

After 10-Day Delay, President Trump's Commerce Secretary Nominee Finally Gets a Vote

The king of the turnaround, billionaire Wilbur Ross, is now going by a new title: secretary of commerce.

In a 72-27 vote, his nomination to join President Donald Trump's Cabinet—and perhaps more importantly, his economic policy team—was confirmed by the Senate, but not without more drama from Democrats. His cloture vote was held on Feb. 17, meaning the vote on his confirmation was delayed by 10 days—mainly because of the President's Day break—as a small group of Democrats whined about interactions Ross may have had with Russian investors years before he was ever nominated to work in the White House.

The vote on Ross' final confirmation suggests, however, that a number of moderates are beginning to feel the heat from constituents about Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) and the Democratic leadership's plan to “stall out” Cabinet confirmations. The Senate also voted to approve cloture for the nomination of Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-Mont.) to be secretary of the interior on a 67-31 vote.

The delay in getting a Cabinet confirmed has now reached historic proportions. More than one month into his administration, only 10 of 15 members of the Cabinet that require Senate confirmation have been approved.

Here's the breakdown:

- Confirmed: Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, Secretary of the Treasury Steve Mnuchin, Secretary of Defense James Mattis, Attorney General Jeff Sessions, Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross, Secretary of Health & Human

Services Dr. Tom Price, Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. David Shulkin and Secretary of Homeland Security John Kelly.

- Awaiting Confirmation Votes: Secretary of the Interior-designate Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-Mont.), Secretary of Housing & Urban Development-designate Dr. Ben Carson and Secretary of Energy-designate former Texas Gov. Rick Perry.
- Still in Committees: Secretary of Agriculture-designate former Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue and Secretary of Labor-designate Alexander Acosta.

Two other Cabinet-level nominations—those of U.S. Trade Representative-designate Amb. Robert Lighthizer and Director of National Intelligence-designate former Sen. Dan Coats (R-Ind.)—are still stuck in their respective committees. {eoa}

Scripture's Little-Known Secrets to a Long, Healthy Life

Recently, my dear mother-in-law (more correctly, my “mother-in-love”) graduated to Paradise. Nonive Aldridge was 87 years old. A true Proverbs 31 lady, she was consistent in her commitment to God from the day she found the LORD around the age of 6. What a legacy she left behind—of prayer, fasting, selflessness, love for people, Christlike character, devotion to God and passion for His Word. The Most High rewarded her with over eight decades of fruit for the Father’s glory.

Legend has it that Ponce de Leon discovered Florida while on a

quest to find a secret source of longevity called the Fountain of Youth. Eight years later, instead of achieving his goal, he died at the hands of the Calusa Indians. Ironically, a search for extended life led to an early death. On the contrary, Nonive never consciously sought after longevity, but longevity sought after her. Because she fulfilled the following six conditions of a God-pleasing life, He fulfilled the promises attached to those conditions:

1. Loving God

In Psalm 91:14a, 16a the Creator promises any sincerely devoted person, "Because he has set his love upon Me ... With long life I will satisfy him."

2. Obedience

Those who genuinely love God will automatically strive to keep His commandments (there are 1050 in the New Testament). Deuteronomy 4:40b prophesies to such obedient persons that it will "go well with you and with your children after you, and so that you may prolong your days in the land, which the Lord your God gives you, forever."

3. Seeking Wisdom

Wisdom is mastery of the art of living in alignment with God's expectations. In the book of Proverbs, wisdom is symbolized as a woman who pledges, "For by me your days will be multiplied, and the years of your life will be increased" (Prov. 9:11, see also 3:16).

4. Fearing God

To fear the Lord is to hold Him in the highest esteem, and to worship Him with deep, reverential awe. Proverbs 10:27 forecasts that "the years of the wicked will be shortened" but "The fear of the Lord prolongs days."

5. Honoring Parents

When God gave the Ten Commandments, the first one with an attached promise was, "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you." (Ex. 20:12)

6. Sharing and Displaying God's Word

Deuteronomy 11:19-21 urges God's people to both share the Word of God with their children and display it their homes "that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied ... as long as the days of heaven on the earth."

If these six keys opened the door of a long and fulfilling life to my mother-in-love, surely they will do the same for you. Of course, the most excellent blessing is not just longevity in this natural world, but immortality in the next. This gift of all gifts is received when we sincerely set our faith on the Lord Jesus, for "He who believes in the Son has eternal life" (John 3:36a). To enjoy a lengthy earthly sojourn is wonderful indeed; but to live forever in the presence of God will be glorious beyond description. {eoa}

Mike Shreve has been involved in power-gift evangelism since 1971 and has written 14 books, including the best-selling Charisma House book, 65 Promises from God for Your Child. His most recent is WHO AM I? Dynamic Declarations of Who You Are in Christ. He and his wife, Elizabeth, and daughter, Destiny, live in Cleveland, Tennessee, where they pastor The Sanctuary. Visit .

What This Woman Was Shown

About the Future of the United States Will Shake You to Your Core

Judgment is coming to America very soon. Recently, Julie Whedbee was shown what life will be like for believers in the United States during The Tribulation.

She has been having dreams and visions for over 20 years, and she is someone whom I have come to hold in high regard. What was revealed to her about the future of the United States is quite chilling, to say the least. She was shown a time when Christians have to live in hiding in a post-apocalyptic America where millions of people have already been killed. The following is a short excerpt from what she wrote about this experience:

We were living underground in hiding, in a large but dark abandoned building of some sort. There was no electricity and had not been for some time. I saw oil lamps and candles everywhere, and it was the only light we had. We were all dressed in oversized clothing and head wraps, doing our best to stay as inconspicuous as possible.

