

## What is the real end game in politics?

I need to be honest. God has provoked me to think about just how God-centered my thinking about politics has been. I am thinking it has not been.

That may sound surprising, because probably friend and foe alike knew my policy views were grounded in what I will call “Biblical values.” But, for the sake of killing legislation I thought morally bad or passing legislation I thought morally good, I tried to leave God out of the legislative arguments. In light of our culture, it seemed that bringing God into the argument at any point just created hassles and objections that made the desired disposition of the legislation that much harder.

This was what I have taken some to mean by “principled persuasion,” even if that is not what they meant. I thought this was what the Apostle Paul did on Mars Hill when he used things the people generally knew, even quoting their own poets, to reason with them.

This is a good approach, but an approach to what? To what end is this approach directed?

As I have considered more fully and carefully the story of Paul on Mars Hill found in Acts 17, the Apostle’s end was to not leave those on Mars Hill in ignorance as to *why* what he said about this “big” or “transcendent” over-everything God was true. The end game was to point them to a true knowledge of the true God, what they had held “in ignorance.”

Knowing God *is* the “end game” of Christianity. Knowing God is eternal life. Knowing God is to know the glory of God. Knowing the glory of God is to see that we live only for the sake of glory of God and realizing that apart from our union with Christ we can never measure up to such a calling.

But this knowing must be externalized and directed to the only purpose that is worthy of God and does not “fall short of” His glory (Romans 3:23), namely, manifesting the “glory of the *knowledge* of God” (2 Corinthians 4:6). Not to do this is to repudiate one of the very reasons we were made in the image of God for part of what is entailed in that image is an exercise of authority in relation to the rest of creation and its further development (Genesis 1:28), recognizing, of course, it is a delegated authority and circumscribed by God for use only to His glory,

It seems to me that the end game in much of modern evangelicalism is not God but the individual person. It may be about escaping Hell to get a Heaven of pleasure (like Islam minus the 72 virgins). It may be about getting whatever will help a person cope with [name something]. It is about me, me, and me. God and salvation become strictly for the sake of the individual, not God.

And in much of conservative evangelicalism, it seems to be about “saving souls,” not the whole person, body, mind, *and* soul, a form of Christian Platonism that is fully compatible with the transgender worldview in which what is in the person’s head (a me-centered “spiritual” or psychic reality) does not need to correspond to the body. The *real* me has nothing to do with my body, and the Scripture warns us against such dualistic thinking.

Similarly, I have for too long considered the end game of politics to be the disposition of legislation in accord with a Biblical moral value. Such a result is good, but is there anything in which a Christian engages for which the end game should not be coming to know God better in the process (the process of sanctification) *and* pointing others to the knowledge of God (bearing witness)?

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Which of these two end games might be of most interest to God—a particular legislative outcome or a relational knowledge of God?

I do not think the answer has to be either/or because it is just possible that if legislation is addressed with the knowledge of God as the end of the process (what we say as we advocate) *and* the end of the legislation (its final disposition), then the knowledge of God in society and legislative outcomes will begin to coincide, if not immediately, then over time.

In fact, history shows that to be the case *and*, though a minority view today, I believe God will be faithful to the goal set by Himself for His Creation in Genesis 1. God never has a Plan B. The basis for the Gospel is not laid in Genesis 3:15, but in Genesis 1 and 2. Genesis 3:15 is not Plan B, but the means by which Plan A is to be brought about.

I further ask myself these questions:

Is removing or at least obscuring the “God factor” in my advocacy for a desired legislative end a form of manipulation?

Is reliance on a “principled persuasion” that says God must remain hidden a denial of the power of God to achieve whatever *His* purposes may have been by the legislation’s presentment *and* the exaltation of worldly wisdom. Why add, at the end “Oh, I believe in God,” when I have just convinced others God is not necessary?

Am I assuming that God’s purpose must be a disposition of the legislation that accords with Biblical moral values? But is this not perhaps grounded on a legalistic spirit that makes right moral values the end and purpose of Christ’s advent, life, death, resurrection, and ascension rather than the knowledge of the glory of God?

This is not to say that I no longer believe that civil law educates and influences. I still believe that there is a quantum of law reflecting a particular worldview that will influence the direction of the social order, even if many are not Christian. *And that is why Creator based societies with their Creator based views of law have to be overthrown by those who do not know God.*

In our country, it has been overthrown predominately by the U.S. Supreme Court, which, in turn, changed the nature and purpose of education, which, in turn, changed the people being educated. Then those “re-educated” persons took over the levers of political government. That is where we now are.

Then again, maybe the Supreme Court was able to jettison the Creator, because of the grief and scorn heaped upon “fundamental” Christians after the Scopes trial and our inability or unwillingness to respond intelligently. Did dualism become our escape from the world and did that produce the whirlwind we have inherited?

Finally, I ask: Should we expect to see any change in a social order that has moved away from God and moving further away every day by hiding God under our bushels? I think not.