



# Christian View of the News



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## "THANKS TO GOD"

This is my favorite Thanksgiving hymn:

Thanks to God for my Redeemer;  
Thanks for all Thou dost provide;  
Thanks for times now but a mem'ry;  
Thanks for Jesus, by my side;  
Thanks for pleasant, balmy springtime;  
Thanks for dark and dreary fall,  
Thanks for tears by now forgotten;  
Thanks for peace within my soul.

Thanks for prayers that Thou hast answered,  
Thanks for what Thou dost deny!  
Thanks for storms that I have weathered;  
Thanks for all Thou dost supply!  
Thanks for pain, and thanks for pleasure,  
Thanks for comfort in despair,  
Thanks for grace that none can measure,  
Thanks for love beyond compare.

Thanks for roses by the wayside,  
Thanks for thorns their stems contain!  
Thanks for home and thanks for fireside,  
Thanks for hope, that sweet refrain.  
Thanks for joy and thanks for sorrow,  
Thanks for heavenly peace with Thee,  
Thanks for hope in the tomorrow,  
Thanks through all eternity.

- J. A. Hultman

### SOCIALISM: THE PILGRIMS' FIRST PROGRAM

The Pilgrims, to whom we attribute many of our Thanksgiving traditions, arrived in America in November 1620. For all intents and purposes, winter had already set in along the windy, sandy coast of Cape Cod.

There was hardly any time for forage for food before the first snows came, let alone plant and harvest a crop. For the next six months, the Pilgrims lived from hand-to-mouth, surviving on handfuls of meal, shell-fish, and dried Indian corn they had found.

With spring came a new lease on life. The woods were filled with turkeys and deer, the seacoast abundant with lobsters and clams. Not exactly the English beef and ale the Pilgrims craved, but enough to keep them alive and even healthy.

But the economic system the Pilgrims chose offered little hope beyond one or two summers. Here's how it worked. Everyone would

be required to bring all that he had produced into the common storehouse; each family would receive a ration of supplies appropriate to its size. Such a system could have been taken right out of Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need."

The Pilgrims, in essence, were trying socialism.

William Bradford, the governor of Plymouth Colony, had misgivings but they promised their financial backers in London that they would follow this "common course." Moreover, they were Christians, and could somehow make it work.

The program failed miserably. Writing in his History of Plymouth Plantation, Bradford described the situation: "This community [of property] was found to breed much confusion and discontent and retarded much employment that would have been to their benefit and comfort." Women objected to working for men who were not their husbands, the elderly objected to having to work as hard as the young men, and the young men objected to having to work harder than the women and elderly.

It was a system based on a false view of human nature.

Providentially, the Pilgrims knew their Bibles -- a knowledge that helped them lay "the cornerstone of a nation," as Longfellow put it. The Bible speaks of the importance of private property, of individual initiative, of the sinfulness of man, and of the economic importance of the family as opposed to the state or church.

And so, under Bradford's leadership, the Pilgrims abandoned their "common course." It was either change or perish. The common storehouse was closed, and each family was assigned their personal plot of land.

Immediately, men and women increased their production.

"This had very good success," Bradford wrote, "for it made all hands very industrious, so as much more corn was planted that otherwise would have been by any means the governor or any other could use, and saved him a great deal of trouble, and for better content."

When harvest came, "instead of famine, now God gave them plenty, and the face of things was changed. . . so as any general want or famine hath not been amongst them since this day." By 1625,

Plymouth Colony was the only self-sustaining colony in the New World. America's subsequent cornucopias of plenty have been due to the philosophy that saved the colony from extinction. - Robert Peterson

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## THANKSGIVING DAY - USA - 2008

In the past century, there are many nations and peoples who have tried Socialism. It hasn't worked, as proven by our Pilgrim fathers. In fact, where tried it has brought division, strife and misery.

Our new President-elect was trained to believe in it and appears to want to experiment with it. We need to pray for him as Scripture tells us. Pray for his salvation and that he will be prevented from using this failed system on our nation. - N.P:

Dr. Albert Mohler suggested that: We must commit ourselves to pray for this new President, for his wife and family, for his administration, and for the nation. We are commanded to pray for rulers, and this new President faces challenges that are not only daunting but potentially disastrous. May God grant him wisdom. He and his family will face new challenges and the pressures of this office. May God protect them, give them joy in their family life, and hold them close together.

We must pray that God will protect this nation even as the new President settles into his role as Commander in Chief, and that God will grant peace as he leads the nation through times of trial and international conflict and tension.

We must pray that God would change President-Elect Obama's mind and heart on issues of our crucial concern. May God change his heart and open his eyes to see abortion as the murder of the innocent unborn, to see marriage as an institution to be defended, and to see a host of issues in a new light. We must pray this from this day until the day he leaves office. God *is* sovereign, after all.

Without doubt, we face hard days ahead. Realistically, we must expect to be frustrated and disappointed. We may find ourselves to be defeated and discouraged. We must keep ever in mind that it is God who raises up nations and pulls them down, and who judges both nations and rulers. We must not act or think as unbelievers, or as those who do not trust God.

