

# Mystery Priest at Accident Scene Hailed as an Angel

Emergency workers and others in eastern Missouri are not sure what to make of a mystery priest who showed up at a critical accident scene Sunday morning (Aug. 4) and whose prayer seemed to change life-threatening events for the positive.

Even odder, the black-garbed priest does not appear in any of the nearly 70 photos of the scene of the accident in which a 19-year-old girl almost died.

No one knows the priest, and he vanished without a word, said Raymond Reed, fire chief of New London, Mo.

"I think it's a miracle," Reed said. "I would say whether it was an angel that was sent to us in the form of a priest or a priest that became our angel, I don't know. Either way, I'm good with it."

Carla Churchill Lentz, the mother of the teen who was critically injured, said emergency workers have told her there is no way her daughter should have lived inside such a mangled car.

"I do believe he certainly could have been an angel dressed in priest's attire because the Bible tells us there are angels among us," she said.

Katie Lentz, a sophomore at Tulane University, was driving from her parents' home in Quincy, Ill., to Jefferson City, Mo., where she has a summer internship and planned to attend church with friends. The Mercedes she was driving collided with another vehicle on a highway near Center, Mo. The accident crushed Lentz's vehicle into a ball of sheet metal that lay on the driver's side, Reed said.

Reed's team and emergency workers from several other jurisdictions tried for at least 45 minutes to remove the twisted metal from around Lentz. Equipment broke and the team was running out of choices. A helicopter waited to carry Lentz to the nearest trauma center.

Though Lentz appeared calm, talking about her church and her studies toward a dentistry degree, her vital signs were beginning to fail, Reed said.

"I was pulled off to the side by one of the members" of the helicopter evacuation team, Reed said. "He expressed to me that we were out of time. Her condition looked grim for her coming out of that vehicle alive. She was facing major problems."

At that point, Reed's team agreed to take the life-threatening chance of sitting the vehicle upright so that Lentz could be removed from it. This can be dangerous because a sudden change in pressure to the body can be critical, he said.

That's when Lentz asked if someone would pray with her and a voice said, "I will."

The silver-haired priest in his 50s or 60s in black pants, black shirt and black clergy collar stepped forward from nowhere. It struck Reed as odd because the street was blocked off 2 miles from the scene and no one from the nearby communities recognized him.

"We're all local people from four different towns," Reed said. "We've only got one Catholic church out of three towns and it wasn't their priest."

Reed and the other emergency workers were on their knees. The priest of about medium build, maybe 6-foot-tall, stood above them.

"This priest approached Katie and began to pray openly with

her,” Reed said. “He had a bottle of anointing oil with him and he used that.”

Another firefighter who had been watching said it appeared as if the priest also sprinkled Reed and two other emergency workers nearby with oil.

Everything happened quickly after that. Twenty emergency workers pulled together and sat the car upright, Churchill Lentz said. Katie Lentz’s vital signs improved and a rescue team from a neighboring community suddenly appeared with fresh equipment and tools. Lentz was removed and rushed to the hospital.

With Lentz gone, the rescue team prepared to clean up, Reed said. “We all go back to thank this priest and he’s gone,” he said.

Initially, they assumed he had to get to his home church to lead Sunday services. But then they looked at their photos of the scene.

“I have 69 photographs that were taken from minutes after that accident happened – bystanders, the extrication, our final cleanup – and he’s not in them,” Reed said. “All we want to do is thank him.”

The Facebook page of Lentz’s mother indicates Lentz is on the mend despite suffering two broken femurs, a broken tibia and fibia, broken left wrist, nine broken ribs, a lacerated liver, ruptured spleen and bruised lung.

Churchill Lentz said her daughter has undergone two surgeries and will undergo two more, but has been upgraded from critical to serious and is doing well.

“She sustained a lot of injuries, however, her face is beautiful, her teeth are perfect, she is sunshine, and everyone who’s contacted us ... they are all saying the same

thing, she never cried, she never screamed, she would just say, 'pray for me and pray out loud.'"

