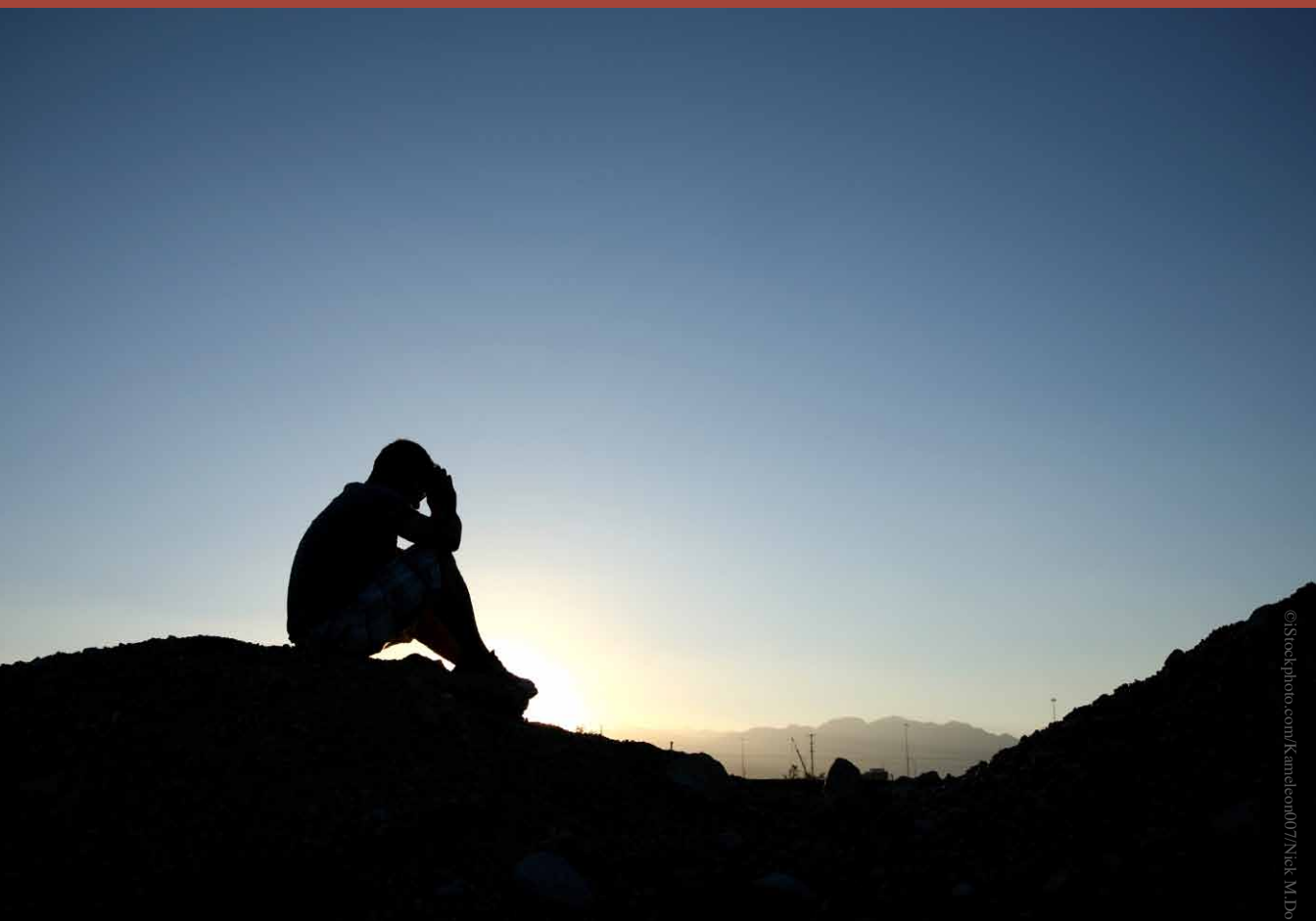


ACTON notes

Acton Institute Newsletter

September / October 2010, Volume 20, Number 5



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“Connecting good intentions with sound economics”

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President's Message

"This is true in our own country and has been for decades."

