

Christian HealthCare

NEWSLETTER

MEMBER LETTER:

We like helping other Christians directly

My husband and I were thrilled when we found Samaritan Ministries. We especially like the idea of directly helping other Christians instead of spending our hard-earned money to make an insurance company richer.

I did not know how it would feel to be on the receiving end until I was hospitalized a couple months ago.

The Samaritan team was very helpful in dealing with paperwork and questions we had. They even prayed with us over the phone. They were organized and friendly.

We received notes of prayer and encouragement along with the checks to pay our bills. I could not be happier about my experience with Samaritan Ministries and fellow members. I thank God for a ministry like this.

Janice Flowers
Bartow, Florida

Ask not for whom the volcano erupts; it erupts for thee

by Al Mohler

Editor's Note: What is being called the "strictest LGBT non-discrimination law in the nation" went into effect in Massachusetts on October 1st. It specifically mentions churches as falling under "public accommodation" restrictions. If a church holds any event open to the public, such as spaghetti supper, patrons must be allowed to use men's or women's restrooms and locker rooms and changing rooms. In such places, staff and official documents must also "use names, pronouns, and gender-related terms appropriate to an employee's stated gender identity in communications with employee and others."

In evaluating lawsuits, the Massachusetts Commission Against Defamation states it will consider whether employers allow self-identified transgenders a leave of absence for "gender affirming surgery" and whether employers assist transgenders in obtaining insurance coverage for sex change surgeries.¹

Christians in America now face a moment of judgment at the hands of a secular culture that grows more intensely adversarial with each passing day. Churches, institutions, and individuals committed to the Christian church's historic sexual ethic, held consistently over two millennia, now find themselves faced with a stark

choice—join the sexual revolution or face the consequences.

Those consequences include social marginalization, overt discrimination, the censure from the cultural elites, and worse. Christian colleges and schools are now openly threatened with the loss of tax-exempt status and participation in federal and state student aid. Christian employees in businesses large and small are told to get with the program or get lost. Getting with the program does not mean simply working amiably with all, regardless of sexual orientation. It means openly and enthusiastically celebrating every demand and aim of the LGBT community. Entire professions will soon be closed to many Christians who, for

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Are you ministering to Jesus?

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Sharing Summary from September

Shares:	\$23,297,610	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:	\$21,325,251	
In Negotiation:	\$108,390	
New Needs:	2,576	
Total Needs:	5,279	
New Rewards:	240	Member Households: 62,696 (as of 8/24/16)
Miscarriages:	30	
Final Rewards:	8	

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

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Remember:



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



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.



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

When Biblical Wisdom is at work

by Rob Slane

What is wisdom? Here are a couple of definitions, taken at random from the internet:

- The ability to use your knowledge and experience to make good decisions and judgments.
- The ability to discern the true nature of a situation, especially by intuition.

There is no doubt a lot to be said for these definitions. We certainly need knowledge and experience to be able to exercise wisdom, and the outcome of exercising wisdom will lead to good decisions. Yet none of these definitions gets to the heart of the Biblical definition of wisdom.

A definition I've come across a number of times is that wisdom is the application of knowledge and understanding. Knowledge is the raw data. Understanding is the ability to analyze the data. And wisdom is the ability to apply it. Some have pointed out that this threefold division, which occurs over and over again in the Book of Proverbs, is similar to the Trivium of classical education: grammar, logic, and rhetoric, and there may be something in this. Yet, I think it still misses the mark.

So what is Biblical Wisdom? In Proverbs 8, Wisdom herself (for Wisdom is given a female persona in that book) speaks to us and says:

I was there when He set the heavens in place, when He marked out the horizon on the face of the deep, when He established the clouds above and fixed securely the fountains of the deep, when He gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep His

command, and when He marked out the foundations of the earth (Proverbs 8:27-29).

Jeremiah says more or less the same thing:

It is He who made the earth by His power, who established the world by His wisdom, and by His understanding stretched out the heavens (Jeremiah 51:15).

So the Bible makes it clear that God used Wisdom to create the universe. But what did that actually look like? If we go back to Genesis 1, we find a series of separations. Heaven is separated from earth. Light is separated from darkness. The waters are separated from the waters. The dry land is separated from the sea. Man is taken out of the dust. This is all Wisdom at work.

In chapter 2, we also get a series of separations. However, the difference between chapters 1 and 2 is that whereas in the former the separations remain (at least for the moment), in chapter 2 they all lead to unions or reunions. So man is separated from the animals, but the reason is so that he can be united with a helpmeet. Man's rib is separated from his body, but the reason is so God can use it in the creation of woman who is then reunited with the man. Man leaves his father and his mother, but the reason is so that a new union can be formed.

The separations in chapter 1, however, are only temporal. At the other end of the Bible, in the last couple of chapters of Revelation, we find that these divisions are restored.

Heaven and earth are reunited as the new Jerusalem descends and God dwells with his people. There is no more sea. There is no more night, only light.

In the first two chapters of the Bible, it is God who does all the dividing, and He does so in order to then bring reunification to create something much better. This is Wisdom. But when we get to chapter 3 of Genesis, we see something else making its entrance: folly. This time, it is no longer God, but man, doing the separating. The consequences are disastrous, with his rebellion leading not only to separation from God, but subsequent history showing that he is, to varying degrees, also separated from his neighbor, from the created order, and even—the root of all psychological problems—from himself.

