

Christian HealthCare

NEWSLETTER

MEMBER LETTERS:

'We experienced the love of the Body of Christ'

I so appreciate that my money is not going for abortions with Samaritan. The Need I had was handled accurately and in a timely manner. The personal notes and prayers are so special, unlike the cold, business-only experience I had with insurance. This ministry is such a blessing.

*Sally
Michigan*

I recently had an insurance telemarketer call me and try to sell me insurance. I said that I'm involved in a Christian health care sharing ministry. He said, "You know, that's not insurance," which prompted me to say, "I know! It's way better than insurance."

I'm very thankful we can come alongside each other and share the burden of medical expenses. I recently experienced chest pains, and Samaritan members met my Need. I'm so blessed to be involved in this ministry.

*Tim
Indiana*

How pro-lifers are winning an invisible cosmic battle

by member Susanne Maynes

"Sandy" is the director of a pregnancy help center in a small town. She doesn't have a huge staff, so she wears lots of hats: meeting with donors, counseling clients, answering the phone.

Sandy works hard and believes in the sanctity of human life. What she doesn't realize is how much of a key player she is in an epic, cosmic battle—a war that rages over hearts and minds in her community, nation, and world on a daily basis.

Maybe you're like Sandy. Maybe you need to be reminded of the vital nature of your work.

Let's look at the battle for life through a wide-angle lens.

As pro-life people, we are painfully cognizant of how our culture devalues preborn people. We understand the right to be born is the most fundamental human right. We understand God created mankind in His image, and He forbids the taking of innocent human life.

That said, the strength of our position will solidify even more if we take a step back to look at the big-picture, overarching truth which goes along with a pro-life conviction.

First, consider why God created human beings in the first place.

God has never been needy, lonely, or unhappy. He is one Being with three Persons. He has angels to serve Him.

God already had relationships before He created us, but He wanted to share

His eternal joy with a special creature who is uniquely like Him—a creature to love who could love Him in return.

So He created mankind in His image.

At first, everything was perfect. Adam and Eve enjoyed fellowship with their Father/Creator, with each other, and with the other creatures.

However, by the third chapter of God's story, another player enters the picture. Satan is jealous of God and hates Him.

How do you pierce a Father's heart? You attack His children.

Satan successfully tempts Eve and Adam to disobey God. And humanity has been in a freefall ever since.

Of course, the good news is God had a plan in mind from the beginning to

Continued on page 12

In This Issue...

3 A win-win-win situation

4 Member Spotlight
Tim Bisagno: MXTV.org

6 Book Review: *The Hacking of the American Mind—The Science Behind the Corporate Takeover of Our Bodies and Brains*

8 Movie Review: *The Pilgrim's Progress*

10 Q&A with Colin Gunn

15 Member Letters

16 The Doorpost
He will enable us to overcome

CONTENTS

- 1 **How pro-lifers are winning an invisible cosmic battle**
by member Susanne Maynes
- 3 **A win-win-win situation**
by Michael Miller
- 4 **Member Spotlight**
Tim Bisagno
MXTV.org
by Kathryn Nielson
- 6 **Book Review**
The Hacking of the American Mind: The Science Behind the Corporate Takeover of Our Bodies and Brains
by Jaclyn Lewis
- 8 **Movie Review**
The Pilgrim's Progress
by Michael Miller
- 10 **Q&A with Colin Gunn**
by Michael Miller
- 14 **Prayer for the Persecuted Church**
- 15 **Member Letters**
- 16 **The Doorpost**
He will enable us to overcome
by Ray King

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Sharing Summary from March

Shares:	\$28,948,225	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:	\$29,060,767	
Unshared Needs in Negotiation:	\$ —	
New Needs:	3,979	
Total Needs:	10,185	
New Rewards:	219	Member Households: 82,171 (as of 2/20/19)
Miscarriages:	20	
Final Rewards:	9	

Contact Us: 877-764-2426 Dash.SamaritanMinistries.org

Questions about?

- Your medical need
- Shares you are sending or receiving
- Your membership

Email

- needs@samaritanministries.org
- membership@samaritanministries.org
- membership@samaritanministries.org

Phone Menu

- 1 - 1
- 1 - 3
- 1 - 4



Health Resources

Have a Need? Use the Health Resources app on Dash.

- Compare quality and cost of health care services in your area using Healthcare Bluebook.
- Use Medibid to receive bids from doctors for tests or treatments you are seeking.
- Email a medical professional or call a nurse (free), or call a doctor who can write a prescription (\$25).
- Access discount tools for prescriptions and lab tests.

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.

A win-win-win situation: MediBid, member surgeon save member a bundle on surgery

by Michael Miller

It was a happy process of health care sharing on all sides. Samaritan Ministries members needed a procedure. They searched for fair pricing through MediBid, offered through the member Dashboard. They received a reasonable bid from a well-rated surgeon, who turns out to be a Samaritan Ministries member and also offers transparent pricing on his website for all to see. The surgery was performed, and the members were spared the need to juggle bills since they only had to write one check.

This happy process started in late 2018 when Samaritan member Daniel Hatch unfortunately needed carpal tunnel surgery on his right wrist. As the owner of Cartoogechaye Creek Campground near Franklin, North Carolina, he's active outside and also used to do a lot of gardening and physical labor when he managed condominiums. Years after a similar surgery to his left arm, the work finally also caught up to his right wrist, with the pain even keeping him awake at night.

