

Refusing Moral Hypocrisy, Parents Refuse to Abort Baby With 2 Faces

Doctors want to put a premature end to their unborn baby's life, but one Australian couple refuses to take this hypocritical action just because their bundle of joy has two faces—and two brains. That Australian couple, Renee Young and Simon Howie, are my **pro-life** heroes this week.

The parents were admittedly shocked when an ultrasound revealed their twin baby girls were actually one baby with two faces and two brains. A 3-D ultrasound shows the baby has only two legs, two arms and one body.

Who wouldn't be shocked and upset? That's a natural reaction. But when doctors called for an **abortion** "because it would be looked upon by the public as a freak," the couple stood on the side of life—and love—saying they would give birth to their baby and surround it with "people who love it."

No baby has ever survived this condition, known as craniofacial hyperhidrosis or diprosopus (only 35 cases of the rare form of conjoined twins have ever been recorded), but this brave couple is nevertheless choosing life.

There was no mention of God in their story, yet *A Current Affair* titled its segment "Miracle Baby." And when asked if they had a **religious** or moral objection to **abortion**, Howie said his objection was moral. But I, for one, am convinced God is in this mix!

"It'd be the same as being a child with autism or Down syndrome," Howie told *A Current Affair*. "I don't believe in terminating the baby if it's healthy and growing fine, and everything is going to plan."

Doctors told the couple their baby would be a “freak,” but the couple’s sense of right and wrong is guiding them to choose life—even if the baby’s life turns out to be short. And who knows? Maybe it really will be a **miracle** baby. Is anything too hard for God? No, God can do a **miracle** in the womb. Why not give Him a chance? Can you imagine the impact a miracle of that magnitude could have on the pro-abortion movement that likes to terminate if babies are defected (or even an undesired sex)?

“If I only get two days with the baby, I only get two days with the baby,” Young, now 19 weeks pregnant, told *A Current Affair*. “At least I have some time with it. That’s just the time we actually get to spend with the baby and its brothers and sisters get to meet their little brother or sister.”

It appears that the parents are neither on-fire Christians nor married, but they are still choosing life in an era that is largely focused on death. (Some commenters, for example, have even suggested euthanizing the baby as soon as it is born.) This couple is showing a dark world that you don’t have to be a Bible-toting, churchgoing, pro-life-sign-carrying Christian to celebrate life. You just have to respect the sanctity of life.

I am not sure why God allows these sorts of trials, but we know that if God doesn’t perform a **miracle**, the baby girl will go on to be with the Lord. We know that these parents are expressing love and the will of God despite no mention of His name. We know that God is getting glory out of this story as the parents choose to go against traditional medical advice for the sake of life and love.

And I believe that some scared, pregnant mother somewhere may just hear this story and decide to keep their perfectly healthy baby. I believe this couple’s story will give courage and inspiration to young women who are considering an **abortion**. I believe God will work the story of the so-called

“miracle baby” out in conformity to the purpose of His will (Phil. 2:13). Even Howie said he had “hope and a little faith.” Ms. Young and Mr. Howie, God bless you!

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How Do We Put an End to Sex Trafficking Once and for All?

In the aftermath of the Super Bowl, authorities announced that they rescued 16 minors in the New York City area from sex traffickers. In addition, more than 50 women who were also coerced to work as prostitutes were saved. Police from more than 50 law enforcement agencies spanning New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Connecticut arrested 45 pimps in a two-week run up to the Super Bowl.

Before the Super Bowl, *The New York Times* reported that the NYPD had already made 298 prostitution-related arrests this year through Jan. 26, a 30 percent increase over the same period in 2013. CNN also reported on a New York City high-end drug and prostitution bust last week.

U.S. Rep. Christopher Smith, R-N.J., has cited numbers from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children that 10,000 women and girls were trafficked to Miami for the 2010 Super Bowl. The New Jersey attorney general’s office ramped up for this year’s Super Bowl by setting up a sex-trafficking task force. Months of investigative work and training of law

enforcement personnel, hospitality workers and airport employees paid off in the recent rescues.

Time reported that to date, the FBI and its partners have recovered more than 3,100 children and have convicted 1,400 pimps.

While the issue of sex trafficking gets much more visibility around a major sporting event like the Super Bowl, we must be aware that it is an ongoing problem that scars thousands of lives every day.

