

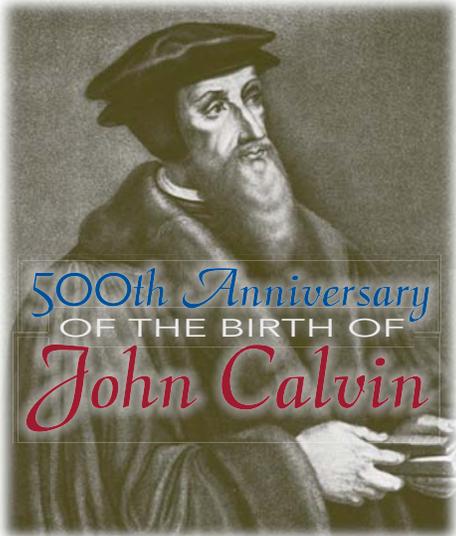
# REDEEMING THE TIME

*"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16).*

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## A Tribute to the "Founder of America"

BY HOWARD CARLSON

I remember when I was a student at Highland College, that grand Bible Presbyterian educational institution, that a book was given to us called *The Creed of Presbyterians*, by E.W. Smith. In that remarkable book, we students gained a deep

appreciation for the founder of America and this founder's ideas. But who was the founder of our nation?

Dr. Smith notes: "If the average American citizen were asked, who was the founder of America, the true author of our great Republic, he might be puzzled for an answer. We can imagine his amazement at the answer given to this question by the famous German historian, Ranke. Says Ranke, 'John Calvin was the virtual founder of America.'"<sup>1</sup> George Bancroft simply called Calvin "the father of America."<sup>2</sup> J.H. Merle d'Aubigné, the French historian, wrote: "Calvin was the founder of the greatest of republics. The Pilgrims who left their country in the reign of James I, and landed on the barren soil of New England, founded populous and mighty colonies, were his sons, his direct and legitimate sons; and that American nation ... boasts as its father the humble Reformer on the shores of Lake Lemman (Geneva)."<sup>3</sup>

But how could John Calvin be considered the Father of the United States when he never even set foot in North America, and indeed lived long before the founding of our Republic? He founded America by his ideas, carried in the hearts of Christian men and women. To quote

## Every Crime Is a Hate Crime

BY BRAD K. GSELL

An emboldened liberal-majority U.S. Congress has begun to bring out of the closet various pieces of "hate crimes" legislation. House bill 1913 (Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act) and Senate bill 909 (The Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act) seek to stiffen penalties for "crimes" which are determined to be motivated by "hate."

Briefly, we oppose these bills for a number of reasons, including the following:

### **Tyranny of the Thought Police:**

Shawn D. Akers, a policy analyst with Liberty Counsel states the dangers well: "...because penalties already exist for those who commit criminal acts, H.R. 1913 serves only to punish individuals for the beliefs,

opinions, or convictions held at the time an act is committed." Therefore, we will now have the federal government involved in seeking to discern and make subjective decisions concerning the inner-most thoughts of the citizenry. Talk about Big Brother!

**Unequal Justice Under the Law:** The Senate bill states that one reason this legislation is needed is because a "hate crime" "devastates not just the actual victim and the family and friends of the victim, but frequently savages the community sharing the traits that caused the victim to be selected." In fact, all citizens are "savaged" when crime occurs. Therefore, there should be "equal protection" as guaranteed in the Declaration of Independence and

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# The Conversion of John Calvin

BY MARK W. EVANS

John Calvin, in his commentary on the Gospel of John (18:36), said: “Should it happen, that the whole world were overturned, provided that our consciences are always directed to the kingdom of Christ, they will, nevertheless, remain firm, not only amidst shakings and convulsions, but even amidst dreadful ruin and destruction.”

We are living in dangerous times, but our King of kings preserves His flock. At unlikely times, He reveals His absolute sovereignty. It was a spiritually dark hour when John Calvin was born, July 10, 1509, at Noyon, France. There had been the appearances of Gospel life, but the pope and his vassal, the King of France, sought to crush it by persecution and burning at the stake.

