

**THE SOUL OF THE U.S. IS UP FOR GRABS –
CAN IT BE RESTORED?**

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In President Joe Biden’s most recent State of the Union Address, he offered repeated promises to “restore the soul of the nation.” It’s not that the soul of our nation doesn’t need restoration; it does. But no president can restore the soul of a country, much less a president with a godless, secular agenda.

What would it take to restore the soul of our nation?

It would take an act of God, accompanied by three corrective measures: a renewal of our public moral culture, a rethinking of America’s current understanding of freedom, and a return to the classical sense of what it means to be a human being. To support these three corrective measures, one needn’t be a Christian. However, aligning oneself with biblical teaching is the most direct path toward their implementation.

A Renewal of Our Public Moral Culture

As Christians, it is incumbent upon us to hold firmly the moral-cultural compass by which our nation can steer a virtuous path through a treacherous 21st century landscape. We must stand firm in our embrace of the moral law. We must never approve of the bloodshed of unborn human beings. We must never consent to the lie that human beings can alter their predetermined sex and gender. We must never shrink from defending religious liberty. We must hold firmly to these things and more. God demands it, and the well-being of our nation depends upon it.

A Rethinking of Our Understanding of Freedom

If we are to renew our public moral culture, we must find ways to persuade our society that its current understanding of freedom is fatally flawed. In recent decades, Americans have come to equate “freedom” with the removal of all restraints — social, moral, political, or otherwise. If we are free to “follow our heart,” the argument goes, we can be truly happy. What’s more, if society doesn’t applaud us for doing whatever our hearts desire, it should be persuaded and, if necessary, coerced into doing so.

This way of thinking made its way into law through the *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992) decision in which the Supreme Court majority opined, “At the heart of liberty is the right to define one’s own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life.” A quarter century later, in *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015), the majority opinion described the human person as basically a bundle of desires whose satisfaction is the primary function of a just government.

However, this way of thinking is destructive to individuals and to just governance. God created human beings to follow God’s desires for their life, as discerned through the universal moral law available to all people. God’s desire for human beings includes unpopular commitments such as respecting human dignity, thus quelching any desire we might have to terminate our unborn babies; living in alignment with our God-given biological sex, therefore resisting any desire we



might have to mutilate our bodies into the appearance of a gender change; and living peaceably with our other-religious neighbors, thus disregarding whatever desire we might have for that set of religious beliefs to disappear from the planet.

In brief, true freedom is living virtuously within proper boundaries. The best life is not one in which we naively follow our desires to the detriment of ourselves or others. The best government is not one that forces society to applaud the desire-based decisions of others. No, the best society is one in which we practice our freedom within the bounds of God’s universal moral law and encourage others to do the same.

A Return to a Classical Understanding of Human Nature

Finally, to renew our public culture by restoring a proper view of freedom, we must return to a more classical view of human beings. A human being is more than the sum total of his desires. He is higher than the animals who, lacking a moral compass and a higher calling, are slaves to their instincts. He is not an evolved amoeba but a moral agent.

Societies in every era of civilization, among every world religion, through myriad philosophies of life, have ascribed to a higher view of human nature than is now preeminent in America. The Graeco-Roman tradition believed that human beings transcended the animal world through rational capacities and moral wherewithal; thus, Socrates declared that the unexamined life is not worth living. The Muslim tradition, as exemplified in the Quranic concept of “Karamah Il-Insaan,” teaches that human beings transcend the rest of creation in their ability to submit to God; thus, each human being should be valued unconditionally. Other examples could be provided, ad infinitum.

The Christian tradition, however, provides the fullest understanding of human beings through biblical teaching that human beings are created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27). This doctrine entails a great dignity and a great humility. Our great dignity is that we are like God; unlike animals, we can know and love God, give reasoned arguments, and follow the dictates of our conscience. Conversely, our great humility is that we are not God and thus do not have permission to follow our hearts or do whatever we please. Instead, we are created with predetermined bodies and a preestablished moral law to which we should align our consciences.

A Nation in Need of Spiritual Awakening

In two years, the United States of America will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Corporately, we have turned our backs not only on God’s special revelation in Christ but also on His general revelation through the moral law. Therefore, any restoration of our nation’s soul will take an act of God, mediated through the obedience of His people.



So, we pray for God to do what only He can: revive our nation spiritually. And we determine to do what only we can on the human side of the equation: elect whichever officials are most likely to keep godless agendas at bay over the next four years, critique the moral vulgarity and insanity of our age, and persuade our neighbors of the goodness of God and His law. These imperatives represent a challenge of epic proportions, too big for us but not too big for our God. May He have mercy on us and restore the soul of our nation.

