

Dead pulpits are greatly facilitating a dying nation

Upon hearing about the deaths of King Saul and his son (and David's best friend) Jonathan, David lamented, "How are the mighty fallen!" (II Samuel 1:19) It is my opinion that David's lamentation could be spoken regarding the death of the American pulpit.

For all intents and purposes, and for the most part, the American pulpit IS dead. It has been replaced with corporate CEOs, carnival barkers, entertainers, motivational speakers, denominational hacks, and groveling statisticians. The Holy Scripture identifies them another way: as hirelings, ear-ticklers, and wolves in sheep's clothing.

Where once the American pulpit was noted as being "ablaze with righteousness" (Alexis De Tocqueville), it is now most famous for being awash in rigor mortis. America's colonial pastors must be turning over in their graves.

America's colonial pastors were the fire and inspiration for America's break from the tyranny of the British Crown. Patriot preachers such as John Witherspoon, John Leland, Jonathan Mayhew, Isaac Backus, Samuel Cooper, Ebenezer Baldwin, James Caldwell, John Peter Muhlenberg, and Jonas Clark were as important to the success of the American Revolution as were the patriots Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Sam Adams, Dr. Joseph Warren, John Hancock, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and Richard Henry Lee.

Listen to how John Adams delineated the duty of America's pastors: "It is the duty of the clergy to accommodate their discourses to the times, to preach against such sins as are most prevalent, and recommend such virtues as are most wanted. For example, if exorbitant ambition and venality are

predominant, ought they not to warn their hearers against those vices? If public spirit is much wanted, should they not inculcate this great virtue? If the rights and duties of Christian magistrates and subjects are disputed, should they not explain them, show their nature, ends, limitations, and restrictions, how much soever it may move the gall of Massachusettsis?"

Note again: "If the rights and duties of Christian magistrates and subjects are disputed, should they not explain them, show their nature, ends, limitations, and restrictions . . . ?"

It is the DUTY of pastors to "explain," "show their nature, ends, limitations and restrictions" regarding civil government, all the while paying no attention to the anger it may create in the hearts of some.

The vast majority of pastors today will shirk their duty by saying something like, "I'm only called to preach the Gospel." That is pure POPPYCOCK, and they know it. While the Gospel is the cornerstone of the Bible, if you take away all of the scriptures that do not specifically refer to the Gospel, you will have a VERY SMALL Bible.

The Bible is a book of science; a book of history; a book of mathematics; a workbook for families; a book of business and economics; a book of geography; a book of archeology; a book of soldiering; and a book of GOVERNMENT. To ignore what the Bible teaches on all of these subjects is to make the vast majority of the scriptures completely irrelevant. And that is exactly what the modern pulpit is doing: it is making the Bible completely irrelevant—especially to the affairs of government.

And while many secularists will accuse politically involved pastors ("conservative" pastors, of course—they don't mind "liberal" clergymen getting involved in politics whatsoever) of trying to create a "theocracy," they need to be reminded

that the religious and secularist communities of colonial America fought side-by-side for America's independence. The reason they could do this was because, for the most part, both groups understood the Natural Law principles of liberty that are common to ALL men.

Listen to John Adams again. This time to what he said on the floor of the Continental Congress as he passionately appealed to his fellow delegates to approve a Declaration of Independence from Great Britain. This is the same speech in which he famously said, "Sir, before God, I believe the hour is come. My judgement approves this measure, and my whole heart is in it. All that I have, and all that I am, and all that I hope, in this life, I am now ready here to stake upon it; and I leave off as I begun, that live or die, survive or perish, I am for the declaration. It is my living sentiment, and by the blessing of God it shall be my dying sentiment, independence now and independence forever."

Adams' speech, perhaps more than any other, convinced delegates to vote in support of our Declaration of Independence. Without a doubt, it is one of the most important speeches in American history—perhaps second only to Patrick Henry's immortal "Give Me Liberty, Or Give Me Death" speech. Here is one paragraph from that speech by John Adams:

"If we fail, it can be no worse for us. But we shall not fail. The cause will raise up armies; the cause will create navies. The people—the people, if we are true to them, will carry us, and will carry themselves, gloriously, through this struggle. I care not how fickle other people have been found. I know the people of these colonies, and I know that resistance to British aggression is deep and settled in their hearts, and cannot be eradicated. Every colony, indeed, has expressed its willingness to follow, if we but take the lead. Sir, the declaration will inspire the people with increased courage. Instead of a long and bloody war for the restoration of privileges, for redress of grievances, for chartered

immunities, held under a British King, set before them the glorious object of entire independence, and it will breathe into them anew the breath of life.

