

Online Journal 2026

by Jim Kenaston

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September overview:

Below are the articles I posted within this journal over the month, some with added highlights*, hoping to help readers save time in getting to the main points. I'm listing them here in alphabetical order while deleting daily journal entries where only the article itself was noted.

- [9/11 at 25: Never Forget, and What We Are Forgetting](#), by John A. Perricone
- [50 Years Later, The Hyde Amendment Has Saved Millions From Abortion](#), by Tim Goeglein
- [A Nation of Technoserfs](#), by Patrick J. Moran
- [AI Companions as a Form of Pornography](#), by Josiah DeBoer
- [China and the Nepal Flood: Geology Trumps Politics](#), by Bart Marcois
- [Going Further: The Incomparable Clarence Thomas](#), by Ted Cruz
- [Leftists Tried To Stop Clarence Thomas From Going Further. They Failed Miserably](#), by Shawn Fleetwood
- [No, There's Nothing Unique Or Interesting About Your Tattoo](#), by Casey Chalk
- [The Lone Juror speaks out](#), by J.R. Dunn
- [The Nation That Cried, "Debt!"](#), by James E. Hartley
- [One Year Without Charlie Kirk: Has Anything Changed?](#), by Scott Ventureyra
- [The difference between rights and entitlements in American political life](#), by Christian Vezilj*
- [There Are No Solutions](#), by Lars Møller
- [Why China Will Never Democratize](#), by Ronny P. Sasmita
- [Why Have Children's Books Become So Ugly?](#), by Alexa Weathers
- [Why We Worship: The Battlefield of Praise](#), by Adriel Sanchez*

Book:

- [Going Further: The Incomparable Clarence Thomas](#), by Ted Cruz.

Videos:

- ['A walking miracle': Ethan Pritchard's incredible road to recovery](#), by ACC Huddle
- ["Genocide" in Gaza](#), by Bill Maher
- [In My Seat - A Pilot's Story from Sept 10th - 11th](#), by Steve Scheibner
- [In My Seat: The 25th Anniversary of 9/11/2001](#), by Steve Scheibner
- N.T. Wright at UT Austin
 - [Is faith compatible with doubt?](#)
 - [The biggest myth about Jesus](#)
 - [Discussion of Jesus' return](#)
 - [Reframing the problem of evil](#)
- [On the key to flourishing](#), by David Brooks and Meghan Sullivan
- [Remembering Betty Ann Ong](#), by NBC Bay Area
- [This Matters More than We Are Willing to Admit](#), by Brian Holdsworth
- [Will the Good of the Other](#), by Robert Barron
- [You Belong to the Lord](#), by Robert Barro

September 2, 2026:

Yesterday I learned of the death of [Robert Bruce Jordan](#) (January 4, 1933 - August 30, 2026). Bob was the builder of the neighborhood where my parents lived over the last 40 years of their lives. He and his wife Joan became especially close friends of my parents, living on the adjacent property. Bob and my dad shared a lot of interests, and an outlook on life that was shaped by their mutual faith in Christ, but also in having come of age during the same era of our nation's history. May God comfort Joan and the extended family as they mourn this tremendous loss. The blessing is in knowing that he's in a much better place now, fully redeemed and restored, thanks to the completed work of Christ on behalf of all who place their trust in Him.

September 5, 2026:

Nearly ten years ago, when I was living in Athens, Georgia, I took a trip to Maine to visit my cousin Mark. It was good to catch up with him. At the time, one of my hobbies was to follow college football, as it would be hard to live in a college town in the southeastern US and not be aware of the football culture there. I remember suggesting to Mark that I wasn't so fully

immersed in it, myself, but then I knew all the key players on the Georgia team at the time, as well as the head coaches of their opponents around the SEC. Mark was convinced that I was in it much more than I had been suggesting.

But the sport has changed a lot since then. In my view, paying athletes for Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) contracts, conference realignment, and the transfer portal have all contributed toward ruining the game for many of us. The NIL and transfer portal leaves players with no team loyalty anymore. What used to be “our school team vs. your school team” has morphed into “our company brand vs. your company brand.” Conference realignment has also ruined many of the traditional rivalries, and with corporate viewership contracts driving much of the change.