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*Melanie Eversley writes for USA Today.*

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## **20 Ways to Maintain a Youthful Glow**

Recently I visited St. Augustine, Fla., with my family, and we found the Fountain of Youth! Well, actually, Ponce De Leon did. However, it was fun to experience the historical park and drink from the fountain. (No, I did not come out looking 20 again.)

Even though I did not gain youthful years back from the legendary fountain, you can achieve a youthful glow by following these beauty and health tips. Plus, you will see results within 24 hours. Best of all, they are nontoxic and earth friendly.

### **20 Ways to Look Younger Tomorrow**

**1. Frownies.** These little tape devices work miracles without needles and have been around for a hundred years. Wear them at night or for at least four hours, and you will see results. *Warning:* Your husband may think you look like a mummy.

**2. Make a mate latte.** Yerba mate tea tastes great and comes in

many flavors. Heat water almost to boiling, steep for 10 minutes, strain and then top it off with steamed, frothy milk (or use almond milk and a dash of cinnamon). Do not drink mate if you are taking an MAO inhibitor, as the combination may raise blood pressure.

**3. Keep a positive attitude.** Various researchers have shown that optimism increases good health. Start with positive self-talk: "I can handle this." Try to avoid criticizing yourself!

**4. Care for hands and feet.** Exfoliate and then, before bed, mix avocado oil and primrose oil in equal parts, apply a few drops to hands and feet, cover with gloves and socks, and go to sleep.

**5. Detox for a day and drink tea.** The South African tea rooibos (red tea) has collagen-building copper as well as vitamin C and other antioxidants.

**6. Take a seaweed detox bath.** Take some Nori flakes and place them in cheesecloth, tying it at the top. Place the pouch in warm bath water, squeeze and rub the pouch in targeted areas.

**7. Whiten your teeth.** Try whitening strips while reading a book before you doze off.

**8. Sleep.** Get at least eight hours of sleep. Try to go to bed before 10 p.m. Tip: Listen to calming music for 45 minutes before bedtime. (I've heard of a study showing that music helped elderly folks sleep longer and feel less tired the next day. This may be because music decreases a key stress hormone in the body.)

**9. Sleep with a contour pillow.** This is the affordable alternative to pricey beauty pillows. The anti-wrinkle pillow made by Eyetopia stretches the neck and reduces the pressure of face to pillow (which, in turn, reduces wrinkles!).

**10. Look younger with a fake tan.** Use a bronzer or sunless

tanning lotion. It will soften the appearance of imperfections. (Be sure to look for natural ingredients.)

**11. Use eye-hydrating goggles.** Saturate cotton pads with an herbal calming tonic such as argan or neem oil, and place them in these specially designed, hydrating goggles. Sleep in them or remove after 30 minutes.

**12. De-puff.** Cut back on white flour and sugar for 24 hours. Refined carbs cause your body to retain water, making your face “puffy.”

**13. Use a pimple zapper.** Blend one packet of brewers’ yeast and a few drops of lemon juice and apply as a mask before bed. As the mixture hardens, it pushes away debris clogging your pores.

**14. Throw on another pillow.** Fifteen minutes before rising from bed in the morning, place an extra pillow under your head. This will help de-puff your eyes.

**15. Cut down on salt.** Salt makes you retain water. Avoid fast foods and switch to Spice Hunters, my favorite spices. My mom is now also a believer in these tasty, salt-free spices. (Those with high blood pressure should only have 250mg a day; the average person, 3,000mg or less. If you are active and sweat a lot, you may need more.)

**16. Pray.** Thank God for everything before bed and before you get up. Be grateful!

**17. Be joyful.** A happy person looks younger because a smile sheds years.

**18. Plump away your wrinkles.** Drink eight to 10 glasses of water with lemon a day. Your skin will be more hydrated and the appearance of wrinkles less pronounced, while lemon helps with digestion. Tip: Squeeze some lemon on a cotton ball and pat around the eye. This helps to exfoliate as well—but be

careful of eye area.