He and his wife, Vivian, who have been members of Samaritan since 1998, checked out the cost to get the surgery locally, but prices were well over \$6,000. They wanted to see if a less expensive provider could be found.

"We decided to use MediBid," Vivian says.

MediBid is a service that Samaritan makes available for free through the member Dashboard. From there, members can go to MediBid.com, find the type of procedure or treatment that they need, enter their information, and then wait for bids to come in from providers.

The Hatches went through the process, submitting information to MediBid in October. Carpal tunnel surgery bids started arriving five minutes later.

"One was here in town, in Franklin," Daniel says. "One was from Asheville. We had maybe one or two others."

One of those others was from Dr. Christopher Vaughn of Freedom Orthopedic in Dunwoody, Georgia,

outside of Atlanta.

"We researched Dr. Vaughn and saw he was rated 4.5 out of 5 stars," Daniel says.

Freedom Orthopedic's price was also much lower than the Hatches had found so far: \$2,800 for the surgery, anesthesia, radiology, and hospital expenses. Total. One other bid came in \$100 under that, but it didn't include as many services as Dr. Vaughn's. The Asheville bid was over three times more than Dr. Vaughn's just for the doctor, not including hospital or anesthesiologist costs.

The Hatches made their decision and traveled the 120 miles to Dunwoody in December to meet with Dr. Vaughn. There was a bit of confusion about the inclusion of the cost of the initial consultation in the \$2,800, but the Hatches and Dr. Vaughn worked that out.

"He said, 'I will handle everything. You cut me the check, I'll pay the anesthesiologist, get the operating room set up. You just go to the hospital,'" Daniel says.

The couple also found out that Dr.

Continued on page 13



Health Resources



The marketplace for medicine.

Dash.SamaritanMinistries.org

Tim Bisagno

MXTV.org

by Kathryn Nielson

When Tim Bisagno said yes to God 30 years ago, he had no idea that a future in television evangelism would spring from a willingness to wholeheartedly serve God.

For 20 years Tim has carried out the vision of his ministry, MXTV, to produce programming that would appeal to the young people across the world “in a language and set in a cultural context that [they] recognize as their own.”

“It’s the original voice in young evangelistic multimedia,” Tim says. “MXTV creatively ‘rePresents’ God’s Word to the world through television, music, film, and the internet. The passion is that this media generation will encounter God, resulting in their salvation.”

MXTV has produced 200 episodes,

sharing the Gospel on 22 Christian television stations and in eight languages.

But, like anything else in life, the way young people interact with media is changing, so MXTV is changing, too. Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996) and Generation Z (1997-present) have replaced the original target audience, Generation X (1965-1980). With this new audience comes the need for a new approach to evangelism. Tim and his team are setting their sights on expanding their internet presence under the all-inclusive branding of Mission X Media.

“We are committed to keeping up with the times,” Tim says. “Despite technology, God is the one who makes it happen. Kids don’t need Mission X Media, they need Jesus. We’re going to be there and give Him to them and ask God to light this thing on fire. We want to be there when they’re searching for God on the internet.”

MXTV.org is full of written resources and dozens of episodes. The site touches on real issues that kids are facing, such as suicide, depression, eating disorders, and finding their worth in Christ.

“Young people today are looking for real acceptance, but they don’t know where to find it,” Tim says. “When viewers encounter Christ through our media, they realize they’ve been accepted all along.”

The website is also chock full of interviews with Christians who use the arts to make a difference in culture. There is no shortage of inter-



views with musicians, a subject close to Tim’s heart and the avenue God used to get him to where he is today.

Tim grew up in a Christian home, the son of a well-known pastor and author, the late John Bisagno. They moved to Houston when Tim was in first grade so that his dad could pastor that city’s First Baptist Church, a congregation of less than 400 that grew to 22,000 people by the time John Bisagno retired.

“Forty-four thousand eyeballs always looking at the preacher’s kid,” Tim says.

Despite his dad’s gracious attempts at making sure they had a normal life, Tim rebelled a bit in high school. Things got rough in college, and Tim began abusing alcohol.

“I felt a call to the ministry very early on in my life, and the way that worked best to quiet God’s voice was to numb myself,” he says. “I knew the truth, and I wasn’t living it. That’s a terrible way to live.”



Eventually God got ahold of him in 1989, and he was all in.

“I always thought I wasn’t going to tell Him yes to get Him off my back,” Tim says. “I promised Him that if I told Him that, I meant it.”

He went to Baylor University and then to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. After that, he spent some time as a youth pastor in Dallas, but God wanted him somewhere else. During an intense time of prayer, he remembers telling God he would go anywhere and do anything for Him.

“I heard God’s voice for the first time, and it shocked me,” Tim says. “He said ‘Amsterdam.’”

He joined Youth With A Mission and started The Friendly’s, a hardcore rock band that toured with a seasoned band that had more experience on the road with evangelism and live shows.

They performed in mainstream nightclubs as well as festivals and parks in about 12 countries to crowds who had no idea they were coming to hear a Christian band. For five years they did nightclub evan-

gelism as “musician-aries,” playing “double pedal Jesus metal.” It was at this time that Tim started Mission X, a nonprofit designed to reach Generation X. They raised enough money to tour, sleeping on floors in buses without air conditioning and living on peanut butter.

“It was the coolest experience,” says Tim.

Eventually he and his band relocated to Houston and were invited to perform in prisons, working alongside a woman in prison ministry. After a concert at a juvenile delinquent center, she asked them to appear on her TV show in Houston on a station later bought by Christian network Daystar.

