

Franklin Graham Calls for Intercession Over Gov. Bobby Jindal

First it was *Duck Dynasty*'s Willie Robertson. Now, it's evangelist Franklin Graham. Both men are applauding a Christian governor who may or may not run for president: Bobby Jindal. And Graham is calling on Christians to make intercession for him.

"I appreciate strong leaders like Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal who are defending religious freedoms in our nation. Unlike some other governors who have waffled on their positions and retreated, he says no matter how tough the opposition he will fight for passage of the Marriage and Conscience Act in this legislative session," Graham wrote on his Facebook page.

"In this *The New York Times* article Jindal says 'We should ensure that musicians, caterers, photographers and others should be immune from government coercion on deeply held religious convictions.' He says, 'As the fight for religious liberty moves to Louisiana, I have a clear message for any corporation that contemplates bullying our state: Save your breath.' Pray for Governor Jindal and post your encouragement to him in the comments below—tell him you support what he is doing!"

Although Graham stopped short of a presidential endorsement, Robertson came out in full support of Jindal as the next Commander-in-Chief just weeks ago.

"If he chooses to go on, I know the values he has ...," Robertson said. "He's got the values, he's got the intelligence to do it. I'd love to see him run."

Frat Boys Spit on Wounded Vet and Desecrate American Flag

Investigations have been launched at two universities over accusations that fraternity members taunted wounded war heroes, urinated on an American flag, and spit on a wounded veteran and his service dog in Panama City Beach, Florida.

The April 17 incident, involving Zeta Beta Tau fraternity members from the University of Florida and Emory University, has infuriated residents of Panama City.

“They were being treated like the Vietnam veterans were treated,” said Linda Cope, the founder of the Warrior Beach Retreat.

The local charity provides an annual all-expense-paid vacation for more than a 100 combat-wounded warriors and their spouses or caregivers. All of the expenses are covered by Panama City Beach residents and businesses.

Cope tells me the fraternity members were staying in the same resort—and caused a night of mayhem. The college kids made derogatory comments about the warriors’ wives, threw items off balconies and desecrated an American flag.

She also said one of the warriors and his service dog were spit on.

Television station WJHG identified that man as Nicholas Connole.

“They actually spit on me and my service dog as well, and that’s just so disrespectful and it hurts,” he told the television station.

There were local reports of frat boys throwing beer on veterans and ripping an American flag out of the ground.

“This happened because of two fraternities causing heartache for these warriors and that should never have happened—never happened,” Cope said. “Shame on them. There was no excuse.”

Reaction has been swift.

Zeta Beta Tau International confirmed that three members of the University of Florida chapter have been expelled from the fraternity and both university chapters have suspended all activities.

“There is no doubt that some of our members engaged in ugly and unacceptable behavior,” Executive Director Laurence Bolotin wrote in a statement. “Their actions have no place in ZBT or anywhere, and they will not be tolerated.”

Bolotin issued a personal apology to the veterans and their families as well as the Warrior Beach Retreat organization—calling the behavior disgusting.

“I am deeply saddened that the actions of our members ruined this special event and failed to show the respect our military and their families deserve,” he wrote.

To the fraternity’s credit, they have promised to make amends for what they called a “disgraceful situation.”

W. Kent Fuchs, the president of the University of Florida, wrote a personal apology to Cope and the Warrior Beach Retreat.

“I can only imagine the pain and indignity of enduring this behavior,” he wrote. “I want to assure you that it is not representative of our students or our university and we will make every effort to learn more, take appropriate action and prevent similar incidents from occurring again.”

Emory University, on the other hand, said it cannot confirm that any of their students were involved in the despicable behavior.

“If any members of our community are identified as being responsible, they will be held accountable for their actions by the university,” read a statement from the Georgia school.

Cope told me the residents of Panama City Beach are “up in arms about what happened.”

“This community is so patriotic and supportive,” she said. “The fraternities are learning a hard lesson. You don’t treat these men and women who have sacrificed so much for your freedom like that.”

Todd Starnes is host of “Fox News & Commentary,” heard on hundreds of radio stations. Sign up for his *American Dispatch* newsletter, be sure to join his Facebook page, and follow him on Twitter. His latest book is *God Less America*.

Watch the latest video at

Has the Supreme Court Already Made Up Its Mind on Gay Marriage?

