

White House Announces Key Appointment

President Donald Trump has nominated a familiar face to represent the U.S. at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

The White House announced a number of key administration appointments and nominations Friday afternoon, including:

Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas to be United States permanent representative on the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with the rank and status of ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary. Kay Bailey Hutchison has been senior counsel since 2013 at Bracewell, LLP, in Dallas, Texas. During her 20 years as a U.S. senator, she served as a member of the Armed Services Committee and chairman of the Military Construction Subcommittee of Appropriations, where she gained extensive international experience and a deep understanding of NATO. She also served in the Texas state government as an elected state representative and later state treasurer. Ms. Hutchison has served as vice chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board. She earned a J.D. from the University of Texas School of Law and a B.A. from the University of Texas.

While Hutchison brings a wealth of experience as a former senator, her appointment also signals perhaps an end to infighting with the "Bush Wing" of the Republican Party establishment. Hutchison is closely aligned with both presidents George H.W. and George W. Bush, and is a longtime friend of former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush. {eoa}

Why Some Spiritual Principalities Can Only Be Driven Out by Prayer

Millennial vlogger Joseph Solomon is encouraging his peers to engage in true intercession. In this video, he breaks down Mark 9 and explains how some spiritual barriers can only be defeated with fervent prayer.

Texas Rules Same-Sex Benefits Not Required by Law, Setting Stage to Repeal Obergefell

Today, the Texas Supreme Court ruled states can define marriage, essentially overturning Obergefell v. Hodges and sending shockwaves around the country. In Obergefell v. Hodges, the United States Supreme Court redefined traditional biblical marriage between a man and a woman to include homosexual marriage.

The victory came after a four-year legal battle.

In 2013, Houston attorney Jared Woodfill filed a lawsuit against liberal Houston Mayor Annise Parker.

Woodfill argued Parker broke state law by using taxpayer dollars to pay for same-sex benefits to City of Houston employees.

Pastor Jack Pidgeon and Republican activist Larry Hicks had

the courage to serve as Woodfill's clients.

A fabulous Harris County Family Court judge, Lisa Millard, agreed with Woodfill's argument and ruled Mayor Parker's conduct broke the law. But the liberal left appealed the decision and overturned Millard's decision. Woodfill was not deterred, however, and took the case to the Texas Supreme Court.

Originally, the Texas Supreme Court refused to hear the case. But Justice John Devine issued a dissenting opinion. Governor Greg Abbott, Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick and Attorney General Ken Paxton filed an amicus brief to support Woodfill and swayed the court's mind.

The case was then argued in front of the entire Texas Supreme Court. Outstanding lawyers and cultural warriors Jonathan Mitchell and Jonathan Saenz joined Woodfill.

Today, the Texas Supreme Court concluded, "In Obergefell, the Supreme Court acknowledged that our historical view of marriage has long been 'based on the understanding that marriage is a union between two persons of the opposite sex.'"

It concluded, however, that this "history is the beginning of these cases," and it rejected the idea that it "should be the end as well."

This case is proof there are many issues with the Obergefell decision, and we will soon see more come to light.

The court ruled Pidgeon and Houston Mayor Parker, like many other litigants throughout the country, must now assist the courts in fully exploring Obergefell's reach and ramifications, and are entitled to the opportunity to do so.

The ruling continued:

Today, however, we are dealing only with an interlocutory appeal from trial court's orders denying a plea to the

jurisdiction and granting a temporary injunction. For the reasons explained, we hold that the Fifth Circuit's decision in De Leon does not bind the trial court on remand, and the trial court is not required to conduct its proceedings 'consistent with' that case. We hold that the court of appeals' judgment does not bar Pidgeon from seeking all appropriate relief on remand or bar the Mayor from opposing that relief. ... And we decline to instruct the trial court how to construe Obergefell on remand. We reverse the court of appeals' judgment, vacate the trial court's temporary injunction order and remand this case to the trial court for further proceedings consistent with our judgment and this opinion.

The original version of this story appeared here. {eoa}

We Must Reclaim the American Vision

In a meeting with Delaware Indian chiefs in 1779, George Washington commended them for their request that their youth be trained in American schools. He assured the chiefs that America would look upon them "as their own children" and then said,

You do well to wish to learn our arts and our ways of life and above all, the religion of Jesus Christ. These will make you a greater and happier people than you are. Congress will do everything they can to assist you in this wise intention.

