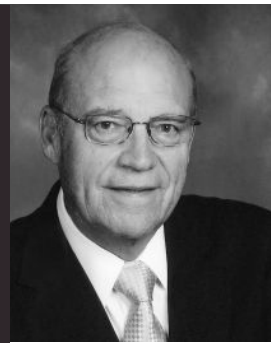




Dr. Fred Schwarz

The Schwarz Report

65 Years Defending Our Christian Faith



Dr. David Noebel

From Plato to Utopia to Marx by D. Parker

February 2025

It's always been a perennial lie of the political left to falsely claim they're all about fresh ideas, bringing in "new" winds of change, and that communism has never really been tried before. Anyone with a passing familiarity with history knows that's a colossal pile of B.S., but if they can bluff their way along, they can hawk their societal slavery once again. The strains of collectivist control of the economy were in the cards in the last election, and if they had won, they would be crowing about how we're all commies now.

Thankfully they lost, and they lost "bigly," given the long odds with the national socialist media and every leftist celebrity on their side, so now is the time to take a good hard look at the damage their genocidal dreams have wrought upon humanity over 400 years and finally declare enough is enough. It's time to make the case for burying these collective ideologies for good.

Our headline harkens back to the 1980s; back then it was President Ronald Reagan, Pope John Paul II, and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher setting the communism of the old USSR and the Warsaw Pact on a path of destruction. The problem is that like roaches after atomic testing, leftists will come back propagandizing that the same ancient ideas are brand spanking new, untried, and untested, so there's a good chance they'll "work" this time even though they've failed, untold times before. Recall the Cold War boast of Nikita Khrushchev from 1956: "Whether you like it or not. History is on our side. We will bury you!"

We now know that history isn't on their side, we also know that there is a very high cost to humanity with their Utopian fantasies. Fantasies that can never work, but always end with a mountain of corpses.

If there is one common thread running through collectivist thought down through the millennia, it's an upper-crust, self-styled intellectual authority class that appears to think it knows better than the rest of humanity, and thus should rule over them. Thus, this intellectual authority class develops collectivist systems to control everyone else and bring about a perfect Utopia—at least, that's been the sales pitch for the past 2,000 years.

These communist concepts were discussed in Plato's *Republic*, composed sometime between 380 to 350 BC, or approximately 2,400 years ago. These concepts were referred to in the 1516 publication *Utopia*, with the concept of a socialist society appearing 300 years before Karl Marx.

We can skip ahead in time to the early 20th Century when leftists didn't understand why the "proletariat" around the world didn't follow the lead of the revolting Bolsheviks. They didn't understand why the people rejected what they were offering them. Why didn't Europe accept Nazism? Why didn't the people want the intellectuals of the Khmer Rouge who had spent time in elite Parisian universities and written doctoral dissertations about how great socialism is?

We saw this in the last election with whole swaths of groups who were normally the target of leftist vote-buying efforts, voting instead for President-Elect Donald Trump. Finally, we saw an example from today in which Fidel's grandson Sandro Castro angrily defends his right to party like a rockstar—the epitome of the far-left communist ruling class.

The far-left authoritarian ruling class *always* wants to impose its collectivist ideologies (communism, fascism, socialism, etc.) upon the people and rule with an iron fist—for their own good, of course. Remember, these are people who pretend to be for "progress" with concepts that are over 2,000 years old. How exactly is that progressive?

The natural response from some will be that the people should be free to make this choice. Except that, we know from experience, leftists are liars. Again, their perennial favorite is that "communism has never really been tried before" (or some variation thereof). This deprives the people of that choice because they aren't fully informed of the situation.

The left also uses force to impose their collectivist ideologies, taking the question of choice out of the equation. The fiction of "democratic" socialism quickly devolves into mob rule, negating any further decision-making abilities on the part of the people.

