

THE CHRISTIAN LAWYER®

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A PUBLICATION OF CHRISTIAN LEGAL SOCIETY



Seeking TRUTH in the LAW

*Students and Lawyers
Pursuing the Glory of God*

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

A Christian Perspective on Studying Labor and Employment Law by Joe Trammell

A Christian Perspective on the Practice of Family Law by Eric Nelson

Christianity and Contract Law by Nicole Kennedy

The Narrow Path: A Christian Perspective on Studying Trial Advocacy by Nick Walter



David Nammo,
Executive Director
and CEO

What does God really have to do with the daily practice of law? Does He have an opinion on civil procedure, estate planning, contracts, or any other number of things that move across our desks on a daily basis? Is He even present in it?

We know God created all things and ordered all things. We know justice is important to Him. We know He cares about how we treat people and how we work with integrity, but does He really care about this clause or that deposition or the details of our work? Does the God of the universe care about the mundane practice of law as much as He cares about cancer and human trafficking?

If we are honest with ourselves, we rarely think about the Lord's perspective on what we are doing minute by minute in our daily work because we are often too immersed in it, whether in the contract or will we are drafting, the interrogatories we are responding to, or the many emails we are sending to lawyers, clients, and others.

Sure, theoretically and theologically, we know that God cares about our work. We understand vocation as a "Christian calling" – where we are to reflect God in all we do and say, especially through our work. We know God wants us to be honest and good at our jobs. He doesn't want us to cheat or act uncharitable toward others or their lawyers. So if we don't embezzle or lie or cheat or steal, and we act nice and litigate zealously, we should be okay, right?

If that is our perspective, we have set a pretty low bar for how much God really cares about where we spend most of our waking hours.

I always tease law students or lawyers who say that God couldn't have called them to practice law. I ask if they prayed about law school admissions, prayed about the LSAT, prayed during the LSAT, prayed during their three years of law school, prayed for a job – and the answer is always "yes." And they thanked the Lord when He opened a door for them. But the discouragement of practice and life often clouds how much they prayed and gave God the credit for where they are today.

This issue of *The Christian Lawyer* takes a strong look at God's perspective on the practice of law and its various fields. We asked law students (who were all part of the inaugural CLS Fellows program) to write about their perspective on how the Lord sees a particular practice area. We then asked a practicing lawyer to write a reflection on the student's perspective.

As you read through this issue, I know you will be enlightened, challenged, and, hopefully, encouraged as you reflect on the students' thoughts and the lawyers' responses. I can think of no better way to answer the eternal question of CLS, "What does it mean to be a Christian lawyer?"

In the end, I hope the reflections help all of us discern today and every day the Lord's presence and hand in our conversations, our documents, our work.

THE CHRISTIAN LAWYER®



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Seeking Truth in the Law

BY MIKE SCHUTT

This is an extraordinary issue of *The Christian Lawyer*.

It is extraordinary because all at once it highlights two relationships that, though central to our calling as Christian lawyers, we often neglect: (1) the relationship between legal academics and biblical faith; and (2) the relationship between Christian law students and veteran lawyers.

It is wonderful to have the opportunity to briefly explore those relationships in these pages.

Paul encouraged Timothy to pass on Paul's teachings to others who were "able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2). This teaching of teachers – faithful teachers – is an essential part of discipleship. Faithful lawyers teaching faithful lawyers (or law students) who will be faithful to teach is an essential part of the Christian lawyer's mission.

For this issue we asked four CLS Law School Fellows, commissioned last summer after a week of fellowship, training, and encouragement, to choose a single law school course and reflect on "a Christian approach" to that topic. We gave very few other parameters, hoping to elicit a broad range of approaches to faithful thinking in the law school classroom. We were not disappointed.

For each topic, we also chose one veteran CLS attorney to engage each student on the substance of the reflection, assisting in the substantive drafting of the article and responding in writing as well.

The result is the issue you hold in your hands: students and lawyers glorifying God together through their pursuit of truth in the ordinary topics of the academy and the ordinary practice of law.

This is the heart of the CLS mission:

Christian Legal Society seeks to fulfill God's command found in Micah 6:8 by bringing glory to God by inspiring, encouraging, and equipping Christian lawyers

and law students, both individually and in community, to proclaim, love, and serve Jesus Christ through the study and practice of law

Each student saw a slightly different opportunity reflected by his or her topic. Joe Trammell (Ohio State), for example, saw an opportunity to explore the biblical foundations and theological substance of labor and employment law. Citing Bible passages that instruct and enlighten on the topic, he encourages us to understand that God's revealed Word speaks into ordinary study and practice.

Eric Nelson (Alabama) saw an opportunity to take stock of his mission, in spite of himself, as a Christian lawyer. Mr. Nelson, by examining both his own calling and the substance of his

coursework, came to a deeper understanding of his vocation as a Christian lawyer, and by extension, the role and calling of all lawyers.

Nicole Kennedy (UC Irvine) explored contracts as a chance to reflect devotionally on her relationship with God and the nature of His relationship with human beings, as did Nick Walter (Arizona State) as he considered the ways that trial practice both shapes and exposes students and lawyers in the midst of "trials." Both Ms.

Kennedy and Mr. Walter recognize study and practice, in different ways, as a catalyst for inner change.

CLS and *The Christian Lawyer* are grateful for the lawyers and students who took time to evaluate these opportunities – to stop and consider what God has given in these practice areas and how He shapes us, speaks to us, and uses us in law practice and beyond. As each of the lawyers points out in his or her own way, looking back at our studies is a good way to confirm our own calling and to remember how God has brought us into our unique practice niche. May God grant you the opportunity to reflect on your own journey into and through the law.



As we pursue truth in whatever practice area, niche, or calling, God uses us as His instruments of grace while shaping us into the men and women He desires to use in this world. These students and mentors have reminded us that our work in the law often functions as a window into ourselves, a devotional tool revealing the intricacies of our relationship with Him. They have also encouraged us to think – biblically, carefully, and specifically – about our discipline and our practice. What does God say about our work and about the specifics of our work? It is good to be reminded of the biblical foundations of our daily work. As we seek to love our neighbors with our legal gifts, we must think theologically about what we are doing.

It is a joy to observe students seeking God’s truth in their studies. It is encouraging to read veteran lawyers’ reflections on their own calling, brought to mind by a new generation of lawyers. Together, we seek truth to His glory, as we worship through our gifts in the law.

We pray you are encouraged by this issue of *The Christian Lawyer*!



Mike Schutt is Director of Law Student Ministries for CLS and Principal Lecturer at Regent University School of Law. He is the founding director of the CLS Law School Fellows program, which is designed for law students seeking a deeper understanding of the nature and sources of human law. The Fellows week provides theological and philosophical tools for a mission-minded approach to legal study and law practice. Mike is the author of *Redeeming Law: Christian Calling and the Legal Profession* and is the editor-in-chief of *The Journal of Christian Legal Thought*. He lives in Mount Pleasant, Texas, with his wife Lisa. They have three grown children and four grandchildren.

TAKING CARE:

Perspectives for the End of Life



Tracy A. Balboni
Harvard Medical School



Theo A. Boer
Protestant Theological University



D. A. Carson
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School



Lydia S. Dugdale
Yale School of Medicine



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Trinity International University



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A Christian Perspective on Studying Labor and Employment Law

BY JOE TRAMMELL

Labor and employment law may not seem to involve a biblical calling like other areas of the law, but examining the principles in God's Word reveals both God's heart and our duty. The God-given purpose of labor and employment law should not be lost on us.

For this discussion, I would like to start with the biblical perspective on work. The Bible views work as an important societal function, a blessing, and a gift. I will then look at labor and employment law's importance in preventing oppression of workers. Finally, I will discuss the function of law in facilitating peaceful resolution of conflict between employers and workers.

The Bible gives us a pretty clear perspective on work. Knowing how God sees it not only affects how we see it, but also shows us the need to facilitate it and protect workers through the abilities God has given us.

Proverbs tells us that work is prudent.

Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense. (Proverbs 12:11)

Proverbs also tells us work is necessary.

In all toil there is profit, but mere talk tends only to poverty. (Proverbs 14:23)

Paul gave this warning:

Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you. It was not because we do not have that right,

but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate. For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. (2 Thessalonians 3:6-12)

The Bible also tells us that work is a gift:

Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart. (Ecclesiastes 5:18-20)

Indeed, work follows the example of Christ.

But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working." (John 5:17)

With this biblical perspective on work, the importance of facilitating it in a peaceful manner and protecting the rights of those engaged in it comes into view. Labor law is a way for God's people to ensure that workers are not abused and that this necessary function carries on without strife.

Our command to not oppress poor workers is not based on who they are, but on our common duty to all people:

You shall not oppress a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your brothers or one of the sojourners who are in your land within your towns. You shall give him his wages on the same day, before

"The Bible also tells us that work is a gift . . . Indeed, work follows the example of Christ."



the sun sets (for he is poor and counts on it), lest he cry against you to the LORD, and you be guilty of sin. (Deuteronomy 24:14-15)

Oppression of workers is an insult to God, and those engaged in it will not receive His blessings:

Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him. (Proverbs 14:31)

Whoever oppresses the poor to increase his own wealth, or gives to the rich, will only come to poverty. (Proverbs 22:16)

God's warning to King Josiah's sons does not stop at a duty to avoid oppression personally, but rather imposes on us an affirmative duty to prevent others from oppressing as well:

Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness, and his upper rooms by injustice, who makes his neighbor serve him for nothing and does not give him his wages, who says, 'I will build myself a great house with spacious upper rooms,' who cuts out windows for it, paneling it with cedar and painting it with vermilion. Do you think you are a king because you compete in cedar? Did not your father eat and drink and do justice and righteousness? Then it was well with him. He judged the

cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Is not this to know me? declares the LORD. But you have eyes and heart only for your dishonest gain, for shedding innocent blood, and for practicing oppression and violence. (Jeremiah 22:13-17)

Part of God's mission for Moses was to end the oppression of His people, who were laboring for Egypt. It was their cry that moved God to act:

Then the LORD said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." ... Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, "I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt, and I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt."' (Exodus 3:7-10, 16-17)

James says something similar when he says:

Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. (James 5:4)

God regards the cries of oppressed workers and commands us not to take part in it. His will is for us to advocate for their rights and bring justice to their situations:

Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy. (Proverbs 31:9)

One final thing to note – labor and employment law helps us live in peace and avoid strife:

[A]spire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you. (1 Thessalonians 4:11)

Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. (Romans 12:16-18)

As Christians, we must live this out by seeking peace in our own lives and in others' lives through our profession. The Bible, in 1 Corinthians 6, speaks of not dragging fellow Christians before unrighteous judges, where strife in the church would be publicly displayed.

