

Christian Reconstruction

Isaiah 61:4

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Who Is Calling the Shots?

by Gary North

In *Your Dominion Strategies* (March 1986) when asked if it is proper for Christians to work for a Rev. Moon-controlled business you said "no." If that is true, then we should not work with any business organization or accept funds from same that disagrees with our epistemology. True?! Even Howard Ruff? I mean anyone.

I am a painting contractor in Northern Virginia. I do business with unbelievers that are my general contractors. By your answers, I cannot sign a contract to do their painting. To carry your thinking even further, I ask you this: "Do you ask your subscribers if they are of your theology before you accept funds from them?" Wouldn't this constitute being "unequally yoked"? The implications of *your* presuppositions are obvious. Now I realize this will never reach the D.S. page, but I do expect to see a much more detailed answer soon.

Smarty Pants

You're correct on one point: you won't see my response in *Dominion Strategies*. When I get a truly wrongheaded, rhetorical, head-in-the-sand, defiant, "you don't know what you're talking about"-type letter, I am willing to devote a whole issue of *Christian Reconstruction* to it.

The letter-writer is playing rhetorical games, but for the sake of argument, let us consider what he is trying to say.

1. North says not to work for Rev. Moon.
2. This implies that Christians shouldn't work for anyone who isn't a Christian
3. It further implies that we should not work for non-theonomic, non-Van Tillian employers ("epistemology" is a big word).
4. We would all starve if we took North's advice.
5. Therefore. . . .

There is no explicit "therefore" in the letter. Its line of argumentation implies, however, that my original premise is incorrect, and therefore it is all right after all to work for Moonies.

Two can play this rhetorical game. The man works for non-Christian general contractors. He thinks this is fine. He sees no reason not to, but he concludes that if my position were true, he would not in good conscience be able to do it.

Fine; let us push our letter-writer a bit farther down his self-selected rhetorical path. Say that his general contractor hires himself out to build a business office. The office is being built by the Pornographic, Abortionist, Prostitution, Homosexual, Transvestite, Communist, Baal-Worshipping Church of Northern Virginia. Since our painting contractor lives in Virginia, this church isn't allowed to incorporate, but

it is still tax exempt.

This "church" then takes out an ad in the local newspaper. "We're for freedom. We want everyone to do his own thing in life. And we're hiring Christians to do all the work on our building, since they honor the Protestant work ethic and will build a safe and secure structure for worshipping. Come on down and celebrate communion the old-fashioned, Cannaanite way!"

Would our letter-writer have a slight twinge of conscience about running down to take their money? From the tone of the letter, he wouldn't hesitate. After all, big bucks are involved, so make hay while the sun shines, and besides, he plans to tithe his portion to his local church.

But if he would even think twice about it, he would have to enter the realm of **casuistry**, the ethical field that involves applying Christian principles to real-world decisions. So for his sake, we need to look at the Bible in order to discover some basic principles.

The Hire of a Whore

Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the Lord thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the Lord thy God (Deut. 23:18). The biblical rule against using income gained from immoral purposes is clear: God does not allow anyone to pay a vow to His church with money that has been gained from an abominable activity. In this verse are listed two capital crimes. But the general principle derived from this case law is that income gained from any activity that is specified as an abomination before God cannot be used to support God's church.

First, you cannot pay your tithe or required vow with money gained from such activities. Second, you do owe tithe money earned from your work. Conclusion: do not derive your income from abominable activities.

So far, the issue is not epistemology; it is morality. I am only establishing the general proposition that money gained from some kinds of income sources is illegitimate, and that the church should not support its activities from donations from members whose income comes from such abominable sources.

We can safely extend this to say that churches should not operate a chain of whorehouses. By implication, they should not buy the stocks of pornography publishing empires. They should not buy a mutual fund that invests in pornography empires.

Would our letter-writer have any objections so far? I trust not. Anyone who reads the Bible and takes it seriously knows that there are certain sources of income that Christians cannot legitimately use to promote the kingdom of God.

He Who Pays the Piper

Can a Christian legitimately serve under a military commander who is not a forthright follower of Van Til's epistemology? The question is rhetorical. Of course he can. He is in service to his country; the chain of command does not allow for refusal to serve based on epistemology.

Can a Christian pay money to a brain surgeon to operate on his brain if the surgeon is a Jew? Or would he prefer to get his brain worked on by a Christian eye-ear-nose-and-throat physician instead?

When you buy the professional services from a skilled technician, there is no biblical principle that says that you need to test him theologically before you agree to deliver the service, unless there is some missing bit of evidence concerning his ability to perform the service that might be revealed somehow by a quick examination of his theology.