There are numerous reasons to bury communism for good and see economic liberty flourish around the world. Countries based on economic freedom aren't aggressive toward each other, making for a much more stable planet. Economic liberty always favors a clean environment along with protecting common sense human rights. Can any of the collectivist countries even get close to offering those benefits?

We're limited in space, so we'll outline the primary reason these hideous collectivist ideologies need to go away and be shunned for all eternity. One reason that distinguishes the collectivist authoritarian abominations from the individual liberty-based, economic liberty systems. And it's that collectivist systems require force (and its mental equivalent—lies) to operate.

Force is the primary differentiating factor between communistic (or whatever) systems and those based on economic liberty. It's the only way those systems can work, and it's the reason they need to finally be on the ash heap of history. Because in the 400 years of failure from the concepts that "have never really been tried before" billions of people have been oppressed, and untold millions (we know that at least over 100 million) have been thrown into cattle cars, shipped to concentration camps and gulags, and murdered.

It's been 400 years of running the same experiment on something that "has never really been tried before"—over and over, in every country, and under every possible condition, and it's failed to work every time. The result has been misery and mass murder. Experiments where a country has been divided, with economic liberty on one side, and socialistic slavery on the other. Where you could easily see which side was free by looking at which side of the wall had graffiti, and which side had anti-personnel mines with trip wires so sensitive that they needed an extra wire so birds wouldn't set them off.

It's more than obvious that we must be rid of these ideologies, humanity can no longer afford their cost in lives and liberty.

—*American Thinker*, December 6, 2024

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If I were the Devil

by Paul Harvey

Many years ago, a courageous and devoted American broadcast a message to his listeners that served as a harbinger for where the nation was headed societally and culturally. In his broadcast he revealed what he would do if he were "the devil," to destroy our culture and undermine our collective societal standards and social mores. That man was Paul Harvey Aurandt, known to the nation simply as Paul Harvey, and his message not only has proven to be prophetic, but serves as a warning to Americans today of where our society continues to trend.

"If I Were The Devil": A Warning to America From Paul Harvey

If I were the devil ... If I were the Prince of Darkness, I'd want to engulf the whole world in darkness. And I'd have a third of its real estate, and four-fifths of its population, but I wouldn't be happy until I had seized the ripest apple on the tree—Thee. So I'd set about however necessary to take over the United States. I'd subvert the churches first—I'd begin with a campaign of whispers. With the wisdom of a serpent, I would whisper to you as I whispered to Eve: "Do as you please."

To the young, I would whisper that "The Bible is a myth." I would convince them that man created God instead of the other way around. I would confide that what's bad is good, and what's good is "square." And the old, I would teach to pray, after me, "Our Father, which art in Washington..."

And then I'd get organized. I'd educate authors in how to make lurid literature exciting, so that anything else would appear dull and uninteresting. I'd threaten TV with dirtier movies and vice versa. I'd pedal narcotics to whom I could. I'd sell alcohol to ladies and gentlemen of distinction. I'd tranquilize the rest with pills.

If I were the devil I'd soon have families at war with themselves, churches at war with themselves, and nations at war with themselves; until each in its turn was consumed. And with promises of higher ratings I'd have mesmerizing media fanning the flames. If I were the devil I would encourage schools to refine young intellects, but neglect to discipline emotions—just let those run wild, until before you knew it, you'd have to have drug sniffing dogs and metal detectors at every schoolhouse door.

Within a decade I'd have prisons overflowing, I'd have judges promoting pornography—soon I could evict God from the courthouse, then from the schoolhouse, and then from the houses of Congress. And in His own churches I would substitute psychology for religion, and deify science. I would lure priests and pastors into misusing boys and girls, and church money. If I were the devil I'd make the symbols of Easter an egg and the symbol of Christmas a bottle.

If I were the devil I'd take from those who have, and give to those who want until I had killed the incentive of the ambitious.

