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OF BATHROOM BILLS AND BASIC BELIEFS

by Joe Dallas

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SYNOPSIS

The latest political controversy related to the gay rights movement concerns the group commonly known as “transgender,” and their right to use the bathroom and showering facilities of their choice. “Transgender” is a broad term covering those dressing and living according to their chosen sex rather than their assigned one (transsexuals) along with those who live outside normally prescribed gender roles. A number of states already have adopted laws guaranteeing the right to use the bathroom of your choice—men’s or women’s room—according to the sex with which you identify.

In response, a number of states have adopted laws protecting the use of bathroom and shower facilities by requiring that a person use only the facility matching the sex on her or his birth certificate, or use instead a single-occupancy facility.

These laws, often referred to as “bathroom bills,” have become more controversial than the laws to which they were responding. Accordingly, major businesses and celebrities have boycotted states with bathroom bills, and the controversy over whether or not a person should be able to enter a restroom based only on his or her self-identification has quickly replaced the earlier controversy over same-sex marriage.

The Christian pondering these laws and controversies is left to consider whether the issue is a primary or secondary one, which will determine whether efforts invested in addressing this controversy will be worthwhile.

A review of the Bible's prioritizing of male/female distinctives yields the conclusion that this is, indeed, a primary issue, calling for the scrutinizing of policies related to it, and the enacting of practices that constitute an appropriate response.

That response springs from an understanding that laws allowing for indiscriminate use of public facilities constitute a three-fold violation: Violation of Safety, Violation of Religious Liberty, and Violation of Binary Boundaries.

I've always looked and felt older than my age. When I was young, that had its advantages, so I demanded that others agree with my self-view, despite the facts. I passed for eighteen by the time I was thirteen, enabling me to buy cigarettes over the counter, and I first stepped inside a bar at fifteen, passing for twenty-one. As a rebellious kid, my older appearance seemed an asset, and since I saw myself as emotionally advanced, I felt I had the right to insist others validate my identification as an adult rather than my actual teen status.

Now I'm sixty-one, and though I no longer relish it, I continue to look and feel older, which still has its perks. Plenty of restaurants and theaters giving discounts to sixty-five-year-olds offer them as soon as they see me, raising an obvious moral question: should I take advantage of senior discounts because of the way I'm perceived or feel? Should I allow (much less insist) that others conform their policies and practices to my self-view or my appearance? Am I really able to alter reality by claiming that what I feel overrides the birth date on my driver's license?

The dilemma of accepting unmerited food discounts is minor, even amusing. There is nothing funny, however, about the similar, graver dilemma Western culture wrestles with today over gender. If people self-identify as one sex when their anatomy testifies to another, are we obliged to adjust our policies and practices to their self-view? Should government compel us to adjust, and if it does, how should Christians respond? Shall anatomical males who call themselves females share toilets and showers with women? Are laws preserving strict male and female distinctives unfair to transsexuals? Is it bigoted to even ask this?

The latest battleground over these questions, though surely not the last, is found in the Carolinas. On March 23, 2016, the General Assembly of North Carolina passed House Bill 2, the *Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act*,¹ which limited the use of public bathrooms and shower facilities.

Under HB 2, public "single-sex multiple occupancy bathroom and changing facilities" (showers or bathrooms used by more than one person at a time, and designated "men's room" or "women's room") can be used only by those whose designated sex on their birth certificates matches the sex designation on the facility. If you want to use the women's room, your birth certificate needs to say "female," the

converse being true for the men's room.

Allowance for transgender persons is made by establishing "single-occupancy bathrooms or changing facilities," so, clearly, transsexuals are not prohibited from using public restrooms or showers. Rather, they are limited to using either the restroom matching their birth certificate or using the private single-occupancy facility.²

Senator Lee Bright of South Carolina introduced a similar bill in April,³ which is already generating the sort of protest, rhetoric, and business disruptions North Carolina continues to face. Objections to these privacy bills go beyond petitions and sign waving, and it's hard to say which is more surprising about these objections: their vehemence or the variety of sources from which they come.