Is religion a source of conflict in society? Sometimes, it is. Yet there are many instances in which people's faith commitments produce a stronger civil society, a greater degree of authentic tolerance, and a more refined attachment to moral principles.

Why, then, does religion sometimes have a disruptive effect on culture and society? Obviously, dogmatic and doctrinal differences are not light matters. The real differences between believers (and non-believers) translate into argument and debate. That's not a bad thing, and it's precisely why we need tolerance: not because we have to agree about everything, but precisely because of our disagreements.

Another complication, however, flows from the state's involvement in religious matters. Religious differences become magnified when the state starts making its own claims about religious truth, or asserts a right to adjudicate doctrinal differences. The situation is worsened when politicians choose to exploit religious differences in order to pursue and realize their own goals, or decide that, in the name of tolerance, the state must seek to exclude all religiously-informed contributions to the public square. Such is the soft authoritarianism with which believers in much of Western Europe and America are confronted today.

One of the American Experiment's universal gifts to the world is its attempt to create circumstances in which believers of different faiths and confessions can, alongside non-believers, co-exist peacefully and live out their significant differences on a host of issues. It hasn't always been easy, and it requires a common commitment to a belief in reason and natural law, but it has worked very well for most of America's history. The key to the success has been identifying and minimizing the impact of those forces that enable differences to be converted into overt hostility.

An overly politicized society is one of those forces. Reducing the influence of politics to its proper sphere, instead of seeing it as the answer to everything, is part of what the Acton Institute is about: to make society a safe place for the exercise of strong faith. Thank you for your support of our work.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Robert A. Sirico". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Robert A. 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.

ACTONINSTITUTE

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Acton Dinner Pays Tribute to Richard M. DeVos

Mr. Richard M. DeVos will receive Acton Institute's Faith and Freedom Award on October 21 for his remarkable accomplishments in business, American cultural life and philanthropy. The award will be presented to Mr. DeVos at the Acton 20th Anniversary dinner in Grand Rapids.

Rev. Robert A. Sirico, president and co-founder of the Acton Institute, cited DeVos for his "decades-long exemplary leadership in business, his dedication to the promotion of liberty, his courage in maintaining and defending the free and virtuous society, and his conviction that the roots of liberty and the morally-charged life are to be found in the eternal truths of the Judeo-Christian tradition."

DeVos and his wife, Helen, generously support hospitals, colleges and universities, arts organizations and Christian causes in their hometown of Grand Rapids, and they support numerous organizations in Central Florida. Among the many institutions they have helped create are DeVos Children's

Hospital, the Cook-DeVos Center for Health Sciences, the DeVos Communications Center at Calvin College, the DeVos Campus of Grand Valley State University, and the DeVos Place convention center. Florida contributions include the DeVos Sport Business Management Program at the University of Central Florida, and the Orlando Magic Youth Foundation. DeVos owns the Orlando Magic NBA franchise.

"The award recognizes an individual who exemplifies commitment to faith and freedom..."

The Faith and Freedom Award was established as part of the Acton Institute's tenth anniversary celebration in 2000. The award recognizes an individual who exemplifies commitment to faith and freedom through outstanding leadership in civic, business, or religious life.

Past recipients include, with date of award: John Marks Templeton (2000); Cardinal Van Thuan (2002); Rocco Buttiglione (2004); Charles W. Colson (2006); Mart Laar (2007); and William F. Buckley (2008).



Mr. Richard DeVos to receive the 2010 Faith & Freedom Award

From Our Conference Participants

It seems my time at Acton University sparked an insatiable interest in economics, politics, and current affairs through a Christian lens.

*—Aurora Griffin
Harvard College*

Without your generosity, I would not have been able to attend. You have my promise that I will do my best to be a good steward of your gift.

*—Timothy J.A. O'Donnell
Fishers, Indiana*

2010 Summer Interns Shine

Among the benefits of interning at Acton is the unique experience that comes from serving at events like Acton University, and also actively participating in the educational sessions. Some interns also used their skills to contribute to the PowerBlog and publish opinion editorials. The summer interns for 2010 represented many diverse individuals and schools from across the world. Summer interns not only hailed from the United States, but included international students from China, Hungary, and Italy.