Yet God isn't finished with His separations. After man's sin, He separates man from the Garden by exiling both the man and the woman. Yet He does so with the promise that He will provide a way—the seed of the woman—for them to one day come back.

That promise was fulfilled in the ultimate example of separation and reunion—the death and Resurrection of Jesus. On the Cross, Jesus is separated both from His Father as well as from man. In the Resurrection He is reunited with both. However, it is not a mere restoration of the relationship before. Everything is better: the risen Christ is now God's King, and He is the New Man, destined to dwell with

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**Joyce Kaping and
Colleen Anderson**

Farm Girl Fresh

by Marcia Krahn



***Eating Pure in a Processed Foods World
is a lifestyle, not a fad diet.***



Farm girls and friends Joyce Kaping and Colleen Anderson weren't sure where God would take them when they decided to mentor people in healthy living. They didn't want to limit the Lord to what they could imagine, so they founded Farm Girl Fresh, a company to encompass whatever venture God had for them.

The name fits. Not only were they both raised on farms, but they also married farmers. And the Lord has taken them on a journey to healthy living by taking them back to their roots, to "grow, preserve, and prepare" food the way their grandmothers did "from the garden to the table."

Although Colleen and Joyce had known of each other for more than thirty years, they did not become close friends until ten years ago, when they both began working at their local church. Conversations

opened up as they noticed they were eating the same type of lunches. They soon discovered that both of their families had faced some similar health problems: allergies, chronic sinusitis, diverticulitis, infertility, irritable bowel syndrome, fatigue, and headaches. They had read many of the same books and watched the same documentaries, all of which resulted in making the same lifestyle changes.

Joyce says, "I noticed when I eat a healthy diet, I have energy. I don't have these afternoon slumps, don't have joint pain or the digestive problems." Colleen experienced the same changes. "Why would anyone want to go back to feeling tired and having no energy?" she asks. "The processed foods no longer appealed to us."

About this time, their children who were getting married and

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Eating Pure in a Processed Foods World

by Joyce Kaping and Colleen Anderson
reviewed by Marcia Krahn

“Grow it. Preserve it. Prepare it” is the slogan that defines Joyce Kaping and Colleen Anderson’s book, *Eating Pure in a Processed Foods World*. More than the typical cookbook, *Eating Pure* overflows with their “fresh is best” philosophy of food and provides information on 39 fruits and vegetables, from raising them in the garden to serving them on the table.

Farm girls Joyce and Colleen are friends “on a mission” to encourage others, especially the younger generations, to “get back to eating real whole food before they experience a health crisis.” The idea for their book grew from the success of teaching a pilot group of young mothers to cook as their grandmothers cooked—without processed food containing artificial additives and preservatives.

The result is *Eating Pure in a Processed Foods World™*, a treasury of practical advice in an engaging format. Colleen and Joyce have listed produce alphabetically from apples to zucchini in their 286-page book. Beautiful photographs throughout create mouthwatering appeal and give visual descriptions.

Introductory pages are devoted to detailed lists of what they have found to be helpful, and explaining the “why” behind “fresh is best.” Definitions of common gardening terms and recommendations for gardening tools are included for those who wish to raise their own produce.

Joyce and Colleen know that to prepare “better food for a better you” easily, necessary ingredients must be on hand. For that purpose, they suggest what to keep stocked in the pantry, refrigerator, and freezer. They also define basic cooking terms, list useful kitchen tools, and define basic cooking terms, as well as provide a synopsis of canning, dehydrating, freezing, and steaming procedures.

Each produce selection begins with a full-page photograph of the subject. On the second page, “How does your garden grow?” features a guide to planting, tending, and harvesting that particular plant. “Dig into this!” is a column of interesting facts and nutritional information. A Scripture verse ends the page for some spiritual nutrition.

Next come methods for preserving and preparing that fruit or vegetable. Helpful Hints, indicated by an apron icon, give tips for measuring that item for recipes, such as 1 ½ pounds of strawberries equals 4 cups and is about 48 medium strawberries. Every selection ends with a wealth of recipes, many of which do not call for gluten, dairy, or nuts in their ingredients.

Eating Pure in a Processed Foods World™ contains subjects as varied as making produce wash, catching fruit flies, growing asparagus in the backyard, and pickling jalapeño peppers. Kid friendly recipes for easy snacks as well as fish sticks and chicken tenders are sure to please. Included are recipes to satisfy a craving for comfort foods like beef



stew, baked beans, and tomato soup in addition to more unique taste treats like apple salsa, bacon and leek pizza, or roasted sweet potato chips. And when that special occasion arrives, the caramel coconut frosted carrot cake or raspberry lemon pie is a purely delicious topping to the celebration.

Joyce Kaping and Colleen Anderson are farm girls committed to a lifestyle of “eating pure” as part of the abundant life God gives. They end their book, *Eating Pure in a Processed Foods World™*, with the challenge they took upon themselves—to not only eat pure foods, but also to “go, equip, and bless the next generation.” ♦

Free Recipes at FarmGirlFresh.com

Looking for a new fall recipe? Want to try pumpkin pie custard or orange cider? Visit the website and click on “Recipes”

leaving home kept asking questions about cooking and recipes.

When Joyce and Colleen saw the distinct difference eating unprocessed food was making in their own families, and how eager their children were to learn, they wondered if there were others in their community they could teach and walk alongside.