**19. Avoid sugar.** It dries out your skin and promotes wrinkles.

**20. Choose an herbal coffee instead of a regular cup of joe.** In a coffee/tea press, make Teeccino vanilla nut caffeine-free herbal coffee, then mix with unsweetened vanilla almond milk, half a drop of Pure Inventions vanilla cocoa, and 1/2 tsp xylitol—or add a little organic half-and-half (it’s a vanilla-cocoa delight!).

When all else fails, live by what Jesus said in Matthew 6:34: “You’ve got enough problems for today, so don’t worry about tomorrow.”

*Shelly Ballestero is a licensed aesthetician, makeup artist, beauty editor of Lifestyle Magazine and author. She has studied under Emmy Award-winner Eve Pearl, head makeup artist for ABC’s The View.*

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## **Chaplain Assistant Facing Punishment for Calling Homosexuality a Sin on Facebook**

Last month a chaplain in Alaska was ordered to remove a religious column he had written because it supposedly offended atheists at his Air Force base. Now a young soldier says she was reprimanded for a Facebook post about homosexuality.

A female Army chaplain’s assistant told Fox News Radio host Todd Starnes she was accused of creating a “hostile and

antagonistic" environment after writing a message on her personal Facebook page in which she called homosexuality a sin.

The 26-year-old soldier, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said she took to her social media page after returning home from church one Sunday and watching a documentary about a minister who endorsed homosexuality.

"I was frustrated with what I saw so I posted a Facebook message about it," she told Starnes.

The Facebook posting in question said, "A lot ticked off, now to all my gay friends you know I care about you so don't think otherwise. I'm watching this documentary and this gay guy went to a church and the Pastor was telling him that he needs to embrace his way and know that it is not a sin. Ok umm wow, dude it is. I'm sick of people making Gods word what it's not. Yes God loves you as a person but He hates the sin. Tired of hearing about Pastors being ok with homosexuality."

The chaplain's assistant, who believes individuals within her unit reported her, was ordered to the commander's office the next day and was told she must either remove the post or face a reduction in rank and pay.

"He said I was creating hostile and antagonistic environment in the unit by posting that on Facebook," she said. "He said I needed to either take it down or face a UCMJ (Uniform Code of Military Justice)."

But the evangelical Christian refuses to remove her post.

"I haven't taken it down, and I won't take it down," she told Fox News. "It is frustrating that people are trying to silence me for something that I believe in. We fight for the freedom that I can't enjoy right now. That's not right."

The unnamed soldier reached out to Todd Hudnall, her pastor at

Radiant Church in Colorado Springs, Colo.

“I read what she posted, and there was absolutely no trace of animus, disrespect or hostility,” Hudnall told Fox News. “Instead, she expressed love for her gay friends but insisted that biblical values should not be compromised. Her issue wasn’t with anyone who is gay but with pastors who refuse to acknowledge scriptural teaching about homosexual behavior.”

Hudnall, who said the soldier was reprimanded for “holding to orthodox biblical instruction,” said this is not the first time he has heard of Christian soldiers being threatened for their religious beliefs.

“It sounds more like totalitarianism than keeping with our heritage of liberty,” he said. “I’m becoming quite concerned that we are losing the freedom of speech and religion in the name of tolerance and over shifting norms of morality and behavior.”

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## **Top Pastor’s Arrest Adds to Christians’ Concerns in Central African Republic**

The already fragile situation for Christians in the Central African Republic (CAR) may be worsening.

On Tuesday, the leader of the country’s evangelical churches, Rev. Nicolas Guerékoyamé, was arrested for comments about the government. He was released a few hours later.

Local media reported that Guerékoyamé, who is president of the CAR’s Evangelical Alliance, was questioned about remarks

during a sermon in Bangui, the capital, on August 4.

His comments were reportedly considered “excessive and extremist... striking a blow at the dignity of the Head of State and at the Institutions of the Transition”.

However local sources, which remain anonymous for security reasons, said his arrest was linked to the publication of an article in which he inferred that the citizens of the CAR are being treated like slaves.

In the July edition of *Le Démocrate*, the pastor called the CAR “another island of Gorée,” an island off the coast of Senegal which was a hub during the slave trade of the 19th Century.