U.S. Rep. David Reichert, R-Wash., said in a hearing last week, "The prevalence of this problem at the Super Bowl allows us to focus national attention on it. But it is a problem seven days a week, 52 weeks a year for the children who are caught up in it. We owe it to them to develop real solutions."

If we are to develop real solutions, we must know what we are up against. Here are some facts compiled by the Covering House about sex trafficking:

- Human trafficking generates \$9.5 billion yearly in the United States (United Nations).
- Approximately 300,000 children are at risk of being prostituted in the United States (U.S. Department of Justice).
- The average age of entry into prostitution for a child victim in the United States is 13-14 years old (U.S. Department of Justice).
- A pimp can make \$150,000-\$200,000 per child each year, and the average pimp has four to six girls (U.S. Justice Department, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children).
- The average victim may be forced to have sex up to 20-48 times a day (Polaris Project).
- One in three teens on the street will be lured toward prostitution within 48 hours of leaving home (National

Runaway Hotline).

Sex trafficking will not be eliminated until the demand is eliminated. The demand will not be eliminated until the roots of disordered sexual desire are eliminated. One of the biggest causes of disordered sexual desire is porn viewing and porn addiction.

A documentary on sex trafficking, *Rape for Profit*, sent the message home: "Prostitution is the main act, and porn for these men is the dress rehearsal. They see it and then they go and act it out. ... When a society is demanding more porn, it's demanding more prostituted women."

A number of studies show the link between sex trafficking and pornography. Here are some of the findings:

- From a 2008 study: "Those who were the most frequent users of pornography were also the most frequent users of women in prostitution."
- From a 2005 journal: "Repeat users reported greater participation in all aspects of the sex industry than did non-customers. They were much more likely to report having purchased sexually explicit magazines or videos, and they were more than twice as likely to have visited nude establishments."
- From a 2001 "Sex Trafficking of Women in the United States" study: "Fifty percent of the international women stated that pornography had been used to 'educate' them into prostitution. One international woman stated that her pimp made her watch pornography in the beginning. Another reported that she had to watch pornography, because 'my clients asked me to do as they did it on the screen.'"

An all-male led film documentary called *Hearts of Men* seeks to address the root of the problem. One of the men who speaks in the film admits, "We're the root of this, and if we're the

root of this, we have to figure out what has to change. It has to start with us.”

Another man states, “One of the best things we can do for women is to get the hearts of men healthy. ... The way that we stop sex trafficking is by disciplining middle school boys. I mean, really, if you think about it, the average age of exposure to pornography is 8. If we get the guys, if we get the girls at a young age and we invest in them, we can see systemic change.”

This modern-day slavery has an even deeper slavery: an enslavement and addiction to sexual sin. Pornography enslaves men physically and psychologically, and this enslaves women and children literally via sex trafficking. Pornography is the gateway to sex trafficking. Men create the demand; women and children are the supply. If we transform the demand side, the supply side will also cease.

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4 Health Dangers of People-Pleasing

The Bible makes it clear that when we give our word, our yes should mean yes and our no, no. This sounds easy enough, but if you’re anything like me, meaning what you say isn’t exactly your forte.

There are often times when I know good and well that my yes would be better defined as a maybe, and then days, perhaps

minutes later, I'm wondering if it's too late to change my this-feels-like-an-optimistic-maybe yes into an absolutely-not-but-I'm flattered-you-asked no. (Have I lost you yet?)

Even when we're less than enthused about scheduling one more activity into our weeks, volunteering on another committee, joining an early a.m. gym class with a friend or hosting our 18th baby shower this year, we give our yeses readily for this simple reason: We're people pleasers.

I think it's fair to presume that most of the time, we all say yes with the best of intentions. We want to bless people with our talents, honor them with our time, relieve them with our strength and energy, and encourage them with our kindness. We know how much more "blessed it is to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35) because we have felt the ineffable waves of well-being that rush into our hearts and flood our souls after we do unto others with love and grace, joy and selflessness. But sometimes pleasing people becomes an all-consuming compulsion, one that replaces the sweet delight of do-gooding with an ironic dose of bitter displeasure.