The two women sensed a growing direction from the Lord to share what they were learning. But how?

“Let’s see where we can meet needs,” they decided.

Out of their entrepreneurial backgrounds as farmers and business owners, they had an idea. To discover what needs to address, they wrote a two-page survey and met individually with several people of different ages and genders from their community. Asking questions like “What is on your weekly shopping list?” and “What is your dream grocery store?” they developed a better understanding of the need.

Based on the results of the survey, they decided to mentor a group of young mothers in growing, preserving, and preparing fresh food. They chose an advisory panel from a cross-section of the young women who had taken the survey and were willing to help them get started. When they were ready for the pilot test group, each woman was asked to invite one friend to come.

The Back to Basics class, as it was called, met every other week at Colleen’s house. For the first fifteen minutes, the moms made a simple snack with their children. After that, daycare providers took the children upstairs to hear a Bible story and a lesson and to have playtime.

The moms stayed downstairs to learn things like canning produce, making yogurt, planting herbs, and cutting up a whole chicken. When the project for that day was completed, the moms had snacks, then spent the final forty minutes in the living room doing a devotional study.

After several months, the moms all said they had loved the class and wanted more. That’s when the idea for the book came about.

**“Slow progress
is better than
no progress.
Don’t be
discouraged
if you try a
healthy meal
and it doesn’t
turn out.”**

Joyce and Colleen thought about all the folders, flyers, and booklets they gave out to the moms and the way they kept bringing them back week after week. “We prayed and we prayed, asking God what was next,” Colleen says, “and something kept bringing us back to all those flyers and folders.”

What if all that information were located in one handy place? They searched bookstores and online to

see what the market already offered, but a book that included all the aspects they taught did not exist.

“So let’s write a book,” they agreed.

“We are both big dreamers,” Joyce says. Maybe the Lord wanted more for them than writing one book. To “set it right from the start,” Colleen and Joyce formed Farm Girl Fresh. Their book, *Eating Pure in a Processed Foods World™*, became their first official project.

For Joyce and Colleen to pursue writing a book, it couldn’t be just a cookbook. It had to be an educational tool anyone could use.

They began by gathering all the information they’d given to the young women. During the next stage, they asked family members to test if the recipes had easy to understand directions and were simple to assemble. Colleen and Joyce chose to arrange the selections alphabetically for a well-defined lay out.

The end result is a high quality, practical book, lovely enough to set out on a coffee table. *Eating Pure in a Processed Foods World* features more than 300 recipes using fresh, whole foods. Included are topics such as discovering which foods are GMOs, what plants to avoid growing near watermelon, and why unflavored gelatin is beneficial. It is the educational tool Colleen and Joyce hoped it would be. Readers learn how to remove garlic odor from hands or breath, where to hang a jug of molasses insect control on apple trees, or how to make a pumpkin chai tea latte topped with dairy or dairy-free whipped cream.

Since writing *Eating Pure in a Processed Foods World™*, Joyce and Colleen have had opportunities to

speak to several organizations and do presentations and workshops. Colleen has joy in seeing people use the book, have successful results, and experience better health. One person told of planting an entire garden around their advice and having it “turn out wonderfully.” Joyce says, “We marvel at how God works. We have story after story. That’s how we know we are supposed to be doing what we are doing, because God is constantly going before us. His timing is perfect.”

In addition to their book, Colleen and Joyce “mentor you from the garden to the table” through their Farm Girl Fresh website that features new tips and additional delicious recipes, along with inspirational thoughts and Scripture. Their book and website make it obvious that these women are serious not only about helping people “rid your diet of harmful, processed foods,” but also about mentoring the coming generations to “live an abundant life; growing together in truth through faith, family, food, and friendship.”

When someone asks Joyce and Colleen where to begin in eating “better foods for a better you,” they say, “Read the labels.” The first step is to “know what is in what you eat,” by recognizing what are additives put in food and what is natural food. They recommend substituting one product at a time for a lasting lifestyle change.

Another favorite piece of advice is to plan meals around pure, fresh fruit and vegetables, which contain an abundance of essential antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals. Because Colleen and Joyce understand the difficulty in getting adequate amounts of these nutrients

in their diet, they first choose their fruits and vegetables, then consider what protein complements them and add the rest.

For example, Joyce may plan her meal by first selecting a head of cauliflower. She decides if she’s going to use it in an egg bake as the main dish, toss it in a salad, roast it as a side dish accompanied by a protein, make it into a soup, or feature it in a veggie tray appetizer. Once she’s made that decision, she plans the rest of her meal.

Colleen and Joyce emphasize that “eating pure in a processed foods world” is a lifestyle, not a fad diet. “Slow progress is better than no progress,” they say to cheer on others. “Don’t be discouraged if you try a healthy meal and it doesn’t turn out, or feel defeated if you don’t make your own ketchup or grow your own herbs. Buy the natural ketchup and herbs and enjoy using them.”

That same gracious attitude applies to all their recommendations. Gardening is a “gratifying adventure” for them, but they know a garden plot is not possible for everyone. They suggest buying from a farmer’s market, purchasing a share in Community Supported Agriculture, or buying at the grocery store based on the Environmental Working Group’s “Clean 15” and “Dirty Dozen.” But one thing they do insist on is that “Grandma was right. Fresh is best.”

