

How You Can Change America's Future

What is it that has so fervently transformed American culture? What is it that has changed our fabric so intensely?

I would argue there is what I call a triangular dominance at play surrounding how members of our society receive their information—a systematic control over educational content that has permeated our minds, our hearts and, perhaps most tragically, our souls. And the situation is only intensifying.

Through the media, entertainment and the university system—the three main information sources that shape the American conscience—people are bombarded with moral codes and messages that are anything but modest, restrained or in line with biblical tenets.

These educational spheres have become overridden with progressive ideals and biases that work against traditional moral understandings. Each sector incubates one worldview while filtering the other out or, more routinely, simply ignoring it all together.

There's also ignorance and complicity unfolding that, unless it is checked, will only incubate, empower and metastasize this educational conundrum, and tragically many people today are likely too indoctrinated at this point to believe—or even recognize—that there's anything wrong with the paradigm shift in moral values undoubtedly slated to transform a wide array of institutions, including marriage, the economy and the circumstances surrounding children's upbringing.

Big changes are already afoot—movements that most certainly carry with them consequences for faith and family structures.

So, what's the solution?

Famed Christian apologist Josh McDowell presented a series of steps and parameters he believes people must take seriously if they actually wish to understand and come to grips with the problems we face in modern society.

“One, you’ve got to be informed,” he said before quoting Scripture. “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free” (John 8:32). “Second, you need to come to understand what are rational, physical, sound solutions, answers.” McDowell continued, “See, most Christians can tell me what they believe, but 95 percent can’t give me any intelligent reason why they believe it.”

He said this dynamic will no longer suffice because people need to be fully aware and cognizant of not only what their values and beliefs are, but why, in fact, they subscribe to such ideals.

“Then, third, we’ve got to live it,” McDowell said. “If we do not live out our faith in our own personal lives, in our marriages, with our children, in our business, in our ministry, whatever—if we don’t live out Christ in a vibrant way—then no one is going to believe whatever we say, and they shouldn’t.”

The fourth and final solution that McDowell offered up is for people to truly learn to listen without interrupting or being judgmental. It’s after listening to what people think and feel—particularly nonbelievers—that he said it’s possible to more appropriately engage.

Taking these simple steps will help us to live our faith and values, as McDowell said. After all, we need to be the shining examples of what we claim to espouse. We can’t simply say we’re Christians; we need to show it in the way we live, the decisions we make and the content we choose to consume.

We should all think deeper about the media, entertainment and university messages we’re consuming, and ask some key

questions: What am I really being told? What do these themes say about the current state of our society and culture? I'd argue, perhaps most importantly, we should ask what information is being left out of the equation. All too often we take in and process messages without considering the information that has perhaps intentionally been left out.

Our lives should speak volumes without needing any actual words to convey the powerful message of what we stand for. Become more aware of what we're consuming and make a concerted effort to avoid certain forms of negative content; not only are we then protecting our hearts and minds, but we can also send a collective message about what we're willing to tolerate.

Personally I've often fallen in this area, as I'm sure we all have. But the stakes are high. Now more than ever, we must take a stand, regardless of the uphill ideological battle.

We need to listen and engage with others. Rather than battle it out over values, again, show people what it means to live out the truth you espouse. Don't give up. Make your voices heard, but do so with peace, love and understanding. The future of free speech—and our nation— depends on it. {eoa}

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