The Friendly’s took their smoke machines and lights, played their heavy metal rock, and gave an invitation to salvation at the end. The phone lines lit up, and the owner of the station couldn’t believe it. He asked them to come back and do the same thing. So they did.

Not wanting it to look like a typical Christian TV show, they started shooting on location instead of in a

TV studio. In 1999, a year after starting production, they won their first Dove Award for best local broadcast show in the nation. Not long after, TBN picked up the show, and they went from local to national overnight. They’ve been on TV ever since.

But the current generation isn’t watching broadcast TV like their predecessors did. They’re on social media, and Mission X Media is going where they are.

“God has given me a new sense of wonder,” Tim says. “Will He do what He did on TV with MXTV on the internet?”

Their foray into online territory affords them new opportunities, like 24/7 access to their audience through a chat service, holding fast to Tim’s commitment to offer an opportunity to respond to the Gospel at the end of every episode.

Tim says his goal has always been to reach a target audience of 18- to 28-year-olds who are “still awaiting their redemption.”

“(They) don’t like to be called lost,” Tim says. “Those are the ones we’re trying to reach.” ♦

Why SMI?

Tim Bisagno, founder and host of MXTV, approached the idea of a Samaritan Ministries membership from a practical standpoint.

“To be very blunt, we are actually missionaries,” Tim says. “One hundred percent of our livelihood and ministry costs comes from donations. We loved that this was a reasonable health care choice. With a family of four, it made wonderful sense.”

Tim sings the praises of SMI whenever the subject comes up.

“We’ve been doing this for years, and it’s batting a thousand,” he says.

Samaritan Ministries checks all the boxes for the Bisagno family.

- “A community feel that is created through shared expense.”
- “People praying for you. That alone is so valuable.”
- “When you’re self-pay, you initially start with an amazing discount.”
- “If you have a question or problem, you call and you get an answer right then or they follow-up quickly.”
- “It’s Biblical, sharing each other’s burdens.” ♦

The Hacking of the American Mind

by Dr. Robert H. Lustig, M.D.

reviewed by Jaclyn Lewis

Dr. Robert Lustig treated kids with hormone-related problems for three decades. The pediatric endocrinologist noticed a concerning trend ten years ago:

“Children still grow,” Dr. Lustig says, “but sadly in my pediatric clinic I now watch many of them grow horizontally rather than vertically. Some take medicines previously reserved for adults, like metformin for type 2 diabetes or benazepril for hypertension” (page 1).

In his newest book, *The Hacking of the American Mind: The Science Behind the Corporate Takeover of Our Bodies and Brains*, Dr. Lustig shows how our country’s “toxic environment” is harming our health and making us miserable on the neurochemical level.

Dr. Lustig acknowledges early on that there is no “smoking gun” to prove a full-blown conspiracy. Current scientific data on addiction and happiness, or contentment,

relies mostly on animal studies and correlative human studies (11). He also explains that “the connecting of our moods and emotions to rational public policy is complex, nuanced, and indirect. People can’t be told what to do” (12).

However, Dr. Lustig says there is enough circumstantial and empirical evidence to show that “pleasure is the slippery slope to tolerance and addiction, while happiness is the key to long life” (7). Some industries blur “the link between their products and disease” and “willingly confuse the concepts of pleasure and happiness with the sole motive being profit” (6).

Therefore, Dr. Lustig writes, “if we don’t understand what’s actually happening to our brains, we become prey to industries that capitalize on our addictions in the name of selling happiness” (7). In short, our brains have been “hacked.”

How could a product cause discontentment? Isn’t contentment

an individual choice? “Indeed,” Dr. Lustig says, “you are in charge of your own thoughts, which are yours and yours alone. But you share the process of emotion generation and its experience with every other human on the planet” (26). The chemical processes in your brain that generate physical feelings of pleasure and contentment are what are being “hacked.” This is why it’s important to understand the physical differences between pleasure and contentment.

Dr. Lustig identifies those distinctions:

- Pleasure is a sensation driven by the hormone dopamine in the brain. Contentment is a sensation driven by the hormone serotonin in the brain (8).
- Pleasure can be activated through consuming substances (added sugar, caffeine, cocaine). Contentment cannot be activated with any substance and requires actions or experiences

(graduating college, the birth of a child, introducing someone to Christ).

- Pleasure occurs through the act of “taking” and the thrill is gone quickly (buying a gadget or bauble, winning a video or casino game). Contentment occurs through the act of giving and is long-lasting (time or money to a worthy project, care and attention to a spouse or friend).
- Pleasure-seeking unchecked can lead to addictions, and, in the case of food addiction, metabolic syndrome (foods spiked with sugar, compulsive behaviors such as shopping, TV watching, porn). Contentment is not addictive, and, like eating vegetables, is supportive of physical health (walks through nature, playing with grandchildren) (9-11).

Dr. Lustig says that the confusion between pleasure and contentment “continues to be stoked by industry and government in order to preserve and sustain persistent economic growth at the expense of the populace” (152).

“We spend money on hedonic pleasures, trying to make ourselves happy, and in the process we drive dopamine, reduce dopamine receptors [our brain’s ability to register pleasure], increase cortisol [a stress hormone], and reduce serotonin, to ever further distance ourselves from our goal” (152). Despite our country’s economic abundance, “we’re prosperous but not happy,” or healthy.

Recent data supports this:

- Life expectancy declined for

men and women in 2014, adjusted for age (153).

