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Taking A Stand

An interview with Governor Mark Sanford

A Journal of Religion, Economics, and Culture

Editor's Note



Currently there are serious concerns about economic prosperity in a nation that has for so long benefited from tremendous economic growth and stability. Likewise, some are deeply troubled about government proposed solutions and cures for our economic ailments. South Carolina's governor Mark Sanford brings substantial thought and credibility to free-market ideas while articulating the danger of greater centralized power.

Those paying attention to current events will be well aware that Governor Sanford has risen to be perhaps the chief voice in opposing bailout and stimulus legislation out of Washington, no matter which political party is pushing more spending. We also add another important

dynamic in our interview that you probably won't see in other interviews with the governor, and that focuses on his views of faith in the public square and what that means going forward in the current political climate.

S.T. Karnick is the editor of the American Culture website, and we are fortunate to feature a piece by him titled "Busting a Pop Culture Illusion." Karnick explains how Disney promotes the "life-without-limits mindset." He also calls this mindset "one of the main progenitors of modern, statist liberalism." He praises the film *Marley and Me*, calling it "an excellent antidote to the Disney myth and the utopianism of modern liberalism."

Bruce Edward Walker offers some excellent thoughts concerning the conservatism of T.S. Eliot and Russell Kirk. Both men, because of their faith background, rightly recognized that the moral order rises above ideological fervor and Walker eloquently depicts the consequences on society and culture when the moral tradition wanes.

Kevin Schmiesing offers a review of

Philip F. Lawler's *The Faithful Departed: The Collapse of Boston's Catholic Culture* and Ray Nothstine reviews Theodore Roosevelt Malloch's *Spiritual Enterprise: Doing Virtuous Business*. Schmiesing clearly explains the reasons for the breach between Boston's Catholic leaders and the laity. He also effectively pulls in "Acton's spin" on Lawler's work for our readers. Nothstine's review of *Spiritual Enterprise* is valuable in that it recognizes there are moral deficiencies in the business world. Additionally, just as society needs moral reform to be healthy moving forward, moral reform needs to extend to an even greater degree in the commercial sector.

In a *Religion & Liberty* issue where I believe we have written about and defended a lot of moral truths, it is so appropriate to give a voice to Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who's haunting, timeless, and most importantly, truth telling words were pivotal in crushing Marxist-Leninism. His story and words are forever appreciated by those who cherish the kind of liberty that is fastened with a moral fabric upon the heart.

Father Raymond

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Taking A Stand:

An Interview with Governor Mark Sanford

Mark Sanford was elected South Carolina's governor in 2002 and won a second term in 2006, becoming only the third two-term governor in modern state history. In 2008, Governor Sanford was also named chairman of the Republican Governors Association.

Prior to his election as governor in 2002, Governor Sanford served six years in the U.S. House. For his consistent efforts to lower taxes and limit government growth, he was ranked number one in the entire Congress by Citizens Against Government Waste. He was rated similarly by the National Taxpayers' Union, and Taxpayers for Common Sense inducted him into the Taxpayers Hall of Fame. Governor Sanford holds a BA degree from Furman University, and a MBA from the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business. He also worked at the New York office of Goldman Sachs.

As a governor, he has gained national attention for his principled opposition to bailouts and stimulus legislation coming out of Washington. He recently spoke with R&L managing editor Ray Nothstine.

You've taken a very principled approach in working for smaller government, lower taxes, individual liberty, and, for fostering a culture of personal responsibility. Those principles are taking a battering in Washington today. Can anything turn the tide?

George Washington and his fairly battered band of patriots were facing far greater odds. The situation looked much more

Not just for an election or election cycle but on a prolonged basis. And that's what it will take to turn the tide. Really, that is the only thing that can turn the tide. However, if the status quo remains, we're going to have profound problems coming our way that I think signal, frankly, the undoing of our Republic.

A lot of the debate in Washington over various bailouts and stimulus packages focuses on how to carve up the pie. But shouldn't we first be talking about bigger issues like what this tremendous expansion of government will mean for America's future?

The answer is yes at several different levels. The first level is that we are undoing the ultimate in economic stimulus—the free market. The real driver of our economy is not our public works projects or government programs, the real driver of our economy is, to date, a free-market based system that spurs on that young entrepreneur in the basement who's created the product of tomorrow, or that middle-ager working in the diner around the corner. All of those things that make up Adam Smith's Invisible Hand are the real stimulus of our economy: the people that get up for

work; those who are creating the products of tomorrow. We need to talk about how this money doesn't come out of the sky. If you borrow it, and you have ever larger sectors of the economy driven by the public sector rather than civil society, we



Gov. Sanford: money doesn't come out of the sky.

bleak. And yet they were resolved to creating the perfect union that they believed in. And they ultimately prevailed against incredibly long odds. So I think the answer rests in that silent and sleeping majority—really making their voice heard.

"The first level is that we are undoing the ultimate in economic stimulus - the free market."

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Busting a Pop Culture Illusion

By S.T. Karnick

For the past several decades, American popular culture has frequently promulgated an idea central to modern liberalism: the idea of a life without limits, that we can have everything we want without having to make hard choices. That assumption is especially evident in Walt Disney movies, and not only in recent ones. Fortunately, the makers of some pop culture products see the absurdity and danger of that notion.

The life-without-limits mindset, derived most directly from the ideas of the eighteenth century French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (one of the main progenitors of modern, statist liberalism), is an essential foundation of modern liberalism and has an important corollary that pervades leftist politics: that the only thing that stops each of us from achieving our life without limits is the stubborn restrictions placed on us by various villains, usually business or religion and typically both.

