

~ continued from page 1 ~

in Christ cancel biology.

It is important for Christians to understand and engage this issue because so much is at stake: children assaulted with relativism that could lead to the destruction of their biological integrity; business owners who are put in the position of choosing between conscience and legal requirements; healthcare workers that might be forced to perform procedures that violate bodily integrity; teachers who might be coerced to use pronouns that violate basic grammar; and female students whose safety and privacy is jeopardized in locker rooms and dorm rooms by biological males.

The Texas Supreme Court took sides in the debate regarding gender dysphoric children when it ruled that the state could investigate parents for child abuse for facilitating gender transition of their minor child. Transgender advocates now call it “gender affirming care.” It used be called participating with mental illness.

NPR carried a story of parents of a self-identified transgender child who feared being investigated by the state. But what about the child who is truly incapable of appreciating the gravity of an irreversible decision that leads to sterility? Medical professionals and parents endorsing the mutilation of healthy body parts of children isn’t just a breach of trust, it’s evil. School professionals penalizing 8th grade boys for refusing to call a fellow student “they” isn’t just ignorant, it’s immoral.

Behind the transgender movement is a very real enemy that defaces the image of God in people. There is a very real devil who comes to “steal, kill, and destroy,” (John 10:10). This includes destroying one’s gender as given by God.

The good news is that there is a very real deliverer who sets the captives free (Luke 4:18). Many people who’ve shed their opposite-sex identity have come to faith in Christ, “Therefore, if any-one is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 Cor. 5:17). And this is good news we all need to hear.

Richard Nelson is the founder and executive director of CPC.

CPC Honors Kentucky Legislators



Sen. Don Douglas Receives Friend of the Commonwealth Award

The Commonwealth Policy Center honored legislators with their 2022 Friend of the Commonwealth award. This goes to state House and Senate members who are dedicated to upholding conservative values that make the commonwealth a better place to live and raise a family.

“We give legislators — state representatives and senators — this award when they work to uphold the pillars of society: the sanctity of life, religious freedom, marriage between a man and a woman and fiscal responsibility,” said Richard Nelson, CPC’s executive director.

Recipients of the Friend of the Commonwealth Award included Sen. Robby Mills, Sen. Max Wise, Sen. Don Douglas, Rep. Ryan Dotson, Rep. Walker Thomas, Rep. Matt Lockett, Rep. Shane Baker, and Rep. Bill Wesley. Rep. Nancy Tate received the Friend of Life Award.

The award says: “In appreciation for your bold and courageous leadership to strengthen the societal pillars of the commonwealth of Kentucky in the 2022 General Assembly Session. Thank you for your service. Future Generations are indebted to you.”

“We just want to share and show our appreciation to those legislators who, again, are working for the values that make Kentucky a better place,” Nelson said. “This is just our opportunity to do that, to honor them publicly with this Friend of the Commonwealth Award.”

All recipients of this award also won their primary races! To view a few of these award presentations, go to CPC’s Youtube Channel!

Political Fears Overshadowed by the Cross

I recently spoke to a group of Christians and was a little more transparent than I intended to be. I shared an observation that many evangelical Christians appear excessively fearful and anxious, largely over the culture wars and what’s happening in Washington, D.C.

Two years of COVID have also contributed to high levels of anxiety. According to an American Psychological Association poll conducted on March 1-3, financial stress is at the highest level since 2015. Inflation and the Russia-Ukrainian war also contribute to deep worry. “Americans have been doing their best to persevere over these past two tumultuous years,” said Arthur C. Evans Jr., CEO of the American Psychological Association. “[B]ut these data suggest that we’re now reaching unprecedented levels of stress that will challenge our ability to cope.”

But should followers of Jesus be controlled by such anxiety? Does the Christian faith afford a better hope? If there was ever overwhelming anxiety and fear followers of Jesus faced, it was nearly 2000 years ago when the Messiah was crucified on a Roman cross.

