

**SECTION THREE:**

**PRACTICAL ACTIONS**

## Chapter 9: Not A Theocracy: A Christian-Stewarded Secular Society

When President John Adams, signer of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, voicing the common belief of the Founding Fathers, said, “Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other,” what did he mean?

What the Founders feared was the sort of arbitrary exercise of power shown recently by judges, first in Massachusetts and then other states, who have invented “marriage” rights for homosexuals. A handful of jurists took it upon themselves to create homosexual “marriage” in disregard of the clear will of millions-strong majorities, and in contradiction to the presumed legislative intent of the framers of their respective state constitutions. They felt entitled to do this because a few decades ago our nation abandoned the biblical moral code which had guided the Founders and many subsequent generations of Americans. And, since there is no longer any external, objective standard for interpreting the existing laws, the only basis for deciding right and wrong is the subjective opinions of the judges themselves. This is precisely the rule-by-elites that our national and state constitutions were designed to prevent.

Legislators and executive officials are still somewhat restrained by our electoral process, but the judges (at least the ones who rule as the “final courts of appeal”) have become a new class of quasi-monarchs, accountable only to themselves. The marriage cases show that we can’t even count on *stare decisis* or “settled law” (meaning the philosophy that judges are bound to follow prior case precedents), to restrain judges any more. There is no rational legal thread that could tie these marriage-killing rulings to the implicit logic of their respective state constitutions.

There is a short-term solution to this problem in the checks and balances provisions of our political system (which, incidentally, are rooted in Isaiah 33:22). Judges aren’t supposed to make laws, and when they try to do so, the other two branches of government have the power to stop them: by simply ignoring the rulings. That’s not likely to happen because most leaders in the other two branches are as lacking in sound moral reasoning as the judges. The long-term solution is thus the only true way out of this mess -- Christians, in numbers far larger than we’ve seen recently, must return to the political process and restore the biblical consensus that our Founders rightly deemed essential to our national survival. Indeed, that was the founders’ genius: the creation not of a

theocracy, but of a Christian-stewarded secular society.

The premise of pro-family activism, and our motivation to press on through ever-increasing challenges, is our belief in God and His Word. Our agenda is the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19): to Christianize the world -- not to satisfy a human desire for power and control, but because God's order brings blessing to all who embrace it and it is our duty to love our neighbors enough to *want* to bless them. Central to His order is marriage and the natural family, and the health of these institutions serves as a sort-of "canary in the mineshaft" for civilizations. Canaries were once used by miners as poison-gas detectors. If the canary died, the miners knew they were in serious danger and must take immediate action to save themselves.

Our canary is nearly dead. The once universally respected and cherished institutions of marriage and the natural family have been poisoned by the new moral order of sexual "freedom." To be sure, many individuals still hold traditional views, but society as a whole (as represented by those in government, media, education and business whom we allow to hold the seats of power) has rejected God's design. If God's Word is true, the inevitable consequence of this rejection is His wrath -- unless we turn back (repent).

Today the main point of conflict between Christians and "gay" activists is indeed marriage, and all the hopes of the pro-family movement seem to rest on preserving the official definition as the union of one man and one woman. Yet, even though this is an important goal, it is a very small part of the larger question: which of the two contradictory value systems will society embrace? To "save" marriage, yet accept homosexual relationships as normal and healthy, is to abandon God's standards for human sexuality and society, and by extension, to trade Christian civilization for humanism and/or occultism. Alarming, either from apathy or by rejection of the concept of Christian civic responsibility, much of the church seems willing to make this trade.

It's up to those of us who are not willing to abandon Christian civilization to show the way forward by devising and implementing new plans and tactics which are not oriented toward responding to the initiatives of our opponents, but focused pro-actively on re-Christianizing our society.

I will offer six suggestions in this chapter:

### ***First: Redefine Ourselves and Our Task***

What we need is a new sense of identity and purpose that frees us from the liberal/conservative political context and allows us to be pursue new and pro-active ideas. I believe our new model should be based on the missionary societies of yesteryear.

America has, realistically, become a mission field, and the strategies and tactics we should follow are those used traditionally by missionaries: identifying mission target areas, establishing missions in them, growing a movement of local believers, infiltrating and steering local centers of influence, educating the local society about the superiority of the biblical world-view, and establishing social service institutions that meet the needs of the local people while simultaneously teaching biblical values.

