

Addressing America's Cultural Crisis

By Jeffrey Breshears

The Areopagus is a Christian education ministry dedicated to an integrated and wholistic understanding of Christian discipleship that engages both the mind and the heart. To that end, we sponsor seminars and forums on a wide range of issues related to Christian history, apologetics, spirituality, literature and the arts. A significant aspect of our ministry has always been an emphasis on cultural apologetics – applying Christian principles to the moral, social and political issues of our day – and considering the troubling trends in contemporary American culture, this will be an area of particular focus over the next year.

In the 2008 presidential primaries Democratic candidate John Edwards ran on a theme of the “Two Americas.” In his strategy to win the party’s nomination, Edwards staked out an extreme left-wing position and played the “class card” – i.e., the exploitation of the age-old wedge issue of class envy. Although he lived in a 10,000 square-foot multi-million-dollar mansion, wore thousand-dollar Brooks Brothers suits and indulged himself with \$400 haircuts, he disingenuously portrayed himself as the advocate of the poor against the greedy rich.

Edwards was just another hypocritical politician, and fortunately his campaign never gained much traction and he finally dropped out of the race. But he was right about one thing: there *are* “Two Americas.” But he was wrong about the dividing line between them. It’s not so much an economic division as a moral and spiritual one, and it has less to do

with class issues than worldview perspectives.

As the historian Gertrude Himmelfarb has characterized it, America’s real division is analogous to two dramatically different cultures existing side-by-side in one nation. Fundamentally, it is values and lifestyles – not wealth and socio/economic status – that divide Americans into two broad categories: cultural conservatives and cultural liberals.

Most Americans, including many Christians, apparently fail to understand this. Focused on immediate concerns, misinformed by a predominantly biased media and miseducated in schools that promote a subtle but insidious secularistic agenda, most people don’t realize that they are being manipulated by liberal elites who dominate American culture.

The practical consequences are alarming. We all know that public

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The Areopagus Calendar

Fall Seminars

A History of Christianity In America: From the Civil War To the Emergence of Modern Evangelicalism

Tuesdays, Aug. 30 - Nov. 15
7 PM

Perimeter Church

– and –

Wednesdays, Aug. 31 - Nov. 16
7 PM

Mt. Bethel Community Center

Instructor: Dr. Jeffrey Breshears

Fall Forums

“Science & Faith: Friends or Foes?”

Friday and Saturday,
October 14th and 15th

Johnson Ferry Baptist Church

A Discovery Institute Conference
Co-sponsored by The Areopagus

– featuring –

Dr. Jonathan Wells,
Dr. Jay Richards, and
Dr. Paul Nelson

The Discovery Institute is the world’s leading think-tank on Intelligent Design theory, and has contributed more than any other science organization to exposing the myths and factual errors associated with Neo-Darwinian evolutionary theory.

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“Addressing America’s Cultural Crisis”

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opinion polls can easily be manipulated by agenda-driven researchers, but over time a relatively consistent pattern begins to emerge. When assessing a broad range of issues, the data reveal that about 30% of the American public are consistently conservative, and about the same percentage are predictably liberal.* The rest vacillate from issue-to-issue with no discernable core values regarding the controversial moral and cultural issues of our day.

Christians often voice dismay at the collapse of moral and ethical standards and behavior in our culture, but this has been an accelerating trend since the 1960s. Regrettably, a major contributing factor to this decline has been the failure of many Christian leaders and churches to offer a clear, consistent and uncompromising prophetic voice. The reasons are many, including (1) a narrow view of Christian discipleship that focuses on personal piety but neglects the broader issues of life; (2) fear of alienating people by appearing intolerant, judgmental and moralistic; (3) fear of appearing out-of-step with the times; and/or (4) a simple desire for acceptance among America’s cultural elite.

Regardless of the motives, the bottom line has been a failure of courage and leadership. As a result, cultural liberals are winning the culture war mostly by default.

America is at a crisis point, and this is no time for cowardice or an unduly restricted view of discipleship. As Christians, our priority should always be the straightforward propagation of the Gospel, which is “the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes” (Rom. 1:16). But the Gospel message is all-inclusive, and to acknowledge the primacy of

evangelism is not to relegate other issues to insignificance. Certainly, social, economic and political issues matter because they have a direct impact on the quality of our lives, the moral tenor of our culture, and our ability to share the Gospel freely and openly in the public square.

The Areopagus is sponsoring several forums over the next few months addressing the state of American culture:

- On **October 20th David French**, the senior legal counsel for the American Center for Law and Justice, will speak on “Defending the Rights of Christians in the Classroom and Workplace;”
- On **November 17th Wendy Wright**, the former president of Concerned Women for America, will speak on “America’s Greatest Challenge – and What Christians Can Do To Make a Difference;” and
- On **January 19th Dr. Carol Swain**, a professor of law and political science at Vanderbilt University and the author of *Be the People*, will challenge Christians to become more proactive in the culture war.

Thank you for your involvement in the Areopagus. We are a unique ministry in the Atlanta area, and your ongoing support is much valued and appreciated as we continue to broaden and deepen our understanding of Christian discipleship in the context of contemporary American culture.

* These figures are not based on the percentage of people who self-identify as conservatives and liberals but on a cumulative assessment of poll results over the past decade related to moral as well as socio/political issues.

The Areopagus Calendar

Fall Forums

(Continued)

“Defending the Rights of Christians in the Classroom and the Workplace”

Thursday, October 20th

7:30 PM

Perimeter Church

A presentation by
David French

Senior Legal Counsel for the
American Center for Law & Justice



“America’s Greatest Challenge ...and What Christians Can Do To Make a Difference”

Thursday, November 17th

7:30 PM

Perimeter Church

A presentation by
Wendy Wright

Former CEO and president of
Concerned Women for America



For more than 20 years Wendy Wright has been a forceful and effective proponent of religious liberty, education reform, the sanctity of human life, and other social and moral causes.

The Areopagus

As an independent and self-sustaining ministry, The Areopagus depends upon the financial support of our **Areopagus Associates** – those who value our ministry and desire to help us expand our outreach in the metro-Atlanta area.

The Areopagus is a highly cost-efficient ministry considering the many seminars, forums and other events that we sponsor each year. Our annual budget of **\$60,000** covers all of our expenses such as staff salaries, administrative costs, honoraria for speakers, etc.

If you would like to support this ministry financially, be assured that your contributions are much valued and appreciated.

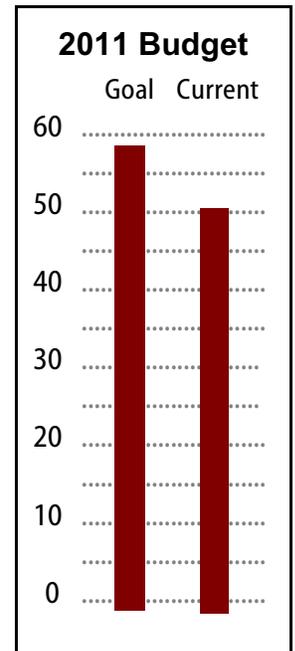
You can contribute financially to the Areopagus two ways:

(1) You can make checks payable to “**The Areopagus, Inc.**” and mail to...

The Areopagus, Inc.
1220 William Robert Drive
Marietta, GA 30008

— OR —

(2) You can contribute by credit card on-line through PayPal at our website home page at www.TheAreopagus.org.



Thank you!

**The Areopagus, Inc. is a
501(c)(3) nonprofit ministry.**

All financial contributions are tax-deductible.

The financial records of The Areopagus are open to all who contribute financially to this ministry.