And what do you bet I could get whole states to promote gambling as the way to get rich? I would caution against extremes and hard work in Patriotism, in moral conduct. I would convince the young that marriage is old-fashioned, that swinging is more fun, that what you see on the TV is the way to be. And thus, I could undress you in public, and I could lure you into bed with diseases for which there is no cure. In other words, if I were the devil I'd just keep right on doing what he's doing."

Paul Harvey, good day."

—Illinois Fraternal Order of Police (www.ilfop.org)

The Institutes of Higher Leaning

by Molly Slag

As is well-known, politics is the art of influencing behavior. As is also well-known, America's institutions of higher education uniformly behave with a political orientation that renders them exponents of leftism, socialism, communism, and antisemitism.

President-Elect Donald Trump is determined to extinguish that behavior. He's identified a vehicle for doing so, too: The role played by educational accreditation agencies for colleges and universities under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-329).

Under the HEA, the Department of Education approves accrediting agencies that the Secretary of Education determines to be reliable authorities regarding the quality of education or training institutions of higher education provide. The Department then publishes a list of nationally recognized accrediting agencies.

Trump has clearly stated his plans for Higher Ed accreditation:

When I return to the White House, I will fire the radical left accreditors that have allowed our colleges to become dominated by Marxist maniacs and lunatics.

We will then accept applications for new accreditors who will impose real standards on colleges once again and once and for all.

These standards will include defending the American tradition and Western civilization, protecting free speech, and eliminating wasteful administrative positions that drive up costs incredibly.

When the new accreditors take office, their mission will be two-fold: political and academic. Their political

component will be to eliminate the Critical Race Theory, Diversity Equity & Inclusion, and antisemitism that have lately run riot on our college campuses.

The academic component of the accreditors' mission has, so far, received relatively less attention than the political component, but that oversight should be corrected. American Higher Ed is greatly in need of academic upgrades focused on five specific areas of coursework: English, Civics, Law, Logic, and Mathematics.

Now, to be sure, all colleges have these courses in their catalogs and may offer them occasionally, but few, if any, make these courses mandatory. But they should be mandatory classes that are required of all students to earn a sheepskin.

English language competency is the bottom-line foundation of academic achievement. Just as education is the bridge to the world, so English is the bridge to education. For a college to be accredited, English grammar, comprehension, and writing must be mandatory for all students. Of course, these classes would need to be stripped of the reading material that advances the alphabet soup of leftist beliefs (LGBTQ+, anti-Americanism, DEI, socialism, etc.).

Making civics mandatory is obviously necessary. But the Accreditors need to review the instructors, syllabi, and textbooks, as in the wrong hands a civics course can become propaganda for socialism.

The law requirement is not satisfied by the business department's business law course. What is needed here is a complete exploration of the American legal system taught by an experienced attorney.

As for logic, every college has in its catalog a course entitled "Introduction To Logic," but no college mandates it. That situation should be reversed. Every college should mandate logic for every student—real logic, not fuzzy or racially tinged logic.

Mathematics might be misunderstood as a vocational course, but it is not. Basic mathematics—algebra up to calculus—is fundamental to a student's academic maturity.

To gain some perspective on the above remarks, let us consider the intimate relationship between English, logic, math, and science.

As a point of departure, consider the dicta from the polymath Galileo Galilei, commonly known as the "father of modern science." Around the year 1600, Galileo intoned, "mathematics is the language of science" and "Mathematics is the language in which God has written the universe."

These dicta are fully accepted today without dispute and have spawned numerous books such as Mario Livio's *Is God a Mathematician?* and Sabine Hossendelder's *Lost in Math*.

Notably, these Galilean dicta immediately raise two follow-on questions:

(1) If math is the language of science, then what is the language of mathematics?

(2) Exactly what is mathematics?

Each of these two questions has a simple but perhaps surprising answer.

The surprising answer to the first question (What is the language of mathematics?) is at once both pedestrian and profound. The language of mathematics is English, German, Spanish, Chinese, etc.—that is to say, natural human language.