America has chosen a President. President-Elect Barack Obama is that choice, and he faces a breathtaking array of challenges and choices in the days ahead. This is the time for Christians to begin praying in earnest for our new President. There is no time to lose. - AlbertMohler.com, 11/5/08

## MEDIA & MCCAIN IGNORED KEY ISSUES

The pundits are already at it, saying that conservatism is dead. But Barack Obama and Joe Biden were elected in large part because they managed, in the face of all evidence, to run to the right of McCain-Palin.

Obama-Biden pretended they weren't much different from social conservatives. In fact, they didn't look much different from fiscal conservatives, either, and played the bogus "tax cut" card better than McCain. They got away with it for two reasons:

1) The McCain-Palin campaign was so busy being Democrat Lite "mavericks" that they refused to raise issues that would have given voters a stark moral choice.

2) The media were happy to ignore the disconnect between the Obama rhetoric and his radical policies and associates. They had the perfect excuse: If the McCain campaign doesn't make an issue of these things, why should we?

Exit polls showed that at least 60 percent of voters said the economy was the most important issue. That makes sense when the stock market is bucking like a mechanical bull, digging a deep pit. Meanwhile, the media are blaming the government-driven mortgage collapse on (take your pick) Republicans or "the free market." McCain-Palin responded by talking about Wall Street "greed" and "greedy" oil companies. This is the language of envy, and the GOP is not in the

same league with Democrats when it comes to stoking the sin of coveting. "Did we mention we're mavericks?"

Given the media's Obama infatuation and the McCain campaign's insistence on sticking to a losing script until the last days, it's little wonder that many voters decided to "make history" with the first African-American president. A lot of Americans regardless of party are proud of this, although many would rather it was Michael Steele, Alan Keyes or anyone without the radical resume of Barack Obama.

Absent from the campaign coverage were potent issues like judicial activism, marriage, abortion, gun control, cultural depravity, and illegal immigration. Some of these were triggered by rogue judges, and resulted in state initiatives. As the Committee for Justice's Curt Levey observes, "Even if McCain and his GOP colleagues were squeamish about tackling these controversial issues directly, they could have used the judges issue to tap into the conservative leanings of voters. . . ."

The media made it all about Obama's historic ascendance and McCain's and Palin's quirks and fumbles.

Part of the blame should go to the conservative talking heads who ignored the social issues. In a sort of reverse Marxist vision of man as just an economic animal, they could go on for days about the economy and never once mention the Left's concerted attack on marriage and family. Some did explore Obama's ties to William Ayers, Jeremiah Wright and other radicals, but few expounded on the gross immorality of Obama's anti-family agenda.

When people elect a president, they naturally think about their own economic situation, but they are also sizing up a leader's character. When Obama's integrity deficits came into focus, McCain was quick to disparage the source. It's one thing to encourage civility, and McCain gets points for that. It's another thing to keep people in the dark out of fear that the media will make you appear "mean," for conveying inconvenient truths. If there had been a Swift Boat Veterans-type effort exposing Obama's record, McCain probably would have torpedoed them for their trouble.

Given the thin gruel of dueling tax policies, many voters of conservative bent took the media's cue and yawned. Numbers quickly become a bore, especially in an age of text messaging and Saturday Night Live impersonations.

Amid scant media coverage, marriage protection amendments won in California, Florida and Arizona. So much for the end of traditional values. Arizona's vote even reversed the 2006 rejection of a measure protecting marriage, the one ballot victory that gay activists have ever achieved on this issue. In Florida, the measure passed with 62 percent, even as the state went for Obama. In 2004, a marriage amendment sealed Ohio's 20 electoral votes for George W. Bush. This time around, there was no Ohio marriage amendment on the ballot. Even if there had been, McCain might have ignored it as he did the one in Florida, where he forfeited a golden opportunity to reveal his opponents as captive to the radical gay lobby. At the least, McCain could have outed Obama as a man who says one thing and does another.

When the media ignore important issues, it is up to the candidate to raise them. But McCain was so busy distancing himself from Bush that his own "change" theme was barely distinguishable from Obama's.

How many voters knew that Obama/Biden have called for overturning the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and opposed California's marriage amendment? "Obiden" came off as marriage defenders while doing everything possible to undermine marriage law. None of this came up in the three presidential debates. Vice presidential moderator Gwen Ifill gave Sarah Palin at least two chances to draw

the distinction. Instead, Palin astoundingly indicated that the two tickets had little disagreement on the issue. That must have had them high-fiving at Democrat campaign headquarters.

Palin's dodge also undoubtedly pleased the homosexual activist Log Cabin Republicans, which boasts all of 20,000 members. McCain strategist Steve Schmidt met earlier with Log Cabin operatives and gushed over their agenda. No wonder very few Christian conservatives felt motivated to match the zeal of Obama supporters. Let the Log Cabin crew pick up the slack.