Joyce Kaping and Colleen Anderson are passionate about the work God has given them in mentoring others to better health through Farm Girl Fresh and their book *Eating Pure in a Processed Foods World™*. They are certain the Lord is leading them in each venture. As Joyce says, “In the end, you recognize it’s all God’s timing, and His timing is perfect.” ♦

Why SMI?

Independent organic farmers Scott and Colleen Anderson were immediately drawn by the concept of health care sharing and how Samaritan Ministries functions. Having been a member for nearly two years, Colleen says her “favorite part of the ministry is that I can prayerfully care for others.” But she’s also aware of a personal benefit. “We have extra money in the bank now,” Colleen adds chuckling, “because we aren’t paying a high premium coupled with high deductibles we never even met.”

Joyce Kaping did careful research before deciding to join the Samaritan family. She imagined the “what ifs” of the worst-case scenarios her mind could create, then questioned several members about what Samaritan Ministries would do. After everyone she asked assured her that Samaritan is “a great ministry,” Joyce chose to become a member. “It was a leap of faith, but one I needed and desired to take. I am excited and happy to belong to the Samaritan family.” ♦

The Wedge of health care freedom

by Twila Brase

The way back to health freedom, and out of government regulated health care, is already here. You may not realize it, but there are doctor's offices and surgical centers sprinkled around the nation that offer affordable, confidential, and patient-centered

privacy-friendly. It's the way health care always was before government and corporate managed care plans intruded, and the way health care should always be.

Medicine has always been a mission, stemming back to the compassionate healing ministry of our Lord

This is disastrous for patients who need care, and morally devastating for physicians committed to serving the patient. When physicians face penalties for individualizing patient care or refusing to comply with one-size-fits-all treatment protocols embedded in the health care system's computer, a dangerous conflict of interest has developed. The doctor is no longer working for the customer: the patient.

The doctor's office should be a safe place for patients—a secure sanctuary—where patients know that doctors are focused solely on their good and where patients know that their most embarrassing confessions will be held in confidence. But in too many doctors' offices today, managed care restrictions, government surveillance systems, and federal reporting requirements have led to tight-lipped patients and hands-tied doctors.

It's time for freedom.

Citizens' Council for Health Freedom (CCHF), a non-profit national health freedom organization, launched The Wedge of Health Freedom for two reasons. First, we know there are doctors and practices operating today that serve their patients freely because their hands are not tied by contracts with insurers and government agencies. But most Americans don't know these affordable practices exist—sometimes right in their own backyards. Therefore, CCHF wanted to identify and make visible the free-trade zone for health care that exists today. We've branded it "The Wedge of Health Freedom."

care, free from outsider controls. And, I'm pleased to say, more are on their way.

Welcome to The Wedge of Health Freedom, America's free-trade zone for health care.

The Wedge is where patients and doctors come together in an ethical, trusted relationship at an affordable price. In The Wedge, care is patient-friendly, pocketbook-friendly, and

Jesus Christ Who amazingly came not to be served, but to serve. But Congress has sold out to managed care corporations, granting them exclusive privileges to run Medicare, Medicaid, and now Obamacare. The health care marketplace has become a bureaucracy run by a cartel instead of a free market that allows people to serve one another by exchanging goods and services



It's the way health care always was before government and corporate managed care plans intruded, and the way health care should always be.

Second, we wanted to establish a nationwide grassroots movement that would draw the public's attention to this zone ("The Wedge"), offer these practices as an attractive choice for patients everywhere, encourage doctors to escape into The Wedge, defend the right of "Wedge practices" to operate freely without government interference, and expand The Wedge into an ever-larger slice of the American health care pie—until it's no longer a wedge, but the entire circle.

The Wedge of Health Freedom has eight simple but important principles for "Wedge practices":

- Transparent, affordable pricing
- Freedom to choose
- True patient privacy
- No government reporting
- No outside interference
- Cash-based pricing
- Protected patient-doctor relationship
- All patients welcome

The cost savings can be huge for patients and doctors. Because Wedge practices do not sign managed care contracts or participate in government programs—but they open their doors to all patients, including those in Medicare,

Medicaid and managed care—they are exempt from more than 132,000 pages of Medicare regulations, more than 20,000 pages of Obamacare regulations, the onerous electronic health record (EHR) mandate and all the attorneys, billers, coders, data reporters, technical staff, and administrative managers associated with



these and other regulatory burdens. These cash-based Wedge practices are free from third-party payer controls and costs, and the savings and extra face-time with the doctor are passed on to the patient.

Examples abound.

PATMOS ("pay at the moment of service") EmergiClinic has thousands of patients in Tennessee. They all pay cash, check, or charge, even those on Medicaid. Using NoInsuranceSurgery.com, patients head to Las Vegas, Nevada, from every corner of the country. Surgeon Dr. Kevin Petersen, whose

services include \$5,000 hernia repairs, uses an outside financing company for those who wish to establish payment plans. He notes on his website: "A health insurance company in no way helps a surgeon provide surgery and for that matter helps no physician take care of their patients." For age-based monthly fees, AtlasMD in Kansas offers unlimited access to physicians, same-day scheduling, certain diagnostics and procedures at no extra cost, and wholesale lab and medication costs. In Massachusetts, Gold Direct Care charges monthly age-based fees and

offers discounted lab tests, medications, and more. Some of the doctors using the Direct Primary Care model are members of Samaritan Ministries (samaritanministries.org/dpc).

