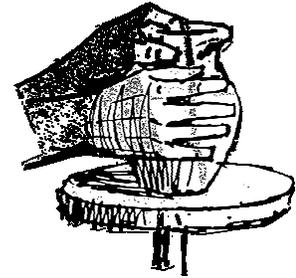


His Workmanship: Westside

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.”

—Ephesians 2:10



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Isaiah 64:8

“His Mercy Endures Forever,” by Shane Carrington

Psalm 136 is a message of thanksgiving containing 26 verses enumerating amazing things about God displayed throughout ancient history, exulting, “*For His mercy endures forever*” after each. Consider some ways God has shown mercy the psalmist lists.

In His Nature. God reveals His goodness and mercy in that He can do what idols cannot. He is “*the God of gods*,” Ps 136:2. He speaks and acts with great power, wisdom, and love, yet idols remain idle. Idols remain incapable of showing either justice or mercy, yet the God of scripture exemplifies both. Why trust idols? Their track record exposes complete futility. But God has shown His strength throughout time.

In Creating the Universe. Imagine what kind of power and wisdom it required for God to make this universe. He made “*the heavens*,” Ps 136:5, including the sun, moon, and stars, Ps 136:7-9. The power required to make such wonders is completely beyond our comprehension. The stars are far from us and powerful in nature. Yet God is not limited by space or time; He rules them like we arrange objects on a desk. The wisdom God used creating the universe is also unfathomable. The stars, etc., move

in circuits with precision—just like clockwork. God’s intelligence is incomprehensible. He made stars and the earth with ability to last a long time. They are grand on both a large scale (for they are huge) and a small scale (for both have intricate, microscopic workings). Realizing our God’s immense power, wisdom, and intelligence should cause us to stand in awe. The fact that He has used these same attributes to bless us so abundantly should cause us to cry out: “*For His mercy endures forever.*”

In His Justice. Some think justice and mercy are opposites, yet the psalmist writes about them both as attributes of our God. In truth, how could you have one without the other. For example, would it be just/fair to allow criminals to run free? Would it be just to allow innocent people to be harmed—with the perpetrators in no danger of facing justice? Certainly not. God knows this and set civil governments in place to curb this problem (see Rm13:1-7). And, yes, criminals today do seemingly “get away” with crimes at times, but whatever injustice escapes punishment in this world will be dealt with in the next.

God has shown His justice on earth many times. “*To Him who struck Egypt in*

their firstborn, for His mercy endures forever; and brought out Israel from among them, for His mercy endures forever,” Ps 136:10-11ff. God’s justice on Pharaoh was to punish him for wickedness. But it was also an act of mercy, for through striking Egypt, God delivered Israel from slavery. God showed His love and mercy for Israel by showing justice to Egypt. God loves all people, Jn 3:16, but people who cast Him aside will answer for this, Jn 12:48. May we love and serve Him that His mercy, not justice, will be ours.

In His Ultimate Display of Mercy. The crowning jewel of God’s mercy came in the form of a Man named Jesus. Because we are sinners, we are subject to God’s justice and wrath. “*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,*” Rm.3:23. “*For the wages of sin is death...*” Rm 6:23, and we have all earned this for ourselves.

Perhaps we have abstained from murder, but do you have hate in your heart? Jesus said, “*You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the*

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“Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is

judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire,” Mt 5:21-22. Murder is not the only problem; hatred is also a condemning sin. Perhaps we have abstained from adultery. But have you ever lusted? Jesus said again, “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart,” Mt 5:27-28. Adultery is not the only condemning sin; so is lust. The point? Because we are all sinners, we are subject to God’s righteous wrath.

But He wants something better for us. That is why Jesus came. To a world of broken sinners Jesus came as Son of Man and Son of God to be the only Mediator between humanity and God, 1 Tim 2:5. He tasted “death for everyone,” Heb. 2:9. Truly, “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us,” Rm 5:8. Yes, “the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord,” Rm 6:23.

