

Friday, September 30, 2011

NEW ARTICLES Re CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES

I have just posted several new articles on my website from my current research into the question "Was, or is, America a Christian Nation?" Very controversial!!
I have outlined a wealth of material here on many subjects gathered in my search for sources of Principles embodied in this Nation's Founding Documents. Are these Sources Christian or Biblical? An extremely timely and important Subject!

<http://www.reformedliving.org/>

Posted by Cal at 09:55

CHANGE THE WORLD? SAVE THE CITIES? REALITY CHECK!

Change the world! Redeem the Culture! Build the Kingdom! Make a Difference! These slogans are everywhere in Christian magazines and books. Christians Colleges promote themselves as the way to prepare students to achieve these Goals. Nationwide Conferences with celebrity Pastors and Preachers are all over the map promoting this Agenda and seeking to excite young Believers and motivate and equip them for this kind of Ministry. Such Ministry is usually cast in social justice terms, increasing directed toward Cities, with a soft, generic, non-denominational "Gospel". We hear a lot about planting churches in those Cities and these "churches" are often described as intentional, missional communities (rather than our grandparent's type of church). Time Out! Please read the rest of my Essay
[change-the-world-redeem-the-culture-build-the-kingdom-](#)

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 09:49

Thursday, September 29, 2011

NEW DEVOTIONS AVAILABLE

The latest Issue of my Devotional Writing, "Cal's Call", is now available at http://kudospress.com/serendipity/index.php?/pages/library/Cals_Call_September2011.html

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 18:46

RECESSION FORCES REVALUATION FOR YOUNG ADULTS

It seems all the rage right now for churches all across the Nation to sponsor Financial Management Workshops. This is good and it is in response to declining income, growing debt and job insecurity among Christians. Hopefully it will help them sort out their values and lifestyles and make appropriate, long-range changes. Many Christians are as worldly and materialistic as their non-Christian neighbors and need to make such changes anyhow. It is overdue. But what about work itself, education and career planning? What does the Bible teach about these related Topics? Are churches helping young adults, especially, to think Biblically about these Topics, too? The current "Recession" is forcing this issue as much as Financial Planning. "Census: Recession takes big toll on young adults 20-somethings and 30-somethings struggling to find work, shunning long-distance moves to live with mom and dad, delaying marriage and raising kids out of wedlock, if they're becoming parents at all. The unemployment rate for them is the highest since World War II, and they risk living in poverty more than others — nearly 1 in 5. New 2010 census data released Thursday show the wrenching impact of a recession [on young adults] Employment among young adults 16-29 was 55.3 percent, compared with 67.3 percent in 2000; it's the lowest since the end of World War II. Young males who lacked a college degree were most likely to lose jobs due to reduced demand for blue-collar jobs in construction, manufacturing and transportation during the downturn. Among teenagers, employment was less than 30 percent. The employment-to-population ratio for all age groups from 2007-2010 dropped faster than for any similar period since the government began tracking the data in 1948. In the past year, 43 of the 50 largest metropolitan areas continued to post declines in employment: Charlotte, N.C., Jacksonville, Fla., Las Vegas, Phoenix, Los Angeles and Detroit. Each experienced a severe housing bust, budget deficit or meltdown in industries such as banking or manufacturing. Among adults 18-34, the share of long-distance moves across state lines fell last year to roughly 3.2 million people, or 4.4 percent, the lowest level since World War II. For college graduates, who historically are more likely to relocate out of state, long-distance moves dipped to 2.4 percent. Opting to stay put, roughly 5.9 million Americans 25-34 last year lived with their parents, an increase of 25 percent from before the recession." [census-recession-takes-big-toll-on-young-adults](#)

