



The Storm Over Truth

God's truth in a world determined to invent its own

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God Had Turned Up the Volume

I woke this morning to a Prescott Valley that seemed determined to blow itself into the next county. Trees thrashing. Rain coming down sideways. Thirty or forty miles an hour, judging by the performance outside my window. God had turned up the volume.

My beloved gym had been closed yesterday, so I climbed onto the elliptical. My right knee still wants to run. The left knee, with its meniscus problem, has retained an attorney. Let them each have their way and I would spend the morning running in circles.

There I was, working hard and going nowhere. A fair picture of a civilization that has mistaken constant change for progress.

Between glances at the storm, I listened to a speech by Eva Vlaardingerbroek. Yes, that last name takes a little practice. The young Dutch commentator, trained in legal philosophy, had something to say about faith, fear, and truth. And she said it with backbone.

I stopped listening casually.

A voice with some backbone

Eva grew up with a Catholic mother and a Protestant father. She describes the pandemic as a turning point in her thinking about state power and God-given rights. In April 2023, she and her father entered the Catholic Church. Her earlier speech, *Reject Globalism: Embrace God*, tells you she was hardly auditioning to become the room's most agreeable person.

Eva argues that our rights come from God, not from government permission. She warns that fear—particularly fear of death—can make people surrender freedom to those promising safety. She rejects moral relativism and calls Christians to speak openly about Christ. For her, this is a spiritual struggle as well as a political one.

What I hear in that is a challenge to stop living as though approval were our oxygen. If keeping everyone happy requires us to hide what we believe, what exactly are we protecting? Our faith, or our invitation to the next respectable gathering?

I love Eva's courage. I love seeing a young woman stand up with that kind of conviction, openly proud of her faith. She gives this old psychologist hope. Here I was watching trees bend outside while listening to someone who seemed determined to stand upright. Good for you, Eva. Keep speaking.

I come from a Protestant background, but some of these Catholics are rocking it for Jesus. Their conviction gets my attention. It also makes me ask whether my own faith has become a little too house-trained.

Among colleagues with whom I rub shoulders are Dr. Quentin Van Meter, Dr. Michael Laidlaw, Dr. Andre Van Mol, Dr. Laura Haynes, Dr. Michelle Cretella, and Dr. Russell Gombosi. Some are Catholic; I do not know everyone's religious affiliation. Many professionals I know and admire are Catholic, and their willingness to stick their necks out has made an impression on me. This old Protestant is paying attention.

Who gave you the authority?

The Latin word for truth is veritas. Fine word. But I am tired of treating truth as something that belongs safely in a philosophy seminar while the roof comes off the house.

I mean God's truth. Truth that was here before we arrived and will remain when our fashionable theories are dust. Truth we are accountable to, even when it ruins our favorite excuse.

We can discover it imperfectly. We can argue about it. We can misunderstand it. None of that gives us permission to manufacture it.

Somewhere along the way, the idea that human beings can be mistaken gets turned into permission for human beings to reinvent everything. How convenient. If reality objects, change the vocabulary. If conscience objects, call it conditioning. If a parent objects, suggest the parent needs reeducation.

I call bullshit on that bargain.

I reject the neo-Marxist habit of treating inherited institutions chiefly as arrangements of power to be dismantled. A family is more than a struggle over power. Faith is more than a device for keeping people obedient. A child is more than raw material for somebody's theory of liberation.

Marx, Gramsci, and the writers of queer theory differ, but here is the arrogance I reject wherever it appears: treating ordinary people's lives as a demolition site for an intellectual renovation. Tear down the inherited wisdom. Dismiss the objections. Promise liberation. And when people ask what will hold the roof up, hand them another theory.

How dare you demand that a family surrender its conscience before you will call it compassionate? How dare you treat questions about a child's future as an offense against your theory?

A theory can be revised next semester. A childhood cannot.

Mr. Soros, your money does not make you right

George Soros has contributed more than \$32 billion to his Open Society Foundations, according to their own account. They describe their mission in terms of rights, justice, and accountable government. Fine. Let us examine the agenda as closely as we admire the checkbook. A noble mission statement is easy to print.

Mr. Soros, your fortune does not make you an oracle. You can fund your vision of society. You cannot purchase the authority of God.

You have the right to advocate, Mr. Soros. The rest of us have the right to push back—hard. I resent the outsized influence that fortunes like yours can give one person’s political judgment. I am not required to applaud a billionaire’s vision for my civilization because he can afford to promote it around the world.

A billion dollars can buy a very large megaphone. It cannot make a false idea true. And “philanthropy” is no exemption from moral scrutiny.

Soros’s foundations acknowledge the influence of Karl Popper. Popper defended objective truth and emphasized human fallibility; he did not simply teach that truth does not exist. My disagreement runs deeper than that: recognizing our errors does not answer the question of whom we ultimately answer to. I will not hand that authority to a financier, a philosopher, or a foundation board.

Children are not your proving ground

Here is where my patience runs out. I have spent too much of my professional life caring about children to watch their futures disappear beneath a pile of confident adult slogans.

A distressed child deserves patient, compassionate care. Parents deserve honest explanations and room for questions. If your answer to a worried parent is an accusation instead of evidence, do not expect me to mistake that for medicine.

Consider two 2024 systematic reviews by Jo Taylor and colleagues, produced for the Cass Review and published in Archives of Disease in Childhood. These were examinations of the research, not merely a collection of opinions.

The puberty-blocker review included 50 studies. Blockers suppressed puberty, but the reviewers could not draw conclusions about their effects on gender dysphoria, mental and psychosocial health, or cognitive development. Bone health and height could be compromised during treatment. Preventing puberty is an observable drug effect. Establishing that doing so improves a struggling child’s life is a much bigger claim.

