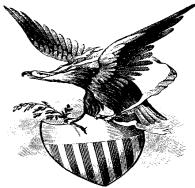


Light Brings Salt

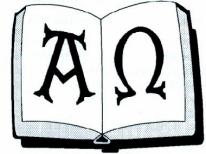
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Iron Range Bible Church

Dedicated to the *Systematic Exposition of the Word of God*
"Sanctify them in the truth: Your word is truth."



Values and Moral Truth are Not the Same

Dr. Albert Mohler

No discussion of our national ills is complete without some mention of slippery "values" in the public square. Indeed, though talk of moral absolutes is portrayed as outdated and simplistic, the debate concerning national values has never been more heated.

The late Allan Bloom, whose 1987 book *The Closing of the American Mind* became a runaway bestseller, wrote perceptively that the contemporary talk of "values" is what is left when society accepts the notion that there is no genuine right or wrong. Moral issues are reduced to matters of personal preference and conviction. My "values" may not match your "values," but we all must respect each other's convictions equally in matters of common concern.

The situation prompted one observer to comment that when he hears talk of "values," he reaches for his nearest discount catalogue. It is about as useful as anything else if all moral absolutes are discarded.

The postmodern philosophers have undermined the very concept of morality, arguing that all moral systems are merely relics of the repressive past, put in place by oppressive forces. Since all truth--including moral claims--is socially constructed, postmodern humans are free to "deconstruct" these moral codes and find "values" within.

The loss of the nation's moral center has been long in coming. The late Fredrick Moore Vinson, a former Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, declared before 1950 that "Nothing is more certain

in modern society than the principle that there are no absolutes." Coming from one who was then America's foremost jurist, the statement was a dark prophecy of things to come.

No thinking person can ignore the massive and seemingly insoluble moral debates that plague our society and frame national debate. When the most basic issues of life, sexuality, family, marriage, and moral responsibility are up for grabs, the nation has reached a testing point of unprecedented proportions. Given the confusion, only the most radical relativist can celebrate our current state of moral affairs.

The shift from morals to values in the church is a sign of the Christian abdication of moral leadership. When the church joins in the affirmation that all moral issues are matters of purely individual concern, the salt has lost its savor. The reduction of morality to values was a hallmark of the 1980s, when progressivist educators pushed this agenda in the public schools. Throughout the educational world, "values clarification" exercises became the order of the day, with children and teenagers encouraged to invent their own individualistic systems of morality and to "develop" their own values. Since these are individually determined, no one can be right and no one can be wrong.

That generation of young people is now well into adulthood, and we can see the moral damage inflicted by those who instructed students to look only within themselves for a system of values, and to doubt or defy traditional morality. Values reflect only a subjective dimension with no objective moral truth. A generation raised in the incubator of moral relativism is groping for enduring truth in the moral wilderness.

Current News Note

Democratic Presidential candidate B. Hussein Obama's remarks about Americans being bitter and clinging to their beliefs regarding religion, guns, anti-free trade and anti-immigration have been characterized as "out of touch", "condescending", "patronizing," and "elitist." While all these may well be true, Obama's remarks encapsulate his political philosophy which are against the Constitution of the United States and are steeped in Marxism and communism. Obama said of small town Pennsylvania voters: "Its not surprising then that they get bitter, they cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren't like them or anti-immigrant sentiment or anti-trade sentiment as a way to explain their frustrations."

Let's break this down. Obama is saying that when economic times are rough middle class Americans get bitter and cling to guns or religion. The First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees religious freedom. The Second Amendment guarantees the right to bear arms. Further, he says these bitter middle class Americans have "antipathy" against people who are not like them. One definition of antipathy is "an instinctive contrariety". American just might have an instinctive contrariety to the government not protecting the borders of the United States. And they may just have an anti-trade sentiment because the government is not protecting America's job base. These are Constitutional national security issues.

In Obama's book "Dreams from my Father", Obama writes of his mentor "Frank." Frank has been identified as Frank Marshall Davis, an active member of the communist party in Hawaii who helped shape the young Obama's political views. Accuracy in Media (AIM) reports that Obama, himself, likens the intimate influence of Frank Marshall Davis on his life as that of a father. AIM writes that Frank Chapman, a Communist Party USA supporter, wrote of Obama to the party newspaper after Obama's Iowa caucus victory: "Obama's victory was more than a progressive move; it was a dialectical leap ushering in a qualitatively new era of struggle.'

The communist Chapman continued about Obama, "Marx once compared revolutionary struggle with the work of the mole, who sometimes burrows so far beneath the ground that he leaves no trace of his movement on the surface. This (Obama) is the old revolutionary

'mole,' not only showing his traces on the surface but also breaking through." Communism and Islamism are the antithesis of Judaism and Christianity. The Apostle Paul warned of such in the latter days in 2 Timothy 3:13, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." Can one man or one woman destroy the covenant of a nation with God? Deceived Americans rush to discover.

Wisdom in Hiding

1 Corinthians 2:7

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

You don't have to watch a drama very long, or read too far into a book, before you find what is hidden being revealed. The Bible often talks about truths that are hidden because of unbelief.

A scientist was recently studying insect-eating birds in an oak tree that was in bloom. He was surrounded by male flowers called catkins. Suddenly, one of the catkins began walking away. The surprise that he had discovered was a species of caterpillar that feeds on catkins, and ends up looking just like a catkin even having fake pollen sacks. In this way, it escapes the notice of feeding birds.

The scientist then found that the members of this caterpillar species that hatch in early spring and feed on catkins end up looking like catkins. But members of the same species that hatch later and feed in oak trees end up looking like oak twigs. This observation was a complete surprise because it means that it is the caterpillars' diet that causes the difference in appearance.

When things are hidden, reality is always different than we expect. While the Gospel is clear, Scripture often mentions that unbelief causes the clear to be hidden to the unbeliever. It is helpful for us to understand this as we see the popularity of belief in evolution and a world without God.