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 09:37

Wednesday, September 28, 2011

WHEN TAXATION BECOMES THEFT

There is a lot of heated discussion these days about Government's involuntary redistribution of private wealth in the name of the common good. It comes under the Topic of Taxation. The Bible has something to say about this. Citizens are to willingly pay taxes to support a government that fulfills its God-given, righteous duties for the common good (See Romans 13:2-6, 1 Peter 2:13-17). However, if a Government arbitrarily seizes a citizen's property (including taxes) against his will for self-aggrandizing purposes (i.e.-in order to make itself more wealthy, larger and more powerful), it has sinned against that citizen and God. Scripture warns that sinning in this way is what Government inevitably shall do unless restrained and limited- See 1 Samuel 8:10-22 [Limited Government is a very fundamental Biblical Principle]. "Thou shalt not steal!" is the negative 8th Commandment (Exo.20:15). The positive converse of this command is "Thou shalt respect ownership!" This Command endorses and under-girds the concept of private property. It is usually taken as a warning to individuals, but the Scripture also applies it to Kings (Government). Again, Government has no right to arbitrarily seize a citizen's property (including taxes) against his will for self-aggrandizing purposes (i.e.-in order to make itself more wealthy, larger and more powerful), That breaks the 8th commandment! A story in the Bible reveals how evil this sin is and how seriously God takes it, judging by the terrible consequences when it happened to Ahab and Jezebel in the story of Naboth's Vineyard that began in 1 Kings 21. It is one of the most violent and gruesome stories in the Bible.1 Now Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. 2 And after this Ahab said to Naboth, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house, and I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its value in money." 3 But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers." 4 And Ahab went into his house vexed and sullen because of what Naboth the Jezreelite had said to him, for he had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and would eat no food. 5 But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, "Why is your spirit so vexed that you eat no food?" 6 And he said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money, or else, if it please you, I will give you another vineyard for it.' And he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'" 7 And Jezebel his wife said to him, "Do you now govern Israel? Arise and eat bread and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite." [and to do that, she had Naboth murdered!]17 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 18 "Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, ... he is in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone to take possession. 19 And you shall say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, "Have you killed and also taken possession?"' And you shall say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: "In the place where dogs licked up the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick your own blood." 20 [Elijah the prophet said to Ahab] because you have sold yourself to do what is evil in the sight of the LORD. 21 Behold, [He] will bring disaster upon you.[And God punished Jezebel, too. The next King, Jehu, ordered his servants to throw her off her balcony] 33 ... So they threw her down; some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses, which trampled on her. 35 ... when they went to bury her, they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. 36 Elijah said, " the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; 37 the corpse of Jezebel shall be like dung ...Kings beware, do not steal from your subjects or God will get very, very angry!!

Posted by Cal in Bible Topics at 20:43

Friday, September 23. 2011

IS CAPITAL PUNISHMENT UNSCRIPTURAL? UNCHRISTIAN?

Many Evangelicals say they are not Theonomists. They believe that Salvation and the Christian life is all about grace and grace alone. To apply the Law of Moses to life situations today would be legalistic, even unchristian. However, in practice we can not help but go to the Law on many subjects, e.g.- Marriage and Abortion. When we do this we are being Theonomists! That is ok! We can and should do that. God never repealed His Law. Jesus himself said this. (Matt 5:17-20) When Paul said Christ is the end of the Law (Rom 10:4) he was teaching we are saved by grace alone, apart from the Law. Absolutely! The Law is not the way to Salvation, but it remains the way God expects people to live their lives! The Commands forbidding stealing, bearing false witness and murder are still in effect. All this is to say that Capital Punishment for murder in the first degree is commanded and sanctioned by the Law of God. Yes, there are terrible faults in our legal system and innocent people have been wrongly sentenced to death (and to other punishments as well). A man admittedly guilty of intentionally killing another man was executed this week in Texas. There were no doubts about his guilt. The system worked. There was another man executed in Georgia this week for murder but there were many doubts about both his trial and guilt. From what I can see, his execution was a miscarriage of Justice- the system not working. He should have been allowed to have another Trial. Such a miscarriage does not justify jettisoning the Law or Capital Punishment itself or the obligation and right of the State to execute it. The latter is not, by definition, "murder". What about mercy? There is a big difference between guilt and punishment. God can forgive the former, but forgiven sinners still must face the consequences of their acts. Being released from guilt is not the same as being released from penalty. What about the value of life? What about it? This question always implies that execution by the State denies that value. No, murder does! Far from denying the value of human life, the most severe penalty possible is given by the State to someone who intentionally takes such a life. This is done specifically in order to teach Society the value of human life and to help preserve it.