Though largely French in origin, the myth of a life without limits is characteristically American and, in fact, typical of adolescents the world over. It involves the idea that freedom means doing whatever you want, not simply having a choice among whatever options life makes available. Instead, the American fantasy is that both individuals and society as a whole can overcome every obstacle to our numerous desires, provided we only wish strongly enough and get our friends on our side.

The lyrics of countless songs in Disney movies skillfully convey this dream, as in these famous lines from the Academy Award-winning song from the 1940 Disney film *Pinocchio*:

When you wish upon a star, Makes
no difference who you are, Anything
your heart desires Will come to you.

If your heart is in your dream No
request is too extreme When you
wish upon a star As dreamers do.

The reality, of course, is that everybody's life does have limits, and that we often have to make hard choices between imperfect alternatives. In fact, the longing for perfect freedom must ultimately be a tyrannical and consuming desire for god-like power. And that is why modern liberalism is so strongly based on coercion.

Recognizing this reality and making it vividly apparent in the narrative, the recent movie *Marley and Me* is very much the anti-Disney film for children. It identifies and clearly criticizes the notion of a life without limits. Whereas Disney films say that you can do anything you want and have anything you want if you only want it badly enough (Disney films have said so since the studio started making feature films, not just in recent years), *Marley and Me* shows how adolescent and unrealistic

this longing for perfect freedom really is.

The very title of the film is a clue that the human protagonist should be a central focus of our attention, and newspaper columnist John Grogan (Owen Wilson) does indeed splendidly represent the Disney philosophy. Dissatisfied with his work as a columnist, at which he is highly successful, he longs to be a "real reporter" like his friend Sebastian, who gets to interview important political figures and is published in *The New York Times*. Of course, once John achieves his dream of being a reporter, he doesn't like it and wants the freedom he had as a columnist.

The reluctance to accept the limits reality imposes on all of us is manifested also in the difficulty John has in deciding whether to have children. He clearly does not want to take on the responsibility that children bring, and ultimately when he decides to go ahead with it, he lays all the responsibility for the decision on his wife, Jennifer (Jennifer Aniston), as he makes quite clear in a conversation with Sebastian.

This is brought home with great force in a later scene in which Jennifer decides that she wants to quit her job in order to raise their children. She tells John that she can't be either a good mother or a good journalist if she tries to do both, and that she chooses to be a good mother, as that is more important to her. It's a perfectly sensible and indeed laudable

choice, albeit a difficult one, yet John, still trapped in his Disney fantasies, actually tries to talk her out of it, offering to get her some “help” in taking care of the kids. Fortunately, Jennifer’s natural sense of personal autonomy and willingness to accept responsibility prevent her from giving in to his foolish entreaties.

That’s the real conflict at the center of the film: John’s unwillingness to accept his natural quota of adult authority when it’s handed to him and to take responsibility for the choices he makes and the people he loves.

This is made quite evident in an amusing way during a scene in which John and Jennifer take their dog to an obedience training class. The teacher (played by Kathleen Turner), asks which of the two will take the role of master, and John defers to Jennifer and lays down in the grass, happy to shirk the responsibility. Later in the scene, however, he ends up having to do his part, and fails miserably, causing Marley and his owners to be kicked out of the class for good. John and Jennifer find it rather amusing, but most normal people would see it as quite humiliating.

As the film goes on, John’s failure to accept his role as an authority and to get control of Marley results in much destruction, comical but still costly.

John’s friend Sebastian also plays an important part in the film, as he represents John’s fantasy of professional and social success without the attendant responsibilities. Yet although Sebastian is a bachelor who seems to do very well with the ladies, it’s clear to the audience, though not to John, that Sebastian’s choices have consequences. His decision to remain a bachelor, for example, means that he can’t experience the joys of marriage and parenting that the film clearly depicts as immensely desirable outcomes of John’s choices.

Sebastian, however, appears to be at peace with his decisions and to accept the

fact that his choices have placed real limits on his life. The tragedy at the center of the film is that John fails to appreciate the beauty of what he has and that these things are in fact the real essence of life. Instead, he continually imagines how splendid his life would be if he were elsewhere doing other things.

The one who really lives the way John would like to exist is Marley, the dog. Yet Marley’s free-spirited misbehavior causes chaos in John’s home and almost forces the couple into divorce. Marley defecates in the ocean on the pet beach, which may cause it to be closed. And he develops an agonizing ailment, stomach torsion, as a result of eating or drinking too quickly.

“...contrary to the Disney myth, many things our hearts desire won’t come to us, no matter how fervently we may wish for them.”

The final scenes press home this theme of the limits to personal autonomy and power, as Marley inevitably confronts the one limit we all must ultimately accept: death. Here John finally seems to begin to understand what’s really important in life, and appears to appreciate the value of the family, home, and job that he has chosen.

Yet even in these scenes John’s fantasy-mongering continues. He expresses discontent with his job, and in his sentimental goodbye to Marley as the dog is dying, John tells Marley that he has been a good dog. That is an absurd lie,

and it can only be for John’s own benefit, as the dog obviously has no understanding of language. It’s John’s way of pretending once again that his choices didn’t have negative consequences, that the American fantasy of having it all still holds true. The film’s story, however, makes it clear that just the opposite is true: contrary to the Disney myth, many things our hearts desire won’t come to us, no matter how fervently we may wish for them.

Recent films as varied as *Milk*, *Kung Fu Panda*, and *Step Brothers* all convey the Disney myth that we can overcome life’s limits by wanting it badly enough, but a significant number of films present a more realistic appraisal of the limits of human autonomy and power: movies such as *The Dark Knight*, *Defiance*, *Gran Torino*, *The Wrestler*, *No Country for Old Men*, *Slumdog Millionaire*, *Fireproof*, and *In Bruges*. *Marley and Me* is particularly interesting in accomplishing this through comedy, and in a film that will appeal to children.