When Jesus walked the Earth, He never compromised on what is important to keep peace, and He did not fear hard truth. His goal

was, and still is, reconciliation, desiring that everyone be brought into His peace.

It is not always possible to live in peace with others, but God desires it for us, and it should never be on us if we cannot. Labor and employment law is a peaceful way to resolve conflict that has a long history of violence. It mediates the strife between two parties and reconciles instead of destroying.

We follow the greatest example of mediation in following Jesus, the man who mediated the strife between us and God and brought us out of destruction and into His peace.

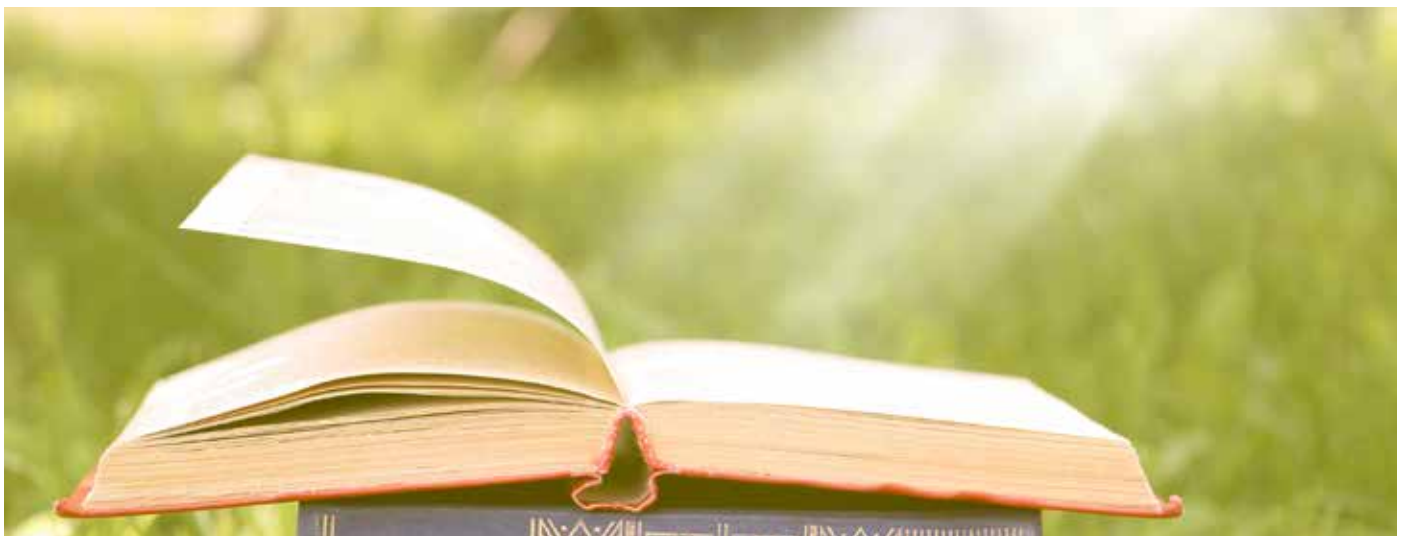
For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 2:5)

It is our reconciliation with Him and the sanctification that follows that drives us to seek reconciliation between others.

Legal representation bridges the inequity in power between workers and employers. Labor and employment law prevents oppression of workers and increases the likelihood of a fair outcome for all parties. When studying or working in labor and employment law, we as Christian law students and attorneys must remember that it is not just an area of law – it is living out a biblical calling.



Joe Trammell is a 2L at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law. He grew up in Franklin, Ohio, and received his Bachelor of Science in sports business from Northern Kentucky University. Joe was part of the inaugural group of Christian Legal Society Law School Fellows in 2018. His heart is to be used by God to bring those around him closer to Him.



A Call for Christ-Followers to Practice Labor and Employment Law

BY NORMAN D. HAWKINS

Prior to the Fall, and even prior to creating Eve, Scripture tells us in Genesis 2:15, “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” It was only after the Fall that God told Adam, “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life ... By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground ...” (Genesis 3:17b, 19a). Clearly, work was part of God’s divine plan for mankind prior to the Fall. Accordingly, following the Fall, the law governing work – labor and employment law – is central and essential in carrying out God’s post-Fall instructions.

My interest in labor law was ignited when, after working as an hourly employee and member of the UAW in a dirty but fascinating foundry during summers in college, I worked as a management trainee in the personnel department of the same foundry. My role as a young management trainee was to improve relationships between the union employees and management. It was during that period that I decided to attend law school and pursue a career in labor law. At that time, I thought of labor law as collective bargaining and work stoppages, grievances and arbitrations. Following my graduation from law school in 1984, however, the volume of traditional labor law was on the decline, while the field of employment law (essentially all things outside union management issues relating to employment) was exploding. In representing management, for many years my practice focused on the defense of discrimination and harassment administrative charges and lawsuits, as well as other wrongful discharge lawsuits. As part of my practice, I began to encourage employers to implement measures such as mediation and arbitration agreements designed to reduce risk and avoid very costly and highly contentious adversarial proceedings. Eventually, I began to practice more in the area of labor law and also to counsel employers on all aspects of the employment relationship from hiring to firing.

In 34 years of legal practice representing primarily management, I have come to realize that labor law and employment law are different sides of the same coin. Based on my experience, to be a very effective labor lawyer you must have a good understanding of employment law and some real-world

employment law practice experience, and vice versa. Today, my practice consists primarily of counseling employers on a daily basis. In some ways, my practice is akin to the emergency department of the labor and employment field. It is rarely boring, consistently interesting, frequently time sensitive, and sometimes very challenging.

While other areas of the law, such as intellectual property, have seen far more growth since the mid-to-late ‘90s, I submit that the next 30 to 40 years will require many dedicated Christian attorneys practicing labor and employment law. For example, in the near term, nondiscrimination laws are going to increasingly collide with religious freedom and freedom from discrimination based on religion. Labor and employment lawyers have the opportunity to be on the forefront of cutting-edge constitutional law cases in the courts, as well as advocating before federal and state administrative agencies. There is a tremendous opportunity for Christ-followers to make an impact regardless of whether one is advocating employee rights or union rights, representing management, working as an investigator in federal or state agencies, deciding cases as an arbitrator, working as a law clerk, or deciding cases as a judge. There will also be increasing opportunities for labor and employment lawyers on the international scene, especially those with bilingual skills.

If you have any interest in a career in labor and employment law, I would be happy to communicate with you via phone or email.



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A Christian Perspective on the Practice of Family Law

BY ERIC NELSON

When I came to law school in the fall of 2017, I knew basically nothing about the law. I came from a family of engineers and had never even met a lawyer before my junior year of college. I didn't even get a typical pre-law degree; my undergrad degree is in animal science. When I felt the Lord calling me to law school in May of my junior year, I was pretty blind as to what kind of law I was being called to practice. I had made up my own mind on one thing, though.

I would *never* practice family law.

The root of that aversion was clear – divorce. There is likely no legal institution more greatly reviled by the Church than divorce, and for good reason. Scripture has a clear policy against divorce, with both Mosaic law and Christ's own words speaking against it. This policy is seen most succinctly in Mark 10: 8-9:

[A]nd the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.

Divorce is only allowed by Scripture in narrow circumstances, and for good reason. I've seen the pain that divorce causes. When you tear apart one flesh, it creates a wound that will never truly be healed in this life. Further, it stands in direct opposition to the gospel message of unity and reconciliation. With that in mind, I came into law school knowing only that I would never practice family law. I stuck with that my entire first year, too. My friends and I would joke about starting our own firm someday (partly for fun, partly a survival mechanism during our 1L year to imagine having "made it"), and my friends knew they could push my buttons by stating we would practice family law.

I firmly believe God has a sense of humor because after declaring I would never practice family law, I now feel that God is calling me towards practicing exactly that.

Why this change? What could make me switch my tune from a total moral reprobation of the field to wanting to devote my career to it?

I saw the incredible avenue for the gospel in family law, and I gained an understanding of what a Christian has the opportunity to do in that field.

The core of this revelation is that family law is so much more than counseling constant "the spark is gone" no-fault divorces. When I attended the inaugural Christian Legal Society Law School Fellows program last summer, I was challenged in one session to develop a deeper understanding of family law by having to answer difficult questions. Yes, the Bible prohibits divorce outside of adultery, but what about a victim of domestic violence who senses a safety need to pursue a divorce? What does it truly mean for a union to be brought together by God? A sizable percentage of couples who go to their final divorce hearing report a secret belief that their marriage could have been saved; would being an advocate and counselor at law in divorces be worth it to be able to help the people in that situation?

My understanding only deepened when I actually took Family Law the first semester of my 2L year. It was a Bar course after all, and my view on the subject had softened dramatically in light of the nuances I had seen at the Fellows program. In studying the topic, I saw the greater opportunity for the gospel in the

practice. It's not because the situations one faces in the field were better than I expected. Rather, it was because the situations are so very much worse. The brokenness detailed in the cases I read were pungent. People who come to family lawyers are often at one of the lowest points in their lives. They are often in fear of losing everything and are dealing with feelings of incredible hurt

and betrayal. The resulting opportunity for a Christian lawyer is twofold.

First, people are never more open to the gospel than when they are brought low. Our Savior didn't come and spend His time with people who lived well put-together, upstanding lives. No, He spent His time with the broken and the discarded, with people dealing with physical and emotional pain, people who were lost and living broken lives of sin. He who was spotless went into the dark nastiness to be a light to those who were searching for it. Christ's initial following included very few people who were rich, powerful, or well-respected because those people are rarely the ones who think they need a savior. Many clients who come to a family lawyer are normally the type who wouldn't see the need for a savior either. As a lawyer, you can often work with people

***"A Christian lawyer
has the opportunity
to speak life
into darkness."***

who have experienced enough wealth and success to feel in control of their lives. That illusion of control is damaged the moment they have to step into a family lawyer's office. Maybe they're trying to fight a divorce, or get custody of their kids, or battling with family over inheritance after a loved one's death. Whatever the reason, they are likely more receptive in this moment to a divine hope than at any other point in their lives.