Posted by Cal in Bible Topics at 10:18

Wednesday, September 21, 2011

DANCING WITH THE STARS; STEPPING ON PRINCIPLES

When "Gay Marriage" was made legal in 2004 by the Massachusetts Supreme Court (actually by the vote of one Justice) and the earth continued to rotate on its axis, the proponents said "See the world has not changed", "It has not ended." This was supposed to answer opponents to "Gay Marriage" who said the later would have serious negative consequences on traditional Marriage and Society. Well it was silly to use the "see, no change after one day" argument. Such radical change in Society may well take a full generation or 30 years before it is evident. But the Movement to make "Gay Marriage" acceptable and Homosexuality a non-issue is on track to achieve those goals. And the Movement will not stop. The repeal of "Don't ask, Don't tell" in the military this week is just the latest and inevitable step in that direction. The ordination of Gay Clergy and Bishops no less was another. Conservative Family groups had a problem with a trans-gender person on Dancing with the Stars saying it would confuse children; but apparently they have no problem with the gyrating dance moves and revealing costumes of the other dancers. Millions cheered the Emmy's given to the "Modern [and very mixed and dysfunctional] Family" TV sitcom last week. Remember the once shocking "Will & Grace" characters or the offense once caused by the "Ellen Degeneres Show"? Old news now. Conservatives can fume and protest this Movement and these changes- the repeal of DOMA is next- but it is to no avail. It will succeed. The evidence of that is the success of other "radical" changes from Tradition about which Conservatives also fumed but to no avail. In my life time, going on welfare (on the dole) was a disgrace, living together without being married or any sex outside of Marriage was shameful; getting a divorce or having an abortion were both stigmatized; public racial integration and bi-racial Marriage were strongly disapproved, actually illegal. Now all these changes, good or bad, are stale bread normal for most people. It is part of the reality of our contemporary Society which welcomes and celebrates equality of all, diversity and multiculturalism without limits. Many Christians see these as "Christian" values and the opposite as being hateful, bigoted and unloving. On top of all that, throw out absolute or objective morality in favor of moral pluralism and you have the recipe for all this radical social change. Instead of setting the standards, churches have either been apathetic or supportive. The sermon we heard two weeks ago was an impassioned plea that there be no discrimination of any kind in the church. We are to avoid all judgmentalism like a plague and pursue unity and harmony with all. Last week we heard that we are to place mercy toward all who may be different or wayward above justice and "fairness". Radical social changes, for better or worse, happen. The problem is that some changes are better and some are worse and we have lost the moral standards to determine the difference and the moral backbone to stand for what is the better and against what is the worse. It may well take a generation, but we reap what we sow.

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 14:03

Friday, September 16, 2011

"CAL'S CALL"

Each week I write and email 3 personal "QT Thots" [Quiet Time Meditations] to a select list of family and friends. Each week my son, Kevin, selects one, improves it with his editing and formatting, and posts it on his own Blog as "Cal's Call". I think he does a great job and I invite you to check out his work (and mine) at <http://kudospress.com/serendipity/>

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 19:02

WHAT WOULD JESUS DO IF HE HAD A WIFE WITH ALZHEIMERS

"This week on his television show Christian broadcaster Pat Robertson said a man would be morally justified to divorce his wife with Alzheimer's disease in order to marry another woman. The dementia-riddled wife is, Robertson said, "not there" anymore. This is more than an embarrassment. This is more than cruelty. This is a repudiation of the gospel of Jesus Christ."This thought-provoking and very helpful article and the comments that follow explore this situation. <http://www.russellmoore.com/2011/09/15/christ-the-church-and-pat-robertson/>

