I am sharing a very sober message with every friend of Liberty Counsel as the momentous year 2016 draws to a close. I pray you will carefully consider this message because I believe the future of our nation is in the hands of God-fearing people like you who have access to God’s Throne of Mercy.

Back in September, two months before the tumultuous general election, my friend Franklin Graham asked me to write an article for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) magazine on the theme of “Decision America 2016.” I am updating that message and sharing it with you in light of what we are facing in 2017 and beyond.

For the first time in the history of the planet, a nation’s government is forcing its citizens to participate in human genocide. No other nation has ever officially dictated such a policy as an ongoing part of its system of government.

Tragically, that nation is the United States of America.

Additional unprecedented threats are coming through the militant LGBTQ agenda. Same-sex “marriage” and the abolition of gender will have a direct impact on every American and every institution. When sexual preferences are elevated to a civil right on par with race, discrimination laws that are now applied to race and ethnicity will be equally and rigorously applied to sexual behavior.

Even churches will not be immune from such mandates, as we are already seeing in Massachusetts and other states. Make no mistake: This attack on liberty is coercive.

Without question, our religious freedom is in more jeopardy than at any time since the founding of the country.

With Your Help, Liberty Counsel Will Meet 2017’s Unprecedented Challenges

A message from our Founder and Chairman, Mat Staver

Mat Staver, Founder and Chairman of Liberty Counsel
Liberty Counsel is now among America’s largest and most effective organizations supporting the nation of Israel. For many years, we have mobilized hundreds of thousands of Christians in communicating love and tangible support for Israel and her national leadership.

In 2011, Anita and I traveled to Israel and privately met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at his office in Jerusalem. We conveyed a message of support that was backed by the signatures of over 110,000 friends of Liberty Counsel that had pledged at all costs to “Stand with Israel.” The bond between these leaders was cemented and the Prime Minister asked us to help build relationships between the Israeli people and American believers. We received Mr. Netanyahu’s challenge as a blessing from the Lord and began expanding our outreach to Israel.

Liberty Counsel has long held that every nation and every individual will be held accountable for the way in which they treat the nation of Israel and the Jewish people. The foundational Scripture for this conviction is found in Genesis 12:3 in which the Lord says of Abraham and his descendants, “I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” A similar admonition is found in Psalm 122:6, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May they prosper who love you.”

The Bible contains many direct statements of God’s intention to judge both individuals and nations according to their acts toward His people. Indeed, Obadiah 1:15 declares:

The day of the Lord is near for all nations. As you have done to Israel, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your own head.

What is true for the Gentile nations is true, as well, for believers in Jesus. We, too, will be held accountable for our response to His people. In fact, how we treat Israel is a gauge of our relationship with Jesus. If we love Jesus, we shall love the people whom He loves and always will love.

Christ’s description of His judgment of the nations in Matthew 25 supports the idea that He will hold all people accountable for how they treat Israel when He returns and sits “on his throne in heavenly glory” – in Jerusalem. With all the nations “gathered before him . . . he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats” (v. 32). To the sheep, he announces:

“Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” (vv. 34-35)

And when the righteous ask the Lord when they came to his aid, He will answer: “I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me” (v. 40).

The identity of the “least of these brothers of mine” is sometimes interpreted to mean the poor and underprivileged, but Jesus may well have another more specific group in mind. Remember, His throne will be in Jerusalem, so when he speaks of “these brothers of mine,” he may well be referring to those physically living in Israel’s capital when He returns: His own kinsmen in the flesh, the Jewish people.

“The expression ‘these brothers’ must refer to a third group that is neither sheep nor goats,” states the Bible Knowledge Commentary: “The only possible group would be Jews, physical brothers of the Lord.”

It’s a sobering conclusion and drives home why Israel matters to the church – and to you. It’s clear from history that the church has stumbled over Israel – often choosing to reject and persecute the people God chose and loves. Today, as always, Israel poses a test to the nations, the church, and to you.