God’s work in history, so beautifully praised in Psalm 136, shows His abundant mercy to us, His creation. And by sending Jesus to live among and die for broken sinners like me and you, God declared His love beyond what words could ever adequately express. Truly, “His mercy endures forever,” Ps 136:1-26. Magnify and serve Him for His wondrous gift!

RFRA, from p. 4

then they should be warned that they are taking an incredible risk in doing so. As Hiram Sasser pointed out in the April 1, 2015, Wall Street Journal, their opposition could be used as evidence that these employers are creating a “hostile work environment for people who support religious freedom protections” if their companies are ever sued.

Contrary to what the media would have you believe, RFRA is not about denying people a seat in a restaurant or a room at a hotel, but about being forced to participate in a religious ceremony or an abortion procedure that violates religious beliefs—and that is completely un-American and uncivil. “If Apple, and specifically Tim Cook, are serious about using this soapbox to stand up for homosexual rights,” RedState’s Neil Stevens points out, “then it’s time to get as active about the People’s Republic of China as they are about Indiana. Speak out just as loudly, and if any economic threats are made, they must be applied equally to both.”

Just this week, Geneva College showed the law’s broad impact. Using Pennsylvania’s RFRA, attorneys at Alliance Defending Freedom are asking the 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals to exempt them from ObamaCare’s pro-abortion mandate. They argue that Americans shouldn’t be forced to violate their religious beliefs and pay for drugs or procedures they morally oppose—a right the Supreme Court already upheld in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*. RFRA may not guarantee Geneva College a victory in court, but it does



guarantee them the opportunity to be heard. And that’s all anyone is asking when the government attacks faith. (For other examples of how the law could help, check out the Benham Brothers’, Craig James’s, Kelvin Cochran’s, and Barronelle Stutzman’s stories.)

The Left’s interpretation of RFRA, meanwhile, was meant to scare people—and scare them they have. GOP presidential hopefuls Governors Jeb Bush and Bobby Jindal, Senators Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, and Rick Santorum have been out in full force to defend the bills, including Mike Hucka-

bee. The former governor is as frustrated as we are to see states like Arkansas cave on their proposed language. “Critics of the law have distorted this legislation and created another phony crisis—and sadly many major corporations, organizations, and individuals have collapsed under the weight of the irrational pressure from the far Left.”

And yet, lost in all of this back-and-forth is the reality that this isn’t about standing up for homosexual rights—it’s about standing up for everyone’s rights. In a civil society, the two don’t have to be mutually exclusive. But that’s exactly the problem right now. America, under this administration, is less and less civil—particularly to men and women of faith. There’s no room for polite debate or even coexistence. Instead, the LGBT movement that once said they didn’t want the government to tell them how to live, now wants the same government to tell *Christians* what to believe and punish those who fail to comply. Where’s the tolerance in that?

Big corporations like *Apple*, *Angie’s List*, and *Walmart* are now putting religious freedom in a worse place than before RFRA was signed into law. Under the reactionary gutting law now proposed in Indiana as a backlash against the RFRA, even nonprofits deemed “not religious enough” face government discrimination for declining to facilitate same-sex wedding ceremonies. If the government punishes people for living their faith, there are no limits to what government can control.

The intolerant left isn’t waiting for lawmakers and the governor to sort out what punishments might be imposed. They turned their fury on Memories Pizza in Walkerton, Indiana, because a co-owner of the restaurant told a reporter, who was asking local small businesses if they would serve same-sex weddings, that she would not cater a same-sex “wedding.” The restaurant

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Psalm 133:1

God makes my heart clean in 2015 "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." —Ps 51:10

Religious Freedom, from p. 2 had to close its doors temporarily "due to the volume of calls and threats it had received," but later received more than \$750,000 in donations on a caring website.