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 18:58

Thursday, September 15, 2011

REASONS FOR NOT LIVING TOGETHER BEFORE MARRIAGE

Couples who shack up before tying the knot are more likely to get divorced than their counterparts who don't move in together until marriage, a new study suggests. Upwards of 70 percent of U.S. couples are cohabiting these days before marrying, the researchers estimate. The study, published in the February issue of the *Journal of Family Psychology*, indicates that such move-ins might not be wise. Those who moved in with a mate before engagement or marriage reported significantly lower quality marriages and a greater potential for split-ups than other couples. While this research suggests cohabitation in itself can result in lousier marriages, the initial reasons for moving in together could impact the relationship quality. In another study led by Rhoades published in the February issue of the *Journal of Family Issues*, cohabiting couples ranked a list of reasons for cohabitation. More than 60 percent of participants ranked spending more time together as the number-one reason for moving in, followed by nearly 19 percent who put "it made most sense financially" at the top of their list, and 14 percent ranking "I wanted to test out our relationship before marriage" highest. Those who listed "testing" as the primary move-in reason were more likely than others to score high on measures of negative communication, such as, "My partner criticizes or belittles my opinions, feelings, or desires." Such testers also had lower confidence in the quality and stability of their relationships. Overall, those who want to test the commitment might want to think again, according to the February study.

<http://www.livescience.com/5561-prenuptial-cohabiting-spoil-marriage.html>

RECOMMENDED BIBLE STUDY ON THIS SUBJECT -

Biblical faith has always held up marriage as the standard for family life and the foundation of society. From Genesis, where God placed Adam and Eve into a permanent relationship, to the New Testament, where marriage is compared to the relationship of Christ and his church, the Scriptures are redolent with marital imagery, instructions, and encouragement. But as Western culture has strayed from its biblical roots, particularly in recent decades, people have wandered from the biblical ideal and attempted to make their own social arrangements. One of these arrangements, cohabitation, known popularly as "shacking up," has received widespread acceptance. But does it work, either sociologically or morally?

<http://biblestudies.stores.yahoo.net/loandcotrabl.html>

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 10:46

DIMINISHING NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN AMERICA

Children now make up less of America's population than ever before, even with a boost from immigrant families. And when this generation grows up, it will become a shrinking work force that will have to support the nation's expanding elderly population — even as the government strains to cut spending for health care, pensions and much else. The latest 2010 census data show that children of immigrants make up one in four people under 18, and are now the fastest-growing segment of the nation's youth, an indication that both legal and illegal immigrants as well as minority births are lifting the nation's population. Currently, the share of children in the U.S. is 24 percent, falling below the previous low of 26 percent of 1990. The share is projected to slip further, to 23 percent by 2050, even as the percentage of people 65 and older is expected to jump from 13 percent today to roughly 20 percent by 2050 due to the aging of baby boomers and beyond. SOURCE:

-census-share-of-children-in-us-hits-record-low

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 10:27

POVERTY NUMBERS INCREASE IN AMERICA

The ranks of the nation's poor have swelled to a record 46.2 million — nearly 1 in 6 Americans. The figures are in a Census Bureau report, released Tuesday. Measured by total numbers, the 46 million now living in poverty are the most on record dating back to when the census began to track in 1959. The 15.1 percent tied the level of 1993 and was the highest since 1983. The overall poverty rate climbed to 15.1 percent, from 14.3 percent the previous year. For last year, the official poverty level was an annual income of \$22,314 for a family of four. The official poverty level is based on a government calculation that includes only income before tax deductions. It excludes capital gains or accumulated wealth, such as home ownership. The official poverty rate takes into account the effects of some stimulus programs

passed in 2009, such as unemployment benefits, as well as jobs that were created or saved by government spending. It does not factor in noncash government aid such as tax credits and food stamps. Next month, the government will release new supplemental poverty numbers for the first time that will factor in food stamps and tax credits as well as everyday costs such as commuting. Preliminary census estimates show a decline in child poverty based on the new measure but increases in poverty among working-age Americans as well as those 65 and older due to rising out-of-pocket medical costs. Poverty rose among all racial and ethnic groups except Asians. The number of Hispanics in poverty increased from 25.3 percent to 26.6 percent; for blacks it rose from 25.8 percent to 27.4 percent and for Asians it was flat at 12.1 percent. The number of whites in poverty rose from 9.4 percent to 9.9 percent. Child poverty rose from 20.7 percent to 22 percent. Poverty among people 65 and older was statistically unchanged at 9 percent, after hitting a record low of 8.9 percent in 2009. SOURCE: [nearly-1-in-6-americans-in-poverty-census-says](#)