One thing Georgia has going for them is that their head coach is a graduate of the school. He honed his skills as the defensive coordinator at Alabama under Nick Saban during several of their championship runs. He essentially recreated at Georgia what Saban had modeled at Alabama. Otherwise there are too many examples of coaches leaving programs for a better financial deal and perhaps a better recruiting base. Lane Kiffin is notorious for this. The current drama surrounding him and LSU (using a loophole to recruit NFL players back into college football) is perhaps just a means of attracting more people to the start of their season, though it goes against the spirit of amateur athletics.

I’m turned off enough to do my best in setting this hobby aside. I’d gotten so far as to no longer watch the actual games, but to watch a few YouTube highlights of some of the more notable matchups on a given weekend. This was due to my sense that we’re not called to live our lives entertaining ourselves to death. I couldn’t justify taking so much time for something as frivolous as sports. The other turn off for me has been the rise of sports betting as a popular trend. I hate to see it, so I’m all the more happy to set this entire industry aside.

I may struggle to avoid checking on game results, though my hope is to shift my attention toward things that are more in line with our calling as Christians in this world.

September 15, 2026:

I was in a conversation with someone over the idea of voting for “the lesser of two evils.” He made a solid argument against supporting candidates who don’t hold to biblical standards, though I admittedly struggle with not seeking some sort of brake on further degradation of our culture, even if only through my vote among imperfect candidates. I suppose my argument would be one of not letting the perfect become the enemy of the best (given a “lesser of two evils” scenario).

In any event, I’m challenged on this theme, as I agree that if the church is to serve as a prophetic voice for our time, seeking to conserve a status quo that we’re comfortable with falls short of that calling.

I’ve been rereading Herbert Schlossberg’s book, *Idols for Destruction: The Conflict of Christian Faith and American Culture*. These quotes (regarding the idol of historicism) seem to affirm what the person I was speaking with was saying:

“Desacralizing history and its elements relativizes all human institutions and values, but only with respect to the absolute beyond history. There is no ideology, party, movement, or organization that may declare itself to be the absolute judge and arbiter of history. The Christian is free to regard each of them in the light of the absolute that is outside of history, that relativizes and judges them, and provides a point beyond which relativity is not permitted...”

And this:

“The conviction that God is active in history makes historicism especially attractive to the church, tempting it to argue that the resurrection guarantees continual victory over the world, that the Christian consequently can enter into the world’s works without worrying about the finer points of scruples, that the lordship of Christ over history guarantees that, when one system replaces another, God’s will is being accomplished. The chief consequence of such mistakes is that Christians justify evil political, economic, and social forces.”

I’ll continue to ponder this issue, and in light of what followers of Christ are called to for our time.

September 16, 2026:

On this topic I brought up yesterday, I should note that the person I was talking with about this considers himself to be a single issue voter, so for him, it makes sense to abstain from voting for any candidate that doesn't share his view on this one issue, regardless of whatever positives the candidate might offer on other themes.

That in itself may be worth an objection, though on a different point, I've long questioned whether we contribute toward changing hearts by efforts to vote for policies that reflect our cultural agenda. Are successful campaigns to our liking simply a manner of coercing outward compliance to our moral agenda within the community, or do they lend anything toward changing hearts. One could argue that a society's practice, whether initially coerced or not, ultimately leads to changed hearts, though it's also a valid question of whether this is the means Christians should seek to use.

But then abandoning the voting process in hopes of bringing society to its knees in repentance could also be considered a means toward coercing changed hearts. I suppose even prayer for the lost might be considered a form of coercion, as the hope is to affect change in others. Perhaps our prayers should focus on affecting change in ourselves, and with the hope of more clearly reflecting God's love toward others. As for voting, it's hard for me to conclude that we're not called to participate in the societal processes we're afforded, even with imperfect candidates and agendas placed before us for the choosing. I'm sure we're called to participate prayerfully, and with circumspect hearts.

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