

We all have the power to change things. Very few have the courage.

CENTRALIZATION is prone to evil; and urbanization is inherently evil (Gen 4.17; 11.4-8). Why? Because each of these tends toward anonymity and lack of accountability for bad actors. To put it another way, centralization and urbanization are the soil in which tyranny most readily grows. Therefore, extensive protections must be put in place to prevent it.

LIBERTY briefly exists between Anarchy and Tyranny, because liberty requires the least government to avoid anarchy. As government inexorably increases, liberty decreases until tyranny reigns. And tyranny will end only at the cost of anarchy. It's a cycle, not a pendulum.

LIBERTY is inefficient and insecure. We must therefore choose between efficiency and liberty, and between security and liberty. Each step toward either efficiency or security in a society, is a step away from individual liberty in that same society.

LIBERTY is rare, fragile, and short-lived because it requires personal responsibility. Most are willing to give up liberty, in order to avoid responsibility.

Politics is about community governance. Because we are citizens in a democracy, Christians in America are entitled to participate extensively in the political process. This can cause conflict with fellow-citizens, and will often produce backlash on the Church.

For the record, America is *not* a Christian nation; it was never *intended* to be a Christian nation; and theologically speaking, it *cannot* be a Christian nation. Nations cannot place their faith in Jesus Christ unto salvation; only individuals can do that. But America *has* been a nation of Christians; and that has helped to influence America's politics, culture, laws, and education, often for the better. Even so, the presence of Christians cannot make a nation "Christian."

The late James Montgomery Boice wrote that Augustine (in *City of God*) "distinguished between two entirely different societies: the city of man, which is characterized by self-love, and the City of God, composed of those who love God and want to serve him. The city of man will *never* be God's city. It has a different origin, progresses along a separate path, and is moving to a radically different end. Yet those who are members of God's city are nevertheless in the world and need to conduct themselves as a renewing force within it." That's what Christians did in America for nearly two centuries; they were its salt and light. But our light is now dim, and our salt isn't as salty...

How can I say that? Well, consider the evidence:

A moral people will not tolerate immoral leadership; and an immoral people will not tolerate moral leadership. Thus *we always have the government we deserve*. If we have immoral leaders, then we have become an immoral or an indifferent people; and Christianity will become increasingly intolerable. And that's what we're seeing.

On the Federalist Papers:

During the formation of the United States government, and preceding the adoption of its Constitution, a series of letters were sent by three men in support of the proposed Constitution to the editors of a number of prominent newspapers, from October of 1787 to April of 1788. These men were John Jay, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton. The

composite of what they wrote is arguably the finest treatise ever written on political philosophy. It reflects the heart and soul of the American system of government, and the intent of its founders. Forty-six of the letters advocate a strong central government under which certain rights were reserved to the states – this shared system of state and federal control, emphasizing central control, is called federalism; and its adherents were known as federalists. Hence, the collective title of these papers. To encourage a fair reading on the merits of the case presented, they each signed their letter “Publius.”

In our current era, the Executive branch is striving to reassert its independence. It wants to be acknowledged as a "separate but equal" federal branch, rather than being a mere agent of the Legislative Branch; it has begun to act autonomously. Meanwhile, many in the Judicial branch apparently believe they've been kept on a short leash far too long. They have therefore chosen to exercise legislative powers which the Founders never intended, and to overrule the Executive Branch on policy issues. The Founders understood that the federal Judiciary would be tempted to abuse its power because it is unelected, and therefore unaccountable. The Constitution thus restricts the Judicial domain to judging the laws and their enforcement against a strictly constructed Constitution. The NSA lawsuit of 2006 reflects this ongoing "struggle for power and control" between the three branches that I described in the 1970s. *But the Leviathan grows only because the American people have been convinced that government is somehow a force for good rather than a necessary evil.* I believe our Founders would be appalled at the thought.