

# ACTON notes

Acton Institute Newsletter

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*“connecting good intentions with sound economics”*

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# President's Message

"Just wanting money and wanting it really badly is not a recipe for success."

I've spent decades explaining the operations of the market economy and how it relates to human well being. And yet, I've found that there will always be some people who do not get it. No matter how many times and how many ways we work to show how commerce and civility go together, they persist in thinking that controls, regulations, taxes, and impositions can make society more fair, just, and moral. Some even say it will make it more religious or Christian.

I've tried for years to understand the anti-market mentality. I've found that a major point of contention concerns the motive force for entrepreneurship. Popular lore regards innovators and agents of economic change as primarily driven by material greed. It is a difficult bias to overcome.

It doesn't take much experience in real-world commerce to see what's wrong with this characterization. Business owners and innovators might be materially greedy but this impulse does not get one very far in real-world markets. Just wanting money and wanting it really badly is not a recipe for success.

In fact, a common trait among all successful entrepreneurs is the special burning passion to make a difference in the world, not for themselves so much as for the world around them. The structure of the market is that it enables that success most readily in the service of others.

It really isn't about the money. The money often comes as an after-thought. However, the money side of things is indispensable because it is the balance sheet that disciplines the business enterprise. It is what gives off the signs of success or the signs of failure. It serves a utilitarian purpose, not a moral one.

If anti-market ideologues could absorb this one point, they would be on the road to understanding economics in general. Human contact is often the key, which is why the Acton Institute's programs work to link up intellectuals, pastors, and entrepreneurs. This human and personal contact is one path toward healing the world.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Rev. Robert Sirico". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Rev. Robert Sirico, President

The mission of the Acton Institute is to promote a free and virtuous society characterized by individual liberty and sustained by religious principles.

**ACTON**INSTITUTE

161 Ottawa Avenue NW, Suite 301 • Grand Rapids, MI 49503 • USA • [www.acton.org](http://www.acton.org)

# 22nd Annual Acton Dinner Hears Call for Cultural Renewal

On October 24, 2012, over 700 people attended the sold-out 22nd Annual Acton Dinner held at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, Mich. Attendees were updated on the progress of the new Acton Institute building and were shown a video describing the new PovertyCure curriculum. The night also included several informative and passionate speeches in the defense of liberty and the virtuous society.

The honorable Joseph G. Scoville, United States Magistrate Judge for the Western District of Michigan, was master of ceremonies. Despite being in the middle of a political campaign far from Michigan, Congressman Jeff Fortenberry of Nebraska attended the event and gave the invocation. He thanked Rev. Robert Sirico for being instrumental in his moral and political formation. Praising the Acton Institute, Fortenberry talked about his journey: "Where can I go study economics that teaches me what ought to be, not just what is?"

*"That which ails our Republic runs far deeper than one election..."*

Rev. Robert A. Sirico gave a special address in which he warned that citizens of the United States need to do what they ought and not merely what they want, echoing the famous words of Lord Acton: "Liberty is not the power of doing what we like, but the right to do what we ought." Rev. Sirico reminded the gathered "that the Kingdom of

God will not be brought about by politics." He said those that do see politics as the solution to our problems strike heretical tones, "because you then concede the whole point to those who see the state as the be all and end all of human society."

In Rev. Sirico's view, statism for some diminishes their concept of God as true King. "That which ails our Republic runs far deeper than one election," declared Rev. Sirico. He challenged people to continue in the work of cultural renewal and to fully understand the true meaning of freedom. The keynote speech by Eric Metaxas is addressed further in this issue on the following page.



Jeff Fortenberry speaking at the 22nd Annual Acton Dinner.

## From Our Conference Participants

As one who is headed into a pastoral career, my interest in issues of virtue and serving the poor were not only stimulated, but also informed by a new set of critical tools.

—Adam Barton  
Zeeland, Michigan

I hope to use many of the materials I acquired at the Acton Institute Free and Virtuous Society Conference in many of my classes, especially in my introduction to American government course.

—Jason Casellas  
Princeton, New Jersey

## Metaxas Speech Champions Liberty

Eric Metaxas, author of *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*, was the keynote speaker at the 22nd Annual Acton Dinner. He inspired and challenged the attendees with the story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the famous German theologian and anti-Nazi dissident.