You may be wondering why legislators, who just last month overwhelmingly voted to protect religious liberty, would now introduce a new proposed law that would use the government as a weapon against people who simply follow their beliefs on marriage. It isn't because the American people are clamoring for it. In fact, a new Rasmussen survey released last week finds that 70% of Americans supports the right of a wedding photographer who is Christian to decline a same-sex ceremony. The reason for the new bill is Big Business.

Our nation's Bill of Rights appropriately begins with the recognition of the right of the freedom of religion, the freedom to believe and live according to those beliefs. This understanding was behind the adoption of the Federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) in 1993 that was signed into law by President Bill Clinton. At its signing, Vice President Al Gore said, "The Religious Freedom Restoration Act is something that every American can support." Two decades later, we shouldn't be surprised that homosexual activists have seized on a narrow reading of RFRA to spark outrage about the law. But that doesn't change the truth, which is that the implications of RFRA go well beyond marriage. In fact, in 22 years, these

Discipleship Here At Home

laws have *never* been used to "discriminate" against gays and lesbians. Believe it or not, the real beneficiaries, as the *Washington Times* explains, have been Muslims, Indians, and Sikhs.

University of Virginia Law Professor Douglas Laycock tried to dispel some of those myths with the history of the law. "So what kinds of cases are RFRA's really about? They are about churches feeding the homeless; sometimes the city or the neighbors object. They are about Muslim women wearing scarves or veils. They are about Amish buggies. They are about Sabbath observers. They are about church bells... And usually, the government wins. These laws have been under-enforced, not over-enforced."

In 1997 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled (*City of Boerne v. Flores*) that the federal RFRA did not apply to state and local governments. As a result, twenty-one states have adopted state versions of RFRA. These common-sense laws protecting the freedom to live according to our beliefs are now in jeopardy, and as a result, our freedoms are at risk. You can politely let businesses know that you place a high value on religious freedom, which is not just the freedom to believe, but the freedom to live your life according to those beliefs. (If [Angie's List](#) doesn't want to deal with states that protect religious liberty, then we should accommodate it and not do business with it. Call 866-623-6088.)

It's the same with the out-of-control governors and elected officials, including Denver's mayor, who are banning state-funded travel to Indiana. The irony is that a couple of these governors (Connecticut's Dannel Malloy for one) are boycotting Indiana because of RFRA when they have the same law on their own books! Then there's New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, who announced he was banning travel by state employees to intolerant Indiana as he heads to Cuba. How's that for hypocrisy?

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help

- **Judy Strand**—recovering from heart valve surgery at home
- **Kaylee Chavez**—age 10, PRAISE—spinal fluid no cancer cells; MRI clear; treatment continues
- **Rod Green**—recovering from severed thumb
- **Nell Free**—rehab recovery for broken hip; Arvada Care & Rehab, 6121 W. 60th Ave, Arvada 80003, rm 7, bed A
- **Ed Fink**—prostate cancer; treatment for brain tumors
- **Pat Wilkes**—surgery recovery for torn shoulder tendon
- **Bill Dennis**—home following rehab on infected knee drainage; pseudo-gout
- **Pat and Larry Campbell**—flu-like symptoms
- **Sandra Perry**—possible kidney failure, may need dialysis or transplant; heart valve issues recently diagnosed; neuropathy from diabetes
- **Chris Bennett**, former member—all tools for biz stolen; recovering from fall, fractured pelvis
- **Buford Wrather, Cheryl Reames's dad**—stroke, complicated by Parkinson's; in CO Springs
- **Sylvia Chapman, Brett's grandmother**—third stage pancreatic cancer; chemo
- **Judy Sartin**—cold; rotator cuff injury; spinal stenosis; arthritis
- **Brittany Tope's mother**—breast cancer in spine; pain in broken ribs which tumor has injured; grandmother—on dialysis
- **Kim Howell's niece Tonya Robison**—delivered 32-week, 2 lb, 5 oz **Malachi Taylor Robison** several wks ago; in NICU in Louisville, KY
- **Kenny Boyd's coworker Kim Phillips**—asks our prayers for heart problems
- **Rick Robbins**, friend of Howells—brain surgery