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 10:22

Wednesday, September 14, 2011

EDUCATION AND ITS IMPACT ON LIFE EARNINGS

Education Impacts Work-Life Earnings Five Times More Than Other Demographic Factors, Census Bureau Reports According to a new U.S. Census Bureau study, education levels had more effect on earnings over a 40-year span in the workforce than any other demographic factor, such as gender, race and Hispanic origin. Many factors, such as race and Hispanic origin, gender, citizenship, English-speaking ability and geographic location do influence work-life earnings but none had as much impact as education.

<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/education/cb11-153.html>

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 19:43

NEW GLOBAL KILLERS- It's not Germs or Mosquitos

What's killing us? For decades, global health leaders have focused on diseases that can spread — AIDS, tuberculosis, new flu bugs. They pushed for vaccines, better treatments and other ways to control germs that were only a plane ride away from seeding outbreaks anywhere in the world. Next week, the U.N. General Assembly will hold its first summit on chronic diseases — cancer, diabetes and heart and lung disease. Those account for nearly two-thirds of deaths worldwide, or about 36 million. In the United States, they kill nearly 9 out of 10 people. They have common risk factors, such as smoking and sedentary lifestyles, and many are preventable. This is only the second time the U.N. has taken up a health issue. The previous one in 2001 led to creation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, with billions from governments and private groups such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

[new-global-killers-heart-lung-disease-](#)

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 19:41

Friday, September 9, 2011

GEOGRAPHY AND THE PAST AND FUTURE OF AMERICA

Here is a fascinating map and narrative detailing the history, growth, power and future of America as it is connected and influenced by our National Geography. Our economy, even our politics, are very much about our Land and its resources. We are blessed by the Creator of it all.

<http://app.response.stratfor.com/e/es.aspx?s>

And check out this related series that gives you a wonderful aerial view with narrative of our States

<http://www.smithsonianchannel.com/site/sn/show.do?series=701>

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 11:05

SOCIAL SECURITY IS NOT A PONZI SCHEME, BUT-

<http://www.ssa.gov/history/ponzi.htm>

http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/post/a-primer-on-social-security/2011/09/08/gIQAavYkCK_blog.html

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<http://www.jeffjacoby.com/10235/a-ponzi-scheme-that-not-the-point>

<http://www.jeffjacoby.com/10242/uncle-sam-i-ous-cant-save-social-security>

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 01:00

Thursday, September 8, 2011

REMEMBERING THE AMERICAN HOLOCAUST

If we are supposed to remember "Lessons" from 9-11, there are certainly Lessons from our National Disgrace known here as the Civil War that we should also be remembering. Americans, North and South, slaughtered each other on American soil. America should remember that War every year and mourn and repent the loss of more than 600,000 Americans killed by other Americans in battles and by starvation and disease while in horrible prisons. What unnecessary, insane and evil madness all that was. Will we ever again be at each others throats like that? Remember most of the combatants were professing Christians with, in their minds, a righteous cause. Was that War something God intended to use to bring us back to Himself and our Founding Principles? Why don't we have a Day to remember that War and those who died in it?

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 18:54

HISTORICAL OR HYSTERICAL PERSPECTIVE

A piece of steel girder from one of the Twin Towers came into our City today. The newsreader on TV said it would be part of a Memorial to the only time when our Nation has been invaded by another. And all the newscasts recite the number killed in the attacks of 9-11 with many photos of those who died. Besides the point that we were not invaded by another Nation on 9-11, there were 2976 people killed (not including the Terrorists) and it is important to remember them. Well, the United States mainland was invaded by a Nation in the War of 1812. That would be England! 2,260 Americans were killed in action; 4,505 were wounded; 15,000 (est total.) died from all causes and all Government Buildings and most of Washington DC itself were burned to the ground. Far greater carnage and destruction than 9-11. A good explanation of the War of 1812 can be found [HERE](#) We are told we must never forget what happened on 9-11. How come we do not remember the invasion of 1814? What is the difference? Which did more damage? Here is an eyewitness account of the invasion of Washington-

