



Written by [Kelly Holt](#) on October 7, 2020

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Christians Called to Politics

Acknowledging that Christians are losing the culture war, The Liberty Pastors Training Camp met to teach pastors how to fight back.

“What part of your life is Jesus Christ not the Lord over?”

So opened the Liberty Pastors Training Camp (LPTC) conference on August 29. Paul Blair, senior pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Edmond, Oklahoma, delivered the above in opening statements at the three-day event in Grapevine, a Dallas suburb. Blair’s commentary signaled the direction of the conference: His comments, and those of other leaders and scholars, called specifically on pastors to talk about politics in their preaching. Three hundred and fifty attendees from various Christian traditions heard the message that the Bible includes instruction for our political lives, and that includes action from the pulpit — and that political involvement is a legitimate and biblical role for Christians, especially in light of America’s teetering position.

“We hope to shore up an area we’re not taught in seminary, the area of biblical worldview,” Blair continued. “Jesus *is* supposed to be Lord of *all* of our lives, not just Sunday morning.”

Many attendees were admittedly disheartened at the obvious truth that the church is losing the culture war. Social-media addiction, government schools, media bias, riots, lawlessness, and a fake COVID emergency have people’s attention most of the week; churches get an hour. If any pastor pays any attention, he’s aghast at happenings in the streets.

Clergy know they’re losing ground, but what are they to do?

LPTC training goes aggressively to the heart of the problem. But pastors have to first understand it, and acquire the tools to combat it. Jack Hibbs, pastor of Calvary Chapel in Chino Hills, California described his particular form of pushback.

After Hibbs and a few other California pastors re-opened their churches after the initial COVID shutdown order, Governor Gavin Newsom doubled down on churches, issuing a second shutdown order. Hibbs refused to shutter the doors, then joined several churches in suing the governor.

Hibbs told LPTC pastors via video, “No pastor, nor government has the authority to shut the doors of a church. It’s not your church, but God’s.” He added: “And Acts 5 calls us to obey God rather than man!”



Pastors for Liberty: Paul Blair, senior pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Edmond, Oklahoma, delivers opening remarks on the first day of Liberty Pastors Training Camp in Grapevine, Texas.

(Photo: TheNewAmerican)



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Walk the Walk

The message throughout the training was that God has a plan for civil government, and intends for Christians to get involved. As Blair said in his opening message, “Christians are to start thinking like Christians if they’re to start acting like Christians. God is either the Lord of *all* of your life, or of *none* of it. He has a plan for the whole of our lives — including civil government. Yet the American church has adopted a modern form of Gnosticism — acting as if what we do in the material world doesn’t matter, as long as our hearts are pure.”

One speaker at LPTC put it this way, “When the church vacates governance, who takes over?” Duh — non-Christians.

Religious discussions about politics always end up with discussions about Romans 13. Conference speakers addressed the oft-misinterpreted text, which calls Christians to “be subject to the governing authorities.” A critical study reveals that that doesn’t mean blind obedience.

Dan Fisher, co-pastor at Paul Blair’s church in Edmond, Oklahoma, chimed in about that. The text of Romans 13 tells us government is designed by God to act as His minister for good, to execute wrath on evildoers, and protect those who do good, but not to be blindly obeyed.

“How then shall believers proceed when government goes awry?”

Fisher continued, “Logic demands government isn’t then entitled to obedience. The previous chapter calls Christians to live peaceably with others, when possible. But pastors can’t hide behind a false understanding of Romans 13. They are to simply obey God rather than man.” Since American government has denied God’s law, it’s up to clergy to steer the course to biblical governance.

And, Fisher concluded, “Since God created government, it’s inconceivable to think He’d want Christians to stay out of it!”

Speaking of the dire need for pastors to engage, one *cannot* ignore the impact of abortion, and Christians’ failure to end it. To understand why abortion is still here requires another article, but it’s fair to ask the question: If so many Christians and elected officials claim to be pro-life, why is legal abortion still here?

Pastor Scott Lively of Springfield, Massachusetts, and president of Abiding Truth Ministries, answered this at LPTC with a darker accusation: “Abortion is about the breakdown of the family ... it’s simply a by-product of the sexual revolution driven by Marxists.” And the church caved — mainly because pastors failed to get their parishioners on board.



Good turnout: Over 350 attendees, mostly pastors, gain tools and knowledge in learning how to apply biblical instruction to the practice of civil government. (Photo: *TheNewAmerican*)



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Blair recounted a pastor-backed effort in Oklahoma in 2016, which invoked the 10th Amendment to end abortion in that state. At the last minute, with the bill on the governor's desk, a signature away from becoming law, pastors who'd supported it failed to show up, and the governor folded. After all, Satan always seeks to destroy that which God creates — that's what he does. And he's after America.

Blair's analysis concluded the effort failed because Oklahoma pastors who'd signed a petition in support of the bill hadn't even mentioned it from their pulpits, so there was no outpouring of support to push the governor to sign it. What could have happened if righteousness had been as organized and intentional as the enemy is? Our heritage is going, going, gone unless pastors learn their heritage and how to use basic civics.

To illustrate that heritage, Fisher explained the Black Robes, an informal band of Colonial pastors, and their monumental role in leading the American War for Independence. Fisher's authentic reenactment of a talk by 18th-century pastor Peter Muhlenberg revealed these pastors understood that civil and religious liberty are inextricably linked, and were willing to fight for it. They often led soldiers into battle to defend liberty, and this was a critical lesson for conference attendees.

The pastors were advised to remember that the Democratic Party is the party of abortion. There's only one choice here for Christians.

Another area where pastors are failing to speak biblical truth is in the area of homosexuality — which God dubs a sin, or an offense to God.