John Calvin, as a young student in Paris, was aware of the new beliefs arising in Germany and of his countrymen who rejected the dogmas of Rome. Public events ignited questions and debates that demanded answers. However, Rome’s vigilant servants, who were teaching Calvin the tangled web of popish doctrines, believed that their premier student was safe. Their seminary was a secure harbor. Calvin had already taken the first steps toward the priesthood. Besides, the study of Medieval scholasticism would satisfy his vast intellect. Their confidence was soon shattered.

Calvin’s cousin, Pierre Robert Olivetan, who later presented France with the first translation of the Bible from the original texts, also lived in Paris. He confronted Calvin with the teachings of Scripture.



A portion of the Reformation monument in Geneva, Switzerland, showing (from left to right): William Farel, John Calvin, Theodore Beza and John Knox.

J.A. Wylie, in his *History of Protestantism*, wrote: “These are the battles that change the world—not those noisy affairs that are fought with cannons and sabers, but those in which souls wrestle to establish or overthrow great principles. ‘There are but two religions in the world,’ we hear Olivetan saying. ‘The one class of religions are [sic] those which men have invented, in all of which man saves himself by ceremonies and good works; the other is that one religion which is revealed in the Bible, and which teaches man to look for salvation solely from the free grace of God.’ ‘I will have none

of your new doctrines,’ Calvin sharply rejoins; ‘think you that I have lived in error all my days?’ But Calvin is not so sure of the matter as he looks. The words of his cousin have gone deeper into his heart than he is willing to admit even to himself; and when Olivetan has taken farewell for the day, scarce has the door been closed behind him when Calvin, bursting into tears, falls upon his knees and gives vent in prayer to the doubts and anxieties that agitate him” (vol. II, p. 152).

Calvin agonized over more than two religions. He was tortured in his soul because he feared standing before the Judge of all the earth. “He was standing there, with all in which he had formerly trusted—saints, rites, good works—swept clean away, with nothing to protect him from the arm of the Lawgiver. He had come to a Judge without an advocate” (Wylie, p. 152).

Calvin turned to his priests. They were unable to deliver him. In desperation, he read the Scriptures. At first, he could only see his condemnation. Yet, there was nowhere else to turn.

He persevered in reading.

Wylie writes: “A ray now shone through his darkness; he thought he could see a way of escape—a shelter where the black tempest that lowered over him would no longer beat upon his head; already the great burden that pressed upon him was less heavy, it seemed as if about to fall off, and now it rolled down as he kept gazing at the ‘Crucified.’ ‘O Father,’ he burst out—it was no longer the Judge, the Avenger—‘O Father, His sacrifice has appeased Thy wrath; His blood has washed away my impurities; His cross has borned my curse; His death has

atoned for me!’ In the midst of the great billows his feet had touched the bottom; he found the ground to be good: he was upon a rock” (p. 153).

Calvin looked to the bleeding Lamb and received forgiveness. Yet, he must face an immense consequence. What must he do in regard to the Roman Catholic Church? Once again, he examined the Scriptures. J.H. Merle d’Aubigné, in his *History of the Reformation in Europe in the Time of John Calvin*, wrote: “He was convinced. ‘I see clearly,’ he said, ‘that the true order of the Church has been lost; that the keys which should preserve discipline have been counterfeited; that Christian liberty has been overthrown; and that when the prindom of the pope was set up, the kingdom of Christ was thrown down.’ Thus, fell the papacy in the mind of the future reformer; and Christ became to him the only King and almighty Head of the Church” (vol. I, p. 397).

The exact date of John Calvin’s conversion is unknown, but it is likely that it occurred in Paris, in 1527. In that one conversion, we can trace blessings extending to the whole world. The Lord said to Jeremiah: “Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?” (Jeremiah 32:27). When the small band of French believers faced extermination, our Redeemer raised up a frail, sickly man to preach Christ and Him crucified. Countless souls were brought into

**“When the small band of French believers faced extermination, our Redeemer raised up a frail, sickly man to preach Christ and Him crucified. Countless souls were brought into His kingdom.”**

His kingdom. If the Lord tarries, we are likely to enter the Dark Ages once again. The spreading apostasy, compromise, and worldliness portend God’s judgment, unless He sends another Reformation. If we look to circumstances, we are discouraged. If we look to our Savior, we know the victory is certain.