Next week, the U.S. Supreme Court will hear cases that will likely determine whether same-sex marriage will become a legal nationwide.

The justices have rolled four cases together that will allow them to decide two questions: Must states recognize other states' gay marriages, and does the Constitution require states to allow same-sex marriage?

Some believe the justices have already decided to create that right before hearing the case. But others say the matter is far from decided.

On Wednesday, a panel discussion at the Family Research Council was swimming upstream against conventional thought on the issue.

That is, it's a foregone conclusion that the Supreme Court justices will rule homosexuals have as much of a right to same-sex marriage as heterosexuals do to traditional marriage.

But these panelists pointed out there's evidence the justices won't rubber stamp gay marriage.

"When the lawyers walk into that courtroom on Tuesday morning, they're going to be walking into a situation where there are 3 1/2 justices who've said 'no constitutional right to same-sex marriage' and no justices who've said there is a constitutional right," former Supreme Court Clerk Gene Schaerr said.

One of the more interesting propositions brought up at Wednesday's panel discussion is that maybe the Christians of the world owe it to the homosexuals to point out that their lifestyle is intrinsically wrong.

"Faith actually teaches nothing about hatred toward gays and lesbians; in fact, the opposite. But it also says the behavior is damaging and harmful to your eternal salvation. That's the faith teaching," John-Henry Westen, editor-in-chief of *LifeSiteNews*, said.

"But they also know from the empirical evidence that the

behavior is damaging to your body as well," he added.

Westen argued that Christians need to say to gays, "We love you enough to tell you this is harmful. In fact, we'll even take the hater and bigot label so that we can tell you this because we care about you."

Should Christians Vote for Hillary Clinton?

As America enters a presidential campaign season with serious implications, we need to engage in an honest, charitable conversation on Hillary Clinton's history and pursuit of the presidency.

"Do not judge according to appearance but judge with righteous judgment" (John 7:24).

Hillary Rodham Clinton is 67 years old and the wife of former President Bill Clinton. Raised in a Methodist Church she professes to be a Christian. She claimed she was named for the famous conqueror of Mount Everest, Sir Edmund Hillary, but later admitted it was untrue. She also stated her four grandparents were immigrants; it's really only one. She graduated from Wellesley college, where she did her thesis on the radical socialist, Saul Alinsky, whose book "Rules for Radicals" (dedicated to Lucifer) promoted manipulating the masses to achieve goals. She served as Obama's Secretary of State.

In 2008, Hillary presented herself as a strong, assertive leader but her presidential campaign failed. She's done a makeover to a motherly, down-to-earth neighbor who is

approachable, warm and relatable. She struggles, especially with financial challenges. "When we left the White House we were not only dead broke but in debt." (A major portion of the debt came from her husband's legal fees defending himself in one of his sex scandals.) She later back-peddled, saying she "misspoke."

Hillary grew up in an affluent family and attended an exclusive private college (annually about \$60,000 today). While Bill was governor of Arkansas, Hillary lived in a mansion and was chauffeured in limousines (she hasn't driven a car in 20 years!). Upon leaving the White House, Hillary's book advance was \$8 million; as Secretary of State she drew \$800,000; their financial disclosure for 2001-12 was \$136.5 million (*Washington Post*); they have two lavish residences as well as income from investments, property, book royalties and speaking.

Arthur Schweizer, president of the Government Accountability Institute, explained in *Clinton Cash: The Untold Story of How and Why Foreign Governments and Businesses Helped Make Bill and Hillary Rich* (Harper Collins) how they've made millions. Bill's speeches brought in \$104.9 million (*Washington Post*). She also made millions, getting \$300,000 from UCLA and \$200,000 from University of Nevada to name two examples.

The Clintons have one child, Chelsea. She is married to a Wall Street investment banker and lives in a \$10 million Manhattan condo. She was hired by NBC at \$600,000 a year. Now she works for her parents' foundation that received \$2 billion from 2001-2014. She's also paid for speeches: \$75,000 for one on "Diarrhea in the 3rd World."

The Clinton Foundation is under scrutiny because of suspicious activity when Hillary was Secretary of State. Individuals and countries donated megabucks. Contracts, favors and access abounded. Emails were mysteriously deleted. *Newsweek* reports their largest individual donor allegedly had lucrative

dealings with Iran during sanctions and her time in office. *The Wall Street Journal* described this: “Blurred Lines.” Folks are asking, “Do we want to go around this Clinton controversy mountain again?!”