Washington's freedom in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with this Indian tribe was normal for the founding generation, for such freedom was rooted in the original American vision. This original vision was brought here by the Jamestown settlers of Virginia, the Pilgrims and Puritans of New England, the Baptists of Rhode Island, the Quakers of Pennsylvania and other Christian reform groups who were drawn to this land with a proactive vision burning in their hearts.

The Original American Vision

Indeed, the original American vision was for a land of individual liberty and a place from which the gospel would be spread to the ends of the earth. America's Founding Fathers were not shy in expressing this vision for they believed, that in this world, real freedom could only be realized in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This link between freedom and the gospel was expressed by America's second president, John Adams, just two weeks before the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. In a letter to his cousin, Zabdiel, a minister of the gospel, Adams wrote, "Statesmen, my dear sir, may plan and speculate for Liberty, but it is Religion [Christianity] and Morality alone, which can establish the Principles, upon which Freedom can securely stand."

Adams was not expressing anything new or novel for the idea of freedom rooted in the gospel of Christ was a common American belief brought here by the very first European immigrants to this land. Consider the following quotes.

"From these very shores the Gospel shall go forth, not only to this New World, but to all the world." –Rev. Robert Hunt, April 29, 1607, as he and the Jamestown settlers, who had just landed at Cape Henry, gathered in prayer around a large oak cross they had brought from England.

"Having undertaken for the glory of God and the advancement of

the Christian faith ... a voyage to plant the first colony in northern Virginia.” –From the Mayflower Compact, the governing document of the Pilgrims who formulated it upon their arrival in the New World in November of 1620.

“Whereas we all came into these parts of America with one and the same end and aim, namely to advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ and enjoy the Liberties of the Gospel in purity and peace.” –Opening statement of the Articles of Confederation for “The United Colonies of New England,” dated May 29, 1643. This confederation of New England towns and colonies was formed for mutual security and to arbitrate land disputes among the growing population.

“Might it not greatly facilitate the introduction of pure religion among the heathen, if we could, by such a colony, show them a better sample of Christians than they commonly see.” –Benjamin Franklin in a 1756 letter to George Whitefield, the most famous preacher of the Great Awakening, in which Franklin proposed that they partner together in founding a Christian colony on the Ohio frontier.

“Pray that the peaceful and glorious reign of our Divine Redeemer may be known throughout the whole family of mankind.” –Samuel Adams, Founding Father and Governor of Massachusetts. This call to prayer was part of a proclamation for a Day of Prayer that he issued as governor of Massachusetts in 1795.

“Pray that all nations may bow to the scepter of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and that the whole earth may be filled with his glory.” –John Hancock, Founding Father, President of the Continental Congress and Governor of Massachusetts. This statement was part of a call for prayer he issued while Governor.

“The policy of the bill is adverse to the diffusion of the light of Christianity. The first wish of those who enjoy this

precious gift ought to be that it may be imparted to the whole race of mankind.” –James Madison, chief architect of the Constitution and America’s fourth president, voicing his opposition in 1785 to a bill that he perceived would have the unintended consequence of hindering the spread of the Gospel.

“The philosophy of Jesus is the most sublime and benevolent code of morals ever offered man. A more beautiful or precious morsel of ethics I have never seen.” –Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence and America’s third president, who took money from the federal treasury to send missionaries to an American Indian tribe and to build them a chapel in which to worship.

“Bless, O Lord, the whole race of mankind, and let the world be filled with the knowledge of Thee and Thy Son, Jesus Christ.” –from a public prayer prayed by George Washington, America’s first president.

No Real Liberty Without the Gospel

It is obvious from the above quotes that America’s founders believed freedom and Christianity to be inextricably linked. They believed so strongly in the gospel as the basis of human freedom that they unashamedly prayed and publicly expressed their desire to see it spread throughout the earth.

Recent presidents have sought to export American-style democracy to other nations apart from the gospel of Christ. Indeed, the entire Western world is seeking to secularize liberty and remove it from any association with faith.

America’s founders would say that such efforts are futile since true liberty cannot be had apart from the gospel of Christ. Washington made this plain in his farewell address, where he warned the fledgling nation that two things must be guarded if they were to be a happy people—Christianity and morality, which he called “indispensable supports” for political prosperity.

Recovering the Truth About the First Amendment

The day after approving the First Amendment, which states, "Congress shall make no law concerning the establishment of religion or hindering the free exercise thereof," those same Founding Fathers issued a proclamation for a National Day of Prayer.