D’Aubigné states well the effects resulting from the Lord’s saving mercy upon John Calvin: “Thus was this memorable conversion accomplished, which by saving one soul became for the Church, and we may even say for the human race, the principle of a great transformation. Then, it was only a poor student converted in a college; now, the light which this scholar set on a candlestick has spread to the ends of the world, and elect souls, scattered among every nation, acknowledge in his conversion the origin of their own” (p. 398). •



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## **A TRIBUTE TO THE “FOUNDER OF AMERICA”**

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Smith again: “It is estimated that of the 3,000,000 Americans at the time of the American Revolution, 900,000 were of Scotch or Scotch-Irish origin, 600,000 were Puritan English and 400,000 were German or Dutch Reformed. In addition to this, the Episcopalians had a Calvinistic confession in their Thirty-nine Articles; and many French Huguenots also had come to this Western world. Thus we see that about two-thirds of the colonial population had been trained in the school of Calvin.”<sup>4</sup> Bancroft also wrote: “The light of Calvin’s genius shattered the mask of

darkness which superstition had held back for centuries before the brow of Religion. Calvinism inspired its converts to cross the Atlantic and sail away from the traditions of the Church, from the hereditary power, from the sovereignty of earthly kings, and from all dominion with the exception of the Bible.... He that will not honor the memory and respect the influence of Calvin knows but little of the origin of American liberty.”<sup>5</sup> The early settlers were primarily Calvinists. England certainly understood this. Many pulpits in our country today echo those famous words from Horace Walpole first spoken in the British Parliament: “Cousin America has run off with a Presbyterian Parson.” We read in one of England’s better histories that King James I is quoted as calling the Revolution “the Presbyterian rebellion” and saying: “Presbytery agreeth as well with monarchy as God and the Devil.”<sup>6</sup> In summary, although many colonists came empty-handed, they did not come empty-minded.

But what did Calvin teach that could produce such great effect? In this 500th Anniversary of Calvin’s birth, we should look to his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* and his Bible commentaries for information that speaks to our day.

The “System” of Calvinism could be divided into three sections—theology, ethics and politics.<sup>7</sup> Each had great implications for the history of America. One has only to live outside this country to appreciate the differences in systems. However we here have space to consider only one—the Christian and politics.

Calvin’s governmental teachings are based upon two pillars: his doctrine of man (all were created by God, and yet fallen, sinful and servants of sin)<sup>8</sup>, and the Christian right to resist tyrants.

In Calvin’s works one finds discussion of the following questions

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Dr. Howard Carlson with members of the Board of Faith College of the Bible in Eldoret, Kenya, East Africa.

## A TRIBUTE TO THE "FOUNDER OF AMERICA"

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that relate to government, our national principals and today's events:

1. Is the state or its governors sovereign?
2. What form should the government take?
3. Is democracy absolute?
4. Who pays for government and how/how much?
5. Who functions as governmental leaders?
6. How much of human life should government cover?
7. What other valid spheres should the government respect (family, church, school)?
8. Can citizens resist their government? And under what limitations or conditions?<sup>9</sup>

Calvin went to the Scriptures for all of his teaching. The motto of the Reformation, after all, was *Sola Scriptura*. The only question was, "What does the Bible say?" There were certain biblical passages which he studied and systematized that laid the basis for his teachings on government. For instance, in his *Institutes*, Calvin's major section on civil government includes:

1. The magistrate, who is the protector or guardian of the law" (4:20, 1 ff.);
2. The laws, which provide objectivity for governors;
3. The people, a statement of the contract theory.<sup>10</sup>

In this section of the *Institutes*, we read that the work of a civil ruler is to ensure "that a public manifesta-