On the abortion issue, Obama has the most radical record of any U.S. senator or presidential candidate in history. His role in killing the Illinois version of the Born Alive Infant Protection Act puts him to the left of the abortion lobby, NARAL Pro-Choice America, which stayed neutral. Obama has pledged as president to sign the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA), which would sweep away any regulations on abortion in all 50 states. This would include bans on partial-birth abortions and even parental notification before minors are taken to abortion clinics. The media were able to ignore all this because the McCain-Palin campaign ignored it. The media shamelessly shilled for Barack Obama. But they had a lot of help in this campaign -- from the invertebrate wing of the GOP. - Robert Knight, *townhall.com*, 11/5/08

### AMERICA'S PROBLEM: PRESIDENT OR PULPIT

I was a little apprehensive about waking up on Wednesday morning. After all, America had willingly elected the most liberal president in our history. As I opened one eye, I turned to my wife who was slightly more awake than I was and said, "Well, honey, we just elected a proud socialist as president and the sun still came up!" I was being a little facetious -- but only a little.

For months there will be endless and minute examinations of what went wrong in this election. Conservatives will find numerous targets of blame and there will be enough people thrown under the proverbial "bus" to keep the ride bumpy for a long, long time. All of that is proper and necessary. Indeed, something went terribly wrong in the election. While continuing to vote for the sanctity of marriage in several key contests, Americans elected a president who will enthusiastically undermine that sacred union. While waving American flags and singing the national anthem -- they elected someone who will probably undermine the flag and freedoms our national anthem praises. But the sun still came up. While I am deeply concerned about the future of America under the leadership of an Obama administration, I am far more concerned about another institution.

A friend of mine reminded me recently of an extremely important Biblical principle. When studying the history of God's people you cannot escape one glaring truth -- God's people often survived poor and even evil kings. Jump into your time machine and open the door at just about any time you desire and you will find God's people under the rule of a less than desirable government. Israel endured one evil king after another. The early church not only endured but flourished under the rule of a totally pagan and corrupt Roman civil government. Of course there was suffering and sacrifice during those regimes but God's people survived. Here is what they could not survive: weak preaching and weak preachers! Israel suffered but survived the bad kings, but they totally self-destructed when the prophets and preachers compromised their message.

In my regular readings, I recently came across again the warnings God issued to the "shepherds" of Israel in Ezekiel 34. God reserves some of the harshest language in scripture for His prophets who compromised the message He had given them. "Thus saith the Lord God; behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my

flock at their hand . . . (v. 10). God dealt with the kings ("the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord" Prov. 21:1) and put one up and put another down. God reserved his most severe criticism for the preachers of the day, the pulpit.

As this election is diced, sliced and dissected, don't underestimate the role of America's pulpits in the outcome. Within the last four years the "evangelical left" has risen meteorically to a place of influence and prominence. Where evangelicals were once known for principle and conviction, under the influence of Jim Wallis and other emergent leaders -- the evangelical community succumbed to compromise and a sort of "justice" that no one can define.

Pulpits that once held high the banner of the gospel, standing strong for life and the family, started preaching equality and "common good." The Kool-Aid of "Social-Justice" was dispensed freely from fountains installed in Evangelical churches across America. The result? Hundreds of thousands of evangelical Christians marched into voting booths and pulled the lever for increased abortions, homosexual unions, socialism, loss of religious freedom and Marxism because the pulpit told them that it was okay because in doing so they would be ending poverty, homelessness and AIDS -- not to mention the end of racial division and the beginning of world peace! How could Christians be so easily deceived when it is abundantly clear that socialism has never delivered anything it has promised? Look no further than the pulpit.

America *can* survive a bad president. America *cannot* survive continued compromise in her pulpits. The solution to America's greatest need is not in the next election -- but in next Sunday's sermon. - Bob Burney, *townhall.com*, 11/06/08

### CHRISTIAN PREACHING DEBASED

Christian preaching continues to be debased as evangelical pastors resort to all sorts of gimmickry to attract and retain members. Evangelicalism simply refuses to let lost people walk away, says expositor Mark Minnick, pastor of Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Greenville, S.C. Minnick contrasts evangelicalism's *modus operandi* with Jesus' treatment of the rich young ruler in Matthew 19. The ruler came asking what he could do to inherit eternal life, but when he refused Jesus' command, Jesus let him go.

Many evangelical churches are so audience-and results-driven that they simply will not do what Jesus did, says Minnick. They will not, like a herald, simply repeat the words of the sovereign. Instead they turn their services into a showcase for music and entertainment borrowed from the worst elements of culture -- in order to keep all comers coming.

Or they turn to inanity. One church recently enjoyed a series of messages based on Dr. Seuss books. After a multimedia show summarizing a Seuss story about a patient elephant named Horton, the pastor told his people thoughtfully, "Horton is such a great example of the faithfulness of God." The pastor's sermon was interrupted by the children's pastor, impersonating a vegetable, who wildly and irreverently told the story of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. The sermon was as shallow as the church is big. - *What In The World*, Vol. 45, #10

### AMERICANS EMBRACE CHILDISH UNITY

The Great Election of 2008 is over. Barack Obama is the 44th President of the United States. Now is the time to ask what this election was about.

Here's what this election was *not* about: Barack Obama. It was not about his record: He didn't have one. It was not about his views, which are radical in the extreme. It was not about his associations:

Americans didn't care about Wright, Ayers, or Khalidi. The media didn't want Americans to know about Obama. Obama didn't want Americans to know about Obama. And Americans didn't want to know about Obama.