There were times we had to go out for items such as salt and oil and would barter with things we had found and collected for this reason. Food was scarce, to say the least. Water was also something we were having to look for constantly, and most important for survival.

As we traveled, we would do so only in the early pre-dawn hours, or at sunset, to do our best to avoid being targeted and taken away to be killed. I was told by Father this was the United States, after many of the judgments had happened, and He made me to understand that millions had died.

During this period of time, there will be no United States government as we know it today, and Christians will be hunted down and killed like animals. In fact, she says that there will be “open crucifixions in the streets”:

The streets were very empty, there were only a few small businesses opened, and everything was run by the NWO. Martial law kept everyone in check, and as we traveled, we were watched and controlled by gunpoint. There were certain paths that had to be taken and if we were found traveling any other way, we were shot instantly. We never spoke while outside of our building.

There were open crucifixions in the streets, a gruesome and horrible sight, of anyone who publicly confessed Christianity. The bodies, once dead, were then left where they hung. Christianity was long gone in this country. Our group did the best we could to go at night and take the bodies of these precious souls back to where we were hiding, although we had no way to properly bury them. I saw rows of them on a far wall of our hiding place, wrapped in sheets and blankets, as this was all we had. I remember discussing with the others what we were going to do with these martyrs.

If you would like to read the entire prophecy, you can find the original right here.

Of course, Julie Whedbee is certainly not the only one who has been shown the future of America. Hundreds of others have also been warned that judgment is rapidly approaching. For example, the following is what Glynda Lomax was recently shown:

Much strife and confusion is coming to the earth. There will be eruptions of violence, murder, strife and infighting in various places.

Much tension shall abound, and brother shall strike out at brother. The line is being drawn tight.

(Note: In the spirit here, I saw a line, like a tightrope wire, being tightened and tightened, until it looked like it would just snap from the tension.)

When I speak to the angels, what is holding back the war will be released, and battles will break out in many places. War will break out. Fighting and killing will seem to be everywhere at once. This is the beginning of the end. Prepare your houses. Prepare your hearts, for the end is upon you. The end of all things quickly approaches.

My children in the earth, My true children, will shine like a beacon in this dark time. Miracles will abound, My Word will go forth with great boldness and authority as it did in the time My Son, Jesus, walked the earth, and many souls will be added unto My Kingdom. The end is very near now as these souls enter just before the door is shut.

Prepare your houses. Prepare your hearts, for the end is upon you."

Sadly, the vast majority of the population refuses to listen to the warnings.

As a nation, we need to repent and turn from our wicked ways, but that is simply not happening. Instead, just about every type of evil that you can possibly imagine is exploding in our society.

For example, earlier today I ran across a CNN article that talked about the epidemic of sexual assault that is taking place in America's nursing homes:

The unthinkable is happening at facilities throughout the country: Vulnerable seniors are being raped and sexually abused by the very people paid to care for them.

It's impossible to know just how many victims are out there. But through an exclusive analysis of state and federal data

and interviews with experts, regulators and the families of victims, CNN has found that this little-discussed issue is more widespread than anyone would imagine.

Even more disturbing: In many cases, nursing homes and the government officials who oversee them are doing little—or nothing—to stop it.

If you read that entire CNN article, you may want to vomit by the time you get to the end of it.

And even our “Christian” leaders are involved in some of the most horrific things imaginable. If you can believe it, WND is reporting that George W. Bush’s daughter Barbara will be the keynote speaker at a Planned Parenthood fundraiser:

Franklin Graham, the president and CEO of the humanitarian aid mission Samaritan’s Purse and one of the world’s best-known Christian leaders, slammed an upcoming Planned Parenthood fundraiser that will be keynoted by former president George W. Bush’s daughter, Barbara, as akin to raising money for the Nazis during World War II.

In a Facebook post, Graham wrote: “Planned Parenthood is the #1 abortion provider in the United States. Raising funds for this organization is like raising money to fund a Nazi death camp—like Auschwitz, except for innocent babies in their mother’s wombs! Reports say they perform over 300,000 abortions per year. And this is the organization whose employees were caught on video trying to sell baby body parts over wine. Disgusting.”

I could go on and on all day, but one more thing that I want to mention is our national addiction to pornography.

As I have discussed previously, one major survey discovered that 64 percent of all **Christian** men in the United States look at “adult material” at least once a month, and another major

survey discovered that 68 percent of all **Christian** men in the United States look at “adult material” on a “regular basis.”

Those numbers alone would explain why the institutional church in America is deader than a doornail right now.

And I was absolutely astounded when I learned that in just one year, more than 87 billion videos were watched on one adult website alone.

It does not take a genius to figure out why judgment is coming to America, and it is going to start with the church. Judgment begins with the house of God, and I want to share with you a portion of what Marty Breeden recently had to share on Facebook:

I've had this STRONG sense over the last few days, that the Lord is about to send, to and through His servants a message of Repentance first to the church and then to the lost world.

NOT ALL churches and Pastors will reject that message, but MOST will and those who deliver that message will NOT be welcomed to the vast majority of American pulpits.

These servants will burn with the Fire of the Living God in their hearts and they will not succumb to church politics or pressures from politically correct pastors.

Many of these fire-branded MEN AND WOMEN will circumvent the “church as normal” to deliver this message and they WILL NOT be stopped! They will not be popular or wealthy but they will be powerful, not of their own strength either, but it will be the undeniable power of God.