“In God’s hand and plan, Israel will prove a point to all humanity – a last days’ great divide. The Church will not be exempt,” remarks Sandra Teplinsky, author of Why Still Care About Israel? “If God is allowing Israel to serve as a strategic point of division. Some in the Body of Christ will stand with the sons and daughters of Jacob; some will turn away. As conflict escalates between Israel and her enemies, your stand in the end will be less about the Jewish state and more about Him.”

But by standing with Israel, in compassion and courage, you can impact history and speed the advance of God’s kingdom – just as early Christian Zionists proved pivotal to the rebirth of modern Israel.

“I don’t believe the Jewish state would have been possible without Christian Zionism,” Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said. Just as Christians helped mid-wife the physical restoration of Israel, believers now have a role in its spiritual restoration as well. As a former Israeli Foreign Ministry official observed:

With Christians now reaching out to the Jewish people in genuine contrition and love, we are witnessing a remarkable phenomenon . . . that will, please God, usher in the final redemption of the Jewish people and of all humankind.

God’s Word tells us redemption is coming. “All Israel will be saved,” Paul proclaims. “The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob” (Romans 11:26). And, as we have discussed, every Christian will be held accountable for their acts and attitudes toward the nation of Israel.

There are hundreds of biblical references to God’s love for the nation of Israel and Liberty Counsel has responded to the scriptural command to bless His people. Have you joined us? You can be a part of Liberty Counsel’s outreach – as Benjamin Netanyahu exhorted us – to build relationships between Israel and American believers. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Resist the growing anti-Semitism plaguing the nations. Bless and defend Israel – and pray for God to hasten her coming redemption!

Learn more about Christians In Defense of Israel at CIDIIsrael.org. Visit CovenantJourney.org to get more information about our breakthrough ministry to Christian college-aged leaders.
WHAT YOU MADE POSSIBLE: ACCOMPLISHMENTS & PENDING LITIGATION

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

• Filed a federal suit and an appeal on behalf of Tom Parker, Associate Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court, challenging the constitutionality of several speech-restrictive Alabama Codes of Criminal Ethics and the Alabama Constitution’s automatic removal provision that requires judges be automatically suspended when the Judicial Inquiry Commission issues a charge. The radical Southern Poverty Law Center is trying to remove Justice Parker from the bench.

• Continue to defend Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore who was unlawfully suspended from the bench for the rest of his term ending in January 2019. Liberty Counsel argued before the Court of the Judiciary in the Alabama Supreme Court and the Chief Justice testified regarding the politically-motivated charges focused solely on his January 2016 Administrative Order in which he merely provided the status of the marriage case pending before the Court.

• Filed a motion for recusal of four Alabama Supreme Court justices in order for Moore to soon receive a fair hearing in the appeal hearing to his case.

• Successfully defended Rowan County, Kentucky, Clerk Kim Davis against the ACLU, which tried to force her to issue same-sex marriage licenses with her name and authorization on them. Worked with new Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin and the legislature to unanimously pass religious freedom protection for Kim and all Kentucky clerks.

• Represented Magistrate Brenda Bumbarger to intervene in a lawsuit against North Carolina state law SB2 that provides a religious accommodation for magistrates who have a conscientious objection to granting marriage licenses for same-sex couples. The judge later dismissed the suit brought by the plaintiffs and the case is now on appeal.

• Supported Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant for signing HB 286, known as the Ohio Pastor Protection Act that protects pastors and churches from performing same-sex weddings.

• Filed an amicus brief on behalf of Little Sisters of the Poor’s legal challenge to the ObamaCare requirement that non-church religious organizations must provide contraceptives and abortion-inducing drugs and devices at no cost to the employees.

• Successfully represented Child Evangelism Fellowship New York Clubs in many school districts throughout the country regarding the use of religious books and equal treatment for the after-school Christian clubs.

• Won a major case involving Child Evangelism Fellowship in Ohio after three-year lawsuit against the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

• Provided legal counsel to many school districts and local government bodies regarding prayer to open the public meetings.

• Provided legal counsel to many school districts about the Obama LGBT directive seeking to force schools K-12 to imposed a dangerous “gender identity” policy on the students.

• Provided legal counsel to school districts and local government bodies on commemoration Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

• Filed an amicus brief in the U. S. Supreme Court on its own behalf and for the National Hispanic Leadership Conference-CONELA to end discrimination against churches in the case of Trinity Lutheran Church of Columbia v. Pauley.