This election was not about John McCain. No one cared about McCain, except the liberal media that nominated him president after one win in New Hampshire.

This election was not about President George W. Bush. Bush was used as a punching bag by both sides -- and by election time, he was completely irrelevant.

And this election was certainly not about the issues. In the general election, Barack Obama campaigned as a centrist, titulary abandoning his more extreme positions to do so. He lied about his policies. And no one cared.

This election was about one thing and one thing only: Americans' puerile need for unity through self-congratulatory, cathartic membership in a broad, transformative political movement.

For eight years, Americans have been engaged in hostile politics. And after eight years, Americans were sick of it.

That isn't to America's credit. Hostile politics -- hard-fought political conflict over the issues that matter -- is not a bad thing. It is precisely the sort of messy republicanism the founders embraced. Early elections were replete with mudslinging, character assassination, brawls and scandals. They were also replete with some of the most substantive debate on policy ever put before mankind.

Apparently, we're no longer interested in the dirty business of politics. We'd rather feel ourselves part of a high-minded movement. Not the sort of movement that espouses particular policies -- not the antiwar movement, or the pro-life movement -- those movements are too divisive. We want to be part of a movement that is solely about us.

Barack Obama was the vessel for that movement. He was an utter cipher. But he embodied the need of the American public for unity by hearkening back to the ultimate unifying feature of American life: third-grade slogans. He spouted Hope and Change. He told us, "We're all Americans." He told us, "Yes, We Can."

From any other politician, it would be ridiculous drivel. From a black candidate, it was inspiring. Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson didn't talk like that -- they spoke the language of division. Because Obama spoke the language of unity, he had to be a moderate. So went our logic.

Barack Obama had us from the moment he said, "Hope." In that moment, Obama accomplished two simultaneous transformations. First, he transformed himself into a moderate. Second, he transformed himself into a messianic figure, the object of our longing: the physical embodiment of America's progression beyond racial conflict. If America wanted to move beyond conflict, what better way than to embrace a candidate who could end all racial conflict?

And the Obama campaign subtly played on this theme. They implied that if we voted against him, we were engaging in racial hatred; some supporters even implied America would undergo a race war if he lost. That's the last thing we wanted.

We wanted to feel good again. That is what the Great Election of 2008 was about. It was about Americans' desire to feel a part of Something Larger. To do something together, as Americans. In today's day and age, that Something Larger cannot be the America Ronald Reagan preached about -- the left has attacked that America as racist, sexist, and selfish. That Something Larger had to be an individual who could provide us with the feeling of unity.

Barack Obama told us that we could do Something Larger simply by voting for him. When he said, "Yes We Can," and we followed

by screaming it, chanting it, shouting his name in unison, we were Doing Something Larger. We were uniting.

America has always recognized that unity for its own sake is useless at best and dangerous at worst. Unifying behind a mysterious charismatic figure promising transformational change may make us feel good, but it is a betrayal of the open and honest governmental debate our Founding Fathers sought and so many Americans have fought and died to preserve.

Americans think they grew up during Election 2008. They think they moved beyond the past. In one way they did. In another, more important way, they regressed dramatically -- to a time before politics mattered. In the next four years, there will be plenty of growing up to do. -- Ben Shapiro, *townhall.com*, 11/06/08

## MOSLEMS (1925): TEMPLE MOUNT IS JEWISH

Since the 1990s there has been an Islamic campaign to deny that Israel ever had a temple in Jerusalem. This Temple Denial is intended to delegitimize Israel's claim to the city. In *The Fight for Jerusalem*, Dore Gold describes the rapid spread of this propaganda: "Temple Denial spread across the Middle East like wildfire from the editorial pages of *al-Jazirah* in Saudi Arabia to well-funded international seminars in the United Arab Emirates. . . Temple Denial found fertile ground in the Arab world's universities, particularly those with a more radical Islamist perspective, where it would affect an entirely new generation." Gold gives many evidences for the Jewish temple in Jerusalem including Josephus' testimony, the Arch of Titus in Rome, and items that have been recovered such as temple plaques and coins. . . .

Now there is new evidence. The Jewish Temple Institute recently acquired a copy of a 1925 guidebook published by the Supreme Moslem Council, which states the following: "Its identity with the site of Solomon's Temple is beyond dispute. This, too, is the spot, according to universal belief, on which 'David built there an altar unto the Lord'" (Arutz Sheva, Sept. 2, 2008). In March 2008, the Israel Antiquities Authority announced that for the first time in the history of archaeological research, remains from Solomon's Temple have been found close to the Temple Mount. . . .

Excavations done over the past two years have uncovered a "magnificent colonnaded street from the 2nd century" that sits directly on top of the layer from the First Temple period, thus having protected it from plunder in later periods. - *Christian News*, 10/6/08

## PROTECT AND DEFEND

President-elect Barack Obama said on election night that "change has come to America." Though the next commander in chief has yet to announce exactly how he will do it, he clearly intends to change the commitments, capabilities and cost of America's military.