**"Without John Calvin  
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tion of religion may exist among Christians, and that humanity be maintained among men." Further, "The civil magistrate does not act on his own, but carries out the very judgment of God."<sup>11</sup>

A major tenant of Calvin's thought was his use of the Old Testament judicial law, which Calvin called "the silent magistrate." In a proper republic, laws are "the stoutest sinews of the commonwealth."<sup>12</sup> In Exodus 18, Calvin's commentary demonstrates his strong appreciation for the Hebrew contri-

butions to republicanism instituted by Jethro. Nimrod was portrayed as the first true monarch. He wrote on Deuteronomy 1:14-16: "Hence it more plainly appears that those who were to preside in judgment were not appointed only by the will of Moses, but elected by the votes of the people. And this is the most desirable goal of liberty, that we should not be compelled to obey every person who may be tyrannically put over our heads; but which allows of election, so that no one should rule except he be approved by us. And this is further confirmed in the next verse, wherein Moses recounts that he awaited the consent of the people, and that nothing was attempted which did not please them all."<sup>13</sup>

We note here how Calvin derived his ideas of government directly from Scripture. Calvin's famous sermon on 1 Samuel 8 takes up the dangers of monarchy, the need for proper limitation on government, and the place of divine sovereignty over human governments. Private property was not "placed under the power of kings." Kings too, are to obey the laws, lest they convince themselves that they may do anything they wish. Rather, rulers should employ all their ingenuity for the welfare of their subjects."<sup>14</sup> Then Calvin enumerated the ways kings abuse their power.

In his commentary on Romans 13, Calvin rightly pointed out that all civil power originates with the Sovereign God—not with man. In the first 31 chapters of Book 4 of the *Institutes*, he brings forward Scriptures to enforce the concept of divine government and the necessity to obey that government. Any government is better than no government at all. But, there were limits on human government.

Calvin, going far beyond Luther, taught that persons were not only free but also obligated to resist the magistrate who compelled ungodly

activity. Calvin saw that obedience to God was primary: "Obedience [to a ruler] is never to lead us away from obedience to Him."<sup>15</sup> In his commentary on Daniel 6:22, he wrote: "Earthly princes lay aside all their power when they rise up against God and are unworthy to be reckoned in the number of mankind. We ought rather to spit on their heads than to obey them when they are so restive and wish to rob God of His rights.... Even though they torture us bodily and use tyranny and cruelty toward us, it is necessary to bear all this, as St. Paul says, but when they rise against God they must be put down and held of no more account than worn out shoes." Further, a blend of necessary factors determined if revolution was in order. In his comments on Genesis 49, he there distinguished between legitimate government and tyranny that may be resisted.<sup>16</sup> The following factors were necessary: (a) a tyrant, who exceeded his divinely charted boundaries; (b) a tyrant, who in so doing, contradicted some other divine mandate; and (c) lower magistrates to bring constitutional correction. One should remember that these words were written in a world of absolute kings and dictators.

John Knox, along with his companion Christopher Goodman, per-

## REDEEMING THE TIME

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## "He who will not honor the memory and respect the influence of Calvin knows but little of the origin of American liberty."

George Bancroft

haps summed up their teacher Calvin's tenets best when they wrote: "Obedience is necessary where God is glorified, but if God is dishonored, your obedience is abominable in the sight of God be it ever so beautiful in man's eyes.... When it [Scripture] commands us to obey God, we must disobey man to the contrary; for no man can serve two masters.... Obedience to God's laws by disobeying man's wicked laws is very commendable, but to disobey God for any duty to man is all together damnable.... Resistance to wicked kings is not rebellion."<sup>18</sup>

To sum up this section on government, we note the five points of political Calvinism, originally stated by John Ponet, a companion of Calvin, and slightly rephrased by this writer:

- Depravity is a perennial human variable to be guarded against in government;
- Accountability for leaders must be provided via checks and balances of a collegium;
- Republicanism is the preferred form of government;
- Constitutionalism is needed to restrain both the rulers and the ruled; and
- Limited government, beginning with the family, is foundational.

