

Where Are the Leaders?

If prior to the Republican Convention, Mitt Romney or John McCain had held a press conference to announced that he favored weakening the pro-life plank of the Republican Platform a united movement conservative leadership would have been quick to conduct a counter-press conference to denounce him.

And his high-profile public supporters would have been called-out and conservatives would have expected them to—at a minimum—help correct the candidate, if not actually jump ship over such an apostasy.

But as usual, when Donald Trump advocates breaking a bedrock principle of conservative policy, and in the case of the right-to-life morality, large segments of the conservative leadership have once again remained silent and given him a pass.

As CHQ Chairman Richard A. Viguerie said in his article “Only Two Things Can Stop Trump,” only Trump himself, and a united conservative movement, can stop Donald Trump’s blitzkrieg through the Republican primaries.

And so far Trump’s outrageous behavior (past and present) and his deviations from conservative orthodoxy have not dissuaded some conservative leaders from supporting him. And his grass-roots conservative supporters appear willing to give Trump a pass on almost anything he says or does, particularly on the cultural issues.

You would think that after almost eight years of Obama’s war on Christianity conservative Christians would want one of their own in the White House, but 42 percent of the evangelical votes in heavily evangelical North Carolina went to Donald Trump, in Ohio, 39 percent of evangelicals voted for Trump. The chief political correspondent for *CBN News*, David

Brody, commented on what he calls Trump's "staying power" with evangelicals.

In examining the March 15 "Super Tuesday II" results in Missouri—where Trump and Cruz battled to a virtual tie—Brody compared the votes of "cultural Christians" and "church-going die-hards."

"Trump's evangelical appeal is NOT just with casual cultural Christians," the Christian journalist concluded. "Yes, it's his main portion; but by winning 31 percent of the 'church-going die-hards,' he [Trump] makes Missouri a competitive state rather than a simple Cruz victory.

"You see, Cruz has to pull a better number than 57 percent among the devoutly faithful crowd," Brody observed. "It's a solid number, but Trump beats Cruz solidly with the cultural Christian crowd ... so the only way for Cruz to win evangelical-heavy states is to run up the number among the 'more religious crowd.' He's really not doing that, and that's made a HUGE difference."

Today, it is obvious that American culture and the moral foundation of our society are in freefall, but conservative leaders are all too often spending their time navel gazing or worrying about offending some politician rather than calling their grass-roots adherents to stand against the great moral crises facing America, and indeed all of Western civilization.

The problem as we see it is too many conservative leaders and organizations—and churches—have been willing to accommodate the political establishment, and as a consequence, they've lost their willingness to call out politicians who break with traditional values, and consequently, they've lost the moral authority to have an impact even when they do. When was the last time you heard a sermon on the need to follow God's teachings on divorce, adultery, sex outside of marriage, pornography, illegal drugs, treatment of spouses and so forth?

Most priests, ministers and pastors have abandoned the teaching of morals, and so it is little wonder that their flocks see no reason not to vote for Donald Trump. And this is especially true for conservative Catholics. Millions of Catholics looking for papal support in their battle against the increasing secular pressure for the Church to abandon its scriptural teachings on sexual morality, including homosexuality and marriage, in favor of acceptance of same-sex "marriage" and other practices directly contradicted by Scripture, and more than two millennia of Church doctrine were left dumbfounded when the Pope visited America and failed to address those challenges and instead chose to lecture them on illegal immigration.

When we look at it in those terms, it is little wonder that Donald Trump has been able to hijack a large percentage of the cultural conservative vote. On one side of the scale are principles and values, particularly the principles and values of our fellow cultural conservatives, and our desire to have leaders and elected officials who respect and live those values and principles.

On the other side is the white-hot anger of millions of grass-roots, limited-government, constitutional conservatives and conservative-leaning populists who are not only angry with the leadership of the establishment Republican Party, but disappointed and frustrated with many leaders of the conservative movement as well.

The millions of disenfranchised country class voters who have been turning out for Trump look at the Republican establishment and see enemies who have been complicit in—if not the actual authors of—the three-decade long destruction of their quality of life.

But they have not found relief through many of Washington's conservative leaders, some of whom have often failed to even try to fight the government policies that have contributed to

the degradation of our culture that is enforced by political correctness, the vast increase in the spending and the reach of the federal government and the hijacking of middle class prosperity by crony government policies on trade and immigration.

If conservative leaders want to stop Trump, the first thing they must do is look to their own complicity in the current state of American culture and public policy. If conservatives unite to fight *for* the great fundamental principles of the conservative movement, who the Republican Party picks as its nominee will take care of itself. {eoa}

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