- Infant mortality increased between 2014 and 2015 (154).
- Suicide rate increased in the white middle-class demographic in 2015 (155).
- Deaths from opioid overdoses quadrupled since 1999 (163).
- Death rates increased for all

“If we don’t understand what’s actually happening to our brains, we become prey to industries that capitalize on our addictions in the name of selling happiness.”

metabolic syndrome diseases, adjusted for age (206).

As one example of how we’ve been hacked, Dr. Lustig asks us to consider the food industry, which grosses \$1.46 trillion a year (200).

Added sugar in processed food drives chronic metabolic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease (201). We’ve known this since nutritional researchers John Yudkin in the U.K. and Sheldon Reiser in the U.S. “correlated sugar consumption with heart disease” around 50 years ago (184).

Yet sugar has been subsidized by the federal government since 1971, when President Nixon pushed for policy to lower food prices (183). The food industry uses sugar as an inexpensive way to increase food palatability and shelf life (183-184, 269-270).

What’s more, when “the sugar

industry came under intense scrutiny” because of Yudkin and Reiser’s research, Dr. Lustig says the Sugar Association increased efforts to market sugar in a positive light.

“[The] Sugar Association established a public relations arm called Sugar Information, Inc., and hired a PR firm to blanket the country with pro-sugar propaganda. Saying that sugar was the ‘quick energy’

to provide the ‘will-power you need to undereat’ and ‘to curb your appetite’—in other words, deceptive advertising designed to drive your dopamine upward. In 1972 the Federal Trade Commission took Sugar Information to court and shut it down” (184).

Fast forward to 2015, when our health care system spent \$3.2 trillion mostly treating the preventable chronic metabolic diseases that added sugar drives. These metabolic diseases are slowly killing over 50 percent of the population (201-202).

To thrive in our toxic environment, Dr. Lustig urges us to add “The 4C’s of Happiness” into our daily lives:

- Connect (social support).
- Contribute (giving).
- Cope (sleep, prayer, exercise).
- Cook (real food low in added sugar) (221-267). ♦

This article is one of three about Dr. Lustig’s work. Read them all at SamaritanMinistries.org/lustig.

The Pilgrim's Progress

by Michael Miller



An animated version of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan's 17th-century Christian classic, is a story about more than just Christian Pilgrim's journey from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City.

It's about the path that Steve Cleary and his staff have been following for the past five years as they created their own production company and tools, pursuing a vision that they at times doubted early on.

It's about the paths that persecuted Christians must walk in nearly every part of the world.

It's about the path that everybody who professes faith in Jesus Christ must take as they live out the Gospel life.

And U.S. filmgoers will be able to see the results of the journey taken by Steve, Robert Fernandez, and several others in showings at 7 p.m. April 18 and 12:55 p.m. April 20. Tickets are available online through pilgrims.movie.

"The Christian journey is not always easy," says Steve, who produced the film. "It can be difficult, and those difficulties can come in persecution, health, finances, family. What I want people to get out of the film is that, when hard times come, if we're not understanding that the Christian life can have difficulties, we have a tendency to say, 'Why God? Why is this happening to me? Haven't I lived a good Christian life? I don't do this, I don't do that. Why am I facing this trial?'"

John Bunyan was probably answering that question when he wrote part one of his epic allegory during a lengthy prison sentence in England for unauthorized preaching. *The Pilgrim's Progress from This World to That Which Is to Come* went on to be translated into over 200 languages and published in what Oxford University Press calls "innumerable" editions. Part two was written later, an account of the similar journey made by Pilgrim's family.

The original story follows Christian Pilgrim's adventures from his home in the City of Destruction to where he is being called, the Celestial City. Along the way he encounters embodied temptations and distractions as well as obstacles like the Slough of Despond, the Valley of Shadow of Death, the River of God, The Enchanted Ground, Vanity Fair, and The Celestial City. Characters include Obstinate, Pliable, Mr. Worldly Wiseman, Apollyon, Hopeful, and The Flatterer.

The project started out as a challenge between Steve and friend Robert Fernandez, who ended up as a writer and director of the film. At first just a possibility, the animated movie soon became a real project. But a challenging one. Steve left the City of Ideas and found himself on the Path of Asking for Money.

"I had to pound the pavement every day to raise money, to keep support coming in," Steve says.

At one point, though, his direc-

tion changed toward the Field of Missions.

“I learned most Christian films lose money,” Steve says. “I learned nobody was really interested in buying my project. I learned that filling theater seats is very difficult. It was really very discouraging. I even wondered if I had made the right decision.”

Then about two thirds of the way into the project, he realized that the goal shouldn't be success in U.S. theaters or sales, but success in the mission field.

“I really believed that God put a spark and put a passion in my heart,” says Steve, who was already familiar with missions and serving the international church through his work with Voice of the Martyrs.

He thought about films that had been successful in the missions field and realized that, apart from *The Jesus Film*, there wasn't one. The team decided to make one.

“We moved away from a studio-type deal, from traditional investors,” Steve says. “We said we'll invest our own money, we'll accept donations.

Ministries like Samaritan have partnered with us. Advertising outlets have helped us. The Christian community has come together to help us and now we do have a finished film that we will take free to the global missions community.”

The ambitious plan of Revelation Media, the nonprofit that was formed around the film, to get the film out to the world is already coming to pass. *The Pilgrim's Progress* will air on a satellite station beaming into Iran, one of the worst countries in the world for Christians, on Easter weekend with an in-country network also possibly airing it. The combination means a potential audience of 6 million people. The producers also have sights set on countries like Nepal, Cuba, and China. Movies about Christianity are less threatening to hostile authorities if they're animated, Steve explained.