I had lunch with a friend the other day and we talked about what it must have been like BC. Before Christ, people had no hope of being saved from their sins. They carried the weight of their own guilt and shame. There was no hope of eternity and peace with God. Their day was described by the prophet Isaiah as “people walking in darkness.” But Isaiah goes on to say that one day they would “see a great light” (Isaiah

9:2) Some 700 years later “the light of the world” came.

But the people’s idea of what they needed and what Jesus offered were two different things. When Christ came into Jerusalem on what Christians recognize as Palm Sunday, the Israelites were expecting a conquering king, one who would drive out the Romans. A few days later he was humiliated, rejected, and killed.

Jesus “disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him” by his work on the cross

~ Colossians 2:15 ~

Jesus came to deliver the Israelites from a greater concern than the Romans. He delivered them from the tyranny of sin. He came not just for the Israelites, but for the whole world, including their enemies. He came not to simply jockey political leaders in his day but as a king to bring an everlasting kingdom.

Which brings me back to the angst over similar temporal issues I see within evangelical Christendom. Politics and policy positions grounded in God’s truth should matter deeply. But when politics and culture don’t go the way of God’s kingdom, we don’t lose hope. Nor do we give into the flesh and take things into our own hands so to speak. After all, Jesus

took nails into his hands, so we can rest in his work, and engage life and issues in a way that honors his sacrifice.

When engaging the world, Christians are grounded in God’s kingdom principles; Humility, grace, and patience should be marks of the Christ follower. Loving thy neighbor as thyself is the second great command that reflects just how much we’re committed to the first great command which is to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. And it goes even further to where Christ commands us to love our enemies. There is no earthly explanation when this is done, except that Jesus loved us while we were still at war with him (Rom. 5:8).

There is a real battle today between good and evil. But Jesus worked through the greatest act of evil and triumphed over it on the cross. When evil seems to have the upper hand, we must be reminded that Jesus “disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him” by his work on the cross (Col 2:14-15).

So, Christians have a new identity and new path in life through Christ. They are freed from the weight of sin. They are also freed from political anxiety of who’s in the White House and who controls Congress. Christians ultimately live in hope, not fear. And this is because of Christ’s sacrifice and resurrection. And that’s good news.

Richard Nelson is the founder and executive director of CPC. This article first appeared in Kentucky Today on April 15.

Christianity & Culture Conference in Owensboro



We’re bringing our Christianity & Culture Conference to Owensboro on Thursday, June 30th. Our goal is to help the church to better understand its role in their community and engage challenging issues in a winsome, effective way.

The conference will be held at the Owensboro Convention Center, where nationally recognized speakers and authors will address some of the most controversial issues facing the culture. Jonathan Butcher, education researcher at the Heritage Foundation, will shed light on

Critical Race Theory. Andrew Walker from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary will share his perspective on transgender ideology. CPC Executive Director, Richard Nelson will lead a question- and-answer session following each presentation.

Nelson said “at a time when truth is assaulted on a daily basis, Christians need a framework for how to think and act. These conferences will help us understand these pressing issues and engage better on these very difficult subjects.”

General non-reserved seating will be \$25, which will include a meal and a copy of Dr. Walker’s book *God and the Transgender Debate*. We will also offer table sponsorships (table of 8) to help offset the cost of the conference. To register, go to CPC’s website. To sponsor a table, contact Richard Nelson at richard@commonwealthpolicy.org.



Register for Christianity & Culture Conferences Today!

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COMMONWEALTH ★★★POLICY CENTER★★★ *Director's Corner*

I'm glad to share that most of our top legislative priorities have succeeded in the 2022 General Assembly Session! Our success included: Pro-life Humanity in Healthcare Act (HB 3), of which SB 321, the 15 week abortion ban was rolled into; charter schools (HB 9); Church is Essential Act (HB 43), and Fairness in Women's Sports (SB 83). We also successfully helped defeat gambling expansion and legalization of marijuana. These victories didn't come in a vacuum, as each of the sponsors were CPC candidates—people we either trained, endorsed, or helped elect.

Several of candidates had primary elections and we made sure to travel to their district and honor them with CPC Friend of the Commonwealth Awards including: State Rep. Walker Thomas, State Rep. Bill Wesley, State Sen. Don Douglass, and State Sen. Robby Mills. I'm glad to report that each of them won their races! We also honored State Rep. Nancy Tate with CPC's Friend of Life Award for sponsoring HB 3 the Humanity in Healthcare Act.



