

### A CALL TO WHOLISTIC DISCIPLESHIP

# On Loving One's Neighbor As One's Self: The Political Component

*Jefrey D. Breshears*

Many Christians have been led to believe that we should be as apolitical as possible so as to eliminate any unnecessary distractions or impediments in our witness to others. After all, they say, what really matters is the Gospel. The implication of the argument is that politics is unspiritual, dirty and divisive, so for the sake of our Christian testimony we should stay focused on “things above” rather than worldly concerns. After all, politics is mostly about the acquisition (and often the abuse) of earthly power, and most politicians are little more than proverbial “pigs at the trough.”

But this is actually quite naive. I'm not sure that I agree with the common adage, “Everything is political,” but much in life certainly is. For example, both the early



Christians and their state-approved persecutors were quick to realize that there is no more “political” statement than the declaration, “Jesus is Lord!”

Fortunately, America's founding fathers understood that politics is a necessary component of life, and that laws and public policies are either based on the universal moral and ethical principles of justice associated with natural law or else they are the arbitrary and tyrannical exercises of coercion by the power elite over everyone else. They realized that laws and public policies can either enhance or detract from the quality of one's life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.

Furthermore, they were mindful that political ignorance, apathy and non-involvement only empower the most ambitious and ruthless elements in society. In other words, they understood that politics matters.

When asked, “Rabbi, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind.’ This is the greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’ – i.e., ‘Treat others in the same way that you would want them to treat you’ (Matt. 22:36-39).

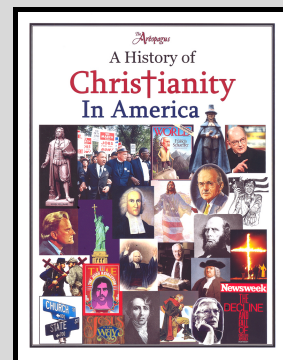
Now my question is this: How can we possibly love others if we are indifferent toward the kind of laws and public policies and programs that regulate (and often control) their lives?

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### The Areopagus Calendar

#### Areopagus Seminars

A History of Christianity  
In America  
From Colonial Times  
To the Present



An in-depth study of the major people, issues and events in American Christian history that every well-informed Christian should know. Unfortunately, this is unfamiliar material to most Christians as it is rarely taught in churches or even in Christian colleges and seminaries. Join us for this unique study.

Not only is this history informative, thought-provoking and inspiring, but also relevant considering the present state of American Christianity, society and culture.

**Taught by Dr. Jefrey Breshears**

**Sunday mornings**

**11:15**

**Johnson Ferry Baptist Church  
Room 270**

# On Loving One's Neighbor as One's Self

(Continued)

How can we possibly love others unless we are sensitive to – and attentive to – not only their religious and spiritual lives, but their physical, material, emotional, social, intellectual, and creative needs as well? How can we truly love others if we care little about the quality of their lives in any wholistic sense?

The Christian faith is more than merely one's own "personal relationship" with Christ outside the larger context of Christian discipleship. Nor can it be reduced to personal piety. In its fullest dimension, Christianity is a comprehensive worldview that influences, conditions and regulates how we think and respond to the full range of issues that affect humanity – or what Francis Schaeffer referred to as "the lordship of Christ over the whole of life."

Realistically, politics is mostly about damage-control, and at least in that regard it can certainly be contentious, divisive and unsatisfying. As such, it often comes down to keeping the very worst people out of positions of power and influence. And of course, no manmade political party or ideology has a monopoly on truth, reason and wisdom. But it is simplistic, foolish and dangerous to assume that because all parties and ideologies are flawed they therefore must all be morally equivalent. This is, as we say in the realm of logic and rhetoric, a *reductio ad absurdum*.

Unfortunately, here is the stark reality: In our current political climate, the Democratic Party serves as the powerful political arm of a militantly secular and ultimately dehumanizing social, cultural and political agenda that is rapidly destroying most everything that is good and decent and in America. It is, in effect, the initiator

and proponent of most laws, policies and programs that are immoral, irrational and counter-productive.

The modern Democratic Party not only shows little regard for the rule of law as established in the U.S. Constitution but also functions as the foremost proponent of abortion-on-demand, voter fraud, open borders, racial divisions, public indecency, incivility, sexual chaos, civil disorder, liberalized drug and pornography laws, and increased restrictions on religious liberty. It has also become a radical secular socialist party. If anyone dismisses this as political hyperbole, simply challenge them to compare the 2016 Democratic Platform with Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*.

So while the Republican Party is often a source of great disappointment (and even embarrassment) and has the well-earned reputation as the party of mediocrity, the Democratic Party proudly functions as the party of venality. And therein lies the difference. One is a concession to human weakness while the other is a testament to human depravity. One is at least theoretically redeemable while the other is a lost cause. To ignore the differences and pretend otherwise is tantamount to willful ignorance.

Politics is not ultimately what matters most in this life, nor is it the answer to mankind's deepest needs. The Gospel is. But as Jesus clearly taught, the Main Thing is not the Only Thing, and to truly love others as we love ourselves, there is a political component that cannot be denied. We must care deeply about the kind of society and culture in which we and others live. To ignore the political implications of wholistic Christian discipleship is not only irresponsible but immoral.

## Areopagus Forums

### WHO INVENTED GOD? The Evidence for Original Monotheism

An Areopagus Forum with  
**Dr. Winfried Corduan**

Retired Professor of Philosophy and Religion,  
Taylor University, and author of *In the  
Beginning God: A Fresh Look  
At the Case for Original Monotheism*



Modern anthropologists contend that the idea of God "evolved" over thousands of years of human history from primitive animism to polytheism and then eventually into monotheism. Is this true, or was the consciousness of a supreme God and Creator inherent in humanity from the beginning?

The Bible teaches that belief in God began when God created the first human beings and revealed himself to them. But is there any scholarly evidence for this belief?

Join us as Dr. Corduan explains why this issue is such a vital component of Christian apologetics.

**WEDNESDAY, NOV. 14<sup>th</sup>  
7:00 PM**

**Johnson Ferry Baptist Church  
The Chapel**

— and —

**THURSDAY, NOV. 15<sup>th</sup>  
7:30 PM**

**Perimeter Church  
Midtown Auditorium**