If you're a chronic people pleaser, you could be on a dangerous path that could potentially harm your health and damage your relationships. Here are four warning signs to watch out for:

1. You're neglecting your health. If you're constantly saying yes, you're very well saying no to yourself too often. Wanting to care for others, of course, is not a bad thing, but when your own health is neglected, you won't be able to be your best for those you love most. If you don't set aside time throughout the day to eat healthy meals, exercise, pray and rest, you will quickly burn out and find yourself too tired, weak and weary to give your all to the tasks you're currently committed to, much less agree to take on more!

2. You're growing resentful. If, while doing for others, you

find yourself making sharp, acerbic comments or cracking subtle, sarcastic jokes, chances are good that your people-pleasing heart isn't in the right place. Maybe you said yes when you should have politely said no, and now you're resenting the person you originally set out to help.

Passive bitterness can grow into relationship-destroying hostility, so when you feel resentment rearing its ugly head, take a few breaths and gently communicate your feelings before they come out in an unsavory manner.

3. You're becoming stressed and depressed. Constantly trying to please others can lead you to become chronically stressed and feel emotionally drained. Rather than looking to medication to help you cope, try looking to your calendar. When you feel overwhelmed, make a list of all of your obligations and identify which of those are musts and which are options. Then identify one or two of the options that could be eliminated to make room for more "you time." Write down why you're making this cut so if you feel guilty about saying no, you will have a note to remind you of the importance of your decision. Ask a friend or family member to help hold you accountable to your commitment to unwind and refresh for the sake of your health and relationships.

4. You no longer enjoy other people or God's presence. For this sign, I wish to share the biblical story of sisters Mary and Martha and their very special dinner guest, Jesus. Martha is a perfect example of someone whose passion for pleasing others and showing hospitality completely stole her ability to enjoy the company of others:

"But the Lord said to her, 'My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her'" (Luke 10:41-42, NLT).

If you've ever thrown a party or hosted a special dinner in

your own home, then you can probably relate to Martha's worries. As soon as the invitations go out, the pressure is on to create for our guests a warm, inviting atmosphere, pleasant conversation, and, of course, a delicious meal that they'll be raving about for days. However, I would venture to guess that none of us has experienced the stress levels that must have overwhelmed Martha as she swept, scrubbed, mopped and chopped for the King of kings!

It's understandable that she was "upset over all these details": she was serving Jesus, after all. So why did the Lord rebuke Martha just for trying to be like Martha Stewart? (Sorry, I couldn't help myself.)

Martha shows what can easily happen to us if we focus more on doing than loving. You see, her desire to please had become so overpowering that it soon overshadowed her ability to enjoy her guests and embrace the blessing of their company. Her drive to be hospitable had, ironically, driven her to be quite the opposite as she accused Jesus of not caring about her while simultaneously tattling on her sister Mary:

"Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me" (Luke 10:40, NASB).

Martha probably had no intention of letting this get-together become a fretful, stress-inducing situation. It's doubtful she'd formulated a premeditated plan to embarrass or shame her sister in Jesus' presence. And I can imagine she wanted to kick herself with the foot she'd stuck in her mouth when she asked Jesus, healer of leprosy and opener of blind eyes, if He cared that she was serving Him solo. But what started out as a good-hearted act of kindness ended as a valuable lesson about priorities.

Notice that Jesus admonished Martha not for serving but for being worried and upset about serving. The Greek word used for

Martha's "worry" and "upset" can be translated as "be anxious about" and "troubled in mind," respectively. Martha's preoccupation with being a perfect hostess had stolen the joy of simply being in Jesus' presence.

What insight this story holds for us today! In addition to the jobs, chores and distractions of daily life, we also have myriad commitments that require our attention. These commitments are good, in and of themselves; indeed, many people have responsibilities to organize, serve, manage and volunteer within the body of Christ. But even in godly pursuits we can find ourselves anxious and "troubled in mind."

In all of our doing and helping, all of our planning and preparing, there is always just one thing we should be most concerned about. Mary, Jesus said, knew what it was: His presence!

As you go about your day today, be careful not to let the doing for others supersede the loving of others. Don't let time spent on noble tasks replace time spent with Jesus. And if you feel yourself becoming anxious, return to His feet and discover, as Mary did, the pricelessness of His presence.

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10 Men Christian Women Should Never Marry

My wife and I raised four daughters—without shotguns in the house!—and three of them have already married. We love our sons-in-law, and it's obvious God handpicked each of them to match our daughters' temperaments and personality.