If I were dying, I would pay an abortionist physician money to save my life, if there were no other physicians around to save me. I would not choose to go to an abortionist to save my life if I could find another physician. Why? Because of the bad testimony involved. Nevertheless, I would pay him to save my life in a crisis. Why not? He would be saving the life of a man who will be out there picketing against his abortion clinic. He would be saving the life of a man who would, if he had the opportunity, vote for the public execution of convicted abortionists. I would be his "epistemological" problem; he wouldn't be mine.

Who is in charge? I am in charge of hiring his services for my purposes. He is in charge of delivering the services. If all he wants is money, and what I want is longer life, so as to help put him out of business later on, then I am in charge. I am the one with the long-term dominion strategy.

Calling the Tune

What about the anti-abortion surgeon who is asked to operate on an abortion-selling professional colleague? Should he say no to the request? I would refuse, if I knew the abortionist had another physician to operate. I would give him my testimony when I refused. But if it were a life-and-death situation, and I was the only surgeon around, I would operate. I would honor the Hypocratic oath I took in medical school; I would not spit on it the way the abortion-performing physicians do. I would not "accidentally" let the knife slip. It is not my job to kill him; that is the job of the civil government. Or God.

There is mutual dependence in a free market. No one has to dance to another man's tune. He can always forfeit the income that he might have earned by playing the tune.

But does playing the buyer's tune always involve becoming **ethically** subordinate to the other person? No. Economically subordinate, yes, but not ethically subordinate.

In the limited area of tune-playing, the money-income receiver becomes economically dependent to the extent that he has to perform the tune. But so does the buyer of tune-dancers. The seller of money and the seller of services are both sellers. The buyer of goods and the buyer of money are both buyers. There is **mutual dependence**. Each relies on the other economically.

The tune-player is to some extent also superior to the payer. He knows the tune. The buyer really wants to hear the tune. The more the buyer wants to hear the tune, the more influence over him the tune-player has . . . but **only in the very limited area of tune-playing**.

A Hidden Agenda

Do you imagine that the Soviet Union offers huge discounts to buyers of shipping facilities because the Soviet Union is profit-oriented, the same way Western Union is?

No, they offer huge discounts in order to capture control over the world's sea lanes. They want to create dependence on the Soviet Union.

The result of this Communist-subsidized discount shipping service is that the Soviet Union now has about the largest commercial (ultimately, anti-commercial) shipping fleet on earth. By making the world economically dependent on the Soviet Union, the Soviet leaders buy cooperation. They may buy a lot of cooperation someday.

Should the United States government pass a law against the use of U.S. ports by Soviet merchant marine ships? As a military measure, this would seem wise. The point is, **there are hidden agendas in life**. What appears to be a short-term benefit (discount shipping) is in fact a military tactic to destroy the independence of the West. There is a subsidized, systematic, Soviet General Staff strategy lying behind the "free" profits offered to the West's shippers.

Once we admit that such hidden agendas exist, we must begin to make real-world judgments. The individual who is being offered a **subsidized** "free good" needs to ask himself this crucial question: **Why am I being offered this subsidy?** This is not a profit-seeking offer that is designed to benefit both participants in a voluntary exchange. This is not a case of mutual economic dependence. This seems to be a case of **buying my dependence**. We might call it a **pay-off**.

Any Christian businessman or pastor or non-profit-foundation president who cannot understand the difference between mutual economic dependence and being bought off doesn't deserve to be the head of anything more important than running a mop through the organization's rest rooms.

The Moonies' Strategy

I have no access to the closed meetings of "Rev." Moon and his accomplices. I do know that he is losing millions of dollars year after year with the *Washington Times*. I do know that he is pouring money into prominent New Christian Right foundations. I have this sneaking suspicion that the money to fund these losses and donations does not come 100% from tithes of the members and the money coming in from the door-to-door sales of candles. It is that same suspicion I have that the Soviet Union isn't financing its merchant marine from the profits it makes on caviar sales to the West.

Someday, I expect the source of the funding to hit the papers someday—but not the *Washington Times*. If it does, and if this information becomes an embarrassment to those who are on the dole from the Unification Church, then those who have taken the money will find that it was very expensive money.

Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe candle-selling is incredibly profitable. Maybe caviar sales are the key to world dominion. Maybe elephants can fly higher than cows. Maybe. But as a man who has figured out that there are no free lunches in life, I will not take Moonie money or cooperate in any way with them.

Conclusion

We are not talking profit-seeking business deals. We are not talking about mutual economic benefits and mutual economic dependence. I am talking about a pay-off to keep silent on issues that deserve public criticism.

In short, use your good judgment. Don't become economically dependent on a theological enemy if that enemy appears to be buying more than the services that are being contracted for. If he is paying above-market prices to buy from you, or selling to you at below-market prices, be suspicious. There are no free lunches in life. He is probably buying more from you than the contract indicates.

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