

Saturday, November 26. 2011

MOBILITY IS THE KEY, NOT EQUALITY

"What can be done to improve the quality of teachers in failing schools, to confront the high school dropout crisis, to encourage college attendance and completion, to reduce teen pregnancy, to encourage stable marriages, to promote financial literacy, to spark entrepreneurship? Both Democrats and Republicans should have something to contribute to the development of this agenda. Neither party, however, currently has much to say. And this is not likely to change until the discussion turns from equality to mobility."

Read the full article- <http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/economic-inequality-is-the-wrong-issue>

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 16:32

POVERTY CAUSES AND SOLUTIONS

REVISED ESSAY: Biblical Basics about Poverty

If you are serious about helping the Poor, please read the rest of this Essay for the Biblical Solutions to Poverty. Biblical Definition of Poverty: Destitution. In the media and according to self-appointed advocates of the poor, Poverty is living below an arbitrary level of income set by the Government. In our Society today, for most people, that definition defines which people are "Poor". That is not the correct definition of "Poverty" or "the Poor". Christians must define Poverty and Poor the way the Bible does. In the Bible, Poverty is defined as destitution. Causes of true Poverty. The Book tells us there are more than 20 causes of Poverty altogether. 1. The Book of Proverbs says that personal, irresponsible behavior (mostly laziness) is a cause of poverty. This is the cause that conservative Evangelical Christians emphasize, almost exclusively (if you are poor you must be lazy). But this is only one cause of being poor. 2. Using the most common Biblical definition, people in America today are correctly called "poor" if they had property and means, but have lost their livelihood to no fault of their own or are no longer able to work and maintain their property. The Poor today are those who due to no fault of their own, can't pay their bills because of plant closings, fire, accident, death in the family, debilitating illness, enormous medical bills, etc. and, of course, natural disasters like tornadoes. The qualifying phrase, "due to no fault of their own" is crucial to the Biblical definition of the Poor. Continue reading for the Biblical Solutions of Poverty.

http://www.reformedliving.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id

Posted by Cal in Bible Topics at 10:13

Friday, November 25. 2011

DO NOT BUY TO SAVE THE ECONOMY

The lead editorial in our local paper today told its readers to embrace Black Friday. It told us how imperative it is that we shop now and everyday. Why? To save jobs, to save the Economy, to save America as two-thirds of our national Economy depends on consumer spending. This same paper has often berated Americans for not saving their money and piling up credit card debt and for buying houses they can not afford. It often runs articles about low unemployment and how so many people are poor these days. So now it is our patriotic duty to run out and spend even more money and pile up even more debt buying a lot of stuff for Christmas that most people do not need just because they are "on sale". One of the Biblical Principles I live by as a Christians is to be a good steward of my money. I do not, on principle, spend money I do not have for things I can not afford or do not need. I will not go into debt because the Economy needs me to or my newspaper Editor goads me to. Another Biblical Principle is to be content with what I have, with my daily bread (basic necessities). Another warns me to flee from avarice and greed. Still another warns me about being Materialistic and not to give in to the sin of conspicuous consumption (keeping up with the Jones or buying stuff to impress others or to improve my "image". If that ruins the Economy so be it; but actually the truth is the opposite. A root reason for our economic problems is that Americans (including Christians) have ignored these Principles, do not live by them and have given in to these temptations. Listen to the Word of the Lord- Mark 10:17 As Jesus was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 18 Jesus said to him, ...19 You know the commandments: "You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother.'" 20 He said to him, "Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth." 21 Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." 22 When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions. 23 Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" 1 Tim 6:6 ... there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; 7 for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; 8 but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. 9 But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains. 11 But as for you, man of God, shun all this; Matthew 6:19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 24 You cannot serve God and wealth. Luke 12:15 And [Jesus] said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." 16 Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. 17 And he thought to himself, "What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?" 18 Then he said, "I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' 20 But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" 21 So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 19:13

LEFT-OVER TURKEYS

I missed having left-over pie for breakfast today. But here is some left over turkey to chew on from George Will. Funny but very sad-
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/feast-on-these-2011-turkeys/2011/11>

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 18:15

Thursday, November 24, 2011

THE BEGINNING OF THE NATIONAL DAY FOR THANKSGIVING

The Call to a National Day of Thanksgiving [and Repentance and Healing]

During the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln issued this Proclamation declaring a Day of Thanksgiving for our Nation to observe. Prior to this some States (mostly Northern) observed their own Thanksgiving Day. Here are some excerpts I find especially important and relevant now.