I have always believed God is in the matchmaking business. If He can do it for my daughters, He can do it for you.

Today I have several single female friends who would very much like to find the right guy. Some tell me the pickings are slim at their church, so they have ventured into the world of online dating. Others have thrown up their hands in despair, wondering if there are any decent Christian guys left anywhere. They've begun to wonder if they should lower their standards in order to find a mate.

My advice stands: *Don't settle for less than God's best.* Too many Christian women today have ended up with an Ishmael because impatience pushed them into an unhappy marriage. Please take my fatherly advice: You are much better off single than with the wrong guy!

Speaking of "wrong guys," here are the top 10 men you should avoid when looking for a husband:

1. The unbeliever. Please write 2 Corinthians 6:14 on a Post-it note and tack it on your computer at work. It says, "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?" (NASB). This is not an outdated religious rule. It is the Word of God for you today.

Don't allow a man's charm, looks or financial success (or his willingness to go to church with you) push you to compromise

what you know is right. “Missionary dating” is never a wise strategy. If the guy is not a born-again Christian, scratch him off your list. He’s not right for you. I’ve yet to meet a Christian woman who didn’t regret marrying an unbeliever.

2. The liar. If you discover that the man you are dating has lied to you about his past or that he’s always covering his tracks to hide his secrets from you, run for the nearest exit. Marriage must be built on a foundation of trust. If he can’t be truthful, break up now before he bamboozles you with an even bigger deception.

3. The playboy. I wish I could say that if you meet a nice guy at church, you can assume he’s living in sexual purity. But that’s not the case today. I’ve heard horror stories about single guys who serve on the worship team on Sunday but act like Casanovas during the week. If you marry a guy who was sleeping around before your wedding, you can be sure he will be sleeping around after your wedding.

4. The deadbeat. There are many solid Christian men who experienced marital failure years ago. Since their divorce, they have experienced the Holy Spirit’s restoration, and now they want to remarry. Second marriages can be very happy. But if you find out that the man you are dating hasn’t been caring for his children from a previous marriage, you have just exposed a fatal flaw. Any man who will not pay for his past mistakes or support children from a previous marriage is not going to treat you responsibly.

5. The addict. Churchgoing men who have addictions to alcohol or drugs have learned to hide their problems—but you don’t want to wait until your honeymoon to find out that he’s a boozer. Never marry a man who refuses to get help for his addiction. Insist that he get professional help and walk away. And don’t get into a codependent relationship in which he claims he needs you to stay sober. You can’t fix him.

6. The bum. I have a female friend who realized after she married her boyfriend that he had no plans to find steady work. He had devised a great strategy: He stayed home all day and played video games while his professional wife worked and paid all the bills. The apostle Paul told the Thessalonians, "If anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either" (2 Thess. 3:10). The same rule applies here: If a man is not willing to work, he doesn't deserve to marry you.

7. The narcissist. I sincerely hope you can find a guy who is handsome. But be careful: If your boyfriend spends six hours a day at the gym and regularly posts closeups of his biceps on Facebook, you have a problem. Do not fall for a self-absorbed guy. He might be cute, but a man who is infatuated with his appearance and his own needs will never be able to love you sacrificially, like Christ loves the church (Eph. 5:25). The man who is always looking at himself in the mirror will never notice you.

8. The abuser. Men with abusive tendencies can't control their anger when it boils over. If the guy you are dating has a tendency to fly off the handle, either at you or others, don't be tempted to rationalize his behavior. He has a problem, and if you marry him you will have to navigate his minefield every day to avoid triggering another outburst. Angry men hurt women—verbally and sometimes physically. Find a man who is gentle.

9. The man-child. Call me old-fashioned, but I'm suspicious of a guy who still lives with his parents at age 35. If his mother is still doing his cooking, cleaning and ironing at that age, you can be sure he's stuck in an emotional time warp. You are asking for trouble if you think you can be a wife to a guy who hasn't grown up. Back away and, as a friend, encourage him to find a mentor who can help him mature.