Having Grogan’s character played by Owen Wilson is an inspired choice. He has long been known for playing free-spirited characters in movies, yet in real life he nearly died last year in what appears to have been a failed suicide attempt. That brings home another sobering truth about the life without limits: when we fail to find happiness in such a life, we have no one to blame but ourselves, and that is a direct path to despair.

The film is based on the memoirs of a real-life American newspaper columnist, and hence is no fantasy itself. Its honesty about the adolescent longing for perfect freedom at the heart of much of American culture makes *Marley and Me* an excellent antidote to the Disney myth and the utopianism of modern liberalism.

S. T. Karnick is editor of the *American Culture* website, <http://stkarnick.com>.



Spiritual Enterprise: Doing Virtuous Business
Theodore Roosevelt Malloch, Encounter, 2008

Spiritual Enterprise: Doing Virtuous Business

Reviewed by Ray Nothstine

With the onset of the financial crisis and economic downturn, there has been a lot of discussion about the future of the free economy in this country. Scandal and corruption among executives and financial institutions has of course played a significant part in fueling the discussion. While paying tribute to the free economy and the wealth it has created, Theodore Roosevelt Malloch also looks to reinforce and renew the foundations of virtuous business in *Spiritual Enterprise*. Malloch agrees that businesses and entrepreneurs that embody those spiritual traits played a substantial role in leading the United States in its rise as an economic power second to none. A key driver of this ascendancy was that so many business leaders and the people who made up those institutions had a deep well of spiritual might and heritage to draw from. “I do not deny that people, and companies, can be virtuous if they lack faith. But, as I argue, virtue endures and spreads because it is sustained by and through faith,” says Malloch.

A central strength of *Spiritual Enterprise* is that it offers a legitimate critique of capitalism’s ability to be uplifting and empowering when there is an absence of moral foundations and influence. According to Michael Novak, who wrote the book’s introduction, spiritual enterprise is “capitalism in its most profound and important form.” Without virtue or some form of spiritual capital on a company’s balance sheet, its priorities and decision

making could degenerate into the Randian mantra Malloch himself references: “the purpose of wealth is to put oneself on a pedestal.” This is a character trait that would indeed be a cause for alarm for most people of faith, if not the wider business community.

Spiritual capital refers to the kind of capital that is linked to our spiritual life. Malloch cites William Wilberforce’s lifelong struggle and ultimate triumph in abolishing the slave trade, as well as Max Dupree’s leadership model as the former CEO of the furniture company Herman Miller as stellar examples.

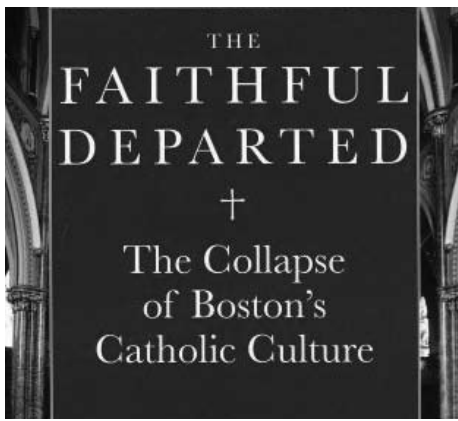
But while spiritual capital looks beyond the bottom line, Malloch argues that in actuality it makes businesses and companies more successful. Simply put, they outperform their competitors. He offers plenty of examples of business leaders and entrepreneurs ignoring spiritual capital or values to their own detriment.

An especially vibrant example of virtue comes from Chick-fil-A founder and CEO S. Truett Cathy. Cathy has remained faithful to his Southern Baptist tradition, and the core statement of his business is reflected by his faith: “To glorify God by being a faithful steward of all that is entrusted to us. To have a positive influence on all who come in contact with Chick-fil-A.” Cathy has recorded forty consecutive years of profit and growth. One of his most visible examples of spiritual capital is his decision to keep his restaurants

closed without exception on Sundays, bypassing 15 percent of the selling week. The policy serves as a reminder for his employees to direct their attention to things that matter more than business.

Malloch points out that businesspeople attend worship services every week more than nearly any other professional class, save church professionals and military officers. “Business is the real test of the moral life, and those who engage in it are putting themselves in a position where trust in God’s goodness is the surest guarantee of success,” says Malloch. Additionally, more businesses and corporate organizations understand that their employees are yearning for a spiritual satisfaction within their work and not striving after profit for material accumulation alone. If this is the case, and there is a lot of evidence out there that says it is, then the enterprise sector could be ripe for greater renewal.

Malloch’s book, while a good commentary on the long-term viability of capitalism, is also thoughtful and fair in dealing with skeptics. Those who have concerns about people of faith obtaining success in business and acquiring wealth, and those who are skeptical of faith playing any role in business at all, will find thoughtful answers and reflection in *Spiritual Enterprise*. This book places tremendous value on the connection between a free economy and religious liberty, and, even more importantly, it expands that connection for an evolving global market.



Power and Corruption in Catholic Boston

Reviewed by Kevin Schmiesing

The Faithful Departed: The Collapse of Boston's Catholic Culture
Philip F. Lawler, Encounter, 2008

Lord Acton's quotation concerning the corrupting effect of power is widely known. Less so is the fact that the target of his criticism on that particular occasion was the power possessed not by government but by church officials. Acton's understanding of ecclesiastical authority (as distinct from power) is debatable, but his insight into human nature is not. A case study—not that we need another to file away in the vast archives of the history of human frailty—is the collapse of the Catholic Archdiocese of Boston.