The hormone review included 53 studies. It found a shortage of high-quality research and limited or inconsistent evidence across several outcomes. Moderate-quality evidence suggested mental health might improve during treatment, largely from studies comparing patients before and after treatment. That finding matters. It does not settle long-term benefits and harms, and prior blocker use made the effects of hormones alone difficult to separate.

How did evidence this uncertain become a message delivered with such certainty? Where is the humility when the person carrying the risk is a child?

I call bullshit on selling certainty the research cannot supply. These reviews do not prove that nobody benefits. They expose how much remains unresolved. In my judgment, that is nowhere near a sufficient foundation for treating these interventions as an assured answer or pressuring families to accept them. The burden belongs on those recommending treatment to justify it—not on frightened parents to disprove the sales pitch.

Our bodies are real. Human reproduction has a biological organization that our preferred vocabulary cannot wish away. Medical interventions can alter bodily characteristics; they do not make biology an act of personal authorship. “Male and female created he them” means something to me. So does the obligation to love the person struggling in front of me.

And yes, I bristle when the warmth of “mother” and “father” gets swallowed by language that sounds as though a committee has inventoried the plumbing. Clinical precision has its uses. It should not require us to drain the humanity out of parenthood.

Put a white coat on an assertion and it still needs evidence. Put enough syllables around a theory and it still needs to survive a question. Children deserve adults who can tell the difference.

I am not bowing.

My license is not a muzzle

And yes, I mean the American Psychological Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics. The APA’s 2024 policy vigorously supports gender-affirming care. The AAP reaffirmed its policy in 2023 while commissioning a systematic review. Both describe room for exploration. Then make that promise mean something. Professional authority should make the questions harder, not make the questioner afraid to ask.

I want developmental psychology, the child’s history, medical risks, and the Cass-linked reviews on the table. All of it. Do not hand me an institutional position and expect me to treat it as the final word on a developing child. I will not pretend uncertainty has disappeared because an organization has issued a resolution. That would be dishonest. A professional logo cannot turn overconfidence into informed consent.

Chiles v. Salazar put the danger of state control over therapeutic speech squarely before the Supreme Court. Colorado’s law allowed identity exploration and support for transition but prohibited efforts to change a minor’s gender identity or sexual orientation. Kaley Chiles challenged its application to her voluntary, client-directed talk therapy. The possible penalties included fines, probation, and loss of a license.

Think about that. A client asks for help pursuing the client’s own goals, and the state determines which direction the conversation may travel. How dare government claim that kind of authority over the counseling room? Protect people from coercion and abuse. Absolutely. But do not dress viewpoint control in a lab coat and expect me to salute.

On March 31, 2026, the Supreme Court ruled 8–1 for Chiles, holding that the law, as applied to her talk therapy, discriminated by viewpoint. It reversed the lower court and sent the case back for strict First Amendment scrutiny. This was a victory for protected speech, not a judicial finding that every proposed therapy is effective.

Along with many faithful colleagues including some mentioned in this essay, participated in the amicus effort supporting that challenge, and I am proud of it and proud to walk alongside my colleagues who dared to put reputations and safety on the line for truth. Thank God for people willing to push back. For me, the victory defends something essential to informed consent: room for an honest conversation. A frightened young person should be heard, including when the question is whether transition is what that person wants.

I have also recently joined the American College of Pediatricians, a different organization from the American Academy of Pediatrics. The College filed an amicus brief supporting Chiles and argued for ethical, client-directed psychotherapy. I love its willingness to challenge the prevailing position. That is what draws me to these colleagues: the determination I see to pursue truth even when doing so makes them unpopular.

My loyalty belongs to the person seeking help. No association owns my conscience. No state gets a free pass to script my conversations. And no clinician, including me, gets to substitute conviction for evidence. That is the standard I want us all held to.

The truth has a claim on me too

Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). He also said, “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12).

There is the heart of it for me. God’s truth has authority whether a government endorses it, a university approves it, or a billionaire funds it. My own agreement does not create its authority either.

That last part matters. I do not get to thunder about everyone else’s dishonesty while giving Jeffrey Hansen a private exemption. My anger is no certificate of righteousness. If I invoke Christ, I owe people honesty and love, including people whose ideas infuriate me.

Across my years as a psychologist, I have seen a deep steadiness in people who actually live their faith: who forgive when it costs them, tell the truth when lying would be easier, and show up for someone who has nothing to offer in return. They still suffer. Faithful people can be devastated by depression, trauma, and grief. But I have watched faith give people something to hold when pleasure and applause had nothing left to offer.

That moves me more than another clever theory about reinventing the human person.

When the wind comes for your house

Outside my window, the trees were still taking a beating. Storms can bring down power lines, tear roofs loose, and kill. A cultural storm can tear through the things we count on, too. Trust. Family. Conscience. Our willingness to tell the truth when there is a price for it.

In Matthew 7, Jesus describes two houses facing the storm. The house built on rock stands. Hearing his words and putting them into practice is the point. Admiring the architecture will not do.

Eva stirred something in me because I am tired of watching Christians apologize for having a foundation. Enough throat-clearing. Enough waiting for a room full of skeptics to grant us permission to speak. We

can be gracious and still say no. We can love people fiercely and refuse to endorse an idea we believe will hurt them.

My left knee still refused to negotiate. The elliptical still went nowhere. But I had somewhere to go with what I had heard.

Let the wind howl. God's truth does not need our permission to stand. We need the courage to stand by it.

Sources and further reading

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