Every expression or equation in mathematics is symbolism for natural language. All mathematical gobbledygook is a compact rendition of natural human language.

One simple example is the sentence “Five plus three times some real number x is twenty-three,” which is rendered as the equation “ $3x+5=23$ ”. The symbolic form is a great convenience and can be manipulated per the rules of algebra—and it is understood across all spoken languages.

As for the second question (Exactly what is mathematics?), the answer is also pedestrian and profound: Mathematics is logic applied to an axiom system. As mathematics is logic, mathematics serves as a conduit for applying logic to problems, and approaching a problem mathematically brings logic to bear upon the problem. Therefore, the disciplined study of mathematics is training in the employment of logic.

This point is subtle and not always understood even by those one might expect to know it intuitively. In an essay entitled “The Unreasonable Effectiveness of Mathematics in the Natural Sciences,” Nobel prize-winning physicist Eugene Wigner wrote, “the enormous usefulness of mathematics in the natural sciences is something bordering on the mysterious and there is no rational explanation for it.”

There is no rational explanation for the enormous usefulness of mathematics in the natural sciences?! Might a rational explanation be formulated from the fact that mathematics is applied logic?

We are now at last in a position to understand the unique and intimate relation among language, logic, mathematics, and natural science. Natural science is applied mathematics; mathematics is applied logic; and logic is applied English. These four disciplines fit together like hand in glove. Upgrading Higher Ed requires upgrading these four disciplines. In that way, we will have taken a huge step toward Making America Great Again.

—*American Thinker*, November 27, 2024

Democratic Socialists of America

by Ronald Beaty

In the heart of American politics, an insidious ideology masquerades under the guise of progressivism, threatening the very foundations upon which our nation was built. The Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), with its burgeoning membership and increasing influence within the Democrat Party, is not just a political movement; it is a calculated assault on the American Dream, capitalism, and individual liberty.

From a conservative perspective, the DSA represents more than a mere divergence from traditional American values; it is ideological terrorism that seeks to dismantle the economic and social structures that have made the United States a beacon of freedom and prosperity.

The DSA’s core philosophy revolves around the notion that capitalism is inherently flawed, requiring replacement by a socialist state where the means of production are controlled by the government. This is not just a policy disagreement; it is an assault on the economic freedom that has enabled America to excel. The DSA’s push for policies like “Medicare for All” and a Green New Deal are cloaked in altruism but serve to centralize power, stifling innovation and personal initiative.

Imagine an economy where government dictates resource allocation, where the entrepreneurial spirit is suffocated by the weight of state mandates. The DSA would transform the economic landscape from one of opportunity into one of bureaucratic stagnation, where the only growth is in government and not in individual or collective wealth.

According to a report by the Heritage Foundation, the DSA’s policy proposals would lead to a significant increase in government spending and taxation, resulting in a substantial decrease in economic freedom.

The DSA’s foreign policy positions, particularly concerning Israel and globalism, reveal a troubling disdain for American sovereignty. Their support for the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel isn’t merely a critique of policy; it’s an alignment with forces hostile to American allies, signaling a readiness to sacrifice national interests at the altar of ideological purity.

Moreover, their advocacy for open borders under the guise of humanitarianism is a direct attack on the concept of a nation-state. By undermining border security, the DSA not only jeopardizes national security but also the cultural and legal integrity of the US, promoting a world where national identity is diluted in favor of a globalist utopia.

The DSA doesn't just aim to redistribute wealth; it seeks to redistribute thought. Their embrace of cultural Marxism, with its roots in critical theory, aims to dismantle traditional American values of individualism, meritocracy, and self-reliance. By promoting identity politics, they foster division, encouraging groups to see themselves as victims of a system designed to oppress rather than one that offers pathways to personal achievement.