The sports and military metaphors we have used in the past to define ourselves as conservative and liberal contestants on a roughly even playing field no longer fit as neatly as they used to. We have lost most of the ground we started with in the 1950's and the contests are now (mostly) not between

Christian conservatives and humanistic liberals but between the Republican and Democrat political parties, both of which (relative to the standards of the past) have moved dramatically to the left and away from biblical Christianity.

Importantly, the work of a missionary is broader than that of a conservative activist, and more in keeping with the broader needs of this “post-Christian” society. The society we’re trying to save from disintegration no longer understands the biblical presuppositions that our grandparents took for granted, and which are necessary for its survival. Our primary emphasis should shift from *fighting against* social evils to *providing* social blessings. This is not to say we should abandon the fight against evil. That fight must continue. However, while we work to put out the fires raging in the community (the work of cultural arsonists), we must work even harder on a campaign of fire prevention or the rest of our work will eventually prove to have been done in vain. This issue is addressed more extensively below.

Personally, I refer to myself less and less as a conservative, and more and more as a missionary. My goals are not those of any political party, nor, necessarily, even of the big Christian pro-family ministries (though I often support their specific pro-family projects). My goal is to transform my own mission field and to encourage like-minded believers to do the same in theirs. I believe this is the most reasonable and hopeful course of action we can pursue under the circumstances.

Significantly, the “post-Christian” mission field is very different and much harder to transform than the pre-Christian one. Anyone who has ever served in a third world mission will tell you that the average person in their mission field is usually quite willing to listen to the message of the Gospel. At the very least, it is an interesting idea to them. In a post-Christian society, however, the people are often openly hostile to Christianity, and many of them have been trained in anti-Christian rhetoric.

A society is post-Christian specifically because enemies of the Gospel have worked to make it so. Meanwhile, the Christians whose responsibility it is to counter the anti-Christians in such societies have, for various reasons, allowed the de-Christianization to occur, and may therefore be defensive or hostile to those who come onto the scene with missionary intentions. Still, when Kingdom-minded Christians begin to think of themselves as missionaries, their own creative gifts and the guidance of the Holy Spirit can make them effective and successful in any context.

## ***Second: Work Locally***

Given the advanced state of moral decline in our nation, and our position of relative weakness compared to our cultural adversaries, we must face the unpleasant prospect that our efforts to restore a Judeo-Christian or natural law moral consensus in America may fail. Prudence dictates that our strategy must allow for this contingency, and provide as much protection for our own families and communities as possible in the event that we cannot return such protections to the nation as a whole.

Keeping a local focus allows us to enact our pro-family agenda in our own local communities first, which in turn helps to shield us from the effects of continuing disintegration in the larger society. It also allows us to prove by example the superiority of the family-centered community model. Others will be inspired to follow our lead once we begin to produce genuinely pro-family communities

While we focus on our local communities, however, we cannot ignore the state, national and international battlefield. It all comes down to prioritizing our battles and allocating our limited time, energy and finances accordingly.

Although many of the attacks upon the Judeo-Christian ethic come from outside our local communities, the impact of these attacks can be blunted by our efforts at the local level. For example, anti-family attitudes promoted to our children by national television and entertainment media can be countered by a strong pro-family message in schools, libraries and community-based organizations. Such institutions are largely controlled by local boards of directors elected at the local level.

Typically today, these boards are dominated by our cultural adversaries, even in relatively conservative communities, but only because pro-family people are not organized and motivated to compete for them. These and all other local political offices can and should be held by pro-family citizens.

The pro-active missionary approach of working to re-Christianize society has its greatest potential for influence at the local level. Coordinated efforts by our friends and allies to promote marriage, effective child-rearing practices, and family health and integrity can have enormous local impact. Active promotion of pro-family goals in business groups and benevolence organizations can redirect the course of change in the local community.

Once a community has become truly pro-family, it can export its local culture to surrounding communities, and advance political candidates for higher office. Obviously, when multiple local communities become pro-family, transforming the state and/or region becomes a more achievable goal. Specific plans and tactics will vary from place to place according to local circumstances and the creativity, talents and ministry emphasis of local activists.

## **One Specific Plan**

### **A. Define a Local Mission Field**

We can't afford to begin a project we can't finish, especially at the start of this renewal of our movement. It is therefore prudent to define a local mission field of limited size that will serve as the initial model. Establish a "Redemption Zone" (RZ) that encompasses no more territory than is reasonable to expect to transform in a five-to-ten year effort with a relatively small number of allies. It should be small enough to manage, but representative of the larger city or county in which it is located (meaning it should contain both residential and commercial sections, and basic institutions such as schools, libraries and community organizations). In more rural areas the RZ may be a whole town or small city. Set specific geographic boundaries, and mark them on a map.

