

Pan-Evangelicalism Driven "Off-Message"

by diverting attention from the gospel to ineffective political attempts to legislate morality

We oldies lament how American culture has changed especially in the last 50 years. The Christian influence that shaped Western Culture worldwide through the 19th century has given way to practical atheism and moral relativism. In the name of equal rights , political correctness, tolerance, gross immorality, pornography, abortion, sexual immorality and divorce (in and out of the church) and homosexuality have become sanctioned in the wider society. So what is the body of Christ to do about it? Is it just a political problem that can be solved politically? In the last decades evangelicals have promoted a political solution to what is seen as a political problem. But America's moral decline is not essentially a political problem but a spiritual problem and consequently its solution is the gospel, not partisan politics. Evangelicals have become known in the wider culture as primarily a political force. Howard Fine, a liberal/progressive political analyst, has stated the obvious in stark terms: "There is a new ruling class in the GOP, the 'revival tent' driving out the 'big tent.'" [This new God's own party] is a doctrinal schizophrenic coalition ... to create a better America... It unites Catholic traditionalists who revere the papal hierarchy, evangelical, fundamentalists, and charismatic protestants, a few ultra-orthodox Jews and Mormons who ironically aren't regarded as Christians by most other members of the coalition." (*The Rise of faith within the GOP has created America's First Religious Party*, www. Huffington Post).

This evangelical political movement is led by a bevy of religious political operatives. Combining excessive patriotism and political activism, the gospel message has been quietly under-emphasized. Rank and file evangelicals in all innocence have signed on to this moral political crusade. Conversely, many progressive/liberal media analysts depict evangelicals as political activists pure and simple. I know that writing this I may be misunderstood. Be assured, I also loathe abortion and abominate homosexuality. I actually hate these things. But an all out public cultural war by Christian political operatives creates many anomalies and misunderstandings to an unbelieving society looking on. The unbelieving media has learned quite well that the Christian Political Right is actually propelled not only to legislate morality, but behind it all, often hidden, many Christian political operatives operate from a base/core motivation that goes beyond even patriotic and political moral solutions. Liberal analysts commonly report on the net that the Christian Right is a "front" for Christian Dominion/Totalitarian rule of the culture. The New Apostolic Reformers (NAR) as I have previously written have jumped into the political battles. For them it is a mix of politics with prophetic/spiritual armament with the ultimate goal a Christian Totalitarian America. Indeed most evangelicals don't know this and even many of the evangelical political operatives don't either. But the liberals know all this very well and have reported extensively on the dominion's agenda. The Apostles and prophets prophesied Perry into running. Two Texas NAR prophets gave him a word from God to run. This resulted in Perry's political prayer meeting in Houston's Reliant Stadium. But false prophets propose and a sovereign God disposes of a Perry. For you see when you decide to do public politics it can get physical and messy. In the process the eternal gospel message has often been co-opted or even ignored because of the temporal winds of partisan politics. Indeed I am also traumatized by the thought of an abortion holocaust, and homosexual marriage.

But is the answer politics? Did Paul call an apostolic pastors meeting and endorse a moral Roman procurator? (good luck no Roman moralist could be found). The first century world was much more immoral than America and western civilization. Regarding Paul's Corinthian mission we must remember that the Greek word "korinthiazesthai" (to "Corinth size") had become a part of the Greek language meaning debauchery and homosexual immorality. Fourteen of the first fifteen Roman emperors practiced unnatural sex. Nero took a boy called Sporus had him castrated, and married him with a full marriage ceremony. Nevertheless, the Gospel saved many homosexuals and Paul announced that "so were some of you, but you were washed." (1 Cor. 6:11). Paul describes homosexual sin in Romans chapter one. But in chapter two he doesn't skip a beat to accuse the moralist Jewish Pharisees of their sin and awaiting judgment. All sin stands under the judgment of God and only the sacrificial blood of Jesus can cleanse and cure it. It is only the Gospel that can redeem sinners of all varieties of sin whether public or private. It's the gospel message preached and lived out as a witness that can snatch brands from the burning. Only the gospel can cure those trapped in an evil culture. The moral legislative crusade of prohibition against alcohol of the 30's is ample proof that one cannot legislate morality. God will use his powerful arm and saving message to show the world that immoral and humanly moral sinners can be reconciled to Him. But by becoming moral political activists we mask and divert the saving gospel from the very people who need the gospel message and make them our enemies. We

must return to the only cure for whatever evils there are in any culture. Will we stamp out evil by the gospel? Hardly and neither will the political moralists. But the gospel will be more effective than moral crusades. We already know from scripture that the days will become more and more evil as the return of Jesus nears. Everyone apart from Christ is trapped in sin. But uniquely, the gospel offers God's forgiveness and a new life by the power located in the gospel message. God can do Corinth all over again but it will be the gospel message witnessed and preached not political theatrics that will actually change the culture.