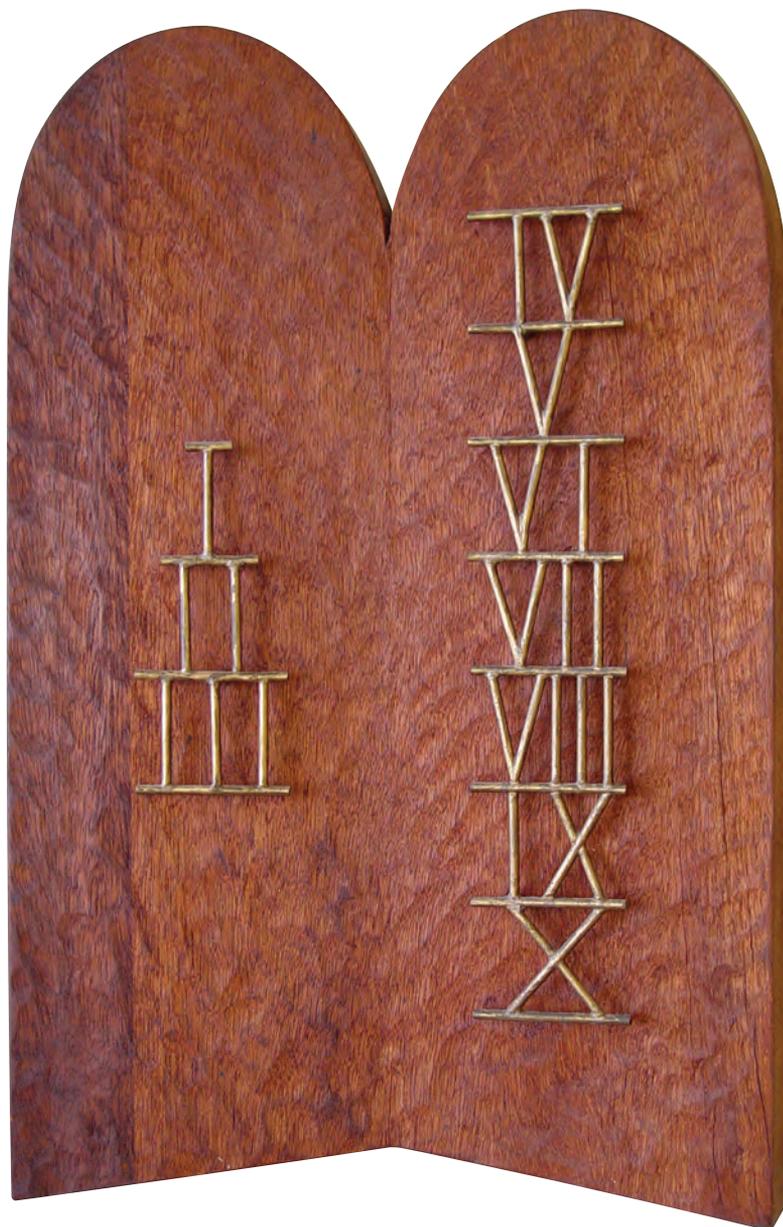


For the **Life of the World**

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne

February 2012, Volume Sixteen, Number One



Old Testament Prophets Symbols
Moses

“When the Lord finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, He gave him the two tablets of the Testimony, the tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God.”
Exodus 31:18

Currently displayed at
Concordia Theological Seminary,
Fort Wayne, Indiana, in Wyneken Hall.



**One God, Two Kingdoms and the First Amendment:
A Trinity that Should Challenge Christians and the Church to Action**

By Mr. Kevin J. Leininger

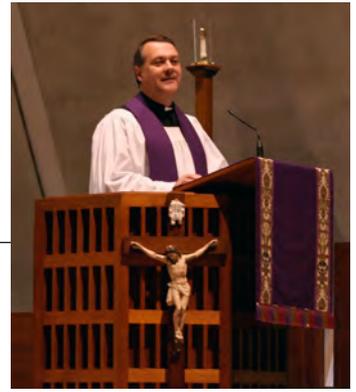
Faith, Public Life and the Role of the Christian Citizen in This New Century

By Mr. Timothy S. Goeglein

Man as Cyborg: A New Challenge

By Dr. William C. Weinrich

FROM THE PRESIDENT



The Church's Place in a Changing Culture

The claim that American culture is experiencing massive changes surprises no one reading this magazine. One of the areas most affected by these changes is that of organized religion, and, of course, that means we Lutherans feel the effects as well. Several years ago the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life published its survey findings on the Religious Landscape of the United States (<http://religions.pewforum.org/reports>). While it found that more than nine out of ten Americans believe in “God,” it also showed that a majority of Americans believe that there are many paths to this “God.” Indeed, 57% of Evangelicals, which would include most Missouri Synod Lutherans, believed there are other ways to God the Father other than through Jesus Christ.