In addition, commercial distribution is ready for South Korea, Mexico, and South America.

“We have a school superintendent in the Philippines who's going to try to run it through the school system,”

Steve says.

The best part is that the Revelation Media team has already started translation into native languages and dialects so that the characters will speak in the local tongue. Even written material onscreen, like signage, will be translated.

“It makes it feel like it's their movie,” Steve says. “I learned I want to make a movie for the world and not just for America. I don't want my success or failure to be judged on a limited theatrical screening at local theaters. I want the success of the film to be judged by how many people get to experience the amazing, epic message of John Bunyan in their country and in their language.”

The Pilgrim's Progress will be distributed for free in the missions field and areas of persecution on thumb drives and microchips. Points of contact will be allowed to duplicate and distribute it. Revelation Media is also looking into the possibility of purchasing portable projectors and screens for use by missionaries.

Continued on page 15

***The Pilgrim's Progress* animates faith**

Revelation Media has produced a work of quality in its animated version of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, despite working with only 12 animators, some working out of a kitchen in Costa Rica; having to create their own software; and having to build their own computers.

Taking on John Bunyan's epic work involving Christian Pilgrim's trip on the narrow path to the Celestial City, writer-director Robert Fernandez and his animation staff have succeeded in creating a compelling version of the classic. You can almost feel the growing “heavy and sickly burden” that Christian carries on his trek and are relieved when he finally manages to get rid of it.

The script stays faithful to Bunyan's work, adding

entertaining voices and expressions for the characters, like Obstinate and Pliable, who try to talk Christian into returning to the City of Destruction. The leaders and trial attendees in Vanity Fair are creatively unnerving, both visually and audibly.

The worlds also are well-crafted—pleasing to the eye and realistic without being distracting. The characters simply fit into them.

Most visible throughout the movie are Pilgrim's emotions. His facial expressions are believable, and his desire to get to The Celestial City is obvious.

The Pilgrim's Progress by Revelation Media should be a great resource for families and missionaries for years to come. ♦

Q&A with Colin Gunn, director of *Wait Till It's Free*

by Michael Miller

Single-payer health care, or its cousin known as “Medicare for All,” is being proposed as a solution to U.S. health care woes. It would put the federal government in charge of a significant amount of our health care, if not all of it. We at Samaritan Ministries are concerned that this approach would take health care in the opposite direction of liberty and destroy what health care freedom we have.

*Five years ago, filmmaker and Samaritan member Colin Gunn released the film *Wait Till It's Free* about the workings of health care economics and liberty. We asked him recently about his views on single-payer/Medicare for All, five years away from releasing the film that sounded the alarm about the problems embedded in our health care system.*

What do you think has changed for health care freedom in general in the past five years since the release of *Wait Till It's Free*? Are there any encouraging signs?

There is some positive stuff. Price transparency is probably one of the areas that people talk about more. There has been a change in the law in relation to that. I have seen a little bit more media on that.

I don't have a huge, positive view of any significant change in the direction our health care is going. Understanding health care economics better still needs to happen. Just the rhetoric I see from politicians and on television, I don't see them really getting it.

It's in God's timing. In the home-school movement, you definitely saw a significant change over a 20- to 30-year period, with people taking responsibility for their children's education. We're not there with health care, though, where you see people saying, “I'm going to take this responsibility on myself. It's going to cost me money, it's going to be difficult, I'm going to have to work hard at it and I'm going to do it for the sake of my children.” We've not seen that in health care as much. Maybe on the personal health front, but not in terms of the economics of it and doctors themselves.

What would “Medicare for All” or a single-payer health care system mean for Americans? How do you think it would end up?

It would be a radical reduction in choice. If you look at what single-payer means, it means it's run by the government—it'll be inefficient, it'll be dangerous, it'll be politicized.

Politicians administer health care politically. That's why in Britain you have this political football that is focused on bringing people sex-change operations instead of getting grandma back on her feet. There's no political capital with helping the elderly, but if you come out and offer whatever trendy thing will get you press, what is fashionable, that is what happens. Politicians are concerned about re-election, they're concerned about votes, so they are administering something politically with their cronies surrounding them rather than it being administered through the free market, which is



Stream *Wait Till It's Free* for \$4.95 at colingunn.com, or purchase the DVD for \$12.95.

the perfect choice for individuals.

Our Veterans Administration medical system is like that. It's the perfect model of what single-payer is like: the loss of choice, and, of course, the increase in taxes, the huge cost of it.

Socialist systems are in decline. Socialism works for a little bit of time until you have exhausted the capital of the system that preceded it. That's where we're at with Venezuela. It was a massively popular and great place to visit at one point. It wasn't a paradise, but it had liberty. Now look at it.

Britain is very similar. Britain had this great health care system. It had the best doctors in the world on Harley Street. Its private system was world-renowned, but that capital has been spent. That's what happens with socialism: The capital is all gone, so what we had was hugely diminished over time. That's what

America will see. We have been to some extent that haven of liberty, people coming from other countries and asking for treatment. We've been the center of research. All that stuff will go away, too.

Why isn't this obvious to Americans?