Philip Lawler documents the details in this skillfully written account of the triumphs and travails of Boston's Catholics. The history is episodic rather than thorough, but Lawler chooses his episodes well. The bulk of his attention goes to the last forty years, and much of that is focused on the sexual abuse scandals of the last ten. For anyone who has followed these developments closely, there will be little in the way of new revelations. Yet Lawler's style, at once sympathetic and bluntly critical, is engrossing. The devout Catholic reader who was dismayed by the character and scale of the abuse scandal will be drawn back to those unpleasant times when it seemed that each new day brought fresh reasons to be ashamed of one's faith.

This kind of reaction is exactly what Lawler wants. The more tractable problems within the Catholic Church have been addressed, he admits, but the more difficult have not. Shame, indignation, even anger, are the emotions he wishes to incite in the faithful

Catholic and in every friend of the church, for he doubts that the major unsolved problem will be tackled otherwise. That problem is the leadership of the church, the bishops, and that returns us to Acton's quotation and to the story of Boston Catholicism.

Lawler's account operates on three levels. In places it is a general history and assessment of Catholicism in the United States. It is the story of a tiny minority, its numbers swelled by immigration and high birth rates, gradually gaining economic, cultural, and political clout. The second level is the local church in Boston, whose story comprises the largest part of the book. Lawler brilliantly evokes the personalities of Boston's prelates, from Cardinals O'Connell (1930s), to Cushing (1950s), to Medeiros (1970s), to Law (1990s). In fact, one might interpret the book as a critical assessment of Boston's bishops.

It is more than that, though. It is an account of the relationship between the archdiocese's shepherds and their flock. Lawler possesses a significant attribute that presses him never to lose sight of the laity: he is one of them. Lawler's personal involvement in parts of the story is the third level, lending it an emotional edge that never slips into maudlin self-pity or self-righteous apology.

The book opens with an anecdote demonstrating episcopal power: Cardinal William O'Connell's single-handed quashing of a proposed state lottery in 1935. It was a time when archdiocesan leadership carried appellations such as "Number 1"

(Boston's O'Connell) and "The Powerhouse" (New York's Spellman).

As Lawler recognizes, however, political influence for American bishops is built not on government prerogative but on spiritual authority. Bishops' "power," and by extension the church's "power," in the secular sense depends utterly on their ability to command allegiance in the spiritual realm. O'Connell's impact on legislation derived not from constitutionally enumerated powers, but from his capacity as respected head of a united community of believers. One might say that the power was the laity's, and the bishop was their mouthpiece.

Gradually this spiritual authority dissipated. The reasons are many, and one can read about them in any number of books printed over the past forty years. Catholics in the latter half of the twentieth century became virtually indistinguishable from other Americans, most critically in areas that contradicted the official positions of their church: contraception, divorce, and abortion politics. Simultaneously, bishops squandered their authority by making ill-advised stands on policy issues less central to the moral teaching of the church and failing to support vigorously those Catholics who remained committed to the traditional teachings.

The value of Lawler's account is that it avoids the easy story lines so common in analyses of the Catholic Church in the post-Vatican II era. Fully appreciative of the assets of early twentieth-century Boston Catholicism, Lawler never dons

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rose-colored glasses that would blind him to the fact that the apparently indomitable church bore within it the seeds of decline. The sorry state of the Boston church in 2009 cannot be blamed solely on the inadequacies of the post-Vatican II era. At the apex of its influence before the council, the church in Boston confused the spiritual and temporal realms.

The Democratic political machine that provided ladders to success so desperately needed by impoverished immigrants also lured the church into cooperation with the expanding government of the New Deal and Great Society eras. Presiding over a coherent and devoted laity, Boston's archbishops enjoyed the perquisites of secular esteem. They enjoyed them so well that they forgot that such deference came grudgingly from a non-Catholic world and, with the crumbling of the spiritual authority at the foundation of the edifice, would be quickly withdrawn.

"From the first days of the Catholic ascendancy," Lawler writes, "church leaders in Boston experienced the temptation to build up that influence and power for their own sake, rather than nurturing the religious solidarity on which they depended. Cardinals became preoccupied with the needs of the archdiocese as a secular institution, sometimes even to the detriment of the archdiocese as a community of faith" (248).

There is incalculable wisdom in those words, and it is applicable to all religious groups. American Catholics and their bishops have not yet learned the lesson, Lawler thinks, and the evidence is with him. Lord Acton's warning about power, however famous it may be, has not been taken seriously often enough.

Kevin Schmiesing is a research fellow at the Acton Institute.

Acton FAQ

Why Did The Acton Institute Develop *The Effective Stewardship Curriculum*?

One of the best ways to reach people of faith is in their places of worship and church communities. Church and lay leaders of many different Christian traditions are often looking for quality and affordable curriculum materials that can equip their own members to act and think biblically about important social issues such as care of creation, poverty relief, financial stewardship, and giving.

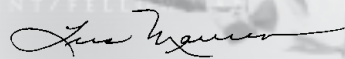
Acton's purpose in developing the *Effective Stewardship Curriculum* and *NIV Stewardship Bible* was to take the best of our ideas, as expressed in the work of our scholars and staff members, and to offer them to a broad audience. With a DVD and companion study guide, Acton can multiply its reach and influence tremendously.

What's more, many church leaders and educational materials propose teachings and policy solutions that are at odds with the "free and virtuous society." With the recent rise of the religious left, the Acton Institute is offering an *Effective Stewardship Curriculum* that faithfully engages Scripture and the value of religious liberty. The biblical teaching on stewardship brings together a number of threads in Scripture that call us to give a more holistic and mainstream approach, which allows us to play a dynamic role in the transformation of individuals and the culture.

Acton has also crafted a partnership with Zondervan, the leading evangelical Christian publishing house, for distribution of the *Effective Stewardship* DVD and study guide beginning in 2009. The partnership will dramatically expand the availability of the Acton *Effective Stewardship Curriculum* into mass market retail channels.