This is a significant theological shift in American thinking. But it is only one change among many, and such shifts are likely to continue. Dr. Daniel Aleshire, Executive Director of The Association of Theological Schools, recently wrote:

The culture-shaping power of religion has weakened and continues to dissipate—not because the seminaries are employing or educating less talented people, but because the broader culture has reassigned religion from a social role of culture shaper to one that is more personal and private. The culture will recognize religion as a valuable personal choice, perhaps even a noble one, but is less inclined to give it a seat at the table where the fundamental future of the culture is developed. This is not a choice that religion has made; it is a choice that the culture has made about religion. Seminary graduates will make a significant contribution to religious lives and visions of countless individuals and congregations. However, they will not have the culture-shaping influence wielded by [earlier seminary leaders]. The future of theological schools will be in shaping American religion in the context of this changed cultural reality.¹

It is to these continually shifting realities that this issue of *For the Life of the World* points. Dr. William Weinrich explores advances in technology that have impacted the way the human body functions. He notes that “our culture is filled with the conviction that there is no such reality as human nature. The human person is rather a construct of choices, the ever-flexible result of a personal will. And, the only limitations to what we can become lie in the present limitations of our technological capacities.” Such perspectives have enormous implications for the Christian faith, which confesses that Christ “was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.”

What are we then to do? Even as Kevin Leininger recognizes that “as Lutherans, we know that state intrusions into the church seldom produce orthodoxy,” still he hopes for an active Lutheran population that will engage the present culture so that the distinctively Christian perspective might be heard more clearly. Indeed, as Timothy Goeglein notes, “Faith puts purpose, vision and meaning at the center of American life.” Living out that faith, we might find ourselves moving “Toward an American Renaissance.”

Lutherans distinguish between Law and Gospel and we are well aware of the ongoing effects of sin. We know that this world will never be perfect until the final restoration. Still, we wait in hope and we carry out our vocations to the fullest as God enables us and strengthens us (Romans 8:18-30).

May God bless you in this season and always!

Lawrence R. Rast Jr.
President, Concordia Theological Seminary

¹ Daniel Aleshire, “Some Observations about Theological Schools and the Future,” *ATS Presidents Intensive*, December 8, 2011, p. 3.

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PUBLISHER
Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr.
President

MANAGING EDITOR
Jayne E. Sheaffer

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
Colleen M. Bartzsch

COPY EDITOR
Trudy E. Behning

ART DIRECTOR
Steve J. Blakey

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This country's history was shaped by its Christian heritage, and that heritage is no less important to its future. But as Lutherans confess, faith cannot be imposed by the state. America will be a Christian nation only so long as its people are Christian—people in whom faith, repentance and love of God and neighbor have been planted by the Holy Spirit and nurtured by the church.

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Show me a country that has a healthy, flourishing culture, and I will show you a healthy, flourishing country. Show me a country that has an unhealthy, diseased culture, and I will show you an unhealthy, diseased country. Faith unifies and provides continuity, stability and ordered liberty. Faith puts purpose, vision and meaning at the center of American life.

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This movement goes by various names: *Humanity +*, *Posthumanism*, *Transhumanism*. The idea is that the body is a rather crude prosthesis of the mind, more of an accident of nature rather than something essential to human life and happiness. Moreover, the body is to a great extent a “weight” which limits through aging, sickness, weakness and the like.

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Faith, Public Life and the Role of the Christian Citizen in this New Century

By Mr. Timothy S. Goeglein



“God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself; because it is not there. There is no such thing.” C. S. Lewis

Every four years, as a presidential election nears and since the dawn of our constitutional republic, there has been one ongoing debate that never seems to be fully resolved. It is the antique debate about whether faith and public life go together; about the dynamic relationship between government and religion; about whether revelation and reason are of a piece or at war; and about whether our beloved country benefits from or is hurt by all the political discussion and conversation about God, the providential advent of America’s arrival on the world stage, and about whether America really is an exceptional country founded as—in Michael Novak’s words—a “religious republic.”

I believe not only that America’s best days are ahead, but also that those brighter days will be animated by a coming together, and not a further decoupling, of religion and common aspirations in our national, public life. To advocate such a closer relationship is considered bad manners among professional atheists, but it is the American story, and I believe that story goes on into this new epoch.