Metaxas used Bonhoeffer's story of the attack on religion in Nazi Germany to speak of religious liberty more broadly. The Nazis slowly infiltrated the German Church in an attempt to silently and totally destroy it. The Nazis did not openly speak out against the church nor publically announce their intentions. Metaxas emphasized that religious liberty is not necessarily threatened by great dramatic events; it may also be threatened by small, annoying, but seemingly harmless ones. Those who attack religious liberty may only cross small lines incrementally and Metaxas warned that there are certain lines that must never be crossed.

Bonhoeffer obeyed God until his final moments on Earth. He knew that God had led him to the

University. He contributed to Acton's PowerBlog, helped manage the Facebook and Twitter pages, and met other needs of the communications department. "I really enjoyed communicating Acton's values and writing about the many different current issues our world faced," declared Glinzak.

After spending some time at Acton, Glinzak decided to continue his dream of furthering his education by attending law school at Valparaiso University. He received a scholarship that paid for a substantial amount of his law school tuition. Glinzak met with the Dean of Admissions and was informed that the admissions office read many of his Acton blog posts. Glinzak was told that his contributions and writing for Acton was a determining factor in receiving the scholarship.

Currently, Glinzak is halfway done with his studies at Valparaiso and was extended an offer from the United States Marine Corps to attend Officer Candidate School (OCS) this summer. Upon completion of OCS, Glinzak will be a commissioned officer, and, after completion of law school and training, will be a Judge Advocate (a JAG officer). "I am humbled by this opportunity and look forward to

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Ray Nothstine and Eric Metaxas at the 22nd Annual Acton Dinner.

gallows, but Bonhoeffer did not attempt to escape or delay his execution. Metaxas gave Bonhoeffer as an example, not simply as someone we can look up to and appreciate, but rather someone we can emulate. Metaxas challenged his audience to live as Bonhoeffer did: trusting God until the end, understanding threats, and standing against those threats, especially attacks on religious liberty.

## Success for Former Acton Communications Assistant

Louie Glinzak began working with the Acton Institute after graduating from Michigan State



Louie Glinzak

serving my country," said Glinzak. He added:

*I am very fortunate that not only is Valparaiso University a great place for me to call home for a few years, but I have also been successful with both classes and extracurricular activities. I am currently in the top 25 percent of my class, completed an internship at the Cook County States Attorney's Office, and made my school's Trial Advocacy Team. My time at Acton was really well spent. While I already graduated from college, the learning process still continued while I worked at Acton. Working at a place that fosters the same core values I possess was a dream come true. I never would have thought I would work at such a great place as soon as I graduated from Michigan State.*



# 'Hero's Journey' by Sirico and Sandefer

Rev. Robert Sirico and Jeff Sandefer have written a "blueprint" to the heroic life in *A Field Guide for the Hero's Journey*. The book published in the Fall of 2012 is called "the modern 'how-to' for entrepreneurs working on accomplishing big things" by Andreas Widmer, cofounder of SEVEN Fund. Jeff Sandefer is an entrepreneur and educator. He started his first business at age 16. After earning an MBA, he founded Sandefer Offshore, an oil and gas company that generated hundreds of millions of dollars in profits in less than five years. He then ran Sandefer Capital Partners, a half-billion dollar energy investment fund.

*Field Guide for the Hero's Journey*, available on Amazon, serves to inspire people to tap into greatness by looking at classic stories and literature. Adam Myerson, President of The Philanthropy Roundtable declared:

*Jeff Sandefer and Rev. Robert Sirico have national reputations as extraordinary teachers who change the lives of their students forever. Guided by the premise that everyone has the potential to be a hero, this inspirational and practical book will help you focus on the*

*right questions that will enable you to lead a life of purpose, achievement, and, yes, heroism.*

The book contains treasures like the poem "High Flight" by John Gillespie Magee, Jr. Magee died in a mid-air collision in World War II and his poem was quoted by President Ronald Reagan after the Challenger Space Shuttle disaster in 1986. The book will help the reader develop a deeper life, engage in critical thinking, and offer a broader thought than much of the culture is offering today.

Dave Doty, author of *Eden's Bridge*, declared in a review:

*A Field Guide for the Hero's Journey "intelligently captures the core lessons of many lifetimes, the secrets not only to success but the true meaning of success, then offers them up in compelling, manageable, and memorable short bits, easy to read and inviting to be read time and time again."*



Entrepreneur and educator, Jeff Sandefer.