The curriculum will also be made available with the *Stewardship Study Bible*, to be published by Zondervan in September 2009. Dave Ramsey, the financial adviser and nationally syndicated radio host, has endorsed the *Stewardship Bible* and will promote it on his show. Ramsey's radio show is ranked in the top five of talk radio, with four million listeners each week. Ramsey's endorsement says, "Too many Christians hold their Bible in one hand and their checkbook in the other, never bringing the two together. What a tragedy! The *NIV Stewardship Study Bible* bridges that gap and shows you how to apply God's Word to your whole life—money and all!"

With partners like Zondervan and Dave Ramsey, the *Effective Stewardship Curriculum* is a critical outreach in building a network of even greater influence and credibility, especially in the evangelical Protestant community. With all of the great ideas, talent, and resources at the Acton Institute, it is essential to broaden our influence while staying faithful to our mission of a free and virtuous society.



Kris Alan Mauren
Executive Director



Eliot, Kirk and the Moral Imagination

By Bruce Edward Walker

The following is adapted from a speech on the occasion of the republication of Russell Kirk's Eliot and His Age, given to the Intercollegiate Studies Institute student group at Central Michigan University in September 2008.

What makes T. S. Eliot and Russell Kirk so important that we should be here tonight to discuss them? Well, for one, both fathered “ages”—the twentieth century was, according to Kirk, “The Age of Eliot” and Kirk himself inaugurated the contemporary Conservative Age with the publication of *The Conservative Mind* in the early 1950s. Both men recognized that there is no culture without cult, cult in this instance, for Kirk, “a joining together for worship—that is, the attempt of people to commune with a transcendent power. It is from association in the cult, the body of worshippers, that human community grows.” Additionally, both Eliot and Kirk agreed that a worldview is only viable inasmuch as it reflects what Edmund Burke called the moral imagination, which he defined as, “the power of ethical perception which strides beyond the barriers of private experience and events of the moment—especially the higher form of this power exercised in poetry and art.”

For Eliot, the moral imagination derived from his Anglo-Catholicism; for Kirk, his Roman Catholicism. Devoid of moral imagination, all systems—political, social, economic, familial and spiritual—are bound to fail. True conservatives, both men believed, place moral considerations ahead of ideology. In fact, both held that true conservatism

is the negation of ideology.

Dr. Benjamin Lockerd, in his excellent new preface to *Eliot and His Age*, quotes Kirk: “Recovery of moral understanding cannot be merely a means to social restoration: it must be its own end, though it will produce social consequences. In the words of T.S. Eliot, ‘If you will not have God (and he is a jealous God) you should pay your respects to Hitler or Stalin.’” Eliot hints at this jealous God in his verse play, “Murder in the Cathedral”:

Those who put their faith in worldly order. Not controlled by the order of God, in confident ignorance, but arrest disorder. Make it fast, breed fatal disease, Degrade what they exalt.

Eliot witnessed the results of catastrophically destructive ideologies. He had seen nationalistic fervor ignite the conflagration of world wars; he had seen the passion for atheistic “social justice” strip whole populations from nations; he had witnessed members of his own generation embrace fascism and members of the succeeding generation embrace Marxist solutions; he had witnessed the tremendous sway of Freud and Jung, which had pointed the way to so many blind alleys for so many writers of so-called Modernist sensibilities.

Revisiting Eliot’s works—and being able to do so with Kirk’s invaluable guidance—serves to remind readers that nurturing

one’s mind also nurtures one’s character, and that chasing after utopian goals as ideologues often do is a fool’s errand. As Kirk wrote about Eliot’s masterpiece, “The Four Quartets”:

Ideology, it must be remembered, is the attempt to supplant religious dogmas by political and scientific dogmas. If one’s first premise is that religion must be a snare and a delusion, for instance, then it follows that Eliot becomes an enemy to be assaulted, rather than a pilgrim whose journey one may admire—even if one does not believe in the goal of that quest. Truly there exists such a state as the invincible ignorance of the learned. If Liberalism, or Socialism, or Communism, has become a god-word, not to be questioned; if Science has become an uncritical faith, amounting really to Scientism—then the captive of ideology will be unable to read with understanding what Eliot wrote painfully and carefully.

Both Kirk and Eliot understood that there is no terrestrial paradise, only that which exists in the hereafter. The best one can hope for is a world that cherishes its traditions, holds on to them, nurtures them, and passes them on to one’s immediate community, family, and the world-at-large. This is a world that constantly renews itself not through revolution, but through regular revisits to those texts that reveal the best of humanity’s thoughts and practices guided by a moral imagination that acknowledges something greater than the

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whims of the individual, something more honorable than political ideologies, something that places humanity under the rubric of the Divine to keep in check the arrogance of earthbound makers—those artists, intellectuals, and leaders who cease placing themselves as creations of something bigger, something more noble, something beyond even the best human minds to fully comprehend.

Lacking this, we are ideologically hide-bound, pushing our personal agendas in attempts to reverse the Fall and reclaim an earthly paradise.

Lacking this, we find ourselves morally bankrupt—enslaved by our own appetites, greed, lusts and desires; subject to not only the bankruptcy of our financial and business institutions, but cultural bankruptcy as well—the decadence of what now passes for art and entertainment and the horrors perpetrated from one to another on an hourly basis.

Lacking this, we are Eliot's "Hollow Men," manifested in the evils of socialism espoused by George Bernard Shaw, Lenin, and Marx; the atheism proudly defended by Bertrand Russell; the dystopian visions of H.G. Wells—and for the rest of us the myriad of social and political correctives and their unforeseen consequences generations later. And, as Eliot concluded in that poem: "This is how the world ends. Not with a bang but a whimper." For, when the moral compass is bent, it no longer serves as a trusted guide through the troubles that demand a moral response.

Bruce Edward Walker is manager of communications for the Mackinac Center's Property Rights Network.