The pastor added that he blamed the present government for the continued prevalence of theft, rape and murder, despite a recent plea by religious leaders and assurances by the President that security and stability was improving.

Guerékoyamé is a member of the National Transitional Council (NTC), an acting parliament set up following the March military coup in which the Séléka group overthrew the regime of François Bozizé. Local media said Guerékoyamé’s immunity as a member of the NTC had not been respected.

Our local source understands the order for the pastor’s arrest came from acting president Michel Djotodia, whose motives in overthrowing the previous government have been questioned before.

In May, World Watch Monitor revealed that Djotodia declared in a letter his desire to turn the Central African Republic into an Islamic republic.

In the letter, Djotodia introduced himself as the defender of the Muslims’ cause in Chad and the Central African Republic, claimed the two countries “have no respect for us” and asked for support from his [Muslim] “brothers”.

A group of senior bishops in response wrote to Djotodia, raising concerns about his past and asking him to speak out against the suffering inflicted by his Séléka guerrillas. “Why shouldn’t you condemn [Séléka’s members]? Until when would you keep silent?” they wrote.

In June, Christian and Muslim leaders together condemned the continued violence enacted by Séléka. The Bishop of Bangassou, Juan José Aguirre Munos, said that without action, the country was “likely to explode.”

Last month, international health organization Medecins sans Frontieres (Doctors without Borders) said the world had abandoned the Central African Republic in its hour of need.

The International Federation for Human Rights reported at the time that Séléka had been accused of murdering more than 400 people since coming to power.

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## **Sam Hinn Getting Re-Ordained 8 Months After Sexual Misconduct**

Less than eight months after Sam Hinn stepped down from the pulpit of his Orlando-area church amid a sexual scandal, the younger brother of evangelist Benny Hinn is being publicly re-ordained on Sunday.

Bishop Mark Chironna, founder and senior pastor of Church on the Living Edge in Longwood, Fla., sent out a phone message to the church’s members this week announcing that Hinn would be “re-ordained” by Chironna, Archbishop Lonnie Langston and six

other bishops. The message indicated that Langston, founder of Tabernacle Bible College and Seminary, would be installing Hinn as a professor at the Tampa, Fla., school.

Neither Chironna nor Langston returned Charisma News' calls seeking comment on the re-ordination, but the message from Chironna's ministry said:

"This Sunday evening at 7:30, Bishop Lonnie Langston and a presbytery of 6 other pastors and bishops, including myself, are gonna be re-ordaining Pastor Sam Hinn at Church on the Living Edge. And I want to encourage as many of you that love Pastor Sam to come out and be a part of that.

"I've been part of the presbytery team in Pastor Sam's journey in the last number of months with everything that's gone on—and the bishops and pastors are all in hearty agreement that it's time to re-ordain Pastor Sam as he's gonna be working with the Tabernacle Bible College and Seminary as a professor. And we want to affirm that he's doing well and he certainly is, and that his family is doing well and they certainly are.

"And so Sunday night is gonna be a very special night—if you have any relationship at all with Pastor Sam, I know that he'd be blessed if you would be a part of that. So, I wanna let everyone know that's a special—special night; and we would love for you to join us and be part of that on Sunday evening at 7:30."

Earlier this year, Hinn admitted to allowing himself "to be drawn into a relationship that has caused much hurt and pain to my wife and family. I have repented and asked for and received their forgiveness. Scripture states that I must bring forth the fruit of repentance if I expect to be restored."

Hinn served as pastor of the Gathering Place Worship Center in Sanford, Fla., which holds two morning services attended by about 300 people each, plus a small Arabic service on

Sunday afternoon. When Hinn admitted to an immoral relationship that lasted more than four years, the church board said, "Pastor Sam Hinn has been relieved of all ministry responsibilities and as the official board, we have outlined a restoration process. This process includes pastoral and professional counseling, as well as a mandatory time out of ministry so that all fractures in both his personal and family life may be healed."