Read this declaration at the head of the army; every sword will be drawn from its scabbard, and the solemn vow uttered, to maintain it, or to perish on the bed of honor. Publish it from the pulpit; religion will approve it, and the love of religious liberty will cling round it, resolved to stand with it, or fall with it. Send it to the public halls; proclaim it there; let them hear it who heard the first roar of the enemy's cannon, let them see it who saw their brothers and their sons fall on the field of Bunker Hill, and in the streets of Lexington and Concord, and the very walls will cry out in its support."

Notice he said, "Publish it from the pulpit; religion will approve it, and the love of religious liberty will cling round it, resolved to stand with it, or fall with it."

And for the "love of religious liberty" and possessing the "resolve to stand with it, or fall with it," the preachers of colonial America sounded forth the clarion call of liberty from pulpits throughout New England just as Adams said they would.

For example, listen to the message that Jonas Clark (who was the pastor of the men who stood on Lexington Green and fired the shot heard round the world that began America's War for Independence) delivered on April 19, 1776, the first anniversary of that epic day. I delivered that famous message word-for-word to my folks at Liberty Fellowship in Kalispell, Montana. Listen to how this courageous pastor applied the Biblical and Natural Law principles to the events on Lexington Green and to America's war for separation from the British Crown. (As far as I know, this video presentation is one of a kind. I know of no other such word-for-word reenactment of Pastor Clark's thrilling message to be in existence.)

Order my verbatim reenactment of that message – Jonas Clark's Message

It was these kinds of sermons with which the colonial pastors of New England filled their churches. Compare these messages to the fluff and ear-tickling claptrap that fills our churches today.

The Biblical Natural Law principles of liberty and government have not been explained, expounded or extrapolated to any significant degree since the dawn of the 20th Century. If one wants to study the teachings of church leaders relative to these issues, one would have to read the scholars and commentators who lived during the Nineteenth Century or earlier. The study of Natural Law is as dead to modern pastors as the study of Guli Guli.

But Natural Law is taught throughout the scriptures. In truth, if one does not have at least a rudimentary knowledge of Natural Law, he or she cannot really comprehend Revealed Law (the Holy Scriptures). Natural Law is nothing more than God's creative revelation of Himself to man. These principles not only make for good government, but also make for a sane, civilized society. The rejection and repudiation of the Creator's Natural Laws by America's pulpits paved the way for the rejection and repudiation of the Redeemer's Revealed Law. Pastors have no one to blame but themselves for America's descent into unbelief and lawlessness.

The Natural Law principles endowed us at creation UNITE us around fundamental governing principles that are as immutable as the laws of physics, biogenesis, thermodynamics, etc. It matters not that we are believers or unbelievers, black or white, rich or poor, conservative or liberal, Democrat or Republican. Natural Law teaches all of us the principles of good government, lawful authority, justifiable resistance, individual liberty, etc. Take away our Creator's Natural Laws and we are left with every man doing what is right in his own

eyes, which is exactly what America—including Christian America—is doing today. When men have no understanding of Natural Law and, therefore, feel no obligation to obey the Natural Law written in their hearts, they are less likely to understand, much less obey, the Revealed Law written on paper.

Readers should know that I have a DVD containing four messages on the subject of Natural Law. Of course, these four messages only serve to provide a most basic understanding of Natural Law principles, but at least it is a beginning. I dare say that most Christians have sat in churches all of their lives and NEVER heard a message remotely resembling the truths and principles contained in these messages.

The titles of the messages contained on this DVD are:

- 1- Biblical Evidence For Natural Law
- 2- Christ's Law Of The Sword
- 3- The Law Of Necessity
- 4- Liberty In Law

The name of the DVD is "Natural Law And Liberty" and may be ordered here.

I thoroughly believe that these messages will help pulpit and pew alike to awaken to an entirely new vista of Biblical understanding. Once a person is aware of Natural Law, the Bible will literally come alive with fresh understanding and insight, especially in the areas of liberty, government, and law. These messages will also help unbelievers to comprehend the Natural Law principles of liberty that unite all of us, regardless of our faith or lack thereof.

As David lamented the deaths of King Saul and Jonathan, so should we lament the death of the American pulpit. But we should do more than that. If we cannot successfully awaken our pastors to their duty, we should find and support pastors who properly understand their duty and who are willing to faithfully discharge it, because dead pulpits are greatly

facilitating a dying nation.

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