

*The Christian World View of
Educating Christians on Social,
Political, and Moral Issues*

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What is the Coalition on Revival?

The Coalition on Revival is a network of evangelical leaders from every major denominational and theological perspective who share a vision for and a commitment to revival, renewal, and reformation in Church and society in America.

People of Anabaptist, Arminian, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Wesleyan denominational backgrounds are all represented among COR's leaders. Pre-, a-, and post-millennialists are cooperating with each other, sharing the exciting task of getting God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven insofar as that is possible between now and whenever Christ comes back to Earth. Charismatics and non-charismatics, covenant and dispensationalist theologians, have joined arm in arm in prayer and hard work to see revival, renewal, and reformation in the Christian Church and the American culture.

COR's vision is to see Christians everywhere doing all they can in the power of the Holy Spirit to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), in every aspect of life. Toward that end, we have developed a series of worldview documents that set forth what we believe are the fundamental and essential points of the total Christian world and life view. The COR worldview documents state what we believe are the biblical principles for all spheres of human life including theology, evangelism, discipleship, law, civil governments, economics, education, family, medicine, psychology and counseling, arts and media, business and professions, and science and technology. We believe that the COR worldview documents state where the entire Church must stand and what action it must take to accomplish its task in the remaining years of the Twentieth Century and on into the next century.

COR steering committee members from all walks of life were joined by many hundreds of other interested Christian scholars, pastors, and laymen in developing the COR documents during many series of workshops and conventions. Each document therefore, reflects input from theologians, philosophers, professionals in their respective fields, pastors, and lay Christians. We have sought to avoid denominational and theological bias in the documents; our aim has been to focus on principles so fundamental that we are convinced no Bible-believing Christian who studied the major questions related to each sphere of life would come to a contradictory conclusion.

COR views itself as a "Bible obedience, holiness movement" that crosses denominational and theological lines. The next step on its agenda, now that its basic documents are complete, is to disseminate them widely and to educate hundreds of thousands of Christians on how to make Christ Lord of absolutely every aspect of life. We plan to do that through publications, and through seminars, and training workshops in the major cities of America and Canada. COR will also work in cooperation with other Christian networking groups to help unify the pastors in major population centers around the vision of mobilizing their people to "Get God's will done in their city as it is in heaven" to whatever degree that is possible before the return of Christ. We believe America can be turned around and once again function as a Christian nation as it did in its earlier years. We believe that wherever the pastors of any city in the world join together in unity to make Christ Lord of every sphere of life, and, with Spirit led strategy, mobilize their people into a unified spiritual army; that city can and will become "a city set upon a hill" and be "a place where righteousness dwells."

About the 17 World View (Sphere) Documents

COR developed the 17 World View Documents, which set forth what we believe are fundamental and essential Biblical principles governing 17 major areas or *spheres* of human life and activity: law, government, economics, business and professions, education, art and media, medicine, science and technology, psychology and counseling, Christian unity, local and world evangelism, discipleship, helping the hurting, educating Christians about social and political moral issues, revitalizing Christian colleges and seminaries, marriage and the family, and pastoral renewal. These documents offer Christian leaders concise and comprehensive Biblical principles of how to apply the Truth of the Bible to all spheres of life and ministry. Each document includes short, creed-like statements of affirmation and denial that we believe state non-negotiable Biblical truths for that sphere of reality.

The 17 World View Documents were developed within 17 different committees made up of leaders with experience and expertise in the 17 different fields over an intensive three-year period of dialogue, critique, editing, and finally, a consensus conviction. Sixty of COR's National Steering Committee members with over 300 other theologians, pastors, lawyers, doctors, businessmen, and Christian workers made up the 17 committees. COR sends forth these documents to the Church at large with the prayer that they may be used by God's Spirit to get God's will done on earth, as it is in heaven—to whatever degree that is possible prior to the Return of Christ.

Preface

God tells us in Scripture that He desires justice in all areas of human life, established by all God-ordained authorities within their proper spheres. God ordained civil government to restrain evil, reward good, and protect the innocent. The Church and civil government have their own spheres of authority.

There are in our society great social, political, and moral evils that dishonor God and undermine the life of our nation. Some evils are oppressive and dehumanizing, attacking the God-given sanctity of individual, family, and Church. Others allow direct acts of oppression by the State against its citizens. Identifying, confronting, and correcting these evils is a national Christian responsibility. Without repentance, these evils will incur God's judgment, both for the godless society that fosters tyranny and for the disobedient Church that abandons its mission as salt and light.

As God's people, we must provide direction for our nation in morality, society, and politics, based on God's unchanging Word, written and revealed. Whether we have been disobedient through willful ignorance, indifference, fear, or deception, we must confess, individually and corporately, our sin of failing to provide this direction.