*State Sen. Robby Mills Receives
Friend of the Commonwealth Award*

One of the ways we helped move legislation was through our regular legislative briefings. Nationally known author and speaker, Jonathan Butcher of The Heritage Foundation briefed legislators on Critical Race Theory (CRT). Gary Houchens, former state school board member and professor of education at Western Kentucky University, briefed legislators on school choice. State Rep. Kim Moser did a legislative briefing on medical marijuana. Les Bernal of STOP Predatory Gambling briefed legislators on state sponsored gambling. And Daniel Mingo of Abba's Delight in Louisville briefed on the proposed "conversion therapy" ban.

The other way we help move good policy upstream is at the ballot box. We provided voter guides for the primary elections. Several of the candidates who attended our candidate training earlier in the year won their races.

We are currently working on two Christianity and Culture conferences in Owensboro and Lexington. We hope to help Christians think biblically and to engage the two most difficult cultural issues of our day—Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Transgender Ideology. Andrew Walker and Jonathan Butcher are nationally recognized speakers and authors, and will lead our conferences. Our hope is to better prepare Christians to engage the culture in an effective, and God-honoring way.

While God has clearly blessed us with favor this first half of the year, I'm constantly reminded that the only lasting change for the Commonwealth will come through Awakening. When individuals come to faith in Christ and conform their lives to him—we'll see true and deep seated change come to the Bluegrass. May God use CPC somehow to spark such a change. May you and your family be blessed.

Yours in Christ,

Richard Nelson

Richard Nelson
Executive Director

P.S. If you haven't donated recently, would you kindly consider a gift today? Current financial needs include underwriting two Christianity and Culture conferences, general election voter guides, and our candidate vetting process. Thanks in advance for any help you can offer!

Help us preserve the bedrock values of the Commonwealth by donating
at www.commonwealthpolicycenter.org/donate

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COMMONWEALTH POLICY

Reinforcing the Commonwealth's Founding Principles - Renewing the Commonwealth's Future Promise

THE POWER OF IDENTITY: A FEW THOUGHTS ON TRANSGENDERISM

Three 8th grade boys are being charged with sexual harassment by the Kiel, Wisconsin school district because they did not use the preferred gender pronoun of a fellow student. Rose Rabidoux, the mother of one of the students involved, told school officials that using the word "they" to identify another student was confusing to her son. "It's plural. It doesn't make sense to him. So, I told him to call [transgender individuals] by their names," Rabidoux said.

Using a first name instead of using a gender pronoun that violates conscience is a respectable work-around for most. But apparently, it is not acceptable to the pronoun police in the Kiel School District.

Earlier in the week, I filled out a patient intake form for a doctor's appointment and instead of two choices for gender, there were five. Curious how a profession based on science and biology, can credibly leave it up to an individual to determine a biological indicator that is grounded in objective scientific truth. Good medicine is predicated upon good science, not personal feelings.