Ron Johnson, pastor of One Church (Assembly of God) in nearby Longwood, was asked by the Gathering Place's church board to oversee the restoration process and did so for the first three months. After a disagreement over restoration stipulations, however, Johnson became estranged from the process. He told Charisma News he does not agree with timing of the re-ordination and will be making a public statement through this platform in the coming days.

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## **Steven Curtis Chapman's Latest Album Highlights God's 'Glorious Epic Story'**

Award-winning singer-songwriter Steven Curtis Chapman is releasing his first full-length studio album in seven years that features all original songs.

To be released Sept. 30, *The Glorious Unfolding* (Reunion Records/Provident) features the hit single "Love Take Me Over." Chapman's 18th album focuses on "the truth that God is at work telling a story through the wonderful and amazing as well as the painful and difficult chapters of our lives," the singer's label says.

“As I’ve journeyed through this story, I’m more convinced than ever that God does know the plans that He has for us, and He will finish what He started,” he says. “God is telling an amazing, glorious, epic story. We have to decide if we will trust Him with it.”

In the fall, Chapman, who has 47 No. 1 singles and nearly 11 million albums sold, will visit more than 35 cities on the first leg of the Glorious Unfolding tour with Laura Story and Jason Gray.

“I’m so excited and honored to have Laura Story and Jason Gray join me on the road,” Chapman says. “I can’t wait to share these songs live, and we’re already praying God will use each and every night powerfully.”

For more information, visit [.](#)

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## **Why Peacemaking Can Be Painful**

I was in Washington, D.C., last week when reports on the arrival of a group of other Israelis in the U.S. capitol made front-page news. While I was warmly received by a wide array of people, including journalists at CBN and leaders from the National Religious broadcasters, my trip was not the focus of the media’s attention.

Rather, it was a team of high-level negotiators from Israel to sit face to face with a parallel group of Palestinians, the first time in years that Israel and the Palestinians actually sat down together face to face formally to try to overcome the differences and even broach the idea of making peace.

Despite my trip not being in the news, my presence was a catalyst for seeking my thoughts, comments and observations about the news among those with a heart for Israel.

I share the prayer and hope of most Israelis that one day we will actually have peace with our neighbors, and I know for a certainty that most Israelis will be ready to make painful concessions if the possibility of peace were actually in reach. Yet I, like many Israelis, don't see too much reason for hope in the short term.

One of the most challenging parts of the negotiation, just to return to negotiations, is Israel's agreeing to release 104 hardcore terrorists, many imprisoned for decades for murdering and maiming other Israelis. Doing so has opened old wounds and renewed the pain and grief of the families of the many victims of these terrorists who will now go free, and who will receive a hero's welcome when they go home, celebrating their murderous acts of Palestinian nationalism.

It's perverse that Israel is releasing these terrorists in order to coax the Palestinians back to talk with us about making peace. As painful as this is, one could make the case for doing so in the implementation of a final peace agreement.

However simply to release terrorists to get the Palestinians to agree to talk about peace makes a mockery of Israel's deep sense of justice. The arrest, trial and imprisonment of these terrorists for serious crimes was all done under Israeli law, yet now they are being set free. One would think that if the Palestinians really want peace and to live side by side with Israel, they would do everything and anything possible to resolve differences, rather than wait years to negotiate terms just to talk about making peace.

Releasing hardened terrorists also sends chills up the spine of any parent of a young man or woman currently serving in the IDF, or who will serve, as it weakens operations to track down

and arrest other terrorists, whether after the fact, or based on intelligence that they are about to act. These operations are done at considerable risk to the elite forces who carry them out as well as those, often Arabs, who provide the necessary intelligence.

Not only does the threat of arrest, or serving a full sentence once arrested, not serve to discourage people from joining the terrorists, it may outright encourage further acts of terrorism as the perpetrators may rightly look at Israel with little fear or consequence of their actions, or actually assess that the "penalty" is well worth the crime, if caught.

Certainly, it's possible that any of these could consider serving 10-20 years in a comfortable Israeli prison with cable, three halal meals, air conditioning, and the ability to study toward an advanced degree as being well worth it, even an incentive to go ahead and kill a few Israelis.