A Craftily Choreographed Campaign

To establish her “common folk” image in her first week of campaigning, the former First Lady sat in a coffee shop, tried a commercial plane and rode in a van. Interacting with “normal” people (actually Democratic operatives carefully brought in and screened first), Mrs. Clinton later stopped at a fast-food restaurant, but neglected to leave a tip for the lady serving her burrito!

Two liberal analysts commented: “I don’t think I’ve seen a more contrived-appearing campaign ever!” (Rick Unger on MSNBC); “She has gone too far in the opposite direction, presenting herself as a sweet docile granny... Sitting talking to average folks she looks like someone prepped to ‘trap a husband’ – listen a lot, nod a lot, widen your eyes and act fascinated with everything that’s said.” (Maureen Dowd, *New York Times*).

“Champion for Average Americans”

Mrs. Clinton selected Robbie Mook to be her campaign manager, sending a message she wants to reach youth and gays. He is 35 years old and the first openly gay manager of a major presidential campaign. In her inaugural video announcement, she featured homosexuals celebrating their gay “marriage.” After a parade of “average” Americans, Hillary declared she wants to be our “champion.”

Mrs. Clinton wants to convince us we’re not being treated fairly and she’s going to help us. Income inequality has got to go! Time for “redistribution of wealth.” The enemies are the upper 1 percent—the rich ... the Republicans ... Wall Street “fat cats” ... those billionaire CEOs. She’ll fix things and

provide entitlements. She doesn't mention rich Democrats in the past like the Kennedys and FDR; wealthy politicians like Nancy Pelosi, John Kerry and Harry Reid; liberal CEOs like Tim Cook of Apple and Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook; and she and Bill, who have made tons of money from—guess who—the 1 percent she now attacks!

The New York Times recently told how Mrs. Clinton met with economists and pointed to a graph saying the economy needs a “toppling” of the wealthiest 1 percent (income of \$8 million plus). Will her “war on the wealthy” mean attacking herself?

The newspaper also ran a scathing indictment of the Clinton's and their foundation on April 23, 2015 branding them as virtually the worst influence-peddlers in history while helping Russia in its efforts to corner the uranium market! (The Clintons are also reworking sensitive tax documents in light of what's coming out.) This is shocking coming from the New York Times, the bastion of ultra-liberal journalism

Closing Considerations

A responsible Christian should pray, examine character, check the voting record and positions of the candidate plus study the history of the candidate. Consider some of Hillary's.

* Women: After an avalanche of criticism for their foundation receiving millions from Middle Eastern countries that repress women (Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates gave as much as \$40 million to the Clinton Foundation since 2001), the Clintons abruptly changed their policy on receiving monies from them.

* Sanctity of human life: Hillary upholds unfettered abortion as women's “reproductive rights,” up until the moment of birth. (Recent surveys show 80 percent of Americans are against third-trimester abortions, and God abhors the taking of innocent life.)

* Gay marriage: Mrs. Clinton's original position: "Marriage has got history, religious and moral content that goes back to the beginning of time. I think a marriage is as a marriage has always been between a man and a woman." She now supports "marriage equality" and "hopes the Supreme Court will come down on the side of same-sex couples being guaranteed that constitutional right."

* Education of children: In 1996 Hillary's book *It Takes a Village* outlined her vision for raising children. On her first campaign trip she said, "Education is the most important non-family enterprise in the raising of the next generation." Christians believe education is the parents' responsibility, supplemented by the church, not government.

* Transparency and Accessibility to the Press: In the first stage of this presidential campaign season, the three Republican candidates engaged in 20 press interviews while Mrs. Clinton engaged in 0. She cited one word to deflect any attempts to get responses to questions about scandals and controversies in her life: "Distractions." Aides know she bristles at annoying questions so they want to control and shield her.

* Colleagues and Advisers: Besides her husband and daughter, Hilary has her closest advisor and "second daughter" as Human Abedin, wife of disgraced politician, Anthony Weiner. Her father has pro-Sharia ties to Islamist organizations including the Muslim Brotherhood.

Continuing the Clinton Legacy?

I certainly won't forget the Clinton years in the White House, not just because I lived in D.C., but because of the constant scandals, controversies and embarrassment Americans experienced.