10. The control freak. Some Christian guys today believe marriage is about male superiority. They may quote Scripture

and sound super-spiritual, but behind the façade of husbandly authority is deep insecurity and pride that can morph into spiritual abuse. First Peter 3:7 commands husbands to treat their wives as equals. If the man you are dating talks down to you, makes demeaning comments about women or seems to squelch your spiritual gifts, back away now. He is on a power trip. Women who marry religious control freaks often end up in a nightmare of depression.

If you are a woman of God, don't sell your spiritual birthright by marrying a guy who doesn't deserve you. Your smartest decision in life is to wait for a man who is sold out to Jesus.

To get the other side of this story, read "8 Women Christian Men Should Never Marry."

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Does the King James Bible Even Matter Anymore?

Writer and critic Christopher Hitchens was an outspoken critic of **religion**, but when it came to the King James Bible, he was a huge fan.

In the May 2011 edition of *Vanity Fair* magazine, he wrote a powerful article about the King James Bible and its impact on Western civilization. The title of the article was "When the King Saved God, with a subtitle that says, "An unbeliever

argues that our language and culture are incomplete without a 400-year-old book—the King James translation of the Bible. Spurned by the Establishment, it really represents a triumph for rebellion and dissent. Accept no substitutes!”

Here’s a powerful excerpt I thought you’d enjoy. Get out the tissues:

“Though I am sometimes reluctant to admit it, there really is something ‘timeless’ in the Tyndale/King James synthesis. For generations, it provided a common stock of references and allusions, rivaled only by Shakespeare in this respect. It resounded in the minds and memories of literate people, as well as of those who acquired it only by listening. From the stricken beach of Dunkirk in 1940, faced with a devil’s choice between annihilation and surrender, a British officer sent a cable back home. It contained the three words ‘but if not ...’ All of those who received it were at once aware of what it signified. In the Book of Daniel, the Babylonian tyrant Nebuchadnezzar tells the three Jewish heretics Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that if they refuse to bow to his sacred idol they will be flung into a ‘burning fiery furnace.’ They made him an answer: ‘If it be so, our god whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, o King. / *But if not*, be it known unto thee, o king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.’

“A culture that does not possess this common store of image and allegory will be a perilously thin one. To seek restlessly to update it or make it ‘relevant’ is to miss the point, like yearning for a hip-hop Shakespeare. ‘Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward,’ says the Book of Job. Want to try to improve that for Twitter? And so bleak and spare and fatalistic—almost non-religious—are the closing verses of Ecclesiastes that they were read at the Church of England funeral service the unbeliever George Orwell had requested in his will: ‘Also when they shall be afraid of that which is

high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home. ... Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. / Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was.'”

I’m certainly not one of those “King James only” people who think any other translation is wrong. I’ve personally read the introduction to the 1611 King James Bible in the British Museum, and the authors actually hope for better translations in the future. But the truth is, the King James Version united the West for centuries, and it’s impact on our arts, letters, music, politics and more cannot be measured. If you haven’t read the King James Version for awhile, check it out.

And by the way, I’d never read that story about Dunkirk, but it’s powerful stuff ...

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Before You Say ‘I Do’ : Premarital Questions

Perhaps you are dating seriously, your kids are dating seriously or you are in the process of preparing your kids to date seriously. Whatever the case may be, it’s important that you have ways to get to know your potential mate well.

By spending time with them, listening to the way they talk and

observing the way they act, you will learn much about their character.

To go even deeper in understanding someone before you say “I do,” here is a list of questions to be sure you discuss together:

Lifestyle

- Are they a morning person or a night person?
- Do they like to fall asleep to the TV or radio, or do they prefer quiet?
- Are they neat or messy? Do they pick up after themselves?
- Can they relax when there are chores to be done, or do they prefer working first, then relaxing?
- How often will they want to go out socially as a couple, on their own or with their friends?
- How much TV do they watch?
- How much time do they spend on their phone, on Facebook, on Twitter, on Instagram, etc.?
- How will you protect your time together? Will you set aside specific time each week for one-on-one time?
- Where will they want to spend the holidays—with their family or yours?
- How often will you spend time with each other’s family?
- Do they like to exercise? How often? Do they expect you to exercise too?
- Do they drink alcoholic beverages? How often?
- Do they have the ability to make and keep friends? Do you like and respect their friends?
- Do they want to live in the same town, or are they open to relocating?
- Do they want to live in the city, the country or the suburbs?

