

2 Essential Questions Will Determine America's Future

In his commentary on 1 and 2 Kings, Dr. Peter J. Leithart brings up the problem of spiritual apathy and indifference to idolatry: "Europeans discovered that theology was bloodily divisive and concluded that the only way to restore comparative harmony was to expunge theology from the public square, forcing theological decision and debate into the recesses of the conscience or, at best, safely behind the walls of the church. Christian capitulation to secular politics—more the rule than the exception in the modern church—is nothing less than apostasy, a denial of the gospel that announces Jesus as Lord."

Taking their cues from Renaissance idolaters centuries before, the liberal Warren Court in the mid-20th century devised a strategy to stamp out Christianity from American culture, employing the *Abington School District v. Schempp* case.

Just as Roman emperor Diocletian [244-311] failed to eradicate Christianity, despite giving it his utmost, so it will go with any push for Christianity's burial, "for the living have no tomb" (Charles H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David*).

Progressives appear unable to understand that moral knowledge is of higher value than learning by rote or blind memorization. In Proverbs, Solomon sagely esteemed "fear of the Lord" as "the beginning of knowledge" and "wisdom" as "the principal thing," delineating the theological and epistemological foundation of knowledge.

Impossible to be acquired through present-day secular education, moral knowledge can only be gained through the provision and incentive of exemplary moral character, as opposed to those living in folly, whose moral deficiency

prompts their irrational behavior (Bruce K. Waltke, *Proverbs Commentary*).

“[In the economy of God], wisdom (*hokma*) is inseparable from knowledge (*da’at*). A person [for example] could memorize the book of Proverbs and still lack wisdom if it did not affect his heart, which informs behavior. *Hokma* in Proverbs does not refer to the Greek conception of wisdom as philosophical theory or rhetorical sophistry” (Bruce K. Waltke, *Proverbs Commentary*).

It is easy to understand why early American education theory had the Bible as its cornerstone. We need to look no further than Founding Father Fisher Ames (1758-1808), coauthor of the First Amendment, who in 1805 declined the presidency of Harvard University due to failing health. He said: “We’ve become accustomed of late of putting little books into the hands of children containing fables and moral lessons. We are spending less time in the classroom on the Bible, which should be the principal text of our schools.”

Yet, 20th-century intellectual and political secularists determined in their ostentatious pomposity that education, which included prayer and the worship of God, be deemed as a “primitive form of knowledge, a consolation for the weak-minded, and an obstacle to peaceful coexistence [with their religion Secularism]” (Marcello Pera, *Why We Should Call Ourselves Christians*).

Jehovah, therefore, had to be removed from the public square; to be replaced by a religion created out of whole cloth by secularists on the bench ... as the complete antithesis of the principles that founded Western civilization and America.

Alluding to the challenge facing Christians from state-controlled education, historian Herbert Schlossberg wrote: “Values-free education is a contradiction in terms, and any hierarchy of values constitutes a religious system. Hence, all

education is fundamentally religious" (Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols of Destruction*).

There are two essential questions regarding education of a nation, state or society, according to Plato: "Who teaches the children, and what do we teach them?"

American Christendom will cease to exist unless she rediscovers her purpose for being. This is because modern-day Christianity has lost sight of the Founding Fathers' declaration of founding America "for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith" (The Mayflower Compact).

Present-day Christianity's dissipation and impassivity in the public arena is a far cry from Jesus' "ekklesia, which the gates of Hades will not overpower" (see Matt. 16:18, NASB). Power-hungry and aggressively self-assertive jousters now dominate the public square, making contemporary Christendom, generally speaking, irrelevant. Despite the proliferation of Christian radio, Christian television, Christian publishing and Christian celebrities over the last 75 years, evangelicalism has barely made a dent in pagan control of secular culture.

President of the Italian Senate from 2001 to 2006 and author of books on science, philosophy, and Christianity, Marcelo Pera views the current situation thus:

Today, politically speaking, liberals have won for the most part. The West has liberal constitutions, liberal institutions, liberal economies, and liberal systems of education. But we are so far from "the end of history" that the same breach between liberalism and Christianity that shook our civilization a few generations ago is now presenting itself in a new form. Not in the violent forms of Nazism or communism, but in the form of liberal secularism. For the destinies of Europe and the West, this ideology is no less dangerous; it is rather more insidious. It does not wear

the brutal face of violence, but the alluring smile of culture. With its words, liberal secularism preaches freedom, tolerance, and democracy, but with its deeds it attacks precisely that Christian religion that prevents freedom from deteriorating into license, tolerance into indifference, democracy into anarchy.

Here in America, we have both the liberal Warren Court and the absence of salt and light in the culture to thank.

Still and all, Christians are taking countermeasures. Across America, evangelical and pro-life Catholic Christians are moving into the public square. As they do, we call upon His help: "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Lord of Life, have mercy on us. Please give us Your favor as we attempt to spiritually resurrect America and reestablish the founders' biblically based culture."

Gideons and Rahabs are beginning to stand.