In America's history, only two U.S. Presidents were impeached by our House of Representatives, Andrew Johnson and Bill

Clinton. Many younger Americans are ignorant of this fact.

As Christians we're called to forgive and be redemptive in our attitude towards others. This applies to former President Clinton as well as Hillary, whom I commend for honoring her marriage vows.

We'll soon be faced with considering Hillary Clinton for president. The latest poll cites 54 percent of U.S. voters say she is not honest or trustworthy (Quinnipiac University national poll). We must ask: "Is Hillary trustworthy? Is she authentic? Is she competent? Does she have the wisdom, experience and character for the most important position on planet earth?"

May we be a generation that looks heavenward, asking God to have mercy on us and enable us to retrace our steps back to the covenant of our forefathers. They envisioned America as a "city on a hill," honoring God and advancing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Larry Tomczak is a best-selling author and cultural commentator with more than 43 years of trusted ministry experience. His passion is to bring perspective, analysis and insight from a biblical worldview (see "Is Gay OK? 10 Things Everyone Needs to Know" now on YouTube). He loves awakening people to today's cultural realities and responses needed for a restored, influential church. Please visit .

The 2 Most Important Things

to Teach Your Child

The earlier children discover they were created on purpose for purpose, the better. Ephesians 2:10 teaches us that we were all created in advance to do good work. Isaiah 43:7 teaches that we were created for God's glory.

- When children discover these truths, they're more willing to invest in themselves and others.
- When children act upon these truths, they discover more about God.

This is a powerful combination.

Due largely to technology and how often we let children use it, it's easy for children to become self-centered and selfish. Technology can convince them the world revolves around them and they don't need anybody. Nothing could be further from the truth.

- Let's parent so children's eyes are not on themselves
- Let's parent so children understand the value of living in community.

These might be among the most important things parents do.

When children volunteer with other children and with their families they can discover the world needs them. Serving helps them believe they can positively influence the world *now*. They will find their gifts and choose to use them. They will find true joy.

Children are never too young to serve and make a difference. After all, scholars believe Mary, the mother of our Lord and Savior, was only 13 or 14 when giving birth to Jesus. Often children are ready and willing.

If we don't take advantage of that window of curiosity and humility, it might be too late. They may begin believing

there's nothing they can do that matters. **Might this be why we all know adults watching the world pass them by who are doing nothing to influence anybody?** It's sad. Let's not let this happen to the children we know.

What can you do today? Tomorrow? What will you do?

Dr. Kathy Koch *is the author of* Screens & Teens: Connecting with Our Kids in A Wireless World *(Moody).*

NHCLC's Samuel Rodriguez Named One of 100 Top Christian US Leaders

Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC)/CONELA, America's largest Hispanic Christian Evangelical organization, was named by Newsmax as one of America's top 100 Christian leaders.

"I am honored and humbled to be a part of such a distinguished group of men and women dedicated to the expansion of God's kingdom," said Rodriguez. "It is a blessing to be a part of work that God is doing in the Spanish-speaking Diaspora and throughout the entire church."

As president of NHCLC/CONELA, the nation's largest Hispanic Christian organization representing millions of Evangelicals globally and more than 40,000 U.S. churches, Rodriguez works with leaders worldwide to reconcile evangelist Billy Graham's message of salvation with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s march of prophetic activism through the "7 Directives" of life, family, compassionate evangelism, stewardship, justice,

education and youth.

As a leading spokesperson for Hispanic Evangelicals, Rodriguez has been a featured speaker at the White House and frequently meets and consults members of both parties in Congress and in White House meetings on social justice, Latino and values issues, immigration and education. Rodriguez also served on President Obama's White House Task Force on Fatherhood and is the recipient of the Martin Luther King Jr. Leadership Award presented by the Congress of Racial Equality.

He has been heralded as the "leader of the Hispanic evangelical movement" by CNN and Fox News and "America's most influential Latino evangelical leader" by NBC/Telemundo. Rodriguez was also included in the *TIME* magazine "The 2013 *TIME* 100 Poll," and the April 15, 2013 *TIME* cover story, "The Latino Reformation."