--**Commitments:** Candidate Obama made "ending the war and getting out of Iraq" the centerpiece of his foreign policy platform from the very beginning of his campaign two years ago. He never has recanted on his goal of "bringing our troops home within 16 months of taking office." He is also adamant that more U.S. and NATO troops are needed in Afghanistan.

Thanks to the courage and perseverance of young Americans in flak jackets, helmets and flight suits, the campaign against radical Islam in Mesopotamia is all but over. Iraqi soldiers and police now carry out most combat operations against Sunni and Shiite terrorists and militias. A phased pullout from Iraq will indeed free up U.S. combat units for Afghanistan, where they are needed. . . .

Let's hope that before he pulls the plug on the "Land Between the Rivers" the new commander in chief will listen carefully to the

counsel of Gens. David Petraeus and Ray Odierno in Iraq and David McKiernan in Afghanistan. Making decisions now about force dispositions after inauguration may well placate his far-left base but could well prove disastrous for the nation.

**--Capabilities:** Even before the election, leading Democrats in the House and Senate were prognosticating a "transformation" in U.S. defense capabilities. The two most recent Democratic presidents made similar promises. When Jimmy Carter came to office, he all but eliminated our human intelligence capabilities and ordered an across-the-board reduction of 15 percent in everything from ships to planes to "end strength" -- the number of soldiers, sailors, airmen, guardsmen and Marines in the services.

Bill Clinton did the same thing, only bigger. Half the Army's divisions disappeared, along with scores of ships and combat air wings. He also introduced the "don't ask, don't tell" policy to allow gays to serve in the armed forces.

The net effect of both presidents' cuts of capabilities was to embolden America's adversaries. Arguably, American troops still are paying in blood for the cost cutting done during the Carter and Clinton administrations. That may well be happening again, in an ever-more dangerous world.

**--Cost Cutting:** When the moving vans roll up to 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. in January, it will be the first time since Richard Nixon took over from Lyndon Johnson that our nation has changed its commander in chief while at war. Yet leaks from the Obama transition team and Capitol Hill indicates that cuts in defense spending are a top priority.

Pulling U.S. troops out of Iraq would "save" \$10 billion per month. Further "savings" can be found by cutting production of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, the F-22 Raptor, Virginia-class nuclear attack submarines, the V-22 Osprey and the DDG-1000 destroyer. Converting the national missile defense system back to a basic research program, eliminating two Air Force fighter wings, and putting a naval carrier strike group in mothballs would "save" hundreds of billions more. Rep. Barney Frank, chairman of the House Financial Service Committee, has called for a 25 percent reduction in the Pentagon's budget -- about \$150 billion -- and said, "We don't need all these fancy new weapons."

Any of these cuts will have the effect of seriously reducing U.S. defense capabilities. One parochial example: The V-22 Osprey is programmed to replace all of the U.S. Marines' 40-year-old CH-46 helicopters. Without the Osprey, Marines will have to walk to the next gunfight.

In his first remarks as president-elect, Obama promised defeat to "those who would tear the world down." If that's what he really wants to do, prudence dictates that he ought not start by tearing apart our ~~nation's defenses~~. -- **Oliver North**, *wnhall.com*, 11/07/08

## INVESTORS HAVE THREE OPTIONS

This entire year, but especially the last six weeks, have proven like few times in human history the need for balancing risk and reward. The mortgage meltdown and housing collapse has had a trickle-down effect that has decimated the credit markets, drastically lowered stock market prices and created an overall panic in the economy.

No one this side of glory knows exactly what will happen next. What we do know is that history tells us that stock markets tend to perform very well coming out of bear markets and times of economic recession. Many times, selling your investments after major market dips has the effect of making permanent the losses that are really "short term volatility."

The challenge for an investor is not to let his emotions make his

decisions for him, as panic and fear are never good drivers of sound financial decisions. If your plan matches your goal and timeline with a suitable solution, then this market noise will pass, and your plan will not be undermined. Of course, it is easy to feel like the solution was not appropriate when markets behave like they are now. With this kind of volatility, there are three things investors can consider doing:

**(1) Stay the course.** Believe in the plan. Tune out the media. Avoid letting short-term problems interfere with long-term goals.

**(2) Take advantage of the problems to be opportunistic.** Re-balance your portfolio to add to the investments that are down, and trim from the investments that are up. Add fresh cash to depreciated assets if possible. Seek to make long-term lemonade out of short-term lemons.

**(3) Sell.** Make your losses permanent. End the headache, and simultaneously render it impossible to lose more money, but also to make any of the money back.

Each one of these options is likely the right thing for some readers of WORLD. For most, I suspect Option 1 is the right decision. For some, option 2 is probably appropriate and wise. For a few, option 3 may just be the only thing to do in the face of emotional fear and psychological agony.

Regardless of which option is best in your situation, remember where we place our trust. No market volatility will ever change the age-old truism, that "some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will trust in the name of the Lord our God (Psalm 20:7)." - David Behnsen, *WORLD*, 11/1-8/08

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## TV SWAYS TEEN RATES OF PREGNANCY

Groundbreaking research suggests pregnancy rates are much higher among teens who watch a lot of TV with sexual dialogue and behavior compared with those who have tamer viewing tastes.

"Sex and the City," anyone? That was one of the shows used in the research.

