

Tuesday, October 22. 2013

WHY I CAN NOT ENDORSE 'GAY MARRIAGE'

I wrote the post below explaining why Christians can not accept "Gay Marriage". I am not against Gay People or Civil Unions between them- just Gay Marriage. Every wedding I have performed over the years has been as an agent of the State: "By the powers vested in me by the Commonwealth ..." All weddings are civil unions, ie- a contract or legal relationship sanctioned by the Laws of the State. If the State declares that a Gay Couple may enter into such a Contract they may. But according to the Bible, it can not be called a Marriage- only what it is- a Civil Union.

I know and like, admire and even love, some people who are homosexual. I am willing to concede that some of them may have been born that way (although I suspect many have chosen to be Gay for personal reasons). I am not in the least homophobic. I do not hate any one.

But I am an Evangelical. I accept the time-honored, classic or traditional definition of Evangelical. That definition includes honoring the entire 66 Books of the canonical Christian Scripture as the propositional revelation of God, to be read following traditional common sense rules of grammar and literary interpretation.

That means, with all due respect to Tradition and Reason, on any topic I begin and end with what I believe the Bible says that is relevant to it- any Topic, all Topics! That is what a true Evangelical must do.

So no matter how much I respect and value individuals who identify as Gay and no matter how strong the pressure is to endorse homosexual Civil Unions as Marriage (and how much vitriol is directed against those who do not), I can not endorse them for one major reason: I am under the authority of the Bible and God's Word does not allow me to do that.

Rather, I accept all the reasons why God instituted heterosexual Marriage in the first place (Genesis 1-2)

[I sadly observe that the growing acceptance of Gay Marriage by many who call themselves Evangelicals is further evidence that they no longer are. I was greatly encouraged by the New Testament Reading this past Sunday-]

2 Tim 3:14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, 15 and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 15:32

BEING REASONABLE ABOUT "GAY MARRIAGE"

OK Let's think this through. New Jersey is the latest State to legally recognize "Gay Marriage". The very fact that the qualifier "Gay" is used is a clue that we are not talking about Marriage- NJ did not just officially recognize Marriage. It had done that for hundreds of years. It is recognizing something different than Marriage- "Gay Marriage".

Here is the reasoning that requires all Evangelicals not to do what the State of New Jersey has done:

How do you know God created the world and you? The Bible says so.

How do you know God loves you? The Bible says so!

How do you know Jesus died to atone for your sins? The Bible says so.

How do you know that Jesus has saved you. The Bible says so.

How do we know that Marriage is only for a man and a woman? The Bible says so. Gen. 2:18-24

How do we know that a follower of Jesus should believe Marriage is only for a man and a woman? Jesus says so. Matt.19:4-6

If we accept #1-4, than we must accept #5-6. It is not reasonable to accept what the Bible says about Salvation and reject what it say about Marriage. If it is not trustworthy and not the authority on the subject of Marriage, then it is not trustworthy or authoritative on the subject of Salvation or anything else we believe. We can not have our cake and eat it too.

[Historical Evangelicals, by definition, accept the Bible, as the verbally inspired Word of God read and interpreted in a common sense historical-grammatical way. As such, it is their First and Final Authority in all matters of faith and practice.]

Posted by Cal in Bible Topics at 10:28

Friday, October 18. 2013

SLAVERY TODAY- 30 million people

Nearly 30 million people live in slavery worldwide, with most of them in Asia and Africa, according to a report released Thursday. The report incorporates factors that include the traditional definition of slavery — owning another person — as well as things such as child marriage and human trafficking.

Here are the highlights of the report:

India, China, Pakistan, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Russia, Thailand, Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar and Bangladesh together account for more than three-quarters of the total estimate.

The West African nation of Mauritania tops the list. It has the highest estimated proportion of enslaved people in the world. The report says there are between 140,000 and 160,000 people enslaved in Mauritania. That's out of a population of just 3.8 million.

India has the most slaves (between 13.3 million and 14.7 million people), followed by China (2.8 million to 3.1 million) and Pakistan (2 million to 2.2 million).

Iceland, Ireland and the U.K. have the fewest slaves. (They rank 160 on the index.) The U.S. is ranked 134 (with between 57,000 and 63,000 people considered enslaved).

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/parallels/2013/10/17/236212198/india-china-top-list-of-nations-with-most-slaves>

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 10:13

SUFFERING FOR CHRIST? COUNTING MARTYRS

<http://blog.beliefnet.com/news/2013/09/syria-in-flames-is-this-how-to-defend-our-faith.php>

http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2013/september/counting-cost-accurately.html?utm_source=ctdirect-html&utm_medium=Newsletter&utm_term=11430839&utm_content=202094450&utm_campaign=2013

Posted by Cal in Church at 10:00

Wednesday, October 16, 2013

THE "NEW AMERICAN CENTER"

"At the center of national sentiment there's no longer a chasm but a common ground where a diverse and growing majority - 51 percent [!] - is bound by a surprising set of shared ideas."

"Just because Washington is polarized doesn't mean America is," says Robert Blizzard, a partner at Public Opinion Strategies, the lead pollster for Mitt Romney in 2012. His firm co-created the survey with the Benenson Strategy Group, pollsters for President Obama, and the result is a nation in eight distinct segments: two on the far right ("The Righteous Right" and "The Talk Radio Heads"), two on the far left ("The Bleeding Hearts" and "The Gospel Left"), and four in the middle that represent nothing less than a new American center ("Minivan Moderates," "The MBA Middle," "The Pick-up Populists, and "The #WhateverMan.").

