

BATTLEFIELDS FOR REFORMATION

“If I had a place to stand, I could move the world.” The Greek engineer Archimedes was referring to the wonders of the lever. In principle, the capacity of a lever was unlimited. An ordinary weakling could move a rock the size of a house. All that he would need would be a fulcrum, a pole strong enough so that it would not break, and long enough to multiply the force. That, and a place to stand.

The force multiplying physics of the lever are a function of distance. The heavier the object, or the weaker the person trying to move it, the longer the pole would need to be, and the further away from it you would have to stand. However, with the right fulcrum, the right bar and the right distance, all you would need to do would be to push the lever down, and the boulder, no matter how heavy it was, would move. Theoretically, Archimedes famously declared, with the right fulcrum, bar and distance, you could put a lever to planet Earth and move the world itself. As long as you had a place to stand!

On 18 April 1521, a 37-year old Professor from the University of Wittenberg found himself hauled in front of the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Standing before the assembled political and spiritual authorities of his day, Luther was presented with a simple choice: Will you recant, and reject everything you have been teaching about the Gospel? Or will you be cast out of the church and state as a heretic and traitor, to be burned at the stake?

Martin Luther’s reply moved the world. He changed history. Because he had a place to stand. Dr. Martin Luther declared: *“My conscience is captive to the Word of God. Here I stand!”* Our Lord Jesus declared that our Faith would be able to move mountains (Matthew 17:20). Martin Luther’s Faith moved the world because he had a place to stand. He stood on the Word of God. The fulcrum he used was the Gospel. This was balanced on the bar of the Law of God.

Luther’s biographer Martin Brecht pointed out that in fact Martin Luther had fulfilled what the Greek engineer Archimedes had hypothesized about. Standing on the Word of God, using the bar of the Law of God and the fulcrum of the Gospel, Martin Luther’s Faith had not only moved mountains, it changed the world. It brought to an end the Middle Ages, and ushered in the modern world. The Protestant Reformation, and the resultant Scientific Revolution and Industrial Revolution, produced the most productive, prosperous and free nations in the history of the world. All this because Luther had a place to stand and he made his stand on the unchangeable Word of Almighty God.

The Church Needs a New Reformation

We want God to bless our country. But we cannot expect God to bless those who are in rebellion to His Laws. Our societies need Reformation and our churches need Revival. As in the days of the Reformers, today we are facing both internal and external threats. Internally we are facing a renaissance of paganism. Externally we are facing the threat from an aggressive radical Islamic *Jihad*. Even more seriously, there is a crisis in our churches. Most of our people are ignorant of history, and have a very superficial grasp of Scripture. As a result, many professing Christians are compromising, cowardly and ineffective. Our churches are filled with weak and worldly, lukewarm and inactive members. The salt has lost its flavour, and the light is being hid under a bushel.

In the words of Dr. Martin Luther: *“If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition, every portion of the Truth of God’s Word, except precisely that point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, then I’m not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Him. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved; and to be steady on all the battle front besides is mere flight and disgrace – if he flinches at that point.”*

Inspiring Examples

With many Christians in defeat and retreat, we are facing a resurgent paganism, a pervasive Humanism and an aggressive Islamic radicalism. To counter these threats we need the faith and boldness of Martin Luther, the courage and conviction of Ulrich Zwingli (*"They may kill the body but they cannot kill the soul."*), the doctrine and devotion of John Calvin (*"A heart aflame in the hand of God"*), the evangelistic zeal of William Farel, the dedication of William Tyndale, the faithfulness of Heinrich Bullinger, and the steadfastness of John Hus (*"Truth conquers"*).

What are some of the issues that we need to address today?

It would appear that Humanism has hijacked many churches. Theistic Evolution is uncritically accepted, worldly entertainment and rock music predominates in all too many youth groups. Antinomianism and egalitarianism are pervasive. All too many churches seem to be more conformed to the world than transformed by the renewing of their minds.

Compromise, cowardice and corruption are pervasive. Many churches are neutralized by an eschatology of defeat and retreat. Escapism and defeatism have sucked the life out of all too many congregations. Rapture fever and an end-times obsession have so distracted all too many congregations that they are ineffective in fulfilling The Great Commission.

Persecution

There is a growing worldwide war against Christianity. Churches have been burned by Muslim mobs in Northern Nigeria. Villages of Christians have been massacred by the Buddhist military dictatorship in Burma. Churches have been bulldozed by the communist regime in Zimbabwe. Christians have been condemned to death for evangelising their Muslim neighbours in Pakistan. Christian school children have been beheaded by Muslim militants in Indonesia. Christians are tortured and imprisoned in massive slave labour camps in Red China. House churches have been raided and closed in communist Cuba.

