

DOMINION STRATEGIES

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My Sunday School class is asking me, "What can we do about the mess we're in?" Any help you can give me in providing an answer would be greatly appreciated.

Christians need to get clear in their minds what the standards of 'messiness' are. A mess is an unpleasant set of external circumstances that is produced by God in response to people's ethical rebellion. There will always be messes for as long as there is sin. But a progressive reduction in sin is covenantally accompanied by a reduction of messes (Deut. 28:1-14).

The Christian today needs to function as a prophet did in the Old Testament: to proclaim the law of God, and to warn men of the coming judgment. The ultimate judgment is God's final judgment: the day of Satan's mess.

Messes are wonderful. They testify to a sovereign God who enforces the terms of His covenant. We should pray for messes, as David prayed in Psalm 83. The messes are designed for sin, just as hell is designed for Satan and his followers. Messes punish sin; we should pray for more messes in response to greater sin. We should also pray for a reduction of messes by means of a reduction in sin. We pray for covenantal cursings on evil men and actions, and blessings for the faithful.

Aside from Christians individually applying biblical law in their own personal lives, what can be done to effect changes in the increasingly unstable financial institutions of western civilization?

They should examine themselves to see in what areas of life they are most competent to exercise dominion. They should spend time and money to perfect these skills. Then they should enter whatever the competitive market is that determines who will become successful in the particular field. It maybe business. It maybe a profession. It maybe politics. The point is, it takes competence to exercise dominion. This requires self-discipline, prayer, and experience. It therefore requires that most elusive of human traits, patience. Joseph Schumpeter, one of the most honored economists of this century, once said that the personal factor which is most responsible for the failure of great men is their inability to wait.

Once Christians have begun to exercise dominion, the financial crises will begin to disappear. Until Christians do take dominion, we must pray for two simultaneous developments: the increase in responsibility and competence of Christians, and the increase in crises for God-haters. The only justification for praying for peace and prosperity for a humanist culture is to give Christians time to develop their skills. Sometimes, they need a push to get them started, just as pagans need a push to unseat them,

In short, enjoy the crises as best you can, get your finan-

cial house in order so they do not devastate you, and train yourself for service in some area of life. The way events are accelerating, you will have plenty of opportunities for service.

Can you explain postmillennialism, and the major issues it espouses?

Yes, i can. We win. They lose.

What did the tithe consist of in a Sabbath Year or in the Year of Jubilee?

Zero for farmers. There was no planting or harvesting. Everyone else paid.

What implications would this have in our current situation?

For the Year of Jubilee, none. There is no Year of Jubilee any more. It was a military spoils program for the conquest of Canaan. With respect to the Sabbatical Year principle, farmers should rotate their fields, leaving one-seventh of their land fallow each year. They would therefore tithe on any increase on the remaining six-sevenths. They would pay only on the increase. Their tithe would be one-seventh less than, full potential anti-sabbatarian production annually, instead of one-seventh less than full production per seven-year cycle. God gets the same percentage; the payment structure is different.

Please give your views on family planning and women working outside the home as addressed by Mary Pride in *The Way Home*. If I understand her correctly, she unequivocally states that participating in marital sex except for the purpose of procreation is sin (on the same level as bestiality, no less), and she believes no woman should ever make money outside the four walls of her home.

If Mrs. (or more likely, Miss) Pride has articulated such views, I would explain this in terms of her employment as an author (she apparently can do this inside her four walls, just so long as she doesn't go to the library to read anything serious about biblical ethics), and because of her desire as an author to increase the size of her potential audience. More babies mean more readers, etc.

With respect to her views on sexual activity, I can't imagine why a Protestant would believe such ideas. We are to multiply and fill the earth, but not necessarily by the year 2000. These days, I know of no married Roman Catholics and only a few Mormons who still take such views seriously, and it's an official part of their religion, not mine. Show me a Roman Catholic family or Mormon family with four kids

spaced two years apart and then no more kids, and I'll show you the circumstantial evidence.

With respect to her views on employment, this much I know the woman of Proverbs 31 was a skilled real estate speculator (v. 16), and I doubt that she made her evaluations inside her four walls.

