



**FAMILY
COUNCIL**

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**AUGUST 2017
UPDATE LETTER**

DEAR FRIENDS,

Several years ago I was approached by a supporter with what seemed like a simple question: Why should Christians oppose physician-assisted suicide? At the time assisted suicide was a hot topic. Many Christians opposed it, but they struggled to explain why. I have to admit I was among them. I knew suicide was wrong, but I couldn't tell you exactly what Scripture taught about it, so I did the best thing I knew to do: I called a pastor I respect.

Over the course of a long telephone conversation, he walked me through the Scriptures, explaining at times verse-by-verse how the Bible teaches against suicide. He had devoted decades of his life to studying Scripture. Because he took time to learn—and because he took time to teach me—I walked away with a deeper understanding of God's Word and how it applied to today's issues.

We need more people like him right now—people who are willing to learn and who will share what they learn with others. We also need people who are discerning and teachable—people who will listen and think critically about what they hear.

Many social commentators say we're living in a "post truth" society. From top to bottom, more people believe stories they wish were true rather than the truth itself.

For instance, in July a columnist at the *Huffington Post* wrote an article about Arkansas' recent pro-life legislation and the ACLU's efforts to have some of those laws struck down in court. The article contained so much incorrect and confusing information about the laws that I can only conclude the author barely asked anybody what the laws did—much less read the laws themselves.

Unfortunately, the column was picked up by local media in Arkansas who helped spread some of its misinformation. We issued responses calling attention to the column's mistakes and correcting them as well as we could. We also told people where to find the pro-life laws in question and encouraged everyone to read the laws for themselves if they had doubts about what the laws do. However, many people who oppose these good, pro-life laws continue to believe and share the incorrect information this columnist and others have published.

There is no shortage of information in our world today. Anyone with a smart phone, tablet, or computer is constantly bombarded with it. How do we filter that information? How do we know what's important and what's not. How can we tell what's true from what's false? Family Council can help.

Family Council remains committed to sharing the truth. That means sharing the timeless truths of God's Word regarding human life, marriage, and family. It also means sharing the truth about laws and policies; stories in the news; and problems facing our state. We share that truth in print, online, in the news, and on the radio.

I still believe the truth matters. John 18:37 tells us Jesus came into the world to testify to the truth and that everyone who is on the side of truth listens to His voice. If Jesus came to testify to the truth, then the truth must be pretty important.

And now let me tell you a little more about how we are spreading the truth—and about our plans for the coming months.

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MY THOUGHTS: ABORTION CLINICS ARE DESPERATELY GRASPING AT STRAWS

In Late June, the ACLU filed lawsuits against 5 good, pro-life laws Arkansas passed this year. The ACLU filed these legal challenges on behalf of two Planned Parenthood clinics, a surgical abortion clinic in Little Rock, and one abortion doctor. I have enclosed more information on these lawsuits with this letter, but if I could sum up the tone of the lawsuits with one word, it would be "desperate." According to the lawsuits, if these laws stand, abortion clinics will close their doors.

Personally, I don't think Arkansas' abortion clinics are quite as close to shutting down as the lawsuits imply, but between plans to cut public funds for abortionists at the federal level and new pro-life laws at the state level, abortion providers are pulling out all the stops. It's hard to miss the note of panic in their voices right now. We are winning the fight against abortion. It's not going to be an easy fight, but I am confident the day is not too far off when abortion will be a thing of the past and our society will have a greater respect for innocent human life.

ACLU, Planned Parenthood File Anti-Life Lawsuits

On June 20, the ACLU and Planned Parenthood filed legal challenges against five pro-life laws recently passed by the Arkansas Legislature. These lawsuits are almost unbelievable. The ACLU is challenging laws designed to do things like help protect underage girls and ensure doctors know a woman's medical history before performing an abortion. Planned Parenthood is challenging laws that hold abortion clinics to reasonable standards. Most of these are commonsense pieces of legislation that protect the health and safety of women.

For example, Act 733 requires the doctor to request medical records related to the woman's pregnancy history before performing an abortion on her. He doesn't have to obtain the records—simply request them. I think most Arkansans would be shocked to think a doctor might perform an abortion without knowing the woman's medical history, but the ACLU is challenging this provision in the law. Act 1018 requires doctors to file a report with the State Crime Lab after performing an abortion on a girl under seventeen. It's designed to catch perpetrators of human trafficking, rape, and incest, but the ACLU wants it removed from the law books.

