

Christian HealthCare

NEWSLETTER

MEMBER LETTER:

When we started receiving notes, we were blown away

My husband and I are so grateful to the Lord for guiding us to Samaritan Ministries. It is delightful to send shares directly to other members and know that no money goes toward objectionable issues.

We've been blessed on the receiving end also. I am still gratefully amazed and humbled by having our medical needs met and also by the sweet and caring notes sent by strangers. Although we might not know each other personally, we are brothers and sisters in Christ!

We are also grateful for Samaritan's workers who make it possible to have a smooth and level path in sharing the sharing of needs. When I do need to talk with someone at Samaritan, that person prays with me right before the end of the call!

Our hearts are full of gratitude, and we tell others about Samaritan with great joy.

*Keith & Victoria Lawrence,
Ponca City, Oklahoma*

Remove state based obstacles to affordable health care

by Dr. Jeffrey Singer

As Americans continue to experience the painful consequences of federal health care law, look for mounting political pressure to replace it with reforms that make health care truly more affordable, enhance patient choice, and restore the patient-doctor relationship. But not all the action has to take place in Washington; much needs to happen in the states.

And there is no reason why it can't start now. States can begin by repealing "certificate-of-need" (CON) laws. These are outdated and counterproductive laws which encourage cronyism, increase costs, and detract from the quality of health care.

Certificate-of-need laws require anyone wanting to open or expand a health care facility to prove to a regulator that the community "needs" it. Once they prove such a need, the state grants them a certificate which lets them operate. In some states the micromanaging can extend down to the level of expanding offices or adding new equipment. In North Carolina, for example, the state Department of Health and Human Services must approve the addition of basic necessities such as hospital beds.¹

My state of Arizona repealed its CON laws years ago, but these regulations are still present in 35 states² and the District of Columbia. Legislators once thought

they would tamp down health care costs by preventing unnecessary and duplicative expenditures. But instead, the certificate-granting process effectively grants monopoly privileges to existing hospitals and facilities—increasing costs in the process.

When a new provider petitions for a certificate, established providers are usually invited to testify³ against their would-be competitors. This means that some health care practices can openly challenge the right to exist of any practice that might hurt their bottom line. Indeed, hospital administrators openly admit that protection against competition thanks to CON laws has become an integral part of their business model.

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The *Christian Health Care Newsletter* is published monthly by Samaritan Ministries International, a 501(c)(3) charity. Subscriptions to the *Christian Health Care Newsletter* are available to non-members for a suggested donation of \$12 per year. The information provided is for educational purposes and is not meant as medical advice.

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Samaritan Ministries' *Christian Health Care Newsletter* is a member of the Evangelical Press Association.

Sharing Summary from April

Shares:	\$12,107,296	Personalized prayer requests of the members with Needs are in the Prayer Guide. Please use your version of the Prayer Guide to support the members assigned to you.
Needs:	\$10,316,822	
In Negotiation:	\$ —	
New Needs:	1,550	
Total Needs:	3,643	
New Rewards:	175	Member Households: 45,765 (as of 3/24/15)
Miscarriages:	35	
Final Rewards:	6	

Contact Us: 877-764-2426 samaritanministries.org/members

Questions about?	Email	Phone Menu
Your medical need	needs@samaritanministries.org	1 - 1
Shares you are sending or receiving	shares@samaritanministries.org	1 - 2
Your membership	membership@samaritanministries.org	1 - 3

Your Member Services Leaders



Bryan Evans
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Member Services Manager

Remember:



1 SEND A NOTE—
Burdens can be lightened emotionally as we encourage one another in the Lord.



2 PAY YOUR SHARE—
Burdens can be lightened physically as we do our part to financially meet others' needs as they would in our time of need.



3 ALWAYS STAY ALERT IN PRAYER—
Burdens can be lightened spiritually as we unite to call upon the God of the impossible.

Culture war—now more than ever

by Doug Wilson

In 1992, Pat Buchanan put the phrase “culture war” on the map with his speech at the 1992 Republican National Convention. Since that time, there’s been a lot of water under the bridge, but—we should be careful to note—it is all the same river.

One of the things you may have noticed lately is that various Christians of various stripes have been trying to put distance between themselves and this culture war. They are “tired” of it. It just seems to go on and on, and what’s the point? Instead of all this, the Church should be focusing its energies on things like furrowed brow concern over climate change—something that will garner applause instead of sneers.

When it comes to the culture wars, I would like to begin by making a distinction between those who are tired *from* being on the right side, and those who are tired *of* being on the right side. The former have been faithfully doing their part in these culture wars, which means worshipping God, bringing up kids, providing them with a Christian education, volunteering at the crisis pregnancy center, voting faithfully, composing music, painting beautifully, and so on. If you want a naval war, you have to build ships, and if you want a culture war, you have to build a culture. And whether it is Rome or any other city, it is not done in a day.

But they are doing all this in a fallen world, and some of their fellow “culture warriors” are fools and others are hypocrites, and some of the generals are lunkheads. Some think that everything will be settled if they write shrill and counterpro-

ductive blog posts, and it turns out that’s not true. And suppose the staff member responsible for abstinence lectures at the crisis pregnancy center is getting it on with her boyfriend. Okay, that’s a problem.

One of the things you may have noticed lately is that various Christians of various stripes have been trying to put distance between themselves and this culture war. They are “tired” of it.