The new study is the first to link those viewing habits with teen pregnancy, said lead author Anita Chandra, a Rand Corp. behavioral scientist. Teens who watched the raciest shows were twice as likely to become pregnant over the next three years as those who watched few such programs. Previous research by some of the same scientists had already found that watching lots of sex on TV can influence teens to have sex at earlier ages. . . .

The study was being released today in the November issue of *Pediatrics*. It involved 2,003 12-to-17-year-old girls and boys nationwide questioned by telephone about their TV viewing habits in 2001. Teens were re-interviewed twice, the last time in 2004, and asked about pregnancy. Among girls, 58 became pregnant during the follow-up, and among boys, 33 said they had gotten a girl pregnant.

Participants were asked how often they watched any of more than 20 TV shows popular among teens at the time or which were found to have lots of sexual content. These included "Sex and the City," "That 70s Show" and "Friends."

Pregnancies were twice as common among those who said they watched such shows regularly, compared with teens who said they hardly ever saw them. - *Atlanta Constitution*, 11/3/08

## SUPREME COURT LOOKS AT NAUGHTY WORDS

In an oral argument that just might turn blue, the court will consider whether fleeting swear words on national television merit punishment. It's a closely watched case, and not just for the R-rated language and a cast of characters that includes Bono, Cher and Nicole Richie.

"The welfare of America, its families and its youth will be detrimentally affected by electronic mass communications which contain unrestrained indecency," the National Religious Broadcasters warned in one legal brief. . . .

The unusually high stack of amicus briefs illustrates the case's appeal. Seven briefs support the FCC's effort to punish TV networks for swear words, filed on behalf of conservative lawmakers and by groups such as Morality in Media and the Family Research Council. - *Atlanta Constitution*, 11/3/08

## THE TREATMENT OF BUSH A DISGRACE

Earlier this year, 12,000 people in San Francisco signed a petition in support of a proposition on a local ballot to rename an Oceanside sewage plant after George W. Bush. The proposition is only one example of the classless disrespect many Americans have shown the president.

According to recent Gallup polls, the president's average approval rating is below 30% -- down from his 90% approval in the wake of 9/11. Mr. Bush has endured relentless attacks from the left while facing abandonment from the right.

This is the price Mr. Bush is paying for trying to work with both Democrats and Republicans. During his 2004 victory speech, the president reached out to voters who supported his opponent, John Kerry, and said, "Today, I want to speak to every person who voted for my opponent. To make this nation stronger and better, I will need your support, and I will work to earn it. I will do all I can do to deserve your trust."

Those bipartisan efforts have been met with crushing resistance from both political parties.

The president's original Supreme Court choice of Harriet Miers alarmed Republicans, while his final nomination of Samuel Alito angered Democrats. His solutions to reform the immigration system alienated traditional conservatives, while his refusal to retreat in Iraq has enraged liberals who have unrealistic expectations about the challenges we face there.

It seems that no matter what Mr. Bush does, he is blamed for everything. He remains despised by the left while continuously disappointing to the right.

Yet it should seem obvious that many of our country's current problems either existed long before Mr. Bush ever came to office, or are beyond his control. Perhaps if Americans stopped being so divisive, and congressional leaders came together to work with the president on some of these problems, he would actually have had a fighting chance of solving them. . . .

To be sure, Mr. Bush is not completely alone. His low approval ratings put him in the good company of former Democratic President Harry S. Truman, whose own approval rating sank to 22% shortly before he left office. Despite Mr. Truman's low numbers, a 2005 Wall Street Journal poll found that he was ranked the seventh most popular president in history.

Just as Americans have gained perspective on how challenging Truman's presidency was in the wake of World War II, our country will recognize the hardship President Bush faced these past eight years - and how extraordinary it was that he accomplished what he did in the

wake of the September 11 attacks.

The treatment President Bush has received from the country is nothing less than a disgrace. The attacks launched against him have been cruel and slanderous, proving to the world what little character and resolve we have. The president is not to blame for all these problems. He never lost faith in America or her people, and has tried his hardest to continue leading our nation during a very difficult time.

Our failure to stand by the one person who continued to stand by us has not gone unnoticed by our enemies. It has shown to the world how disloyal we can be when our president needed loyalty -- a shameful display of arrogance and weakness that will haunt this nation long after Mr. Bush has left the White House. - Jeffrey Scott Shapiro, *The Wall Street Journal*, 11/5/08

## COOL ON WARMING

Economic hardship and falling oil prices are changing the greenscape. Think a Barack Obama presidency will significantly change the country's course on climate policy? Not so, says a growing cadre of economists, political analysts, and environmental experts. Charles McElwee, a law professor at Shanghai Jiao Tong University and a leading liaison between the United States and China on emissions discussions, contends that the president-elect is not likely to convince Congress to ratify hard caps on greenhouse gases amid the nation's economic turmoil. Harland L. Watson, the State Department's special envoy to the UN on climate change, goes one step further, arguing that no world leader, including the new American president, is going to bear the financial cost necessary to clamp down on carbon anytime soon. "The economy is going to be the focus of the new U.S. president and the world leaders for the foreseeable future. Quite frankly, the economy has buried everything."