The Gospel will go forth with great power and influence and be confirmed as it was in the Book of Acts, with signs, wonders and mighty miracles. The people of the church will then have to determine if they are going to still be part of a dry, dead social club atmosphere, or are they going to seek

the face of God and impact and change their world and the generation they were destined to influence.

We often speak of the "Coming Judgment" and it is coming indeed, but we often leave out the part that "Judgment MUST begin at the "House of God" (1 Pet. 4:17)

Sadly, the institutional church doesn't want to hear voices such as this, and instead, they are exalting people that speak endlessly of prosperity.

But the Word of God has a warning about those that only speak of prosperity. The following is what Jeremiah 28:7-9 says in the Modern English Version:

"Nevertheless hear now this word that I speak in your ears and in the ears of all the people. The prophets of old who have been before me and before you prophesied both against many countries and against great kingdoms, of war and disaster and pestilence. As for the prophet who prophesies of peace, when the word of the prophet comes to pass, then that prophet shall be known as one whom the Lord has truly sent.

A great shaking is coming, and this is going to include a great shaking of the institutional church.

But we should be thankful for the shaking that is coming, because multitudes will be shaken into the Kingdom of God, and an immense wave of glory will be unleashed all over the world.
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Worship Leader, Songwriter and Cancer Survivor Darlene Zschech Declares, 'Here I Am, Send Me!'

For Darlene Zschech—speaker, author, pastor and worship leader who has written over 100 anthems sung by 30 million worshippers around the world—the concept of hope is not a concept at all. Hope has hands that serve the poor. Hope trusts even when the diagnosis seems grim. Hope says “yes,” before the question is asked. As long as there is hope, there is life. And for this mentor of a whole new generation of worship leaders, as long as there is life, there is worship.

“Worship pushes back the noise of life,” explains Darlene, who pastors Hope Unlimited Church in New South Wales, Australia, along with her husband, Mark. “In that place, we hear Him speak, we’re made more like Him, we’re satisfied in His presence, given the fruits of the Spirit. Over the years, I’ve had this sense that maybe this is really about the Great Commission. Once He has our hearts, then He has our lives. ... Worship has more to do with what comes from our lives, not just our mouths.”

And much has come from this worship-filled life. Bringing hope and the love of Christ to the world has long been the calling for Darlene and Mark through their work within the Church and through relief agencies such as Hope:Global, an organization they founded to serve the poorest of the poor. The Zschechs believe that if our worship is to fulfill God’s purpose, we must be willing to say, “Here I am, send me.”

It is the answer and response that drives the entire Hope Unlimited congregation. And it is the overarching message for

Darlene's latest recording, *Here I Am Send Me*, a live album and her first project following a life changing cancer diagnosis in 2014.

"The first mention of worship in the Bible is in Genesis 22," Darlene says of the impetus behind the title track. "God calls Abraham, and Abraham says, 'Yes Lord,' which is translated in Hebrew as *hineni*, meaning 'Whatever it is you're asking, my answer is yes.' Even before the ask, before anything, my answer is yes."

It's a scary proposition, this unreserved yes. But having received the power of the Holy Spirit, His healing and grace, there is no other response for this mother, grandmother and spiritual mother to countless others.

Here I Am Send Me begins appropriately with a full-on declaration of the greatness of God, written with Martin Smith (Delirious?), in response to the most challenging season of her life: *You are great/Greater than the world has ever seen/Higher than the heavens over me.*

"When I was at my sickest, Martin flew over from England to sit with us, sing songs over our church, and walk and talk with me and my husband, all the while speaking courage into us," Darlene says, her voice full of emotion recalling the dark days after her diagnosis of breast cancer that is now in remission. "It's week one of treatment, and you think you're going to die, and Martin said, 'Darls, I know you're going to want to write songs about this season. What do you want to say?' And I said, 'I want to say 'He is great!' That's where it started. ... In the midst of the fire, it doesn't change who our God is."

From there, she says, the album goes on a journey, always declaring God's greatness, love and call, and our response with 10 more songs penned by Darlene, members of her church and guest writers including Paul Baloche and Jenn Johnson

(Bethel).

“You Will Be Praised,” written with Baloché and Johnson on Darlene’s first return to America after cancer treatment, unabashedly declares the power of the Holy Spirit living among us that makes fearlessness possible in every season and circumstance of life. It is, in many ways, Darlene’s testimony.

*Though I walk through darkest valleys / There’s no fear for
You are with me / You have held me through the fire / Jesus
You are here with me. ... Through every storm You will remain /
In death and in life I’ll not be afraid / In joy or in pain
You will be praised.*

“I’m 51, and I never thought I’d be doing this at my age. There’s such a freshness in me. In our culture, youth is almost worshipped. But there’s something to be said when you’ve watched the faithfulness of God again and again and again. There’s something to be said of the trust that grows over time.”

“Beloved” a modern hymn of surrender co-written by Darlene with Leeland Mooring and Casey Moore, takes its cues from “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” penned by 17th-century hymn writer Isaac Watts. “Leeland had put it on his album, and it was beautiful. I wanted to record it but strip it back,” says Darlene who recalls a sweet moment during the recording where the church began singing spontaneously as the team ended the song. “You hear the people start to respond. ... It’s a really holy moment.”

The album is full of such moments. But perhaps more than any of the aforementioned songs, “Here I Am Send Me” and “Go” encapsulate the heart and passion of this worship pioneer and her unequivocal yes.