Double-Edged Sword: *The Power of the Word*

Psalm 94:14,15

For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance. But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it.

So often in life we feel alone, neglected, and forgotten. Even in crowds an individual can feel isolated, excluded, and supremely unimportant, sometimes through no fault of his or her own. Yet worse, often we are unfairly wronged by people who are supposed to be friends and loved ones, or we are persecuted and tormented by foes. The 94th Psalm is an appeal by the psalmist for the Lord to be a judge and to intercede on behalf of his people.

The English evangelist, Charles Spurgeon, declared of the 14th verse of the Psalm: "If any of you are deeply troubled, I counsel you to get a hold of this promise! Perhaps it seems to you as if two seas of sorrow had met around you and that you were in a whirlpool of trouble. Then I say again, lay hold of this text and grip it firmly." Those who are faithful and devoted to the Lord through the ages have asked, "Why does God allow the wicked to prosper?" While our Lord may allow evil deeds to go unpunished for a time and allow pain and correction for his own people, he never casts them aside or forsakes them.

There is a particularly beautiful passage in the 9th chapter of John's Gospel illustrating God's intercession for his people. Jesus and his disciples were walking along, and they came upon a man who was born blind. At that time, it was common to believe a person's physical infirmity was the result of that person's sin or was inherited from the sin of his or her ancestors. His disciples asked him who had sinned "that he was born blind?" Jesus responded, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life."

Jesus, of course, healed the man, and the Gospel writings are beautifully filled with accounts of Jesus's earthly ministry. Christ sought out the destitute, the sick, the lonely, and the marginalized. The ministry and intercession of Christ is the greatest assurance that the Father has not cast aside or forsaken his people. It is why so many saints in Christianity have found inspiration and transformation where others could only find despair. The life, death, and resurrection of Christ testifies to the power of God in the present now and through all time. Those that will be cast aside are the ones who mock what is right and hurl insults at the Lord; they are lovers of worldly things and worldly principles, their lives are only for this world. Their joy and strength subsides for only a fleeting moment, but for those who put their trust and joy in the Lord; the psalmist also declares God will turn their "mourning into dancing."



Governor Sanford brings horse and buggy to the South Carolina Statehouse.

"The role of government is to promote, in my view, individual freedom."

will have big problems coming our way. The other point is you can only borrow so much at the individual level, the corporate level, and even at a governmental level before the chickens come home to roost. And I think if we're not at, we're very near, the tipping point where we begin to undermine the value of every dollar that's held by Americans. We can suffer a dollar crash even now. We could suffer under a crippling load of debt that our kids and grandkids would have to deal with. So I just think that, yeah, there's some much bigger issues besides the im-



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their own policies?

The answer is yes. That which is unsustainable is going to end. And so for instance California government grew by 95 percent over the last ten years. Federal government grew by about 73 percent. So you have state government that has grown at an even faster rate than the federal government. You have a state government that has gone out and issued long-term debt to cover the actual operations of government over the last couple years. It's not sustainable. The idea is that you can just throw some federal money in to that unsustainable mix. But all you do is delay big structural reforms that are absolutely essential to California, for instance, being on firm financial footing. And this notion of mandating over a bad situation ultimately generally makes the situation worse. So, yeah, I do think it postpones the day of reckoning. And

frankly makes the day of reckoning worse.

The line of business people asking for government bailout help seems to get longer by the day, how can you say no when jobs may be on the line?

mediacy of the economy that go to the long term again viability of our Republic.

A lot of state governors are lining up for federal bailout money. Won't this simply postpone the day of reckoning that some states need to face because of

The role of government is to promote, in my view, individual freedom. In other words, we have a governmental apparatus that is legitimate in nature in as much as it is to maximize one's individual freedom. There are other folks who believe in the idea of a nanny state, and believe government is there to take care of your different needs, cradle-to-grave, chief among them being employment. Rather, government is there to create a foundation by which private sector can grow and create employment opportunities. Its job is not to create employment itself as I see it. And so I would say, yes, they're lining up. There's an article in today's paper about car rental companies now lining up for a piece of the bailout funding. There was another article I saw where credit unions were getting money they've never gotten before. So, yes, there's going to be an endless list. And it is again going to get to the point of the absurd before this thing is over and done. And the fact that

"The bottom line here is that as a country, as businesses, as individuals, we got way ahead of ourselves in spending."

the list is growing longer shows what a fallacy it is to think that government can change economic laws.

We seem to have lost sight of the virtue of self-restraint.

The bottom line here is that as a country, as businesses, as individuals, we got way ahead of ourselves in spending. Debt has gone three times GDP in the world in the last fifteen years. We've been on a spending binge. And if you get ahead of yourself with regard to spending, you're going to have to deal with the other side of the binge. And no government program, no government bailout, no government stimulus is going to prevent

continued on pg 12

you from that economic reality. Reality is always reality. And so what we need to do is make sure we get back to the firm footing and then let the markets begin to rebuild. You can't stop—you may try—what's unfolding. That's just because we loaded up too much debt. And if you're overleveraged, you have got to get back to that point where you're the sustainable rate of leverage and we're not there yet.

You've also said that the Obama victory was not a repudiation of conservative principles but a rejection of Republicans who failed to live up to them. Do you see any sign that con-

review. You look hard at yourself when you've failed. There's not a lot of self-

"It needs to be based on an advance and adherence to free market capitalistic principles...."

analysis that often times goes with victory. But there's a whole lot of self-analysis that goes when things haven't gone so well. So I would say time will tell. But I don't think they're there yet.



Governor Sanford calls on General Assembly to pass a budget that checks government growth.

We read in Proverbs, "Where there is no vision, the people perish. But he that keeps the law, happy is he." What new vision grounded in either principle or moral law should conservatives be offering America right now?