Americans value—and it's a big mistake—they value what they think is the most secure path, and the add-on to that is what they think is the secure path is given to them. They're told what the secure path is, and it's interesting because that sort of relates to treatment. They trust that the guy in the white coat will tell them they need this, this, and this. We're trying to sell them this unusual thing (health care liberty), just like homeschooling's hard to sell to people, too, because it was weird—"Is that legal?"

I think we're at that stage with health care. Americans are following the secure model. They're following what everyone else is doing. They're following what the government tells them they should be doing. So a radical opinion, which is what I am essentially presenting to them, is very hard for them to understand. They trust the government, they trust institutions, they trust hospitals—there's too much misplaced trust in these big institutions.

With the Brits it's just pure statism. "Of course government can best administer health care." I think the British people are the worst in the sense that every conversation on health care that I have with Brits, apart from a tiny handful of people, they just cannot even fathom what I'm trying to present to them. They just know I'm wrong. (Laughs.) They

believe in this idea by faith that the government has to administer health care.

If you could update *Wait Till It's Free*, what would you change or include?

I've become more aware of the stark difference between the established health care system and what the Christian alternative would be. *Wait Till It's Free* dealt largely with eco-

“Prayerfully examine your choices in relation to health care and don't just take it for granted that the system as it stands is what you need.”

nomics, and while that's important, I don't think it's an argument that easily resonates with people and that people really understand.

I do, more and more, see the need for a presentation of the antithesis between the health care system we have, which includes the economics of it, and what Christian health care needs to be. I've become more aware of that in relation to the health care establishment's connection to our abortion holocaust and the loss of life that we have seen in our nation since *Roe v. Wade*. We've seen this moral disaster perpetrated in our nation largely with support from our medical establishment.

That shows glaringly that the guilty party of our nation is not just an economic problem, but there's a huge ethical problem in our health care system.

Abortion is the pinnacle of that, but there's multiple areas of health care that are very clearly anti-Christian, which includes deception and theft, but also the proper view of man doesn't exist. We touch on this in the film. But how they view man and then how they view the work of medicine is antithetical to a Christian system. We really need to look at how health care needs to change across the board.

What do Americans need to watch for in order to guard what health care freedom we still have?

A big thing in our film is personal responsibility and understanding the motives of those that are trying to take control of your health care, that you have to act with the best interest of your family and have Biblical wisdom. Prayerfully examine your choices in relation to health care and don't just take it for granted that the system as it stands is what you need. The personal responsibility of taking care of your own health, your own family, takes a lot of effort if you're going to break free of the system as it stands. As you know, just the simple act of walking into a doctor's office and announcing that you're cash-pay is a difficult thing. It's a challenge to do it, because you're doing something that no one else wants to do or thinks about or cares about, maybe even the doctor that you're talking to. You may have more information on health care economics than he does. ♦

rescue His children and restore His creation. Those who love and serve Jesus are being rescued, and one day He will restore our broken world as well (Revelation 21:5).

So how does the grand metanarrative of God's story—and our part in it—apply to pro-life ministry?

God loves human beings. Satan hates God; therefore, Satan hates us. His objective is to sever our relationship with God and take us captive. He uses culture to infiltrate our minds.

When you consider the blatant lies our society has swallowed about human beings, you begin to appreciate why pro-life work is so difficult—and so important.

We are gatekeepers to the truth about humankind.

Let's put this in terms of the work done by pregnancy centers every day.

A distressed young woman comes into a pregnancy help clinic. She's a product of our culture, so she's already been indoctrinated in significant ways.

She's been told that human beings are a random accident of evolution and there's not really meaning or purpose to our lives. She believes humans are just a higher form of animal, and that animals are people, too.

She tells herself that she is worthy of love, but she would be hard-pressed to tell you on what basis she has value.

If asked about her identity, she'll explain her sexual preferences (which don't necessarily match her biology). In her mind, her sexual activity and feelings are who she is.

She's terrified of being alone. Only losers don't have a partner, and sex is everything—so she's always in a relationship, still looking for the one

who will “complete” her.

She believes in women's rights, and that abortion is a choice—perhaps a heavy one, but a choice nonetheless. She sees children as a burden that could ruin her life as she knows it.

This woman is blind to the truth of “*imago Dei*,” for which the pro-life movement is a gatekeeper and first-responder.

Image-bearer. Planned by God. Beloved. Crowned with glory.

She doesn't yet realize she's been created in the image of God, just a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor. She doesn't know she's not just an animal, or that God himself has bestowed honor and dignity upon her.

She can't see that her identity is “*image-bearer of God*,” not her sexual preferences—that her biology is a gift, not a troubling puzzle to figure out.

She doesn't understand that her full value was given to her long before she was born; that God knew her name before she was conceived (Jeremiah 1:5) and started writing her story while He carefully formed her in her mother's womb.

She doesn't yet see that children are always a blessing, and that the “choice” our culture forces on women is something that never even entered God's mind. She doesn't realize that no matter how old or

sick or hopeless she becomes, her value will never diminish one iota.

She doesn't know the *imago Dei* truth about herself—and she certainly doesn't know it about the child she carries.

Image-bearer. Planned by God. Beloved. Crowned with glory. Carefully fashioned with purpose. A meaningful story in the making. Worthy of honor, dignity, and protection. A blessing and a reward.

Here's the beautiful thing: a young woman facing a pregnancy crisis may not know the truth about herself or her child before she enters the doors of a pregnancy help center—but once she does, everything changes.

Here she is loved and valued. Here she learns the truth about humanity. Here she's invited into the grand story of God and His love for her and her child.

And when she chooses life, another round in the great cosmic battle is won.