This cultural assault is perhaps the most insidious, as it targets the psyche of America, aiming to reshape societal norms to fit a collectivist mold. In doing so, the DSA erodes the very ethos that encourages hard work, personal responsibility, and the pursuit of happiness as an individual right, not a collective obligation.

The DSA's own literature and statements from its leaders also underscore the threat it poses to American values and democracy. For instance, the DSA's former national director, Maria Svart, has stated that "socialism is not just an economic system, but a political and social system" that seeks to "transform" America. This vision of transformation is incompatible with the principles of individual liberty, limited government, and free markets that have always defined America.

Labeling the DSA as "ideological terrorists" isn't hyperbole. Terrorism, in its essence, uses fear and coercion to achieve political ends. The DSA, through its relentless critique of capitalism, its demonization of those who defend it, and its radical policy proposals, engages in a form of psychological warfare. They aim to instill a fear of economic collapse unless their vision is embraced, using this fear to coerce public opinion and policy.

Their tactics in protests, their influence in educational institutions, and their infiltration into the political mainstream are not just about advocacy; they are about transforming America into something unrecognizable to its founders and its citizens who cherish freedom.

The DSA's rise is not just a political challenge; it's a call to vigilance for every American who values the constitutional principles of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Their agenda is not one of reform but of revolution, where the end goal is not just to adjust the system but to upend it entirely.

We must recognize that the DSA's influence within the Democratic Party is not an innocuous shift to the left but a strategic move to normalize socialism. This isn't about dialogue or compromise; it's about understanding that the ideologies they promote are antithetical to the American way of life.

We cannot afford to see the DSA as merely another political group; we must see it for what it truly is—a

domestic enemy with the potential to unleash ideological terrorism on our soil, not through bombs, but through ballots.

The DSA's presence in American politics is a stark reminder of the vigilance necessary to protect our republic. Their vision of America is one where government control supersedes personal freedom, where collective identity trumps individual rights, and where economic equality is sought at the cost of innovation and prosperity.

It's time to critically engage with this threat, to educate our fellow Americans on the dangers of socialism, and to ensure that our political discourse does not become a conduit for ideologies that would dismantle the very essence of what makes America exceptional. The battle against the DSA is not just political; it's existential, demanding not just our attention but our action to preserve the American Dream for future generations.

—*American Thinker*, December 4, 2024

Thomas Lifson Says Good Bye

by Thomas Lifson

A number of readers have noted the absence of my byline on the *American Thinker* homepage, and those that investigated the "About Us" page saw that I am now credited as "Founder and Editor Emeritus." Some have written *AT* asking what this is all about.

I didn't want to distract from the campaign that concluded Tuesday, which I regarded as a battle to save the Republic, so I did not explain my departure to readers. Since that battle has concluded successfully (though control of the House of Representatives is still an open question), it is time to explain to our beloved community why I have bowed out and what it means for the future of *American Thinker*.

But first I must offer my own views of this site and its purpose. *American Thinker* was born of my conviction in the wake of the 9/11 attack that the grassroots conservative base was full of smart people whose voices remained invisible to the wider public. Among them were many who wanted and deserved a forum, but were unable to access a national platform. Why not start a place where people with good ideas and special insights arising from their life and professional experiences and accomplishments could find a home? I knew that many such people had ideas important to saving our country from the progressive takeover of our politics and institutions, even those who did not have confidence in their skills as writers. So a key to success

would be the ability to edit submissions and help those writers find their voices.

So, with the help of my friends Richard Baehr and Ed Lasky, both of them brilliant and extremely well-read political junkies, I started *American Thinker* 21 years ago. They helped me pay for the original software we needed and diligently wrote material for us on a daily basis while we built a readership, and others started sending us material for editing and publication.

For me, this initially meant starting my workday at 3 AM so as to be able to provide new content for the site by the time people in the Eastern Time Zone started reading. (That later switched to 1 AM, fully embedding me in the graveyard shift.)

