

# Christian Coalition of Washington

July 2006

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## What exactly are we modeling?

*A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross.* --H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Kingdom of God in America*, 1937

Dear Friends:

Relatively speaking, times are good in China. Observers believe the underlying cause of much social, political, and economic restructuring behind the Great Wall is the same as that in the United States—the Church. The explosive growth of the Sino church is making impractical, the practice of rounding up religious dissidents—Christians who attend unregistered home churches. Communist officials are reluctant as well to quarrel with thousands of business, industry, and high-tech moguls who are serving the King-of-kings—openly. Especially since the execs are key to a rapidly rising economy.

The West is also experiencing a realignment of its social, political and economic institutions. But unlike China, America's twin pillars of religion and morality are turning to sand in the wake of declining Christian influence in the culture. Although corporate America is enjoying a wildly prosperous ride, it seems to be in spite of the Church, not because of it. That does not mean corporate heads are not paying public homage to their god.

While Chinese CEO's preach Christ to their employees and conduct Bible studies on company time (*World magazine*, 6/24/06), more than half of all Fortune 500 companies are preaching the religion of sexual liberation. On June 30, leaders of *Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays* (PFLAG) were invited to ring the closing bell at the New York Stock Exchange in observance of "Gay and Lesbian Pride Month."

Undermining previous assertions of an underprivileged class, Jody Huckaby, a spokesman for PFLAG, claims that the collective purchasing power of American homosexuals, bisexuals, and transgender individuals is currently \$641 billion and growing.<sup>1</sup>

Another shot over the Church bow is Warren Buffett's announced plan to gift some \$37 billion of his fortune to the world's largest charitable organization, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. For years, Buffett, the world's second richest man, has channeled much of his charitable giving to reproductive health, family planning, and pro-choice causes, including funding for research and clinical trials leading to RU-486—the morning-after abortifacient. His legacy will be perpetuated by Bill and Melinda who have contributed some \$12.5 billion to Planned Parenthood since 1998, including funds to persuade teens to support abortion.

Interestingly, some born-again Chinese CEO's are privately concerned that an Enron-like crash could occur following the 2008 Olympics because China's "foundation" is weak, and they fear God's judgment against China for its emphasis on abortion and other evils.

Corporate America suffers no such fear of the Lord.

Numerous surveys conducted by George Barna Research suggest that America's churches are unable to deal with the social, cultural, and political issues of our day.

Barna believes that the spiritual walk of Christian individuals has been retarded by their frequent, if unconscious, support of philosophies and activities contradictory to the Christian perspective. In a survey completed this Spring, he reports that “among those who say their faith has ‘greatly transformed’ their life, just one out of four positioned their faith practices and pursuits as their highest life priority. It certainly seems,” concludes Barna, “that millions of Americans are fooling themselves into thinking that they have found the appropriate balance between God and lifestyle.”<sup>2</sup>

David F. Wells of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary notes other troubling signs. In his new book, *Above All Earthly Powers*, Wells addresses what he calls a church movement engaged in niche marketing. In his view, spiritual entertainment is being offered to “seekers” in search of a vaguely spiritual uplift. He is particularly bothered by the view that ecclesiastical architecture is offensive and that religious symbols such as crosses should be removed from churches. Wells says, “This is probably the first time...that churchgoers have wanted their buildings to be mistaken for corporate headquarters or country clubs.”<sup>3</sup>

Although progressives may cherish UNITY above truth, many evangelicals opt for [p]eace rather than victory. Unpleasant issues are often dismissed as “political” or “divisive.” The late pastor and teacher, Dr. Adrian Rogers, was criticized for social activism. “Sounds like you’re trying to mix politics and religion.” This was his response: “Let me tell you something about the church. The church is not the master of the state, nor is the church the servant of the state. The church is the conscience of the state. We need to speak up and say what God’s Word says...Satan’s strategy is to keep good people silent in evil times.”<sup>4</sup>

In their collaborative work, *Watchmen on the Walls*,<sup>5</sup> Bruce Anderson, Stephen McDowell, and Rev. Mark Beliles remind readers that Mosaic Law has not been swept away. They point to Jesus who taught considerably more about public affairs (social issues) than is commonly believed by many; that He quoted more from the book of Deuteronomy than any other book of the Bible. The authors suggest it would be telling to see what a typical pastor’s Bible would look like—based on what he preaches. Would it be skinny, including only select books, pages, or topics?

More than a dozen years ago, many of us wanted to do something about the serious breach between Church and State. As a result, a Christian-based coalition was formed to “educate and activate Christians for social, political, and spiritual action.” It was our intention to submit to, and work with, as many church leaders as possible, especially those with “skinny” Bibles. To that end, our faithful financial supporters have gladly provided voter guides and Christian education materials free of cost to countless individuals and churches across the state. If we have not held back a flood of evil, we have certainly impeded its advance. But we want to do better.

Many church leaders in China have only two or three years of Christian experience. Hardly time to develop a consistent Christian worldview. Our Asian brothers and sisters are said to be desperately in need of discipleship. A small group leader in a house church told *World*, “We are such young Christians. We look up to the U.S. for living examples of how to lead Christian lives.”

The concern is, when they look to us what do they see? What exactly are we modeling?

Sincerely,

Rick Forcier  
Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> CNSNews.com, 6/30/2006

<sup>2</sup> *The Barna Update, Americans Reveal Their Top Priority*, March 14, 2006

<sup>3</sup> *First Things*, the Journal of Religion, Culture, and Public Life, May, 2006, pg. 64

<sup>4</sup> Adrian Rogers, “Will God Impeach America?”

<sup>5</sup> *Watchmen, Pastors Equipping Christians For Their Civil Duties*, 1995, The Providence Foundation, Charlottesville, VA, pg. 7, 21