

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

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After decades of secular media's contemptuous disregard of evangelicals, it celebrates *Christianity Today's* exiting editor-in-chief, Mark Galli, with multiple rounds of thrilled approval and full-throated praise. Galli's antigay stands are overlooked to *adore* his grumpy scolding of those the Left despises: President Trump and his everyday evangelical supporters. It was all so predictable after Galli's exasperated rant, seconded by *CT's* CEO, calling for President Trump's impeachment for what they seem to interpret as the "high crime and misdemeanor" of *his not being a good enough Christian*. Did the defeated candidates of 2016 meet their litmus test of *Christian morality*? Besides, didn't Paul assure Roman Christians who were *persecuted* by *pagan* rulers, that *all* governments exist by God's overarching sovereignty? (Rom 13)

Sadly, Trump's bad habit of boasting is fueled by his early mentoring under Norman Vincent Peale's pop psych "Power of Positive Thinking". Even a Unitarian Democrat, Adlai Stevenson, running against Ike, quipped: "I find Paul appealing, but Peale appalling". Trump gets his *pro-life* position from evangelical supporters and, in the deal, they tolerate his support for *gay rights*.

Galli *et al*, in contempt of Jesus' call to, "Condemn not!" (Matt 7) and the warning of Paul that we'll be judged *by our own harsh standards* imposed on others, do *condemn* Trump (I Cor 5).

In today's PC culture, many can't stand any nuance that leads to maturity. Every human being, politician, spouse, *et al*, is a *mixed-bag*. *Oneself* is a *mixed-bag*! Failing to reckon with this fact, we stumble into disappointment and disgruntled discontent. Trump, for all his flaws, is the first president to speak in person to tens of thousands at the March for Life in Washington, first to put two pro-life Justices onto the Supreme Court, and the first to call on sixty-nine foreign countries to decriminalize homosexuality.

"Mark Galli's Other Morality Play" is a highly respected attorney's response to Galli's call for Trump's impeachment. Charles L. Dalziel, Jr. writes: "Too soon has the reaction to Mark Galli's *Christianity Today* editorial hating on evangelicals for supporting Trump died down. Anyone interested should consider the unbelievably hypocritical Galli article, barely two years earlier in *Christianity Today*, titled, "What to Make of Karl Barth's Adultery."

"Galli's big book as a writer is about Karl Barth – a very, very admiring book. Right after his Barth book was released, longtime rumors were confirmed that Barth had participated in a 13-year affair. He had even moved his lover, his secretary, into his marital home. Galli rationalizes the affair, saying few theologians are actually able to live up to their loftiest ideas. He describes Barth as fighting his battle against adultery unsuccessfully (I'll say), but tells the reader not to discard Barth, instead arguing the very weaknesses of Christian leaders elevate the grandness of their ideas. Galli didn't condemn Barth's prolonged adultery, and said Barth's behavior did not disqualify him from being a theologian. However, Galli concludes that Trump is disqualified from being president by Trump's moral failures. How did our investigative journalists and the conservatives attacking Galli miss this? Galli's having excused Barth for his moral failures while a theologian, is impossible to reconcile with his thoughts on Trump."

Messiah College's John Fea has written, *Believe Me*. It's as anti-Trump as Galli's last editorial as *CT's* editor-in-chief. Fea, too, claims he's concerned for the Gospel, but he gripes that evangelicals, "categorize social and moral issues in hierarchy: Abortion and biblical marriage are at the top of everything else." Yes, evangelicals *do* see infanticide as *atrocious*, but they've

been revising, even reversing, their views on homosexuality and abiding Trump's pro-gay views. But, in Fea's frame, "It's amazing the trade-off ... to tolerate all the immoral things [Trump] does because ... he's going to fight for us on abortion. He's going to fight for us on religious liberties."

"Respect for others is an indication of one's own self-understanding." Mennonite pastor and biblical scholar, Myron Augsburger, makes this point in his commentary on Matthew's gospel. On Matthew 5:1ff, he writes: "The awareness of the complexity of our own lives and the limitations of our own nature should help us to be more considerate and understanding of others. This does not mean that, by an attitude of acceptance toward others, we are thereby endorsing their practice. But we can be discerning without being judgmental. The approach of love is to use personal power or privilege to benefit another. ... Jesus asks His disciples to avoid censoriousness. ... In the first place, we only know in part and never fully understand all of the issues involved or the motives of the person. Second, we cannot be completely impartial, for we have emotional identifications that are often subconscious which affect our judgment. ... Third, only God is competent to judge another in His holiness and understanding."