Twenty-one years later, still evading the graveyard for the moment, it was time for me to leave. Thanks to the incredibly hard-working editors that have joined us (and persisted in the face of low pay and demanding work schedules), my efforts were no longer absolutely necessary. They were, to be frank, able to not just sustain *AT* but to improve it following my departure.

But to be fully honest, there was one more factor that actually determined my departure: my failing health. Without that factor, I probably would have held on, maybe far too long.

Like many people, I am loath to discuss the details of my health, so I will keep this very basic. I do not want to discuss details. Period.

But the reality is that I have a terminal disease, one that is incurable, and for which there are no promising remedies in the foreseeable future. I am getting the best medical care the world has to offer and have a supportive family and community environment. While there are degenerative effects of my disease and I have lost and will continue to lose physical strength, endurance, and vigor, I am not in pain. I have already lived well beyond the median life expectancy following diagnosis for my disease. Double, in fact, and still counting.

I am spending as much of my time left as possible in a state of gratitude—for the readers and writers and especially for the editors who have made *AT* what it is today, as well as for many other private blessings that I have enjoyed, too numerous to even begin mentioning.

If you are so inclined, I would be grateful for any prayers for my health, as well as for continued support of *American Thinker*. But beyond that, I neither need nor want anything related to my illnesses.

I take comfort that my departure was invisible and of zero concern to almost all readers. That is a tribute to the talent, energy, and diligence of the editors who are devoting themselves to *American Thinker*. And I am deeply grateful to them.

—*American Thinker*, November 7, 2024

Bible and Prayer in Schools

by E. Jeffrey Ludwig

In the late 1940s, Supreme Court Justice Hugo L. Black, in the case of *Everson v. United States*, took a quote from a letter written by Thomas Jefferson out of context and insisted that the wall of separation between church and state “should be high and impregnable.”

Despite some variability, this position became the basis for the Court’s interpretation of the separation of church and state which led to the banning of prayer and Bible reading in the public schools at the beginning of the 1960s.

Separation of church and state means (1) that taxes should not be used to support an official national church (denomination) of Christianity, (2) that there would be no church recognized as the official church for the nation or for any state, and (3) no one will be fined or jailed for not agreeing with the doctrine of any denomination or church.

That “separation” became the basis for excluding William Blackstone’s affirmation that the Bible provides the natural law basis for understanding the civil and criminal law.

That view has since been diluted by what conservative judges call an “originalist interpretation” of the law. So-called conservative jurists refer to the original meanings of terms used in early Supreme Court decisions, but unlike the 18th century lawyers of the William Blackstone era in England, they cannot refer to “Nature’s Law” or the Holy Bible in support of their decisions. That would be true originalist conservatism, but would not be consistent with the separation of church and state affirmed in various decisions 60-75 years ago.

In our public schools, “separation” came to mean students could not pray with or be led in prayer or be even asked to pray (with the right not to pray) by their teacher in any classroom. No teacher could read the Bible aloud to the students, but had to check his or her explicit faith at the door.

That “separation” was taken to mean that the Ten Commandments could not be posted anywhere in any school. A saying from anywhere in the Bible could not be posted in any school. So I would ask “If having books about non-straight lifestyles can be read or even read aloud in schools and that is considered by those who do it as promoting tolerance for drag queens, transgenders, and homosexuals, but not necessarily promoting or imposing identification with and/or practicing those behaviors, why is it that reading from the Bible is considered imposing religion and not considered promoting free will tolerance of people who are Bible believing?”

Despite the stigma of being a born-again Christian in the public high schools 20 years ago, a Jewish teacher invited me to his class when he was teaching about cultural responses to the Civil War. He asked if I would join a group of students who would lead the class in singing “The Battle Hymn of the Republic.” I agreed, and all joined in with the six students and myself at the front of the classroom. The class was 70% composed of first-generation Chinese students. Although some were Christian, most had no religious commitments. The song captured the flavor of Northern anti-slavery politics as it combined with the dominant Christian ideology of that period.