My father-in-law served with honor and distinction in the Pacific theater, and was wounded at Guadalcanal, and yet simply being on the right side did not make it all a matter of Simple Valor. He told me that one time he was up at the headquarters on that embattled island, and one of our generals was trying to function up there while flat-out plastered. Couldn’t hit the ground with his hat.

Paul tells us that in a great house there are many different kinds of vessels (2 Timothy 2:20), and the same thing is true of a great army.

There are many faithful Christians who have served in just the ways God calls us to serve in times like these. They are tired *from* serving in the culture wars, tired from betrayals, tired from mismanagement, tired from apparent lack of success, and the only thing they need is a word of encouragement.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 15:58, KJV)

“For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.” (Hebrews 6:10, KJV)

But there is the other category, the people who are tired *of* being on the right side. They are tired of the scorn they receive from the other team, and they have a deep hunger to somehow get in with the cool kids. And because there is absolutely no way to get in with the cool kids so long as you remain in any way in clear opposition to the sexual revolution, they have begun the process of dialing everything way back. What they are doing is looking for the first clear opportunity to go over to the other side. So the word that is necessary to deploy here is not encouragement, but rather repentance. The problem here is not that they object to our opposition to everything going to

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Scott and Carol Maxwell
Freedom of Conscience
Defense Fund

by Jaclyn Lewis



God has brought the family of Scott and Carol Maxwell to a key place of ministering as a family.

From the beginning of their marriage, Scott and Carol faithfully attended church and served in min-

istries. Scott also worked for several nonprofit ministerial organizations.

Yet for the Maxwells, their church involvement was routine because of familiarity and a superficial understanding of church and faith, rather than from an impassioned surrender to Jesus and His will for their lives and the world.

That changed when Carol became involved with church homeschool groups in order to learn about this way of instructing her children.

“These homeschool families helped Scott and me tremendously in our family and our faith” says Carol.

Through these families, the Maxwells gained powerful living examples of Biblical, complementary marriage, and a deeper understanding of church teaching. What most blessed Carol was a more profound understanding of Jesus in communion and of redemption.

With this clarity, Scott and Carol’s marriage thrived, their seven kids blossomed, and their joy increased.

Now Scott is the executive director of the Freedom of Conscience

Defense Fund (FCDF), a nonprofit public-interest law firm which defends and protects religious freedom when conscience rights have been violated (see page 5). He leads the organization with five attorneys providing pro-bono legal defense at the trial level to any individual or organization. His main areas of responsibility are marketing, fundraising, and public relations.

Meanwhile, Carol homeschools the four youngest children, ages 8 through 15, and supports Scott in his position with the FCDF. She also supports her son, Luke, in his ministry to suicidal teens (see page 7).

The couple is also passionate about defending constitutional liberties, especially the First Amendment protection of religion.

The FCDF’s president and chief counsel, Charles Li Mandri, appeared in a documentary, *One Generation Away*, about the status of religious liberty in America. *One Generation Away* is based on the idea, said famously by former President

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Scott and Carol Maxwell

**Freedom of Conscience
Defense Fund**

consciencedefense.org
info@consciencedefense.org

ucantberased.com

Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-8255
Parent-to-Parent
24-Hour Support: 1-888-358-3622

Lamb of God Maternity Home

agnusdeifoundation.org
760-294-7969
Crisis Number: 760-715-6463

Freedom of Conscience Defense Fund

Here are some of the cases the Freedom of Conscience Defense Fund has defended or is currently defending:

JONAH Case – Jews Offering New Alternatives for Healing (JONAH) is a small nonprofit that offers counseling for those with unwanted same-sex attractions. They are being sued by Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) for consumer fraud as they claim homosexuality is not a disorder, people are born gay, and that those with same-sex attractions cannot return to a heterosexual lifestyle. FCDF is defending JONAH at the trial court level and, God willing, seeks to win a positive jury verdict in Summer 2015.

HHS Mandate – The federal Department of Health and Human Services attempted to force all businesses—including most faith-based nonprofits—to provide employees health insurance that pays for abortifacient contraceptive devices through the HHS Mandate. In 2012, FCDF was blessed with a victory against the HHS mandate in a Michigan federal district court case.

Firefighters' Case – Four Christian firefighters in San Diego were ordered to participate in a 2007 Gay Pride Parade, where they were not only subjected to obscene gestures and vulgar catcalls, but also insulting words and gestures when they would not respond to the crowd. The city refused a change in policy that would prevent any future firefighters from having to endure the same experience. FCDF defended the firefighters in a sexual harassment case, which resulted in a 2011 verdict in their favor.

Johnson Defamation Case – Christian high school teacher, Brad Johnson, was ordered by his school district to remove large patriotic banners from his classroom. These banners had been posted for over 20 years, and included phrases such as “under God” from the Pledge of Allegiance and the national motto, “In God we trust.” FCDF won a trial court case defending Johnson’s freedom of speech and religion.

Meritage Hotel Boycott Case – Tim Busch, owner of the Meritage Hotel in Napa, California, was threatened with a government boycott after he cancelled a conference by the National Abortion Rights Action League. FCDF helped prevent the government boycott by convincing St. Helena City Council to cease pursuit of the boycott.

Mt. Soledad Cross Case – FCDF strongly believes that the constitution protects religious expression, even on government property. The Memorial Cross has stood atop Mount Soledad in a city park since 1954, and has been threatened with removal since the late 1980s. This case is still pending, and FCDF continues to provide legal services to defend the Memorial Cross. ♦

Why SMI?