### **B. Build a Missionary Team**

Recruit a group of activists who can grasp the vision of creating a genuinely family-friendly community through missionary activity. Work together to plan a campaign to Christianize the Redemption Zone through activity in all of the community-shaping spheres of society, especially churches, business, education, media and government. For a detailed plan on how to organize and

deploy the members of your team, see Chapter 10. The “Redemption Group” can and should include members of various and diverse Christian denominations, para-church organizations and other Bible-believing, pro-family entities.

### **C. Promote a Missionary Campaign**

Your missionary campaign should begin by educating the Bible-believing churches in the region surrounding your Redemption Zone about your project. They should receive a briefing from a member or members of your team as well as an information packet that includes, at minimum, a copy of the RZ map, the Statement of Faith (which will alleviate concerns about denominational disagreements), and a written invitation to participate in the project.

The goal is for all of the believers in the region to adopt the RZ as their own personal mission field in order to concentrate and maximize the available resources.

Possible activities to promote to allies include: evangelism, educational efforts such as literature distribution and community classes and seminars, establishment of Christian-owned and operated business ventures, sponsorship of Christian political candidates (outside of church venues), community events such as concerts and/or plays or street theater and benevolence activities: food programs, employment assistance, recovery programs, etc..

The believers/allies should be regularly exhorted to adopt the missionary mindset, and, in addition to working with your project, to independently seek to maximize their own influence for good in the RZ or the larger city by infiltrating the local media, public school, college, government agency, or influential community organization. Once there, without advertising their agenda, they should work to Christianize that entity as carefully and strategically as they can, and to work to rise to the highest position they can reach within it. The Redemption Group should, instead of “building its own empire,” encourage and facilitate the development of diverse independent ministries by its members.

### **D. Take Stewardship of the Redemption Zone**

To the extent possible, get to know every person, church, business, school and agency in the RZ, and craft your plans to bless them through your actions in a way that glorifies God. Like Nehemiah in Jerusalem, be patient, systematic, unwavering and visionary so that the end of your efforts will be the restoration of Godly authority over the territory you have claimed for Him (see the Book of Nehemiah, especially Chapters 1-7).

### **Third: Focus on Fundamental Freedoms**

The missionary strategy is not specifically focused on “culture war” issues, but these issues will inevitably arise as we pursue the re-Christianization of our communities because the chief opponents of authentic Christianity in society are “gay” activists and their ideological allies.

When they do arise, be prepared. Our strongest positions and arguments are those rooted in the defense of our fundamental freedoms: speech, worship, association and conscience. These are

not infallible arguments, because anti-family judges and other decision-makers are often so hostile to pro-family views that they are willing to override their own generally staunch support for these freedoms. However, these are the best arguments we have in the current cultural climate. And, frankly, if we ultimately lose these freedoms, the only options left to us will be capitulation or punishment.

As a practical matter, what does it mean to focus on fundamental freedoms? It means couching our arguments in the same civil rights language that our opponents have used so effectively for decades. For example, I'm frequently asked how to respond to the start of "gay" student clubs in public schools. Invariably, the question is how to keep the clubs out of the schools. However, my response usually surprises people. In my view, it is better not to oppose the club, but to compete with it by starting or strengthening a Christian club on campus.

Frankly, young people are inundated with pro-homosexual propaganda from many diverse sources: movies, television, music, magazines, etc., so a "gay" club at school is not such a shocking concept. However, these students almost never hear the pro-family perspective from any source (with the exception of those relative few who attend Bible-believing churches willing to address homosexuality from the pulpit). If, instead of campaigning to stop the "gay" club (with the inevitable result of being called bigots and hate-mongers), we demand equal time for the pro-family perspective, we immediately turn the tables. We become the advocates of freedom of speech, they become the advocates of censorship. We become the victims of discrimination, they become the discriminators. And, if there are Christian students bold enough to exercise their freedom of speech in cooperation with us, the rest of the students (many for the first time) will get to hear the truth.