*Here I am send me / Send me to the nations / Send me to my
neighbors / Send me with Your love.*

“Go,” a song of commissioning closes the album. “It can’t be any straighter,” Darlene says with a laugh. “In Ephesians, we get that sense of being commissioned into the world to share His love. I write about tribes, lands and neighborhoods. ... When you get in His presence, when you allow Him into the tough places, you rise knowing you must go and share it. His love is what is missing in the world.”

Here we come now Your church / We will go to all the world / Every tribe every land / As Your feet and loving hands / To the rich to the poor / Grace is flowing for us all / Nothing missing nothing broken / He makes all things new / From the ash from the fire / There is hope there is new life. ... Tell the world lift Him high.

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Hope:Global

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Richard Viguerie: Democrats Have Officially Become a Minority Party

In my book *Takeover*, I discussed how I apply to politics the marketing knowledge and experience I’ve gained over my 55 years in direct marketing. Over those many years, I developed what I call “Viguerie’s Four Horsemen of Marketing,” which

are:

- Position (a hole in the marketplace)
- Differentiation
- Benefit
- Brand (what makes you singular or unique)

Brand is really defined by a combination of the other three elements; in politics, it is what makes Republicans unique and stand apart from Democrats.

Although I prefer to use that hard-earned experience to help conservatives raise money and win elections, the same concepts apply to Democrats as well.

So, it was with great interest and pleasure that I observed how this past weekend—by electing former Obama Labor Secretary Tom Perez as Chairman and runner-up Congressman Keith Ellison as Deputy Chairman—the Democratic Party officially and publicly abandoned its 85-year-old brand as the party of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal to become the party of George Soros, pink kitty hats, Muslim extremism and the hardcore far left.

This radical (pun intended) rebranding has been coming for a long time, but the election signaled with finality the Democrats' end as the party of FDR, JFK, Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson, to become the party of the anti-American left.

Perez and Ellison are among the most hard-core leftists in today's Democratic Party. NBC's Chuck Todd, certainly no conservative, said on Sunday, "If Tom Perez is considered establishment today, that tells you how much the [Democratic] party has moved to the left."

Clearly, the "hole in the marketplace" Democrats were seeking to fill was not someone to sell the party to the center-right majority of Americans, but to the Far Left of liberal

activists.

Perez, the so-called establishment Democrat candidate, barely beat out Ellison, an African-American Muslim who was supported by a Who's Who of the far left including Chris Shelton, president of Communications Workers of America; Richard Trumka, president, AFL-CIO and Alex Soros, son of far-left financier George Soros.

According to FiveThirtyEight's ideological ratings that look at congressional voting records, donors and public statements, both Perez and Ellison are well to the left of center on the spectrum of beliefs within the Democratic Party, though Ellison's views are more deeply left. In fact, he's more liberal than 90 percent of House Democrats (and that's saying a lot).

Ellison was so bad on national defense and Israel that prominent Democratic donor Haim Saban, who gave millions to Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign, took Ellison to task publicly during a question-and-answer portion of a Brookings Institute seminar with Israeli Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman moderated by CNN's Jake Tapper.

"If you go back to his positions, his papers, his speeches, the way he has voted, he is clearly an anti-Semite and anti-Israel individual," the Israeli-American said about Rep. Ellison. "Words matter and actions matter more. Keith Ellison would be a disaster for the relationship between the Jewish community and the Democratic Party."

However, Perez supporters were quick to emphasize that, as "the most liberal member of Obama's cabinet," he is just as progressive as Ellison.

And Tom Perez is also closely connected to George Soros and other anti-American figures.

As Monica Showalter documented in an article for The American

Thinker, CASA de Maryland, a Soros-funded group dedicated to helping illegal immigrants flout U.S. immigration law, that Perez once headed up, took a \$1.5 million donation in 2008 from the late Venezuelan dictator Hugo Chavez.

Showalter says Perez seems to have taken Chavez's philosophy along with it, which isn't that surprising: His dad was a well-known henchman for Rafael Trujillo, the bemedaled, mirrored-sunglassed Idi-Amin-style thug dictator of the Dominican Republic who used to throw his opponents literally into the shark pools over his 30-plus years' rule. One cannot control who one's relatives are, of course, but Perez is notable for lying about it, wrote Showalter, not just in denying the relationship, but in saying it was the opposite of what it was.

While at the Department of Justice as an assistant attorney general, Perez initiated junk lawsuits against peaceful anti-abortion protestors in Florida and filed race-baiting lawsuits against municipalities to force them to scrap written tests for police and firefighters to ensure affirmative action hiring.

My friend Quin Hillyer, in an article for *The American Spectator*, documented how Perez argued that black firefighter applicants who flunked 70 percent of their entrance exams should get a free pass to the New York firefighters academy.

When, according to Gallup, almost two-thirds of Americans disagree with race-based affirmative action, it would seem that choosing Perez as chairman would position the Democrats well outside the mainstream of America's center-right majority.

And even the Department of Justice Inspector General seemed to see it that way. A 250-page internal DOJ Inspector General's report blasted Perez's division for its hothouse atmosphere of racial grievance mongering, "with several incidents in which

deep ideological polarization fueled disputes and mistrust that harmed the functioning of the Voting Section.”

By electing “racial grievance mongering” Tom Perez as Chair and making Rep. Keith Ellison Deputy Chair, Democrats have differentiated themselves quite clearly from Republicans, President Trump and from the Democratic Party of FDR, JFK, Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson.