Rodriguez will lead the NHCLC/CONELA Annual Convention in Houston April 28-30, 2015, bringing together more than 1,000 Hispanic leaders to discuss issues of faith, education, immigration, racial reconciliation, religious liberties, Israel, and family and marriage. Featured speakers will include Gov. Jeb Bush, Gov. Mike Huckabee, U.S. Congressman Luis Gutiérrez, Deputy Head of Mission for The Embassy of Israel to the United States Reuven Azar, Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services León Rodríguez, and The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission President Dr. Russell Moore, among others.

During the convention, NHCLC/CONELA will celebrate its merger, which became official last year, and reveal its new international name. It will also introduce new organizational leadership and launch an innovative Hispanic-focused television network in partnership with Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) as well as a new Israel coalition.

NHCLC/CONELA is the world's largest Hispanic Christian

organization. It serves as a representative voice for the more than 100 million Hispanic Evangelicals assembled in over 40,000 U.S. churches and another 500,000 congregations spread throughout the Spanish-speaking Diaspora. For additional information, visit .

Pastor Saeed Abedini's Wife Pens Open Letter to President Obama

American Pastor Saeed Abedini's wife, Naghmeh, wrote the following open letter to President Obama urging his administration to do more to free her husband and the other wrongfully imprisoned Americans held in Iran.

President Obama, ☐☐

When you met with my children, Rebekka and Jacob, and I in January, you promised that you would do everything you can to get my husband—their father—out of prison. You told our family that securing my husband's release is a "high priority." I know that this is a very difficult thing to do, but I ask that you, Secretary of State John Kerry, and your administration to do everything they can to have our fellow U.S. citizens freed before any deal is finalized with Iran.

☐☐

In your address on April 2 you stated, "These are matters of war and peace, and they should be evaluated based on facts and what is ultimately best for the American people." The fact is that my husband, who is being held simply because of his Christian faith, and the three other wrongfully held U.S.

citizens are Americans and they need to be released. ☐☐

Mr. President, as the US continues its negotiations with Iran, will you please demand the immediate release of Jason Rezaian, Amir Hekmati, Robert Levinson, and my husband, Pastor Saeed Abedini—this direct ask needs to be priority front and center not pushed to the sidelines. These Americans deserve to be freed and returned to their families immediately.

Please continue to pray and sign the petition for their release as we fight across the globe for Pastor Saeed's freedom.

Holy Spirit Tells Kundalini Yoga Instructor 'I Have Something Else for You to Do'

After a near-death experience in his freshman year at Florida State, he embarked on a quest for the "true light" and ultimately became a yoga instructor at four universities—until a hitchhiking encounter left him changed.

"I had been a rock musician in my latter high school years, but the alcohol, the drugs, the absence of moral boundaries took its toll," says Mike Shreve, the founder of Deeper Revelation Books and Shreve Ministries.

Mike nearly died after ingesting a bad batch of LSD shortly after he entered college.

"I was not a heavy drug user, but I had a bad trip," he

explains. "I lost control of my body, was convulsing, couldn't get up. I felt like my soul left my body and went into a dark void."

The experience frightened him enough to quit drugs and he began to explore nearly every new philosophy or belief system that crossed his path. While raised a Roman Catholic, he thought the insistence on one way to God seemed narrow-minded.

He studied Ayn Rand, Herman Hess, Meher Baba and other books by gurus and out-of-the box thinkers. He joined an Edgar Cayce meditation group in Orlando, which used "The Lord's Prayer" as a basis for meditation, but reinterpreted the prayer to promote metaphysical concepts.

Yogi Bhajan, a guru from India, who arrived in America to help the flower children find their way spiritually, became a big influence. "He taught us about yoga. The emphasis was not on obtaining a relationship with God, but rather, on attaining a *realization* of our inherent oneness with God (actually, an understanding that *we are God*), Mike notes.

In every free moment—between his college classes—Mike pursued the goal of reaching enlightenment.

But then he unexpectedly dropped out of Florida State, because he thought his conventional studies could lead him toward a mundane existence—where he might become "a stale crumb to be eaten by the tiger of time," to quote one of his favorite Hindu poets.

After he left school, he helped start an ashram in Daytona Beach, a commune where yoga votaries live and practice their spiritual disciplines together. As he studied the Bhagavad-Gita and the Vedas—ancient Hindu Scriptures—he felt he was beginning to blend into oneness with the "oversoul," as experience out-of-body excursions into the astral realm and vivid spiritual dreams.