Mark Galli's critics ask, "How many of the Trump Administration's fine achievements did Galli consider, but decided to ditch, in order to call for the President's impeachment?"

President Trump has had to contend with the daily distraction of his enemies' ongoing threat of impeachment since even before his inauguration. Yet, in spite of these constant attacks, almost 4 million new jobs have been created, more Americans are now *employed* than ever before, *unemployment* is at a 49-year low, median household income is at its *highest* ever, the rates

of *unemployment* among African-Americans, Hispanics, and Asian-Americans have been cut to the *lowest* rate ever, and women's *unemployment* has reached its *lowest* rate in 65 years. Youth *unemployment* has hit its *lowest* rate in nearly half a century. We've had the *lowest unemployment* rate ever recorded for Americans without a high school diploma. Veterans' *unemployment* has reached its *lowest* rate in nearly 20 years. About 3.9 million Americans have been lifted off of food stamps. Middle-class and lower-income Americans' personal finances have improved at a far faster rate than wealthier Americans, contrary to the anti-Trump tropes. His First Step program gives thousands of federal prisoners an opportunity for early release and reentry into law-abiding lives.

The Pledge to America's Workers has resulted in employers committing to train more than 4 million Americans. Ninety-five percent of US manufacturers are optimistic about the future – more than ever before. Retail sales surged up another 6 percent over last year. Trump signed the *biggest* tax cuts in history, resulting in an immediate return of over \$300 billion. Small business will now have the lowest top marginal tax rate in more than 80 years.

Approval of the Keystone XL and the Dakota Access Pipelines was achieved. Record numbers of regulations were eliminated. Regulatory relief for community banks and credit unions was achieved. More affordable healthcare options are now available. The FDA approved more affordable generic drugs than ever before and many drug companies are now freezing or reversing price increases that had been planned. Medicare reform now stops hospitals from overcharging seniors for drugs. Right-To-Try legislation was signed. \$6 billion in new funding to fight the opioid epidemic has reduced high-dose opioid prescriptions by 16 percent. The VA Choice and Accountability Acts expanded VA telehealth services, walk-in-clinics, and same-day urgent primary and mental health care. The anti-coal plan was overturned. American coal exports have been increased by 60 percent and our oil production reached an all-time high. The US is now a net natural gas exporter for the first time since 1957. The US left the job-killing Paris Climate Accord.

\$700 billion in military funding was secured; \$716 billion next year.

Since 2016, our NATO allies are now spending \$69 billion more for their part in NATO. The Space Force, a 6th branch of the US Armed Forces, is in preparation. The Trump Administration confirmed more circuit court judges than any other new administration in history. Two fine Supreme Court justices were confirmed. The US has withdrawn from the dangerously unfair Iran Deal. Trump moved our US Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem to represent our support for the only democracy in the Middle East. Trump's anti-terrorist travel ban was upheld by the Supreme Court. He issued an Executive Order to keep Guantanamo Bay open. He concluded the successful U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement to replace NAFTA. Agreement with the EU increases US exports. Imposed tariffs on foreign steel and aluminum have been imposed for our national security. Tariffs on China in response to China's forced technology transfer, intellectual property theft, and chronically abusive trade practices have been imposed. Net exports are on track to increase by \$59 billion this year. Major improvements in vetting and screening of refugees have been achieved and progress has been made on the southern border wall. There is Arab support for Trump's innovative Mideast plan for a Palestinian State alongside Israel as Ambassadors from Bahrain, Oman and the UAE endorse it and Jordan and Lebanon see "little outrage" over it. The Saudis now see Israelis as much better partners than the Palestinians.

Gallup reports significant improvement in America's satisfaction on various issues between January 2017, when President Trump was inaugurated, and January 2020. For example, on the economy, satisfaction has moved from 46% to 68%, on race relations, from 22% to 36%, on income distribution, from 35% to 43%, and from ways to get ahead, from 66% to 72%.