• Successfully represented the Zavala family in California regarding the violation of the Desert Rose Elementary School in California of their child’s constitutional rights to share Bible verses and encouraging notes with classmates during non-instructional time, including during the lunch period. The school sent a Deputy Sheriffs to the Zavala’s home to warn the family to stop bringing Bible stories to school. But, the Palmdale School District backed down and allowed the seven-year-old to continue sharing the Bible verses and stories.

• Continued to defend Pastor Scott Lively in a case filed by Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG) and financed by rogue billionaire George Soros in which SMUG seeks to silence and impose significant criminal penalties against Lively for speech about homosexuality in Uganda in 2002 and 2009. This year alone, the case has involved tens of thousands of pages of discovery, multiple depositions, and over 300-pages of legal argument.

• Filed a brief with the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in Mountain Right to Life v. Kamala Harris that challenges California’s Assembly Bill 775, which imposes onerous notification and disclosure requirements on pro-life crisis pregnancy centers.

• Attended a U.S. House Judiciary Committee hearing to discuss the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits funding abortions with taxpayer dollars, and H.R. 3504, known as the Born Alive Infants Protection Act, which extends legal protection to infants who are born alive after a “failed” attempt at induced abortion.

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

• Defended and had criminal charges dropped against Sandra “Susan” Merritt after a Houston grand jury supposedly investigated Planned Parenthood (PPH) instead filed charges against Sandra for her undercover video exposing the barbaric practices of selling babies’ body parts. The charges were filed by PPH for her connection to the undercover videos produced by the Center for Medical Progress opposing PPH’s gruesome trade in aborted babies’ body parts.

• Continue to defend Sandra “Susan” Merritt against a federal RICO law suit filed by Planned Parenthood in San Francisco. PPH claims it lost tens of millions of dollars in taxpayer funds because of Sandra’s undercover video exposing the sale of babies’ body parts.

• Continue to defend pro-life advocate Larry Cirignano for his peaceful, lawful, constitutionally protected speech for his own conscience and for the religious beliefs of his predominantly Lutheran abortion clinic situated between an elementary and a middle school at Two Rivers Public Charter School in Washington, D.C. The school filed suit seeking to prevent Larry and others from exposing the abortion clinic’s plans to the public.

• Filed an amicus brief on before the U.S. Supreme Court on behalf of Operation Rescue, which obtained extensive evidence of unsanitary conditions in Texas abortion clinics, and the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, an organization of over 40,000 Hispanic churches, concerning Planned Parenthood’s targeting and endangering minority women.

• Provided assistance for pro-life advocates in Oklahoma City regarding SB 1552 which allowed for the revocation of medical licenses for doctors who perform abortions after viability.

• Filed suit and are pursuing an appeal against the city of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, because its ordinance made “speech about sexuality” on public sidewalks and public property 20 feet away from abortion clinic entrances, exits, and driveways.

• Filed suit on behalf of three faith-based, crisis pregnancy centers in California challenging the law that prohibits public funding for the clinic of Planned Parenthood’s Pregnancy Planning Services which threatens the revocation of medical licenses.

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• Filed a brief in the state appeal in Gainesville Free Will Baptist Church v. City of Gainesville, Florida, on behalf of the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American College of Pediatricians, and argued in favor of a 24-hour waiting period to its legal challenge to an abortion law in Florida. One of our Covenant Journey alumni, who is the youngest female elected to the Florida Legislature, was a major supporter for our brief.

• Filed a brief with the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in Mountain Right to Life v. Kamala Harris that challenges Continued on page 7...
Recent battles in Iraq and Syria have greatly increased the suffering of those who are caught between armies fighting to liberate cities, towns, and entire regions from ISIS occupation. Throughout the fall of 2016, intense shelling and a protracted siege have left the inhabitants of Aleppo, Syria, decimated and in total desperation to find relief and a place of safety. Syrian and Russian forces have been unleashing in their joint attack on rebel forces bottled up in the city and the attacks have frequently been indiscriminate. The civilian population has suffered horrendous damage. Meanwhile, in what has been billed as the liberation of ISIS’ last major stronghold in Iraq, the ancient city of Mosul has faced near-total devastation as Iraqi forces attempt to drive ISIS occupiers out of the city and surrounding region. As in Aleppo, civilian casualties in Mosul are catastrophically high and there are reports of ISIS using civilians as “human shields.”