Of course, just by being an Israeli in D.C. does not give me any unique insight into what was and has been taking place behind the scenes to get to this place. It's a very uneasy situation and one about which I don't know too many people who are happy. Speculation is rife with ideas that Israel had to bend to the U.S. in order to demonstrate that it was really trying so that when the time comes to act on Iran, the U.S. will do the right thing.

Everyone understands that Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas is a weak leader who governs with little legitimacy (his term as president ended years ago but there have not been any elections since, so he sits in his office with no constitutional legitimacy), and one who probably looks over his shoulder all the time as his Hamas brothers threaten to do to him what is happening in Syria and Egypt. By tossing Abbas this bone, the theory goes he could have the standing to be so bold as to actually negotiate peace with Israel, which many Palestinians oppose and many Israelis don't see him able to

uphold.

There is a hope that in the context of Israel releasing these Arab prisoners, as part of this deal President Obama will do the right thing and pardon Jonathan Pollard, an Israeli American serving a sentence so far in excess of what others convicted of serious crimes, it's hard not to imagine anti-Semitism playing a role. While Palestinian terrorists' release is legitimately a mockery of justice, so too is Pollard's continued imprisonment. Pollard's release could certainly give Prime Minister Netanyahu something to show in response to the mounting protests against the terrorists' release.

Whatever may come, I pray that the God of Israel, whose covenant with Abraham grants Israel more legitimacy than most if not all modern nation states today, will grant wisdom to do the right thing.

*Jonathan Feldstein is the director of Heart to Heart, a unique virtual blood donation program to bless Israel and save lives in Israel. Born and educated in the U.S., Feldstein emigrated to Israel in 2004. He is married and the father of six. Throughout his life and career, he has been blessed by the calling to fellowship with Christian supporters of Israel and shares experiences of living as an Orthodox Jew in Israel.*

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## **Mr. President, Where's the Accountability?**

Saturday, August 10 marks the third month of the IRS scandal.

On May 10, when Lois Lerner, the former director of the IRS exempt organizations division, answered a question at a legal

conference—a question she arranged to have asked in advance—she clearly had no idea what would happen next.

When she admitted that the IRS had targeted conservative groups simply because of their political beliefs, she touched off a national firestorm. Her inept attempt to apologize for the agency's blunder and put it to rest backfired.

In the past three months, we have learned that the Obama administration repeatedly tried to downplay this unlawful targeting scheme, which is an unprecedented breach of the public's trust by the IRS.

We also know that the scandal continues to expand. And we know that the Obama administration is doing very little to get to the bottom of what happened, despite the president's promise to the American people that the administration would "hold the responsible parties accountable."

Today, after all this time, it's clear that the Obama administration isn't really interested in the facts about how this could happen at the IRS or about holding anyone accountable.

In fact, President Obama has moved on, calling the IRS targeting scheme a "phony" scandal and acting as if corrective action has been taken and the problem solved.

Not so fast.

From the beginning, the facts did not square with the excuses offered up to the American public by the Obama administration.

It did not take long to punch holes in the IRS' story that the scheme to target conservatives began in a small office run by just a couple of rogue agents.

In our lawsuit against the IRS, on behalf of 41 conservative organizations in 22 states, the evidence is very clear: Documents have revealed that IRS offices coast to coast were

involved in the scheme, including Lois Lerner herself! In fact, she sent more than a dozen letters to conservative organizations asking them intrusive and inappropriate questions.

The White House has also claimed that the unconstitutional targeting of conservative organizations ended in May 2012. Again, our documents clearly show that the IRS abuse continued through May 2013, with the most recent letter dated May 6, 2013—just four days before Lerner’s admission.

And we now know, thanks to the testimony of former IRS attorneys, that the office of the IRS chief counsel (a political presidential appointee) was involved in the scheme too. This testimony raises important questions about President Obama’s knowledge of or involvement in the scheme.

Now there’s new information to suggest that the IRS may have been providing taxpayer information to the Federal Election Commission (FEC), something that violates federal law and the IRS’ own regulations.

