



**FAMILY  
COUNCIL**

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**OCTOBER 2017  
UPDATE LETTER**

## **DEAR FRIENDS,**

For the past 54 years, every U.S. President has had at least two things in common as far as I can tell: they have all attended the annual National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C., and they have all known Rev. Billy Graham.

In 1952 Dwight D. Eisenhower invited Rev. Billy Graham to join him in Denver, CO. Eisenhower had just received the Republican nomination for president, and he was on the campaign trail. In a sermon he gave in 1987, Rev. Graham described their time together, saying,

*"I gave [General Eisenhower] a red Bible, which was remarked about in the press, because he always kept it at his bedside. And I suggested to him that he join a church. He said, 'No.' He said, 'I don't belong to a church, but if I join now, it would look political ... I promise you that as soon as the election is over, win or lose, I'm going to join a church.' And I said, 'What denomination do you think you'd be?' and he said, 'Well, I don't know, but,' he said, 'my wife is Presbyterian. Do you know any good Presbyterian churches in Washington?' And I said, 'Yes, I certainly do.' To make a long story short, he joined a church, and the minister baptized him publicly. As President of the United States, he took a public stand for Christ. And he chose as his favorite hymn, 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus.'"*

Growing up, President Eisenhower's family belonged to the Jehovah's Witnesses. However, he was not a member of any church or religious group throughout much of his life. It was not until after he became President of the United States at 62 years of age that he made a public profession of faith. Can you imagine a president today joining a church and being baptized during his first 100 days in office?

President Eisenhower attended the National Prayer Breakfast shortly after his inauguration. Every U.S. President who has served since that time has attended it as well.

In 2000, George W. Bush called the presidency "an office that turns pride into prayer." But I'm not sure our leaders would turn to prayer were it not for people like Billy Graham. We need leaders who will take a stand, but we also need Christians standing alongside them, praying with them and for them. Several weeks ago a group of ministers and leaders prayed over President Trump in the Oval Office. A few pundits criticized them for praying with the president, but frankly I would think if there's one thing every American ought to be able to agree on right now, it's that President Trump probably needs all the prayer he can get.

You and I may never be invited to a prayer meeting at the White House. We may never hand a Bible to a U.S. President or share the gospel with the Leader of the Free World. However, we can still pray for our elected leaders. We can also follow Billy Graham's example by being ready to minister to elected officials we do meet—and I suspect we'll meet a few during the campaign season that's quickly approaching.

Praying for those in authority is something Family Council firmly believes in. And now let me tell you a little more about what we've been doing—and what you can do to help us promote, protect, and strengthen traditional family values in Arkansas.

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Family Council  
President Jerry Cox

## MY THOUGHTS: NO WEAPON FORMED AGAINST US WILL PROSPER

Lately, we have had some pretty vicious attacks against our work, so I've been praying the promise from Isaiah 54 that says, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." The other day I received a note in the mail with a \$5 donation for Family Council. Here is what one of our longtime, monthly supporters had to say:

"Jerry, Enclosed is a \$5 gift given to me by M\_\_\_\_\_ for your work. Several ladies (all over 80) meet for prayer 2 times a month. We read and pray for your requests from the Family Council bulletin. Thank you for your good work. The enemy is mad, but God says, 'No weapon formed against you will prosper.' Hallelujah!"

Wow! What confirmation! Please join me and this precious group of ladies who pray and claim the promise that no weapon formed against Family Council, our staff, or their families will prosper.

### Keeping Counties Free of Marijuana

On September 18, some 300 individuals and companies applied to grow or sell so-called "medical marijuana" in Arkansas. Of these applicants, five growers and thirty-two sellers will be approved by the state. Application fees are \$15,000 for prospective growers and \$7,500 for prospective sellers; those who are not approved by the state will get half their application fee refunded. That means the State of Arkansas will get about \$1 million from the application fees. That's a lot of money, but it's nowhere near the \$2.1-\$2.5 million per year the Department of Finance and Administration has estimated medical marijuana will cost state government. Tax revenue simply cannot offset all the costs and harm that come with legalizing marijuana. That's why Family Council is committed to helping communities stay free of marijuana.