Six months ago I penned a political memoir, *The Man in the Middle: An Inside Account of Faith and Politics in the George W. Bush Era*. By God’s grace, the book is doing well, and much of the attention the book has garnered is rooted precisely in this debate: the dynamic relationship between faith and politics, which is in many ways a uniquely American narrative.

Part of my motivation for writing the book was to explore a little further this historic debate about God and government, but principally how dynamic faith in America must lead us into this fraught new century. I chose to evoke that view through my own lived experience working for three of the most prominent Christians in American politics in the last quarter century: U.S. Senator Dan Coats of Indiana; former Reagan administration political director and Republican presidential candidate Gary Bauer; and President George W. Bush, the 43rd man to serve as our head of state.

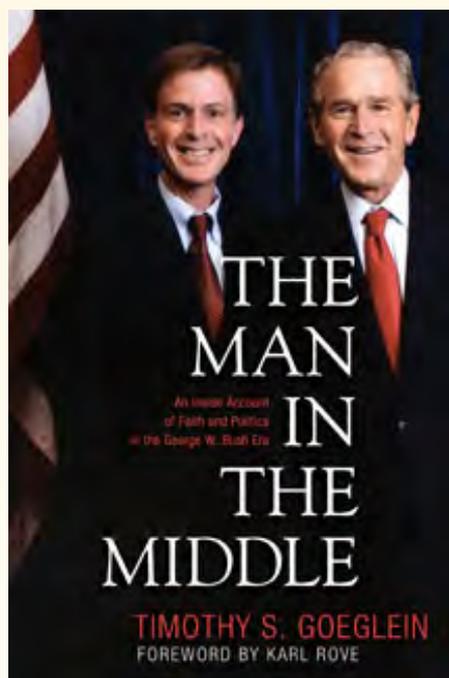
I wanted to animate this ongoing debate not at a particularly theological or philosophical or theoretical level—reams have been written about the debate from those angles, with plenty more to come—but rather from a first-person narrative: What I saw, what I experienced through the roughest and best days, and why I think this debate about faith and public life is deeply important for America’s future and as the leader for freedom in the world.

I have enjoyed a personal friendship with each man and have worked with each at close range in senior positions. For Senator Coats, I was first his deputy press secretary, then press secretary and finally his communications director, and worked with him through two hard fought senate campaigns virtually the entire time he was in the U.S. Senate from 1988 to 1998.

For Gary Bauer, I was his communications director in the *Gary Bauer for President* campaign and joined him for all nine of the GOP debates in which he participated in 2000, where there was a large and ranging field of candidates that included Steve Forbes, Patrick Buchanan and Dan Quayle, for whom I had interned in the mid-1980s

and who introduced me to the late Senator Barry Goldwater.

For Bush, I was a Special Assistant to the President and the Deputy Director of the White House Office of Public Liaison for nearly eight years. When I asked Karl Rove, to whom I was a deputy at the White House for nearly eight years and who wrote the Forward to my memoir, what that longish and almost incomprehensible job title meant, he said I would be “the man in the middle”—the president’s point man with my fellow Christians and conservatives. It was a position I came to see was tailor-made as my vocation in those years as a commissioned officer to the leader of the free world. Thus, the title of my book.



Those of us who bear the name of Christ owe our country the best that is in us. The taproot is humility, the opposite of pride. G. K. Chesterton wrote: “Humility is the mother of giants. One sees great things from the valley; only small things from the peak.”

I loved working for all three men because, though very different by nature, personal style and temperament, they all had one big thing—the biggest thing—in common: their love and belief in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Each man spoke about his Christianity publicly; each was pilloried for doing so; each took such criticism in his stride; and each believed that without flourishing faith in the American public square, our liberty would be less than our Founders intended it to be.

Drawing on my nearly quarter century living and working in and around the Beltway, it is this last point I wanted to explore as a capstone to my memoir because I believe not only that America’s best days are ahead, but also that those brighter days will be animated by a coming together, and not a further decoupling, of religion and common aspirations in our national, public life. To advocate such a closer relationship is considered bad manners among professional atheists, but it is the American story, and I believe that story goes on into this new epoch.

The title to my final chapter is “Toward an American Renaissance,” and I root my hopeful view not in economic success or military prowess—though I believe we will need both—but rather in the very American, widely-held belief that our very liberty and freedom comes not from government but from God.