Second, because of his or her faith, a Christian lawyer has the opportunity to speak life into darkness. With situations as personal and painful as those seen in family law, there is a temptation for people involved to miss the point and focus entirely on hurting their adversary. It's no longer about finding what custody arrangement is actually best for their kids, or figuring out a visitation schedule that works, or figuring out a fair property distribution. Speaking life in these situations is not only righteous for the sake of justice, but by preventing destructive behavior, a Christian lawyer will better serve his or her clients' best interests in the long run. Not only will they inevitably regret causing pain for the sake of pain, but a good lawyer can help them see that being cantankerous and obstinate is likely to hurt their own best outcomes as well.

This is not all to say that everything I have seen in studying family law is awful or that these are the only opportunities for the Kingdom to be built through the practice. In fact, there is no more beautiful imitation of our spiritual acceptance into God's family than the legal adoption that occurs on this earth. Furthermore, through mediation there are opportunities for a Christian to advocate for reconciliation over and even in the midst of divorce.

There are a million opportunities for the Spirit to work through a Christian lawyer in a clean, beautiful way that makes that lawyer feel good about his or her work. This may be the reason that family lawyers actually report some of the highest job satisfaction of all lawyers. But there's also the opportunity for the Spirit to work through a Christian in situations that are broken and difficult, and I believe that isn't something from which Christians should shy away. Rather, as imitators of Christ, we should pour ourselves out for the sake of the gospel by being lights in dark places.

That's not to say family law as a field of practice doesn't have pitfalls and brokenness attached to it. Every field of practice does. The point is that family law can be used for building the Kingdom through the faithful action of believers. The incredible brokenness shouldn't inspire us to shy away, but should instead embolden us to care for the lost. It's an opportunity I hope to pursue and convince others to consider.



Eric Nelson is a student at the University of Alabama Culverhouse School of Law graduating in May 2020. Eric Nelson received a Bachelor of Science degree in animal science at Auburn University in 2017. Eric attends Capstone Church and leads his law school's Christian Legal Society chapter.



Reflections on a Christian Perspective on Studying Family Law

BY LYNNE MARIE KOHM

University of Alabama 3L Eric Nelson has cleverly uncovered and individually investigated one of the most conflict-ridden aspects of Christian lawyering – family law. He has done so with open honesty of his own initial feelings on the matter, while also compassionately addressing and peeling open the positive opportunities for lawyerly ministry and service in family law practice. It is an honor indeed to reflect on that sage advice to us all from this future lawyer.

A lawyer could be described as a healer of human conflict – a professional to whom clients bring their brokenness and interpersonal struggles, needing help, begging for guidance, maybe even hoping for curative measures. The state of the family in our culture today opens up incredible opportunities for the body of Christ to offer new hope to a struggling world, particularly in family law. Teaching, researching, serving, and publishing in the areas that affect families and the law, it is a privilege to teach family law from a biblical perspective toward family restoration. As you might imagine, to grasp family law concepts from this perspective is quite unique among law schools in the United States, but it is my firm belief and practice that law students must have the opportunity to receive excellent training to serve as counselors at law and to study in an environment that will challenge their spiritual growth. Family law particularly brings out some cognitive dissonance that enables and encourages students to understand the desperate need for Christian lawyers, for those lawyers to learn to be healers of human conflict, and to use the law to work toward family restoration. Mr. Nelson has considered those perspectives because of his encounter with Christian Legal Society, and he has outlined here the benefit of understanding the breakdown of the family from a legal and biblical perspective, discerning what can be done to restore the individuals and their families to that complete design God originally intended. He has also highlighted the personal aspects of lawyering that can be easily overlooked.

The Christian lawyer recognizes that the overall goal is to further the kingdom of God and, therefore, the Christian family law attorney is able to counsel a client on the appropriate measures to take to mitigate negative impacts, as opposed to letting clients be engulfed in anger and bitterness, which can damage the parties even further than what they are already experiencing. The Christian divorce lawyer particularly can put these matters into biblical perspective in hopes of counseling a client as to the true needs, concerns, and benefits of his or her spouse and their children. The Christian divorce lawyer recognizes that the counselor-at-law part of practice allows an attorney to help his or her client to act wisely and carefully, rather than to pursue a scorched earth strategy in a divorce or custody battle.

Furthermore, all Christians, even (and maybe particularly) Christian lawyers, are called to be salt and light. We know that we are called to serve those who are downtrodden and in need. Ask any divorce attorney about the state of his or her divorce clients – they are generally individuals in great need of support. That support can come from a Christian lawyer in excellent representation, but it can also come in the added support of prayer. It is in those moments that these weakened people feel fortified and able to face the challenges ahead of them regardless of the outcome. In

*“A lawyer
could be described
as a healer of
human conflict . . .”*

those prayers, lawyer and client are able to thank God for being called to a higher purpose, knowing that God’s plan is always better than our own. The Christian family law attorney aids that family in navigating the muddy waters that could end a marriage or helps to set a course to lead that family into new family dynamics, rather than allowing divorce to be an avenue for revenge. That lawyer might also help a client to understand marital reconciliation in a culture of divorce, even fashioning a contract to accomplish that objective. Being a Christian family law attorney does not have to be a paradox or an oxymoron or a controversy, but rather it allows families to be encouraged and empowered to work out a plan with Holy Spirit-led guidance. Furthermore, a troubled marriage or custody battle is

not the only context for this work, as Mr. Nelson points out with the beauty of adoption, but a Christian family law attorney can also be instrumental in protecting parental rights, or can help grandparents work toward a child's best interests, or might offer wisdom and direction in client guidance toward building a family with assisted reproductive techniques. Sharing and accomplishing God's wisdom in these important matters is also the work of a Christian family law attorney.

A Christian family law attorney is a healer of human conflict, licensed and empowered in a ministry toward family restoration and strength in the context of the practice of law, a critically important ministry that should never be overlooked or misjudged. Thank you, Mr. Nelson, for providing that most encouraging example to us all.



Lynne Marie Kohm - law professor, author, lawyer, speaker, and discipleship mentor - is dedicated to family restoration through the application of Christian legal principles. Teaching Family Law, Bioethics, Child Advocacy, Professional Responsibility, and Wills, Trusts & Estates, as the John Brown McCarty Professor of Family Law at Regent University School of Law, wife of 30+ years, a (homeschooling) mother of two, and leader in the realm of state and volunteer bar service, Professor Kohm brings a servant leadership model of family preservation and restoration to the practice of family law. See her research on SSRN.com, and her full bio at Regent.edu.



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Christianity and Contract Law

BY NICOLE KENNEDY

During my 1L year, I discovered the classic law school film *The Paper Chase*. If, by chance, you have not heard of it, this film centers around a first-year law student, Hart, as he struggles to impress his stern contracts professor, Kingsfield. In one scene, Hart searches his school's law library and finds Kingsfield's old notes. Among them, Kingsfield has scrawled on one page: "Can we make a contract with God that is binding to man?"

This question, left unresolved in the film, piqued my curiosity as I worked through my own Contract Law course. Can we make a contract with God? Upon further reflection and study, I've found that God's Word contains parallels to each fundamental element of contract law. Our relationship with Him seems to operate like a typical contract, but our covenant with Christ covers our sins and defies the law of man.

Terms

The first step of contract formation is establishing terms that each party can readily decipher. God's contract with us contains simple yet profound terms.

You shall be my people, and I will be your God. (Jeremiah 30:22)

These terms manifest throughout the whole contract, establishing an intimate relationship between mankind and our Creator.

Offer

Once terms are established, one party must make an offer to the other. Section 24 of the Restatement (Second) of Contracts defines an offer as "the manifestation of willingness to enter into a bargain, so a reasonable person would see it as an offer."

In *The Paper Chase*, Kingsfield asked if we can make a contract with God. The answer is that we cannot; in our contract with God, He is the one making the offer. God offers us the opportunity to enter into relationship and eternal life with Him through His son. This offer is the manifestation of His willingness to enter into a contract with us.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whoever believes in Him will not perish but will have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

Acceptance

God has made an offer, so now we may accept it. Scripture instructs us how to accept God's offer.

If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)

Consideration

Consideration is a fundamental requirement of every contract. Parties on each side of the contract must offer something of value, typically through bargaining, to create a valid agreement.

There is consideration on both sides of our contract with God.

On God's side, He is offering us the gift of connection to Him starting on this earth, abundant life leading to eternal life.

I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. (John 10:10)

On our side, we must also offer consideration by behaving in a way that is pleasing to God. We are part of His family, and He calls us to follow His laws.

If you love me, keep my commandments. (John 14:15)

God has also provided us with statutes in the Torah. The Gospel of Matthew summarizes the greatest commandments:

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments. (Matthew 22:37-40)

"Can we make a contract with God that is binding to man?"

To create an enforceable contract, parties must have consideration; each must bargain for an object that has legal value. Courts do not always examine the adequacy or fairness of the consideration. Yet sometimes, as in the 1861 case of *Schnell v. Nell*, they may deem nominal consideration to be insufficient.

Are we offering nominal consideration? By human's standards, it appears so; after all, God has given us a bargain that is vastly uneven. He offers us eternal life, and nothing that we offer comes close. This is where God's grace exceeds man's law: God accepts our consideration, no matter how nominal, as part of a valid contract.

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

Breach

Breach occurs when one or more parties fails to fulfill their contractual agreement. The court in *Kasarsky v. Merit Systems* defined breach as simply "the non-performance of a contractual duty."

Mankind has breached its contract with God numerous times. From the Garden of Eden, to the times of Noah leading to the flood, to the Tower of Babel, to many denying Jesus, and into present-day injustice, idolatry, and lack of love.