“**Before Samaritan**, we had just your standard health care plan,” Scott Maxwell says.

Through 30 years of marriage, he and his wife, Carol, always had insurance coverage, whether it was HMO, PPO, or hybrid, and either through an employer or through a private plan they purchased when they started their own business. They felt comfort having insurance, and “always proudly showed” their insurance card at doctor’s appointments.

But over time, their insurance costs kept rising.

“Every time we reached a birthday, premiums would go up and they would cover less,” says Carol. At one point their monthly premium increased to \$1,200, with a \$6,000 out-of-pocket portion and \$1,500 deductible.

No longer able to afford the premiums, the Maxwells “decided to jump ship” and join Samaritan Ministries.

“We were scared to death” leaving insurance and joining “something that was not insurance,” but, Carol says, “Our biggest regret, actually, was that we hadn’t joined it sooner.

“What we get back is so much more—financially, of course—but [also] spiritually. ... When we have needs, we get cards and letters. These are people who believe in the same things we believe and who aren’t afraid to share their faith.” ♦

Scott and Carol Maxwell
Continued from page 4

God provided for a medical need we did not expect. Our three-year-old daughter was found not breathing at night. Through prayer God directed us to a doctor who properly diagnosed and treated her obstructive sleep apnea with surgery.

God gave us peace during the surgery. We had never had to experience surgery for one of our children before. God allowed Margaret to heal well and it was a joy to watch our older children take care of her during her recovery. Margaret was a completely new child we had to relearn. Not knowing she was sleep and oxygen deprived, we had to adjust to this new bundle of energy.

Maragaret now speaks well, is more alert, is potty trained, grew a size of clothes, and has hair that grows. We praise God for the sleep apnea experience that allowed our daughter to overcome these challenges and develop properly.

Our unsaved family is amazed at the changes in Maragaret and bewildered that through Samaritan the need was met in full with no out-of-pocket expenses. When we first told them we dropped insurance for a health care sharing ministry they thought we were crazy. Now instead of all the “what if” questions we are able to show them that through His people God will supply all our needs and with notes of encouragement, too!

*Brett and Katie Shafer
Johannah, Joshua, and Margaret
Chilton, Wisconsin*

Ronald Reagan, that “freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction,” and therefore must be vigilantly protected and diligently passed on to each new generation.

Scott and Carol urge others to actively engage in protecting freedom in a variety of ways. First, parents can train their children and teens in Biblical worldview.

“We not only homeschool our kids,” says Carol, “but have our older children attend junior college and stay at home, so that as they are exposed to differing worldviews, we can talk about them and help our sons digest the new information in a safe place.”

It’s important, say Scott and Carol, to discuss world issues in an age-appropriate manner with children, and put current events into Biblical

perspective. Equally important, they say, is to talk about taboo political topics with friends and family, such as the interpretation of our Constitution, the separation of Church and state, and the Biblical basis for civil rights.

They also encourage families to be active in their communities through service that meets both physical and spiritual needs. For example, Scott serves on the Board of the Lamb of God Maternity Home for women in crisis pregnancies who want to place their babies for adoption.

“Look into local ministries,” says Carol. “There are many, many ways for families to shine a light in their communities.” ♦

my Samaritan story.org



Visit MySamaritanStory.org to view a video of the Maxwells and many other members telling about how sharing with each other through Samaritan Ministries has impacted their lives and strengthened their faith. The site is designed to easily allow you to share the videos with your friends and family through your website, blog, email, Facebook, and Twitter.

Luke Maxwell and ucantberased.com

by Jaclyn Lewis

As the Maxwell family has followed God into different ministries, the journey has not always been smooth. When their son, Luke, nearly died in a car crash during a depressive episode, the Lord brought the Maxwell family together to support him. They banded together through Luke's recovery and in the development of his teen suicide prevention ministry, ucantberased.com.

When Luke Maxwell was 12, he began to feel "lonely, sad and tired all the time," and he did not know why.

"I kept secrets about how I felt," says Luke, "pretending to be happy and satisfied in life." When it came to God, Luke says, "I lost my faith.

I couldn't believe God or anyone loved me." He kept up a happy front around his parents and siblings, hiding his depression for four years. Scott and Carol had no idea. It wasn't until the day Luke crashed his parents' van head-on with another vehicle, trying to end his life, that Scott and Carol discovered their son's depression.

Yet, what could have ended in tragedy became an occasion for God to show mercy and redeem.

The driver of the other vehicle was Lenny Ross, a husband and father, and also a Christian. Though Luke collided with Lenny going 60 mph in the family 12-seater, neither Luke nor Lenny suffered serious injuries. Lenny had a broken sternum and glass embedded in his

body. Though Lenny was admitted into the hospital, there was no other internal damage. "I had a scratch on my arm," says Luke.

Doctors diagnosed Luke with major depressive disorder (MDD) and started him on medication, which he was weaned off almost two years later. He also saw a Christian therapist for counseling and a priest for spiritual direction. In addition, his diet was carefully monitored to

It wasn't until the day Luke crashed his parents' van head-on with another vehicle, trying to end his life, that Scott and Carol discovered their son's depression.

avoid any foods that could affect his mood. God provided him the peace to slowly reflect and recover. He could finally begin to feel again that he was loved and had a future.