"the British send a truce party to negotiate with the Americans ...scarcely had the party bearing the flag entered the street, than they were fired upon ... they proceeded, without a moment's delay to burn and destroy everything in the most distant degree connected with government. In this general devastation were included the Senate House, the President's palace, an extensive dockyard and arsenal, barracks for two or three thousand men, several large storehouses filled with naval and military stores, some hundreds of cannon of different descriptions, and nearly twenty thousand stand of small arms. There were also two or three public rope works which shared the same fate, a fine frigate pierced for sixty guns and just ready to be launched, several gun brigs and armed schooners, with a variety of gunboats and small craft. The powder magazines were, of course, set on fire, and exploded with a tremendous crash, throwing down many houses in their vicinity, partly by pieces of the wall striking them, and partly by the concussion of the air whilst quantities of shot, shell, and hand grenades, which could not otherwise be rendered useless, were thrown into the river."While Gleig's regiment was sacking the city, the remainder of the British force marched into the American capital as night approached:"... the blazing of houses, ships, and stores, the report of exploding magazines, and the crash of falling roofs informed them, as they proceeded, of what was going forward. You can conceive nothing finer than the sight which met them as they drew near to the town. The sky was brilliantly illuminated by the different conflagrations, and a dark red light was thrown upon the road, sufficient to permit each man to view distinctly his comrade's face....When the detachment sent out to destroy Mr. Madison's house entered his dining parlor, they found a dinner table spread and covers laid for forty guests. Several kinds of wine, in handsome cut glass decanters, were cooling on the sideboard; plate holders stood by the fireplace, filled with dishes and plates; knives, forks, and spoons were arranged for immediate use; in short, everything was ready for the entertainment of a ceremonious party. Such were the arrangements in the dining room, whilst in the kitchen were others answerable to them in every respect. Spits, loaded with joints of various sorts, turned before the fire; pots, saucepans, and other culinary utensils stood upon the grate; and all the other requisites for an elegant and substantial repast were exactly in a state which indicated that they had been lately and precipitately abandoned. You will readily imagine that these preparations were beheld by a party of hungry soldiers with no indifferent eye. An elegant dinner, even though considerably overdressed, was a luxury to which few of them, at least for some time back, had been accustomed, and which, after the dangers and fatigues of the day, appeared peculiarly inviting. They sat down to it, therefore, not indeed in the most orderly manner, but with countenances which would not have disgraced a party of aldermen at a civic feast, and, having satisfied their appetites with fewer complaints than would have probably escaped their rival gourmands, and partaken pretty freely of the wines, they finished by setting fire

to the house which had so liberally entertained them....Of the Senate house, the President's palace, the barracks, the dockyard, etc., nothing could be seen except heaps of smoking ruins."References: Gleig, George Robert, A History of the Campaigns of the British at Washington and New Orleans (1826), reprinted in Commager, Henry Steele and Allan Nevins The Heritage of America (1939); Lloyd, Alan, The Scorching of Washington (1974); Seale, William The President's House, Vol. I (1986).

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 18:47

COMMON CORE EDUCATION STANDARDS EXPLAINED

New school year- new buzz about reform and Common Core Standards coming to a school near you. The US Constitution says nothing about public education. It does not list Education among the enumerated powers or (responsibilities) of the Federal Government. Therefore it is unconstitutional for it to control public education. The latter is a matter for the States to handle. However, the Federal Government does have a Department of Education which allegedly exists to help the States with their mission of education. The D of E is promoting new Common Core Standards to be followed in every State and school across the Land. Participation by the States is voluntary but only those who do so will receive promised Federal Funding. So far 40 States have "volunteered". Do we really need and want this? Do we really want and need the Federal Government to promote this?<http://www.corestandards.org/>