Planned Parenthood is challenging laws that hold abortion clinics to reasonable standards.

Those are just a couple of examples of the laws being challenged. Enclosed is a flyer outlining the ACLU's legal challenges and Family Council's response to each one. We hope you can use it to help your friends and family members better understand these laws and what the ACLU is trying to do.

National Media Spreads Confusion About Arkansas' Abortion Laws

Have you ever heard the old saying, "A lie gets halfway around the world before the truth gets its pants on"?

The column contained so much incorrect information that it's hard to know where to begin.

In July a columnist with the *Huffington Post* wrote about some of Arkansas' pro-life laws the ACLU is challenging. The column contained so much incorrect information that it's hard to know where to begin. For example, it claimed women in Arkansas will have to get permission from men before having an abortion and that victims of sexual assault might have to consult with their attackers before having an abortion or burying the aborted baby's remains. To put it simply, none of these bills requires a woman to get permission before having an abortion, and rapists have no legal right to their victims or to children conceived through rape.

Some of these same arguments were raised in February by opponents of our pro-life bills. They were easily debunked, and the bills passed with overwhelming support in the Arkansas Legislature. The *Huffington Post* and others have chosen to recycle old, discredited rumors about our pro-life laws. That should make it easy to convince people of the truth, right? Unfortunately, no.

Instead of double-checking these claims, a few members of the media in Arkansas and elsewhere simply repeated them as fact, and no one seems ready to walk the stories back. All of this has created a lot of confusion. We have issued press releases, emails, blog posts, and letters like this one to correct this terrible misinformation being spread by the national media.

Building Pro-Life Successes on a Heap of “Failures”

Somebody once said success is built on a heap of failure. That is certainly true of the pro-life movement. Since 1973, the pro-life community has been dealt a few setbacks by the courts. However, through perseverance and reliance on God’s grace, we always seem to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

Even when the courts rule against us, there’s a silver lining buried in the decision. When the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* decision 25 years ago, the court effectively said abortion was just like any other medical procedure; that was a setback. However, the court also inadvertently ushered in a new era for

pro-life laws by saying abortion could be regulated like any other medical procedure. That paved the way for all kinds of new regulations on abortion procedures and clinics. When the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals struck part of Arkansas’ fetal heartbeat law a few years ago, some of the findings in that bad ruling actually made it easier for us to pass really good pro-life legislation in 2015.

I believe these 5 pro-life laws can withstand the ACLU’s lawsuits. However, I also believe these lawsuits will be a foundation for even better pro-life laws in the future—no matter how the courts rule.

U.S. Supreme Court Tells Arkansas to List Two “Mothers” on Birth Certificates

In Arkansas, birth certificates have a space to list one mother and one father. That’s because every baby born has one mother and one father. In 2015 three married, lesbian couples sued the state over its birth certificate laws. Simply put, they wanted to list two “mothers” on children’s birth certificates.

Last December the Arkansas Supreme Court decided it is entirely appropriate for a child’s birth certificate to list his or her mother and father; there is no need to add a second, unrelated “mother” to the certificate. That was a very good ruling, but two of the couples suing the state took their case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Last June the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the couples, saying the State of Arkansas must list two “mothers” on a child’s birth certificate if the child’s birth mother is legally married to another woman.

The U.S. Supreme Court is asking Arkansas to ignore basic facts about biology. Birth certificates record that a child was born and who the child’s biological parents are presumed to be. No child can have two biological mothers, but Arkansas will now be forced to operate as if that is possible because of this court ruling.

The U.S. Supreme Court is treating birth certificates like some sort of marriage benefit. Birth certificates are issued for the sake of children—not for the sake of adults. They are not simply pieces of paper. They are vital records that need to be accurate and deserve respect. We should not let them become political ploys in the ongoing debates about marriage. We plan to look at ways to address this issue in the months to come.

Man Breaks All Ten Commandments at Once—With a Car

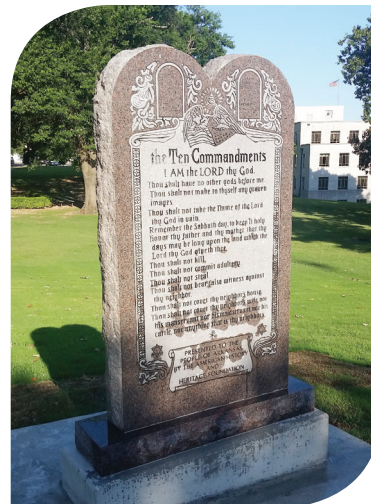
In 2015 Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Bigelow) sponsored a law authorizing a monument of the Ten Commandments on the Arkansas State Capitol Grounds. The monument was to be identical to one ruled constitutional in Texas; it would be privately funded and celebrate the influence and legacy of the Ten Commandments in western law.