Stephen Broden, pastor of Fair Park Bible Fellowship in Dallas, addressed that very thing at LPTC. "The Equality Act, if passed will change Christianity forever, and it's happening while we're sheltering in place! Where's the outrage over socialism, the sexualization of children, transgenderism, child trafficking, and the destruction of the family! We can expect pedophilia to be the next thing to be accepted!"

The Equality Act, passed by the House in 2019 and now sitting in the Senate, is an egregious attack on religious liberty. If passed, it will amend the Civil Rights Act in such a way that it could force churches to hire homosexuals or be in violation of civil law, and make calling homosexuality a sin "hate speech."

Nearly every LPTC speaker recognized these attacks on the church as a result of the advance of Marxism in America, and that it drives apathy in the American church.

While many Christians, including pastors, see socialism/Marxism as a way to bring about equity and fairness, it not only lowers the standard of living for most people living under it, it degrades the church, the family, and the state — the very forms of government God established. Marx advocated the destruction of private property and capitalism — destroying society through perpetual conflict and paid agitators, then transformation. See any of that happening? Marxism is a godless "ism," and that's why pastors are *required* to stand up against it.

Trevor Loudon, a popular author and activist, has researched Marxist and terrorist movements and their covert influence for decades. Speaking at LPTC, he said unequivocally, "Churches are the backbone of liberty in America, and they're under attack. The church is responsible for handing off a Christian nation to the next generation, especially since ours is the civilization more responsible than any other for the spread of Christianity. Communism is the most organized form of Satanism on earth,



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and we cannot enable it.”

Broden concurred: “We’re the only Christians *in history* who haven’t been persecuted for our faith. Christians won’t long enjoy the comfortable existence they’ve had in America. Communism is an instrument of Satan to move us to a one-world government, and Marxists know the U.S. Constitution and Christianity are the only two things in the way of their destruction of America. This is about much more than just religious liberty.”

E.W. Jackson of Virginia and founder of S.T.A.N.D. (it is noteworthy in these times of BLM riots that he is a black pastor) reminded the crowd that ours is the first government ever established to protect individual rights, to protect the weak from being prey to the strong. Now he has received death threats after preaching political messages. When asked how it changed his work, he said, “Not one bit. God is the one to fear, not man.”

So You Want to Be Popular?

A telling observation about the “state of the church” came from Patrick Mmuokebe, who left his native Nigeria to evangelize in America. While attending an American Bible college and observing the American church, his one prevailing conclusion was this: Americans left disciplining of children to government, and the government took advantage. “Pastors have to stand up if they want to change things.”

But why don’t they? A Barna study reported that preachers don’t preach what they acknowledge is biblical truth for two reasons: It will hurt their attendance and the offering (as if Jesus died for either one of those), and they fear violating the Johnson Amendment, which threatens churches with losing their tax-exempt status if they get involved in politics.

Even if this argument were legitimate, so what? Obey God, not man, right?

But the Johnson Amendment is a toothless lion. Mat Staver, founder of Liberty Counsel, explained the truth about that in a pre-recorded video message. The upshot: “By virtue of being a church, you’re exempt. You don’t need a letter or official status. No church has ever lost its tax-exempt status so it’s time to replace your muzzle with a megaphone.”



Dan Fisher, co-pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Edmond, Oklahoma, authentically re-enacts a



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Colonial pastor. A majority supported the War for Independence, believing civil and religious liberty are inextricably linked. (*Photo: TheNewAmerican*)

For three days, pastors benefited from substantive history, wisdom, and knowledge. But, any good leader knows not to present a problem without a solution. The short-term strategy is this: First, encourage pastors to speak biblical truth, including politics, from their pulpits, using resources from LPTC if needed. Since the November election is crucial, emphasis was placed on getting congregants to vote their values, rather than their traditions.

Second, pastors were encouraged to register their congregations to vote. Third, preach at least three election sermons — *three* — before November, followed by encouraging the congregations to vote their convictions. They know there will be consequences — Pastor Steve Smothermon of Legacy Church in Albuquerque preached godly political messages, and 4,000 members out of the 20,000-plus-member church walked. But as pastor James Burrell, a black pastor from Petersburg, Virginia, said, “It’s not our job to decide whether to stand up.”

That’s maybe the most important point of all. There’s a long road to recovery, and only truth overcomes error.

Many clergy outside the conference are standing up, too, and engaging in politics. For example, witness Father James Altman, a Catholic parish priest in La Crosse, Wisconsin. A former attorney, he has delivered stinging video homilies that have gone viral. For example, he has decried the mask edict of Wisconsin’s Governor Tony Evers. Altman said, “There is no emergency. God gave us a brain, use it! How can there be a virus so dangerous, so lethal, so deadly you have to be tested to even know you have it! It’s a dehumanizing lie. None of the science backs the claim.”

He wants churches fully open and believes the COVID edicts are serving to supplant the church with the government. He also believes the COVID danger has been intentionally overplayed so that it can only be ‘solved’ by socialist government intervention, thereby elevating man to the position of savior. That role belongs exclusively to God, and therein is the critical issue.

Altman went on, “The entire premise of Comrade Evers’ emergency order is a godless, diabolical farce.”

Father Altman wasn’t shy about another point: “Since politics should be a moral enterprise, then the church should have something to say about it. Here’s a memo to clueless baptized Catholics out there: You cannot be Catholic and be a Democrat. Period. The party platform absolutely is against everything the Catholic Church teaches, so just quit pretending that you’re Catholic while you vote Democrat. Repent your support of that party and its platform or face the fires of hell. Because there will be 60 million aborted babies standing at the gates of heaven barring your Democrat entrance and nothing you can say will ever excuse you for your direct or indirect support of that diabolic agenda. It’s our fault, because too many shepherds of the church haven’t taught them.”

God bless clergy who speak the truth about things that matter.



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