In the midst of his recovery, Luke also faced legal proceedings, since his crash was ruled an assault with a deadly weapon. The Maxwell family began praying for Lenny right after the crash. Luke felt moved to ask Lenny personally for forgiveness, though he was not able to speak with Lenny right away.

"Finally, my dad asked the DA if it was possible to contact Lenny," says Luke. "She didn't think so, but she said she'd ask him if he was interested. We were pleasantly surprised when he seemed just as eager to meet us."

It turns out that after Lenny had heard Luke's crash was a suicide attempt, he began to pray for Luke, asking God for an opportunity to reach out. When Luke and Lenny met, Lenny did forgive him personally, and they shared inspirational Bible verses. However, Luke's criminal case continued, requiring probation, a large restitution to Lenny, and community service.

Miraculously, the DA supported Luke in staying out of jail by placing her reputation on the line with the judge that Luke would not re-offend.

As Luke continued to recover, he looked for support groups in his area for teens suffering from depression. He quickly discovered

that there were none, and that the stigma of mental illness kept other teenagers from admitting their struggles. He decided to begin ucantberased.com as a way to share his story. He also started a support group to save lives by showing teenagers they are not alone and encouraging them to get help.

They are passionate about upholding a "culture of life" in the midst of a "culture of death" and saving lives "for the glory of God."

"We do what we do so lives are saved," says Carol, "so that another teenager going through what Luke went through can get help. But this is not just about Luke, it's about the glory of God." ♦

Member doctors adopt new model for primary care

by Jed Stuber

For many years, third-party payers for health care services have been an increasing barrier in the relationships between doctors and patients. The growth of government involvement in health care is adding even more interference. This month's article on page 12 about problems in the Canadian health care system gives additional insight into what may be in store for patients in the U.S. Trying to find satisfactory primary care medical service can be frustrating and may become worse.

But patients are not the only ones who are frustrated. Some doctors are taking bold steps to solve problems by working with their patients apart from the third-party payer system, offering direct primary care.

Direct Primary Care is a small but growing movement. A second annual national conference for doctors is being held this July in Kansas City. Forbes, Time, and the New York Times have reported on it recently, and there's more to it than just a better model for providing primary care.

Pricing is simple and clear. For example, the monthly membership fee could be \$75 for an individual or \$150 for a family. A membership includes as many visits as you want and in-office services like lab tests, shots, stitches, and EKG. If you're not a member, and prefer to pay fees for an appointment and specific treatment, the prices are listed on their websites as well.

Same or next day appointments are common. If you need to have a long discussion about a health issue you are facing, the doctor is able to do that. You have the doctor's per-

sonal phone number and email to discuss things, or for simple things that don't require a visit. Sometimes a picture taken with your phone is enough for the doctor to diagnose and prescribe treatment. And DPC doctors make good old-fashioned house calls when it makes sense.

In a typical practice a patient is often reduced to a tool to obtain a diagnosis code to justify the highest possible reimbursement.

Many of the tests and services that DPCs include in the membership are things you would be charged separately for in a traditional practice. DPCs often have arrangements with other providers in the area for discounted prices on tests and treatments that aren't available in their office, frequently arranging savings of up to 95 percent. Some have in-office dispensaries for common over-the-counter and prescription medications. And the DPC doctor is your advocate when you do need a referral to a specialist.

Three Samaritan members are doctors who are among the innovators who have implemented these changes in their practices. Here is more about them and their practices.

Dr. Bruce Jung is a Samaritan member who was frustrated when the federally-qualified community health center he worked for moved in a direction that wasn't in the patients' best interests. He bought an old doctor's office, embraced the retro feel it had by decorating it with a

1960's theme, and opened The Doc Shoppe, in Corbin, Kentucky.

He says, "My patients have come to understand that I work directly for them and not for a health insurance company, the federal government, or their employer. In the past I was mainly paid by these other third-party payers and so in essence was working for them and not the patient. In a typical fee-for-service office, a patient is not much more than a tool from which to obtain the best ICD-9 diagnosis code possible to justify the highest reimbursable CPT procedural code possible to bring in the most revenue possible with each encounter. In our model I am paid directly by the patient, and so I am motivated ethically, financially, and medically to do what is in their best interest alone."

Dr. Daniel Sneed, a Samaritan member who converted his traditional practice in Dallas-Fort Worth to Direct Patient Services, cites similar concerns.

"I have, in effect, kicked out the negative aspects of insurance and government interference from my office. This results in a much more efficient delivery of health care in my practice. With no insurance verification of coverage, no cumbersome coding requirements to get reimbursed, no pre-requirements before treatment, and no government audits to bully the doctor with, the doctor-patient relationship is greatly enhanced. Remember: health insurance does not equal health care.

"It is a well-known fact that doctors have to practice differently to

meet government and insurance requirements. One of the worst of these is the mandate for doctors to participate in electronic medical records (EMR). EMR not only comes between the doctor and the patient during the office encounter (lack of eye contact, only half listening, paying more attention to the computer...), but it represents a serious threat to patient health confidentiality. How many times have you heard of computer systems being hacked? My paper charts are secure.”

In Direct Primary Care, the doctor is paid directly by the patient, and is motivated ethically, financially, and medically to do what is in the patient’s best interest.