Because he felt a zeal to help the dawning of the "Age of Aquarius," he moved to Tampa, Florida, where four universities in the area opened their doors to him to teach Kundalini Yoga.

As a following developed around him and his classes, the *Tampa Tribune* newspaper published a story about Mike. He was thrilled by the free publicity as his classes continued to grow.

But little did he know the news story also alerted a Christian group in Tampa to clip the article, pin it to their prayer board, and assign people to fast and pray for him every hour of every day until his conversion!

Several weeks after the article appeared he received a letter from a college friend named Larry, who had also been devoted to yoga and meditation. But Larry happened to walk into a church one day and heard an audible voice say, "Jesus is the only way." At that moment, the Holy Spirit opened his heart to believe and Larry was born again.

When Mike read Larry's letter, he thought the term 'born again' must be synonymous with *Nirvana*, *Samadhi* or *Christ consciousness*, but Larry insisted it was different.

"Mike, you'll never find ultimate peace through yoga and meditation," Larry wrote. "You have to go through the cross. You have to be spiritually reborn. Jesus really is the way to eternal life."

Mike wrote back a respectful letter, explaining he was happy his friend found a path that was right for him, but noted that he thought Christianity seemed illogical and the claims of Jesus too exclusive.

Unexpectedly however, a few weeks later, Mike's heart began to soften. He thought he shouldn't dismiss Jesus out-of-hand, but give him a chance. So one morning, instead of following his usual yoga routine, he decided to dedicate one day to Jesus.

“Lord Jesus,” he prayed. “I commit this day to you. I believe if you are real and if you’re the Savior of the world, you will show me today.”

Mike opened up a Bible and began to read through the Gospel of John and the book of Revelation until the afternoon, when he left for the University of South Florida.

That same afternoon, Kent Sullivan, a member of the student prayer group that had been praying for Mike (and a former follower of an Indian guru named Yogananda), was on the way to wash his dirty clothes. He got halfway through the door of a laundromat when God impressed this on his heart:

Don't go in there. I have something else for you to do. Get back in your van and drive where I lead you.

Kent made several distinct turns as directed by the Holy Spirit until he was on a road behind Busch gardens. He had no idea the yoga teacher he had been praying for in the last few weeks was hitchhiking, trying to get a ride to the University.

Suddenly Kent spied a young man with long curly brown hair, a long beard and Indian-style clothing hitchhiking on the side of the road. Kent felt compelled to pull over and pick him up, but had no idea who it was.

As Mike stepped into the van he immediately noticed a picture of Jesus taped to the ceiling and his heart began to race.

“Can I ask you a question,” Kent asked.

“Yes.”

Kent was very direct. “Have you ever experienced Jesus coming into your heart?”

“No,” Mike replied, “but when can I? I’ve been praying about the experience all day long.”

Kent's eyes widened with surprise. He didn't expect such a quick response. "You can come to your prayer meeting tonight."

"I don't want to wait for a prayer meeting," Mike said. "I want to experience Jesus right now."

Excitedly, Kent pulled his van off the road into the first parking lot he could find. Within a few minutes he realized Mike was the one he had been praying about during the last four weeks.

As Kent went through the Scripture and explained the good news of the gospel, Mike peppered him with a myriad of questions, but Kent kept replying: "Don't concern yourself with those things. Just try Jesus."

Finally, Mike's heart was ready to receive the gift of salvation. With the motor idling, the two young men bowed their heads together in the back of the van and Mike prayed:

"Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I repent of all my sins. Forgive me. Wash me in Your blood. By faith, I receive Your gift of eternal life. I acknowledge that You died for the sins of the world and that You arose from the dead. I accept You now as Lord of my life."

Mike felt a warm sensation wash through his heart that brought cleansing beyond any laundry soap. "The peace of God settled like fresh dew on my soul. I was changed and I knew it," he recalls.

"God generated a brand new spirit in me and I had truly become a new person—a 'new creation.'"

Mike and Elizabeth Shreve pastor *The Sanctuary in Cleveland, Tennessee*. Mike has made numerous appearances on Christian programs such as TBN, The 700 Club, and TCT Network. He has worked in evangelism globally since 1971, is the Founder/Director of *Deeper Revelation Books* publishing company

and is the author of 13 books.

Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, Other Terror Groups Hunting Christians

*Editors Note: This is a next in a series of speech texts from last Friday's conference at the United Nations titled, "Not Peace but a Sword: The Persecution of Christians in the Middle East as a Threat to International Peace and Security." Here's **Jamie Peters**, who with his wife, spent 25 years building churches and as missionaries on the front line in several African Nations.*

Jamie Peters

First of all, I want to thank our hostess, Ugoji Eze, who is the originator of this event and has painstakingly worked to make this meeting a reality. I also wish to thank His Excellency, Ambassador Caleb Otto, for his role in making this historic event come to pass. I do not count this opportunity lightly; words to express my thanks adequately escape me as the gravity of this meeting is great.

Today, I humbly speak before you all as a voice for fellow Christians who are, at this moment, being persecuted for their faith. In times past, such persecution was more or less isolated to more remote and closed parts of the world, but it has now escalated to the point of alarm. Not only are we witness to persecution of Christians in the Middle East, but we are also witness to an increase of persecution against Christians on the great continent of Africa as well. It is

interesting to note at this particular juncture that six out of the 11 main jihadi groups in the world are based in Africa. From Boko Haram in Nigeria slaughtering the innocent to al-Shabab infiltrating Kenya and singling out Christians with acts of terror—as we saw in the recent attacks at Garrissa University in Kenya, students who were unable to recite portions of the Quran were executed. In this single act alone 148 lost their lives once again to al-Shabab. This is the same group that murdered 67 men, women and children at the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya in September, 2013. It is already too late for those who have lost their lives in this senseless violence; how many more will die as we wait for the International Community to speak, to act? If no measures are taken to stop the violence, these groups, and others like them, will continue to sweep across the region and ultimately the continent of Africa and beyond slaughtering and persecuting those whose faith is different from their own.

Today, my heart is heavy for Kenya, indeed for the entire continent of Africa. For far too long, Africa has been plagued by civil war, famine, poverty, tribal unrest, lack of infrastructure, lack of schools, lack of proper medical facilities and the basic necessities for human life. Oftentimes these people are forced to live in conditions where they struggle to simply have water for their families on a daily basis, not to mention the conveniences of electricity that we here in the Western world take for granted. Their struggle has gone unnoticed, forgotten and even ignored. One country, the Democratic Republic of Congo, stands out in my mind as one of the greatest forgotten tragedies of our present day world. Since the early 1990s, the DRC has been plagued by civil unrest, uprisings, and the consequences of such longstanding violence. According to an article, “Chronicle of Death Ignored” published by *The Economist* in April 2011, 5 million people had died due to the unrest in the DRC—and this number is now 4 years old. The count, undoubtedly, has climbed much, much higher.

I can speak of these conditions today from personal experience, because as missionaries, my family and I lived and worked in Africa for 25 years; from 1987 to 2012 we served as missionaries in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi.

During this span of 25 years of missionary service, we saw many injustices committed, both by outside nations as well as from inside the nations where we served. Unfortunately, in most cases, we didn't have a platform to stand on and speak out against these injustices because of the nature of our work. So when this opportunity was presented to me to speak before the International Community of the United Nations and speak out against the injustices and crimes against humanity being committed against Christians around the world, and in particular the continent of Africa, I knew I had to accept.

One particular injustice we saw firsthand while serving in Bujumbura, Burundi, from 1991 to 2000, was the genocide that took place in neighboring Rwanda during that time, where an estimated 1 million people were murdered just for being the wrong tribe—intolerance of massive proportions. In fact, in Burundi we experienced genocide of several hundred thousand as well, around the same time, all for the same reason.

To make the situation in the region more complex, civil war broke out in the Democratic Republic of Congo around the same time as the events that were taking place in Rwanda and Burundi. This created a security vacuum in the Congo because Congo allowed thousands to flee from Rwanda and Burundi into their nation. Among the innocent refugees were many of the ones who committed the atrocities that took place in Rwanda and Burundi. The perpetrators of the genocide are still hiding in the forests of the DRC, many having escaped justice. This has created a volatile situation that continues to exist in the Great Lakes Region of Africa. The ones who suffer the most? Women, children and the elderly—who will speak for them? Who will act for them?