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

Later in Romans, Scripture clarifies the consequences of our sin.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

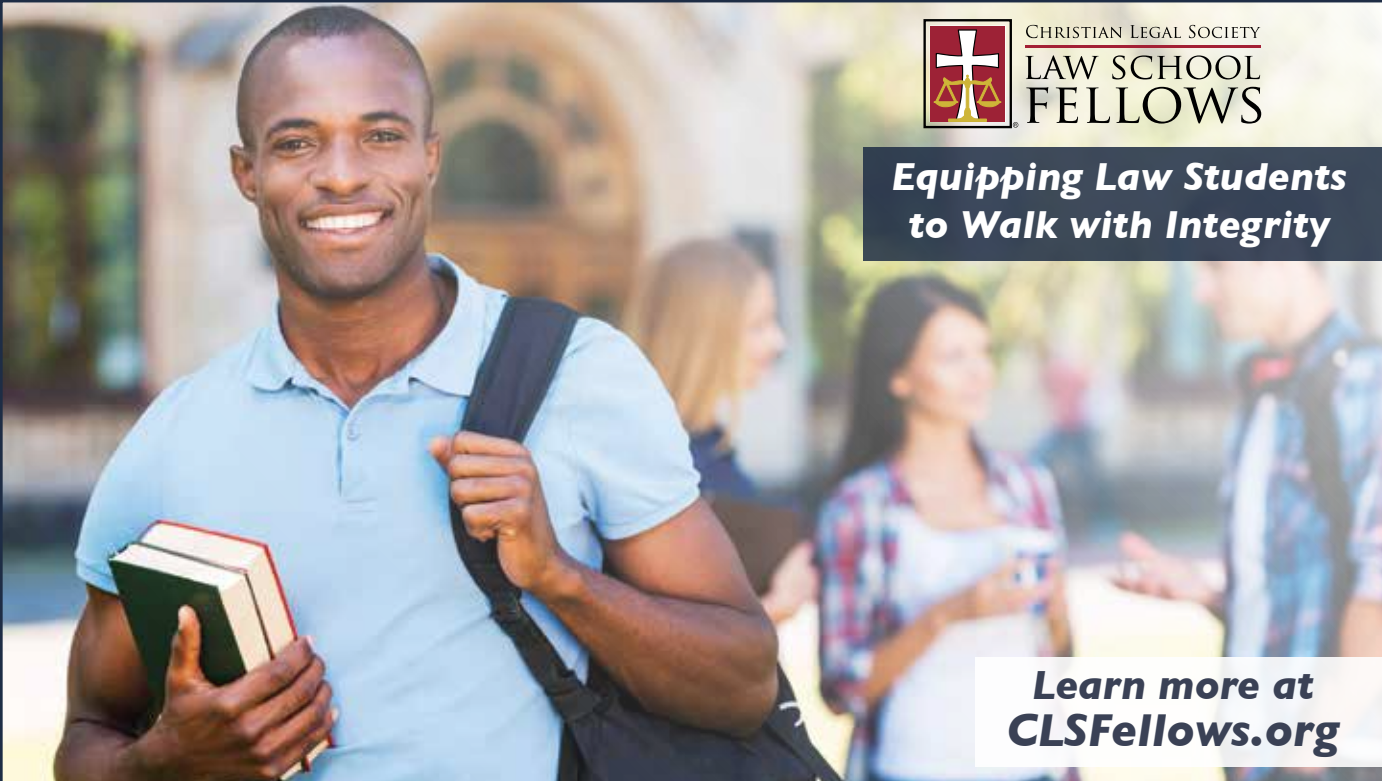
In most contracts, breach results in lawsuits and retaliation. Yet in God's contract with us, He offers us a different contract with new terms: once we enter relationship with Christ, He forgives us of our sins.


Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. (John 5:24)

Remedy

In contract law, if someone breaches a contract, the non-breaching party is entitled to a remedy. The concept of remedy is inherent in the fundamental definition of a contract. Section 1 of the Restatement (Second) of Contracts defines a contract as "a promise the breach of which law gives remedy, or performance of which the law makes duty."

The purpose of a remedy is to make the wronged party whole, to restore what was lost in a contract gone wrong. This usually takes



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the form of a monetary remedy, a pay-out from the breaching party.

God's remedy looks different. Although all of us have breached our contract with Him, God makes us whole and forgives our transgressions when we repent and turn back to Him. Like the prodigal son's loving father, He welcomes us back into His family even after we've strayed from Him. He cares about every precious sheep in His flock.

Like a good parent, God disciplines us when we disobey Him.

God disciplines those He loves. (Hebrews 12:6)

Yet He remains ever-merciful and loving, gently pointing us in the right direction instead of giving us the full extent of the punishment we deserve.

He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. (Psalm 103:10-12)

God's remedy is to make us better people as we grow in relationship with Him.

And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Romans 8:30)

Conclusion

God's actions contradict virtually every principle of contract law. He offers the gift of eternal life, accepts our nominal consideration, and makes us whole even when we breach our side of the contract.

To the legal scholar and first-year law student alike, God's mercy in forgiving His people's breach of contract seems completely illogical. Indeed, our covenant with God simply doesn't fit into our legal system. Our idea of justice is only proximate justice, and our legal system is a mere approximation of God's true justice.

God has forgiven our trespasses and healed our breach. He has given us a gift beyond measure, and in return He calls us to obey His commandments and strive for justice in this life.

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)



Nicole Marie Kennedy is a CLS Law School Fellow and a second-year law student at the University of California, Irvine School of Law, where she serves as co-president of Adelphi Christian Fellowship. She has worked at the Center for Public Justice and will be interning with the California Attorney General - Charitable Trusts Section this summer. Nicole graduated with honors from Pepperdine University with a B.A. in English literature and a vocal music minor. She hopes to build a career in nonprofit law, counseling and managing tax-exempt organizations.



Contracting with God?

BY SALLY WAGENMAKER

Can a person make a binding contract with God? One may think that only a lawyer – or a law student through the lens of a 1L contracts class – could ask such a question. After all, it is only by God’s grace and mercy that we can approach His throne, and only through His son Jesus Christ that we can stand before Him as worthy and redeemed. But do parallels exist between our relationship with God and contract law, like concepts of offer, acceptance, breach, and remedies?

Law student Nicole Kennedy draws some fascinating parallels and contrasts, all pointing to Jesus Christ as God’s Son and through the Holy Spirit’s power. Tracking generally with Ms. Kennedy’s legal analysis, I offer some additional observations but with the disclaimer that I am no theologian or philosopher, just a Christ-follower and long-time lawyer. Despite similarities between biblical conceptions of law and covenant and modern contract law, we also must proceed with caution lest we force biblical concepts to fit our contemporary paradigms (rather than the other way around).

Capacity

A key aspect of any contractual relationship is each party’s capacity to make a binding agreement: can each party – physically, mentally, and here, spiritually – sign on the proverbial dotted line? God made us; we did not create ourselves. We have capacity, therefore, only insofar as He has allowed it for us. And He has done so beautifully and magnificently! Indeed, we are made in the very image of God! (Genesis 1:27).

Note too that God entered into unilateral and bilateral covenants with human beings, including Noah, Abraham, and David. Throughout the Old and New Testaments, God treats human beings, both individually and corporately, as persons with the capacity – with the ability – to keep the terms of an agreement, with our obligation being to obey and keep his commandments. (Exodus 19:5-6). So yes, I would call that capacity, by the grace of God.

Terms

The God of the universe chose us – wow! God’s clear and unilateral promise to his people that “I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God” (Exodus 6:7) was unmerited. It came after a host of other failures on the part of Adam and Eve and

others who followed. Nevertheless, God’s choice of His people is a far cry from career counselors and worldly advisors who all too often encourage a “believe in yourself” mentality – not much of a contract with God! The terms, then, are clear, especially when He explicitly sets forth “if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:5-6). We fail to keep our end of the bargain, and so He offers terms of reconciliation after our breach of that covenant: “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved!” (Acts 16:31).

Offer and Acceptance

As Martin Luther famously uttered at his life’s end, “We are beggars, this is true.” We have nothing to offer God. He is all; we are nothing. Or as Jesus put it, “apart from me, you can do nothing” (John 15:5). And as the Calvinists phrase it, we are totally depraved – in dire need of God and in no way on equal footing. Those are tough words for lawyers and law students, who feel the continual pull to prove themselves as attractive success stories!

Now what does God offer? Above all, relationship – with Him, with other Christians, and with the world through His love – as Ms. Kennedy points out, for now and eternity. But this is not merely a transaction; it’s a life-changing transformation of eternal consequence. Indeed, all of our life experiences point to our relationship with God so that we can draw closer to Him. Not at all what a worldly contract of fees for good or services would provide!

Consideration

Sorry, but this one’s really lopsided – almost a no-go from the human side. Anything we could offer to God, the Creator of the universe, necessarily must be inadequate – for if God needed something from us in His infinite glory, would He be the omnipotent God worthy of our worship? And yet God invites our service, our hearts, our very lives. Our inability to keep His initial covenant with His people is why God swore by Himself to keep His covenantal terms with Abraham. (Genesis 15:17).



Breach

As Ms. Kennedy notes, and as my children learned through their kindergarten “A” verse (of the “Bible alphabet”), “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Acts 3:23). We’re hopeless. Now if each of us can grasp that concept for ourselves and for those around us, our ability to succeed in life can increase exponentially – with resulting humility and kindness toward others too!

God’s law does not differ from the laws of man with respect to the need for punishment of breach, as Ms. Kennedy notes. Rather, God’s mercy is shown through His execution of the remedy for breach ... on Himself!

Remedy

God’s righteousness demands justice and wrath, but He provides mercy through Jesus Christ’s atoning death and resurrection. The world cries, “my rights” and “I’m the victim.” Yet God gives us the right to become His children (John 1:12), with all breaches repaired by His amazing love. We want worldly power (especially as lawyers); God equips us through His power alone (Ephesians 3:5-6, 16-19).

And there’s more! Ms. Kennedy’s explanation of God’s remedy reveals His infinite relational love for us, as His children. Contracts may concern many treasures, and important ones at that. The greatest treasure is God’s love (1 Corinthians 13:13), lavished upon believers, upon His offer, our acceptance, and through a resulting lifetime of Christ-following.

Contracts – A Shadow of Things to Come

Through the ages, contracts have been cemented through handshakes, vows, paperwork, and now electronic transmission. One beautiful biblical contract is that of marriage. God made one man and one woman to promise faithfulness to each, as one, as co-creators of children in His image, and for deep abiding relationship together – all pointing us to Christ. Do people breach the marriage contract, and do they fail? All the time! Nevertheless, with Christ as our bridegroom and the church as His “bride,” this contractual relationship shows us how God passionately desires our hearts, our beings, and our wills to be united with Him. May it be so for each of us as we seek His face and enjoy His rich mercy and love through our legal studies, the legal profession, and every facet of our lives!