I would say that we got to go back to the basics. And the vision would be for a prosperous, competitive America in what has

do directly. Sir Alex Francis Taylor studied history for all of his life. When he came to the end of his life, the quote attributed to him was that a democracy can not exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until voters discover that they can vote for themselves, largess of the public treasury with a result that democracy always fails under loose fiscal policy and is generally followed by dictatorship. The average age of the world's great civilizations has been 200 years for a nation to progress to a sequence from bondage to spiritual faith, spiritual faith to great courage, great courage to liberty, liberty to abundance, abundance to selfishness, selfishness to complacency, complacency to apathy, apathy to dependence. And from dependence back again into bondage. And so what I'm saying is some of what's going on here is probably a reflection of where we are as a people. And so the vision we need is about going back to the principles that made this country great, those things that Taylor talks about starting this timeline of spiritual faith and great courage, liberty, and how that leads to abundance. You have got to go back to the original three I think to really see the kind of renewing in America that a lot of people are thirsting for.

The religious views of candidates and their support among various faith traditions

servatives are ready to repudiate the culture of corruption we've witnessed in Washington in recent years?

"I would say that we got to go back to the basics. And the vision would be for a prosperous, competitive America..."

I don't think they are there yet. The good news is you do self-assessment. You do

become a very, very competitive global world. It needs to be based on an advance and adherence to free market capitalistic principles, and on maximizing the sphere of individual freedom. I suspect there's a moral component or faith-based component to all that as well. But that's probably more the role of the church than it is something the government can



played a big role in the 2008 presidential race. Is this a good thing?

It is. But I don't know if it was more window dressing than not. Obama had Rick Warren speak at the inauguration, and then got some guy of another persuasion to give the benediction. I don't think you want it as an accoutrement. I think that you want it to show up in policy. In other words, conversation is certainly an important starting point. It can't be the ending point.

When it's convenient, many politicians say they can't bring their own religious views to bear on important issues because they represent all the people. What's your view?

I don't agree with that. What people

"I said, 'look, I'm not trying to offend anybody. But if that's my personal faith, I can say what I want to say.'"

are sick of is that no one will make a stand. The bottom line in politics is, I think, at the end of the day to be effective in standing for both the convic-

tions that drove you into office and the principles that you outlined in running. And that is not restrained to simply the

fore men that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father that's in heaven." Hopefully, by the way in which you act. The way in which you make decisions. They're going to see that something's there. I would also say the Bible says in Revelation, "Be hot. Be cold. But don't be lukewarm" [Rev. 3:15]. And there's too many political candidates who walk around completely in the middle—completely in neutral. With regard not only to faith, but with regard to policy. And that's what people are sick of. Everything's gotten so watered down. So I have people come to me frequently saying, "Look, I voted for you. In fact, I completely disagree with you on these different stands over here. But at least I know where you stand." And so I would say it's a mistake to confine one's belief to only matters of government. If you have a religious view, it's incumbent upon you and it's real to have that. The Bible talks about the fruit of the spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control. There ought to be certain things that are clearly observable by your actions. I remember when I first gave a Christmas address, a



Governor Mark Sanford speaks at the 2003 Carol Lighting Ceremony.

world of Caesar, it applies to what you think is right and wrong and everything in between. Now we all get nervous about the people who simply wear it on their arm sleeve to sort of prove that they've got that merit badge. But I think the Bible says, "Let your light so shine be-

candle lighting event on the state house capitol. And people were freaking because they said, "You can't say Jesus." I said, "Look, I'm not trying to offend anybody. But if that's my personal faith, I can say what I want to say. I'm going to say what I want to say." I'm not going to be rubbing anybody's face in it. But I say you can't dance around that which you really believe. And so I'd say we need people who are more bold in taking stands on all kinds of different things.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn [1918-2008]

One word of truth shall outweigh the whole world.

Toward the close of his 1970 Nobel Prize lecture, Alexander Solzhenitsyn affirmed the power of literature “to help mankind, in these its troubled hours, to see itself as it really is, notwithstanding the indoctrinations of prejudiced people and parties.” In this, the great man affirmed the power of literature to communicate the moral truths of our lives, our societies, across all national and ethnic boundaries. Solzhenitsyn, perhaps known by most as a Soviet dissident, was nonetheless an artist of great distinction who heroically exposed the lies at the heart of Marxism-Leninism and the near destruction of traditional Russian society and faith communities at the hands of the Soviets.

Solzhenitsyn took a sledgehammer to the crumbling foundations of the Soviet system and, more than any other single person, was responsible for its collapse. Indeed, his artistic mission was to chronicle—in works such as *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, *Cancer Ward*, *The First Circle* and *The Gulag Archipelago*—the catastrophe that the Bolshevik revolution and Soviet repression wrought on Russia. Solzhenitsyn never forgot the injustice of his own imprisonment in the Soviet Gulag and the stories of those he met there.

In his works, their sacrifices would not be forgotten. As he said in his powerful Nobel lecture (smuggled out of the Soviet Union in 1972 and published to a sensational reception all over the world), violence—both physical and spiritual—cannot ultimately stand against the truth. “And no sooner will falsehood be dispersed than the nakedness of violence will be revealed in all its ugliness—and violence, decrepit, will fall,” he wrote.

Exiled from the Soviet Union in 1974, Solzhenitsyn soon settled in the United States. But the Western liberal elites, feeling the writer’s withering condemnation, were quick to turn on him.