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

- **Logan Corray; Addison Tope; Christian Harrod; Rocco Jr; Tim Huelsman**—asthma
- **Nell Free**—pacemaker, heart; back pain
- **Autumn Hadders**—epilepsy; celiac disease
- **Jonathan Hadders**—RA
- **Danielle Huelsman**—vertigo, CV syndrome
- **Hannah Huelsman**—polycythemia, thickening of blood; heart murmur, acid reflux, chest pain
- **Kirk Johnson**—MS
- **Menards**—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak. 92nd birthday 4/9; **Virginia**, macular degeneration
- **Cheryl Reames**—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia
- **Lynda Szymanski**—COPD, lung weakness
- **Travel Larry Campbell** working in FL. **Brett Witherington** in FL Through April helping his father refurbish houses
- **Rejoice Cliff Cox** has a new job with Littleton Police, and his family has a new home.
- **Menards' 73rd anniversary** today.



Exposing current thoughts & trends *religious liberty*

Corporations Tell Freedom “None of Your Business”

Corporate America is drawing a line in the sand over America's foundational freedom, deciding to stand on the wrong side. In the past two weeks, corporations from *Angie's List* to *Walmart* to *Yelp* have weighed in against religious freedom protections in Indiana and Arkansas, having sided with the anti-religious Left.

After weeks of misinformation, liberals have managed to whip the entire country into a pointless frenzy over a reasonable religious liberty law that is almost identical to one heralded by Bill Clinton. Their propaganda machine has been particularly effective on corporate CEOs, who have fired off indignant press releases about pulling their business from the Indiana—but not before engaging in some epic hypocrisy of their own. Turns out, the companies most outraged by Indiana's law are the ones contributing to *real* and sometimes deadly discrimination!

CEO Marc Benioff of *SalesForce* argues that “*protecting religious liberty makes travel to Indiana unsafe for customers or employees.*” Well, try traveling to China or Iran and see how safe *not* protecting religious liberty makes you! Mollie Hemingway blew the lid off of Benioff's double standard in *The Federalist* slamming the company's international policies. “*It's worth looking at who Benioff happily does business with,*” she writes. “*The company has a branch based out of Beijing in the People's Republic of China, a Communist-controlled country that is a human rights nightmare.*” Before Benioff gets on his moral high horse, he might want to stop operating in countries where “*long jail terms, forced renunciations of faith, and torture in detention...and organ harvesting*” are routine.

Then, of course, there's *Apple*, which takes exception to Indiana's law for offending homosexuals—but is somehow perfectly okay doing business with nations that stone them. *RedState* took CEO openly-homosexual *Tim Cook* to task over the company's selective outrage with a surprising look at the countries “*where Apple has a presence—(including 30 not-so-progressive African, Arab, Indian, and Middle-East regions).* See any nations that engage in discrimination? When was the last time *Cook* objected to a single act of discrimination in any of these countries? Never. He hasn't. He doesn't.”

So how is it that these businesses can justify boycotting Indiana when they consistently turn a blind eye to international partners that deal in child slavery, forced abortions, real sexual persecution, or human trafficking? And if *Apple*, *SalesForce*, *Angie's List*, and dozens of others are protesting laws that simply protect religious liberty,

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720-295-4530

Pastors

Larry Campbell (303) 246-8810
DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

info@thechurchingolden.com

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Westside-Church-of-Christ/276475819148309>

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning

- **adult Bible class, “Marriage Boot Camp: Basic Training in Communication, “What's It All About?”** Jim Reingrover

- **Sermon, “Peter's Epistle to Westside, 11,”** Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon

- Lessons from the Life of Christ, “How Jesus Dealt with Paying Taxes—Mark 12:13-16,” Jeff Wilkes

Feeding on His Word Reading

Everyone is invited to an open Bible reading of Genesis 25-50 next Sunday evening, April 19, at 4 pm, ending with light supper, at the Reingrover's' house. See **Joel Walker** for schedule.