"In 2019, the US saw the biggest decline in energy-related CO₂ emissions on a country basis – a fall of 140 Mt, or 2.9%, to 4.8 Gt," The International Energy Agency reports: "US emissions are now down almost 1 Gt from their peak in 2000, the largest absolute decline by any country."

In 2020, "millions of religious conservatives will approach their votes with a political realism", notes Andrew Walker at *National Review*, ignoring Trump's "uncouth speech and incessantly immature tweets" for First Amendment matters and the life of preborn babies.

For Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Vice-President Mike Pence was in Memphis, at the Holy City Church of God in Christ, a large black Pentecostal congregation. After Pence spoke briefly and had taken his seat in the congregation, Bishop Jerry Wayne Taylor, founder and pastor of the church, preached the day's sermon. During his sermon, Taylor referred to homosexuality as a "demonic spirit". Although this antigay statement was the bishop's opinion, not anything Pence had said in his remarks, the news media immediately condemned Pence for what the bishop said, and LGBTQQ lobbies picked it up and joined in the attack on Pence.

A conservative Christian Republican in Kentucky's State Senate is the lead sponsor of a bill to ban "ex-gay therapy" on minors. Sen. Alice Forgy Kerr calls so-called "ex-gay" therapy, "religion gone bad". She says, it's "torture." She says being gay, "can't be fixed and it shouldn't be fixed. In my Christian faith, I was taught that we are all fearfully and wonderfully made, and I believe that very strongly." She has two sons, 33 and 31. The younger son is gay.

A Southwestern Baptist Seminary professor claims he was fired for calling attention to Southern Baptists' same-sex abuse. Responding to this, a professor at the Ohio Theological Institute, a new and independent mission in that state, observes that, in the Southern Baptist Convention, "homosexuality is such a bogeyman, noted for its eight year boycott of Disney for 'promotion of a gay agenda' that any mention of same-sex sexual contact is rife with enough shame and stigma to prevent reporting of same-sex abuse." He urges: "It's time to get over ourselves. Instead of virtue-signaling to those in our camp the staunchness of our disapproval of homosexuality, the SBC should demonstrate our desire to follow Jesus in caring for the op-

pressed. Our love for our fellow humans should surpass our hatred of anything we are against. In short, it's time to stop demonizing gayness. Let's instead focus on treating all people as humans made in God's image, as worthy of dignity and respect as such."

The United Methodist Church is splitting organizationally over issues of same-sex marriage and same-sex clergy. A 16-member team of UMC bishops has developed a plan that allows for a new Methodist denomination to be formed apart from UMC's pro-LGBTQQ congregations. For decades, Methodists have been fighting over these sexuality issues without any consensus.

Under this separation arrangement, congregations that leave will keep their church properties, pastors who leave will take their pensions with them, and the continuing denomination will give \$25 million to the new denomination to help establish it as a separate denomination.

Back in the 19th and 20th centuries, controversies over slavery and racial segregation prompted more hostile splits between the Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians of the South and the Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians of the North.

Church historian Carl R. Trueman quite reasonably finds it strange that now, the United Methodists have split up over differences about homosexuality while, for a very long time, conservative Methodists have tolerated the radically liberal theological leanings in UMC leadership on the most basic biblical issues, such as Jesus Christ's deity and his bodily resurrection. Commenting in *First Things*, he effectively argues: "To fight over same-sex marriage while tolerating heresy on foundational doctrines is to make oneself vulnerable to the charge of being motivated less by fidelity to the Christian faith and more by homophobia. I am not saying that the UMC conservatives are motivated by homophobia, of course; but I am saying that, after so much else has been allowed to pass without division, making same-sex marriage the hill upon which to die does render such an accusation plausible."

Salem Books will publish Jack Phillips' story this summer. He is the

owner of Masterpiece Cakeshop bakery in Colorado. In 2012, he declined to design one of his intricately artistic custom-made cakes to celebrate a *gay wedding*, because he has a conscientious objection to celebrating such a union, based in his reading of the Bible. He was willing to sell this couple any regular cake in his shop. But they sued him instead of simply taking their special order to some other local baker. The matter was taken up by the Colorado Civil Rights Commission and it ruled against Phillips. The case was finally appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which, in 2018, voted 7-2 that Phillips' rights under the First Amendment had been violated. The Court found that the Colorado Civil Rights Commission's decision was impermissible hostile to religion.

