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PROCLAIMING CHRIST AND HIS GOSPEL OF LIBERTY

Election Solutions: The Bottom Line



“A people without a heritage are easily persuaded.”

Karl Marx

As we face a pivotal election this fall, it is crucial for our future as a free people that we elect leaders who understand the key to America’s greatness: our Judeo-Christian common law tradition. More than 95% of people throughout history have been enslaved under tyrants’ law and have lived in misery, poverty and at the whim of an elite. We in the American tradition have been blessed with the only alternative to the tyrannical rulers’ law system. Tyrants’ law now governs Russia, China and much of the world today. America’s prosperity and entire societal structure and legal system were founded upon Scripture, as applied in our colonial charters, as summarized in the Magna Carta and as compiled in the Common Law of England in the 9th Century.

Most Christians today know that the earliest believers worked to evangelize the world in the centuries after Christ. But many people are unaware that early believers also developed and promoted God’s Law as the only foundation for a civilization, including civil government. These biblical foundations were especially cherished by the Celtic Christians in England, Scotland and Ireland from the 4th century. The common man enjoyed self-government and happiness as never before.

“Alfred the Great integrated the Law of God into the Common Law of England, which was imbedded in America’s Constitution.”

But by the 9th century, the supposed “Christian” kings of England had compromised the self-governing, liberating Christianity built upon obedience to God’s law. By 877 A.D. all of these kings with their petty fiefdoms had been killed or captured by the marauding, blood-thirsty Viking armies of King Guthrum. His chief god was Oden, the god of war. It seemed that England was destined to be overrun. Even London fell to the invaders.

One small Christian army with their young King Alfred stood against the brutal invaders. Alfred made a treaty of peace with Guthrum. But on Christmas Eve, Guthrum used the cover of the treaty to lead a surprise attack upon Alfred as he was celebrating the holiday. (Surprise attacks and broken treaties are to be expected by nations under tyrants’ law, whether then or now. Russia’s recent invasion of Georgia and the 9/11 terrorist attacks are modern examples.)

That Christmas night it appeared that the hopes of a Christian civilization, with a biblically based legal system, were dashed forever. The last Christian army was killed or scattered. King Alfred escaped into a swamp with about 200 of his bodyguards, and was presumed dead. But the young Alfred rose up a volunteer force from throughout his lands. By May of 878, he won a decisive victory against Guthrum and his Viking horde. The future of the world was transformed that day, not only because brutal paganism was turned back, but

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because Alfred created a thoroughly Christian civilization and government.

Alfred was as merciful in victory as he was fierce in defending his homeland. He offered to let the Vikings stay in England if they would convert to Christianity. Guthrum and his leaders agreed. Alfred baptized them and trained them in the doctrines of the faith. Then he sent them back to rule in northern England. Alfred’s boldness in battle and graciousness in victory was blessed of God. His descendants ruled England for over a century and confirmed that England would become a beacon of Christian faith. The story of King Alfred gives us great hope and answers for today. He did more than win battles. He and his people humbled themselves before God and His Word and laid the foundation for our blessed civilization as we know it.

King Alfred was the embodiment of Christian chivalry and knighthood. He protected his nation, the innocent and cherished one woman forever. He married a nobleman’s daughter and loved her and her alone throughout his life. They were blessed with six children. Until Alfred, marital fidelity was virtually unheard of among rulers. During his reign, the English boasted that “a beautiful woman could walk from one side of their Island to the other with a basket of gold on her head and her babe in her arms and never fear.”

The Vikings had burned the libraries down, but Alfred set up schools so his people could understand God’s plan for their lives and for their nation. Alfred spent eight hours a day reading and writing. He translated large sections of Scripture and classic Christian works, like those of Augustine. He knew that a biblical view of history was vital for his people. He translated the Christian history of England by the Venerable Bede so that his people would know how their Island became Christian. Alfred gave one-half of his wealth to create Christian schools. He spent an additional eight hours a day humbly ruling England. He also commanded and fought in 54 battles, designed ships,

created the English Navy and became the Father of English literature. Alfred’s greatest accomplishment was the establishment of the Law of God as the Common Law of England. He enhanced and codified the common law tradition that was begun by earlier Christian kings. Alfred’s law code begins with his translation of the Ten Commandments - verbatim. He then includes other passages from the Law of Moses (Exodus 21:1-23:19,) describing the clear application of the law to their society. It is followed by an excerpt from Christ’s Sermon of the Mount, and a brief account of apostolic history and the growth of Christian law among the Christian nations. This common law tradition is imbedded in and spoken of in our Constitution and stands in stark contrast to the tyrannical rulers’ law that, even today, dominates much of the world.

Alfred gave us the key for making this pattern of liberty work for us today. He said “Local government ought to be synonymous with local Christian virtue; otherwise it becomes local tyranny, local corruption and local iniquity.” He knew that the strength of England was in the people at the local level. He developed local counties and sheriffs based on the decentralization of power as taught by Moses. These local authorities were given more power than the national parliament. If our national leaders are out of control, it is a sure sign that we have failed in our local responsibilities in our counties, cities and homes.

As we exercise the sacred responsibility of electing “civil ministers” or magistrates, we must choose representatives who share our Christian common law heritage, rather than the enslaving rulers’ law under the guise of a caring, “loving” state. If Alfred can build a Christian civilization surrounded by pagan enemies, certainly we can work to restore the most blessed and biblical civilization in the history of human kind.

Marshall Foster

This is the second in a series on the essential documents of liberty that we believe every American Christian should know.



9th Century Vikings attacked England.

“Surprise attacks and broken treaties are common under tyrants’ law - like Russia’s recent invasion of Georgia.”



Founded in 1976, the Mayflower Institute is dedicated to proclaiming Christ’s Gospel of liberty to the world, and provides seminars, tours and educational resources to prepare Christians to biblically and historically defend the faith in all areas of culture.

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MAYFLOWER INSTITUTE
P.O. Box 4673
Thousand Oaks, CA 91359
866.566.1620
805.529.7747 (fax)
www.mayflowerinstitute.com