Political leaders from both sides of the aisle have voiced their opinion. Democratic Senator Marlon Kimpson of South Carolina said, "I can't imagine a more ridiculous bill,"⁴ the state's governor Nikki Haley dismissed it as something addressing a battle South Carolina didn't need,⁵ and Republican presidential contenders Donald Trump and John Kasich both went on record opposing the bill.⁶

Objections from businesses, however, may be more compelling to the average North Carolinian than sound bites from politicians. CNN estimates that House Bill 2 has cost the state 400 jobs⁷ since Pay-Pal has cancelled its plans to open a new global operations center in Charlotte because of the bill. Additionally, Starbucks has gone on record with at least one hundred other companies in asking North Carolina to repeal it.⁸

Celebrity opposition is predictable but notable. Bruce Springsteen cancelled his North Carolina concert, declaring HB 2 "an attempt by people who cannot stand the progress our country has made in recognizing the human rights of all of our citizens to overturn that progress,"⁹ and Ringo Starr followed suit, cancelling his scheduled North Carolina concert with the rationale, "We need to take a stand against this hatred."¹⁰ Entertainers Nick Jonas and Demi Lovato have done the same,¹¹ and will no doubt be joined by others.

Even Fox News commentator Charles Krauthammer, a well-respected conservative voice, questioned the need for the bill by asking, "Do we really have an epidemic of transgenders being evil in bathrooms?"¹²

Positions, Policies, and Practices

All of this leaves Christians wondering what our *position* should be on the subject of transsexuals, what *policies* regarding them we should support or resist, and what *practices* we should adopt in response to laws encoding transsexualism, or other laws protecting personal and religious liberties for those who oppose it. The subject is being widely discussed, and we can hardly be relevant, much less effective, in ministry and service if we withdraw from the national debate on bathroom bills.

First, we should consider whether we're dealing with primary versus secondary issues. (These should be distinguished from essential versus nonessential *doctrines*,

which have already been expounded on in the CHRISTIAN RESEARCH JOURNAL.)¹³ Primary issues are doctrinally based moral issues compelling us to take a stand, first within the church and, when possible, the culture as well.

Slavery was such an issue, as was segregation, and human trafficking remains a primary concern. These are topics requiring clarity of position, policy, and priority, in that we not only hold beliefs about them but also consider those beliefs important enough to initiate action. That may call for drastic measures such as civil disobedience, or for more restrained efforts such as lobbying, organizing, or working for change within the system.

The complementary nature of humanity displayed in the male/female contrast, along with human sexual behavior, both qualify as primary concerns because the distinctive established in Genesis between man and woman is one so profound that God Himself pronounced it the solution to man's basic need for partnering (Gen. 2:18) and as inherently good (Gen. 1:31). Once established, the differences between the sexes are recognized and commended in Scripture, most notably by Jesus Himself (Matt. 19:4) with specific, contrasting roles and expectations attached to each (Eph. 5:22–24; 1 Tim. 2:8–11; 1 Tim. 5:9–10 and 14; Titus 2:3–5; 1 Pet. 3:1–6). Indeed, the sexual differences are referenced in both Testaments, and the assignment of one's sex is cited as springing from the foreknowledge and foreordination of God (Jer. 1:5; Ps. 139:13–16). So the sex we're born with is the sex we're assigned, an immutable characteristic meant to be embraced, impossible to alter.

Sexual morality—the principles guiding our use of these assigned bodies—is likewise a primary concern. In fact, the first martyrdom described in the New Testament occurred because John the Baptist publicly criticized Herod's illicit relationship (Mark 6:18), and the first recorded case of church discipline occurred in response to sexual sin (1 Cor. 5:1–5). Indeed, sexual immorality is one of only a few behaviors Paul said warrants our withdrawal from Christians who practice it (1 Cor. 5:11), and he further describes it as unique in the damage it does to the body itself (1 Cor. 6:18).

For these reasons, the blurring of the genders and the sexual misuse of the body call for correction when they occur within the church, and response from the church when they're practiced in the culture. Paul did say we're not necessarily called to impose moral standards onto consenting adults (1 Cor. 5:9–13), but surely we are called to express them (Eph. 5:11).

With that in mind, a Christian response to laws allowing anatomical males access to female bathroom facilities, or anatomical females access to male bathroom facilities, is an imperative. A reasoned argument against such laws, collective support for (and defense of) bills amending or overturning them, and responsible actions when needed, all come under the umbrella of *practices* we should enact in response to *policies* at odds with primary biblical *positions*.