## ACTON in the News

"...Europeanization is not just economically and morally problematic — it's also downright un-American."

—Excerpted from Dr. Samuel Gregg's article in *National Review Online*.

**Rev. Robert Sirico**

Title: Newtown Shooting

Program: *Your World With Neil Cavuto*

Air Date: 12.18.12

**Rev. Robert Sirico**

Title: Defending the Free Market

Program: *The Hugh Hewitt Show*

Air Date: 12.11.12

**Dr. Samuel Gregg**

Title: Are We All Europeans Now?

Publication: *National Review Online*

Date: 11.12.12

## Reminder

### Help Acton Promote Freedom and Virtue!

The Acton Institute depends on the generosity of supporters like you. If you have not donated to Acton, but enjoy *Acton Notes*, please consider helping us meet our goals! Your help makes possible our mission to promote a free and virtuous society. You may choose to donate using the envelope provided, or you may visit the Acton website to make a secure donation online. We send our heartfelt thanks to those who have been so generous in the past with your strategic support as well as your prayers. You have a broad vision and a generous heart.

## INTRODUCE ACTON TO A FRIEND

KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE WORK OF THE ACTON INSTITUTE? USE OUR WEBSITE TO SEND THEM AN E-MAIL WITH INFORMATION ON OUR PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES. THANKS FOR PROMOTING FREEDOM AND VIRTUE!

**Visit: [www.acton.org/refer](http://www.acton.org/refer)**



## ACTON ANNUAL DINNER



# ACTON Book Shoppe



## A Field Guide for the Hero's Journey

By Jeff Sandefer and Rev. Robert Sirico

Do you feel like something big is missing from your life? Do you feel trapped, bored, stuck in a meaningless routine? It may be you think you're too ordinary to ever do something special. Perhaps you're afraid that if you try, you'll fail. If so, this is the book for you. Welcome to your heroic journey.

**Softcover 154 pages    Original Price \$10.00    Sale \$9.00**



## Becoming Europe

By Samuel Gregg

In *Becoming Europe*, Samuel Gregg examines economic culture - the values and institutions that inform our economic priorities - to explain how European economic life has drifted in the direction of what Alexis de Tocqueville called "soft despotism", and the ways in which similar trends are manifesting themselves in the US.

**Hardcover 384 pages    Sale \$25.00**

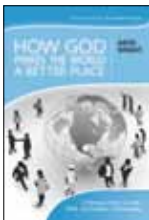


## Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good

By Amy L. Sherman

Amy Sherman, director of the Center on Faith in Communities and scholar of vocational stewardship, uses this as a springboard to explore how, through our faith-formed calling, we announce the kingdom of God to our everyday world. But cultural trends toward privatism and materialism threaten...

**Softcover 272 pages    Original Price \$16.00    Sale \$14.00**



## How God Makes the World a Better Place

By David Wright

In *How God Makes the World a Better Place* David Wright and his team challenge teachers, preachers, and business leaders to use their influence to create, maintain, and affirm communities that value work and that value the systems that make work possible and rewarding for the most people.

**Softcover 138 pages    Sale \$10.00**

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	PRICE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
<a href="#">A Field Guide for the Hero's Journey</a>	\$9.00		
<a href="#">Becoming Europe</a>	\$25.00		
<a href="#">Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good</a>	\$14.00		
<a href="#">How God Makes the World a Better Place</a>	\$10.00		

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# Calendar of Events

## ACTON INSTITUTE EVENTS

Date	Event	Location
Jan 29	Flourishing Churches and Communities	Springfield, MO
Feb 2-3	Asia Liberty Forum Sponsored by the Asia Centre for Enterprise Kris Mauren to Speak	Delhi, India
Feb 6	Westminster Institute Book Event Dr. Samuel Gregg to Speak	McLean, VA
Feb 7	Heritage Foundation Book Event Economic Decline, Culture, & How America Can Avoid a European Future Dr. Samuel Gregg to Speak	Washington, D.C.
Feb 28	Toward a Free and Virtuous Society Conference	Bandera, TX
Jun 18-21	Acton University	Grand Rapids, MI

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