Children

- How many children do they want?
- How do they want to handle childcare?
- How do they want to handle discipline?
- Would they be open to adoption?

Faith

- What are their religious beliefs?
- How often do they attend worship services?
- How often do they plan on attending services once you are married?
- Do they plan on giving financially to their place of worship? If so, how much?
- What faith will you teach your children?
- What role will faith play in your day-to-day lives?

Commitment

- What are their views on divorce?
- In what circumstances would they consider divorce?
- Would they attend counseling if requested by you? At what point would they consider that an option?
- What steps will they take to “affair-proof” your marriage?
- What are their views on socializing with opposite-sex friends?

Financial

- Do they currently have a savings plan? Do they actually have money saved?
- Do they have a retirement plan?
- Do they have debt? What kind of debt? Credit card debt? Student loans? Car loans?
- Have they borrowed from family and friends? Do they still owe them?
- Do they pay their bills on time?
- Who will handle the bill-paying in your marriage?
- How much will you spend on gifts for family and friends?

- Do they have a budget plan for married life?

Ethics and Character

- Do they have clear-cut ideas about right and wrong, or do they subscribe to situational ethics?
- Will they lie if it makes things more convenient for them? (For example, calling in sick to work when they're actually well, cheating or being misleading in business deals, or saying they never got a request for something when they simply forgot to follow through.)
- How would they describe a person of good character?
- Are they willing to do hard work, or do they want instant success and quick money?
- Do they accept responsibility when they've made a mistake or try to blame others?

Personality Traits

- Do they have a quick temper? How do they show it? Screaming? Pouting? Walking away? Throwing or breaking things? Driving fast? Physical violence?
- Are they open to discussing sensitive subjects, or do they get defensive and withdraw?
- Do they take prescription drugs for mental illness? Would they be open to taking such medication? Would they be open to counseling?
- Do they hold a grudge, or are they forgiving?
- Do they complain often about people, work or other things?
- Do they criticize others, pointing out their flaws and shortcomings?

Intimacy

- Are you a virgin? Is your potential mate?
- How many sexual partners have you each had in the past? What does your potential mate think about those relationships?

- What are your expectations for sex with your potential mate, both before and after marriage?

Can you think of any questions I forgot? If so, please share your thoughts with me in a comment below.

Mark Merrill is the president of Family First. For the original article, visit .

Pastor Bayless Conley Remains in Intensive Care Unit After Critical Boating Accident

After a boating accident in late January, Pastor **Bayless Conley** remains hospitalized in the intensive care unit.

Conley is pastor of Cottonwood Church in Los Alamitos, Calif., and a speaker known for applying the Bible to everyday life through his television program, *Answers With Bayless Conley*. The broadcast reaches into more than 200 nations in the world.

“The injuries sustained to his neck and throat areas are beginning to heal,” his ministry has said in a statement. “The doctors are pleased with how he is progressing and expect a full recovery.

“Currently he remains in ICU. Please continue to hold Pastor Bayless up in **prayer**, believing for a rapid **healing** process. The Conley family is doing well and continues to be full of faith. They thank you for all of the love and support!”

Bayless grew up in Southern California, where, during his teenage years, he became involved in a lifestyle of drug and

alcohol abuse. After years of searching for truth and a number of near-death experiences, he found answers and freedom in Jesus when a 12-year-old boy shared God's message of hope with him in a park one day. Bayless' background and story have enabled him to reach a diverse audience globally.

Bayless and his wife, Janet, are the parents of three grown children and enthusiastic grandparents to grandsons Asher and Sawyer. Together they lead Cottonwood Church in Orange County, Calif., and passionately pursue life, God and family.

Bayless' ministry representatives also said the church and all of its ministry activities continue to move forward like normal. The church's leadership team is managing its day-to-day operational affairs.

"Again, the Conley family thanks you for your continued prayers," the statement concludes.

White House Again Delays Health Care Mandate for Employers

The **Obama administration** on Monday again delayed a contentious health care law requirement that all but the smallest employers provide coverage to full-time workers, this time by giving medium-sized businesses another year to comply.

The so-called employer mandate, which has been opposed by businesses, was originally supposed to take effect in January under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, known as **Obamacare**. But the administration granted a one-year delay in

July.