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 11:55

SCHOOL REFORM: FAILING GRADE

"School 'Reform': A Failing Grade" is an article by Diane Ravitch, whom I respect for her studies on the state of Education in America. Ravitch contrasts Steven Brill's "Class Warfare" with Janet Grossbach Mayer's "As Bad As They Say? Three Decades of Teaching in the Bronx" in The New York Review of Books- books on each side of the current movement to reform public school education."In these two books" she writes, "we have two versions of school reform. One is devised by Wall Street financiers and politicians who believe in rigidly defined numerical goals and return on investment; they blame lazy teachers and self-interested unions when test scores are low. The other draws on the deep experience of a compassionate teacher who finds fault not with teachers, unions, or students, but with a society that refuses to take responsibility for the conditions in which its children live and learn—and who has demonstrated through her own efforts how one dedicated teacher has improved the education of poor young people."Read the entire, provocative article [here](#)

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 11:52

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION REFORM IN 1938

"Twenty years ago Progressive Education was a tiny and, in many eyes, a crackpot movement quarantined in a handful of private schools. Today it covers much more territory. Now predominantly a public-school affair. Progressive Education has strongholds in the suburbs of greater New York. Chicago and Los Angeles, is transforming such major public school systems as those of Denver, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York City, Detroit. No U. S. school has completely escaped its influence.' This is the lead paragraph from an article about public education reform written 73 years ago! <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,883101,00.html>

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 11:45

Tuesday, September 6, 2011

LIBERTY AND FREEDOM IN THE WORLD TODAY

Freedom and Liberty are major Themes in the Bible. They are defines there as either Spiritual freedom from bondage to the Law, sin, death, devil or as Liberty (liberation) from imprisonment, exile, debt, slavery, enemies, oppression. What do these terms mean when we hear them in the daily news?The basic idea of "Freedom" is the ability to act voluntarily; to will or chose as one wishes in the absence of coercion.Perhaps the killing and violence in Lybia is coming to a close. Perhaps the current Ruler of Syria will step down. Perhaps Mubarak in Egypt will be found guilty of corruption and punished. The Western media and most people writing about the "Arab Spring" uprisings have said or hoped all of this is about people (especially discontent young people) who want Freedom such as they think we have in the West. Really? How do we define 'Freedom" or "Liberty"?In our Society, "Freedom" is ideally freedom to pursue our own individual good in our own way while not depriving others of the same freedom. Such freedom in Nations with millions of people requires Government, an "order-keeping" State with authority and power to maintain that Liberty while restraining itself. The ideal State maintains liberty for all but violates the freedom of none. Is such Liberty or Freedom the goal being pursued by the demonstrating masses? Will such a State be the outcome? Our political Tradition includes *representative institutions, *popular sovereignty, *social contract, *elected Rulers, *limited Powers and *Government under Law". These are the principles of Government a free people have in America. Is that kind of Government what the people of Egypt are going to have after Mubarak is gone? what Lybians will have after Gadhafi is gone? Actual, true Personal, Economic and Political Freedom for all Citizens is unknown and impossible in Nations which are controlled by an all-powerful King, Dictator or Regime which, by definition, must deny it (even if they pay lip service to some of these ideals). Such Freedom for all Citizens is also impossible to maintain apart from its Biblical and Christian underpinning. The latter are the true and historical sources of true Liberty and such a Government. Peoples around the Globe who want true Freedom must first have Biblical Christianity. And if our Nation does not guard the Christian Heritage that it does have, it will lose the Freedom that is its fruit!

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 15:49

THE SUCCESSFUL WAR AND THE UNNECESSARY WAR

What has been gained since 9-11? What lessons should we learn? Here is what seems to me to be a knowledgeable, realistic and wise assessment of where we are at and should now be going 10 years later.
<http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20110905-911-and-successful-war?>

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 09:50

Monday, September 5, 2011

WHY DO WE LABOR?

Ecclesiastes 3:22 ... there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work ... Isaiah 2:8 [However, beware worshipping your work] Their land is filled with idols; they bow down to the work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made.

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 09:25

WILL THE WORLD'S WOES EVER CEASE? WHEN?

Struggling Economy, Unemployment, Natural Disasters week after week across the Land. But, in spite of current woes and protestations to the contrary, contemporary younger Christians seem to have an abiding belief in the goodness of human beings and of Government. They have a strong faith that progress for Humanity is possible and will be made to overcome the troubles of the World. This faith and confidence is not based in Scripture. The End Times will be very different.