Perez and Ellison ran on a platform of refining the Democratic Party’s techniques and organization, but that’s not what makes a political brand. The brand choice decision facing voters in coming elections won’t be about organization, it will be “what’s the benefit of embracing a party that makes racial polarization and illegal immigration core brand values?”

When Coke changed the formula of its iconic brand and called it New Coke, millions of consumers rebelled, and the soft drink giant was forced to bring back the old Coke consumers love.

For millions of independent voters concerned about making their families safe again and making their country great again the brand choice in future elections will be easy—and it won’t be voting for the newly rebranded radical Left Democrats.

However, once abandoned, it won’t be so easy for Democrats to bring back the old Democratic Party that they have now killed-off in favor of the radical Soros-backed social justice warrior elitism they’ve adopted, and their Far Left radical new brand is likely to remain a permanent minority for many years to come. {eoa}

Richard Viguerie *transformed American politics in the 1960s and '70s by pioneering the use of direct mail fundraising in the political and ideological spheres. He used computerized direct mail fundraising to help build the conservative movement, which then elected Ronald Reagan as the first conservative president of the modern era. As the “Funding*

Father of the conservative movement," Viguerie motivated millions of Americans to participate in politics for the first time, greatly expanding the base of active citizenship. He is our era's equivalent of Tom Paine, using a direct mail letter rather than a pamphlet to deliver his call to arms. George magazine credited this as one of the defining political moments of the 20th century.

This article was originally published at . Used with permission.

March 2017: The End of a 100-Year Global Debt Super Cycle Is Way Overdue

For more than 100 years, global debt levels have been rising, and now we are potentially facing the greatest debt crisis in all of human history.

Never before have we seen such a level of debt saturation all over the planet, and pretty much everyone understands that this is going to end very, very badly at some point. The only real question is when it will happen. Many believe that the current global debt super cycle began when the Federal Reserve was established in 1913. Central banks are designed to create debt, and since 1913 the U.S. national debt has gotten more than 6800 times larger. But of course, it is not just the United States that is in this sort of predicament. At this point, more than 99 percent of the population of the entire planet lives in a nation that has a debt-creating central bank, and as a result the whole world is drowning in debt.

When people tell me that things are going to “get better” in 2017 and beyond, I find it difficult not to roll my eyes. The truth is that the only way we can even continue to maintain our current ridiculously high debt-fueled standard of living is to grow debt at a much faster pace than the economy is growing. We may be able to do that for a brief period of time, but giant financial bubbles like this always end and we will not be any exception.

Barack Obama and his team understood what was happening, and they were able to keep us out of a horrifying economic depression by stealing more than nine trillion dollars from future generations of Americans and pumping that money into the U.S. economy. As a result, the federal government is now 20 trillion dollars in debt, and that means that the eventual crash is going to be far, far worse than it would have been if we would have lived within our means all this time.

Corporations and households have been going into absolutely enormous amounts of debt as well. Corporate debt has approximately doubled since the last financial crisis, and U.S. consumers are now more than 12 trillion dollars in debt.

When you add all forms of debt together, America’s debt to GDP ratio is now about 352 percent. I think that the following illustration does a pretty good job of showing how absolutely insane that is:

If your brother earns \$100,000 in annual income and borrowed \$10,000 on his credit card, he could consume \$110,000 worth of stuff. In this example, his debt to his personal GDP is just 10 percent. But what if he could get more credit year after year and reached a point where his total debt reached \$352,000 but his income remained the same? His personal debt-to-GDP ratio would now be 352 percent.

If he could borrow at super-low interest rates, maybe he

could sustain the monthly loan payments. Maybe? But how much more could he possibly borrow? What lender would lend him more? And what if those low rates began to rise? How much debt can his \$100,000 income cover? Essentially, he has reached the end of his own debt cycle.

The United States is certainly not alone in this regard. When you look all over the industrialized world, you see similar triple digit debt to GDP figures.

When this current debt super cycle ultimately ends, it is going to create economic pain on a scale that will be unlike anything that we have ever seen before. The following comes from King World News:

That is the inevitable consequence of 100 years of credit expansion from virtually nothing to \$250 trillion, plus global unfunded liabilities of roughly \$500 trillion, plus derivatives of \$1.5 quadrillion. This is a staggering total of \$ quadrillion. Therefore, the question is not what could go wrong, since it is guaranteed that all these liabilities will implode at some point. And when they do, it will bring misery to the world of a magnitude that no one could ever imagine. It is of course very difficult to forecast the end of a major cycle. As this is unlikely to be a mere 100-year cycle but possibly a 2000-year cycle. It is also impossible to forecast how long the decline will take. Will it be gradual like the Dark Ages, which took 500 years after the fall of the Roman Empire? Or will the fall be much faster this time due to the implosion of the biggest credit bubble in world history? The latter is more likely, especially since the bubble will become a lot bigger before it implodes.

And there are certainly lots of signs that a global slowdown is already beginning. For example, global trade growth has fallen below 2 percent for only the third time since the year 2000. On each of the other occasions, we witnessed a horrible

recession take place. For more signs that economic conditions are deteriorating, please see my previous article entitled "Recession 2017? Things Are Happening That Usually Never Happen Unless a New Recession Is Beginning".

Of course, much of the globe is already in the midst of a horrible economic crisis. Brazil is in the middle of their worst recession ever, and people are literally starving in Venezuela. A new round of debt problems has erupted in Europe, with Greece, Portugal and Italy being the latest flash points.