Amateurs in biblical ethics enjoy telling people that they have a moral obligation to do all sorts of nutty things (or refrain from doing sensible things), knowing that hardly anyone will take their advice seriously. Then they sit back and wait. If something bad happens, they chortle: 'See, I told you what to do, but you didn't listen.' If nothing bad happens, they promise: 'But it *will* happen soon, and it will be a lot worse when it does because it hasn't happened yet.' They can't lose, and those who pay attention to them can't win.

What should the Christian **response** be to women who enter the commercial **labor** force?

"You're hired!"

One of the most positive developments of modern times is the advent of working wives. It has vastly increased the productivity of the **West**. **Women** have gone from **washer-women** to secretaries, and from secretaries to the **professions**. Spare me the vision of Phyllis **Schlaflly** in hair curlers and a housecoat, happily baking cookies.

Capitalism has produced labor-saving tools that have eased physical labor to historically unprecedented levels. This has freed people to increase their productivity to astounding heights. **Women** have participated in this liberation from physical bondage. They have discovered ways to serve the community that were undreamed of a century ago. They have also replaced men in lower-paid areas of the economy, thereby freeing up men to exercise dominion in ever-more productive ways. A few women have also forced men to compete on their once-restricted turf, which also benefits consumers. It never hurts consumers when market forces smash a monopoly. **Women** are doing what God intended them to do: to become **helpmeets**. What a lot of nay-sayers are complaining about is that they are getting paychecks for their efforts.

The problem is not "working wives" as such. The problem is mothers of young children who work outside the home, in a society in which grandmothers and maiden aunts are not at home to help out. What is needed is to implement new technologies that will enable women to remain home and still be part of the commercial labor force. These technologies are on the horizon. The revolution is coming. Per capita output, and therefore per capita wealth, will rise when it comes.

Women who enter the work force today maybe tempted to become adulterers, or they may become "upplty" to their husbands, or they may commit other autonomy-related sins. There is no escape from the facts of ethical life: as your productivity increases, your opportunity to sin in new and creative ways also increases. The way to handle productivity and the wealth that productivity produces is to honor God's law.

The answer is the gospel. The answer is not a return to mud huts.

Aren't children cheated by women who work **outside** the home?

Are sons cheated by fathers who work outside the home? A century ago, and from time immemorial, most men were farmers. They worked in the fields with their sons. **Women** worked at home with their daughters. No longer. So what?

A lot of naive Christians talk as though a woman's place is in the home because children need attention. Very young children do need attention by mothers. Christian mothers with very young children should normally stay at home. But families are getting smaller, and children eventually go to school. What then?

Neither sons nor daughters are taught mainly by parents. They are taught by teachers and television. It would do far more good for the kingdom of God for parents to pull the plug on the TV than to keep mom out of the work force if she wants to work, or the family needs the money to put the children in a Christian school. **Wives** who stay home and clean house while their children are being kidnapped by humanists in the public schools are hardly models of biblical morality. While the wives clean house at home, the humanists are cleaning house on the Christians.

Should children be **educated exclusively** at home?

Puritan families in England sent sons away to become apprentices when the boys were as young as eight years old. They distrusted their own softness in dealing with sons. They also wanted superior specialized training for sons. Daughters sometimes were never taught to read. Today we send children of both sexes to school. I think today's approach is better.

A school is simply an extension of the principle of the tutor. The tutor, in turn, is an extension of the family. A family used to hire a tutor to teach a child or two. Only very rich families could afford this. So innovative tutors who couldn't get jobs got **smart**: they convinced several families to pay them a **little** each month, and thereby made tutorials **cost-effective**. This is the division of labor principle. It gets the educational benefits that were once the exclusive privilege of the rich into the hands of the middle class and the **future-oriented, self-sacrificing poor**. This is where these **benefits** belong.

At very early ages, children can learn immense amounts. I have seen a program that gets them reading at age two, as well as adding, multiplying, and dividing. But few mothers can match the efficiency of professional teachers once the child reaches the fourth or fifth grade. High school is even tougher. **We** must acknowledge the reality of the division of labor. At some point, parents have to bow out. "**Teach your child brain surgery**" is not a home school course I intend to buy.