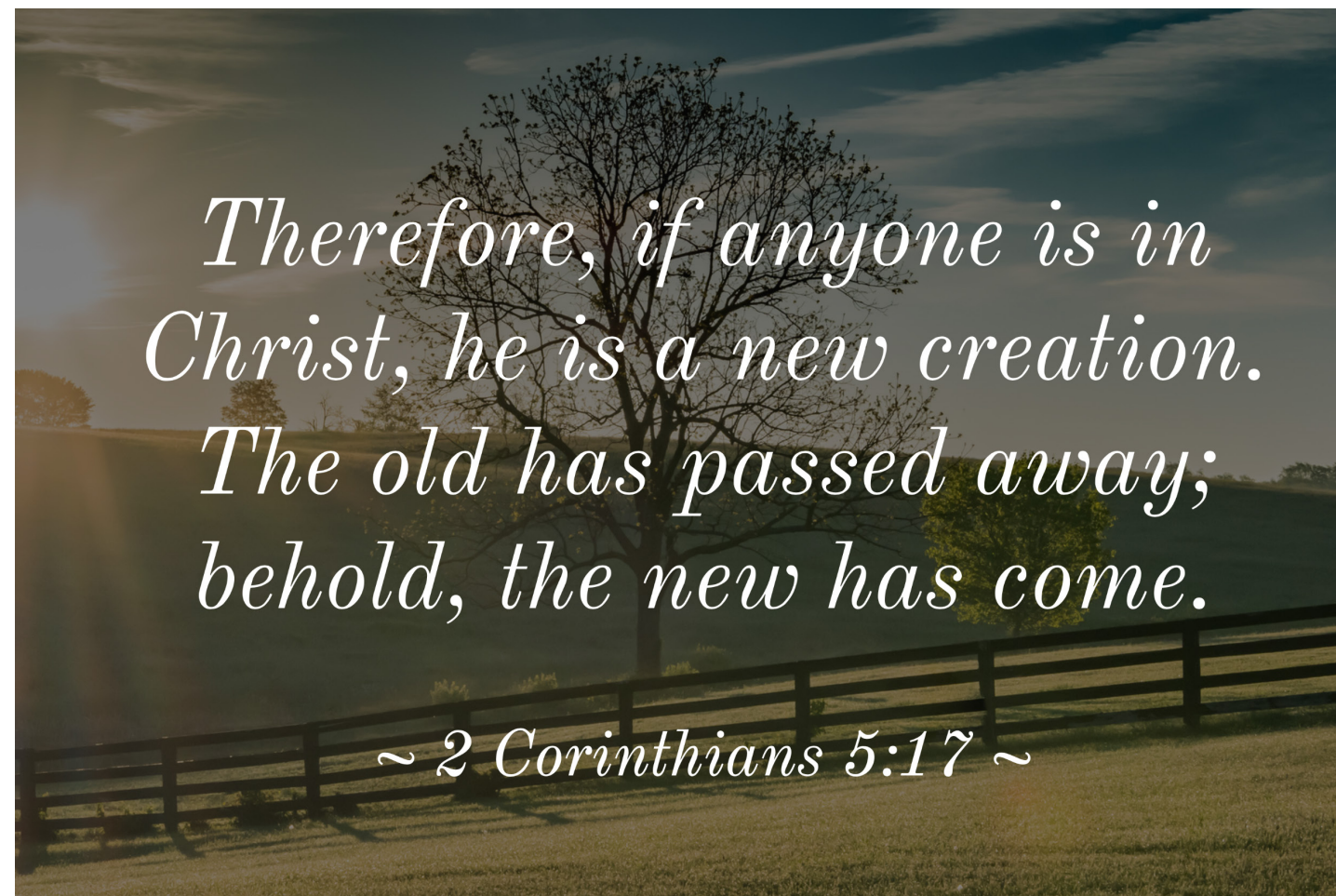
I've had many discussions with Kentuckians concerned about the destabilization of categories once universally accepted. A pastor, who's also a school board member in a western Kentucky community, recently shared with me that

not only are some of the students in the district identifying as the opposite gender, but some are identifying as dogs and cats, even going so far as asking for litter boxes. As gender dysphoria is accepted as mainstream, how can we say no to non-human identities?

So how should Christians process this? On the one hand we should not be surprised to see brokenness in our society. Transgenderism is perhaps the pinnacle of such visible personal brokenness, and it's important that we demonstrate care and empathy for the broken, including those demonstrating gender dysphoria.

At the same time, we must not be coerced into participating with a falsehood, namely that human beings can rightly redefine their biological gender. That definition is squarely reserved to the realm of the Creator.

The power to change an identity and a name is possible biblically. Abram became Abraham. Sarai became Sarah. Jacob became Israel. These names were changed for them by God himself because of their new identities and purposes found in Him. The same is true for the follower of Jesus who imparts a new identity. Their affections and concerns and identities are ultimately in Christ, the one who redeemed them. But never do we see a biblical example of a new identity



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policy group helping
Kentuckians value life,
protect natural marriage,
defend religious liberty, and
promote fiscal integrity.

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