The latest change, published in a 227-page final rule, allows medium-sized businesses with 50-99 full-time workers to avoid a tax penalty until 2016 for failing to offer health insurance. It also allows larger employers to phase in coverage by offering a health plan to 70 percent of their full-time workforce next year, rising to 95 percent in 2016.

Firms with fewer than 50 full-time workers are not required to provide coverage under Obamacare, but could qualify for federal subsidies through new health insurance marketplaces established under Obamacare.

The regulation had been the subject of intense business lobbying and drew a largely upbeat response from employer groups.

"I am quite pleasantly surprised," said Neil Trautwein of the National Retail Federation, a Washington-based trade group. "This is beginning to look more like something the business community can live with."

But the change triggered another wave of Republican calls to postpone Obamacare's mandate for individuals, which requires most Americans to enroll in coverage by March 31 or pay a penalty in their 2014 income taxes.

"Much like the individual mandate, the business mandate is bad for middle-class families and it will harm economic growth. But the answer to this problem is not random unilateral changes, stoking uncertainty," House Republican Majority Leader Eric Cantor said in a statement.

"It's time to stop creating more chaos and delay Obamacare for all Americans."

Analysts said the change could help vulnerable Democrats in November's midterm elections battle for control of Congress by

delaying a potential crescendo of complaints from small-business leaders, a theme Republicans also picked up on.

“It is clear Democrats don’t think they can survive politically if Obamacare is allowed to fully go into effect,” said Dave Camp, Republican chairman of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee.

Medium-sized businesses employ about 7.9 million people in the United States, according to data provided by the Treasury Department. That number is dwarfed by the 31.3 million employed by firms with fewer than 50 full-time workers and another 74.3 million who work for companies with 100 employees or more.

Not all business reaction was positive.

Thomas Donohue, president and chief executive of the powerful U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said other steps were necessary to reduce, “the significant harm this law is inflicting on businesses of all sizes.”

“This short-term fix also creates new problems for companies by moving the goal posts of the mandate modestly when what we really need is a time-out,” Donohue said.

Treasury officials described the mandate’s two-year phase-in for larger employers as a gesture to help companies cope with a new definition of full-time employment that begins with an average of 30 hours a week rather than the traditional 40 hours. The regulation also allows employers to determine whether an employee is full-time by averaging work hours over a period of up to 12 months.

President Barack Obama’s signature domestic policy aims to extend health coverage to millions of uninsured Americans by allowing individuals and smaller employers to purchase subsidized private health insurance in new marketplaces set up in all 50 states.

The rules finalize draft proposals issued in December 2012 and took into consideration comments from businesses and congressional members, the Treasury Department said.

The regulations clarify that government volunteers, such as firefighters and emergency responders, are not considered full-time employees, an uncertainty that worried state and local governments.

Teachers and other education employees will not be treated as part-time for the year even, although their schools are closed or their work hours are limited in the summer, the rules said.

Additional safe harbors in the rules aim to make it easier for businesses to determine whether the coverage they offer is affordable to employees.

For adjunct college teachers, who were struggling with how to count all the hours they work, they can include 2 1/4 hours of work outside the classroom for each hour of classroom teaching they have a week.

For coverage of an employee's spouse and children, the final rules spare businesses from dependent coverage in 2015, as long as businesses are taking steps to offer this coverage in 2016.

Additional reporting by David Morgan; Editing by Karey Van Hall, Peter Cooney, Amanda Kwan and Andre Grenon

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'The Bible,' 'Grace Unplugged' Big Winners at Movieguide Awards

Winners of the annual \$100,000 Epiphany Prizes for entertainment that lifts up positive, godly messages were the TV miniseries *The Bible* and the movie *Grace Unplugged*. Winners accepted their awards in Los Angeles Friday night at the 22nd annual Movieguide Awards event, which is part of a family-uplifting ministry dedicated to redeeming the values of the entertainment industry.

"Stories open people's hearts, and that's when the grace of God can move in," said Roma Downey, who won the Grace Award for TV actress and shared in the Epiphany Prize for the most inspiring television program of 2013 with her husband, Mark Burnett, the accomplished television producer known for the TV programs *Shark Tank*, *The Apprentice*, *Survivor* and *The Voice*.