Louie Crew, founder of Integrity, the Episcopal LGBT support group, has passed away at 82. He'd grown up in the segregationist South where a "mixed-race" marriage, such as he and Earnest had for over 40 years, would have targeted them for murder – even apart from the gay part. Earnest was with Louie when he died. A Rutgers University English professor for many years, he also taught at colleges in China. He was a longtime friend of EC. His essay, "Gays and God's Love", in *Christianity and Crisis*, was reviewed in *EC's Review* for the Fall of 1987.

Franklin Graham's UK appearances have been cancelled by venue operators, citing his "hatred" of gays. He denies that he hates gays and he's looking for other, even bigger, venues in Glasgow, Sheffield, Newport, London, Birmingham, Newcastle and Liverpool, for June.

Names of over 900 Roman Catholic priests were left off of lists of some 5,300 credibly accused child sex abusers according to an Associated Press investigation. But, without a priest's *admitting* guilt, the dioceses must protect the reputations of priests falsely accused.

Pope Francis has rejected the Latin American bishops' recommending married priests. The Amazon region is facing a significant shortage of priests.

The Latter-day Saints have pulled 400,000 Mormon youths out of Boy Scouts of America. This decision finally comes after the BSA's welcoming of openly gay boys, girls, and gay adult volunteers into this over a century-old youth program. Mormon boys will now join an LDS youth program.

The Boy Scouts of America, facing hundreds of child-sex-abuse claims, has filed for bankruptcy. The BSA took this step to help compensate victims of abuse and to keep the BSA going. It was hit with a \$20 million verdict in one case and several states have passed laws giving alleged victims more time to sue. Since its founding in 1910, 130 million boys have taken part in Boy Scouts.

Bemoaning the destructiveness of widespread divorce, the Presbyterian Church in America concludes that, "cohabitation, offers no solution to that problem. If anything, living together before marriage makes the problem worse". Yet, as the antigay PCA denomination permits no legally committed *same-sex* marriage among its *same-sex* oriented folks, the only option for *same-sex* couples in the PCA is to live together without the advantages of marriage – and, no doubt, for practical purposes, to keep their relationship a secret, lest the PCA kick them out of the church. PCA leaves no room for even *celibate* gay members to call themselves "gay".

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has prevented entry into the US by the antigay Tanzanian government official, Paul Makonda, who has led crackdowns against Tanzanian homosexuals.

Zambian President Lungu has expelled Daniel Foote, U.S. Ambassador to Zambia, for his criticism of Zambia's harsh prison sentences for homosexuality. Foote was appointed Ambassador to Zambia by President Trump in 2017. President Lungu told Zambia's state TV: "We don't want such people in our midst. We want him gone." Besides Zambia's oppression of homosexuals, the government is rife with political and financial corruption.

"Jesus is a Faggot" is a French performer's foul-mouthed lampoon of a

song called, “Jesus is Coming Back”. LGBT activists are offending themselves over this, so France’s Radio Inter apologized for the “homophobia”. However, here’s a comment on Facebook: “Apologies to the LBGTQWXYZ crowd but not to the Christians, typical. I’m not religious but that is taking the mick. If it said ‘Mohammed is a Faggot’ there would have been mass outrage from the left and burning and looting and pillaging, heads would have literally rolled. [Christians] are seen as an easy target, with not a peep from anyone not Christian.”

What’s what on gender dysphoria? Psychiatrist Ken Zucker of the University of Toronto and editor of *Archives of Sexual Behaviour* is a major authority on the topic. He approaches this *holistically*, i.e., not as a matter of mere “identity”, ideology or political correctness. Dynamics in a family, autism, depression, anxiety, etc. can well be involved. He challenges the notion that, just because children as young as 3 say they “want to be a boy” or “want to be a girl”, contrary to their natal sex, doesn’t require adults to jump to accommodating their immature wishes. Yet, wise “watchful waiting” rather than premature decision making is typically dismissed as “transphobic” by angry trans activists who denounce Zucker is an enemy of their “freedom”.