Global financial hardship has undermined the long propagated myth among some environmentalists that going green on climate policy will usher in new energy markets, create jobs, and stoke national economies. Obama will have a hard time embracing the current climate-change bill bouncing around Congress, which calls for 80 percent emissions reductions from 2005 levels by 2050. Its passage should be certain in a Democratic Congress fortified by election victories. But amid economic uncertainty, even Democratic supermajorities could prove a bit cool on the global warming issue.

Further deterring alternative fuel research: falling oil prices. Royal Dutch Shell became the latest oil company to halt such a project, announcing in October an indefinite stop to development of Canada's once-booming tar sands industry, amid soaring costs and plunging oil prices. - Mark Bergin, *WORLD*, 11/15/08

## MAINLINE CHURCHES ARE DYING

The basically Protestant consensus that used to hold the United States together has withered away, writes Joseph Bottum in *First Things*. In 1965, the mainline U.S. Protestant denominations counted more than half of all Americans among their members. But now those denominations -- including the United Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Episcopal Church -- have completely capitulated to the world around them, guilty of "routine genuflections toward the latest political causes, the feminizing of the clergy. . . the substitution of leftist social action for Christian evangelizing, and the disappearance of biblical theology."

In fact, says Bottum, "all the Mainline churches have become essentially the same church: their histories, their theologies, and even much of their practice lost to a uniform vision of social progress."

As a result, according to Bottum, the mainline is dying. The institutions these denominations founded are "corpses, even if they don't quite realize that they're dead." And their membership is both dwindling and getting older. (*First Things*, Aug/Sep 2008), *WITW*

## DESPAIR WITH CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

"I'm at the point of despair with congregational singing," writes Michael Raiter in *The Briefing*, an international evangelical monthly "In many churches, genuine heartfelt congregational singing has been in its death throes for some years now."

"I was at a convention recently," says Raiter. "The music team at the front [was] 'leading' . . . and we were singing. Well, we were meant to be singing. And so I did what I've done quite often lately. I closed my eyes and listened to the singing. The song leaders with their microphones were clear and distinct. I could identify each of the several instruments accompanying the singers. But if you blocked out the 'worship team,' all that was left around the building was a barely audible murmur. I opened my eyes and looked around. Most folk were either standing silently, not even making a pretense of singing, or were little engaged in the activity."

Raiter's travels take him to a different church almost every Sunday, and he says he sees this phenomenon nearly everywhere he goes. "The music teams are killing congregational singing," he says.

To make the situation worse, he says, in "the urban areas of Asia, Africa, North America or Australia, everywhere you go, increasingly, the singing in the church -- both the songs that are sung and the style of music -- is the same."

Raiter urges Christians to remember two dimensions of music in the Bible: the vertical ("making melody in your heart to the Lord") and the horizontal ("speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs"). - *The Briefing*, July 2008, *WITW*.

## DETROIT BREAKDOWN

Remember when Democrats lamented the growing budget deficit and spoke of the burden our children and grandchildren would face if we didn't put our fiscal house in order? That was when Republicans ran the federal government and Democrats opposed tax cuts. Now that Democrats are about to be in charge, concern about the deficit has disappeared and spending plans proliferate, even though the national debt passed \$10 trillion in September and we added another \$500 billion last month.

The latest, but by no means the last supplicant at the public trough, is the auto industry, which wants a bailout to save jobs because its cars are not selling. There is a reason for that and it can be summed up in five words: The United Auto Workers Union (UAW).

Half of the \$50 billion the auto industry wants is for health care for its current and retired employees. This is the result of increasing UAW demands, strikes and threats of strikes unless health care and pension benefits were regularly increased. While in the past UAW settled for some benefit decreases while bargaining with the Big Three U.S. automakers, according to the Wall Street Journal in September of 2006, "on average, GM pays \$81.18 an hour in wages and benefits to its U.S. hourly workers." Those increased costs, including the cost of health care, were passed along to consumers, adding \$1,600 to the price of every vehicle GM produced. In February 2008, after General Motors offered buyouts to 74,000 employees, the Center for Automotive Research estimated the average wage, including benefits, for current GM workers had dropped to \$78.21 an hour. New hires pulled down a paltry \$26.65. GM, now facing a head-on collision with reality, has taken an important first step toward fiscal responsibility by an-

nouncing the elimination of lifetime health care benefits for about 100,000 of its white-collar retirees at the end of this year.

Contrast this with non-union Toyota, whose total hourly U.S. labor costs, with benefits, are \$35 per hour. Those lower labor costs mean Toyota enjoys a cost advantage over U.S. automakers of about \$1,000 per vehicle. Is it any wonder that Toyota is outselling American automakers and from plants that have been built on U.S. soil? According to James Sherk of The Heritage Foundation, Japanese car companies provide their employees with good jobs at good wages: "The typical hourly employee at a Toyota, Honda or Nissan plant in America makes almost \$100,000 a year in wages and benefits, before overtime."

While many in the Democratic Party have focused on "corporate greed" and "fairness," according to Sherk, "competition, not corporate greed, is the real problem facing labor unions. When unions negotiate raises for their members, companies pass those higher costs on to consumers." Americans used to tolerate those increases, but no more. Competition has brought lower prices for Japanese cars and Americans are buying more of them, taking a pass on those manufactured in Detroit.