Ted Baehr, founder of Movieguide and author of the book *How to Succeed in Hollywood (Without Losing Your Soul)*, said, "2013 was the year that the good, the true and the beautiful reached new heights at the box office and in the TV ratings. 2013 was the year that *The Bible* won the ratings and the hearts of America."

One hundred million people have watched *The Bible* miniseries, according to Downey. It has encouraged water-cooler talk about faith and God across the country since it first aired last year. (The next project from the Downey/Burnett duo is the movie *Son of God*, which debuts in theaters Feb. 28.)

Baehr opened the gala event with his annual "Report to the Entertainment Industry."

"I was amazed that the number of movies with positive

Christian content increased to 66 percent of the movies released in 250 theaters or more," he said. "And movies with faith and values continue to win the box office, with 90 percent of the top 10 box office movies containing positive Christian and biblical content. Even Superman went to church in *Man of Steel*. So, the producers, writers, directors and studio executives in this room deserve to be commended."

Baehr told the audience of Hollywood heavy-hitters about the positive box office numbers that movies with faith and values attained in 2013, noting that movies with very strong Christian, redemptive worldviews tend to average three to six times more money in the United States and Canada than movies with very strong non-Christian worldviews.

For the first time ever, Baehr said, 100 percent of the top 10 movies overseas in 2013 had either strong or very strong Christian, redemptive, biblical or moral worldviews with strong moral and spiritually uplifting content. Furthermore, 80 percent of the top home videos in 2013 were Movieguide Award winners in either 2012 or 2013.

Baehr noted that study after study shows the content of movies and television have a profound effect on the culture, especially the hearts and minds and behavior of children and teenagers, but that even these children would rather see positive, uplifting entertainment.

Stunning audiences with poignancy and real-world struggles of faith, family relationships and life choices was the family-friendly movie *Grace Unplugged*, a Christian drama about a church singer (AJ Michalka) who becomes estranged from her father but then reaches a crossroads.

"2013 was the year that the prodigal daughter came home to her family and Jesus Christ in *Grace Unplugged*," Baehr said, citing it as the most inspiring film of the year.

The television program *Shark Tank* walked away with the \$50,000

Friess Free Enterprise Prize. Burnett, who produces the show, said his production company receives letters from many people who say they watch the show with their family and talk to their children about starting a business.

The winner of the \$50,000 Chronos Prize, supported by a grant from the John Templeton Foundation, was Matthew G. Hill and Landon Johnson, of Anaheim, Calif., for *Burning at Both Ends*.

Bill Engvall, the stand-up comedian who hosted the gala, said, "The Movieguide Awards help advance faith-based entertainment, [helping to steer the industry] back to normalcy. Not everything has to be shocking. You can be entertaining without being shocking. Look, I even love that a prayer is said on *Duck Dynasty*."

Duck Dynasty was honored at the gala, winning the Faith and Freedom Award for TV.

"We're so honored, and we want to thank the Lord," said Willie Robertson, one of the stars of the show. "I'm thankful I get to work with my family every day."

Robertson also won the Grace Award for TV Actor.

Also recognized at the awards gala for family-friendly, redeeming content were the movies *Frozen*, *Black Nativity*, *Linsanity*, *Turbo*, *42*, *Iron Man 3*, *Man of Steel* and *The Hobbit*. The TV shows *Blue Bloods* and *Last Man Standing* were also called out for setting a positive example.

For producing the *Jesus* film—a film that reportedly has been seen by more people on the planet than any other film, according to Movieguide—the Visionary Award was given to John Heyman, who described himself as "a nice Jewish boy" who is "a living, walking, talking example of the power of prayer."

In the mid-1980s, Heyman survived a terrible car accident, and while he was fighting for his life, 6,000 letters arrived from

people who said they were praying for him. Three decades later, he readily acknowledges the impact of those prayers.

“Movies should empower us to change; however, not Pollyanna purist,” said actor Corbin Bernsen, best known for the once-highly-popular TV show *LA Law*. “The word *wholesome* [to describe movies] sounds like homogenized milk. We [Christians in Hollywood] are doing a lot more than that.”

The Movieguide Awards ceremony will air on the Reelz cable channel March 1. A musical performance by Joni Eareckson Tada of the song “Alone Yet Not Alone” will be featured on the broadcast. The song received an Oscar nomination for Best Original Song of 2013 until it was revoked under questionable circumstances.

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