Liberty, to be sustained and to flourish over time, must spring from virtue among the people. Virtue is the other side of liberty and not one without the other. Virtue is moral excellence, and in the American experience that moral scope has always sprung from only one place, from the Holy Scriptures.

This Judeo-Christian tradition is what gave rise to our very form of government, to the Constitution, to the Declaration of Independence, to the Bill of Rights, and to the major social causes and upheavals that have widened the scope in American public life of who is included as a citizen: the American Revolution, the abolition of slavery, the coeducation of women, the Civil Rights movement and the pro-life cause, which is the civil rights issue of our time.

It would be impossible to understand not only our founding as a nation but also our flourishing as a country, culture and civilization apart from the dynamic role that the church and synagogue have played for good in our national life and

from the genesis of our country.

Our major universities, colleges, public and private schools; our seminaries; our foundations; our better museums and symphonies; indeed, most of our civil society is rooted in religion. These are the institutions that comprise culture, and so while politics is important in the American context, it is downstream from culture. Culture is preeminent because it springs from the “cult,” from religion.

Show me a country that has a healthy, flourishing culture, and I will show you a healthy, flourishing country. Show me a country that has an unhealthy, diseased culture, and I will show you an unhealthy, diseased country. Faith unifies and provides continuity, stability and ordered liberty. Faith puts purpose, vision and meaning at the center of American life. Allowing the great Judeo-Christian tradition to help us reposition and re-anchor ourselves to that which is worth conserving must be part of this renaissance for which most of us yearn.

Some Americans, of course, believe firmly that America’s best days are behind us, that nations have life cycles, and that history teaches us rise and decline are inevitable. The reasons for decline are various: materialism and extravagant wealth; moral and social decay; a loss of strong marriages and families; a culture that is decadent; the surrender of elites; a collapse of confident exceptionalism; but above all, a collapse of faith. I am decidedly not in the declinist camp.

I believe an American renaissance is possible, even likely, yet it is important to take stock of the health and illness of our country, culture and civilization, and to see it as it really is. George Orwell said the first duty of intelligent people is “the restatement of the obvious,” and so I believe that conversation must ensue. But it is preeminently a cultural conversation, not a political one, and so the largest historical question is what American religion brings to this debate and what it will or will not offer to the country and our people, and especially to the least, the last and the lost.

The Scriptures were and are the ancient and lasting moral code for the



Photo courtesy of the George W. Bush Presidential Library

Tim Goeglein meets with President Bush and Presidential Aide Blake Gottesman in the Oval Office.

overwhelming majority of Americans. This makes us fundamentally distinct from our European allies. The dissenting Protestants who founded and built America believed the Bible was the greatest expression of Christian truth, and they built a country around its precepts.

Freedom and Christianity go together, not only in the lives of believers but also in the lives of nations. “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” The faithful soul is free and unshackled. It can be true in the lives of nations too. The poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, whose portrait I keep on my office wall on Capitol Hill overlooking the Supreme Court, wrote: “In fine, religion, true or false, is and ever has been the center of gravity in a realm, to which all other things must and will accommodate themselves.”

In America, there exists from our founding an inseparable relationship between revelation and government. Politics cannot be drained of faith because they are of a piece. There is a natural, deep unity between America’s political life and the life of a transcendent moral order that precedes our nation’s founding. In order for the United States to thrive in this new century, we need both a thriving realm of faith and a thriving realm of limited government which makes ample room for the practicing of that faith.

Ours is a world where everyone seems to be shouting to be heard. Christians

should consider sharing with our beloved country and culture a voice of considered reflection worth listening to, rooted not in a tranquility that is wistful or sentimental, but rather in one that is exquisitely punctuated by a concision worth knowing. It is from such concision that springs an inner strength first surrendered to Christ Himself. That kind of serenity is achievable even amid the noise and haste and tumult of the contemporary world, which is always too much with us.

Those of us who bear the name of Christ owe our country the best that is in us. The taproot is humility, the opposite of pride. G. K. Chesterton wrote: “Humility is the mother of giants. One sees great things from the valley; only small things from the peak.”

Does revealed religion consecrate a country like ours? Yes, I believe it does, and I believe it is the source of our vitality and our future. 🏡

Mr. Timothy S. Goeglein is the Vice President of Focus on the Family and a Senior Fellow at The Heritage Foundation.



He is married to Jenny, the father of two teenage boys, and lives and works in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. He has been a deacon for 25 years in his church, Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church, Alexandria, Virginia. He can be contacted at Tim.Goeglein@fofj.org.