Fortunately, the law is on our side when we follow the "equal time" strategy. The Federal Equal Access Act of 1984 was specifically passed to ensure that Christian students would have equal opportunity to express their views on campus to the same extent as any other students with any other viewpoint. On the other hand, this is the same law used by the "gay" clubs, which is why efforts to stop them have usually (though not always) failed.

The equal time theme applies in many contexts, and always provides our side the opportunity to champion rather than seeming to attack basic "civil rights." When we actually get equal time, we should use the opportunity to promote our pro-family world-view as an alternative to the "gay" message, rather than using our time to attack their message. Remember that we have the ability to frame our position in secular terms (see Chapter 8), so we should never be denied our say in a public school or other government setting on the idea that it is "religious."

We should also look for ways to promote the positive aspects of our pro-family message, irrespective of anything the "gays" are doing. For example, educational campaigns about the blessings of authentic marriage, the rewards of sticking it out through tough times, preparing oneself in youth to be a good husband or wife, the joys of enlightened parenthood, and other family-building messages can be conducted anywhere by relatively small groups of activists with a modest budget. These messages are effective in brochures, posters, radio and TV spots, billboards, public gatherings such as parades and county fairs, ads in newspapers (including school newspapers), etc. These sorts of campaigns are like antibodies in the bloodstream of society that boost its immunity to destructive influences.

Freedom of association is also a powerful right that has been upheld by the courts. In *Hurley v. Irish-American Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Group of Boston* the U.S. Supreme Court has upheld the right of

parade organizers to exclude those who do not share their message. The hybrid right of “expressive association” was what saved the Boy Scouts from being forced to accept homosexual scoutmasters in *Dale v. Boy Scouts of America*.

The right of conscience is the right not to participate in otherwise mandatory activities. The appeal to this right will become increasingly necessary in the coming months and years as the anti-family agenda incrementally becomes the law of the land. We have already lost our power to stop various things such as “gay pride” parades, but a majority of those who accept these things still agree that people shouldn’t be forced to participate in them. That will change as the “gays” gain greater power, but for now the right of conscience is a strong argument. It should have a prominent place in our rhetoric as a movement, and we should pro-actively seek to add the right of conscience in any pro-“gay” law or policy that we can’t stop -- even if they are not yet trying to force dissenters to participate.

Freedom of the press is a right which we in the pro-family movement have never effectively utilized. A for-profit news business has probably the greatest freedom of any entity in America to promote its viewpoint in the public. There is really no excuse for leaving the news media in the hands of the enemies of Christ and the family. Of course, the effective use of such an instrument requires a wise and careful hand. If we bought *The New York Times*, for example, and started preaching the Gospel on the front page, we would destroy its usefulness as a tool of public enlightenment. The people who most need to broaden their world-view would stop reading it. However, a subtle shift of perspective in an otherwise unchanged format of factual reporting would accomplish a lot. And don’t forget that news media have the right to editorialize on their own opinions and to endorse political candidates.

#### ***Fourth: Protect the Victims and the Vulnerable***

If the homosexual agenda is ever defeated in America it will likely be through the work and witness of two groups of its victims: recovered homosexuals and those who have been subjected to “gay” indoctrination as public-school children. We’ve seen this sort of social backlash once before in this nation: against the drug culture. Much of the country was persuaded in the 1960s to view mind-altering substances as relatively harmless, and the result was an explosion of drug use, and then an avalanche of social problems. What eventually turned the tide against the drug culture? It was the work and witness of former drug addicts (myself being one of them). These victims of the drug culture were immune to all of the clever rhetoric and philosophies that had duped the nation and were zealous to protect others from being harmed as they had been. They knew the truth by their own experience, and the word of their testimony was far more powerful than the lies of the adversaries.

The pro-family movement would be well served to learn from this example and devote a substantial portion of its time and resources both to advancing and growing the ex-“gay” movement and to teaching the pro-family perspective to young people. Strategically, there are other, obvious benefits to focusing on helping the victims and the vulnerable, not the least of which is relatively greater support from the modern controversy-shy church (some support is better than none).

A pro-family organization called Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays and Gays (PFOX) has

provided exemplary leadership in utilizing this approach. Their primary goal and ministry emphasis in recent years has been ending discrimination against ex-“gays.” PFOX uses all of the civil rights rhetoric and reasoning that the “gay” movement has employed over the past several decades, but to protect a group of people whom the “gays” insist cannot exist: *former* homosexuals. The very existence of ex-“gays” demolishes the “gay” doctrine that homosexuality is innate and unchangeable -- and gives real hope to all of the many homosexuals who secretly wish to be rid of their same-sex compulsions. The PFOX pursuit of equal rights for ex-“gays” in the face of intense opposition and hostility by so-called “civil rights” activists and leaders, exposes the hypocrisy of these pro-“gay” bigots to the watching public.