More than 145 practices have already joined The Wedge. Patients can use the "Find a Practice" tool on the website (www.JOINtheWEDGE.com) to locate doctors who will work for them—and only them. As the numbers of Wedge practices grows, and the number of patients seeking them expands, more doctors

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will realize that it really is possible to find freedom and restore joy.

Meet Dr. Brenda Arnett, M.D. She runs a cash-based Wedge practice in Virginia. Ten years ago, she left the bureaucratic model that didn't allow her time to sufficiently care for her patients. She says she's slept better ever since. Her patients, including nearly 200 Medicare recipients, pay by cash, check, or charge. She typically spends 45 minutes with patients, does house calls, and oversees their care at the hospital.

Dr. Ashley Maltz, M.D., an integrative medicine physician, posted the following about her cash-based practice at KevinMD.com earlier this year: "I had to leave the comfortable confines of my salaried practice in order to become the doctor I'd always dreamed of being. The doctor who is centered, grounded, and wise. The doctor who gets to spend however much time she/he needs with a patient in order to get to the root cause of health issues ..."

The Wedge also addresses a significant problem in health care today: the disconnect between who receives care and who pays the bill. Patients that don't pay their own bills are insulated from costs, which adds expensive, unnecessary bureaucratic third-party payer processes to the cost of care, and allows insurers to interfere in medical decisions and deny payment. The Wedge puts patients and doctors in a direct relationship, with transparent, affordable prices and no delays or denials.

This is how the practice of medicine used to be. The Wedge will take health care "back to the future." Back to a time when medical bills were manageable, health insurance was rarely used (and affordable), and

the patient-doctor relationship really was a relationship.

All patients need a trusted doctor in their corner—a doctor dedicated to protecting and caring for them when they cannot protect and care for themselves. The Wedge is for everyone, including the insured, the uninsured and the publicly subsidized. When a health plan or the government says no, even the "covered" may need a doctor who says yes.

All patients need a trusted doctor in their corner—a doctor dedicated to protecting and caring for them. Invite your doctors to join the Wedge.

Some of the supportive comments we've heard since our June 28 launch at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., include:

- "I love it. My boss will love it." (Congressional staffer, D.C.)
- "What you're doing will help everyone in the country." (physician, PA)
- "Is this available in the state of Texas?" (citizen, TX)

Wedge practices can include physician offices, surgical centers, dental practices, and others. However, due to a federal law, chiropractors and independently practicing physical

therapists and occupational therapists cannot opt out of Medicare and are prohibited from engaging in private contracts with their patients. That was a surprise discovery—and a law that should be repealed.

We also envision the establishment of "Wedge hospitals." These could include faith-based hospitals free from conscience-violating mandates and the high costs of managed care restrictions and government regulations. It will be interesting to see how low hospital costs can go if they are free to simply do the work of a hospital and nothing else.

The Wedge of Health Freedom is a nationwide grassroots campaign to restore the heart of health care in America, regardless of whether the "Affordable" Care Act is or isn't repealed, and no matter what happens to Medicare. The Wedge is an alternative, affordable patient-centered system outside of government regulations and managed care controls.

Invite your doctors to join the Wedge. It may take them two or three years to actually break free, but the time to start showing them it's not only possible but a good idea is now. As a grassroots campaign, we're counting on patients and doctors everywhere to promote and expand The Wedge of Health Freedom. Go to www.JOINtheWEDGE.com for resources to share with your doctors. ♦

Samaritan Ministries member Twila Brase is the President of Citizens Council for Health Freedom. Her "Health Freedom Minute" is heard on 400 radio stations. Her efforts have led to successful lawsuits against illegal state storage, use, and dissemination of newborn DNA.

Our doctor is member Jeff

Davenport at One Focus Medical, in Edmond, Oklahoma. Dr. Davenport operates as a direct primary care physician utilizing a new model in which I pay a flat, affordable, monthly fee in exchange for a broad range of primary care services.

The fee ranges from \$10-100 per month depending upon the patient's age. I pay nothing additional for unlimited access to my doctor, including his private cell number! A normal visit is scheduled for 60 minutes, giving us plenty of time to talk.

In addition to solving my need for affordable primary care, Dr. Davenport has also given me negotiated rates to other services such as lab work and specialists. In addition, he carries reasonably-priced medications, acting as my pharmacist. In all cases, he is my medical advocate.

I joined Dr. Davenport's DPC model because it dovetails wonderfully with my Samaritan health sharing plan. The two ideas together give my wife and I access to affordable, intelligent medical services that has allowed me to venture out into my own business with peace of mind.

*Terry and Cindy Chapman
Edmond, Oklahoma*

Since we made the decision to leave the world of health insurance and join Samaritan's geographically extended community of believers, we have felt overjoyed to write our checks every month knowing that the Lord was using it in some small way to help the Body of Christ.

When we received shares for our need, the cards that came with them were incredibly encouraging. We felt so loved and supported by people we didn't even personally

know. However we realized that we do know them—by their fruits as brothers and sisters in the Lord. Thank you Samaritan Ministries for being such a vital resource for the Body of Christ.

*Isaac Halls
Clovis, California*

We can hardly find the words to thank all of you for helping us through our recent medical emergency with our daughter. It was truly amazing to see the Body of Christ surround us with prayer, words of encouragement, and financial support. This was our first experience having a need shared and we were so blessed by the staff too! We are truly grateful to be part of this ministry with all of you.