Dr. Eric Potter is a Samaritan member who has been building his practice, Sanctuary Medical Care, mostly by doing house calls in the Nashville, Tennessee area. He also works out of an office in a pharmacy about half an hour south of Nashville. He says, “By opting out of Medicare and Medicaid, I don’t spend my time attempting to comply with confusing and burdensome programs. I am then free to guide care, based on what is best for the patient rather than what bureaucrats say should be done. Less

time arguing with bureaucrats means more time with patients.”

Dr. Potter also finds that the DPC model allows him the freedom to practice medicine consistent with his theological and medical convictions.

“Regardless of whether I serve you as a consultant or as your primary care physician, my care will begin from a Biblical worldview. This means I am committed to God’s authority in my care for you, and my aim is Biblical health care.

“This commitment includes excellence, honesty, time, compassion, and covenantal care. A covenant before God with my patients holds me to God’s authority and your best interests with greater force than would a legal contract or government regulations.

“With longer visits and other interactions, I can also integrate the best of natural remedies with the best of conventional medicine, while educating patients on how to care for their own health.”

If what these Samaritan members are saying about Direct Primary Care appeals to you, visit iamdirectcare.com to begin your search for Direct Primary Care in your area. If you would like to read more of what Dr. Jung, Dr. Sneed, and Dr. Potter have to say about Direct Primary Care, visit the pages on the Samaritan website that are shown in the sidebar. ♦

Editor’s Note: This article is not an endorsement of a particular medical provider. Members are free to choose their own providers.

Members may be able to have some of their Direct Primary Care membership fees shared when they are receiving treatment for an illness or injury. Contact member services for more information and see the “Direct Primary Care” item in section VIII.B of the Guidelines. (www.SamaritanMinistries.org/guidelines)

Members who are Direct Primary Care doctors



Dr. Bruce Jung
theDocShope.net

In his own words:
SamaritanMinistries.org/drjung



Dr. Daniel Sneed
DirectPatientServices.com

In his own words:
SamaritanMinistries.org/drsneed



Dr. Eric Potter
SanctuaryMedicalCare.com

In his own words:
SamaritanMinistries.org/drpotter

The Politically Incorrect Jesus

by Joe Battaglia

reviewed by Melanie Campbell

“You and I have a destiny. We can explore what that is, through God’s Word and a relationship with Jesus, or allow that exploration to be blunted by the restrictiveness of politically correct thinking that refuses to admit to absolute truth.”

— Joe Battaglia

The culture we live in is on the path to self-destruction, following the man-centered ideals of political correctness.

What do Christians need to do? *The Politically Incorrect Jesus*, by Joe Battaglia, tells how to respond Biblically. He says that Jesus instructs His followers to be “men and women of counterculture faith, making a difference in a counterfeit world.” How do we do that?

Because of who we are in Jesus Christ, we must uphold righteousness in a world that has a twisted view of good and evil. Jesus calls His people to reject the self-absorbed, unstable culture of political correctness and embrace the firm, unchanging foundation of God’s Word. “Once we embrace Jesus, we can begin to grasp what is true,” writes Battaglia. “Truth, then, comes through a relationship, and not through a religion, a political movement, or accumulated knowledge.”

A society that bases its understanding of truth on the conflicting beliefs of its members lacks a common moral compass, making it impossible to determine consistent standards of right and wrong. As a result, people have begun to

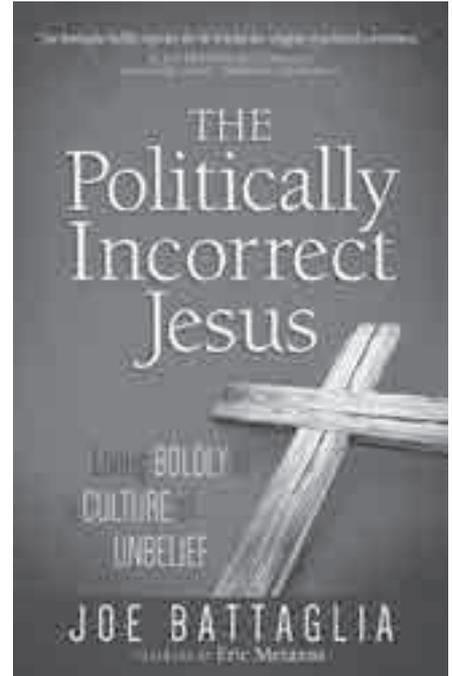
tolerate, and even celebrate, lifestyles that were once considered wicked and unethical. Champions of political correctness argue that, by accepting and even promoting sinful lifestyles, they are merely fostering diversity.

Battaglia says that a Biblical definition of diversity is “recognizing the uniqueness of creation (which includes mankind).” Those who advocate political correctness have perverted the intended meaning of the word, redefining it to justify behaviors that violate Biblical principles.

The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus Christ is the only source of truth. “[Jesus] wants us to go beyond the cultural rivalry fostered by political correctness and simply be lights to truth,” Battaglia explains. Verses like John 14:6, in which Jesus claims to be the only source of life and truth and the only way to the Father, cause society to accuse Christ of being exclusive and intolerant.

What society doesn’t admit is that Jesus is far more accepting than the most politically correct human being. While He does not approve of sin, Jesus demonstrates the ultimate level of tolerance by providing a way for even the worst sinners to be cleansed of their unrighteousness and made holy in His sight. Jesus is inclusive with the greatest gift of all—His Father’s love.