In like manner, pro-family activists who champion freedom of speech to, for and by young people in the supposed “marketplaces of ideas” (schools and colleges) expose the hypocrisy of the teachers and education bureaucrats who are so astonishingly repressive of speech and thought on this issue..

Importantly, while exposing the truth might not be enough to change things in the short term, it has a powerful influence on both the victims of the “gay” agenda and on all of the fair-minded witnesses now watching in uncomfortable silence. As the number of former homosexuals and former public school “brainwashes” grows, there will come a time when the scale tips against the pro-“gay” bullies, and a culture-changing backlash will ensue.

### ***Fifth: Separate Positive from Negative Messages and Messengers.***

A Byrds song from the 1960’s made a certain passage of Scripture well known throughout the secular world; it was Ecclesiastes 3:1-8: “To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven...A time to break down, and a time to build up,...A time to tear, and a time to sew,...A time to love and a time to hate...” To apply this Biblical principle in our context, there is a time for attacking the “gay” agenda and a time for promoting the pro-family agenda, but they are not necessarily the same times.

Our inclination as “conservatives” (I have expressed my reservations about using this term for pro-family activists) is to focus on the negative, meaning the true but ugly facts that contradict the benign image of homosexuality being sold to the public by “gay” propagandists and their allies. The negative message is valid and appropriate in its time. Less familiar is the positive message, meaning the active promotion (in the community outside the church walls) of God’s design for marriage and family as a superior way of life to all others.

As tactics of influencing the public, some people favor the negative and others favor the positive. Many Christians understand that each has its place, but others oppose one or the other approach for various reasons, making it very difficult to come to a consensus within the Christian community about how to deal with the homosexual issue (and other social/moral problems).

What really is needed is a dual approach. As a movement, we need to do both, but we should keep them separate. We should have independent ministry organizations which specialize in one or the other of the approaches. And we should strongly discourage criticism of either approach by proponents of the other.

## **Sixth: Train Youth as Missionaries**

One of the most shameful results of the church's abdication of civic responsibility is the transformation of church youth groups from missionary training grounds to baby-sitting centers. The typical youth group in the modern church is focused on keeping teenagers and pre-teens entertained so they won't fall into "worldliness." Ironically, the emphasis on self-gratification is as worldly as anything happening outside the church. But worse, the cause of Christ is robbed of its most potent missionary force. The history of the church is replete with stories of young believers doing great works to advance the Kingdom of God. Today, they are its most underutilized resource.

What is needed is a new philosophy of youth ministry: one which recognizes the duty of the church to prepare its young people for the challenges of the present age. The youth program should train members in the fundamental skills of apologetics, critical thinking, debate and strategic planning, then send them out to accomplish specific tasks and projects in the world. The youth program should be a hive of excitement and energy, where young people come with eagerness to fellowship with their fellow activists, share the developments in their various mission projects, and learn more about how to effectively accomplish their goal: the re-Christianization of the post-Christian world.

What generates this sort of excitement among the youth? The chance to overcome the demeaning platitude that they are "our future," and actually live the truth that they (if they have surrendered their lives to Him) are Christ's agents *in the present*, with just as much spiritual authority and often greater potential impact on the world than most adults. Said Paul to Timothy: "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (I Timothy 4:12).

Proverbs 127:5 reads: "Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, The fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them." The principle implicit in this teaching is that children should be aimed like arrows; not shot blindly and randomly from the bow. The latter result is the natural outcome of churches that do nothing for youth but provide them a sanctuary from the world. But the church with a missionary mindset carefully prepares its youth for leadership in the world, and directs them purposefully into strategic mission fields in their communities.

For example, every church youth group should be sponsoring, equipping and backing student Christian clubs in every public school as part of their missions program. They should have student interns in all of the spheres of influence: newspapers, radio stations, television stations, business groups, community organizations, government agencies, the offices of legislators, attorneys, college professors, and para-church organizations.

The youth group should be the place where young people come together to debrief and learn how to biblically meet the unique challenges specific to these respective mission fields. And the "adult" church should treat these missionaries with the respect they deserve, routinely acknowledging and honoring their service within the context of regular services and in special events.