<http://www.nbcnews.com/id/53277240#introl> knew when I wrote recently about the causes of our divided Nation that I was over simplifying; but the conclusion drawn by the above Poll reveals (to the pollsters) that Americans are divided into "eight distinct segments" does not change what I wrote. I still believe the main divide between Americans is fundamentally between two major ideologies and the persistent pursuit of self-interest by individuals and groups.

The Segments were determined by demographic factors and positions taken by those who participated in the poll on specific social, religious, economic and political issues. Of course, the data gathered (and the labels given) were subject to the interpretations (and values) of the Pollsters and especially their major conclusion that the Country is actually not divided, but has a "new American Center". For the record, the pollsters put me into what they call, "The Righteous Right" segment. I am not in the Center.

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 13:16

Saturday, October 12, 2013

MOST POST-CHRISTIAN CITIES IN AMERICA

Which City has the most Christians? Which has the least? Check out the latest fascinating Surveys of Believers, Churches, Unbelievers and non-church goers (including their politics) in all the States and Regions of the Country <http://cities.barna.org/the-most-post-christian-cities-in-america/>

Posted by Cal in Church at 16:39

Wednesday, October 9, 2013

WRESTLING WITH SPIRITUAL FORCES OF EVIL

Ephesians 6:12 we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

What or who is Paul writing about? What is the connection between these "spiritual powers" and current events. I have put an extensive study about spiritual warfare on my website. Very appropriate for Halloween, Zombies and the grid-lock in Washington

http://www.reformedliving.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=174:qspiritual-powersq-an-extensive-bible-study&catid=71:special-topics&Itemid=59

Posted by Cal in Bible Topics at 10:10

SCALIA AND SATAN

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/gleanings/2013/october/antonin-scalia-c-s-lewis-devil-screw-tape-supreme-court.html?>

Posted by Cal in Bible Topics at 10:07

Monday, October 7, 2013

GRAVITY

Good Review of a stellar movie you can get lost in!!
<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2013/october-web-only/gravity.html?>

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 14:02

DISTURBING STORIES

If you missed 60 Minutes last night. check out the three featured stories/videos they presented. All Important. One is very disturbing, another very inspiring and touching and the other very informative.
http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-504803_162-57606236-10391709/what-happens-when-the-u.s-disability-fund-runs-dry/

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 13:53

Friday, October 4, 2013

FOUR TYPES OF CONSERVATIVES

In the post below this one, I mention Conservatives and Libertarians. This article identifies 4 major divisions among "Conservatives" and postulates that we are all held together only by a common, strong dislike of Liberalism and if it were to disappear, Conservatives would break apart and fight each other!
<http://www.libertylawsite.org/2012/08/04/four-heads-and-one-heart/>

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 20:38

Wednesday, October 2, 2013

WHO IS TO BLAME? WE ALL ARE

Our daily newspaper's lead editorial today and all but one of the columnists damn Republicans in no uncertain terms for the dead lock in Congress- and the Shut-down. It is totally our fault. I respectfully disagree- the President, the Senate and the House all are responsible for the morass and impasse. But so is the public. We elected all these politicians. Most of us probably cast our votes based on two major factors:

1. Ideology: Generally, those who voted Democrat believe people are basically good and when they go wrong or have a hard time in life, it is primarily the result of external circumstances and environment. The major solution to their problems is, then, to change the circumstances and environment. Beginning with late 19th Century- early 20th Century Progressive era, but kicking into high gear with the New Deal in the 30s and and ramped up big time with the War on Poverty and Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, and continuing through this Day, many people have become persuaded that the primary responsibility for making the external changes that improve people's lives falls to the Government. And now, after some 80 plus years of indoctrination about this, they demand that help and depend on it. Hence, among other rights and benefits, they believe the government is responsible for Universal, Gov't mandated and controlled, Health care. Whatever specific issues are being debated, underlying them all is this deeply grounded Ideology.

Conservatives and Libertarians (maybe the other half of all Americans) take the opposite point of view about the purpose of Government. Hence, We the People, are divided and have deadlock. The real struggle is a conflict over Ideology, not only Obamacare.

2. Dependence: Many dumped on Mr Romney for saying, during his run for the Presidency, that 47% of Americans depend on the Federal Government. Whether the percent is accurate or not, millions of us do indeed depend on some form of Government aid. There are tax deductions, exemptions, exceptions and credits. Everyone knows there is much pork in the Budget with all kinds of subsidies, welfare and stimulus monies coming to a town near us. There are entitlements that no one is willing to give up. And now, Health care for everyone, much of it to be paid for by the Government.

If we are truly serious about cutting expenditures or balancing the Federal Budget, all of these things have got to be on the Table. But we who elected our President, Senators and Representatives do not seem to be serious about doing any that. We are as stubborn as the Politicians. They do in fact represent us, including our selfishness or the pursuit of self interest at any expense. Want real change? Change the ideology and give up the dependency. The worst enemy of our Nation is us. Neither side can win- both must be willing to compromise and do it!

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 20:03