"[Mr Lincoln urges us to appreciate the many blessing we have as Americans that have been given us under the] ever watchful providence of Almighty God.[He goes on to say] In the midst of a civil war of unequaled magnitude and severity, ... [The Nation enjoys and is to be thankful for many things which he then enumerated] "No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American People.I do therefore [invite all Americans to observe] a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens ... offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, [and] they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, ... and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union."AMEN

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 09:40

Friday, November 18. 2011

HOLDING OURSELVES MORALLY ACCOUNTABLE

Biblical Christians are well aware that the Bible teaches the human heart is deceitful and the source of the evils we all are capable of. We humans are marvelously made in the image of God and capable therefore of doing marvelous things, but we have this dark side within. Our Society is loath to admit it. Even the most dastardly deeds are blamed on, well, anything else- usually external influences. Our "Progressive" education system for generations has been based on the idea that children are basically good and simply need education to shape and mold them for wholesome, productive lives. Our Puritan ancestors, knowing their Bibles, knew the truth about the sinful nature of human beings. The drafters of our Federal Constitution knew that truth as well. It is the reason they insisted on a limited Government with checks and balances. When I was a social worker many years ago, I sincerely but naively offered this doctrine as partial explanation for the antisocial behavior of a certain teenager at a Team meeting. I was roundly ridiculed and my suggestion rejected outright by the other members of the Team. This attitude has not changed over the years. So I was glad to read this column by a respected journalist who puts forth the doctrine and its corollary of personal responsibility for one's behavior. He writes in response to public reactions to the current scandal at Penn State.<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/15/opinion/brooks-lets-all-feel-superior.html?ref=dauidbrooks>

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 13:20

ENOUGH ALREADY WITH THE OCCUPY MOVEMENT!

OK, we all get it. The demonstrations by the so-called "Occupy Movement" make it clear that there are a lot of mostly young adults unhappy with many things about America. We get it. But beyond that we don't get it. Being against so many different things for no specific reasons and with no specific proposals for solutions of any of them is more than counter-productive. It leads nowhere except to increased frustration for themselves (and for rest of us who, instead of protesting, are working, responsible taxpayers forced to accommodate them) and the inevitable anger and violence that will follow. This is not Democracy in action, this is the chaos of leaderless Mobocracy. It will not lead to reasonable resolution of any of the placarded problems being shouted by these throngs of very misguided, muddled masses.

Parading down streets, blocking the traffic of other people who are going to work, yelling "Jobs, Jobs" for themselves does nothing to create jobs and certainly spending weeks doing that yelling does nothing to secure real jobs for the protestors. (Temporary jobs created by a benighted Government with taxpayer money to quell such beggary is not the solution.)

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 12:06

THE NEED FOR REAL LEADERS

The need for Government and real Leaders is demonstrated by what is happening in India and argued cogently by in this article by Thomas Friedman.

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/16/opinion/whos-the-decider.html?_r=1&ref=thomasfriedman

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 12:04

Thursday, November 17, 2011

NEW DEVOTIONAL ON-LINE NOW

My latest Devotional ("QT Thots") are now available at <http://kudospress.com/serendipity/>
Look for Cal's Call

Cal's Call May 2011
Cal's Call June 2011
Cal's Call July 2011
Cal's Call August 2011
Cal's Call September 2011
Cal's Call October 2011
Cal's Call November 2011

Kudos Press website is full of practical resources for daily living

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 08:02

Wednesday, November 16, 2011

MISSIONS TODAY

If you want to keep up on what is happening in the world of Missions, especially in the Global South, an excellent resource is "Engaging the Adventure". This FB Wall is constantly updated with stories of what is happening today in many countries and among many people groups, especially those most unreached with the Gospel. You will be able to read about all kinds of people and evangelical ministries seeking to share Christ in many ways and marvel at what the Lord is doing through them. I do not know of any other more complete resource on Missions today. Check it out- you will be amazed by the wealth of information you will find there!

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Engaging-the-Adventure/>

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 13:06

Saturday, November 12. 2011

B. Graham Thoughts on Veterans and Sacrifice

From time to time we have had the opportunity to visit veterans' hospitals. After a service, we've gone from bed to bed talking and praying with the patients. Many of these people feel neglected. They have lost limbs, eyesight or health in service to their country. Some have been in the hospital for years and will remain there the rest of their lives. What a price they have paid for all of us. I once talked to a man who had lost a leg in World War II. When I remarked about the price he had paid, he said, "It was worth it, wasn't it?" Let some veterans show you the scars that they have received in battle, and you will realize how much suffering, heartache and blood our freedoms have cost.