By the way, our daughter is doing great! Through the process we learned so much about our local medical system. We were able to save a lot of money by just making a few phone calls to the doctors and hospital. Most of them have a discount for cash payment. It saved us thousands of dollars.

We were active in asking questions too, which prevented several unnecessary procedures from being routinely performed, and our daughter was especially grateful for this. It also saved us thousands of dollars!

The whole experience was unnerving but we will be far more prepared should another medical emergency arise.

Although we prefer to be sending shares instead of receiving them, we are so grateful for the prayers and assistance. We are praising God for His faithfulness.

*Scott and Jody Flickema
Spring Lake, Michigan*

What a privilege and a blessing it is to be a part of Samaritan Ministries. This was my first experience of having a need. What a humbling, yet wonderfully encouraging experience it was to have the staff pray with me and receive notes of encouragement and monetary gifts from brothers and sisters in Christ from all over the United States.

I wondered what kind of sacrifice each had made so that they could help me. I prayed for God's blessing on each one. And I was reminded of the importance of giving from a heart of love as we help one another in sharing our burdens.

*Mary Burkey
Seward, Nebraska*

I was blessed by those who were willing to give to my Special Prayer Need. I pray that God would bless each one of them. I see now how my small amount can end up blessing someone in a very big way. I am very thankful.

*Anna Sitnik
Snohomish, Washington*

God has blessed us through people we have never met. Even though they don't know us, they are praying for my husband's healing. He has never had to have any medical treatment before, but was pretty shaken up with this kidney stone.

We were given peace and comfort knowing that so many were praying for him. This ministry is a great way to share our medical needs as we look to Jehovah Rapha, our Healer. It is He that binds us all together.

*Dave and Valerie Long
Buffalo, Wyoming*

example, cannot, without violating their Christian conscience, perform sex-reassignment surgeries.

This is the reality we now face, and the onslaught is coming fast. Major LGBT organizations are now pressing their demands and gaining traction. A host of politicians are ready to support any legislation that will make them appear, by their calculation, on “the right side of history,” not to mention on the winning side of the ballot box. An entire universe of regulative bodies ranging from the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the American Bar Association to accrediting agencies and local school boards is poised to drop the hammer on any individual or institution that stands in the path of the sexual revolution.

Now, along comes a voice to warn us that the deluge is coming and to argue that we had better prepare ourselves for disaster or save ourselves at last by joining the revolution.

That voice is Professor David Gushee of Mercer University. In a recent column at Religion News Service, Gushee announced: “Middle ground is disappearing on the question of whether LGBT persons should be treated as full equals, without any discrimination in society—and on the related question of whether religious institutions should be allowed to continue discriminating due to their doctrinal beliefs. It turns out that you are either for full and unequivocal social and legal equality for LGBT people, or you are against it, and your answer will at some point be revealed. This is true both for individuals and for institutions.”²

Just in case we missed his point, he lowers the boom: “Neutrality

is not an option. Neither is polite half-acceptance. Nor is avoiding the subject. Hide as you might, the issue will come and find you.”

Let me be clear. I agree with Gushee’s main point. Middle ground is indeed disappearing on LGBT issues. Indeed, the very idea of middle ground or a “third way” on these questions is ludicrous on its face. I have been making this argument in public for well over a decade. In 2005 I wrote an article with the title, “No Middle Ground on Homosexuality.” My argument then and my argument now is that the normalization of LGBT behaviors and relationships and revisions of human identity is incompatible with a commitment to Biblical authority and the historic faith of the Christian church defined by Holy Scripture.

Middle ground was always untenable, even when some version of middle ground was David Gushee’s own position. The demand of the LGBT revolution is not merely toleration or even legalization, but required celebration. Middle ground disappears in the irreconcilable nature of the conflict. The “third way” is just a delaying tactic on the taxiway to full take-off.

When it comes to actions to be taken against Christians and Christian institutions, Gushee’s language is very informative. He raises “the related question of whether religious institutions should be allowed to continue discriminating due to their doctrinal beliefs.”

This is called framing, and we must watch as he frames the issue by contrasting the winning side, those who believe that LGBT persons “should be treated as full equals,” with the losing side, those who “continue discriminating due to their

doctrinal beliefs.” Everything that follows in his article flows from that frame. It’s beautiful equality vs. ugly discrimination—end of story.

What makes David Gushee’s essay so interesting, and so troubling, is the fact that he poses as a friendly critic to traditionally minded Christians. After all, not too long ago he was himself arguing that homosexual acts and relationships were incompatible with Christian faithfulness. In *Kingdom Ethics*, written with the late Professor Glen Stassen and published in 2003, Gushee argued that “homosexual conduct is one form of sexual expression that falls outside the will of God.”³ In the years following there were signals that Gushee’s position was changing. In 2014 Gushee announced a full reversal of his position, announcing his new position in an address to an LGBT audience at The Reformation Project conference in Washington, D.C. delivered on November 8 of that year. He also published a book, *Changing Our Mind*, which told the story of his theological transition and included essays by Brian McLaren, Phyllis Tickle, and Matthew Vines. The arguments in the book offer nothing new to the debate, but they did signal Gushee’s apparent 180 degree turn on LGBT questions.