Those of us who acknowledge the sinfulness of human beings and the reality of Evil who hold on to the hope that current woes will lead people to seek God in their troubles are flying in the face of what the Bible says about human nature. With an occasional exception, tough times and suffering do not normally lead human beings to repent of their sins and turn to God for mercy. It has led many people to call on the Lord for help during their time of trial, but that is not really repenting of sin and seeking salvation of one's soul. At any rate, such people usually lose interest in God after their crisis has passed.

Revelation 16 describes far worse times than what we are seeing now, and yet look how people will respond- v.10 ... People gnawed their tongues in anguish 11 and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores. They did not repent of their deeds. Likewise, v.18 And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. 19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, 20 And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found. 21 And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe. Many things do change and there is relative progress for Humanity in some ways, but History as we know it does not end well. Regardless of any progress made to eliminate world poverty and warfare, Nations will not turn to God. Humanity as a whole will not repent of its sins against the Lord. Read the 18th chapter of Revelation. "Babylon" is world-wide hedonistic, materialistic Civilization. Because that is Idolatrous, it will eventually be destroyed. Read chapter 19 about the Coming of the Rider on the White Horse and the End Times as they shall actually be! The Kingdom of God on earth shall appear only after Christ returns in Glory. Bad News! Good News!

Posted by Cal in Bible Topics at 09:22

Sunday, September 4, 2011

WHAT ARE WE REMEMBERING 9-11?

I do not think any of us will forget what happened on 9-11 ten years ago. But I wonder what the purpose is of the Memorial Services that so many are planning for this week or next Sunday. Are we simply honoring the memory of those who died that day or as a result of that day? Are we honoring those who died as Patriotic Heroes? Those who were killed while at their workplace because of the destruction caused by the airplane crashes are victims not heroes. Those who died or were injured because of their attempts to rescue or help those victims are brave heroes. They all should be remembered, of course!

Are we also going to remember the reason for the destruction that led to the death of these victims and heroes? To do their deaths some justice, to put their suffering and the suffering of their family and friends and the entire Nation into the right perspective, don't we have to acknowledge that the cause was an effort to terrorize and hurt America by radical Muslims? I wonder if we will remember that in the Services this week?

If it is important, as so many say, that we never forget the victims and the heroes of 9-11, it is equally important that we never forget the infamy of those Islamic Terrorists and renew our commitment to whatever it takes to see to it that such infamy by them never happens again. (What will that be?)

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 13:49

Saturday, September 3, 2011

WARNING: GRANDPARENTS SCAM

My wife answered the phone yesterday. The young man calling said he was (one of our grandsons). My wife told him he didn't sound like (our grand son) He replied he had a cold and then went on to say he was in trouble and needed our help. He had been mugged but in the scuffle the mugger fell down and hit his head. Ambulance and police arrived. The mugger accused (our grandson) of assault. The police believed him and took (our grandson) to the Police station. That is where he was calling from, he said. He asked us not to call his parents and to please send him money to get out of jail. We were totally incredulous, but very confused. What? Who? Where? How? 3000 dollars!? He said his lawyer wanted to talk with us. I got on the phone. The man, a different voice, repeated the story and said he could get the charges dropped if we sent the money. He was very serious, very convincing. I said I did not believe what he was saying. No way! And we would never wire money to a stranger anyway. He went into this whole thing about "If you love your grandson, how can you let him sit here in a jail cell, etc." I said my wife and I would need to talk about this. He said he would call back in a half hour but he did not.

We called our real grandson's parents. No, he was not in jail. He was where he lives, miles away and safe. We later read on Google about how common this "Grandparents Scam" is. We were put through a scare and almost got cheated out of 3000 dollars. Thankfully we did not bite. But I write this for the benefit of others who may never have heard of such a thing. From the stories on Google it happens all over the Country. And how did the scumbag get our names and number? Most likely from Facebook! Beware!!

Posted by Cal in Personal Journal at 19:20