Just as in 2007, many are mocking the idea that a major economic downturn is coming to the United States. They believe that the ridiculously high stock market valuations of today can stick around indefinitely, and they are putting their faith in politicians.

But it won't be too long before a new economic crisis begins in America, and the kind of civil unrest that I portray in *The Beginning of the End* erupts all across the country.

I just don't understand why more people cannot see this. Government debt, corporate debt and consumer debt have all been growing much, much faster than the overall economy. Can someone please explain to me how that could possibly be sustainable in the long-term?

Someone I considered to be a mentor but who has since passed away once said things would seem as though they would be getting better for a little while before the next crash comes.

And it turned out that he was precisely correct. We are in a season of time when economic conditions have appeared to be getting a little bit better in the United States, and this has blinded so many people to the truth of what is about to happen to us. {eoa}

Dangerous Warning Signs of a Soulless 'Prayer Warrior'

Katie* was energetic and enthusiastic, encouraging countless people over the years. She had helped so many in her life of 43 years, serving as a nurse and Christian ministry director for a homeless and jail chaplaincy ministry. Her health took a turn for the worse, and she was hospitalized where I had the opportunity to pray with her friends and family and read Scripture to her. They thanked me for taking the time and ministering to their needs and to her. They appreciated that I was her friend and pastor in the six months I knew her.

Katie slipped into a coma and was given only days to live. I was later told that a small group of people met her mother outside the hospital, convincing her they were "special" Christians and making promises that God would hear their prayers for Katie. They entered the ICU and prayed over her. But then they started binding, rebuking and "casting out" demons. They called for Katie to "rise up," getting in her face, with one lady taking oil and trying to anoint parts of Katie's body that were covered up, but to no avail. The louder they prayed, the more they worked up a sweat and became more aggressive. When the mother asked them to calm down, they retorted, "We will not be silenced!"

Due to their behavior, which upset the friends and immediate family members as well as other patients in the ward, the ICU nurses forced this prayer group to leave. Katie's mother dismissed them as a "cult," as their actions proved something was amiss.

This sort of behavior gives us charismatic Christians a bad

name and can ruin our witness. What may have taken years of seed-planting can be destroyed in an instant due to the careless and insensitive actions of a zealous few. Doctors and nurses have bedside manners for patients, and so should we.

Does God heal? Yes. Do we want to see Him heal? Absolutely. But we need to think of how we come across to people in various circumstances. The ICU is a place for medical healing, not for aggressive warfare prayer that upsets the patient's peace and rest. Warfare prayer is for another time and place. But the hospital is a place where Christians can minister through prayer, actively listening to family members while reading Scripture over those admitted. If a demonic entity is truly discerned, screaming and yelling is not necessary. That may assuage your peace of mind, but it scares everyone else.

Did you know your prayers are just as powerful when done quietly and modestly because of Jesus' authority? His name alone has power. And He commanded demons and diseases to leave by a word (see Matt. 8:16). He forgave sins and healed the whole person (Mark 2:1-12). Jesus never hunted for demons, but instead, He cast demons out quickly when they revealed themselves. He didn't manipulate his way to go pray for the dying, and neither should we. He was invited into homes to pray for people and to the places where the sick lay.

If we are zealous for God and walk in the anointing, we don't dodge nurses and sneak into rooms. Doing this only frustrates the staff by breaking the rules, revealing our lack of submission to the authorities, which is sinful. If we strong-arm people to pray for the sick, we have honestly made it more difficult for doctors and nurses to do their jobs, and we can contaminate the work space.

If we are called to pray over the sick, then God will make a way, and that is usually through relationship and an invitation. It is not through claiming we are "special" or that our prayers are heard better than other people's. It is

not through manipulating hurting people to go pray and sneaking our way in, which may make us feel like secret agents. That is pride and arrogance on display, and it maligns the expansion of the kingdom of God. You are an ambassador of Christ who is to walk in integrity and obedience to God and the rules set in place.

Katie slipped into eternity with her closest friends and family by her side. Thankfully, her family were Christians who dismissed the actions of the zealous small group that had put on a show. I can only imagine the kind of damage done if her family didn't believe in Jesus. The only winners in this scenario would be the "prayer warriors," who walked off thinking they did something good when people's eternity weighed in the balance. Realistically, they hurt the kingdom of God for the family, patients and hospital staff as their behavior was arrogant and insensitive, lacking true compassion. In situations like this, Christians should abide by hospital etiquette but are also to:

1. Have compassion for people, as Jesus did.
2. Know that the hospital is never a place for aggressive prayer but for sensitive prayers that address the needs of those present. Pray for the doctors, nurses, friends and family and for everyone to have peace of mind. Pray for healing, which can come miraculously or through medicine.
3. Read the Scripture with those present and, if they have any questions, answer them to the best of your ability. But if you don't know the answer, be transparent and say you don't know but will try to discover it.
4. Be calm while showing courageous strength, directing people to the great Healer and Physician.

Let's show everyone we have faith but also the best hospital etiquette. Let's not be rogue prayer warriors who malign the kingdom. {eoa}

* *Not her real name*

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43 Word of Faith Congregants Rally Together to Expose Years of Alleged Abuse

In a groundbreaking exposé, dozens of men and women are now speaking out about the alleged abuse they suffered at the hands of a local church.

The Associated Press released the evidence over the weekend with articles that detail how congregants—everyone from crying babies to crying adults—were regularly punched, smacked, choked, slammed to the floor or thrown through walls at Word of Faith Fellowship in North Carolina, pastored by Jane Whaley and her husband, Sam.

