

Equipping The Saints

"...For the equipping of the saints for the work of service..." ~ Ephesians 4:12

February 28, 2016

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How to Impact Society Without Casting a Vote (By Andrew Dow)

America is in the middle of a heated election cycle. With the ability to elect our government officials, we have an opportunity to influence the direction of our country by means of our vote. Many Christians are rightfully worried about our country's increasing acceptance of homosexual behavior, careless attitude toward the permanence of marriage, and overwhelming desire to murder pre-born children among other moral issues. Our society is not the first to abandon morality and, should the Lord allow the world to continue, it will not be the last. How can Christians impact their society in a positive way?

First, be a Christian. Christians will never impact the culture around them if they do not first live like Christ. If we're no different than the world, why do we expect the world to change? Does the abortion rate trouble you? Stop treating children as burdens to be overcome. Does the divorce rate bother you? Model your marriage after Christ and the church. Are you tired of homosexual hype? Work to master your own temptations. Christians are to be like God (Matt. 5:48), not like the world (Rom. 12:2). If you want to change society, first change yourself!

Second, raise your children. One reason for the moral decline of our society is that many Christians happily let society

raise their children. Lest I'm misunderstood, public education is not the problem; the problem is Christians allowing any person, group, or organization to become their children's primary influence. Parents, it is your obligation to teach and influence your children (Deut. 6:6-9; Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4). If you let the world raise your kids, don't gasp when your kids act like the world!

Finally, share the gospel. Paul said, **“The gospel... is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes”** (Rom. 1:16, NASB). Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1-4) is the only means of salvation and true change (John 14:6; 1 Cor. 6:9-11). Giving lost souls the gospel caused the world to be turned upside-down (Acts 17:6, NKJV). It will have the same effect today if you will only have the boldness to share it!

My intention here is not to discourage voting in this year's elections. However, as citizens of God's Kingdom (cf. Phil. 3:20), there are things we can do to impact our society far more than filling out a ballot. If we live the gospel in our lives, instill the gospel in our children, and share the gospel with the lost, the world will be positively impacted for Christ.

Love & Acceptance (By Andrew Dow)

God loves you. He cherishes you like an artist cherishes his prized creation (Col. 3:16). He desires a relationship with you like parents long for a relationship with their child (Acts 17:26-29). He waits for you at the finish line like a coach encourages an athlete under his guidance (Heb. 12:1-2). God loves you so much that He came to earth and died the cruelest imaginable death so that we could have the hope of eternal life (John 3:16; Rom. 5:6-8). Make no mistake about it: God loves you.

However, let us never come to believe that God's love for us means that he unconditionally accepts our actions. The God who loves you is the same God who flooded the world (Gen. 6-9), plagued the Egyptians (Exo. 7-12), and sent Israel into captivity (2 Chron. 36:10) in order to punish wickedness. The God who loves you is the same God who taught strict moral conduct (Matt. 5:20-48) and warned of coming judgment (Matt. 25:31-46). God desires all men to be saved (1 Tim. 2:3-4; 2 Pet. 3:9), but God will not save all men!

Even though an artist cherishes his artwork, he will not display it if it has been covered with permanent marker. Even though parents long for a relationship with their child, at times they must punish that child. Even though a coach anticipates victory, he must still encourage growth. God is the same way. God loves you, but that does not mean He will accept a lifestyle contrary to His Word! **“Therefore, beloved... be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless”** (2 Pet. 3:14).

9 Ways To Be Evangelistic Without Being The Teacher

(By Berry Kercheville)

9. Can You Devote Yourself to Prayer? Now who can't do this? Sure, everyone can pray, but not everyone will labor diligently in prayer, especially prayer for those we are teaching and those who are in spiritual need in the church. Add to this, a simple card sent to a new soul at appropriate times that just says, *“I'm praying for you because you are important to God and to me.”* It is the Lord who is directing the work of saving souls. Paul often prayed and encouraged others to pray for open doors and for the gospel to spread (Col. 4:2-3; 2 Thess. 3:1). If evangelism

is going to be successful, we need Christians on our team who will *devote* themselves to prayer (Acts 2:42). Further, it should not just be a few individuals who are praying for the lost, the whole church needs to set aside regular times for this kind of praying.

I hope you can see that evangelism is far more than just being the one who teaches. No one can take on the whole conversion process. We need every Christian involved. This is how **“the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love”** (Eph. 4:16).

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Note: Scripture clearly demands that we all be involved in teaching lost souls the gospel (Matt. 28:19-20). People today (as always) are in serious need of the gospel (Rom. 3:23). With upwards of 70,000 people in Conroe, there is not a lack of work to be done! I hope that the suggestions offered here over the last several weeks help you recognize that there is much you can do to win souls to Christ! ~ABDow

Notes:

AM Lesson:

Restoring God's Masterpiece

PM Lesson:

If I Love Jesus...

“Go therefore and make disciples...” (Matthew 28:19-20)