An FEC commissioner says he has seen previously undisclosed emails between the IRS and FEC about the targeting scheme. And lawmakers are now demanding the FEC turn over records of more than five years of communications with the IRS.

All of this information comes as the Obama administration continues to stonewall Congress about the scandal—providing just a fraction of the information requested.

Noting the three month mark since the scandal began, Reps. Darrell Issa (Calif.) and Dave Camp (Mich.), chairmen of the House Committees on Oversight and Ways and Means, have voiced their concern, saying in a statement, “The American people demand and deserve accountability from their government, not to live in fear of being subject to an audit or other extra scrutiny for reasons unrelated to the content of their filing. So far, the IRS and this administration have provided no

assurances that oversight and accountability is in place to prevent such abuses from happening again.”

The president did order the new acting IRS Commissioner Daniel Werfel to conduct a 30-day review of the IRS scandal. Yes, you read that right—just a 30-day review to investigate a scheme that had been underway *for years*. It’s no surprise that Werfel claims the 30-day review turned up no “evidence of intentional wrongdoing by anyone in the IRS.”

It’s been three months since the American public learned about this outrageous behavior by the IRS. No one has been fired. Lerner and a handful of others are on leave and still being paid.

And what has happened to the investigations underway by the FBI and Department of Justice? Three months later, not one of our clients has been contacted by investigators at the FBI or Justice Department.

It’s difficult to imagine how anyone could claim that a thorough investigation—or any investigation, for that matter—has been conducted without even bothering to interview the taxpayers who were targeted.

So, the IRS scandal continues. It’s been three months and counting. The last three months have produced many more questions and very few answers.

Where’s the accountability, Mr. President?

**Jay Sekulow** is chief counsel of the American Center for Law and Justice. Follow him on Twitter @JaySekulow. This article originally appeared on Fox News.

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# How to Win Back Your Prodigal Daughter

Ellen agonized over the spiritual lostness of her daughter, who in her youth had walked faithfully with the Lord. In her late teens, the young woman had rejected her spiritual moorings, defying almost everything in her life that was good, righteous and principled.

She had become a prodigal.

Ellen, of course, prayed for her daughter every day and tried to stay connected through phone calls and cards.

Soon, they lost even that connection. Calls went unanswered, phone numbers were changed, and letters seemed to disappear into the void. It now seemed like an impenetrable wall separated mother and daughter.

Months went by without a word. It broke Ellen's heart not to know where her daughter was or how she was getting along. Not knowing what else to do, she persisted in prayer—every day, every night, whispering her hurt, desires and longings to the Lord.

Even though she had been a leader and Bible teacher in her church and was a woman of strong faith, Ellen felt cold fingers of doubt touch her heart. She has stopped praying for something dramatic and supernatural to happen in her relationship with her daughter and decided to pray for something small.

She told the Lord she trusted Him and had the capacity to “wait upon the Lord” as long as needed. But she dared to ask her Lord if He would give her an indication—some small sign—that He heard her heartbroken prayers.

“Lord,” she prayed. “I’m not looking for a quick resolution here; just a sign that You’ve heard me and that You’re working.”

Later that very morning, a van from a local florist pulled into Ellen’s driveway. The delivery person came to the front door with a small bouquet of flowers and a note: “Hi, Mom. I love you.”

It was signed by her daughter.

No, the daughter hadn’t come home or even indicated where she was or what had been happening in her life.

But Ellen had prayed for an indicator, and she had most certainly received one, almost immediately. Her heart flooded with joy and wonder. This was, to Ellen, like Elijah’s cloud “the size of a man’s hand.” In that Old Testament account, the prophet had seen that tiny cloud over the ocean and knew his prayer for rain—a big, heavy rain—had been answered (See 1 Kings 18:41-45).

She prayed more diligently than before, and soon the full answer came. Mother and daughter were reunited—emotionally, geographically and spiritually.

Are you praying for the return of a prodigal son or daughter? Take heart. Keep on praying. Keep on believing. Keep on thanking Him for His answer. Keep an eye out for His miracle.