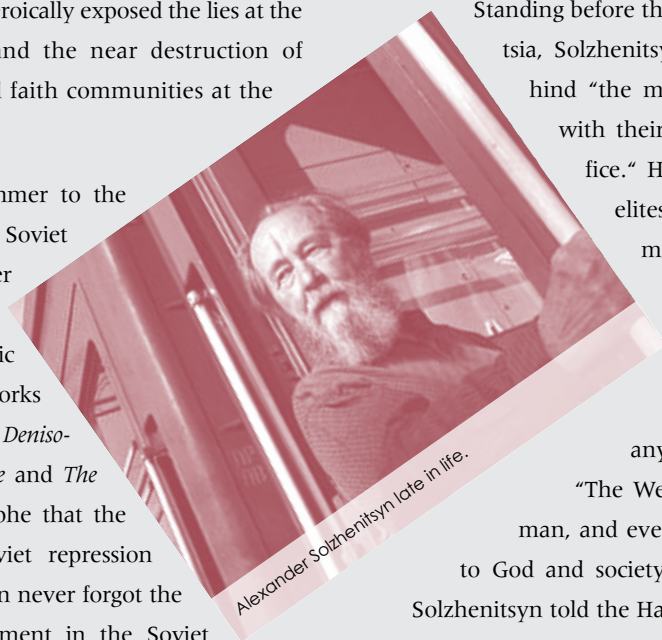
Scholars Edward E. Ericson and Daniel J. Mahoney recounted how journalist Jeri Laber, who in 1972 had praised Solzhenitsyn as a person and a writer, in 1974 declared his art dull and his politics reactionary. Her memorable generalization: “He is not the ‘liberal’ we would like him to be.”

What would she have thought of Solzhenitsyn’s famous 1978 commencement address at Harvard where he catalogued the West’s failings, including rampant materialism, the superficiality of the media, and the moral cowardice of intellectuals?

Standing before the cream of the Cambridge intelligentsia, Solzhenitsyn accused the West of leaving behind “the moral heritage of Christian centuries with their great reserves of mercy and sacrifice.” He took the political and intellectual elites to task for cowardice, a “lack of manhood” in its dealings with international aggressors and terrorists. He lamented the “boundless space” that the West had provided for human freedom without making any distinctions for human decadence.

“The West has finally achieved the rights of man, and even to excess, but man’s responsibility to God and society has grown dimmer and dimmer,” Solzhenitsyn told the Harvard crowd.

As a boy, Solzhenitsyn was deeply influenced by his Aunt Irina, who instilled in him a love of literature and of Russian Orthodoxy. But he drifted away from the Christian faith under the spell of state indoctrination in Marxism-Leninism. It was his experience with the realities of the labor camps that brought him to his *metanoia*, the change of mind that put him on the road to repentance. “He returned with adult thoughtfulness to the Christian worldview of his rearing,” Ericson and Mahoney wrote. “Solzhenitsyn’s mature articulation of Christian truths was deeply informed by his experience in the prison camps. There he witnessed human nature in extremis and learned about the heights and depths of the human soul.”





The Envy Trap

It is one of the great puzzles, true throughout all human history, that during an economic downturn, people turn on the rich. They call for them to be taxed, harassed, beaten, and jailed. Because they have money

when others are losing money, envy is unleashed and encouraged by the political establishment. It amounts to a kind of lashing out at the most conspicuous target, even though doing so won't actually accomplish anything.

On the face of it, this should be obvious. In hard economic times, the goal should not be to harm the rich but create conditions that enable more people to become rich. Punishing those who have created and accumulated wealth doesn't do this. In fact, it does the opposite. It sends the signal that the creation and accumulation of wealth will not be tolerated—and this is exactly the opposite signal that an economy in recession needs.

There are additional problems with this impulse. The rich in a market economy are the main holders and providers of the capital needed to regenerate a growing prosperity. I am not talking about the “trickle down” theory that is so often berated by the opponents of the market economy. I am speaking here of the economic reality that the wealthiest sectors of society are those responsible for the creation of new jobs, the provision of new investments, and the funding of entrepreneurial projects that generate new wealth that benefits us all.

Some people are under the illusion that if we just expropriate the wealth of the richest one percent, society will find itself with all needs met. This is a fantastic illusion that amounts to burning the wood that builds the house in order to provide warmth on a cold day. The effects are temporary, and then you find that you have a bigger problem to deal with in the long run.

There is also the charitable sector to think about. Foundations, which are funded by the rich, have been seriously harmed during the downturn. Their funding is off by as much as half, and this has wrought massive upheaval in the charitable sector. Many charities are going out of business at the very time when they are most needed. For both the receivers and providers of

charitable services, this has created an environment of crisis.

There is a danger here that what is a crisis for the nonprofit sector offers an opportunity for the government to build the welfare state. We could end up with a situation very much like Europe today, where government provision has crowded out a once vibrant charitable sector. In Europe, the ethic of giving money to good causes has been harmed by this intervention, and this is one reason that charities have such a difficult time starting up and thriving there.

The United States has always been different, but the trajectory right now doesn't look good. Attacking the rich and taxing them even more threatens the life of the foundations that are already hurting. It could end in the destruction of an important sector of the economy that provides funding for millions of charitable ventures. For this reason, an attack on the rich really does result in an attack on the poor, the middle class, and everybody else.

So it is not just the rich who have an interest in protecting the right to earn and accumulate wealth. Every house of worship, hospital, school, shelter, symphony, and educational scholarship fund also has an interest in this cause. The whole of society, in a market economy, benefits from its wealthiest members.

But do the rich share some of the blame for the current crisis? Of course there are some that do. In any large social changes, the people with financial means turn out to be the largest actors. But that observation provides no case for expropriating people as a class.

In his parables, Jesus frequently told stories involving wealth. There were bad rich people in his stories, but there were also good ones: the merchant who traded pearls, the owner of the vineyard, the master who taught his servants to be good custodians of the money with which he entrusted them. It is not the case that the wealthiest were always evil. They were also great benefactors to society and vehicles through which holy lessons were learned.

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