An Unfabricated Crisis

Would to God Governor Haley and Charles Krauthammer were right in claiming laws such as HB 2 fabricated a problem that really doesn't exist, but, sadly, they're wrong. As of March 2016, nineteen states currently have gender identity and orientation protection laws on the books.¹⁴ Many of these laws refer to "discrimination based on gender identity" being prohibited in "public facilities,"¹⁵ and Colorado, Iowa, Washington State, and Washington D.C., along with California's city of San Francisco specify that access to public bathrooms is granted people according to the way they identify themselves, regardless of appearance, much less anatomy.¹⁶

Only the most naïve would assume the trend won't continue until all states have joined in, meaning that, on a national scale, members of any sex will use any public lavatory they choose, and, should one choose a lavatory of the opposite sex, he need only claim to identify himself as female (or herself as male) to gain access.

While a knee-jerk reaction to all of this is common and understandable, explosive name-calling or aggression won't help. A more redemptive response will object to this trend because it constitutes three major violations: Violation of Safety, Violation of Binary Boundaries, and Violation of Religious Liberty.

Violation of Safety

If laws enacted to protect one group's feelings pose literal danger to another larger group, then something's obviously amiss, but that's not stopping the nation from enacting such laws.

Consider this: the percentage of adults identifying as "transgendered" hovers somewhere around 0.3.¹⁷ Surely that minority status doesn't mean that transgendered people, whether literally transsexual or simply living outside mainstream gender roles, should be left without protection. Laws can and should ensure the physical safety and fair treatment of any citizen, regardless of how that citizen chooses to self-identify, dress, or behave. While Scripture condemns distorting one's assigned sex, it also calls believers to love their neighbors, transgenders included (Mark 12:31), to live at peace with all people (Rom. 12:18), and to treat others as they wish to be treated (Luke 6:31).

So-called bathroom bills deserve our support because they violate none of these injunctions. Far from preventing transgendered people from using public restrooms, they provide for single-occupancy facilities—a safe, nonthreatening compromise.

Some are trying to equate these compromises with the "separate but equal" approach to segregation imposed decades ago against African Americans, but that's a poor comparison. Separate but equal facilities kept one race apart from the general population in numerous ways—separate drinking fountains, toilets, movie theaters, and even schools. Everyday life for the African American under "separate but equal" was marked by reminders that they were second-class citizens. Bathroom bills, by

comparison, provide separation between the anatomical sexes in only one area, a place we've always believed warranted singular privacy: the bathroom or public shower.

In this area of life, we've always practiced "separate but equal," giving men and women separate but equal facilities, and neither gender has been deprived fair treatment as a result.

Yet some transgenders and their advocates complain that if they identify as a certain sex, they're being discriminated against when they're denied use of the bathroom designated to the sex they've chosen. Thereby, they claim, they're being emotionally damaged.

We can debate the difference between "hurt and irritated" versus literal "emotional damage," and we rightfully can challenge the notion that the inconvenience of using one facility in lieu of another is really harmful. Still, if someone is hurt or angered by a policy, that should matter to us, even if we support the policy. Indifference is hardly a virtue, but neither is endangerment, and common sense reminds us that laws allowing people to use the bathroom of choice also flash a green-light to sexual predators. Women, young girls in particular, are made vulnerable to serious violations, all in the interest of accommodating the desires of a minority wishing to use one washroom, though another is available. That's an ugly fact already confirmed by even uglier recent incidents.

This month (April 2016) a ten-year-old girl found a man in the women's restroom taking pictures over and under the toilet stalls. Upon investigation, police found child pornography in his possession.¹⁸ In Toronto two years ago, a man claimed to be transgender so as to gain access to women at two Toronto shelters and subsequently was jailed "indefinitely" after being declared by a judge a "dangerous offender."¹⁹ In Seattle, Washington, just a few weeks after the state implemented new regulations allowing people to choose their restroom based on their selected gender identity, a man walked into the women's locker room at a public pool and began undressing in front of the women inside. When asked by staff to leave, he declared, "The law has changed, and I have a right to be here."²⁰

Transsexuals cannot be blamed for any of this, because the predators involved, by all accounts, weren't transsexual. Nobody is denying that violators such as these always have preyed on victims in public places. When access to their victims was limited, however, their ability to violate was limited as well.

Accommodating the transgendered minority enhances access to these predators, who now need no justification for their use of the women's room apart from a verbal, "I see myself as a girl." Is the trauma they inflict on their targets really less egregious than the possibility of hurt feelings experienced by some transgenders when they're compelled to use a separate facility? If not, then is there any logic to the claims made by Springsteen and Starr that bathroom bills are forms of hate?