The First Amendment was merely their way of saying that America would never have an official, national church like the nations of Europe at that time. Instead of banning faith from the public square, as many moderns suppose, they created a free and open marketplace for religious ideas.

They were not concerned about false religion getting the upper hand in such an open setting, for they believed in the power of the gospel and were convinced that on an open and even playing field, truth would always prevail. They agreed with the Puritan, John Milton, who wrote,

Let truth and falsehood grapple; who ever knew truth put to the worse in free and open encounter? She needs no policies, nor strategems, nor licensings to make her victorious ... Give her but room.

By instituting the First Amendment, the Founders were rejecting the model begun by Constantine in which civil government sets forth and defends a certain church, religious expression or point of view. In their thinking, only those who do not have confidence in the message they proclaim would insist on such an alignment with the civil government.

The founders believed in the inherent power of Christian truth, which is why Jefferson wrote,

Truth can stand by itself ... If there be but one right religion and Christianity that one, we should wish to see the nine hundred and ninety-nine wandering sects gathered into the fold of truth. But against such a majority we cannot

effect this by force. Reason and persuasion are the only practicable instruments. To make way for these, free inquiry must be indulged; and how can we wish others to indulge it while we refuse it ourselves.

It is Time to Recover the Vision

It is time for this generation to rise up and reject the lie of the left that the First Amendment bans expressions of faith in the marketplace. It is time to realize with the founders that true freedom and happiness can only be found in Jesus Christ. It is time to learn from the founders that faith and freedom go together like hand and glove, and the loss of one inevitably leads to the loss of the other. It is time for this generation to recover the original American vision. {eoa}

*This article is derived from **Eddie Hyatt's** book, Pilgrims and Patriots, available from Amazon and his website, . At his website, you can also check out his vision for America and another Great Awakening.*

Dr. Michael Brown: Don't Forget That God Comes Before Country

Independence Day is here, and most people couldn't be more proud to be an American. But Dr. Michael Brown explains the important difference between patriotism and the kingdom of God. Do you agree? {eoa}

President Trump Applies Pressure to North Korea

In a speech delivered from the Rose Garden at the White House, President Donald Trump made it clear he no longer has any patience with North Korean dictator Kim Jong-un's regime, and he's ready to take action to see it come to an end.

For now, that action will be strengthened sanctions, which was a somewhat unexpected move given South Korean President Moon Jae-in's stated desire to use economic cooperation as a carrot to lure in the Hermit Kingdom. Moon was standing at Trump's side Friday when the president made the announcement during a joint appearance following a series of meetings at the White House between the two leaders and their diplomatic teams.

"The alliance between the United States and South Korea is a cornerstone of peace and security in a very, very dangerous part of the world," he said. "The link between our countries cemented in battle is now also tied together by culture, commerce, and common values.

"Together, we are facing the threat of the reckless and brutal regime in North Korea. The nuclear and ballistic missile programs of that regime require a determined response. The North Korean dictatorship has no regard for the safety and security of its people or its neighbors, and has no respect for human life—and that's been proven over and over again.

"Millions of North Korea's own citizens have suffered and starved to death, and the entire world just witnessed what the regime did to our wonderful Otto Warmbier. I thanked President Moon for expressing his condolences on the travesty of Otto's death. Our thoughts and our prayers remain with his wonderful

family.

“The era of strategic patience with the North Korean regime has failed for many years. It’s failed and frankly that patience is over. We are working closely with South Korea and Japan, as well as partners around the world on a range of diplomatic security and economic measures to protect our allies and our own citizens from this menace known as North Korea.

“The United States calls on other regional powers and all responsible nations to join us in implementing sanctions and demanding that the North Korean regime choose a better path—and do it quickly—and different future for its long-suffering people. Our goal is peace and prosperity for the region, but the United States will defend itself always, and we will always defend our allies.”

You can see the full event in the video clip above. {eoa}

Mom, Are You Hindering the Holy Spirit’s Work in Your Teenager?

Sometimes I gasp when reading Facebook posts. That happened last night as I read a post by my friend, Valerie, about her parenting journey and her 15-year-old daughter’s choice.

Learning about the eight great ways kids are smart and other principles of honoring children has encouraged Valerie. I love teaching her—as I do so many of you—because she is open. I hope her words here speak to you. Yes, you!