As I said, David Gushee means to pose as a friend to those conservative Christians who even now refuse to get with the program. Alan Jacobs at Baylor University has pointed to a word that jumped off the page of Gushee’s essay the first time I read it. He calls upon Christian conservatives “to reconsider their position voluntarily.” He wants to give us time to abandon over two thousand years of Christian conviction ... but not much time. The stick is not far

behind the carrot.

When those on the receiving end of Gushee's stern advice complained about both the tone and the substance of his essay, he responded with a second essay in which he offered this analogy: "I was saying: 'Watch out, I notice that volcano over there is smoking ominously, and if it erupts, hot molten lava will wash over you.' I was not saying: 'I hope that the volcano erupts, and hot molten lava washes over you.'"⁴

He was merely describing and predicting, he insisted, not at all prescribing what should happen. But there is a big problem with that defense. The language and framing that he deploys in both of his articles (and in his recent book projects as well) clearly imply that conservative Christians are a menace to the cause he champions. He has described evangelical Christians as the last major hold-outs on the road to full LGBT equality, and he claims to be a full convert to the LGBT cause.

Still, I differ with some of Gushee's critics who argue that he does not really intend to pose as a friend to evangelicals at all. I have known David Gushee for many years. We were seminary students together and we were for some time colleagues on the same theology faculty. Our daughters went to kindergarten together and played together. For some years we lived a human drama together, but it was also clear that we inhabited different theological worlds and had very different visions of evangelical identity and conviction.

I truly believe that David Gushee intends no malice towards us. He is an essentially kind person, and I think he really means to warn

Christians who believe as I do that we are about to be the victims of a volcanic eruption. Hot lava is headed our way. I doubt he understands the extent to which his own language and framing make that warning seem far more prescriptive than he admits. He clearly believes that the volcano must and should erupt. I think he would also prefer that we join the revolution rather than be consumed in the lava flow.

I know he is fully honest when he tells us how he sees the two sides in this conflict. "Culture warriors who criticize me believe they are defending the True Faith from compromising liberals like me. I believe I am defending the Religion of Jesus from intolerant ideologues like them. We will never, ever agree. Only God can judge."

As he said, there is no real middle ground. The only way to avoid being destroyed in the lava flow is to abandon two thousand years of Christian conviction. The sexual revolutionaries have shown an amazing willingness to accept converts to their cause. Barack Obama and both Bill and Hillary Clinton stand at the head of that list. All three were on record opposing same-sex marriage until they publicly converted, repented, and joined the revolution. Count on the list of religious leaders answering that altar call to grow as the volcano trembles.

David Gushee has openly declared himself to hold to a "revisionist" understanding of Christian sexual morality. I appreciate the honesty. I also wonder whether he is himself ready for the coming eruption. In the revised edition of *Kingdom Ethics*, published just months ago, he offers details of his new "revisionist" position. He clearly advocates

a covenant relationship as the basis for sexual bonding. That will not satisfy the sexual revolutionaries, who demand the celebration of what they describe as full freedom in sexual and gender expression. They are not willing to accept any demand that same-sex couples must get married and commit to monogamy.

But, Professor Gushee's warning has been both delivered and received. His words clarify where we stand, and I agree that the earth is shaking under our feet.

At the same time, I have to wonder if the sexual revolutionaries and their erstwhile supporters and theologians understand just what they have set loose.

Ask not for whom the volcano erupts; it erupts for thee. ♦

Dr. R. Albert Mohler Jr., serves as president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Dr. Mohler hosts two programs: "The Briefing," a daily analysis of news and events from a Christian worldview; and "Thinking in Public," a series of conversations with the day's leading thinkers. He also writes a popular blog and a regular commentary on moral, cultural, and theological issues. All of these resources can be accessed through Dr. Mohler's website, www.AlbertMohler.com.

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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.

Bible camp receives backlash

A Bible camp in Canada is being criticized by its local community after refusing to allow a “gay pride” speaker from giving a presentation on gender and sexuality at an awards ceremony on the campgrounds, International Christian Concern reports. The rental agreement for using the Lake Ness Bible Camp property in Prince George, British Columbia, specifically requires compliance with the organization’s values and faith statement. The awards ceremony plan violated that agreement, camp officials say. *Praise God that the camp’s directors are standing strong for Biblical teachings. Pray that they will continue to obey God and love righteousness more than they would love the praise of men.*

Iranian pastor again arrested

Iranian authorities again arrested Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani on July 24, Voice of the Martyrs reports. Youcef was charged with “acting against

national security” and released after being warned against evangelizing. He was originally arrested in 2009 on charges of apostasy and served three years in prison. He and his wife also were briefly jailed earlier this year. *Pray that Pastor Youcef will remain strong in his faith and continue to reach others for Christ.*

Pastor kidnapped, murdered

A Maoist mob kidnapped a pastor from his home in India on July 30, severely beat him, cut his throat, and dumped his body outside his family’s village, VOM says. Pastor Yohan had served among a local tribal group for 15 years. The murderers left a note warning, “If you plan to cheat our people by working as a police informer, this will be your punishment.” *Pray for the comfort and protection of his family and the Christians in the community.*

Mother seeks son’s release

The mother of Iranian Christian Ebrahim Firouzi is pleading for her son’s release from prison, ICC reports. Ebrahim was sentenced to five years for his Christian activities. He reportedly is one of 350 religious prisoners in Iran. His mother, who is in ill health, is also asking for a fair trial for him. *Pray that Ebrahim will be released soon as well as for the well-being of his mother, and for religious freedom in Iran.*