Sally Wagenmaker is a partner at Wagenmaker & Oberly, with offices in Chicago and Charleston. The law firm’s values include trustworthiness, cost efficiency, creative collaboration, mutual respect, and community engagement, consistent with Proverbs 11:24-25. Sally currently serves as President of CLS. Her love for CLS began in law school, with a hunger for spiritual growth and meaningful work. Special thanks to her colleague Jonathan Hwang, who provided invaluable assistance with this essay dialogue.

The Narrow Path: A Christian Perspective on Studying Trial Advocacy

BY NICK WALTER

I spent fall of last year preparing for a mock trial tournament I just attended this past January. It was a simple but tragic DUI problem based, as most mock trial problems are, on a real case: a young woman is out with her boyfriend and his daughter. After drinks and drug use, she gets behind the wheel. In the ensuing crash, boyfriend and daughter die.

It's a short case. Four depositions, fifteen exhibits (only five of which are useful), less than ninety pages. Simple stuff. Straightforward.

At least that's what I'd thought when I initially began to practice, just as I'd done for other mock trials. The strategy was simple: you read the case, poked the holes in the other side's theory, painted them as somehow bad or incompetent, and voila.

Jury trials are, at their heart, a battle of stories. One attorney gets up and tells the jury his client's side of the story. The other attorney then gets up and does the same for his client. Best story wins. While this approach works well, it's also time-consuming: developing themes, crafting the story, testing case theories, and preparing a finished product for the jury takes many hours of studious dedication.

About two months before the tournament, nagging doubts about my trial preparation began creeping to the forefront of my mind. Trial practice was taking up an exorbitant amount of my time; I'd even missed church once for a scrimmage. In my rush to get out the door every morning, I was missing my morning devotions with the Lord. Amid the furor of a packed schedule I was beginning to forget whom my work should be for.

In many ways, my experience with mock trial mirrors the struggles of trial practice. Caught up in the unrelenting pressure inherent in trial work, a Christian attorney may fall prey to various temptations or struggles, forgetting the ultimate goal for which we strive. Our innate desire to win, our pride, and our fear of failure combine to make effectively following Christ as a trial attorney difficult. We are hard pressed on every side by troubles, and the path of righteousness is a narrow one. To be fair, these problems face all attorneys, but in few places do they hit as keenly as in trial, where the issues must be so cleanly distilled down and packaged for a lay jury, where the story is so paramount, and where the stage is so important.

In this article, I will explore some of the major issues faced by the Christian lawyer in trial practice. I conclude that Christians must walk a narrow path in trial advocacy, not falling into the pitfalls of pride, deceitfulness, and idolatry.

The first and greatest issue that trial lawyers face is that of pride. We love the spotlight. It takes a unique mix of traits to create a trial lawyer; someone who has the concentration to devote hours to mindless detail work, as well as the public speaking chops to smoothly handle unexpected events in the courtroom. It's been said that a good trial attorney is like a theater kid who loves to study: someone with dramatic flair but academic diligence. This unusual combination of qualities makes trial work rather niche; it's not for everyone. Uniqueness can breed arrogance.

Adding to this problem is how many lawyers are wired. To succeed in law practice typically requires some level of competitiveness, of a desire to win. As C.S. Lewis wrote in *Mere Christianity*, pride is especially dangerous for competitive people:

We say that people are proud of being rich, or clever, or good-looking, but they are not. They are proud of being richer, or cleverer, or better-looking than others... [o]nce the element of competition has gone, pride has gone. That is why I say that Pride is essentially competitive in a way the other vices are not.

Additionally, our desire to zealously advocate can cause trial attorneys to stray into deceitfulness. As discussed, a key focus of trial work (especially jury trials) is to synthesize the facts into a single story that the lawyer can tell in a sentence or two. It is even better if the lawyer can break it down into a single phrase, such as "lazy cop," "careless driver," etc. From here, however, the desire to win can drive us to move beyond effective story telling to something murkier.

The temptation to do whatever it takes to win, including shading the truth, can manifest in many ways. For example, one popular book espouses the reptile theory, arguing that plaintiffs' lawyers should not focus on winning on the merits of their specific case. Rather, the book argues, they should appeal to the jury's primal, "reptilian" survival instincts, convincing jurors that their safety is at stake in a trial, even when this is clearly not the case. Through this and similar methods, attorneys can slightly misstate the law or the



facts. An attorney could even go outside the parameters of the case entirely or hint that facts not in evidence are actually true.

Furthermore, the nature of trial practice lends to this difficulty. Every sentence a trial attorney writes or utters is written with an eye towards persuasion. Every time an attorney stands up in court to make an evidentiary objection, conduct a direct examination, or give a closing argument, she is doing so to advocate for her client. It is so easy to leave out a convenient detail and pretend she's told the whole story, to shade the truth just a hair to sway that last holdout juror.

Finally, trial attorneys can stray into idolatry. Trial work is often incredibly difficult. Forgetting even one fact from a deposition can make or break a case. To avoid this, attorneys must spend hundreds of hours poring over transcripts, affidavits, records, and the like. They must invest themselves in their work for, if they do not, they will fail.

Because of the sheer length of time that a trial attorney must spend on one trial alone, it is easy to let trial work become an idol and forget friends, family, the church, and even God. Doing trial litigation is not why we were put on this earth. It is merely one facet of a larger calling. That calling is not to stand in some courtroom somewhere and passionately declare our client's innocence. It is to humbly, calmly, and often quietly pursue God with full-throated, unapologetic, reckless abandon. We are called to be salt and light, but we cannot do so if our earthly focus has consumed our thoughts and lives until all we can think about is motions *in limine*. That is the danger of worshipping anything other than God.

What is the solution for these problems? Easy enough to outline, but impossible to fully implement on this earth. First, pride. At its root, pride is the sin of putting yourself in place of God. When we are prideful or arrogant, seeking out glory or fame for its own sake, we tell God that our plan is better than His. To avoid pride, therefore, we must do the following: (1) remember that all we do is for God's glory; (2) pray that He will help us put Him first; and

(3) actually put Him first. As Scripture tells us, "whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

To avoid deceitfulness, we must remember our goals, keeping our eyes fixed on the Light, as Christian, the protagonist in John Bunyan's masterpiece *Pilgrim's Progress*, does when he traverses the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Our temporal goal is to zealously advocate for our client. Our spiritual goal is to do everything for the glory of God. And God has prohibited deceit. As with pride, the solution is again easy to outline but hard to implement: (1) remember all we do is for God's glory; (2) pray He will keep deceit far from us; and (3) actually avoid being deceitful.

Finally, to avoid idolatry, we must remember the ultimate reason why we do anything. Every single action we take in this life is for the furtherance of the Kingdom. Period. Our work as attorneys, no matter how important it may seem on this earth, is always just one part of a great plan that our earthly eyes cannot see. We must worship Jesus, not juries.

Despite these issues, studying and practicing trial advocacy is one of the most rewarding experiences in the law, with some of the greatest potential for spreading the gospel in the profession. Trial lawyers are some of the most well-known types of attorneys and can be some of the most well-respected (such as Atticus Finch). By our actions, we can set an example for others both in the legal field and to the general public. The legacy of a great Christian trial lawyer is a man or woman who walks humbly, speaks honestly, and deals justly: a man or woman who loves and follows Christ. In our profession, or any other, there is no mightier work than that.



Nick Walter is a second-year student at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University. His interests range from statutory interpretation to platform speeches to ultimate frisbee. God willing, Nick will be pursuing clerkships and then civil trial litigation, particularly jury trials, after graduation.

Countering the Consuming Practice

BY JOSH GROSSHANS

In reading Nick's article, I was struck by how this Christian law student adeptly put his finger on some of the core temptations for those of us in trial practice: pride, deceitfulness, and idolatry. Moreover, I was impressed he identified the specific ways in which these sins can fester in the life and practice of a Christian litigator. While Nick's article reminds me of the diligence required to walk the "narrow path" of righteousness, it also gives me great hope for the future of the practice, as well as the future of the faith in the legal profession. Nick demonstrates an awareness that is sorely needed in law schools and the practice of law today.

Some of the best advice I ever received regarding the practice of law came from the first attorney I clerked for in law school. "Young Josh," he said as he leaned across his desk, "the practice of law is broken, and the practice of law by Christians is just as broken. This practice will consume you if you let it." Study after study bears this out. Alcoholism, drug use, divorce, suicide; there is something dark that plagues the practice of law, and believers are not immune. While I cheer on the efforts many bar associations have taken up to help foster healthy lifestyles and relationships, we in the faith should recognize that there is something spiritual at work in our practice. We need to be keenly aware of the temptations and pitfalls that seek to draw our eyes away from the faith, our families, and who we are called to be in Christ. This is why I'm grateful for the encouragement of CLS in my own life and that of "young Nick."

The fruit of CLS' steady ministry to law students is lawyers who think deeply about the integration of their faith and their vocation. Thanks to CLS, law students like Nick are shown how to be lawyers who are mindful of the spiritual challenges of the practice. There is no other organization with more opportunity, or success, in the work of building up law students to be attorneys for the Kingdom. And, of course, CLS' work doesn't stop at graduation. I regularly need this same inspiration in my life. In the midst of court-ordered deadlines, arbitration schedules, and the like, I can lose sight of the goals Nick challenges us to focus on. Thankfully CLS provides a consistent encouragement to keep my eyes on the Creator. Sometimes that reminder comes from a conversation at a local chapter meeting. Sometimes it comes from an interaction with a law student, like Nick, who ends up encouraging me more than I do him or her. I hope you'll consider joining with your local CLS attorney or law student chapter in this work of preparing students for the practice of law and the challenges therein. I'll bet you find yourself getting out of it more than you put in.



Josh Grosshans is a partner at the law firm of Latham, Shuker, Eden and Beaudine in Orlando, Florida, where he focuses his practice on construction law and commercial litigation.



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Attorney to Attorney: Don't Try to Lawyer on Your Own

BY CONNIE BOURNE

Across generations, geography, and practice areas, smart attorneys learned a very valuable lesson that is not taught in law school. They learned early on that finding an experienced and trusted advisor, *i.e.*, a mentor, helped them more than all the substantive topics taught them and, on occasion, surpassed the logic, organized thoughts, and analysis they gained as the foundation of good lawyering. Simply stated, they don't try to lawyer on their own.

Smart attorneys know that lawyering with others forces them to acknowledge their limitations and their interdependence and also helps them to appreciate the value another attorney brings. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: "We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied to a single garment of destiny." For Christian attorneys, mentoring is all about prayer, guidance, and serving, which allows us to affirm not only that there is an important role we each play but also that we all participate in the essential but unfinished work of building community.