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Arkansas' marijuana amendment gives citizens leeway when it comes to restricting marijuana farms and stores. We are working with attorneys and others to assist cities and counties who do not want marijuana businesses in their communities. Nearly half the people who voted last year voted against marijuana. Many of those who voted to legalize marijuana still want marijuana properly regulated. They don't want marijuana stores on Main Street, and they don't want drug users wandering around parks and playgrounds. They want to protect their communities from the effects of marijuana, and we are here to help them do that.

**Take Action:** If you would like to help organize a petition drive to prohibit marijuana farms and stores in your community, call us at (501) 375-7000.

### Teen Abortion in Arkansas Hits Lowest Level in At Least Three Decades

The Department of Health released reports earlier this summer showing the number of abortions performed on teenagers has fallen to the lowest level in three decades. In 1986, 32% of all abortions performed in Arkansas were on teenage girls. In 2016 only 11% were on teenage girls.

Since the 1980s, the number of abortions performed on teenagers in Arkansas has plummeted from more than 2,000 per year to about 350. Some say this decline is due to increased access to birth control. However, Arkansas' teen pregnancy rates have remained high. While that's nothing to brag about, it shows contraceptives are not the reason teenagers are having fewer abortions.

So what is behind the drastic decline in abortion? For one thing, we are building a culture of life. Abortion is unthinkable to many young people who have seen ultrasound images and know what abortion really is. I also believe much of the credit goes to our pro-life laws passed in recent years. If the numbers are any indicator, we are winning the fight against abortion.

### Attorney General Still Defending Pro-Life Laws in Court

Last month we told you the federal Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals has been duking it out with U.S. District Judge Kristine Baker in Little Rock over Arkansas' pro-life laws. Judge Baker has generally struck down Arkansas' pro-life laws while the Eighth Circuit has generally upheld them.

Planned Parenthood is working to get some of the Eighth Circuit's good rulings overturned. Specifically, they are still trying to force Arkansas to pay Medicaid money to Planned Parenthood. Attorney General Leslie Rutledge's office is continuing to defend our state's laws and the sanctity of human life.

**Take Action:** Call (501) 682-2007 to thank Attorney General Rutledge for defending Arkansas' pro-life laws.

## The Nashville Statement: What It Is and Why We Need It

In late August, Christian leaders released a document known as the “Nashville Statement” reiterating basic biblical truths on marriage, biological sex, and other important issues. Among other things, the statement rejected transgenderism, polygamy, and homosexuality, and it affirmed traditional marriage. Altogether, 153 leaders have signed the Nashville Statement so far, including Dr. James Dobson; Russell Moore; Dr. Albert Mohler; Pastor John Piper; Tony Perkins of Family Research Council; Dennis Rainey of FamilyLife; Dr. R. C. Sproul; and many others.

For two thousand years, Christian leaders have gathered together from time to time to read the Bible and answer important questions of their day. Acts 15 records the apostles in Jerusalem doing precisely that when Gentiles were first admitted to the church. After Constantine legalized Christianity throughout the Roman Empire, church leaders met to answer questions about which writings should be included in

the New Testament. When heresies sprang up, leaders again gathered to study scripture and address the heresies. The Protestant Reformers issued statements articulating scripture’s teachings. The Nashville Statement is simply another chapter in that story: in the face of a culture rejecting traditional marriage and biology, the Nashville Statement offers the timeless truth of God’s Word. In that regard, there’s nothing new here.

**The last time anyone seriously questioned scripture’s teaching on homosexuality and marriage, Simon Peter and James the half-brother of Jesus were leading church services in Jerusalem. That should say something about how far we have drifted on these issues.**

### FORTY DAYS FOR LIFE HAPPENING RIGHT NOW

From now until November 5, Christians will gather for prayer outside abortion clinics across America as part of the semiannual 40 Days for Life effort. During this time, pro-life prayer warriors meet to pray that abortion clinics will close and abortion will end.

We routinely hear stories of abortion doctors and nurses coming to Christ and leaving the abortion industry in the wake of these prayer vigils. We also hear stories of pregnant women choosing not to abort their children after seeing or speaking with those praying outside the abortion clinics.