Gender dysphoria can suddenly appear as a *social contagion* in any schoolroom where another kid claims it. Research physician Lisa Littman of Brown University finds that, for many teenage girls, identifying as trans is a maladaptive coping mechanism for girls with *other* problems.

A Canadian court has ruled that a transgender teenager should be able to receive hormone therapy without both parents’ approval. This British Columbia Court of Appeals ruled in favor of a 15-year-old female who identifies as male. “While of course [the father] is fully entitled to his opinions and beliefs, he cannot forget that [the teen], now a mature 15-year-old, with the support of his [*sic*] mother and his [*sic*] medical advisors, has chosen a course of action that includes not only hormone treatment, but a legal change of his [*sic*] name and gender identity,” according to the Court’s ruling. The

Court also said that the father must acknowledge and refer to his child as *male* and exclusively use *male* pronouns.

A 23-year-old convicted sex offender in Iowa may soon be released from a correctional facility since he now identifies as a woman and has received female hormones. The Office of the Attorney General says that, as a *transgender woman* with less male testosterone fueling the sex drive, “she” isn’t as likely to reoffend. Before transitioning, he may have molested as many as 15 kids of both genders, all under 13.

The US Supreme Court has announced that it would not review a Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that Texas had no obligation to provide gender confirmation surgery to a transgender prisoner. Circuit Judge James Ho, wrote the majority opinion in a 2-1 decision. The Fifth Circuit found that transgender inmate “offered no evidence” that there was “universal acceptance” in the medical community that gender confirmation surgery was either necessary or effective as a treatment for gender dysphoria. Given the difference of opinion among medical experts, denying treatment was understood to be neither cruel nor unusual.

New York City’s Health Department now permits nonbinary death certificates for the deceased who identified as neither male nor female or identified as both. New York’s nonbinary birth certificates have been permitted since 2018.

A retired US Army soldier who, in 2016, was the first American to obtain legal recognition as “non-binary” in terms of gender, explains that he has now “returned to his male birth sex” and is now, along with many other *former* trans claimers, a vocal critic of the entire concept of “gender identity”. James Shupe now describes the “non-binary” designation as “psychologically harmful legal fiction”. He hopes his decision will prevent others from making the mistake he made. He says: “The charade of not being male, the legal fiction, it’s over. The lies behind my fictitious sex changes, something I shamefully participated in, first to female, and then to non-binary,

have been forever exposed. A truthful accounting of events has replaced the deceit that allowed me to become America’s first legally non-binary person. The legal record has now been corrected and LGBT advocates are no longer able to use my historic non-binary court order to advance their toxic agenda. I am and have always been male. That is my biological truth.”

Harry Potter author J. K. Rowling, who knows a thing or two about the difference between fantasy and reality, is getting backlash for defending Maya, a woman who was fired by a British think tank for expressing her defense of biological reality. She posted her comments on Twitter, criticizing the UK government for letting people self-identify by their chosen gender.

Rowling tweeted: “Dress however you please. Call yourself whatever you like. Sleep with any consenting adult who’ll have you. Live your best life in peace and security. But force women out of their jobs for stating that sex is real? #IstandWithMaya.”

Maya Forsater had tweeted her agreement with Fair Play for Women, a feminist group that opposes allowing biological men into women’s sports. She said, “Radically expanding the legal definition of ‘women’ so that it can include both males and females makes it a meaningless concept, and will undermine women’s rights & protections for vulnerable women & girls.”

After being fired, she filed a complaint with an employment tribunal and alleged that she was discriminated against on the basis of her beliefs. The tribunal rejected her claim. In a lengthy judgment issued in December, Judge James Tayler ruled that her view is “not worthy of respect in a democratic society.” Failing to recognize *his* undemocratic absolutism, he called her view “absolutist” and “incompatible with human dignity and fundamental rights of others.”

AND FINALLY:

Bill Maher ridicules Elizabeth Warren’s plan to have a transgender child vet her nominee for Secretary of Education. He smirks that this is an example of what Obama called “crazy stuff”.