Take heart. Your work matters more than you know. There's an epic struggle going on in the invisible realm—and your daily efforts help win the war. ♦

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Member Susanne Maynes is certified as a Biblical Counselor with the Board of Christian Professional and Pastoral Counselors. She blogs on church and culture, spiritual growth, and Christian parenting at SusanneMaynes.com and is the author of Releasing Your Brave Love: Helping Kids to Change Their World and Unleashing Your Courageous Compassion: 40 Reflections on Rescuing the Unborn.

A win-win-win situation

Continued from page 3

Vaughn was a Samaritan Ministries member.

“He was very friendly and cordial, a believer,” Daniel says.

When the Hatches arrived at the hospital on the day of the surgery on December 21, “I was just a regular patient to them,” Daniel says. “I got all the care that anyone else would have gotten. Dr. Vaughn took care of it.”

The Hatches paid Dr. Vaughn the day of the surgery.

“This was very easy for us,” Vivian says. “We would highly recommend people using MediBid.”

Only having to write one check for everything also saved the Hatches from having to juggle several bills. The one bill was submitted to Samaritan and the Hatches have received Shares from other members.

The couple also mistakenly received a bill from the hospital, but they just called Dr. Vaughn, who said he would take care of it. The bill, however, revealed how much the hospital alone would have charged for its services: \$8,393. The anesthesiologist’s bill was \$415. But the Hatches just paid their \$2,800 to Dr. Vaughn, plus a \$300 fee for the initial consultation.

Daniel’s wrist is in the process of healing. It’s not at 100 percent yet, but he’s able to sleep through the night without pain, which he’s pretty happy about.

While MediBid is helpful for finding reasonable prices for medical treatment, the price the Hatches received is also plainly stated at OrthoFreedom.com, Dr. Vaughn’s website. Freedom Orthopedics offers transparent pricing.

“I complained about our system

for so long, even helping to produce the documentary *Wait Till It’s Free* (by fellow Samaritan member Colin Gunn), but never took concrete steps in practice to make a difference,” Dr. Vaughn says. “The opportunity became available to step into this practice that Dr. Tom Joseph



had started. He had already laid the groundwork, and then I extended it by posting prices for numerous common orthopedic surgery procedures on the Freedom Orthopedics website.”

The key to being able to charge reasonable prices, like the carpal tunnel surgery for \$2,800, is the lack of overhead, Dr. Vaughn says.

“We do not need to have a team of coders, billers, and insurance personnel to bill and make sure that we get paid,” the surgeon says. “Office visits and surgeries are paid at or just before the service for surgeries. The surgery price includes facility, anesthesia, and surgery fees. Office visits are a flat fee and include, if needed, X-rays, splints, injections, and review of outside images, as well as the consultation.”

Identifying partner hospital and surgery centers that will offer reasonable pricing is also vital, Dr. Vaughn says.

“Critically important to transparent pricing is having surgery centers and hospitals supportive of the con-

cept and able to give good pricing, because payment is due at the time of service,” he says.

Dr. Vaughn also says that MediBid and Healthcare Bluebook, which is also offered through the member Dashboard, “have been helpful in empowering patients to shop and find costs for services that otherwise would be difficult to estimate.”

“I have taken care of several MediBid patients, and it has been a really easy and seamless process,” he says. He also used Healthcare Bluebook early in the process to arrive at fair prices.

While Dr. Vaughn says he feels blessed to have had great patients with or without insurance over the years, “there is a special bond that comes with members of Samaritan and other health care sharing ministries.”

“Praying with my patients is a special privilege,” he says. “Knowing that we are working together to build an alternative path to care for people in a more Biblical fashion is extremely rewarding. We have an instant connection when somebody tells me their story about Samaritan.” ♦

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, we will provide updates and offer prayer points gleaned from a variety of sources. Please use them in your personal or group prayer time.

Tajikistan tightens grip

Children are now barred from attending religious services in Tajikistan as part of a new religion law that went into effect last year, according to World Watch Monitor. The law gives the state greater control over religious education and also increases the amount of information, including membership numbers and finances, that religious groups must provide to the government. Authorities also confiscated and destroyed 5,000 calendars with Bible verses that had been imported by a Baptist group then fined the organization. Churches also are fined if children under 10 years old are found in their facilities. *Pray that Tajik parents will be able to bring their children up in the Christian faith and that Christian materials will be able to find their way to Tajik believers.*

Christian officer fired

An Ethiopian police officer was arrested, fired, and forced to relocate after he told fellow workers about his Christian faith, WWM

reports. “Adane,” 25, became a Christian two years ago. After a colleague heard Adane talking about his faith while in uniform, the man filed a complaint with the state’s human rights office. An official in the office advised Adane to return to Islam, which Adane refused to do, leading to his arrest. Following an intervention by the office’s chairman, Adane was released, only to find he had been fired by the police force. He was then advised to relocate to another area for his safety. *Pray for provision for Adane, for a strong faith, and for his ability to tell others about Jesus.*

Kidnapped pastor killed

A pastor who was kidnapped at gunpoint in Myanmar in January was killed February 1, International Christian Concern says. Pastor Tun Nu, 41, was part of Gospel for Asia, which says the man was killed along with several others who had been kidnapped by a rebel army. He is survived by his wife, three children, and a church of more than 50 believers. *Pray for Tun Nu’s family and church as they grieve his loss. Pray also for provision for his family.*

Indian church burned

Attackers set fire to a Pentecostal church in India’s Telangana state on February 2, ICC says, leaving about 200 Christians from 10 villages without a place to worship. Police tried to blame the fire on natural causes, but eventually agreed it was intentionally set. Much of the inside of the church was destroyed. Church members reported being threatened by local Hindu radicals shortly before the fire. *Pray that members of the India Pentecostal Church in*

Ooparpalli village will have a place to worship and pray together, and that police will find the arsonists.

