



The Two Americas: The Undeniable Realities

by Jeffrey Breshears

With the election of Donald Trump last November, America is more polarized than at any time in our history since the Civil War. Of course the same would be true had Hillary Clinton won the election, except that we would not have witnessed such hysterical overreactions by media, academic and Hollywood elites nor all the ensuing street riots and civil disorder for the simple reason that only the left engages in such tactics. Also, conservatives don't have radical multi-billionaire puppet-masters such as George Soros orchestrating chaos from behind the scenes. But otherwise, America would be just as divided as it currently is. As unsettling as it may be, the unfortunate but undeniable reality is that there are essentially two incompatible cultures currently cohabitating in America.

Several years ago I wrote an article, "The Culture War and the Two Americas: The Undeniable Realities," in which I noted that the idea of a culture war is not a popular topic. On a wide range of issues from sexual morality and the sanctity of life to the rule of law and the proper role of government, Americans are fundamentally divided. But many people, including many Christian leaders, deny that an intractable culture war exists. This is somewhat understandable since we would all like to think the best of others, including those with whom we disagree.

As Christians we naturally assume that it is more Christlike to function as a peacemaker than a culture warrior, or as a bridge-builder rather than a wall-builder. But the harsh reality is that not everyone shares a common value system, a similar vision, or a compatible moral code. There are, unfortunately, Two Americas whose values and goals are irreconcilable, and in such situations in which truth and morality are at stake, peacemaking is attainable neither through compromise nor capitulation.

True peace is achievable only when aggressive evil is contained, and considering the pervasive nature of evil in our society, the failure to confront it is cowardly and irresponsible. For Christians, our moral responsibilities extend beyond merely ourselves, our own family, and perhaps our own church. We are members of a larger social community, and we simply cannot ignore the larger cultural issues swirling around us. When the culture is toxic, it pollutes everything (and everyone) in it.

From point of fact, the culture war is real whether we prefer to acknowledge it or not. Furthermore, it is nothing new. It was present at the outset of American history, and from the beginning there has been an ongoing struggle between those who envisioned America as a potential New Jerusalem versus those who wished to create a New Babylon. The former were mostly conscientious Christians who held many beliefs, especially regarding personal morality and family values, similar to cultural conservatives

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The Areopagus Calendar

Winter/Spring Seminars

The Reformation Era, Part 1

The origins, the legacy, and the major people, issues and events associated with one of the most significant and influential periods in Christian history.

Tuesdays

7:00 PM

Perimeter Church / Fellowship Hall

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Wednesdays

7:00 PM

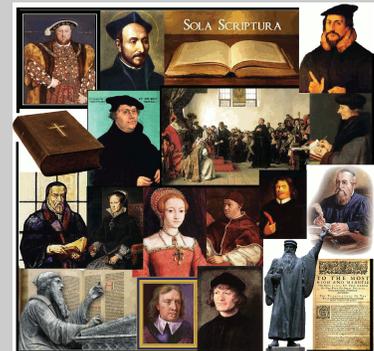
Johnson Ferry Baptist Church / Room 108

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Sundays

11:15 AM

Johnson Ferry Baptist Church / Room 270



The Reformation History Tour

SEPTEMBER 15-28, 2017

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today. The latter was an eclectic assortment of socio/political non-conformists, hedonists, and militant individualists whose attitudes and sensibilities were shaped less by biblical principles than by the secular values of their day. Over the past several decades this mentality has best been characterized by the kind of “libertarian socialism” advocated by the Neo-Marxist philosopher Herbert Marcuse.

To be sure, there has been a lack of charity and tolerance on both sides of the cultural divide – mostly by traditionalists in the beginning but more recently by the secular left as they’ve gained the ascendancy – but for the most part the two sides have lived in a state of peaceful coexistence despite the tensions underlying their contrasting values and beliefs. But since the 1960s the fissure separating the two has widened into a gaping chasm to the point that it’s now clear that what is at stake is a clash between two fundamentally irreconcilable worldviews.

As the culture war has intensified, the main difference between now and earlier in history is that the dam has broken and the flood of secularism has inundated much of the American landscape. Whereas these forces were mostly contained in the past, they now dominate most of our major public institutions. To borrow a phrase from Karl Marx, cultural liberals now control the “commanding heights” of the culture – those key sectors of our society that most influence our educational, political and legal systems just as they dominate the media, popular culture, and many of our religious institutions.

Many Christians are uncomfortable with the idea of a culture war. As Christians, we sincerely desire to live in peace with all people as much as possible, just as we earnestly aspire to be as tolerant and accepting of others as possible. Furthermore, there is an almost

unavoidable spirit of self-righteous judgmentalism that accompanies the whole culture war concept that is most insidious and unappealing. There is always the temptation to assume that God is on our side instead of continually questioning our thoughts, our motives and our actions to discern whether or not we are in fact on God’s side.

But idealism doesn’t alter reality, and the truth is that a culture war exists whether we prefer to acknowledge it or not. In fact, it is because so many Christians have been so reluctant to recognize it and so fearful to engage it that we find ourselves in our current predicament. We are losing the culture war not because the Christian faith has nothing to offer to modern man, but because we have essentially forfeited the war to our opponents. As a result, we see the consequences in a culture that is rapidly decaying and disintegrating all around us.

Naturally, we would like to see Americans put aside petty partisanship, transcend their ideological differences, and unite in the cause of justice, morality and civility for the sake of all. We would like to see the Two Americas fuse into one. But unfortunately, this is unrealistic because the differences that divide us are neither superficial nor simply stylistic or tactical. In substance, the division is between those who believe in absolute truth and universal moral laws versus those who think everything is relative and subjective. As radio talk show host Dennis Prager has noted, “America will be united only when one [of these worldviews] prevails over the other.” Many cultural liberals seem to understand this, but many cultural conservatives, including far too many Christians, apparently do not.

(Note: To read the full text of the article, “The Culture War and the Two Americas,” go to <http://www.theareopagus.org/blog/category/articles/>)

The Areopagus Calendar

Winter Forums

**Moses and the Exodus:
History or Myth?
Has New Evidence Surfaced That
Confirms the Biblical Narrative?**

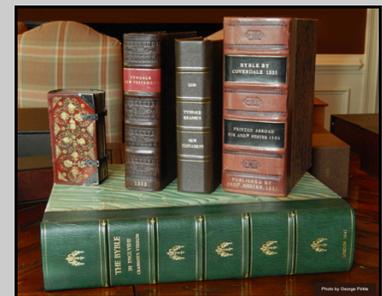


A presentation by
Jennifer Breedon
Legal Advisor and Media Analyst for
The Clarion Project

Thursday, March 23rd
7:30 PM
Perimeter Church / Fellowship Hall

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**The Bibles That Inspired
The Reformation:
What Every Christian Should
Know About the Origins and
Development of the English Bible**



A presentation by
Charles Payette
Bible historian and Founder of the
ReformationSociety.org

Thursday, April 20th
7:30 PM
Perimeter Church / Fellowship Hall