Ironically, those who advocate politically correct tolerance and inclusiveness are the same people who are attempting to remove all



traces of Biblical standards from society and prevent Christians from living out their faith. When are the “tolerant” going to start practicing what they preach? “Leave it to us humans to get it all backward,” writes Battaglia.

The culture of political correctness encourages individuals to be the rulers of their own universe and to determine their own moral compass, explains Battaglia, but that way of thinking leads to a chaotic world that lacks purpose and rationalizes sin. Biblical Christians acknowledge that God is the Ruler of the universe, the Creator of truth, and the only reliable source of meaning for life.

Political correctness seeks gods that conform to man’s ideas, while Christians with a counterculture faith seek to conform themselves to God’s image. In his book, Battaglia asserts that those who accept God’s

gift of forgiveness through Christ's atoning sacrifice will begin to see the world through the Father's eyes and start to perceive "God's heavenly Kingdom as the focal point for understanding earthly existence."

Instead of spending our lives chasing the ideals promoted by the culture of political correctness, which is progressively destroying our society, Battaglia encourages Christians to strive to live according to God's principles. He suggests practical ways to live a Biblical, countercultural life:

1. Surrender your will and desires to God. Recognize that "we best realize security when we stop our pursuit of being in control, and trust Him."
2. Resist temptation. It is Satan's way of getting us to focus on ourselves rather than on God's Kingdom.
3. Exercise forgiveness. It has the power to transform others' lives, as well as our own.
4. Have a thankful spirit.
5. Live according to the moral compass presented by God in the Bible, even when the world accuses you of intolerance.
6. Demonstrate God's love for humanity by serving others, including those whom Jesus refers to as "the least of these" (Matthew 25:40).
7. Be salt and light (Matthew 5:13-15). Seek to "bring life to barren lives and aid in the growth of those who can't make it alone;" "illuminate the beauty and presence of God;" and "dispel the darkness that would blind men to all that is good in the world." ♦

metaphorical hell in a metaphorical handbasket, but rather that they are acting in such a way that shows they want to go to the actual Hell.

People in this category chide and rebuke the conservative church for having misplaced priorities. Why so combative? Why the polemics? Why the constant us/them construal of everything?

Well, the last I checked, we are still dismembering little children by the millions, and doing so in the name of James Madison. And God set forth Sodom and Gomorrah as an example to every generation of the vengeance of eternal fire (Jude 7), so that we all might have something to consider before giving way to our lusts. And yet we still live in a time when the secular state, in one of its many paroxysms of tolerance, is demanding that we all give our formal approval of detestable acts. And we also live in a time when the social justice gimmie gimmie graspers have a poorer understanding of property rights than a dog with a chew toy does. I could go on for a long time, for there are many examples.

So to those who are "tired of" all the culture war rhetoric, I have one last point to make.

If North America were one vast pagan empire, and the apostle Paul just arrived here, what would he do first? I quite grant that he would not start by circulating petitions against the gladiatorial games. He would start with the foundations, which would be planting churches, establishing worship around the empire, and teaching Christians to live like Christians in their families and congregations. We are going to judge angels, so let's start by learning self-

government. If the meek will inherit the earth, you don't start with the inheriting part—you start by learning meekness, which can only be learned through the gospel. So that's where he would start.

But if one day we got to the point where there were tens of thousands of churches, and millions of Christians, and the gladiatorial games were still going on merrily, and new stadiums were being built every year, then the only possible conclusion would be that the churches in question were diseased.

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13). ♦

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Wait times in Canada foreshadow life under the Affordable Care Act

by Gregory Cummings

A new study on Canadian health care has been released. In it, the authors examine the deleterious effects of socialized medicine on patient wait times and the delivery of care.¹ It offers Americans a revealing glimpse of the future economic implications of the Affordable Care Act.

Released by the Fraser Institute, the December 2012 survey of specialists reveals that Canadians are now waiting 17.7 weeks between the referral to a specialist and the delivery of treatment. This is 91 percent longer than in 1993, when the institute began studying wait times.

In essence, wait times in Canada have doubled in the past 20 years. Sadly, the rationing of care that results in lengthy wait times for patients is a predictable consequence of government interference in the medical system.

Moral hazard and overconsumption

Other things the same, consumers (in this case, patients) seek out more medical care as its price decreases. This is simply a reflection of the law of demand. Because patients living under government medical “insurance” pay nothing directly, they seek out medical treatment for increasingly frivolous reasons, squandering valuable resources in the process.

Suddenly, a runny nose during cold and flu season is reason enough to proceed to the hospital. Or an otherwise healthy individual travels to the nearest medical clinic on a weekly basis to have the doctor check his blood pressure. Or an elderly widower visits the emergen-

cy room on Christmas Day because he’s lonely. Moral hazard of this sort is all too common in Canada.

No medicine, no care

On the other hand, the skyrocketing costs associated with growing use of the State-funded medical system cause the government to institute price controls on health care services. Economic calculation, a characteristic feature of the unhampered market economy, is progressively eliminated as prices become increasingly arbitrary. This neuters the market allocation of resources, resulting in persistent shortages in critical areas. Medical care is then rationed to patients. Long wait times are but one symptom.

In addition, barriers to entry, such as state-licensing requirements and the accreditation of educational institutions, cartelize various medical professions and further exacerbate these circumstances.