Out of this comes a great lesson to Christians. The Apostle Paul said, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" Galatians 6:17, NKJV. In other words, Paul said that he bore in his body the branding marks of a slave. When he called himself a servant of Jesus Christ, he did not mean a paid worker, as the word connotes today. He meant a slave, in utter subjection to the Master. But this subjection is borne out of love and devotion to Christ, and it ultimately brings liberty." – Read more at BGEA: Service and Sacrifice.

<http://adrianwarnock.com/2011/11/billy-graham-quote-for-remembrance-day-veterans-day>

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 09:16

Friday, November 11. 2011

NEW ARTICLES ON WEBSITE

These are new articles in my on-going Series seeking an answer to the Question: Was America ever, and is she now, a Christian Nation?

America's Civil Religion Today

18th Century Civil Religion and the Declaration

Who Really Wrote the Declaration of Independence?

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

Posted by Cal at 01:58

Thursday, November 10, 2011

PROBLEMS FOR THE PERSONHOOD MOVEMENT

I posted on Monday about the "Personhood" referendum being voted on in Mississippi on Tuesday. It would have legally, constitutionally defined an embryo, from the moment of conception, as a legal "Person". The referendum was defeated. Here are two articles from Times magazine that cynically and sarcastically criticize the Personhood Movement. But they cover all the issues and arguments the Movement must deal with. I agree about conception being the beginning of a human being and a human being is an incipient "person". It is the consequences (many of which are unfortunate and unintended) of trying to put this into a practical, workable Law that creates the problems. That attempt must be greatly refined.

<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,2097340-1,00.html>

<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,2097340-2,00.html>

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 13:17

SPORTS SCANDAL- IT IS NOT ONLY ABOUT CHILD RAPE

Of the several articles I have read about the Scandal at Penn State, this one from Sports illustrated seems to cover the main issues well-as evil as the rapes were, the cover-up was too!"The university is much larger than its athletic teams [and in this case, Joe Paterno].""That was the message the board sent loud and clear Wednesday. From the information contained in a grand jury presentment released Saturday, several powerful people at Penn State appeared to worry more about the brand of the football team than about the safety of a child. Other children -- some now young adults -- have come forward claiming abuse since that 2002 incident. If the charges against Sandusky are true, Paterno, McQueary, Spanier, former athletic director Tim Curley and former vice president Gary Schultz enabled a monster because not a single one of them thought [or decided not] to dial 9-1-1. That is [morally] inexcusable [as well as illegal], and it speaks to a need to change the power structure and the culture at Penn State. For too long, the school and the athletic department have felt they didn't need to answer to anyone. Now, the Pennsylvania attorney general's office and the U.S. Department of Education will come in asking questions the administration can't ignore. People will be held accountable. The findings to come could be ugly, but sunshine doesn't only light the darkest recesses. It also helps heal." [emphasis added by me]

http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2011/writers/andy_staples/11/10

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 12:40

Monday, November 7, 2011

LIGHTS OUT

The area we live in was without power this past week. Hundreds of thousands had no electricity, including yours truly, for 7 full and stressful days. Hence I was not able to post. - Cal

Posted by Cal in Personal Journal at 20:25

VOTING ON ABORTION- WHAT IS A "PERSON"?

"Voters in Mississippi will head to the polls Tuesday to vote on a "personhood" amendment that would designate a fertilized egg as a person – a move that would likely have the effect of outlawing abortion and, if you believe opponents, all kinds of other unintended consequences, such as criminalizing abortion and possibly restricting birth control and in-vitro fertilization. It could even criminalize a pregnant cancer patient's chemotherapy, if you believe opponents." the-abortion-rights-powder-keg/2011/11/07/

What do you think? How does a Biblical Christian define a "person"?

A human being comes into existence at the moment of conception. A human being is a person. The Image of God in every human being is what makes us "persons" and gives each of us our infinite value, consists of ways in which we are "like" our Creator. Simply put, we human beings are persons because we have the faculties for reasoning, creativity, morality and communality (living in community with others) and especially, spirituality (living in relationship with God). Although these faculties are only incipient in babies, they are nevertheless real and must be valued, preserved, nurtured and developed. Because we have these God-given faculties, humans have the ability to do marvelous things. But these same wonderful faculties are also radically fractured and limited by sin within from birth (Eph. 2:1-3). The Good News is these faculties, this Image of God within, this person-hood, can be redeemed, restored in Christ and improved by the grace of God and to His Glory. Thus the infinite value of every embryo.

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 20:08