We are the light of the world. Our light must shine before men. We are the salt of the earth. We must not lose our savor (Matthew 5:13-16). God commended David's men because they understood the times and knew what Israel should do (1 Chronicles 12:32). The Apostle Paul frequently exhorted the churches to penetrate their communities in every aspect of life (*e.g.* 1 Thessalonians. 4:10b-12). The prophet Amos declared that God would reject His people's worship if they did not seek righteousness and justice in their land (Amos 2:4-8; 4:4-13; 5:14,15,21-24). In Ezekiel, God called His prophet to be a watchman and gave him the duty to warn the people of the costs of wickedness in light of the coming judgment of God (Ezekiel 3:17-19; 33:1-9).

A total understanding of the gospel implies that we see these endeavors as integral to our obedience to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. With this understanding in mind, we set forth the following statements of affirmation and denial.

Statements of Affirmation and Denial

The Imperative of Christian Involvement

1. We affirm that Christian parents have the primary responsibility to educate their children about the social, political, and moral issues in their culture (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).

We deny that the primary responsibility to educate children about these issues falls on churches or schools.

2. We affirm that Christian leaders and churches have a responsibility to educate their people about the Biblical morality of social and political issues of our time.

We deny that Christian leaders or churches may avoid addressing these issues because their primary task is to “preach the gospel”, and that it is possible to teach the whole counsel of God without addressing the Biblical morality of social and political issues.

3. We affirm that all Christians must take a Bible-based, clear, bold public stand against the social, political, and moral evils in our society.

We deny that God will absolve us of responsibility for the destruction of our society if we do not give clear warnings to those around us (Ezekiel 33:1-9).

4. We affirm that all Christians must be involved in overcoming the social, political, and moral evils in our society through individual and corporate Spirit-led acts of Biblical obedience, with compassion, justice, righteousness, and humility (Deuteronomy 4:1-8).

We deny that it is possible for any Christian to be salt and light in the world without acting sacrificially to bring God’s light into the darkness in his culture (2 Tim. 3:12).

5. We affirm that man is depraved as a result of original sin (Romans 5); that man’s fallen nature, essentially exploitative and self-centered, requires restraining by God’s Law (Romans 7); and that that Law must be either written internally and enforced by the Holy Spirit (Romans 2:14,15), or written externally and enforced by legitimate authority (Romans 13:1-7).

We deny that man’s essential nature is inherently good; that environmental influences—poverty, discrimination, or lack of education—in and of themselves, are the source of evil; and that civil governments were formed by God to alleviate environmental causes of evil rather than to restrain man’s inherent evil nature.

6. We affirm that God’s governing authority is delegated along with the requisite responsibilities inherent therein; that for the individual, self-government under God’s Law is a primary responsibility; that within the family authority is delegated to parents, within the Church to Biblically ordained church leaders, and within general society to civil government and voluntary associations in their limited spheres.

We deny that authority to govern is derived solely from man, and that the authority of civil government is supreme over the individual, family, or church (Revelation 1:5).

7. We affirm that civil government is ordained to punish wrongdoers, protect the innocent, and promote good conduct in society, thus ratifying unchanging morality based on God's Law (Romans 13:1-7), and that State and Church are distinct institutions, both under God's sovereign authority (Matthew 22:21) and both obligated to conduct their affairs in accordance with the Bible.

We deny that the legitimate authority of civil government operating within its proper sphere may supersede the authority of the Church by taxing, regulating, licensing, or certifying its orthodoxy, education, evangelism, or other matters of belief and/or practice (Acts 5:29).

Liberty versus Restraint

8. We affirm that genuine liberty exists only when man possesses within himself the internal restraints and liberties derived from the indwelling Person of Jesus Christ (Romans 6:16-22), thus living in voluntary submission to the Bible's view of reality and morality.

We deny that genuine liberty consists of the absence of moral and/or legal restraint, as is taught in the philosophies of extreme libertarianism and anarchism.

9. We affirm that God's standard is necessary to retard man's tendency toward unchecked license, which leads to the disintegration of society.

We deny that any form of restraint other than that founded on Biblically centered Judeo-Christian values can prevent the ultimate disintegration of society (Deuteronomy 4:6).

10. We affirm that God created all men and women to be responsible moral agents, equal with all others in importance and value before Him, equally responsible to Him as stewards of liberty, and designed to act as His voluntary bond-slaves in reclaiming the fallen creation.

We deny that man's freedom is absolute; that it is derived from evolutionary prerogatives; that man is anything less than answerable to God for his stewardship of liberty; and that God is a respecter of persons.