“She has a way of getting people to do things,” said ex-congregant John Huddle. “She knows the right words to say, the right buttons to push.”

Whaley reportedly tried to “purify” sinners and cast out devils by a process known as “blasting,” an ear-piercing verbal onslaught often conducted in hours-long sessions.

Word of Faith Fellowship justifies the practice with Scriptures like Acts 2:2 and Exodus 15:8.

"I saw so many people beaten over the years. Little kids punched in the face, called Satanists," former member Katherine Fetachu told The Associated Press.

The church denies the allegations, telling media they're "shocked and saddened" by the reports.

"We do not condone or allow abuse—in any form—at our church. Period," the Whaleys said in a statement.

They continued:

These false allegations were predominantly made by members of an extended family, with one of its members currently facing several legal battles, both civil and criminal. We believe these allegations are carefully targeted and timed to prejudice the jury pool, put pressure on the judges and elected officials and otherwise influence the public in an attempt to gain advantage in these legal cases. The allegations of this small group of people should be viewed in contrast to the number of faithful members in our large congregation. It is curious—and revealing—that those now speaking out have sat on their allegations for several years and only speak out at what they perceive to be an advantageous time. If our church is such an abusive place, why did several of the attorneys quoted in Mr. Weiss' article allow their children to continue to attend our church and school for months after they withdrew from membership in the church? Further, it is notable that one of the most vehement critics quoted in the article routinely insisted that his infant daughter be cared for daily by the very individuals he now accuses of heinous abuse. False allegations have been made against our church in the past. Investigations at several levels of government have been conducted. We have been exonerated at every point. Although Mr. Weiss' article references his review of various legal documents, it fails to educate the reader on these exonerations.

Five of the church members were charged when a gay man alleged they attempted to beat the “homosexual demons” out of him.

Police also investigated the church in 1999 for child endangerment, but the church was cleared of any wrongdoing.

“The line between religion and abuse, they are crossing it quite severely. That’s why I’m doing this. They have to know you cannot hurt people,” said the man making the accusations in 2014. {eoa}

Why Do People Prefer the Government Do It?

“People do not love markets,” says Pascal Boyer of the International Cognition & Culture Institute, “there is a lot of evidence for that.” Sadly, Boyer is right and I suspect he’s right about the cause too: People do not like markets because people seem not to understand much about market economics.

We don’t fully understand this antipathy, Boyer notes, because there hasn’t been much research on folk-economics, a study of “what makes people’s economic modules tick.” But I think Boyer has identified one of the key reasons people tend to prefer government interventions to market-driven solutions:

[H]umans may be motivated to place their trust in processes that are (or at least seem to be) driven by agents rather than impersonal factors. This may be why there is a strong correlation between being scared of markets and being in favor of state interventions in the economy. One of the most

widespread political assumptions in modern industrial societies is that “the government should do something about X”, where X can be any social or economic problem. Why do people trust the state? The state (in people’s intuitions, not in actual fact) has all the trappings of an agent. It is supposed to have knowledge, memories, intentions, strategies, etc. Now it may be that people are vastly more comfortable trusting an agent to provide help or impose sanctions, than they would trust an impersonal, distributed and largely invisible process. That would be mostly a question of intuitive psychology (highly salient in our reasonings about social processes) versus population thinking (highly unintuitive, difficult to acquire and engage in without sustained effort).

While free-market conservatives and libertarians may not be as susceptible to this bias, we are partially responsible for its ubiquity. For example, we often talk—or allow others to talk—as if the president is the CEO of the American economy. While the POTUS can certainly have a significant (often negative) influence on the economy, the office has very little direct control over the economy. Yet many people truly believe that the president could “fix” the economy if only he had the will/knowledge/desire to do so.

Because we tend to have political reasons for perpetuating this myth, we often allow this belief to persist without challenge. But if we want to effectively champion the effectiveness of free enterprise, we need to find a way to make people realize that government is not a sentient creature that can make beneficent economic decisions on our behalf.
{eoa}

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Unforgettable Lessons on Healing From Heart-Scarring Loss

No, I'm not really alone. I never have been, and I never will be.

But grief is hard. My husband died exactly one year ago. I don't think I've ever been through anything so exhausting—not OB-GYN residency, when I'd spend long nights in the hospital with little or no sleep, not the weeks caring for my husband as he became increasingly unable to completely care for himself. They say losing a loved spouse is like losing an arm or a leg. I think it's more like losing most of who you are.

Grief hurts. In some very real ways I've come to terms with the pain, and most of the time, I focus more on the future than on the past. But there's a treasure in grief that you can't purchase any other way. Words don't do it justice, and you'd never choose the pain you have to endure in order to get it. But for those of you who are walking a similar journey, perhaps these ideas will help you find your own treasure.

This is in response to some of you who have asked me to share more about my journey as a widow. I'll try here to share some

thoughts about what helped, and God's place in the journey of grief.

You Need People

As Al became increasingly ill, his world became smaller and smaller, and mine did too. That's a common occurrence for caregivers, I'm told. I had struggled to stay engaged with others, even professionally. And after Al's death I realized that outside of family I had no truly close friends. Enjoying grandchildren and grieving with others who miss him too has been incredibly valuable, but I've had no one I was "doing life with" previously to be there for me and help me see the future.

Some of that was because Al's health was already declining when we moved to this area, and some was a result of my own personality and lifestyle. But it has meant I've had to exert a great deal of energy in finding ways to connect with people, invest in friendship and build a life I now choose. That's hard work.