The argument made by those favoring a bailout of Detroit is that it will save more than 100,000 jobs in the auto and related industries. But what good does that do if people are not buying cars in sufficient numbers to allow the Big Three to make a profit? This becomes the kind of corporate welfare Democrats decry when it comes to Wall Street. But, then, Wall Street isn't unionized and Democrats want and need the union vote.

What about Chrysler's bailout 30 years ago? It was a loan. Didn't Chrysler pay back the government? Wasn't it worth the risk to save jobs? According to the Heritage Foundation, the \$1.2 billion in loan guarantees made by the Carter administration still resulted in a partial bankruptcy for Chrysler. "Most of the company's creditors were forced to accept losses just as they would if Chrysler had gone through Chapter 11, and the company ended up firing almost half its workforce, including 20,000 white-collar workers and 42,600 hourly wage earners. The only people who benefited from the bailout were Chrysler shareholders.

The Heritage Foundation also notes, "If Washington really wants to help Detroit, they could end the regulatory nightmare that prevents profitable, fuel-efficient cars from reaching market." Ford, they say, has begun selling a car that gets 65 mpg, but they're not selling it in America. Why? Because it runs on diesel fuel "and environmentalists in the U.S. have fought to keep diesel taxes high and refinery capacity low."

More government intervention in private industry will bring us closer to socialism. Better to renegotiate the labor contracts, re-train workers for other jobs, or help them get hired at the Japanese auto plants in America than to subsidize a failed economic model for the sake of political gain. - Cal Thomas, *townhall.com*, 11/11/08

## ELECTION DAY WON'T END TIL DEMS HAVE 60

Visualize a nightmare scenario in which Democrats actually reach the goal of 60 Senate seats that would allow them to stop any GOP filibusters. The scenario runs like this:

First, Republicans lose the Alaska seat. At least 15,000 provisional ballots and an estimated 20,000 mailed absentee ballots remain to be counted. Ominously for Republicans, Mr. Begich now holds an 814-vote lead after some 50,000 absentee ballots were counted this week. The race could remain undecided for some time. . . .

Democrats also have an excellent opportunity to pick up a Georgia Senate seat if President-elect Obama decides it's vital for his party

to win the December 2 runoff between GOP incumbent Saxby Chambliss and Democrat Jim Martin. With a snap of Mr. Obama's fingers, money and resources from Team Obama's vaunted organization would pour in. . . . (We need to prevent liberals from controlling the whole government. Go vote again on December 2. - N.P.)

Then there's Minnesota, where GOP Senator Norm Coleman's lead over comedian Al Franken has just dwindled to 206 votes even before a statewide recount begins next week. Republicans fear that Democratic Secretary of State Mark Ritchie, an ally of the activist group ACORN, will attempt to put his thumb on the scale during the process. - John Fund, *The Wall Street Journal*, 11/14/08

## MARRIAGE AND HOMOSEXUALITY

This brings us to the highly charged political issue, the relationship between homosexuality and marriage. There are two Biblical reasons why marriage cannot be between two men or two women.

1. The will of God for marriage was expressed in creation. Jesus confirmed God's will in creation when he said in Matthew 19:4-6, "Have you not read that he which made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this cause a man shall leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?' Wherefore they are no more twain but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." The Bible's teaching and assumption from cover to cover is one woman and one man becoming one flesh by covenant and sexual union.

2. There is no such thing as homosexual marriage in the eyes of God. The Bible defines homosexual behavior as "dishonorable" and

"shameless" and "contrary to nature" (Romans 1:26-27), but on the other hand the Bible says that marriage is to be "held in honor" (Hebrews 13:4). Marriage does not produce shame. And marriage is not contrary to nature. There is therefore **no such thing as homosexual marriage in the eyes of God.** And there should not be in the eyes of his people -- no matter what the state says. - *AFA Journal*, 10/08

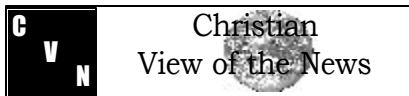
## BIRTH RATES SHARPLY DECLINE

A U.S. Census Bureau survey reported in August that the percentage of women who have reached the end of their child-bearing years without having a child has doubled -- from 10% to 20% -- over the last three decades. Another revealing number is that 36% of women who gave birth in 2006 were separated, widowed, divorced or never married.

The survey indicated that in 1976, women in the 40-44 age group ended their child-bearing years with 3.1 children. In 2006, that number was 1.9 children, a number below replacement-level fertility. Hispanic and black populations depart from the norm, with Hispanics averaging 2.3 children and blacks 2.0 children. At this rate, experts say whites will be a minority in America by 2042.

Wendy Wright, president of Concerned Women for America, said declining female fertility rates will have long-term negative economic, spiritual and social consequences. . . .

Johns Hopkins University sociology professor Andrew Cherlin observed, "[This] means that 25 years from now, there'll be many elderly people who are childless and who may not have anybody to care for them." - *AFA Journal*, 10/08



Christian  
View of the News

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