**Take Action: There’s still time to be part of 40 Days for Life in Arkansas. To find a prayer vigil near you, go to [www.40DaysForLife.com](http://www.40DaysForLife.com) or call us at (501) 375-7000.**

What is new is the need to address these particular issues. John Stonestreet with the Colson Center for Christian Worldview reminds us that “the very first council in church history, the Jerusalem Council recorded in Acts 15, did take up the issue of sexuality. Gentile Christians were told to ‘abstain from sexual immorality,’ which for the Jewish apostles would mean the list of practices condemned in Leviticus 18, including homosexual behavior.” In other words, the last time Christians seriously questioned scripture’s teaching on homosexuality and marriage, Simon Peter and James the half-brother of Jesus were leading church services in Jerusalem. That should say something about how far we have drifted on these issues.

What is also new is the vicious backlash Christians have faced simply for believing things Christians have believed for two thousand years. NBC news called the Nashville Statement a “sexuality manifesto.” Some members of the media quickly provided a list of more liberal clergymen who opposed the Nashville Statement. One columnist even called it “the religious right’s death rattle.” Nashville’s mayor tweeted that the statement “does not represent the inclusive values of the city & people of Nashville.” Keep in mind there’s nothing political about the Nashville Statement. It’s a creed, but an elected official publicly criticized it on the Internet.

There is much more that could be said, but here are two final thoughts: first, the fact that the Nashville Statement has met so much criticism probably means now more than ever Christians need to tell others what the Bible says about marriage, biological sex, and our identity. Second, pundits have claimed for centuries that Christianity will die out if it does not compromise. However, biblical Christianity has survived by clinging to the Word of God—not by abandoning it. The Nashville Statement is another chapter in that story as well.

**Take Action: Read and sign the Nashville Statement at [www.NashvilleStatement.com](http://www.NashvilleStatement.com).**



## Authorities Raid Gambling Houses in Arkansas

In September we wrote about the proliferation of illegal gambling houses in some parts of Arkansas. Shortly after

**Illegal gambling houses often use machines that look more like video games than traditional slot machines or card games.**

we sent that letter, authorities in Jefferson County raided two suspected gambling houses—and they indicated other raids could happen in the future. One of these gambling houses appears to have been located in or near an

old gas station; the other appears to have been located in a former or current bar or liquor store.

Illegal gambling houses often use machines that look more like video games than traditional slot machines or card games. Some attorneys consider them legally “gray”— the machines probably are illegal, but the case against them isn’t black and white.

**Take Action:** If you suspect a gambling house is operating in your community, please notify your local sheriff’s office; your local prosecutor’s office; and your county judge’s office. Then call us at (501) 375-7000.

## HERE ARE THREE WAYS YOU CAN HELP US

Another election year is just around the corner. We are beginning to work on the Arkansas Voter’s Guide for 2018. We are analyzing the referred measures that will appear on the ballot next year, and we plan to send you information about those measures in the months to come. We are also looking at pro-life efforts in other states and ways we can improve Arkansas’ policies on abortion, assisted suicide, euthanasia, and end of life care.

### Here are three ways you can support our work:

**Pray:** Without God’s grace and assistance, there’s simply no way we can do everything that is before us. We need prayer from all of our friends.

**Spread the Word:** Please tell your friends and family members about what we are doing, and help them connect with us.

**Give:** Your generous financial support keeps us in the fight for traditional family values. If you are able to give, please use the enclosed response card and return envelope to send a generous, tax-deductible donation today.

**Thank you for standing with us.** We simply would not be here without friends like you backing us. Please call us if there is ever anything my staff or I can do for you.

Sincerely,



Jerry Cox, President

*Thank you!!*

P.S. We’re working to keep communities free of marijuana. Forty Days for Life is happening right now in Arkansas. This is your opportunity to pray abortion will end in America. Attorney General Leslie Rutledge is still defending pro-life laws in court. Your generous support is helping us make Arkansas a better place to live, work, and raise a family. Thank you for standing with us.

