

We Could Transform Our Culture for Jesus if We Walked Out These 8 Steps

For the church to obey the cultural commission of influencing every realm of culture as salt and light (found in Gen. 1:28 and Matt. 5:13-16), it is essential that believers learn how to think biblically and articulate biblical principles in the language of contemporary hearers.

All the covenants point to believers taking the lead in secular society and redeeming culture for the kingdom and glory of God. From Gen. 1:28; 3:15; 12:1-3; 17:1-5; 22:17; Deut. 28:10-13; Ps. 2; Ps. 110; consummating in Rev. 21:1-3 and Isa. 65:17-25, we see the Word of God pointing us to actual engagement, penetration and transformation of society for Christ.

Furthermore, Jesus was called the King of kings (Rev. 19:16), meaning He is the president of all secular presidents in contemporary language (which is a political statement).

He called His followers the *ekklesia*, which is the equivalent of assembling together to rule cities and nations in Greco/Roman culture (Matt. 16:18-19). He also called the church to disciple whole nations (Matt. 28:19), not merely individual ethnic people.

The following are steps we need to take to accomplish this for the purpose of societal transformation:

1. We need to have a biblical worldview for every realm of contemporary life.

Because we are made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27), we need to learn how to think God's thoughts after Him.

In other words, our thoughts should be derivative of Father God's word and not merely our own subjective autonomous opinions. When we fully explore what the Bible says and agree with its general principles regarding history, law, psychology, education, religion, politics, economics, family and science, then we have a biblical worldview that serves as our lens that interprets all the data we inhale.

Unfortunately, most Christians don't have a biblical worldview but only a cursory knowledge of pet Bible verses they recite for physical and emotional health. This limited fragmented knowledge of Scripture has resulted in believers acquiescing to secular humanistic views in all practical matters dealing with the stewardship of the earth. As a result, this leaves Christians relegated to dealing only with matters of religion and spirituality. Consequently, although we have an abundance of Christians serving in secular society and record numbers of people attending Sunday church services, our culture continues to reflect a humanistic worldview, which brings us to the next step.

2. We need Christian thinking in societal leadership, not just more Christians in leadership.

Everywhere I go in society I meet an abundance of Christians serving in public schools, universities, hospitals, politics, business, and so on. With so many Christians already placed in influential positions in this nation, we have to recognize that the major challenge we face in regards to experiencing a biblical reformation is not a lack of Christians, but a lack of Christian thinking in all these prominent realms. We have to realize that the Bible is not just a book of promises, pithy sayings and moral commandments, but a blueprint for how to manage and disciple whole nations (Matt. 28:19). God has something to say regarding economics, how to aid the poor, health care, immigration, politics, science, history and so on.

Even when the nation has experienced revival in certain places, there was no long-lasting effect in regards to laws and politics because Christians lacked a biblical worldview that applies the Bible to culture.

3. The church needs to speak the language of Babylon.

After gaining a biblical worldview, believers need to speak the language of the culture they are in. Every discipline in life has their own subculture with their own nomenclature (vocabulary describing nuances in their work). In the same way, football utilizes words associated with the game, like "touchdown," the disciplines of political science, economics, sociology, education and nonprofit charities all have terminologies we have to master if we want to speak prophetically to them and communicate with their mind molders.

A methodology that involves quoting Bible passages and preaching to gatekeepers of culture doesn't usually work unless they are in a personal crisis. Consequently, believers already successfully immersed in a particular discipline need to think through the biblical concepts that apply to their field of work and articulate those concepts in secular terms that unchurched people can connect with, since the Bible has the best ideas because it reflects God's thinking. Mature believers who do this skillfully can expect to be elevated to the highest places of prominence in their respective fields.

Furthermore, pastors and leaders who want to reach the unchurched in their communities not only need to continually study their changing community demographics and provide practical services that people need, but they also need to adequately represent themselves when making announcements. They can do this by losing some of the unnecessary religious jargon that the average attendee cannot understand or connect with. (When public speaking or preaching, sometimes every other word out of the mouth of the pastor is "amen", "praise the Lord" or "hallelujah," and it turns off the unchurched,

who think part of the salvation package is adopting a weird religious nomenclature that doesn't track with their present lifestyle.) This is an unnecessary stumbling block, which can be removed if church leaders can learn how to eliminate religious lingo and talk as normally as they do when in the workplace environment.

4. Christian parents need to prepare their children for leadership, not followership.

This step in the process needs to be done concurrently with all of the steps mentioned in this teaching. Thus, I didn't really know where to place it in this article. Having a multi-generational plan of training our children to be Christian thinkers and practitioners is the most important calling a parent and church has!

Unfortunately, most Christian parents rarely take time out to pray and teach their children the Bible. Even when they do, it is not enough to nurture them to be world-class leaders. To nurture world-changers, as a general rule, young children between 3-10 years old should be immersed in Scripture memorization. Once children are in middle school and preparing for high school, parents and churches need to begin to teach their children how to understand and apply their Scripture knowledge in regard to evolution, history, education, government and business. They should also encourage them to excel in school and to attend the best universities and colleges available. In this way, we are not just teaching our children how not to backslide, but how to take the lead in culture and society.

5. We need to nurture world-changers in every realm of society

The Bible teaches us that we need to have an intergenerational approach. This is done when we catechize our biological and spiritual children so they can be trained to apply the Bible to everyday life. By doing this, we will nurture the greatest

leaders the world has ever seen, just as the church of old did when they had the greatest artists, scientists, writers, politicians and educators that transformed Europe and North America. Up until the mid-1800s, the church not only cared for the down and out, but also nurtured the “up and in” cultural elites who became the mind molders that influenced culture.

Nowadays, instead of starting world-class universities like Harvard and Yale, the church shuns higher education and encourages emerging leaders merely to attend their little Bible institutes. As long as we are afraid of higher education, we will never ascend to the head of culture. It is time for believers to become the “cultural elites” of society so we can lead our communities with wisdom and justice.

6. We should welcome unbelievers into our church communities even before they accept Christ as Lord and Savior

Churches that think biblically but speak secularly are in the habit of embracing their communities even before they accept Jesus Christ as Lord. Instead of getting the community to come into the church, we need to send church members out to our communities as servant leaders. The church can become a hotbed of community activity in which those outside the church believe that the church building is now their community center for a wealth of information, resources and even community board meetings. In this way, the people on the outside of the church will feel comfortable with the people of the church and will be more inclined to step inside the sanctuary for a Sunday service.

7. We should produce problem solvers for the greatest global challenges

I believe the time has arrived when the world will come to pastors and believers for advice and answers on how to deal with the pressing problems they are facing in their communities. The church should not only produce the greatest

prayer warriors and worshippers the world has ever seen, but it should also produce the greatest thinkers, entrepreneurs and strategists the world has ever seen. Presently, the world is waiting for a person to articulate answers regarding our failing economy, global terrorism, cures for cancer and AIDS, environmental issues, disaster relief strategies and more. Why shouldn't people representing the Kingdom of God come up with these solutions?

8. Christians need to improve the quality of life in their communities to demonstrate transformation

Talk is cheap. The world doesn't need another book about the dire problems we have in our cities. We need people to produce lasting change that will greatly benefit the quality of life, who will then write it down in a book and teach us. I am sick of hearing people prophesying and preaching about reformation. God is looking for churches and people to at least create a community model others can look to for replication in their own cities.