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November 17, 2017

SUPREME COURT TO HEAR IMPORTANT CASE ABOUT FREE SPEECH AND ABORTION

Pray for justice to result from this Supreme Court case about the free speech rights of pro-life pregnancy centers. Ask God to bless the work of crisis pregnancy centers.

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives (Col 1:9)

“What if a state forced all of its citizens to display a message on their cars that reads, “Live Free or Die”? George and Maxine Maynard were in just that position and objected to the phrase both politically and religiously, so they didn’t want the government to force them to display it on their vehicle. The Supreme Court agreed and ruled in their favor in 1977’s *Wooley v. Maynard* decision — an outcome that would have been even easier for the Maynards to achieve if the state of New Hampshire had been foolish enough to require only those who disagree with the message to display it.

But what state would ever do that? California would — and does.

The Reproductive FACT Act, AB 775, targets pro-life pregnancy-care centers because they “discourage” abortion. That’s not an allegation; the state admits this to be the case. The law forces these centers to advertise for the abortion industry by requiring the display of a message informing women how to obtain a free or low-cost abortion from the state — including a phone number to call. Women who call that number and ask about obtaining an abortion are referred to Planned Parenthood and other organizations that perform abortions.

The state claims it is justified in forcing the pro-life centers to present a message that contradicts the very reason they exist because a center somewhere might decide to be deceptive in the counsel it gives to women....

This demonstrates that California’s likely real motivation is to discourage the pro-life message that these pregnancy-care centers express, so it is coopting them to convey its own pro-abortion message....

That’s why NIFLA asked Alliance Defending Freedom to file a lawsuit on its behalf to have the law declared unconstitutional. To date, both the federal district court and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the

Ninth Circuit have refused to keep the law from being enforced against NIFLA and its pro-life pregnancy-care center members. So now ADF has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to take up NIFLA's case.

The justices may very well decide to review the case because other federal courts in New York, Maryland, and Texas have found similar laws unconstitutional. Supreme Court guidance is needed to provide legal consistency in jurisdictions across the country....

The Supreme Court should strike down this unjust law just as it struck down New Hampshire's law that forced citizens, including the Maynards, to advertise the state's preferred message...." (Excerpted from [National Review](#) , commentary by Kevin Theriot, senior counsel with Alliance Defending Freedom, which represents the National Institute of Family Life Advocacy.)

EVANGELICALS AND ROY MOORE

Pray for Roy Moore, and the Church, to respond to recent allegations with upholding the Bible and honoring God as our primary motives.

Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. (Heb 12:14)

While we wait for new evidence to come forward, let's talk not so much about what Roy Moore did or did not do, but what those who attack or defend the 70-year-old candidate from Alabama are saying....

The **first**, if true, should disqualify him from becoming a senator. The importance of the second to Moore's current election prospects depends on whether he has a self-righteous understanding or a Christ-righteous belief.

Let's mull over the JMC Analytics poll—taken before news of lawyer Gloria Allred bringing forward a new Moore accuser—that shows nearly two-fifths of Alabama evangelicals saying the accusations (undifferentiated) make them more likely to vote for Moore. Almost another two-fifths said the accusations make no difference in their voting plans.

That's troubling but unsurprising, for three reasons. First, a poll from Winthrop University shows nearly half of white Southerners feeling they are under attack—and thus more likely to welcome a defender like Moore.

Second, the old saying "In for a dime, in for a dollar" can now be reversed to "In for a dollar, in for a dime." Evangelicals who voted for presidential candidate Donald Trump despite his sexually degrading statements and apparent actions are also more likely to support a marred candidate for a lower post.

A **third** reason is also significant: Four decades ago women, especially in the South, often married earlier than is now the custom. Moore was a West Point graduate in a hardscrabble part of Alabama, so it's not surprising that one mother thought Moore was "good husband material," and another thought her daughter would be "lucky" to date him.

This doesn't mean it was right—I've seen professors taking advantage of college students, and I believe it's similarly wrong for an assistant district attorney in Gadsden, Ala., to use that aura to kiss high school

girls—but we should pay more attention to the testimony of Leigh Corfman, who was 14 in 1979, and not mix up the immoral with the inappropriate.

If Corfman’s testimony holds up, we should not give Moore a pass because his vote in the Senate could be politically important in the battle against abortion. Making decisions on that basis increases our cultural debasement—and that means more ruined lives and more dead babies. Basically, we need to be concerned more about the gospel than about any particular election. The Good News is not a favorable political poll but the Bible’s announcement that God saves sinners.

Overall, evangelical discussions about Roy Moore will be fruitful if the Bible rather than an election becomes foremost in our thoughts. If we pretend that we or our favorite candidates have not sinned, we are self-righteously proclaiming that we don’t need Christ—because only His sacrifice on the cross makes it possible for God to be perfectly just and perfectly grace-giving....

Bottom line: We do a disservice to God’s holiness when we minimize sin. We do a disservice to God’s mercy when we maximize it. We do a disservice to evangelism when we say or believe winning an election is more important than telling the truth about God’s glory and our sinfulness.” (Excerpted from [World Magazine](#) , opinion by Marvin Olasky.)

AFTER THE FIRES

Thank God for being at work in trials and suffering. Praise Him whether you are in plenty or in want, whether well fed or hungry. Pray for the people of California to find Jesus in the midst of loss.

And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. (1 Pet 5:10)

“...[M]y in-laws once lost their few possessions in a flood that submerged the tree house they built and lived in on an Oregon communal property. They have mostly laughed about this, only wishing sometimes they had retrieved more than one washed-out wedding photo.

But two weeks ago, early Monday morning, a fire consumed more than four decades of my in-laws’ possessions. Their house, built with their own hands, was one of nearly 7,700 homes and buildings that burned in Northern California’s unprecedented wildfires. Like many others, they had minutes to grab important documents and photo albums....

A day later, my mother-in-law spent the afternoon searching through rubble. She returned weary but eager to show me one find: her mother’s porcelain Christmas ornaments, faded and still dusted in ash.

This struck me as a picture of grace. At Christmas most of us decorate trees. As Christians, we do this not randomly but in celebration of God’s merciful plan for redemption—a Son come to earth to die for sinners, the just for the unjust, making good the destruction sin has wrought. Yet, how often do I sing “Amazing Grace” without amazement, blinded by earthly comforts and my perceived self-sufficiency. This is why author Iain Murray calls trials, afflictions, and illnesses “medicinal,” for that is often what it takes to lead us to God....

For now, we and our kids will miss the stories by my in-laws’ wood stove, canning fruit in their kitchen, science and art projects at their table—also the setting for Christmas Eve and Thanksgiving dinner

spreads. My daughter will miss dancing in my mother-in-law's garage, converted into a ballet studio that served many young dancers. They do plan to rebuild.

In flood and now in fire, though, my in-laws point to God's merciful goodness and the promise of eternal blessings. The fire consumed a temporal "earthly dwelling," but as the Apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians, "we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Indeed, we have this legacy from my in-laws and as believers. It is worth much more than material possessions....

Soon these black landscapes will sprout anew, and burnt rubble will be bulldozed away—another picture of grace. For now, they still confront us with raw reality. In our home, this has sparked conversations, like how this experience has revealed our complacency. It is easy to sing hymns but hard to see our great need, our wretched hearts.

In our area, the earth groaned, and fires consumed many of our comforts. Last Sunday my father-in-law stood before our small congregation, still wearing the same pants and shoes he wore the morning of the fire and sifting through his house's ashen remains. I couldn't help but think the flood prepared them for fire.... "(Excerpted from [WORLD MAGAZINE](#), by Mary Jackson.)