

PENINSULA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Reclaiming Our Culture *Reclaiming God's Church* *Reclaiming Our Lives for Christ*

Many see & lament the degradation of our culture...

- And mistakenly think politics is the means of reclaiming it

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The first century church **changed the known world...**

- They didn't use politics to do it

Which is more powerful?

- Changing **public policy**? Or...
- Changing **hearts & minds**?

The Apostle Paul spoke with Kings & Governors

- But he didn't talk about public policy
- He talked about **the life changing power of Christ Jesus!**

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Paul discarded his lofty human influence for Christ

Philippians 3:7-8,

"Whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of **the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord**, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them **garbage**, that I may gain Christ"

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Our public policies declare many things to be lawful

- Sexual sins, drug abuse & the killing of innocents included
- Yet, we don't participate in them. **Why?**

- **Our hearts & minds know they are evil**

I Corinthians 6:12,

"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful (Beneficial). All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any."

Public laws don't define right & wrong, good & evil

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So, **what defines our lives...** yours & mine?

- What influence do we hope to bring to our culture?
- What governs our life's purposes?

Edmund Burke said, "Those who will not govern themselves, require that others govern over them."

What do we most hope to change?

- **Public policy, or hearts & minds?**

Because **what we are, is what we bring**

- And what **we do, is what we are**
- Good theology by Bill Parcells, "You're exactly what your record says you are."

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We are not responsible for every church expression out there

- We are responsible **for this one**
- **Peninsula Christian Fellowship**

Who we are, is the only influence we have...

- On other churches we have relationship with (1 Cor. 12)
- On the culture we are planted in (Matt. 13:33)

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 Like Paul, our influence isn't supposed to be Christ, **plus anything!**

- We will either be the influence of **who Christ is** (Acts 1:8)
- Or be influenced by whatever we add to Him
- **ONLY the church, His Body, is eternal!**

Romans 12:1-2,

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. **Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.** Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will."

- **What we believe** determines what we do...
- **What we do** defines who we are...
- **How we live** is our evidence of who God is

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Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

So... **Who is He, and where do we start?**

He said, "Follow Me", "Do as I do", "Love like I love."

He said, "You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am."

Let's start **where He started teaching** us all...

- **His very first instruction** for how we are to live in God's blessing

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Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the **poor in spirit,** for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Pride is at the heart of all sin

"**I will**" preceded the first sin ever, interestingly, in heaven.

Jesus said, "**Not as I will, but as You will.**"

He also said, "Peace to you! **As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.**"

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 Self-direction **separates from God.**

Surrender, in submission and obedience to Christ...

- Brings the transformation of our lives
- And His influence **among us & through us**

Chuck quoted Leonard Ravenhill yesterday,

"Are the things you are living for, worth Christ dying for?"

That's a good question to take with us today