Besides which, though transsexuals seem unlikely to assault the girls or men they

undress with, their very presence as anatomical opposites constitutes an assault in and of itself. The girl showering next to another naked person who identifies as female but has male sexual organs is likely to feel violated—not by the person but by the experience of being forced to shower with such a person.

This no doubt accounts for the uproar at a Missouri high school last year when a seventeen-year-old transgender student, anatomically male but female identified, demanded to shower with the girls.²¹ The single-occupancy restroom the school offered the student, who was allowed to participate in girl's physical education, wasn't sufficient because, according to the student, "I am a girl. I am not going to be pushed away to another bathroom."²²

In response, 150 students staged a walkout to protest what many considered a school-sponsored invasion of privacy.²³ We'd also say it warranted a disregard for natural modesty, something we've traditionally valued as protective of the physical and emotional safety of young women.

Kellie Fiedorek of the Alliance Defending Freedom legal counsel noted this obvious point when she said, "If the right to privacy means anything, it certainly means that women and girls should not be compelled to undress, shower, or use the restroom in the presence of men. This is just common sense."²⁴ Marissa Poulson, also of ADF, agrees, noting, "Women and girls have a right to their bodily privacy. Children have a right not to be exposed to private anatomy of the opposite sex. Laws such as the one proposed in South Carolina do exactly that—protect their right to privacy."²⁵ And Tom Trinko of American Thinker sums up the absurdity of a nation claiming to be progressive on feminism while pushing laws that endanger women: "Letting a man who simply claims he feels he's a woman into women's bathrooms is dramatically increasing the danger in women's lives. No real feminist would support that."²⁶

The bathroom bills being derided as discriminatory are, in fact, protecting the rights of women while insuring the rights of all, and nothing could be more inclusive.

Violation of Binary Boundaries

Some violations, such as those cited above, are verifiable and easy to substantiate. Other violations are more subtle, with their impact showing itself gradually over time. That's why social experiments can be insidious. They position us atop a slippery slope, but because the long-term damage they do won't be known immediately or even soon, it's easy for their proponents to say, "Prove that if we do this, there will be damage." Common sense may testify against them, but if the proof they require isn't obvious or well presented, the experiment is likely to go forward.

This is what happened when we tinkered with the permanence of marriage more than four decades ago. "No-fault divorce" seemed, at the time, a humane way to alleviate the discomfort of people in unhappy marriages, making it easier for them to free themselves. Though common sense said kids would be hurt when their parents

casually split up, we put the desires of the adults ahead of the family's needs, and the experiment moved ahead.

Dr. Judith Wallerstein of the University of California at Berkeley remarks on this while remembering, "We made radical changes in the family without realizing how it changes the experience of growing up. We embarked on a gigantic social experiment without any idea about how the next generation would be affected."²⁷

Today we look at the impact of divorce and say, "Oops!" So you'd think we'd learn, yet after chipping away at one pillar of the institution of marriage—permanence—and seeing the damage, we then chopped down another when we redefined it to include same-sex coupling. Despite evidence that two males or two females, no matter how good their character, cannot provide the parenting capacities of a male-female unit,²⁸ we did what many felt was humane, ignoring the voice of common sense telling us that marriage is, by nature, heterosexual.

This is more than a debate about toilets. It's a mandate or a referendum on transsexualism itself, a national decision to overturn or preserve definitions we never thought we'd need to defend. So after overturning a basic definition of matrimony, we're revising the notion of male and female, yanking it from the objective and making it a subjective construct, determined not by the physically obvious but instead by feeling-centered self-identification. When Bruce Jenner dons a nightie and appears on a magazine cover saying, "Call me Caitlyn," we comply, because if he says he's a she, then we say we agree.

Common sense argues yet again that if you're male, a castration combined with injections and implants won't make you female. Again, common sense takes a back seat to desire, and what is viewed as the sin is raising any objection to desire and not the desire itself.

Our concern about this goes beyond the invasion of privacy inflicted on both sexes by these trends, as cited above. We're also concerned about the broader trend to blur the sexes, insisting that "binary genders" is an outdated concept and that we aren't necessarily male or female but an amalgamation, or absence, of both. The blurring's evolved over the years, most noticeably among a younger generation seeming to be comfortable with it, while their elders remain ignorant of it and then shocked when confronted by it.