Without John Calvin and those he led in Scriptural truths, there would have been no United States as we know it. Perhaps the United States would have been a mere copy of Mexico. •

<sup>1</sup>Smith, Egbert Watson, *The Creed of Presbyterians*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1902. Every Bible-believing Christian should have this little book. The latter part was added by the author later in his life and is tainted with Liberalism. It can be found on Amazon.com.

<sup>2</sup>Bancroft, George, *The History of the United States*, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1856. Bancroft, trained as a Unitarian minister, was appointed Secretary of the Navy in 1845, partly in recognition of historical writings. Later, as U.S. Ambassador to several European nations, his literary labors were greatly aided by the kindness of the British government in giving him access to the State Paper Office, and to collections in the museum, and various private collections. He also had access to the State Records of Paris, where he received valuable aids.

<sup>3</sup>D'Aubigne, J.H. Merle, *The Reformation in the Times of Calvin*, Hartland Publications, 1999, Vol. 1, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Smith.

<sup>5</sup>Bancroft, George, *Miscellanies*, Harper Brothers, 1855, pp. 406-407.

<sup>6</sup>Green, John Richard, *History of the English People*, Harper Brothers, 1885, vol. 3, p. 113.

<sup>7</sup>A very useful book on these points is contained in a work by W.K. Anderson entitled *Protestantism, a Symposium*, Ayer Publishers, 1969.

<sup>8</sup>Anderson, (see footnote 7) well sums up this point: "All men by the curse of Adam are equally unfree. God is no respecter of persons, nor was Calvin. No rich reprobate in Geneva could escape the condemnation of God, the consistory or the council.... Before God we are all sinners. The doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty and man's total depravity and helplessness thus becomes a great leveler, a solvent to human pretensions, and a foundation stone for the democratizing of social order."

<sup>9</sup>Hall, David W. "John Calvin on Human Government and the State" in the *Confessional Presbyterian*, vol. 4, p. 122. These topics are especially relevant for our country today.

<sup>10</sup>Calvin, John, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, John T. McNeill, ed. Philadelphia, Chapter 20.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 4:20, 8-10.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, 4:20, 14.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.* A century after Calvin, Samuel Rutherford used the same Mosaic pattern in his 1644 *Lex Rex*.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, 4:20, 32.

<sup>16</sup>Calvin, *Harmony of Moses*, Edinburg, (Calvin Translation Society, 1843-59) 3-154.

<sup>17</sup>Calvin, *Commentary on Romans*, xix.479, Baker Book House, 1979.

<sup>18</sup>Patrick Poole, cited at <http://www.Constitution.org/cm/Goodman.obeyed.htm>. It is not difficult to see here the seedbed of Thomas Jefferson's motto, "Rebellion to wicked kings is not rebellion."



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# The Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22,23

## Joy

by Brad K. Gsell



*In Galatians 5, the Apostle Paul describes for us the fruit which is to be found in the life of every Christian. This is the third in a series of articles which will discuss these characteristics of the Christian life.*

**I**n studying the “fruit of the Spirit,” it soon becomes evident that these Christian virtues are interconnected and inter-related. They all work together as a glorious whole. The Christian who has the other eight categories of “fruit” in his life, will most certainly experience Joy—the second one listed by Paul.

Merriam-Webster defines joy as “the emotion evoked by well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospects of possessing what one desires; delight.”

John Calvin describes joy in this passage as “that cheerful behavior towards our fellow-men which is the opposite of moroseness [“having a sullen or gloomy disposition”—Merriam-Webster].” It is “cheerfulness in conversation with our friends, or rather a constant delight in God,” according to Matthew Henry.

*The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* states: “Besides joy in a general sense, as the response of the mind to any pleasurable event or state (1 Kings 1:40; Esther 8:17, etc.), joy as a religious emotion is very frequently referred to in the Old Testament. Religion is conceived of

as touching the deepest springs of emotion, including the feeling of exultant gladness.... Joy is repeatedly shown to be the natural outcome of fellowship with God.”