Acton entered the world of digital book publishing and interns were instrumental in helping to launch ebooks to expand our reach. The work they did to improve Acton's visibility on social networking sites and high quality translation work was also invaluable to the mission of the Acton Institute. Christopher Oppermann, an undergraduate student at Harvard offered some thoughts on his summer internship:

I can easily say, without hesitation, that my relationship with Acton has, in a very literal

interested. I was encouraged to see how much opportunity there is to reach people with information about connecting good intentions with sound economics.

Kelly Miller wrote a commentary for Acton titled "In the 'Green' Economy, the Poor Pay More."

While cap-and-trade legislation has little chance of passage at the moment, Ms. Miller examined how federal bureaucracies can accomplish much of what elected representatives so far haven't been able to put in place because of a lack of popular appeal.

The Acton Institute would like to thank all the summer interns. They were: Stuart Beaman, Mate Csak, Francesco Dibosio, Lucy Feil, Michelle Hornak, Martha Johnson, Kyle Lockhart, Kelly Miller, Tony Oleck, Chris Oppermann, Ed Smilde, Elizabeth Sunshine, Laura Trevisan, and Liping Xu.

Upcoming: Chicago Open Mic

Acton's "Chicago Open Mic" event is set to take place November 4 at the University Club of Chicago. Issues that will be addressed are the state

ACTON News



A special thank you to all of Acton's summer interns



and concrete way, changed my life. Without the contact I have had with Acton and its work, I certainly know that I would be in a different position in my life today.

Kelly Miller, also a summer intern with Acton declared:

I worked with several Acton staff to strategize marketing for the Birth of Freedom curriculum in the homeschooling community. Acton produces high-quality educational materials with a broad appeal, and the market for those materials is so large and receptive that it's challenging to get the word out to everyone who may be

of financial markets, the prospect for economic growth, the impact of government debt, and the future of free and open discussion of faith in the public square. Please come ready with questions to ask the panelists. Panelists include Acton president Rev. Robert Sirico, Mr. Joseph A. Morris, who is a partner in the law firm of Morris & De La Rosa. Mr. Morris served in President Ronald Reagan's administration. Also joining the panel is Mr. Brian S. Wesbury, who is the Chief Economist at First Trust Advisors L.P., a financial services firm based in Wheaton, Illinois. For more about this event, please email Kimberly Brink at kbrink@acton.org.

Acton Lecture Series Closes Strong for 2010

Dr. Samuel Gregg and Mr. Jordan Ballor delivered the last two lectures in the 2010 Acton Lecture Series. Dr. Gregg's lecture titled "Europe's Economic Crisis: What Went Wrong, What Will Happen, and What it Means for America" took place on September 2 in Grand Rapids and drew 85 attendees. Dr. Gregg said that even in the midst of crisis, "there are several things some European governments are doing much better than America right now when it comes to dealing with their economic problems." He also noted that Europe "provides us with a living, breathing case-study of how interventionist policies with expansive welfare programs can, especially when mixed with a certain culture of democracy, drive entire countries to the brink of economic collapse."

He concluded his remarks by stressing the critical need for Europeans and Americans to develop a moral, political and economic culture which understands the deep deficiency of politicians and citizens using the state to live at the expense of others.

Mr. Jordan Ballor lectured on "Ecumenical Ethics & Economics: A Critical Appraisal" on July 15. Ballor has published a new book on the subject named "Ecumenical Babel: Confusing Economic Ideology and the Church's Social Witness." Ballor concluded the book with an appeal to a more faithful calling for the ecumenical movement:

It is the fervent hope expressed in this critique that the divisive and ideological language of economic faith all too often expressed in the social witness of the ecumenical movement might be renewed and reformed. Let our [Christian] confession be not "I follow Marx," or, "I follow Hayek," "I follow Rand," or, "I follow Keynes," but rather, together, "We follow Christ" (see 1 Co. 1:12).