Evils that Rob Man's Dignity

11. We affirm that all Biblical moral absolutes are valid, including proscriptions against prostitution, promiscuity, homosexuality, lesbianism, adultery, fornication, incest, sado-masochism, bestiality, transvestism, rape, pornography, and activities that pervert the God-given role of sexuality within the confines of marriage.

We deny that Biblical liberty allows mankind to practice these deviant activities as acceptable alternative lifestyles.

12. We affirm that corporal discipline of children as a means of teaching godly behavior and character and as a means of checking rebellion is commanded by God's Word (Proverbs 13:24; 22:15; 23:13,14; 29:15,17), that husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the Church, and that wives are to submit to their husbands as to the Lord (Ephesians 5:21-33).

We deny that Biblical order in the family permits physical abuse, emotional abuse, psychological coercion, neglect, or abandonment.

13. We affirm that the physical body of a believer is the temple of the Holy Spirit and that substance abuse, gluttony, and other forms of voluntary destructive behavior that weaken or destroy the body are sinful (1 Corinthians 6:12-19).

We deny that our bodies are our own to abuse by any harmful behavior.

14. We affirm that God is not a respecter of persons; that racism and all similar forms of prejudice are evil; and that all men are valuable as made in the image of God.

We deny that racism and prejudice have any place in the Body of Christ.

Evils that Demean the Value of Life

15. We affirm that God is sovereign over the creation of all human life; that human life begins at conception; that all human life is sacred in the eyes of God; that planned termination of innocent human life by abortion on demand is murder; and that infanticide, euthanasia, and suicide as "death with dignity" are murder.

We deny that any teachings that denigrate the importance of physical life are true, and that death via abortion on demand, infanticide, euthanasia, or suicide as "death with dignity" constitute legitimate applications of governmental power or individual freedom of choice.

16. We affirm that God ordained the family to consist of a man and woman legally married to each other and, if possible, children, and that the family is of primary importance in the structure of society.

We deny that the Biblical family can or should be redefined; that God condones open marriages, marital infidelity, homosexual marriage, or divorce for any reason other than that sanctioned by Scripture; and that God condones State take-over of parental rights, rejection and ridicule of the traditional role of the mother as homemaker and child raiser, State advocacy of institutional child care through tax laws and governmental funding, and promotion of "children's rights" by which minor children may bring suit against their parents.

17. We affirm that it is the primary responsibility of parents to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, not provoking them to anger.

We deny that the State has any legitimate jurisdiction over children within the family, and that civil government may forbid spanking in Christian schools or churches, or in families, as an appropriate means of punishment, except to protect them from abuse and neglect where a clear and present danger exists.

18. We affirm that there are evils that are direct acts of oppression by the State against the Church, including the State's usurpation of the Church's authority and responsibility for the welfare and personal financial security of its members, taxation levied against churches and their related property and/or ministries, restrictive application of zoning laws against churches, and restricting or regulating religious meetings or Biblical ordinances.

We deny that civil government has legitimate jurisdiction over any aspect of the Church except in its role to promote Biblical justice.

19. We affirm that there are evils that constitute direct acts of oppression by the State against its citizens, including the secularizing of society accompanied by discrimination against religion and individuals who practice their faith, excessive taxation laws, usurpation by the State of individual responsibility for personal financial security, regulation of religious schools, other than by standards of physical safety and health, and the fining or imprisonment of people who refuse to give up their right to live according to their Biblical convictions.

We deny that civil government has any legitimate authority to interfere with an individual's life, liberty, property, or pursuit of happiness except to promote Biblical justice.

Methods of Opposing Evil

20. We affirm that God's people are commanded to oppose evil by educating and demonstrating God's propositional truths regarding evil to all other men.

We deny that God and His truth should ever be separated from the State; that absolute separation of Church and State is either right or possible; and that Christians should ever be silent in the face of evil.

21. We affirm that Christians must obey the laws of God rather than the laws of men when those laws conflict (Acts 5:29).

We deny that civil law rules over Biblical Law, and that man must obey any civil law that requires disobedience to God's Law.

22. We affirm that Christians must be involved in all processes and offices of civil government in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, so that the government may rest upon His shoulders (Isaiah 9:6,7), and that such involvement is part of the Church's prophetic role in society.

We deny that Biblical piety or spirituality precludes a Christian's allowing Christ to be Lord over his involvement in government and thus his active involvement in political processes.

Overcoming Evil with Good

23. We affirm that Christians have a duty to pray for those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1-4), to register to vote, to be informed about candidates' stands on issues, to cast their votes faithfully as bond-slaves to Christ, and to be willing to be sent by God into civil government, the political process, or social and moral action.

We deny that inactivity, prayer alone, or prayerless activism alone can constitute the faithful exercise of a believer's full Biblical responsibilities.