And indeed there are hundreds of verses throughout both the Old and New Testaments which would bear this out. Psalm 16:11 says: “Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” “But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also

**“For the joy of the Lord  
is your strength.”  
(Nehemiah 8:10)**

that love thy name be joyful in thee” (Psalm 5:11). In John 15, Christ tells His disciples: “I am the vine, ye are the branches, He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing” (verse 5). Then, in verse 11, He says: “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.”

The New Testament begins with the greatest cause for joy in human history. The angel of the Lord appeared unto the shepherds in Luke 2:10 and 11, and said: “Fear not: for,

behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” Even in the Old Testament, Habakkuk wrote: “...I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation” (3:18). “And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation” (Psalm 35:9).

It quickly becomes apparent that the joy spoken of throughout the Word of God is not a mere selfish happiness at carnal delights or ease of living. In fact, the joy of the Christian is often in spite of his circumstances. It results from a mature, abiding trust in the sovereignty of God and thankfulness for His provision of salvation and our hope of eternal life.

James begins his epistle by saying: “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations [trials]” (James 1:2). He continues in verses 3 and 4: “Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” Even our trials are a blessing and should bring joy to the Christian!

Peter further establishes this: “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appear-

ing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls” (1 Peter 1:7-9).

In 2 Corinthians 8, Paul tells of the great trials being experienced by the Christians in Macedonia. Yet, he reports in verse 2: “How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.” Even in their own suffering, these Christians had joy and wanted to give from their poverty to help others!

If one were to name a book in the Bible which taught the need to be joyful, it would undoubtedly be Philippians. Paul writes: “Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice” (Philippians 4:4). We could assume before more careful study that Paul is basking in his success as a missionary and the respect he has gained in his travels to so many churches. Yet, we are struck with the fact that Paul is actually writing this as a PRISONER in Rome. Philippians is known as one of Paul’s “Prison Epistles.” How could a man possibly be joyful in such circumstances?

In Acts 20:24, Paul gives us an answer: “But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the

Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

It is indeed an amazing thing to see so many Hollywood stars, and successful businessmen and politicians, flush with fame and fortune, who live terrible lives of overwhelming unhappiness, drug addiction, wrecked families, and so forth. You would think they would be full of joy. Then, one sees a godly man or woman who has very little, and is suffering many hardships, and yet he or she has deep inward joy.

On my recent trip to Kenya and a number of years ago in South America, I had opportunity to worship and fellowship with many believers. Most of these precious Christians lived in ways unimaginable to us in the United States. Yet, I was struck by the beaming faces, and the joy of the Lord which simply could not be counterfeited! Luke 12:15 tells us that “a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” Our personal wealth and influence will never bring true joy! Instead, “The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel” (Isaiah 29:19).

It is indeed a comfort to know that “God is at once the source (Psalm 4:7; 51:12) and the object (Psalm 35:9; Isaiah 29:19) of religious joy” (*The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*). The very God who gives us our joy is the same one in whom we delight!

We all undoubtedly will experience many sorrows, disappointments, reversals, pain and suffering, and persecutions in this life. But, those who know and love the Lord, need not be discouraged. With Nehemiah, who faced what seemed like impossible odds humanly speaking, we can say with confidence: “For the joy of the LORD is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10)! •

## EVERY CRIME IS A HATE CRIME

*Continued from page 1*

the Fourteenth Amendment. Criminals should be punished equally for their wrong ACTIONS, not for their thoughts.

**Judicial Mischief:** Since any determination of a person’s beliefs and thoughts inherently involves subjectivism, and with the increase of “activist” judges being appointed to the bench, the door is being opened to great judicial mischief. Despite all assurances to the contrary, one only needs to look back a few years to the RICO legislation, intended to add extra punishment to those convicted of Mafia crimes. It didn’t take radical pro-abortion judges long to begin using it against upstanding citizens who picketed abortion clinics.