Don't be mistaken, law school was indeed beneficial to us lawyers because it taught us how to think. What we didn't realize at the time is that law school was only a hint of what it would be like to actually practice law. It didn't take us long after graduation to realize that practicing law was nothing like *Matlock* or *Perry Mason* and that the "jealous mistress" so ominously talked about in the halls of learning really did pursue us. We rarely thought about it, but the most important lessons we learned about practicing law and being a successful lawyer were not written in multi-pound treatises or volumes far too heavy to carry. Such knowledge and wisdom came from individuals who poured into our lives throughout the years with prayer and guidance. These individuals are mentors and yet they are also a great deal more to Christian lawyers. We call them disciple-makers.

The word "mentor" does not appear in the Bible, but we see examples in both the Old and New Testaments. In the biblical account of Moses and Joshua, the references are relatively brief and scattered, but the books of Exodus, Numbers, Joshua, and Judges give testimony to the ways that Moses prepared Joshua to

be a great leader and, eventually, his successor. In these books, we see how Joshua, since his youth, was an ever-present aide to Moses (Numbers 11:28); that Moses sends Joshua into battle (Exodus 17:8-10) and takes Joshua to the mountaintop (Exodus 24:12-16); how Moses invites Joshua along as he speaks to God (Exodus 33:8-11); that Moses sends Joshua as a spy (Numbers 13:16-17); how Moses prepares to pass the mantle of leadership to Joshua (Numbers 27:18-20); and, finally, how the Lord appoints Joshua to lead (Joshua 1:1-9).

In the New Testament, specifically Acts 9 and 11, we read about Barnabas and Paul. Barnabas was the mentor and sponsor who introduced Paul to the church in Jerusalem, which would play such an important role in Paul's life. Later, Barnabas was Paul's partner in several missionary ventures. Barnabas is often looked to as a model of disciple-making.

Finally, Jesus mentored the twelve apostles who established the Christian church. The apostles mentored hundreds of other leaders, including Paul. Paul mentored Titus and Timothy, among many others. Timothy mentored "faithful men" such as Epaphras. Epaphras and the other faithful men also mentored others too, which led to a chain reaction that resulted in dozens of new churches in Asia. Ultimately, this specific mentoring chain is the beginning point of our churches today.

Although over two thousand years have passed since the Bible was written, it set the foundation for law, teaching, scholarship, and helping to guide others. The legal profession is indebted to the work of these great biblical leaders and the legacy for mentoring others that flows to the legal world starting in law schools and continuing throughout the careers of attorneys.

Mentors play a vital role in our lives and the lives of many throughout history. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906 to 1945) of Germany, was a pastor and theologian. Arrested in 1943 for his role in a plot to assassinate Hitler, he was hung April 8, 1945, eleven days before the Allies liberated Europe. His writings, including *Letters and Papers from Prison*, have continued to influence and inspire others around the world. A brilliant theology student at the University of Berlin, Bonhoeffer was deeply influenced by his family. His father, a professor of psychiatry at Berlin University, was a distant benign patriarch typical of the

times. His mother was primarily concerned that her children be independent thinkers and responsible human beings. Outside of his family, his primary influence was the Swiss theologian Karl Barth. Barth's theology was an anathema to the Berlin faculty, yet Dietrich did not hesitate to express his Barthian leanings in papers and classes.

Dorothy Day (1897-1980) was an American journalist and social activist. The causes leading to her many arrests were her tireless advocacy for workers and the poor. There were no important mentors until her thirties, and her primary influence came from books. At thirty-five, she prayed for a way to use her writing, her faith, and her concern for the poor. A stranger, Peter Maurin, a poor peasant, philosopher, and devout Catholic, appeared at her home, and he and Dorothy worked towards a better life for those with less in society. Their cooperation led to *The Catholic*

Worker – first, the newspaper and then the movement.

Family and the culture in which they were embedded were especially formative for Bonhoeffer and Day. For both there was an influential group of friends and mentors who were supportive of them and reminded them of their purpose. Today, it's harder starting out as a lawyer – harder to get a job, harder to know how to do basic procedural tasks

without guidance, harder to evaluate cases, and harder to speak with clients and handle a court case from start to finish, all while ensuring that you are following the rules of professional conduct. To be honest, we wonder if it will ever get easier. Just when you think you have something nailed, you don't. There's always an opposing counsel, a judge, or a client that dampens your enthusiasm and wit. There's always something new to be learned, at either your client's expense or your own.

This is the central reason why a smart attorney does not lawyer on his or her own. Almost always, mentors exhibit the following traits: appreciation of the giftedness of the mentee; generosity of time; caring; a listening ear; openness; encouragement; holding the mentee to high standards; expanding the mentee's experiences; and being a role model for the mentee. Mentoring allows the attorney to be a listener and not a fixer, to offer transparency in sharing life's challenges and successes, and to create an environment that is welcoming and inspirational. Mostly, mentors

“Mentoring allows the attorney to be a listener and not a fixer, to offer transparency in sharing life's challenges and successes, and to create an environment that is welcoming and inspirational.”

pray often for their charge. The Bible tells us, “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2).

Conversely, an earnest mentee will be someone who is teachable, open to suggestions, and able to recognize that he or she still has a lot to learn. The mentee shows appreciation, enthusiasm, and a commitment to pay. “He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way” (Psalm 25:9).

The most important role for both the mentee and the mentor is to have several mentors and mentees and then to pay it forward. The Lord Jesus reiterated what Solomon wrote, “In a multitude of counselors there is victory” (Proverbs 11:14). The objective is fellowship, friendship, and the desire to share their lives.

We have only touched the surface of why mentoring makes life better for law students and lawyers alike. For Christian attorneys, life is enhanced because we are given the opportunity to be disciple-makers, leaders, and mentors to help new attorneys entering law – and even lawyers who have been in the profession – to be

the salt and light of Jesus Christ. We ought to invite ourselves to consider how we could recognize and nurture this kind of biblical spiritual giftedness. We are guided by awareness of how these individuals were influenced by family, by teachers, by books, or mentors. As suggested, it is a calling inspired by the truth that none of us should lawyer on our own!



Connie Bourne is Director of Attorney Ministries at CLS. She has more than 10 years of legal experience in estate law, elder law, and information technology government contracts. Since 2014, Connie has lectured at various higher education institutions and has published training materials on professional development topics in the law. Her favorite pastime is serving as a volunteer speaker at churches, community organizations, and universities. Connie will complete a two-year Biblical Studies Certificate Program in May 2019.



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The Legal Landscape for Issues Involving Religion and Government Programs

BY KIM COLBY

An exciting project is underway throughout the federal government. In October 2017, the United States Attorney General tasked all federal executive departments and agencies with reviewing “all proposed rules, regulations, and policies that have the potential to have an effect on religious liberty for compliance with the principles of religious liberty.”¹ The Attorney General also reminded the agencies that their enforcement actions, employment standards, and contracting and grant-making had to conform to federal religious freedom protections, including the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the First Amendment. The Attorney General issued the memorandum in response to Executive Order No. 13798 § 4.²

This is good news because many federal regulations were adopted before enactment of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in 1993 and before the United States Supreme Court handed down many of the decisions interpreting the Free Exercise, Free Speech, and Establishment Clauses. The Establishment Clause jurisprudence of the 1970s – which was suspicious, even sometimes hostile, to religious institutions – has largely been replaced by an Establishment Clause jurisprudence that is more evenhanded in its treatment of religious individuals and institutions and more respectful of its companion Free Speech and Free Exercise Clauses.

As government officials review their agencies’ actions for alignment with federal religious freedom protections, four primary legal authorities, which have been remarkably stable for three decades, come into play.

1. The Federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act, §§ 42 U.S.C. 2000bb et seq. In 1993, Congress passed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) by overwhelmingly bipartisan votes – 97-3 in the Senate and a unanimous voice vote in the House. President Clinton signed RFRA into law, citing “a shared desire here to protect perhaps the most precious of all American liberties, religious freedom.”³

By passing RFRA, Congress amended every federal statute, whether enacted before or after 1993, to include its strong protection for religious freedom. Every federal statute and regulation must be implemented in a way that complies with RFRA’s stringent safeguards.

What does RFRA require? If an individual’s or institution’s exercise of religion is substantially burdened, then the federal government must demonstrate two things: (1) that it has a compelling governmental interest that justifies burdening the specific individual’s or institution’s exercise of religion; and (2) that its compelling interest is being furthered in the least

restrictive means possible. This is a very high standard that the government often cannot meet.

Specifically, any regulation promulgated by the federal government must comply with RFRA. An agency cannot impose a substantial burden on the exercise of religion unless it can demonstrate a compelling interest unachievable by less restrictive means. For regulations adopted before 1993, the Attorney General's directive to the agencies is particularly necessary to bring older regulations into compliance with RFRA.

2. The First Amendment's Establishment Clause. The directive is also essential because many regulations were adopted before the Supreme Court handed down several landmark decisions interpreting the federal Establishment, Free Exercise, and Free Speech Clauses.

a. Access for religious individuals and institutions to government funding programs does not violate the Establishment Clause. Since the 1980s, the Supreme Court has consistently ruled that the federal Establishment Clause allows religious persons or organizations to participate in generally available benefit programs. The key is that the funding be available using religion-neutral criteria. For example, in one of the leading cases, the Supreme Court ruled that the federal Establishment Clause would not be violated if a blind college student received funding through a state vocational rehabilitation assistance program even though he was pursuing studies at a religious college to be a pastor.⁴

Likewise, the Supreme Court has repeatedly ruled in favor of access for religious persons and organizations to government funding programs. For example, the federal Establishment Clause is not violated by any of the following:

- a public employee providing services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act as an interpreter for a deaf student attending a religious high school;⁵
- a religious student publication receiving significant funding through a public university's student activity fees program;⁶
- religious school students receiving remedial reading instruction at their religious schools from public school teachers funded by Title I;⁷
- religious schools receiving educational materials and equipment funded by Chapter 2 of Title I;⁸
- religious school students receiving funds through a state voucher program;⁹ and
- a church receiving a state-funded grant to upgrade its pre-school playground.¹⁰

b. The government risks violating the Establishment Clause if it excludes religious individuals or institutions from generally available benefit programs. Several

Establishment Clause problems can be triggered by the exclusion of religious persons or institutions from generally available government programs.

