



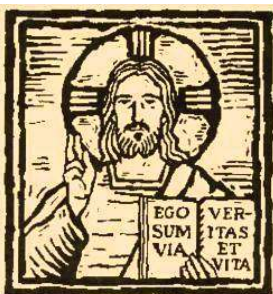
A CALL TO WHOLISTIC DISCIPLESHIP

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

Jefrey 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. What really matters, they remind us, is the Gospel. The implication of their 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. While I don't necessarily agree with the common adage that "everything is political," 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 derived from 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; 7:12).

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?

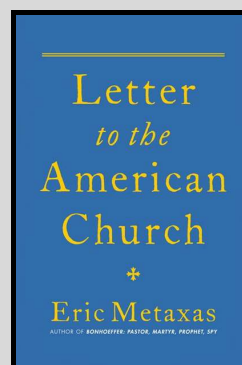
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The Areopagus Calendar

Areopagus Seminars

CHRIST & CULTURE A Letter (and Warning!) to the American Church

*Our current crisis... and
what American Christians
can learn from the life and
legacy of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*



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Join us for our "Dinner & Dialogue" series on Christian cultural apologetics led by Dr. Jefrey Breshears:

Tuesdays, 6 PM
Beginning August 20th
Camps Restaurant
255 Village Pkwy NE #310
Marietta, GA 30067

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, psychological, social, intellectual and creative needs as well? How can we truly love others if we care little about the quality of their lives in a 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*.

In our current political climate, the Democratic and Republican parties constitute two contrasting visions for America. The stark reality is that the Democratic Party promotes a radical authoritarian social, cultural and political agenda that is destroying most everything that is good, decent and just in America. It is, in effect, the initiator and propagator 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 it also functions as the foremost proponent of abortion-on-demand, election 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 an overtly secular socialist party. (If anyone dismisses this as political hyperbole, simply challenge them to compare the current Democratic Platform with Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*.)

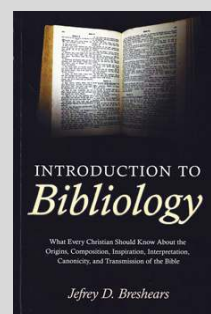
So while the Republican Party has often been a source of great disappointment (and even embarrassment) and has the well-earned reputation as the party of mediocrity, the Democratic Party proudly functions as the party of venality. And therein lies the difference. One is a concession to human weakness while the other is a testament to human depravity. One is at least theoretically reformable 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. Therefore, to ignore the political implications of wholistic Christian discipleship is not only irresponsible and indefensible but outright immoral.

Areopagus Seminars

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What every Christian should know about the origins, composition, inspiration, interpretation, canonization, and the transmission of the Bible through the centuries



A course for Christians who take their faith seriously and want to be equipped to better understand, explain and defend why we believe the Bible to be the inspired and authoritative written Word of God. Topics include...

- What is it about the Bible that makes it unique among all the religious texts in history?
- What is the evidence that the Bible was in fact divinely inspired?
- Why were certain books included and excluded from the biblical text?
- Has the Bible been accurately preserved and transmitted through the centuries – or has it been corrupted in the process?
- ... and many other relevant issues.

Wednesdays, 6:30 PM
Beginning August 7th
Johnson Ferry Baptist Church
Room 320