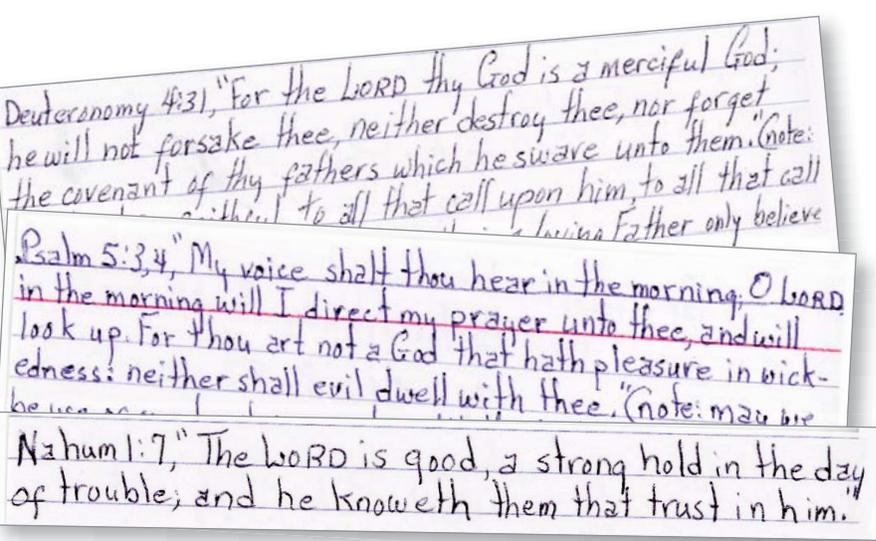
**A Chilling Threat to Free Speech:** Our First Amendment gives Americans the precious right to free speech. Although we all hear many offensive statements, and rightly voice our strong condemnation of many viewpoints, it is not the government’s place to interfere with the thoughts and opinions of its citizens. Despite assurances to the contrary, it is not unreasonable to question when we will see a minister finding himself on the wrong side of the law for preaching what the Bible teaches concerning Islam or homosexuality. Such things are already happening in Canada.

When will we see ideological adversaries using these laws to silence their opponents? Remember when the Philadelphia Council of Churches and other groups challenged Dr. Carl McIntire’s criticisms of the liberal churches in order to silence Bible Presbyterian radio station WXUR?

These “hate crimes” bills are a threat to our liberty. Let’s work to preserve our freedoms while we are able! •

## The Good News...

“... joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance” (Luke 15:7).



# A Witness for Christ — One Letter at a Time

**F**ay West has always kept busy with her hands. As a skilled quilter, she has awed many—and won awards—with her numerous masterful creations of cloth, bunting and multiplied thousands of meticulous hand-sewn stitches. But, at 83 years old, being a witness for Christ is the real passion of her life, and she puts her desires into action.

For many years, Mrs. West has handed out gospel tracts. “Sometimes it has been discouraging,” she said, “because so many people refuse them or just throw them down.”

One day, she heard a radio minister preaching from Isaiah 55:11: “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” It left a real impression on her, and then she had an idea. She bought a pack of 3×5 cards and began neatly printing Bible verses—several on each card. With scissors in hand, she cut them apart and placed them in a small metal box.

Now, she carries her little box everywhere she goes and freely hands out these “blessings.” Rarely has anyone turned her away. There is something about a handwritten message which is distinctly personal, shows an extra measure of love and care, and is difficult to refuse.

She distributes them in every bill, every letter, in doctor’s offices, in the hospital and at restaurants. One night on the way home from church she followed through on a

burden she had. She turned her steering wheel into the parking lot of a local pool hall! The patrons all took a verse and said, “Thank you, Ma’am.” How could they say No to such an unlikely visitor?!

This has given her many opportunities to witness. Patients and their families have been comforted. One nurse read the verse she had been given to every one in the office. A pharmaceutical company sent her a personal thank you for the verses enclosed in her bill. Some have asked for additional verses and they have been seen tacked to bulletin boards in offices and in other places.

Mrs. West keeps a notebook of the THOUSANDS of verses she has written out by hand and distributed. She says that an added benefit is that she personally is greatly blessed by the verses as she writes them. “It is my labor of love. It is my joy!” she concludes.