Ultimately, as Murray Rothbard predicted, “everyone has the right to free medical care, but there is, in effect, no medicine and no care.”

The wait times, for example, satisfy the needs of seemingly everyone but the patient. According to the specialists consulted in the Fraser study, Canadians are waiting approximately three weeks longer than is reasonable between the initial consultation with a specialist and elective treatment. Importantly, a wait time that is deemed reasonable by a physician, especially one accustomed to practicing within the framework of socialized medicine in Canada, is likely less tolerable for

the individual patient. For example, while a median 12-week wait time for orthopedic surgery may seem reasonable to a specialist, it may not be for a bed-ridden long-term care resident awaiting hip replacement surgery. Nevertheless, these results were deemed satisfactory by Canadian provincial governments, who evidently hold themselves to lower standards of performance.

Currently, Canadians are awaiting an estimated 870,462 procedures. Life on a waiting list isn’t pretty. It involves living in a state of poorer health, in constant fear that treatment will come too late, increased suffering and lower quality of life, and financial and economic loss. According to Dr. David Gratzner, author of *Code Blue: Reviving Canada’s Health Care System*, some patients even die without treatment. Others will travel in search of health care. In fact, an estimated 0.9 percent of patients left the country in 2012 in preference for treatment outside of Canada.

The cure

It doesn’t have to be this way. As Rothbard, describing the U.S. medical system of his time, explains:

Everyone old enough to remember the good old days of family physicians making house calls, spending a great deal of time with and getting to know the patient, and charging low fees to boot, is deeply and properly resentful of the current assembly-line care. But all too few understand the role of the much-beloved medical insurance itself in bringing about this

sorry decline in quality, as well as the astronomical rise in prices.

Rothbard saw the rise of the HMO/PPO state in America, which the Affordable Care Act essentially puts on steroids. Under this system, Americans received health “insurance” beyond catastrophic care. This amounted to an all-you-can-eat healthcare buffet for consumers, just as it did in Canada—only without the rationing. Care providers and health insurers formed a cartel around these profligate consumers and divided the spoils. The result has been steady medical inflation in America. But without accurate price signals for patients, rationing will have to follow. The Canadian example demonstrates that the egalitarian desideratum of “equal care for all” condemns society to poorer care for all. That is why the Affordable Care Act too will fail.

Instead, the cure for our metastasizing health care ills is freedom—that is, a restoration of the market process with the patient at the center. This restoration of patient sovereignty in the medical system is the only way to allocate healthcare resources efficiently and without shortages.

Wanna treat American health care? Prescribe capitalism. ♦

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First published in The Freeman <http://www.fee.org/the_freeman/detail/a-cure-for-obamacare-from-canada-with-love#ixzz2KuqAY7Hb>

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I was nervous when my husband first proposed Samaritan Ministries. I did not want to have to do paperwork and arrange payment. I was concerned Samaritan would be difficult to work with and that I'd feel like I had to “justify” going to the doctor. Nothing could be further from the truth.

After being a member for 18 months, I experienced our first need. Samaritan staff were kind and gracious each time I called. It is a blessing when each check arrives, because it's proof of the Body of Christ caring for and bearing the burdens of other members. Before this experience, when I sent our check and wrote the note, it was abstract. Now I know how it feels to be on the other end, so I will write my notes with a different understanding.

In addition, we worked out a 75 percent discount with our hospital as cash-paying patients. Working together as the Body of Christ allowed us to obtain over \$17,000 in discounts. I got the same medical care for a good price because of Samaritan brothers and sisters.

I believe God is pleased with the unity and compassion among His people as we join together through the health care sharing ministry. It is wise stewardship and true fellowship.

My diagnosis of cancer was unexpected, but I know I can receive the needed care because my fellow members will provide financially and lift me up in prayer.

*Daniel and Adrienne Jarvis,
Laingsburg, Michigan*

We continue to see God's grace sustain us through the most difficult time of our lives as we have dealt with Robbie's traumatic brain injury. We have a new “normal.”

God has encouraged us through family and friends. A personal trainer is working *pro bono* with Robbie at a community fitness center to help him gain muscle tone. A church offered to pay for our hotel stay when we travel to Seattle Children's Hospital. Teachers have been accommodating to Robbie's limitations. We can see God placing people in Robbie's life that all contribute to the healing process.

God's Word and His promises encourage our hearts. 1 Peter 5:7 about casting our anxieties on God because He cares for us is such a precious reminder and promise. God has a plan and purpose for our family in all this.

*Simon and Lavonne Challinor,
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.*

My husband and I just had our first need shared, the birth of our first child. We were so blessed by the provision of the members assigned to our need, but more than that, the letters! There is so much encouragement and love in the Body of Christ. It is wonderful to have the support and prayer of people around the country. Making the decision to join Samaritan Ministries was one of the best we have made for our family.

*Abraham and Rebekah Dane,
Jonesville, Michigan*

Large hospitals and other medical incumbents have another advantage: They can afford the lengthy and expensive process while smaller, newer health care providers cannot. Getting state approval for a certificate-of-need can take years⁴ or even over a decade, including appeals and re-appeals.⁵ In a place like Washington state, the application fee alone can cost tens of thousands of dollars.⁶ All of this discourages new entrants who lack the legal and financial resources to run the certificate-of-need obstacle course.