- Government officials should not be in the business of categorizing individuals' speech as religious or not religious. The Supreme Court has warned that the Establishment Clause would be violated by government officials trying to determine whether students' speech is "religious instruction or worship" for purposes of allowing the students to meet in university facilities or funding a religious student publication using student activity fees.¹¹
- Government officials should not administer a program in a way that discriminates among religious individuals or institutions, which is what happens when the government engages in religious line-drawing. The Supreme Court has said that the "clearest command of the Establishment Clause" is for the government to treat all religions neutrally.¹²
- Government officials may not exclude a religious institution because it is "pervasively sectarian." The Supreme Court has repudiated the idea that a religious institution can be excluded from a government funding program because it is "pervasively sectarian," a notion popular in the 1970s.¹³

3. The First Amendment's Free Exercise Clause. The Supreme Court has repeatedly ruled that the government cannot impose "special disabilities" on individuals or institutions based on their religious status.¹⁴ The Free Exercise Clause "protect[s] religious observers against unequal treatment" and subjects to the strictest scrutiny laws that target the religious for "special disabilities" based on their "religious status."¹⁵ The Supreme Court has held that the Free Exercise Clause was violated when:

- a state refused to allow a church to participate in a state-funded grant program to make playgrounds safer for children;¹⁶
- a state refused to allow individuals to run for certain state offices because they were ministers;¹⁷ and
- a municipality punished religious conduct but not analogous secular conduct.¹⁸

4. The First Amendment's Free Speech Clause. Since 1981, the Supreme Court has consistently held that the government may not exclude religious individuals from government programs because their speech is religious (*i.e.*, "viewpoint discrimination") and has rejected the Establishment Clause as a justification for such viewpoint discrimination.¹⁹

Given these substantial changes in the religious freedom landscape, the federal government's serious effort to modernize its regulations is to be applauded. While the effort must be careful



to remain within Establishment Clause guardrails, federal regulations should not be ossified relics of the 1970s but instead should reflect the respectful attitude toward religious individuals and institutions that has generally characterized the Court’s rulings for three decades.



Kim Colby is Director of CLS’ Center for Law & Religious Freedom. She is a graduate of Harvard Law School. Kim has represented religious groups in numerous appellate cases, including two cases heard by the United States Supreme Court. She has also filed dozens of amicus briefs in both federal and state courts. In 1984, Kim was heavily involved in congressional passage of the Equal Access Act.

END NOTES

- 1 Attorney General, *Memorandum for All Executive Departments and Agencies*, Oct. 6, 2017, at 7-8.
- 2 President Donald J. Trump, *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty*, 82 Fed. Reg. 21675 (May 4, 2017).
- 3 Administration of President William J. Clinton, *Remarks on Signing the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993*, Nov. 16, 1993, at 2377-78, at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/WCPD-1993-11-22/pdf/WCPD-1993-11-22-Pg2377.pdf>.
- 4 *Witters v. Washington Dep’t of Servs. for the Blind*, 474 U.S. 481 (1986).
- 5 *Zobrest v. Catalina Foothills Sch. Dist.*, 509 U.S. 1 (1993).
- 6 *Rosenberger v. University of Virginia*, 515 U.S. 819 (1995).

- 7 *Agostini v. Felton*, 521 U.S. 203 (1997).
- 8 *Mitchell v. Helms*, 530 U.S. 793 (2000).
- 9 *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. 639 (2002).
- 10 *Trinity Lutheran Church v. Comer*, 137 S. Ct. 2012 (2017).
- 11 *Widmar v. Vincent*, 454 U.S. 263 (1981); *Rosenberger v. University of Virginia*, 515 U.S. 819 (1995).
- 12 *Larson v. Valente*, 456 U.S. 228 (1982).
- 13 *Mitchell v. Helms*, 530 U.S. 793, 828-29 (2000) (plurality op.) (“[N]othing in the Establishment Clause requires the exclusion of pervasively sectarian schools from otherwise permissible aid programs.”); *id.* at 850-51, 857-58 (O’Connor, J., concurring in the judgment and joined by Breyer, J.).
- 14 *Trinity Lutheran Church v. Comer*, 137 S. Ct. 2012 (2017); *Employment Division v. Smith*, 494 U.S. 872 (1990).
- 15 *Trinity Lutheran Church*, 137 S. Ct. at 2019.
- 16 *Id.* at 2024-2025.
- 17 *McDaniel v. Paty*, 435 U.S. 618 (1978).
- 18 *Church of the Babalu Lukumi Aye v. Hialeah*, 508 U.S. 520 (1993).
- 19 See *Widmar v. Vincent*, 454 U.S. 263 (1981) (public university may not exclude religious student group because it engaged in religious instruction, prayer, and worship); *Lamb’s Chapel v. Cent. Moriches Union Sch. Dist.*, 508 U.S. 393 (1993) (school districts may not exclude religious community groups); *Good News Club v. Milford Cent. Sch.*, 533 U.S. 98 (2001) (same); *Rosenberger v. University of Virginia*, 515 U.S. 819 (1995) (public university may not deny student activity fees funding to religious student publication).



Being a Paul to Timothy: Mentoring Attorneys in God's Call to Serve the Needy

BY LORI YOUNG

Thinking back on the days of being a new lawyer, for me, one of the most paralyzing fears was that of advising clients for the first time. Real advice – not the academic exercise of reciting a case to a professor, but advice that would affect an actual person's actual future. The weight of this responsibility was great, and would have been overwhelming had I faced it alone. I was blessed in my professional development with many mentors who generously gave me guidance in the profession, helping me to provide representation to my clients with at least some degree of confidence. My mentors were experienced attorneys I could call for advice about not only the legal issues in a case, but also about running a law office, relating to clients, and other such matters.

Experienced attorneys know the value of mentorship in the legal profession and, as Christian attorneys, we are even more aware of the value of mentorship. One of the best parts of being a Christian is being in fellowship with other Christians. It is God's reminder that we are not alone in our challenges. It keeps us grounded in His Word. Mentorship is a form of

fellowship, and it provides guidance and training, not only in the profession, but also in living our faith through our work. Mentorship can provide confidence to new Christian attorneys working for the Lord in two important ways: (1) by demonstrating how to provide legal service to the poor; and (2) by demonstrating how to share the gospel within their practice.

The Bible instructs us unequivocally to provide justice to the poor:

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy. (Proverbs 31:8-9)

Do not exploit the poor because they are poor and do not crush the needy in court, for the Lord will take up their case and will exact life for life. (Proverbs 22:22-23)

I know that the Lord secures justice for the poor and upholds the cause of the needy. (Psalms 140:12)

And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)

In his book *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*, Bryan Stevenson challenges us with these words: “Finally, I’ve come to believe that the true measure of our commitment to justice, the character of our society, our commitment to the rule of law, fairness, and equality cannot be measured by how we treat the rich, the powerful, the privileged, and the respected among us. The true measure of our character is how we treat the poor, the disfavored, the accused, the incarcerated, and the condemned.”

Mentorship helps new Christian attorneys understand the unique gift God has given them to seek justice. In the legal profession, it is important for experienced attorneys to mentor new attorneys in the work of answering God’s call to seek justice and mercy by advocating for the poor. Scripture clearly instructs us of our need for teaching and training, both as new Christians and throughout our Christian walk. When Philip met the young Ethiopian reading from the book of Isaiah, he asked him if he understood what he was reading. The eunuch replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” (Acts 8:27-31). The Proverbs are given to us for wisdom, and they teach of the wisdom of mentorship from our elders. “The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel: for gaining wisdom and instruction, for understanding words of insight, for receiving instruction in prudent behavior, doing what is right and just and fair; for giving prudence to those who are simple, knowledge and discretion to the young—let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance, ...” (Proverbs 1:1-5). One of the most important ways to provide teaching and training is through mentorship.

Each of us is called to use our very unique skill set and education, gifted to us by our Creator, to serve the poor in a way no one else can. It is wonderful that others feed, clothe, and house the poor, but we have been uniquely gifted to advocate for the poor. As attorneys, we can do that, and we can train other lawyers to do that as well.

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. (1 Peter 4:10)

Secondly, we are called to share the joy of the gospel in all that we do and to all whom we meet. All aspects of our lives belong to God. “Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters” (Colossians 3:23). That is why Christian legal aid is unlike secular legal aid. One client at a time, one brother, sister, neighbor in Christ, Christian lawyers work to provide compassion and care to the least of these. Of course, we provide legal counsel. But we also proclaim the gospel and declare his glory. We provide a listening ear, a hug, a prayer. One client at a time, we share the love of Jesus. Through your gift of Christian legal aid, you can share the message of the gospel, the message that God sees the client before you not as a broken sinner, but as someone made in His image, and He desires that all would come to know Him and be called to salvation.

What a truly amazing and mighty God we serve! He is the Creator of our universe. He is the author and perfecter of our lives. He is the great I am. And yet, how humbling is it to know that He calls on us to work alongside Him to carry out His work? He blesses us and He calls us. He blesses us in many ways so that we can be a blessing to others (Genesis 12:2). As stewards of God’s grace, we are charged with using these gifts to serve others – there is a reason we are given the gifts we are given. Jesus had a way of making things very clear for us, and he sums up these lessons perfectly in these words:

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments. (Matthew 22:38-40)

“The true measure of our character is how we treat the poor, the disfavored, the accused, the incarcerated, and the condemned.”



Lori Young is the Executive Director of Trinity Legal Clinic of Oklahoma, a non-profit Christian legal clinic connecting and equipping Christian attorneys to serve the poor in Oklahoma City.



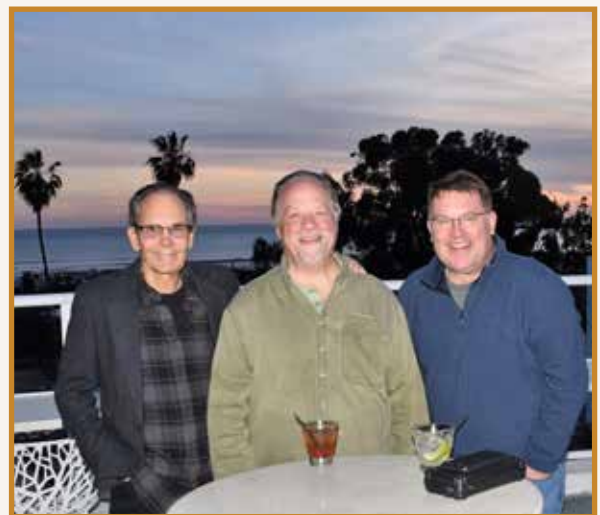
Christian Legal Society is a community.