From Valerie:

To my young mom friends: God has blessed me with three very different young women. We all “get” each other at times, but we all think very differently. We argue differently, we praise differently, we study differently, we have different hobbies, different likes, different dislikes.

It has taken me a long time to realize my kids don't have to do it my way. In fact, their ways teach them faster, teach them more deeply, grow them better.

A few months ago, Kaleigh came to us and asked if she could turn her linen closet into a prayer closet. To be honest, I didn't know how much she would be in there, but she spends hours each week in there—journaling, drawing, worshipping.

Last week, she asked if she could paint on the walls in her prayer closet. This goes against everything I am. “We don't want to make a mess.” “You might spill paint on the floor.” “Do people really just paint on the walls, like with total freedom and without fear of failure?” (My own issues.)

Well, after three hours, she had created a beautiful painting that includes a Scripture verse. She intends to paint over it one day, when she feels she needs a new picture—and start over.

Mom friends—I'm almost at the end of my “raising” times, and I am just finding the freedom to let them be who God made them to be. It's exhilarating, inspiring and freeing. {eoa}

*Reprinted with permission from Dr. Kathy Koch's blog. **Dr. Kathy Koch** (cook), the Founder and President of Celebrate Kids, Inc., based in Fort Worth, Texas, has influenced thousands of parents, teachers and children in 30 countries through keynote messages, seminars, chapels and other events.*

There Is a War on Truth

Wednesday, NBC News anchor Chuck Todd said this:

I'm obsessed with the White House's war on the press and on the media. Let's be clear about this, that war is nothing less than a war on the truth. Do we get it right all the time? Nope, we don't. And when we don't, we run a correction, and in some cases, people lose their jobs. That's what just happened at CNN. CNN took responsibility for its mistakes.

At this network, we've done it quite a few times publicly as well. But because we try to get it right we take what we do seriously, because truth, viewers and readers' trust is all we have, and without that, we're nothing.

Todd is right that what we are talking about is a war on truth. Only he's got it backwards. It is not Donald Trump who's waging this war on truth but the low-information media.

Even Todd himself admits that NBC has choked on the truth "quite a few times" and has been forced to publicly correct its errors. Thus Todd himself admits that NBC can't be trusted. If the network got it wrong then, why should we trust it now? If it turns out we shouldn't have believed NBC then, why should believe what it is telling us now?

The premiere case in point of all this is the Talking Snake Media's obsession with the substance-free accusation that Trump somehow colluded with the Russians to steal the election from the American people. (I call them the Talking Snake Media in honor of their patron saint, the snake in the Garden of Eden who lied to Eve in order to frustrate the purposes of God.)

There never was any evidence at all of any such collusion despite over a year's worth of investigation. A senior producer at CNN (which I refer to as the "Counterfeit News Network") revealed to an undercover reporter from Project Veritas that there was in fact no smoking gun, the whole thing was probably "[expletive]" and that they had only been ordered to refocus on the Russia thing because it was good for ratings.

To top it off, Van Jones, CNN's resident communist commentator, admitted to another undercover journalist, "This Russia thing is a nothingburger."

In other words, CNN is not searching for the truth; it is searching for viewers. To this network, the truth is utterly disposable if twisting and distorting it serves their agenda.

Well, focusing on the fabricated Trump-Russia story is not working any more for CNN. Its ratings are in a freefall, now dropping far behind both Fox and MSNBC in prime time.

There is a larger dynamic at work here, especially for people of faith. And that dynamic is that error and falsehood can only be propped up for so long. You can lie to people for a time, but eventually the truth will come out, and the lie will be exposed for the ugly thing that it is. Abraham Lincoln was credited with saying, "You can fool all of the people some of the time, you can fool some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all of the time."

Satan lied to Eve and got her to believe his lie because it was, well, so believable. The fruit was, he told her, "good for food ... pleasing to the eyes and ... desirable to make one wise" (Gen. 3:6b). Eve believed the believable lie, convinced her husband to join her, and the horrible truth was revealed in an instant.

The point here is that the fake news the media has been dishing out may sound plausible at first blush, but the facade

cannot be sustained. If the media continues to traffic in patent falsehoods, eventually their entire enterprise will collapse in on itself. In an almost biblical sense, the media will fall into the pit it has dug for the others.

That implosion seems to be happening as we speak. CNN is firing reporters for filing utterly bogus stories about Trump and Russia and is now admitting that there is no evidence to support the charge. CNN is rapidly going from the most trusted name in news to the most busted name in news.