✘ Adapted from *An Eye for Miracles* by Dr. Paul Risser, copyright 2010, published by Foursquare Media. This book will inspire you to start looking for the move of God in everyday occurrences around you. His accounts encourage you to be surprised by answers to prayer and not take miracles in your life for granted no matter how small.

To order your copy, [click here](#).

**PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 8/12/2013**

This week build your faith by hearing God's Word and declaring it over whatever petition you have before the Lord. Encourage your faith through praise, worship and thanksgiving over the answer that is soon to come. Continue to pray for the peace of Israel, and lift up our nation and its leaders as they face the challenges ahead. Remember our children as they return to schools and universities. Pray for their protection and for those working with them toward their success. Continue to pray for revival in our churches, laborers for the harvest field, and the persecuted church. Ask God for opportunities to bless others in His Name. 2 Chron. 7:14; James 5:16-18

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## **Billy Graham's Bridge Over Troubled Waters**

In her recent op-ed for *The New York Times*, "A Religious Legacy, With Its Leftward Tilt, Is Reconsidered," Jennifer Scheussler considers Christianity's lasting influence on the American religious consciousness. She credits the Protestant mainline churches for the growing "spiritual but not religious" cadre of believers who value tolerance, racial and sexual equality, and ecumenicalism over doctrine. In doing so, she presents **evangelical** and mainline Protestant Christians as pitted against each other in a zero sum game.

Whatever the future outcome for Protestant Christianity in America—and no matter how murky the present landscape—one would be remiss to overlook the unique legacy of evangelist **Billy Graham**, whom Scheussler invokes to illustrate the mobilization of **evangelicals** against mainline-endorsed leftist causes in the 1950s; Graham comes off the page as little more than a firebrand polemicist.

Quite to the contrary, Graham's impact on American Protestantism has been one of inclusion—building bridges of understanding to unite ecumenicals and evangelicals and, in latter years even Catholics—in **evangelism**. Using a football metaphor, if leaders of diverse Christian confessions were perceived to be playing between the 10-yard-line and the goal at either end of the field, Graham brought them mid-field between the two forties.

Writing in *The Christian Century*, Dr. Grant Wacker, professor of theology at Duke Divinity School, agrees in part with Scheussler's estimation that the mainline establishment "still exerts enormous influence on the culture-shaping agencies of our society," but argues that Billy Graham's increasingly progressive record on civil rights and other issues "placed him in the moderate forefront of American Christians' social conscience."

Graham's preaching had its genesis in hardline fundamentalism, but by 1957 he had demonstrated to the world that he was an unstoppable force for the burgeoning "New Evangelical" movement: an effort to draw **evangelical** Christians away from fundamentalists' separatism and toward the mainline's more inclusive emphasis on one's personal relationship to God. Graham's biographer William Martin observes in *A Prophet with Honor* that as "non-Evangelicals watched the streams of people who responded to [Graham's] invitation, they wanted to channel at least a trickle of them into their own churches."

Essentially, the conflict between conservative and liberal Protestants boiled down to a matter of intellect versus emotion. Mainline Protestants accused **evangelicals** of anti-intellectualism, and evangelicals saw liberals as lacking the impassioned strategy required to spread the **gospel** message. Theologians like Reinhold Niebuhr critiqued evangelicalism's triumph in bringing fresh faces through their doors—he viewed evangelicals' membership gains as the product of their "oversimplification of difficult issues."

Graham's response to Niebuhr's criticisms exhibits why Graham was so effective in spanning the divide between conservative and liberal Christians: he humbly acknowledged Niebuhr's superior intellect and education, but observed that the mainliners' overwrought concern for theology had a poor track record in recruiting new adherents: "I feel inadequate before [Niebuhr's] brilliant mind and learning," Graham said, adding, "If I tried to preach as he writes, people would be so bewildered they would walk out." Graham's strength lay in his ability to synthesize heady orthodoxy and earthy evangelicalism, embodying a captivating faith that integrated head and heart.

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