United Nations observers have warned there will soon be an additional million new refugees in the war-torn region, over and above the previously estimated 10–15 million displaced people since the beginning of the ISIS insurgency. The UN also reports that half of the victims who have been displaced are children.

This explosive new situation is placing enormous stress on relief organizations like Liberty Relief International (LRI). Thankfully, thousands of friends have come alongside LRI to provide “Survival Food Boxes” to those suffering deprivation of food, water, medicine, and other items necessary for survival. Each Food Box contains enough rice, pasta, canned meat, cheese, and other items to feed an entire family for a full month. In September alone, over 1,500 friends of LRI sponsored one or more Food Boxes that have made a real impact in meeting the needs of displaced refugees. But for those who somehow escape this living hell, LRI and our on-the-ground partners can provide a lifeline to recovery.

The remaining days of 2016 are crucial to LRI’s fundraising efforts. We are praying that we can raise at least another $50,000 above our regular December budget for LRI to provide a thousand more Food Boxes to Christians and other minorities caught in the crosshairs of warring armies.

In many of these embattled areas where human suffering is so severe, our sponsored teams work in the eye of the storm, utilizing established local and underground networks to distribute food, water, medical, and hygiene supplies. Our sponsored camps serve as an oasis of protection where Christian refugees find both the physical and spiritual needs of frightened, hurting refugees every day, thanks to the faithfulness and generosity of friends and supporters like you.

We know that many of our friends have sacrificed a great deal to help Christians and others struggling for survival in Syria and Iraq for many months now. But as the suffering in these devastated regions intensifies due to the repeated attempts to liberate ISIS and Syrian rebel strongholds, LRI remains one of the few relief organizations still distributing life-sustaining supplies into the hands of displaced people in the region.

Until ISIS is destroyed, the pressing need to help our brothers and sisters in Christ and other persecuted minorities will continue. Please, help to the extent you are able. May God greatly bless you for your prayers and financial support!

For more information, visit LibertyReliefInternational.org.

Continued from page 5

- Provided testimony and legal opinion before numerous school boards and local government bodies opposing dangerous “gender identity” and so-called “bathroom” laws.
- Provided testimony and legal opinion to the Massachusetts legislature regarding House Bill 4233 (formerly HB1577), known as the Bathroom Bill, that imposes criminal penalties (including up to a year in jail) on business owners and churches which attempt to prevent biological men from using women’s facilities.
- Filed a brief in the G.G. v. Gloucester County School Board case, in which the federal Court of Appeals ruled that the federal law known as Title IX should be interpreted to include “gender identity,” and thus that court ruled that a girl who wants to identify as a boy should be able to use the boy’s restroom. The U.S. Supreme Court blocked the federal court of appeals decision.
- Opposed the Government Services Administration which enacted a regulation declaring that transgender employees and visitors must be allowed to use the bathrooms that match their gender identity in more than 9,000 federal buildings and offices in more than 2,000 cities nationwide.
- Provided model language to ensure that church programs, including scout troops, remain consistent with God’s Word if they maintain their association with Boy Scouts of America.
- Filed a brief in the High Court of Romania opposing same-sex marriage in which the court sided with our arguments.
- Featured on CBS Evening News because of Liberty Counsel’s work in more than half of the states providing consultation regarding religious freedom and so-called “bathroom bills.”

