came to stop hiding and face the biggest secret of my early life” by Jonathan Merritt. No. 1: World Vision’s decision to hire gays in same-sex marriages and then its quick reversal (two articles by Celeste Gracey and Jeremy Weber).

**“We’re Not the Average Gay Dating Site.”** That’s Compatible Partners, the gay side of eHarmony, founded by Neil Clark Warren, former dean of Fuller Theological Seminary’s Graduate School of Psychology. *The Advocate*, a

major gay magazine, says that the over 200,000 users of Compatible Partners “are seen as quite desirable [because of the site’s] emphasis on long-term relationships”.

Says Warren: “I think this issue of same-sex marriage within the next five to 15 years will be no issue anymore. We’ve made too much of it. I’m tired of it.”

**ISIS is throwing gay men off tall buildings** in the name of Allah. A few survive the fall and are then stoned to

death. But the San Francisco City Council and gay activists there condemned an ad that denounces these Islamist atrocities, preferring to focus their ire on antigay street preachers. Across the Muslim world, though, *death* is the penalty for gays.

AND FINALLY:

**Starbucks uses “sodomite semen” to flavor lattes.** So says a Harlem preacher, James David Manning. Oddly, he’s a graduate of New York’s liberal Union Seminary.

He preaches at Atlah World Missionary Church. He explains that, “a number of people think semen tastes good, and that drinking semen is a good idea”. He says, Starbucks has capitalized on this. Manning claims “sodomites” should be stoned to death. And he points to Chirlane McCray, New York City Mayor Bill DeBlasio’s wife, to prove that homosexuality is “a choice” for, as she’s written, she “identified as a lesbian” in the past.