The events described on these pages are just a few examples of the fellowship, learning, and fun going on at CLS events. We are reserving this space in every magazine issue to share what is going on around the country and, hopefully, to inspire you to plan a CLS event in your area. The goal is always to bring individuals and chapters in your communities together.

Want to be our next inspiration in Chapter & Event Highlights? Tell us about a successful event or meeting you organized yesterday, last week, or last month, and we will share it with our members nationwide (and remember, it must be accompanied by a picture). We look forward to hearing about your stories and events and celebrating with you!

CLS 2019 Southwest Regional Retreat

Photo credit: Duane Horning



CLS 2018 National Conference, Clearwater Beach, FL



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CLS 2019 Midwest Regional Retreat

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Fort Collins
Serve 6.8 Legal Clinic

DELAWARE

Wilmington
Mission Legal Aid Clinic

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington, DC
Christian Legal Aid of the District of Columbia (CLADC)

- Central Union Mission
- DC Dream Center

FLORIDA

Jacksonville
CLS Pro Bono Project

Jacksonville Metro Area
Jericho Road Legal Service Ministry

ILLINOIS

Chicago
Cabrini Green Legal Aid

Chicago Metro Area
Administer Justice

- Wheaton Bible Church
- Christ Community Church
- Fox Valley Church
- Wayside Cross Ministries
- Christ Church of Oak Brook
- Willow Creek Care Center

KANSAS

Wichita
Wichita Christian Legal Aid

KENTUCKY

Louisville
Metro Christian Legal Aid

MARYLAND

Gaithersburg
Good Samaritan Advocates at Covenant Life Church

Silver Spring and Baltimore
Christian Legal Aid Maryland (CLAiM)

MICHIGAN

Detroit Metro Area
Christian Legal Aid of Southeast Michigan

Grand Rapids Metro Area
West Michigan Christian Legal Aid

Kalamazoo
Christian Legal Aid of Southwest Michigan

Lansing
Christian Legal Aid of Lansing

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis
Park Avenue Walk-in Legal Clinic

Twin Cities
Twin Cities Christian Legal Aid (TCCLA)

MISSISSIPPI

Jackson
Mission First Legal Aid Office

MISSOURI

St. Louis Metro Area
New Covenant Legal Services

NEW JERSEY

Newark Metro Area
Immigrant Hope

NEW MEXICO

Albuquerque
New Mexico Christian Legal Aid

Las Cruces
Catholic Charities of Southern New Mexico

NEW YORK

New York City
Open Hands Legal Services, Inc.

NORTH CAROLINA

Durham
Justice Matters

Raleigh
Campbell Community Law Clinic

OHIO

Cleveland
Scranton Road Legal Clinic

Westerville (Columbus Metro Area)
Vineyard Immigration Counseling Service

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City Metro Area
Trinity Legal

- Crossings Community Center
- Cross and Crown Mission
- City Rescue Mission
- Living Faith Ministry
- Salvation Army – Norman

Tulsa
Tulsa Dream Center:
Legal Assistance

Tulsa
Tulsa University College of Law CLS
Christian Legal Aid Clinic

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia
Christian Legal Clinics of Philadelphia

- West Philadelphia Legal Clinic
- Hunting Park Legal Clinic
- Carroll Park Legal Clinic
- South Philadelphia Legal Clinic
- Chester Legal Clinic
- Germantown Legal Clinic
- Kensington Legal Clinic
- Chosen 300 Legal Clinic
- North Philadelphia Legal Clinic

Pittsburgh
Christian Legal Aid of Pittsburgh

TENNESSEE

Murfreesboro
Murfreesboro Christian Legal Clinic

Nashville Metro Area
Compassionate Counsel

TEXAS

Houston
Houston Legal Aid Center

VIRGINIA

Arlington
Restoration Immigration Legal Aid

Northern Virginia
Good Samaritan Advocates

- Columbia Baptist Church
- Reston Bible Church
- The Lamb Center

Roanoke
Roanoke Rescue Mission

WASHINGTON

Seattle
Open Door Legal Services

For contact information and other details for the Christian Legal Aid clinics, view the full clinic directory at ChristianLegalAid.org/clinics



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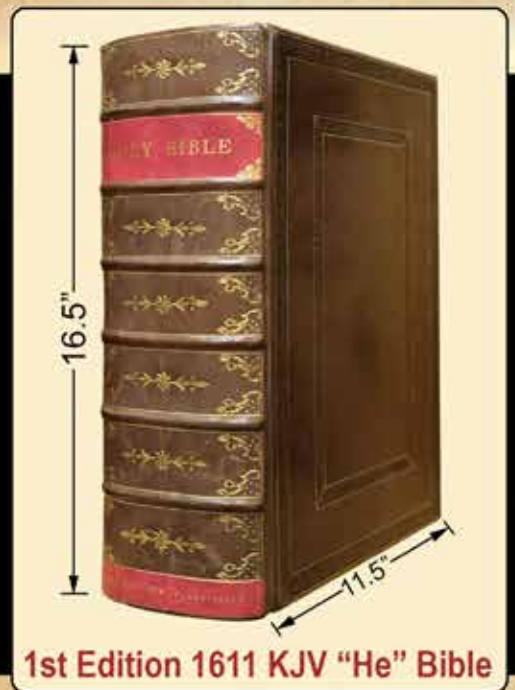
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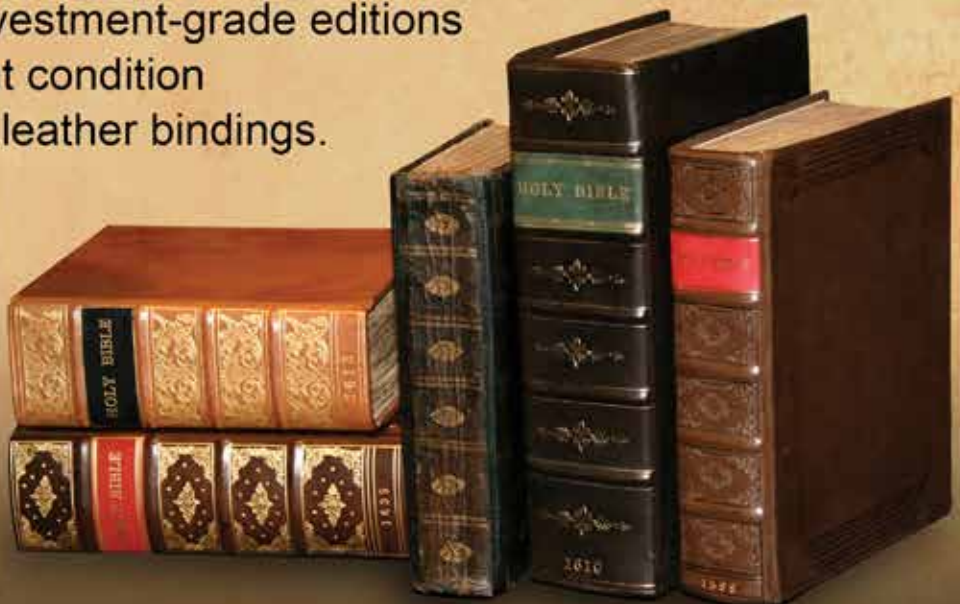
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Sally Wagenmaker,
President and
Chairman of the Board

I enjoy the immense privilege and honor to serve a two-year term as President of Christian Legal Society. Through the challenging years of law school, the ups and downs of private law practice, and significant involvement with CLS locally and nationally, CLS has always provided me with an oasis of Christian fellowship, accountability, and opportunities for fruitful growth. I hope and pray that these CLS benefits hold true for you too.

Our CLS Board of Directors recently undertook a self-evaluation, which included the question of why we each serve in CLS ministry – as leaders, followers, and fellow believers. The answers ranged as follows:

- To strategically reach lawyers and law students for Christ;
- To uniquely impact the legal profession;
- To help develop the next generation of Christian leaders;
- To reach the lost and the hurting;
- To encourage law students and lawyers in glorifying God, as ambassadors of Christ;
- To build and expand CLS' influence for the Kingdom of God;
- To advocate for religious liberty, help others through legal aid, and foster the right to life;
- To uphold biblical standards in the practice of law, with the help of fellow Christians; and
- To promote Christian fellowship and integration of faith with work.

Here's my answer: Because I love the Lord and feel His call strongly to serve in the Kingdom through dedicated service in CLS. It's that simple, and incredibly rich.

In my twenty-plus years of CLS involvement, I believe that CLS has never been better equipped, positioned, or compelled to engage our culture for Christ and to expand our influence for Christian lawyers, law students, legal aid, and religious liberty – and for life itself.

CLS has attorney and law student chapters across the country, plus additional opportunities to get involved through our annual national conference and regional retreats. Our changing culture continues to challenge religious liberty values, and CLS is responding with excellence and effectiveness. The need for legal aid persists as well, with so many unable to afford paid attorneys amidst an increasingly complex and intimidating legal system. CLS remains a vital resource to help legal aid clinics thrive and effectively serve those in need. Our law students face barriers and even outright hostility to gathering together as Christians, and they need encouragement and support through CLS more than ever. And the legal profession remains stressful, as we carry our clients' burdens, strive to make financial ends meet, and continue the life/balance juggle. Thank God for our fellow CLS attorneys – for listening ears, valued friendship, and sage advice!

Where is God calling you to serve, to get more involved with CLS, to share this ministry with others who aren't yet involved? Who in your community or network could use some encouragement about the legal profession? Or maybe some concrete assistance with a legal aid issue? Please share about CLS and this magazine with your pastor, your friends, and others who could benefit through CLS' ministry.

As Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 1:21, "Now it is God who makes us stand firm in Christ." God has a place and purpose for each of us to live out our calling as Christ-followers. May CLS continue to help each of us live out that call, integrating our faith with our work, striving to serve others for Him, dedicating ourselves to godly obedience, and lovingly building the Kingdom.

Thanks for joining together as fellow Christians and CLS members! If you're not a member, please join CLS today. And please help spread the good word about CLS' ministry, serving together for the glory of God!

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