For example, as of 2014, Facebook offered fifty-six separate categories of gender identity.²⁹ Classifications included those who identify as "Agender/Neutrois" (no gender at all), "Androgyne/Androgynous" (both genders combined, making them a third gender), "Bigender" (switches between male and female at different times), and "Two-spirit" (a Native American concept of male and female spirits dwelling in the same body). We can laugh, but we shouldn't, because the trend goes beyond degendering and steps into literal dehumanizing, introduced by the category "Otherkins" (people containing nonhuman identities such as animals or spirits).³⁰

To millions of up-and-coming citizens who will vote, teach the young, raise children, run businesses, and hold office, delving into fathomless layers of ever-changing self-concepts is business as usual. What's perhaps most chilling about this scenario is the fact that with this delving comes the demand for others—family members, coworkers, friends, associates, and society at large—to adjust their communications, and their very relationships, to whatever new identity a person adopts once, or often, during a lifetime.

In contrast, a biblical view of humanity celebrates a binary view of the sexes, viewing people without apology as being one or the other. In doing so, we can reject manmade stereotypes about men and women, affirming that men needn't be John Wayne, nor should "the little lady" be tied to the house, vacuuming, cooking, and remembering her place. We even can appreciate the diversities inherent in all of us, exemplified by King David, whose warrior skills coexisted with his exquisite musical and poetic gifts.

Yet noting David's contrasting characteristics hardly requires us to call him anything but a man, and this is why we object strenuously to the normalizing of transsexualism. Such normalizing places in human hands the right to define reality, which constitutes a blatant usurping of what belongs to the Creator alone.

It belongs to Him with good cause. When we conform our lives to what His intentions are (intentions made obvious by anatomy), we thrive. When we attempt to conform reality to our self-concepts or (one could argue) our delusions, then confusion is the only sure result.

Scanning the gender identity categories above, you can't help but remember the historical confusion they hearken back to, recorded in Judges 21:25: "Every man did what was right in his own eyes." In light of our current attempts to modify reality, it's tempting to add to that: "And centuries later, everyone became what was right in their own eyes."

Violation of Religious Liberty

While lamenting America's drift from biblical standards, we may falsely comfort ourselves into thinking that, although Judeo-Christian teaching is not as influential as before, it always will be recognized as one of many legitimate voices in a diverse culture.

We'd be wrong. If we were on Mars Hill, where a multitude of beliefs were considered (Acts 17:16–23), our moral stance might be viewed with curiosity or amusement or even interest. Tolerance for pluralism is fading now, however, as open hostility toward the Christian position on sexuality is rampant and largely condoned. When cultural icons such as Springsteen and Ringo Starr dismiss objections to gender-specific bathrooms as "hatred," something more than diversity is happening. Society is being taught not only to reject the Bible's directives regarding sex and gender but also

to view them as evidence of hatred and to view those of us who promote them as peddlers of bigotry who need to be stopped.

Accordingly, if bigots spew hateful ideas that hurt people, and you silence them, you're not viewed as a violator of religious liberty; you're viewed as a hero, patriotically defending the world against hateful, toxic influences. So when gay journalist and media figure Dan Savage spoke at a student journalism conference, mocking the Bible and believers by referring to the "bull— in the Bible about homosexuality" and calling Christians who walked out on his profanity-laced tirade "pansy-a—ed," his audience of future journalists applauded him.³¹ When playwright Larry Kramer referred proudly to his group ACT-UP's invasion of a Catholic mass in New York City, in which demonstrators stopped the service by jumping into the aisles and screaming, he bragged, "And suddenly we were not longer [sic] limp-wristed fairies. We were men in black boots and black jeans and tough, and that became our image. And it made us, I think. And people were suddenly afraid of us....It's a good feeling."³²

Other gay activists attended a mass held by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, D.C. Though openly identifying themselves as homosexual, they demanded they be served communion, and when the presiding priest refused, they disrupted the communion service and were placed under arrest for trespassing.

Yet when they were sentenced with a light fine, Judge Mildred Edwards of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia assured them that "terrible violence" had been done to them by the Bishops, that they were in "solidarity with all victims of violence," and that she apologized, for the entire church, for the way they were treated.³³

Even more sobering are conclusions drawn by California's federal judge Vaughn Walker, whose ruling overturned California's Proposition 8, which limited the definition of marriage to a male-female union: "Religious beliefs that gay and lesbian relationships are sinful or inferior to heterosexual relationships harm gays and lesbians."³⁴

So the culture is being taught by its judges, elites, and leadership that Christians who teach a biblical view of marriage and sexuality cause harm, operate from bigotry, do violence, read a book that's full of [expletive deleted], and deserve to be invaded and violated in their own places of worship.