Two Iranians arrested

Two Christian converts have been arrested by Iranian intelligence authorities, ICC reports. Sina Moloudian is being held in Dastgerd Prison, and Ismaeil Maghrabinejad has been released on bail. The arrests are part of an apparent uptick in the persecution of Christians in Iran over the past three months. *Pray that any charges against Sina and Ismaeil will be dropped and that they will be kept safe.*

Colombian pastor killed

A 24-year-old pastor was killed after preaching a service in Caucasia, Colombia, as he left the church, WWM reports. Pastor Leider Molina was hit by five bullets. The region has suffered an increase in violence over the past several months. A source told WWM that communist guerrillas, paramilitary groups, criminal gangs, and drug cartels “all see the church as an enemy to be eradicated because ... many young people have renounced armed conflict and illegal activities.” Pastor Molina in particular was effective with young people. His death follows several others in the past year in the region. *Pray for Christians to be safe in the area and to hold onto Jesus, and for the families of slain leaders.*

For more on the persecuted church, contact International Christian Concern (persecution.org, 800-422-5441) or World Watch Monitor (worldwatchmonitor.org)

When our infant daughter fell and had profuse vomiting a couple days later we were thankful for our Direct Primary Care doctor's immediate availability in discerning her need for a CT scan and for his ongoing time to walk with us. In the midst of making urgent and difficult decisions, we were thankful for the peace of knowing Samaritan members would share our burden. The financial aspect didn't add stress. Even more, we're thankful for the prayers for healing and encouraging words in the notes we received. Thank you, Samaritan community, for being a presence of peace in situations that feel scary.

*Jared & Lisa
Pennsylvania*

After 25 years working in health care as an occupational therapist, I was blessed with the opportunity to start a small business. One of our greatest concerns was what we would do about health insurance. The exchange was estimating over \$1,500 a month for premiums and the coverage was quite limited. By God's blessing a friend told us about Samaritan. We were afraid of the unknown, but we could no longer put up with the broken health care system.

We had good health in our first year of membership but this year had physical therapy and a tonsillectomy for our daughters. I was apprehensive about the Need process but talking with the Samaritan team and being prayed for was such a comfort. Our bills have been paid and knowing we are part of this amazing ministry is such a gift.

*Robert & Shelly
Missouri*

Words cannot describe how grateful to God we are for Samaritan Ministries. Our two year old son had to have multiple heart surgeries and we found ourselves with larger medical Needs than we ever dreamed possible, but both the staff and members at Samaritan made it so much more bearable. Galatians 6:2 became a deep and profound reality in our lives.

While we were navigating a whole new world of surgeries, life, support, and ICU, we didn't have to worry about the extra stresses that come with insurance companies. The freedom to do what is in the best interest of the patient is priceless. We would hear about the nightmares that other people were having with insurance and would offer up another prayer of thanksgiving for Samaritan.

The prayer support during this time has been both humbling and awe-inspiring. The staff at Samaritan were always willing to pray for us for whatever needs we had that day, and they were so comforting and reassuring as we talked to them. They did everything they could to help us through this journey.

And until you are the recipient of all the notes of encouragement from thousands of other members who are praying for your family, you can't really know how precious they really are. We appreciated the time people put into the letters as they were a breath of fresh air to us. Samaritan not only meets physical needs but spiritual and emotional needs as well. We are so thankful for how God had worked in our lives through this ministry.

*Matthew & Jacqueline
Iowa*

The Pilgrim's Progress *Continued from page 9*

"It really is a global plan," Steve says.

But it was difficult to whittle part one of the allegory of more than 57,000 words into a version that would keep viewers' interest. The producers had to decide which among the more than 20 characters and 20 places should be included.

"It wasn't easy," Steve says. "Christian travels through 15 different worlds in our film. We picked the ones that were more well-known, like Vanity Fair and Worldly Woods."

They also decided to use the worlds that could be more easily conveyed in the associated curriculum they're creating "so families can have 15 family devotions with their children."

Already available at pilgrims.movie is an interactive storybook. By going to the site's front page, scrolling down, clicking on the "Interactive Storybook Card," and entering the code NoitCurtsed, Samaritan members can get free access to the book, courtesy of Steve.

Next up for Revelation Media is an even more ambitious project. After tackling an animated version of the best-selling work of fiction in history, Steve and company are taking on the best-selling work of nonfiction: the Bible.

"We want to create an interactive Bible that can be translated into any language so anybody with electronics can watch the whole Bible in their language." ♦

And they have
conquered him by the
blood of the Lamb and
by the word of their
testimony, for they
loved not their lives
even unto death.

Revelation 12:11

Believers in Jesus Christ can overcome Satan and his angels. When we put our trust in Him, we have everything we need. But one thing can keep this from happening—loving our lives.

In Luke 9:24-25, Jesus says, “For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?”

Today we have many opportunities to resist the forces of evil for the sake of our Lord. He shed His blood for us, He has worked in our lives, and He will enable us to overcome. We are more than conquerors if we do not love our lives.

For the Kingdom,



Ray King