

Liberty

Ps. 120:7 I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.

In the political world there is a huge divide between the Left and the Right. The differences between the two camps is vast. How the Left views and defines the world and how the Right views and defines the world are miles apart. Both camps have a different set of values. Because we have an opposite set of values than the Left, some common terms that both camps use are defined differently.

Liberty, for example, is a conservative value that is currently under assault in many parts of our country. Many paid the ultimate price so that we can enjoy these liberties. The concept of liberty and its historical significance is not thoroughly appreciated by the Left.

In many ways, we have been conditioned to accept the loss of liberty. It's been a gradual incremental process. For example, if a conservative is invited to speak at a university today, students and faculty alike will explode with rage and protest the event. We expect this; it is now part of the landscape. The Left censors, rages, and also resorts to violence if need be, and we are not surprised by any of it.

For years the Left preached their liberal ideas to their congregations while we accepted that we could not or should not do the same thing. We have been conditioned to accept this and to silently accept the double standard. The end result is that we have an ideologically mixed multitude within our ranks. In other words, we have among us people that have no problem with liberal ideas and that also do not truly understand the concepts of conservatism.

There are two basic ways to remedy the problem caused by this intrusive, nihilistic spirit that has also permeated our churches. (1) Take note of the behavior, attitude, and spirit of committed liberals and how they operate and avoid those defining characteristics. And remember this: If it quacks like a duck, walks like a duck, talks like a duck... Guess what? It is a duck. Simply put, our people should never demonstrate the same sorry dispositions of Marxist adherents. That attitude and their way of operation are strictly liberal manifestations. A conservative by nature should strive to be a conservative in every area of his life. Also (2) We should study conservative ideological principles that others have championed like the foundational conservative idea of liberty.

Many years ago if a brother took a stand against television he was considered a real conservative. Today, a stand against television would not necessarily make someone per se, a conservative. The obvious reason is because we know as Apostolic ministers that there are many other important "items and issues" that must also be considered.

Because the term "conservative" can mean so many different things to different people, it is important to codify the implications of this term in our own lives before we attempt to explain it to others. In other words, we should be able to identify and list the "principles and inherent virtues" that define "conservatism" and compare it to the objective standard of God's Word.

What is conservatism? What does it mean to be a conservative? Do we know exactly what this term really means? We toss this word around, so much, but what do we actually mean by its usage? What is the difference between a liberal and a conservative in real terms?

Brethren, secularism abounds. Because we have been conditioned to not deal with political ideological differences, many of our people have the same attitude and set of beliefs that stem from a secular mindset. For example, if someone in our ranks, as a matter of faith, is against people in our

churches carrying a gun, I do not touch that. That is a matter of faith. What I am addressing is when it is not a matter of faith but rather a matter of ideology. To be against guns is a liberal value, not a conservative value.

Do you know people that cannot handle hearing an opinion that differs from their own? Is it wrong to have a different view or opinion? (I am not speaking of established Apostolic doctrines, I am speaking about opinion.) But that brings up another foundational problem—some may not admit or may not be able to distinguish that there is a difference between established doctrine and mere opinion. To disagree is not a problem. To censure is a problem. To argue, in the classical sense, is not a problem. To make it personal is a problem.

What are the virtues of conservatism? Outwardly, there are some that by any given standard are considered very conservative. But they may not demonstrate those virtues inwardly. There are some that would be considered liberal because of their weaker standards. But what if they demonstrate conservative virtues like courage, optimism, strength of character, a tremendous work ethic, prayer, or evangelism? All of these things are conservative values that we must also demonstrate.

What a mixed-up world we live in. Some have the externals of conservatism but not the spirit of it. Some have the virtues but not the externals. We need both to be balanced. We need both so that we can be real, not nominal conservatives.

A nominal conservative is a conservative in name only. Someone like this is not interested in or is completely unaware of the foundational components of conservative values. The outcome of this unawareness is a focus on the outward with little regard for the inward.

One of the outcomes of socialism is a militant groupthink mentality. There is no diversity of thinking in their world; they snuff it out. This is why they must censure everything that originates from an individualistic platform—particularly if it is from a Judeo-Christian perspective. We should be the opposite of everything the liberal represents. They hate God, they hate this nation, and they hate the flag. Basically, they despise what we love. Let's be champions of liberty! Let's teach conservative values from a biblical perspective. That is what this nation was founded on!

Book Recommendation: The Triumph of Liberty: A 2,000-year History, Told Through the Lives of Freedom's Greatest Champions by Jim Powell
<https://books.apple.com/us/audiobook/triumph-liberty-2-000-year-history-told-through-lives/id1421659622>

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