Laotian believers detained

Two Laotian Christians were detained early in August for sharing their faith, VOM says. “Ket” was arrested for handing out Christian materials in his village. When authorities learned he had received the materials from “Boua,” they arrested

her when she came to visit Ket in jail. *Pray for encouragement for Ket and Boua.*

Convert’s video questioned

An Egyptian journalist who has battled with the government for an updated identification card reflecting his conversion to Christianity has released a video announcing his return to Islam, ICC reports. Human rights activists are suspicious that Mohamed Hegazy was forced to make the video on YouTube. Friends have reported that Hegazy has endured “relentless persecution” since trying to get a new ID with his Christian name of Bishoy Armeya Boulos. *Pray that the Egyptian journalist will be strengthened in his Christian faith of 17 years, and that God’s love would overwhelm him.*

Nepal targets Christians

The Nepalese church continues to be under strain thanks to a new national constitution that bans “evangelistic activity,” ICC reports. Bible studies, adults praying with children, and possession of religious material have all become illegal under the constitution. *Pray that believers in Nepal would be unafraid and unashamed of their faith, that they would receive material and spiritual provision, and that Hindus in Nepal would become jealous of the favor God shows His children in that country. ♦*

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).

His people in the New Heavens and New Earth forever.

Was this separation and union done by Wisdom? According to Paul, it was the prime example of Wisdom:

But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love Him (1 Corinthians 2:7-9).

The essence of Wisdom therefore has much to do with separating or discerning, and reuniting or restoring. This can be seen in the story of Solomon and the two prostitutes. Why is this story included in the Bible? Is it meant to be just one among many examples of His wisdom? Are we meant to just look at it and say, “Wow, that was pretty neat, Solomon?” I don’t think so. In fact, I think it is there to give us insight into the real nature of wisdom itself.

You no doubt know the story. There are two women, both of whom have a baby, but one accidentally suffocates hers in the night. So she swaps the babies—the living for the dead. When the other woman awakes, she realizes that the dead baby isn’t hers, and so a dispute arises. Solomon—pre-DNA testing—has to sort this mess out.

He calls for a sword, ordering that the living baby be chopped in half with each woman getting an equal part. The truthful woman cries out

in anguish to Solomon not to do this thing, but to give the baby to the other. The deceitful woman is unconcerned by the baby’s fate. So Solomon gives the baby to its true mother—the one who would rather give it up than see it killed.

Now what actually happened? First, the baby has been separated from its true mother as a result of human wickedness and folly, and Solomon—as God’s anointed—is called on to successfully reunite them. When he calls for a sword, at first it looks like yet another tragic separation is about to take place. However, what he is really doing is this: While appearing to divide the baby, he is actually dividing the women. He is separating between them, and between truth and falsehood, using another Sword—the Sword of wisdom. And he does it solely so a reunion can then take place between the baby and its true mother.

If this is wisdom, what is the application to us? In the first place, it means we must beware of separating after the manner of men, and we must learn to do so after the manner of God. As shown above, man separates not for the sake of restoring or reuniting, but for the sake of causing separations and divisions. God, on the other hand, separates in order to restore and reunite, and to create something much better than existed before. Man’s separations are folly; God’s are wisdom.

In the second place, we need to put it into practice. We are often given seemingly intractable problems, which God wants us to sort out using His wisdom, and not our folly. Think about issues and disputes that arise in a church. What

is man’s way of dealing with it? Quite often, we make separations, but we do so not in ways that are ever going to restore and reunite, but to create a permanent rift. So instead of separating out matters according to what is true and what is false, we divide into factions (see 1 Corinthians for an example of this in practice). Or if we do separate according to truth and falsehood, we fail to separate out love from bitterness and a vengeful spirit, and so end up crushing the other person or people “because we have right on our side.” Before you know it, the Church, which God hath joined together, has been put asunder.

That’s the opposite of Biblical wisdom. Biblical wisdom separates, but doesn’t separate into factions. Biblical wisdom separates, but doesn’t confuse issues with people. Biblical wisdom separates, but does so separating love from bitterness and a vengeful spirit. In other words, the goal of Biblical wisdom in church disputes is not to be right, not to be with the right party, not to seek revenge. Rather, its goal is to bring about restoration and reunion. If you see a dispute or an issue settled in a way that brings about these results, you will know that Biblical wisdom has been at work. ♦

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Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger and welcome You, or naked and clothe You? And when did we see You sick or in prison and visit You?

Matthew 25:37b-39

Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?

Matthew 25:44

Matthew 25 tells what will happen on that Day when all people stand before the Son of Man's glorious throne. He will separate all of us into one of two groups, with the righteous on His right and the unrighteous on His left. The righteous will be commended for ministering to Him, and the unrighteous will be told that they didn't minister to Him.

Ironically, those in both groups will ask essentially the same question, "When did we see You ... ?"

When we have received Jesus Christ, we will minister to those around us without realizing that we are ministering to Him. Those who have not received Him

will not minister to those around them, and they will not realize it is Jesus that they are neglecting.

As you did it (or not) to one of the least of these ... you did it (or not) to Me. Minister to the least of these the way you would minister if it was Jesus, because it is.

For the Kingdom,



Ray King