The Jewish teacher and I were technically pushing the limits of our freedom of expression or going beyond literal limits, but there was no imposition. The class teacher asked one young man why he was not singing, and he replied that it was “against his religion.” The teacher respectfully did not insist that he join in. After the class when I asked the teacher why he taught the song he said that he simply wanted to give the class a sense of the spirit of that era and the spiritual sense that motivated the soldiers’ historical response.

In another interesting incident also about 20 years ago, the assistant principal of counseling at a school had given his phone number for a disturbed student to call him if he felt very upset or even suicidal. The student called him at 3:00 a.m. one morning in an effort to stave off suicidal thoughts, and the AP talked with him until he felt better. Since it was the Christmas season, in gratitude for the assistant principal’s sacrificial compassion, the student bought him a crèche, which the AP displayed in his office. An arch-atheist woman counselor reported him to the Department of Education for promoting Christian religion, and incredibly two investigators from the central office of the Department of Education came to evaluate this possible violation of separation of church and state. Happily, he was not punished.

Further, through God’s infinite justice, shortly thereafter, the same woman who insisted that he was in violation of the US Constitution lashed out and punched another middle-aged woman counselor who, like her, was committed to a leftist agenda. She had punched her best friend in the counseling division and was subsequently removed from her duties, put in isolation in a separate office, and forced into early retirement.

An idiotic situation like her accusation of the AP would never have taken place if there was no legal doctrine of separation of church and state in our schools, which doctrine is fiercely justified in the minds of the far left employees of the school system.

Yet, we also see a great irony in that, despite that doctrine, the leftist adherents of this doctrine issued no complaints when Muslim students in the school—despite or perhaps because of the 9/11 attacks on the

World Trade Center and the Pentagon—20 years ago were given a room to use as a prayer room during the school day!! Neither Jewish nor Christian students were offered their own space for a service or for prayer.

One writer, David Callaway, writes “But ultimately, preventing government from interfering with religion is an essential principle of religious liberty.” He sees the elimination of the Bible and prayer from our schools as preventing interference with religion, but the purpose is to make the person of God *persona non grata* in our schools.

Ultimately this view in defense of keeping all religion out of public education as much as possible (with recent Muslim access as an exception) is a rejection of freedom of religion.

The student has a right to be any religion he or she chooses to be, but public sanctioning of faith is missing. Institutional structures to honor faith are missing. Those beliefs cannot be expressed on a daily basis as being just as legitimate as learning about history or geometry, and in fact as essential to that learning since a faithful Christian at least will be thanking the Lord God for the opportunity to learn math, science, or a foreign language.

We need to find creative ways to restore faith in Almighty God to our public educational institutions. It is essential for our return to being a more moral nation. Aren’t 60+ years where God can’t even ride in the back of the bus sufficiently disgraceful that we need a revision?

—*American Thinker*, November 10, 2024

Jordan Peterson Wrestles With God

By Meir Soloveichik

Wrestling With God, Jordan Peterson’s latest book, is an unusual bestseller: It is a tome dedicated to the study of Scripture. In a wide-ranging interview last week, Mr. Peterson told me, “The book that you have is one-third of what I wrote.” When I laughed and said I was envisioning his editor receiving a 1,500-page draft, he responded: “That’s actually what happened.”

More striking than the book’s success is the intellectual journey of its author. Mr. Peterson, a Canadian psychologist, tells me he was a “casual attendee” at a church whose denomination has since been “absolutely laid waste” by the trends of postmodernity. When he was unimpressed as a teenager

with a clergyman's inability to reconcile Scripture and science, he stopped going to services.