The violence in Rwanda and Burundi was based on ethnic divisions. Two different tribes in Rwanda and Burundi warred against one another simply due to their intolerance of one another. This hatred and intolerance brought them to take up AK-47's and machetes and use them on one another in an attempt of each tribe trying to annihilate the other tribe. However, much blame is also to be put on the International Community for their injustice committed at that time—an injustice of silence and non-intervention—especially when it had the responsibility and the means to do something about it, but unfortunately, for the most part, it turned a blind eye and did nothing about it—this led to the senseless deaths of nearly 1.5 million people (the total number of deaths in Rwanda and Burundi combined).

One of our dear friends and colleagues in Africa, who has personally experienced these types of atrocities we are addressing in this meeting, sent me the following message upon learning that I would be speaking before you today: “When I heard of your going to the U.N. to speak on the behalf of those who cannot speak, I became suddenly emotional as my thoughts took me back in 1972 when my father was murdered during an ethnic war. The International Community did nothing at that time to stop the senseless murders of thousands of innocent civilians. I have grown up without a father figure. I don't know what it feels like to have an earthly father. Sometimes I wish I had one ... I have never called anyone “Dad” my entire life! Do I miss it? I don't know because I've never been able to experience having a father.

Someone needs to stand up; someone needs to stop the pointless murdering of innocent lives. In so doing, they could possibly save a generation of people from growing up empty, fatherless and motherless. We all have the right to live. Right now dozens of foreigners are being burnt alive in South Africa and no one has dared to say anything. Not assisting someone in danger when you are in a position to do so is as good as

committing the crime itself. Please go ahead and speak for us.”

So here we are again where it seems as if history is repeating itself on the continent of Africa, and around the world, as extremists take up the sword and gun. This history is one of intolerance and hatred. Only this time it's an intolerance and hatred based on religion, but an intolerance and hatred nonetheless. The question that begs to be answered today is this: Will the International Community repeat history by ignoring its responsibility and not using its means to stop the atrocities that are taking place against Christians in Africa, and now in other parts of the world as well, in the name of radical Islamic extremism? The International Community must do something now before it's too late. Otherwise, the intolerance and hatred of radical Islamic extremists will continue to spread and become a security threat to many regions around the world—as we have already witnessed in certain parts of the world, namely in the Middle East.

In the 1990s Rwanda and Burundi experienced a genocide based on ethnicity. Now in 2015 radical Islamic extremists are trying to carry out another kind of genocide—a genocide based on religion whose goal is to kill as many Christians as they can. And so my appeal today is to the International Community who has the responsibility and the means to not let another genocide take place—please do not let history repeat itself!

It is apparent that radical Islamic extremists are waging a war against Christianity. This must be stopped, not only for the safety and security of millions of Christians around the world, but for society as a whole. Otherwise, the future of every peace-loving member of the world community will be jeopardized. According to one African proverb: “War is a bad chisel with which to carve out tomorrow.”

In conclusion, I would like to speak a blessing in Swahili over our fellow Christians in Africa and around the world who

are persecuted for their faith in Christ:

Wakristo wenzetu wa Afrika na wa duniani kote mnaoteseka kwa ajili ya imani yenu katika Kristo, tunasimama pamoja nanyi. Mwenyezi Mungu awalinde na awawezeshe kuendelea kumfuata.

Translation: Our fellow Christians in Africa and around the world who are persecuted for your faith in Christ, we stand together with you. May Almighty God protect you and strengthen you to continue to follow Him.

Muslim-Turned-Christian Warns of Radical Islam in Idaho

Concerns over radical Islam are emerging in Idaho.

This week, a former Muslim turned Christian pastor warned a crowd at a Republican event about the threat of Muslims moving to the state.

Speaking to the Bonner County Republican Women on Tuesday, Shahram Hadian said Muslims who support Sharia law and aim to kill anyone who doesn't agree with their interpretation of Islam are trying to move to the United States, and to Idaho.

"I have witnessed ... what Islam has done to freedom of religion, freedom of conscience, freedom of the press, rights of women, rights of minorities, the rights of homosexuals," *The Bonner County Daily Bee* quoted Hadian. "The rights of any group that disagrees with the Islamic government."

"We are in an ideological war," he warned. "Don't listen to officials who say we are not in an ideological war."

A state House panel recently rejected a child support enforcement bill after Idahoans testified the state could potentially be bound to enforce Islamic law under the act.