Always beware when the fox is pleased with the choice of guard for the henhouse. The American

Hospital Association endorsed and lobbied for the widespread adoption of these laws. And yet after these laws were enacted, hospitals still found ways around them. According to one health care journal, “hospitals tend to view CON restrictions favorably when they serve to exclude [competing] facilities from entering a market, but may take steps to circumvent the CON application process where their own expansion is concerned.”⁷

The negative effect of certificate-of-need laws on competition and the monopoly-like privileges they bestow have attracted the attention of the Justice Department and the FTC.⁸ These agencies strongly condemned certificate-of-need laws as recently as 2008, arguing that they ruin the market process while deliv-

ering the opposite of the benefits they were intended to promote.

Above all else, the preponderance of evidence is that certificate-of-need laws do not fulfill any of their intended purposes. According to studies from the Mercatus center at George Mason University, they decrease the availability of medical

State legislators can start repealing their certificate-of-need laws and forcing providers to compete for customers. Let patients—not the providers or government bureaucrats—determine how each state’s health care system looks and works.

resources,⁹ do not make care more accessible for underserved communities, and increase the costs of care by 13.6 percent per-capita in the states where they exist.¹⁰ If there is any substantial benefit associated with these regulations, such a benefit has yet to present itself. The negatives, on the other hand, are unmistakable.

We don’t have to wait for our representatives in Washington to fix our health care mess. State legislators can start repealing their certificate-of-need laws and forcing providers to compete for customers. Let patients—not the providers or government bureaucrats—determine how each state’s health care system looks and works. ♦

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Prayer for the Persecuted Church

Hebrews 13:3 tells us to “Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body.” Our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world are being persecuted for the sake of the Gospel. We need to remember them in prayer. Each month, the Christian Health Care Newsletter will provide updates gleaned from such sources as World Watch Monitor and The Voice of the Martyrs and offer prayer points. Please use them in your personal or group prayer time.

Remembering the persecuted Church

Few Western Christians truly know what it means to be persecuted for their faith. While most of us enjoy religious freedom, our brothers and sisters in more than 40 nations around the world are being brutally punished for believing in Jesus Christ. International Christian Concern's March 2015 newsletter reports that 100 million Christians around the world were discriminated against, beaten, imprisoned, or even beheaded for their faith in 2014.

How can you help? Here are some ways.

- Various organizations share the names of persecuted Christians across the globe and how to pray for them. You can sign up for alert emails at icommittoprayer.com, prisoneralert.com and persecution.org.
- Some offer opportunities for members of the Body of Christ to write personalized letters of encouragement. The Voice of the Martyrs provides these resources on prisoneralert.com.
- You can financially support Christian workers on the front lines

of persecution through Voice of the Martyrs (vombooks.com/adopt) or International Christian Concern (bitly.com/adoptworker).

- Continue to use the monthly prayer requests on this page in your quiet time or in prayer groups.

Other ministries that serve the persecuted Church include Open Doors, Christian Freedom International, World Watch Monitor, and China Aid.

Please don't forget your brothers and sisters in chains.

Three released from prison

Chinese authorities released three Christian from detention on March 6, while two others from Wenzhou province remain in custody, China Aid reports. The five were detained during a campaign against Protestant and Catholic churches, during which 425 churches received demolition notices. Crews destroyed churches or removed crosses during the effort. *Praise God that the three have been released. Pray for the release of the others detained as well as all Christians under persecution in China. Pray also for the end of the church demolition campaign.*

Bombings kill 11 Christians

The Christian community in Lahore, Pakistan, continues to recover from the bombing of two churches. Eleven Christians and four Muslims were killed and more than 70 wounded in the attacks, according to International Christian Concern. St. John's Catholic Church and Christ Church, both located in the neighborhood of Youhanabad, were attacked just minutes apart. The Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility. After the bombings,

Christians protested, beating two men to death. *Pray for healing for the injured and comfort for grieving families. Pray also for spiritual strength for Christians in those and other Pakistan communities. Pray as well that Christians will respond to attacks in peace.*

Indian pastor injured

An Indian pastor was severely injured in a December attack by a mob, Voice of the Martyrs reports. Pastor Ramavath and two other Christians were beaten with sticks after their vehicle was stopped by two groups blocking the road. Ramavath was in intensive care for three days, but has been released. The other two men were kept overnight and then released. *Pray for healing for the three men, and for peace for Christians in India, who have been under increasing attack by Hindu radicals.*

Activist detained in Egypt

A well-known human rights lawyer and Christian convert from Islam was detained in Egypt on February 24. Naglaa el-Emam has been charged with “insulting Islam,” VOM reports. Naglaa converted to Christianity in 2010, after which she was fired from her job and disowned by her family. She reportedly has been harassed by government officials. *Pray that Naglaa will be able to speak out on behalf of Egyptian Christians and that she will have supernatural protection from authorities.*

For more information on the persecuted church, contact The Voice of the Martyrs (www.persecution.com, 877-337-0302), International Christian Concern (www.persecution.org, 800-422-5441) or World Watch Monitor (worldwatchmonitor.org).

If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God Whom he has not seen.

1 John 4:20

Do you love God? There is a simple way to tell. Do you love your brother? Our love for our brother, the one we love the least, is an indication of our love for God. Do you hope the best for your brother, or do you hope that he will “get what he deserves?”

Earlier in this chapter, we are told that “Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.” The more we know God, the more we become like Him, loving our brother.

Do you love your brother? Do you know God?

For the Kingdom,



Ray King