Having left religion behind, Mr. Peterson studied psychology thanks to his "obsession with totalitarianism and malevolence." In a striking way, his interest in the nature of evil led him back to faith. As an adult, he "stopped believing in God but . . . started to believe in Satan." "The problem with believing in Satan," he says, is that "you end up stuck with God again." His horror at evil provided a mirror that revealed the deep truths of Scripture, whose celebration of man as created in God's image, Mr. Peterson writes, is "perhaps the greatest idea ever revealed." He adds that a "lack of that belief or faith" destroys relationships and political societies, leaving us with "the true hell that they far too often become."

Mr. Peterson's understanding of the Bible isn't the same as mine, which considers every word in the stories of Abraham and Moses to be a divinely dictated description of what happened. He casts the Exodus story as a combination of poetic and mythological elements, as well as descriptions of events that "likely" occurred. At the same time, he sees "no reason to disbelieve" in its central figures and asserted that their stories "delved into the essence of people who actually lived."

Our discussion of Abraham raised one of my disagreements with the book—Mr. Peterson's description of the patriarch's starting out his journey as a morally flawed "everyman." There is no questions that to learn from biblical figures, they must in some way be like us. But surely a flawed everyman doesn't give up wealth and status in the Fertile Crescent and move to a relative backwater to proclaim the word of God at his command.

Mr. Peterson conceded the point but stressed that he wished to emphasize the grandeur of Abraham's story, the "archetypal individual who is on the right path," a father whose life offers the ultimate rejoinder to Richard Dawkins's notion of "the selfish gene." In Abraham we find someone who wished to transform fatherhood into a source of generous love and moral achievement.

This is surely right. "For I have known him," God says of Abraham, "so that he will command his children

and household after him, . . . to do righteousness and justice." Much of contemporary culture denies the unique dignity of man and the grandeur of fatherhood. Large families have been denounced as enemies of conservation, the implications of which many haven't grappled with seriously.

One of Mr. Peterson's most creative chapters concerns Jonah, who is scolded by God when he hopes for the destruction of the sinful city of Nineveh even as he loves the tree that offers him shade. For Mr. Peterson, this reveals a temptation that was found in the ancient world, as well as our own. "To put the natural world above mankind in the hierarchy of ultimate value," he writes, "is to regress to the worship of Baal." Such an approach denigrates "both the God Who stands outside nature, and humanity itself."

The moral implications are dire when we forget that humans are endowed with divine-life dignity. "How," Mr. Peterson reflects in the book, "could hell not appear, and prevail, when the cart is thus put before the horse?" The Bible, he insists, offers a vision that "is more real than power, more real than impulse, desire, wish or whim." It remains the central offer "of redemption and atonement to those who are lost, the foundation of the rights that make free countries both free and desirable, and the spirit of all voluntary and productive relationship."

We live in an age of profound biblical ignorance. Last year, an episode of "Jeopardy!" featured a clue that only decades ago nearly everyone could have answered: "This Bible book gives us the line 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.'" All three contestants stared blankly until the buzzer sounded.

Mr. Peterson thus offers an important insight: A culture that forgets biblical teaching not only loses its own identity; it is in danger of becoming a hell. As such, whatever disagreements the biblically learned might have with his insightful work, all can agree that it is an unalloyed good that a book about the Bible could be so widely read.

—*The Wall Street Journal*, December 6, 2024, p. A15

Founded in 1953, the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, under the leadership of Dr. Fred C. Schwarz (1913-2009) has been publishing a monthly newsletter since 1960. *The Schwarz Report* is edited by Dr. David A. Noebel and is offered free of charge to anyone asking for it. The Crusade's address is PO Box 129, Manitou Springs, CO 80829. Our telephone number is 719-685-9043. All correspondence and tax-deductible gifts (CACC is a 501C3 tax-exempt organization) may be sent to this address. You may also access earlier editions of *The Schwarz Report* and make donations at www.schwarzreport.org. Permission to reproduce materials from this Report is granted provided that the article and author are given along with our name and address. Our daily blog address is www.thunderontheright.org.