The World Council of Churches, the godmother organization of the ecumenical movement, whose institutional origins go far back into the last century, is made up of 349 member churches in more than 110 countries worldwide, representing over 560 million Christians.



Dr. Gregg speaks on Europe's Economic Crisis

ACTON in the News

"The places where black students excel, Perry says, are those where students have access to choice."

—Excerpted from Anthony Bradley's article in *The Detroit News*.

Dr. Samuel Gregg

Title: Conscience and the State
Program: *EWTN Live*
Air Date: 9.08.10

Rev. Robert Sirico

Title: Ground Zero Mosque
Program: *The Laura Ingraham Show*
Air Date: 9.08.10

Dr. Anthony Bradley

Title: Teachers unions, civil rights groups protect failed schools
Publisher: *The Detroit News*
Date: 8.27.10

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.

Updating your estate plans?

Please consider including Acton in those changes or notifying us of your current intentions.

For more information on how visit: www.acton.org/plannedgiving

Or contact Charles Roelofs at: 616-454-3080 or croelofs@acton.org

We value your current and future commitment to promoting freedom and virtue!



SAVE THE DATE

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF PROMOTING FAITH AND FREEDOM

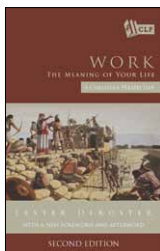
ACTON INSTITUTE ANNUAL DINNER

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2010

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

MR. RICHARD M. DEVOS TO RECEIVE THE FAITH & FREEDOM AWARD

ACTON Book Shoppe

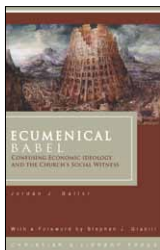


Work: The Meaning of Your Life

by Lester DeKoster

Where do we find the core of life's meaning? Right on the job! At whatever work we do – with head or hand, from kitchen to executive suite, from your house to the White House! "Work is the great equalizer – everyone has to come to it in order to find meaning in living; no short cuts, no detours, no bargain rates."

Paperback 94 pages New Release! Sale \$9.00

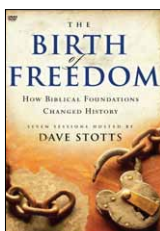


Ecumenical Babel: Confusing Economic Ideology and the Church's Social Witness

by Jordan Ballor

A critical engagement of the ecumenical movement's approach to ethical and economic issues, Ecumenical Babel updates a line of criticism articulated by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Paul Ramsey, and Ernest W. Lefever.

Paperback 167 pages Original Price \$7.00 Sale \$5.00



Birth of Freedom Curriculum DVD and Study Guide (set)

produced by Acton Media

Based on the popular documentary The Birth of Freedom, this seven-session DVD study, designed for use with the Birth of Freedom Participants Guide, shows the biblical roots of the concept of freedom and debunks the notion that Christianity held back the development of Western civilization.

DVD 130 mins Original Price \$30.00 Sale \$28.00

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	PRICE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Work: The Meaning of Your Life	\$9.00		
Ecumenical Babel	\$5.00		
Birth of Freedom Curriculum DVD and Study Guide (set)	\$28.00		

Make checks payable to "Acton Institute." For orders in the United States, Canada, and Mexico: for the first item, add US \$6.75 for shipping; plus US \$1.00 for each additional item. Overseas orders: US \$8.75 for the first item, plus US \$1.75 for each additional item.

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Calendar of Events

ACTON INSTITUTE EVENTS

Date	Event	Location
Oct 21-24	Liberty and Markets Conference Co-sponsored by Liberty Fund	Grand Rapids, MI
Oct 21	Acton Institute's 20th Annual Dinner	Grand Rapids, MI
Oct 28	Acton on Tap Jordan Ballor and Ray Nothstine to speak	Grand Rapids, MI
Nov 4	Chicago Open Mic Night	Chicago, IL

STAFF ACTIVITIES/DEADLINES

Date	Event	Location
Oct 10-15	Mont Pèlerin Society General Meeting Dr. Samuel Gregg to attend	Sydney, Australia
Oct 14-16	Sixteenth Century Conference Jordan Ballor to speak	Montreal, Canada

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