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Continued from page 5
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Other activities:

- Stand with Kentucky County Clerk Kim Davis when she was re-elected at Family Research Council’s Summit for the Family and when she attended President Obama’s final State of the Union Address.
- Stand with Kim Davis when she received the National Religious Broadcasters President’s Award for her faithful commitment to Christian values despite political and media opposition.
- Launched the second year of Covenant Journey experiential tours of Israel for Christian college-age students who have leadership potential. Students from over 150 colleges and universities have participated including Christian, private, public, and Ivy League schools.
- Mat Staver received the Ronald Reagan Freedom Fighter Award at the California Republican Assembly in Buena Park, California, and gave the keynote speech entitled, “Religious Freedom Under Fire,” which also addressed the recent accusation from the recent passing of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia.
- Mat Staver served on the Southern Baptist Convention’s 2016 Committee on Resolutions that adopted a platform which supports Israel, natural marriage, and religious liberty.
- Launched the fourteenth annual “Friend or Foe” Graduation Prayer Campaign that serves to protect religious viewpoints at graduation. Liberty Counsel seeks to educate and, if necessary, litigate to ensure that prayer and religious viewpoints are not censored during graduation ceremonies and also throughout the year.
- Launched the thirteenth annual “Friend or Foe” Christmas Campaign that serves to protect religious viewpoints during the Christmas season. Liberty Counsel seeks to educate and, if necessary, litigate to ensure that prayer and religious viewpoints are not censored.
- Launched new website for Christians in Defense of Israel. www.CIDIsrael.org
- Financially supported persecuted Christians by providing humanitarian relief, shelter, food, training, and indigenous-language Bibles through our ministry Liberty Relief International (LRI). www.LiberityReliefInternational.org
- Hosted year-round and summer interns in Florida, Virginia, Washington, D.C., and Israel.
- Provided counsel on national public policy and internship opportunities for college students in our Washington, D.C., office. www.LC.org and www.LCAction.org
- Gathered hundreds of thousands of activist citizen petitions and delivered them to members of Congress. www.LibertyCounsel.com
- Hosted “The Awakening 2016” in Orlando, Florida, bringing together leading pro-life, pro-family, and pro-liberty organizations in America and featuring 46 nationally-known speakers.

For more information, visit LibertyReliefInternational.org.
Continued from page 1

WITH YOUR HELP, LIBERTY COUNSEL WILL MEET 2017’S UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGES

unyielding, and highly aggressive. No one will be exempt.

Because religious freedom must be defended in the judicial system, Liberty Counsel is redoubling our resolve to meet the escalating challenges to religious liberty and freedom of conscience in the nation’s courtrooms, in the legislative chambers, and in the court of public opinion. All of us must be prepared to oppose and resist unjust laws.

Resolve to join Liberty Counsel’s aggressive defense of life, liberty, and family in 2017! I’m praying that many of our Liberty Counsel team members will send the largest year-end gift to date in response to the dramatic challenges American believers will face in 2017.

But, do not be dismayed or give up for one second. We serve the Creator of the universe with Whom NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE! I repeat, NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD. The Lord birthed us for these times. He is in control and is looking for faithful people to stand. As for Liberty Counsel and me, we will stand! I ask you to stand with us and for God’s agenda and His values.

Working together, we could well experience the greatest era yet for His church. Remember, Jesus said the “gates of Hell shall not prevail against the church.” We can be a light and push back the darkness and the evil forces that have brought America to this horrible place. Stand with us in prayer and financial support during this intense spiritual and cultural battle for the soul of America!

YOUR LEGACY GIFT CAN MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE

Over the years since our founding in 1989, Liberty Counsel has relied upon tens of thousands of friends to help us with financial support. We are a faith-based ministry. Every day, we trust God anew for the resources to continue our vital mission. By including us in your estate planning, you can leave a lasting legacy that will impact many lives, receive significant tax benefits and current income for a term or for life, and help Liberty Counsel continue the calling to restore our culture by advancing religious freedom, the sanctity of human life, and the family.

Planned Gifts
- Simple Bequests
- Charitable Trusts
- Annuities

“Every generation must yearn for liberty and fight to preserve it!” — Mat Staver

For more information on how to make a legacy gift to Liberty Counsel, contact Liberty Counsel’s Office of Constituency Affairs at 800-671-1776 or email Liberty@LC.org

Understanding Why Israel Matters

We are very excited about the launch of a deeply insightful, brand new documentary series created by Liberty Counsel and the Trinity Broadcasting Network.

Please check our website for viewing times in your area.

www.CIDI.org

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