Many transsexual advocates seem to know this, and they're playing their cards well. As films such as *Philadelphia* and *Brokeback Mountain* generated sympathy for gays and antipathy toward those viewing homosexuality as sin, so movies such as *The Danish Girl* and TV shows such as *Orange Is the New Black* are doing the same for transgenders. As talk-show hosts such as Phil Donahue promoted approval of homosexuality,³⁵ so journalists such as Barbara Walters promote approval of transsexualism, even among children.³⁶ Recently, transsexual reality-show host Caitlyn Jenner's show featured Jenner and friends telephoning Houston area "transphobic" churches, accusing them of

dishonesty and asking if they'd be welcome to show up for prayer meetings.³⁷

When commenting on these trends and how intimidated many Christians seem to be as a result, highly influential Hispanic pastor Samuel Rodriguez recently observed, "Today's complacency is tomorrow's captivity. As a nation we have never been under the canopy of darkness that we presently find ourselves...We can't be silent about issues that impact Christendom...We need to speak truth with love."³⁸

He also noted, "If a state of Babylon is not evident now for some, it will be in a matter of just a year or two."³⁹ In Babylon, God's people weren't just one of many groups holding equal citizenship; they were exiles, oppressed under the power of a hostile kingdom.

We recognize that America was always a nation, never the church, and that it's never been perfect. But whereas it was once a place where freedom of speech and religion flourished, it's become, and is further becoming, a land of limitations. Nowhere are those limitations more evident than in the vanishing landscapes of free speech and free religious practice, and nowhere are those freedoms more jeopardized than in the arena of ideas regarding sex.

In this sense, the transgender movement follows the same playbook the gay rights movement followed, to great success: gather allies in media, entertainment, and education; offer film and television portrayals of your group in a sympathetic light; and hammer the message that opposition to your goals equates destructive prejudice.

It worked for the legitimization of homosexuality and will do no less for transgenders as well. Still, the church has never been called to be in the majority's favor. Rather, it's called to know, then live, then express truth, regardless of the surrounding environment's opinion.

On this issue, our fear of violation of religious liberties stems from the assault on such liberties already experienced by Christian bakers, florists, caterers, and photographers who felt they couldn't in good conscience offer their services for a same-sex wedding. Lawsuits, legal judgments, and hefty fines were imposed on them, and there's no reason to believe those who refuse to cater to self-defined gender identification will face any less. That's because the transgender movement is cousin to the gay rights movement and, in fact, accounts for the T in the label LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender). Strategies employed by one segment of the movement are certain to be employed by the others.

This makes the ramifications looming ahead look bleak. In light of the transgender movement's success in defeating bathroom bills and its ability to convince the public its goals are valid, Christian businesses soon will face lawsuits and penalties for not allowing people to use their restrooms based on their gender of choice. Churches will experience harassment, whether personal or legal, for teaching and enforcing a binary view of gender. Christian counselors who hold the view that gender dysphoria—the belief that one inhabits the body of the wrong sex—is a disorder to

resist rather than a conviction to conform to will face censuring from their governing boards and, quite possibly, revocation of their licenses.

Hard to imagine? Certainly. But hasn't every gain the LGBT movement made over the past decades pushed the unimaginable into the "business as usual" category? Rod Dreher defines this as the "Law of Merited Impossibility" when he writes, "The Law of Merited Impossibility is an epistemological construct governing the paradoxical way over-class opinion makers frame the discourse about the clash between religious liberty and LGBT civil rights. It is best summed up by the phrase, 'It's a complete absurdity to believe that traditional Christians and other conservatives will suffer a single thing from the expansion of LGBT rights, and boy, do they deserve what they're going to get.'"⁴⁰

Violations of safety, binary boundaries, and religious liberty can only work against everyone—those who promote them and those who resist and lament them. They represent yet one more loss for man, one more giant leap against mankind. This makes us wonder if God Himself might not warn this nation as He once warned Israel: "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver" (Ps. 50:21–22). Where moral virtue is concerned, America has clearly lost much. It remains to be seen how much, how grave the damage, and how irrevocable that damage will turn out to be.

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