24. We affirm that Christians have a duty to contend earnestly for all Christian values and to oppose all erosion of Biblical values in every arena, including, but not limited to, civil government.

We deny that Christian involvement in the formulation or execution of public policy or law is carnal, unspiritual, or in any way undesirable.

Instituting Christianity's Compassionate Alternatives

25. We affirm that for every sinful activity we are compelled to oppose by Biblical command, there is a corresponding positive alternative that we have a Biblical duty to propose and implement — *e.g.*, if we oppose abortion, we should provide services such as crisis pregnancy centers, counseling, shelter for expectant mothers, adoption assistance, and training in Biblical values.

We deny that the practice of Biblical teachings is in any way carnal, and the Church can obey Scripture without practicing such compassionate activities.

26. We affirm that the Church is to act as salt and light in society, radically altering the direction, flavor, and perception of the non-Christian segment of society, for individuals as well as for nations.

We deny that Christianity is to serve merely as one among many mildly leavening influences within a pluralistic culture or world.

A Call to Action in Educating Christians on Social, Political, and Moral Issues

General Actions

Because of the preceding convictions, we call upon all men and women who name Christ as their personal Savior and Lord to join us in:

1. examining earnestly these affirmations and denials in the light of God's Word to see if they are true, and informing us directly of those points in which they believe we have departed from Scripture or logic;
2. re-examining our own social and political moral action theories and practices and asking God to show us where we are falling short;
3. repenting of all known sins, confessing and forsaking them, asking forgiveness both of God Himself and of all those who have been offended, and then making all possible restitution;
4. praying for God to fill all of His people with the enabling power of the Holy Spirit in order that we may bring our personal lives and our social and political moral action theories and practice into closer conformity to His revealed will on a permanent and consistent basis;

5. seeking guidance from our brethren and local church authorities as to how we can mutually support and influence one another to make our social and political moral action practices glorifying to God.

Having dealt with our own personal sins and failures, and placing ourselves accountable to the Bible and to the brethren, we now commit ourselves to:

1. influencing any known Christians or Christian associations with whom we work to consider seriously our affirmations and denials with the goal of enlisting their responses;
2. influencing those in the field of social and political moral action who agree with our affirmations and denials to implement these proposals in their work;
3. mobilizing and networking our Christian resources and working in concert with the other professional spheres both inside and outside COR, to see the behavior of the Body of Christ and our nation changed to approximate more closely the view of reality and morality presented to us in the Holy Scriptures.

Specific Actions

To these ends, we commit ourselves to the following specific actions:

1. praying for Christians to live lives of holiness, purity, and social responsibility in obedience to the Bible under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit (Psalm 81:13,14; 85:8,9; 130:5-8);
2. praying for our governmental leaders and those in authority over us (1 Timothy 2:1-4);
3. repenting of our willful ignorance of, and indifference to, and our sinful inaction in response to, the social, political, and moral evils in our society;
4. educating ourselves continually about the social, political, and moral issues in our society;
5. educating our children about these issues in society;
6. sharing information and research with others;
7. taking clear stands against evil in our society and forthright action to overcome those evils;
8. publicizing through printed and electronic media information on current social, political, and moral issues;
9. establishing a national network to share information among Christian leaders on current social, political, and moral issues;
10. establishing a network for national coordinated responses to key social, political, and moral issues;

11. coordinating and facilitating practical grass-roots education and action programs to provide Christians with clear guidance and direction on what to do and how to get involved in such things as:
 - 11.1. running for public office;
 - 11.2. starting or operating a crisis pregnancy center;
 - 11.3. writing to legislators, public officials, newspaper editors;
 - 11.4. seeking public service appointments;
 - 11.5. locating sources of lecturers;
 - 11.6. voting and registration;
 - 11.7. picketing;
 - 11.8. sponsoring Christian programs or films in broadcast media;
 - 11.9. writing editorials and public statements;
 - 11.10. starting Christian and home schools;
 - 11.11. distributing Christian literature to public libraries;
 - 11.12. speaking in public forums.

Actions for Christian Leaders

We call on all Christian leaders to:

1. provide for the continuing education of those in their care regarding the social, political, and moral issues of our time;
2. include, as part of their regular teaching, the application of Biblical truth to the social, political, and moral issues in our culture;
3. provide exemplary leadership in their communities in implementing these Biblical truths.
4. recruit and train men and women from our own congregations to run for public office and send them forth to city halls and state legislatures with an ordination ceremony equivalent to the ordaining and sending forth of a foreign missionary;
5. recognize, encourage, and support those who serve in prophetic ministry — who confront evil and work to disciple nations — nurturing them within and holding them accountable to a local church body.