CNN and the rest of the media have blindly blundered on, to focus now on an equally unsupportable lie, that the president obstructed justice by doing his job and exercising his constitutional responsibilities as the head of the executive branch.

Jesus told us that if we abide in His words, we will know the truth, and the truth will set us free (see John 8:31-32). We can spot the lies of the media in an instant by comparing what they say to what the Scriptures say. The truth of Scripture is the carpenter's level we use to identify declarations that align with the truth and separate them from those that don't.

The media is waging its war on the truth by relentlessly assaulting the truth not only about public policy matters but about abortion, marriage, the family, sexual immorality, homosexuality, abortion and everything else under the sun. But Christian citizens are not duped.

Todd said that without the viewers' trust, "we're nothing." He's got that right. The jig is up. The American people are on to him and his ilk, and in the end, the truth will be the only thing left standing. May Mr. Todd and his colleagues enjoy a long, serene and fact-free retirement as soon as possible.
{eoa}

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This article was originally published at . Used with permission.

America's Independence Should Be for Everyone

July 4, 1776 was a great day in American history: Independence Day! So historically, July Fourth is a day that is celebrated yearly with family get-togethers, cookouts, parades, watermelon and fireworks. It was a great day but not for all.

While our nation was liberated from British rule in 1776, there was a class of people, slaves, who didn't enjoy independence along with other Americans until the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. Until then, slaves weren't considered to be persons.

Actually, slaves only achieved partial personhood in 1787, and then only because slave owners wanted to use them in order to gain a greater voting power. Thus, they were counted as three-fifths of a person in the Three-Fifths Compromise. The slaves didn't enjoy true independence until 1863. And finally, on June 19, 1885, came Juneteenth Independence Day; a day celebrated in some circles with the same hoopla as many enjoy the Fourth of July.

Another class of Americans, the female suffragettes, waged and in some cases still do wage the battle for equality. Unfortunately, all too many still confuse women's rights with human rights, and many pre-born persons are being discriminated against and killed as a result.

Yet, the celebrations for this year's Fourth of July will go

on for most Americans. Still, although African-Americans and women will join in the celebrations, there are still segments of Americans who do not enjoy the same freedom as everyone else; they include pre-born persons and victims of human trafficking in America and around the world.

America can never be truly free until the babies in the womb are free to be born, and all victims of abortion and other crimes against humanity are set free.

In America, the unborn are not considered "persons" under the law, and therefore they don't enjoy the protection of the Fourteenth Amendment assuring 'Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness," a right the babies could expect prior to the Supreme Court decision made in Roe v. Wade on January 22, 1973. Since that date over 60 million babies have not celebrated an Independence Day, have not joined in family celebrations, watched fireworks or a parade.

I dream and pray for a day when all Americans, born and unborn, can enjoy justice for all and independence for all; an "Independence Day from Roe v. Wade" is in order. Otherwise, how can the dream survive abortion?

One day our babies will be free. Until that day, please enjoy this Independence Day, but also say a prayer for those who are unable to celebrate it with us. And please take a moment to say this prayer for Independence Day! {eoa}

Texas Man Charged With Manslaughter in Church Bus Crash

A 20-year-old Texas man who told authorities he was texting while driving has been charged with manslaughter after a head-on collision with a small church bus that killed 13 people, a district attorney said on Thursday.

Jack Young was indicted by a grand jury on Monday in connection with the March 29 crash in Uvalde County, about 80 miles (130 kms.) west of San Antonio.

Thirteen senior adults affiliated with First Baptist New Braunfels church died as they returned home from a retreat, and the sole survivor on the bus was seriously injured.

Young is charged with 13 counts of manslaughter and 13 counts of intoxication manslaughter, second-degree felonies that can bring up to 20 years each in prison, Uvalde County District Attorney Daniel Kindred said in a statement.

Young also is charged with using his pickup truck as a deadly weapon. He has surrendered to authorities and is in custody in Uvalde County, the district attorney said.

A lawyer for Young was not immediately available for comment.

The National Transportation Safety Board has said two witnesses in a vehicle behind a pickup truck driven by Young recorded a 14-minute video showing his vehicle crossing roadside barrier lines 37 times prior to the crash.

"After the crash, the pickup driver told the witnesses and the police that he had been texting," the NTSB said in a report.
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