Some people have said things that were helpful, and some people occasionally still say things that make me want to scream and run away. Perhaps most helpful of all has been a newer friend who has simply continued to ask, "How are you?" Pause. No fixing. Sometimes I talk, sometimes silence. And then, "Just know I'm here."

My advice: Realize both family and friends are important. There will only be a few people around your deathbed; how well are you investing in them? Family connections are worth putting up with, risking yourself for and spending time with.

It's just as critical to have one or a few close friends you do life with. When grief comes, someone who's not grieving but who knows you very well can be an invaluable source of support. Choose your friends proactively and wisely, now.

And if you're the friend of someone who's grieving, don't try to fix it. Just be there.

Time Passes; Time Alone Doesn't Heal

Healing isn't something that just happens to you. It's something you choose to believe in, seek, find, and decide to take into your being. It's an active process, one you must invest energy in.

When I came home from the hospital after Al's death, I sat down with a cup of coffee and my Bible, and opened it to 1 Corinthians 15, Paul's treatise on death and resurrection. I knew the place to go. All my previous investment in my relationship with God came into play at that time. But it didn't lessen the pain. It's not supposed to. Death is not normal in God's universe; we were made for eternity. We still sorrow. It's only in eternity that God will wipe all tears from our eyes (see Rev. 21:4).

In some ways, it seems like Al died just yesterday. Time doesn't deal with all his personal things, make the pain go away or build a life. I get to decide whether to stay stuck or to step forward. I get to choose what memories to embrace, how to honor his life, what to carry forward and what to build into my future. The speed of those decisions doesn't matter nearly as much as deciding to decide.

During the initial weeks and months, I would feel depressed every evening. When my mind was clear in the morning, I'd have a few hours when I could focus on writing, work or other productive matters, and when I'd get tired and sad later in the day, I'd just have to stop. Quit. Rest. Do nothing. That has lessened a lot now, and most days, I hold on to hope and joy and feel energetic all day. Doing the work of grief makes that possible.

My advice: Don't worry at all about how fast you move forward, but do worry a great deal about choosing whether or not you

will move forward. Do the work of grief. Deal with the stuff—physically, emotionally, spiritually. Do it at your own pace, but do it. Decide to decide. Choose healing. There are no medals for speed, but determine that you will not quit, no matter what.

Head and Heart Are Both Important

I attended a GriefShare group for a few months after Al's death. As I told the facilitator, my head knows all this, but my heart needs the human connections. Frankly, I was somewhat disappointed theologically in the videos, workbook and email messages, but that's not why I went. I knew I had to do the hard work of connecting with people if I were to move forward.

Early on I was so concerned about doing grief right. Am I feeling what I'm supposed to feel? Am I doing the right things? Confusion, anxiety, exhaustion and sadness made it difficult to think at times. I read books: *A Grief Observed* (C.S. Lewis), *Understanding Your Grief* (Alan D. Wolfelt), *Experiencing Grief* (H. Normal Wright) and *Grieving with Hope* (Samuel J Hodges). I finally realized there is no "right" way to grieve. I often wished for a road map, a timeline. But I learned to keep walking even when I couldn't figure it out, and experienced again that God is always there.

Doing things to remember Al has also been important. I retraced our most memorable anniversary vacation. I had a memory quilt made from some of Al's clothes. I made a shadow box of items related to his funeral and included our wedding rings. I've watched over and over the slideshow of pictures we prepared a year ago to remember his life. When an ambush of grief washes over me emotionally, I take time to stop and cry. And yes, those ambushes happen much less frequently than they did during the initial weeks.

My advice: Consciously give both your head and your heart attention. Seek out godly wise input from books, support

groups, people, Scripture and more. Study grief, so to speak. Doing so does not make everything OK, but it helps you find your own path through the wilderness.

And also find ways to honor the emotional journey you are on. God created us human beings with feelings, limitations, emotions, desires, needs, fears and so on. Embrace them. Go there! But then make the decision to keep going. Don't park there. Feel it, and then take one more step no matter how difficult it is to do so.

The Future Exists

My head knows this. My heart sometimes still struggles to feel it. But there are a few things I know for certain:

- As long as I'm still alive, God has a purpose for me here.
- God can and already has used my pain to minister to others.
- In eternity, God will wipe my tears away, and it will be enough.

Who I am as a person has deepened in significant ways as a result of my journey of grief. I've realized an increased depth in my own writing. The kinds of issues people talk and write to me about have deepened—not necessarily about grief, but about life. The well of what I have to offer is significantly richer in many areas. There's an increased substance to what I bring to ministry and to the world in general.

I believe that has happened because God has honored my decision to not quit. I've brought the totality of my stuff—my past medical and ministry training, my painful experiences including my grief, my strengths and limitations—and given God permission to do what He will with them. He is a miracle-worker in taking our stuff and making it into something meaningful and valuable.

I'm not going after comfort or happiness. I'm blessed with a certain measure of clarity about the mission for which God has me here on Earth, and that's what I'm about. Knowing God does not make it not hurt, but He provides the reason to keep going. He is the source of healing as you seek for it. He is the safe place you can always run to.

My advice: Choose to believe in the future. If you're alive, God is not finished with you yet. He still has something here for you to do. If you're grieving, God can take that pain and use it. Worry not at all about how far into the future you can see right now. Simply worry about which direction you are turning your gaze.

Embrace the memories. It's good to treasure them. But then make certain you are turning your gaze in the direction of the future. God is already in your future, and He will meet you in the next moment, the next day, and all the days yet to come.
{eoa}

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