Arkansas’ monument of the Ten Commandments was placed on the Capitol Grounds on June 27, 2017. Unfortunately, less than 24 hours after its unveiling, a man named Michael Tate Reed allegedly plowed a vehicle into the monument, completely destroying it. Reed was arrested in Oklahoma in 2014 for ramming a car into a similar monument outside the Capitol Building in Oklahoma City, but he was not prosecuted on the condition that he seek mental health treatment.

Reed was promptly arrested for destroying Arkansas’ monument. He has appeared in court once already, and he is scheduled to appear again in September. In the meantime, plans are in the works to rebuild the Ten Commandments monument. Pure Flix Entertainment and the producers of the “God’s Not Dead” film series have donated \$25,000 for the monument’s reconstruction. Meanwhile, the ACLU says it plans to file a lawsuit against the State of Arkansas as soon as the monument is back on the Capitol Grounds.

They say the monument is unconstitutional and has no place on public property—even though the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled an identical monument constitutional in Texas. The ACLU and the Freedom From Religion Foundation were swift to issue public statements denouncing Mr. Reed for destroying the monument with a car, but they seem more than eager to destroy it with a lawsuit.

Left: Arkansas’ monument of the Ten Commandments hours before it was destroyed.



Lawmakers Studying Key Pieces of Legislation Between Now and 2019

Even though they aren't officially in session, the Arkansas Legislature will study two key pieces of legislation between now and 2019. First, lawmakers will look at the Arkansas Lottery. Specifically, they will consider requiring at least 25% of lottery revenue to fund scholarships; reinstating the 2.5 GPA requirement to be eligible for scholarships; and having independent consultants for the Arkansas Lottery. We hope this will help reveal how poorly the Arkansas Lottery is being managed and the many ways it preys on Arkansas' poor.

Second, the legislature will study privacy legislation requiring a person using public showers, locker rooms, restrooms, or similar facilities on government property to use the facility corresponding to the biological sex listed on his or her original birth certificate. We have said repeatedly that Arkansas needs to protect the public safety of women and children in these facilities. The legislature will study this issue in the months to come.

Lawmakers cannot pass laws during this interim study period, but they can research these issues, collect testimony, and present recommendations when the Arkansas Legislature reconvenes in 2019. We are glad lawmakers have agreed to look at these two issues. We plan to be at the Capitol every step of the way.



WE NEED YOUR HELP

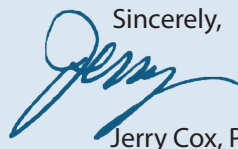
Here are just a few of the things we are working on right now:

- 1. Voter's Guides:** When our next voter's guide is released, you can expect big changes in our format, and content. I expect our voter's guide to be the best in the nation.
- 2. Home Schooling:** Our Education Alliance division works with the state Department of Education and helps home schoolers with everything from kindergarten to college admission.
- 3. Marijuana:** The only way a city or county can prevent marijuana farms or stores from locating there is to circulate petitions and place the issue up for a citywide or countywide vote at a general election. We are working with attorneys to craft solid wording for a local ballot measure to ban any marijuana operations. In addition, we plan to produce material to guide local citizens from the time they begin circulating petitions all the way through the election. We hope Arkansas ends up with many marijuana-free counties.

Here are three things you can do to help us right now:

- 1. Pray:** Pray our work would be successful and God would provide for our financial needs.
- 2. Spread the Word:** Tell your friends about us, and encourage them to connect with our work.
- 3. Give:** If you are able, please send a generous, tax-deductible donation today using the enclosed response card and return envelope. Your financial support will keep us in the fight for traditional family values.

Thank you for standing with us, and please let me know if there is ever anything my staff or I can do for you.

Sincerely,
 Thank you!!
Jerry Cox, President

P.S. The ACLU, three abortion clinics, and an abortion doctor are trying to get five good, pro-life laws struck down in Arkansas. We are spreading the truth about these good laws and what they do. Lawmakers are studying the Arkansas Lottery and "bathroom" legislation in the coming months. We plan to be there to help them understand these issues and push for better laws. **Thank you for standing with us. Your strong financial support keeps us in the fight for traditional family values in Arkansas.**