Harassment

Not only in communist nations in the East and Muslim states in the Middle East, but increasingly even secular governments in western states are, through legislation and judicial pronouncements, encroaching upon schools, churches and homes, eroding freedoms and even prosecuting Christians who are opposing perversion, or evangelising in the workplace.

Marriage Under Attack

Even the very definition of marriage itself is under attack, with pressure for same sex *"marriages."* The very foundations of our Faith and freedoms – civilisation itself is under attack.

War Against God

At its heart it is a war against God and against His Word – The Bible. The question of *'Who is God?'* and *'How trustworthy is the Bible?'* are foundational in this World War of Worldviews.

The Battle for the Mind

In the battle for the mind, classrooms and cinemas are battlefields. Education is a battleground. The textbooks and teachers often promote evolutionism, situation ethics, sex education and *"values clarification."* In all too many sections of the new media, reality is being rearranged by selective focus, and rather than news, we are receiving humanist views and propaganda.

Rewriting History

Karl Marx declared that the first battlefield is the rewriting of History. By twisting perceptions Marxists hope to steal our children and hijack our country.

The Battle for the Heart

The entertainment industry has been so subverted as to glamourise evil, popularize profanity and celebrate ugliness.

The Battle for the Family

The family is the basic building block of society. The battle for the family is in the frontline of the World War of Worldviews. However, as the influence of education, entertainment and the news media is so pervasive, it is in these realms that the battle for the family is either being lost or won.

Capture the Culture

Humanism has sought to capture the culture by waging a war against the Word of God, seeking to abort God retroactively through evolutionism, and kill God in the minds of children through secular humanist education, occultic books and films (such as *Harry Potter* and the *Golden Compass*).

“Test all things; hold fast to what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.” 1 Thessalonians 5:21 – 22

A Celebration of Evil

Halloween has its origins in the full moon closest to November 1, the witches’ new year.

Day of Death

Halloween has strong roots in paganism and witchcraft. It began as the Druid festival of Samhain. The Celts considered November 1st the day of death, because, in the Northern hemisphere, this was the beginning of winter, the leaves were falling, it was getting darker earlier, and temperatures were dropping. The druids also taught that on 31 October, on the eve of the feast, Samhain assembled the spirits of all who had died during the previous year to return to their former home to visit the living.

Human and Animal Sacrifices

On Halloween, for thousands of years, druid priests have conducted diabolical worship ceremonies in which cats, horses, sheep, oxen, human beings and other offerings were rounded up, stuffed into wicca cages and burned to death. These human and animal sacrifices were apparently required to appease Samhain and keep the spirits from harming them.

Trick or Treat

To obtain these sacrifices, druid priests would go from house to house asking for fatted calves, black sheep and human beings. Those who gave were promised prosperity, and those who refused to give were threatened and cursed. This is the origin of *“trick or treat.”*

Jack-O-Lantern

The Jack-O-Lantern has its origin in the candle-lit pumpkin, or skull, which served as a signal to mark those farms and homes that supported the druids’ religion, and thus were seeking the *“treat”* when the terror of Halloween began. The Encyclopedia says: *“The Jack-O-Lantern is an ancient symbol of a damned soul.”*

Dance of Death

While people and animals were screaming in agony, being burnt to death, the druids and their followers would dress in costumes made of animal skins and heads. They would dance, chant and jump through the flames in the hope of warding off evil spirits.

The Word of God

“When you come into the land, which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God,

for these nations, which you will dispossess, listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you the Lord your God has not appointed such for you.” Deuteronomy 18:9 – 14

“... teach my people the difference between the holy and the unholy, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.” Ezekiel 34:23

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Hosea 4:6

“Train up a child in the way he should go, then when he is old he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6

“That whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone was hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!”

Matthew 18: 6 – 7

“Let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the Armour of Light.” Romans 13:12

“You cannot partake of the Lord’s Table and of the table of demons.” 1 Corinthians 10:21

“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? What communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Therefore, come out from among them and be separate says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean and I will receive you.” 2 Corinthians 6:14 – 17

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather expose them.” Ephesians 5:11

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things.” Philippians 4:8

“Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” James 4:7

“Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.” 3 John 11

Participating in Paganism

Instead of participating in paganism, walking with Wicca, being in harmony with Halloween, having our children celebrate cruelty, and dabbling in a day of death, we should focus our family and congregation on celebrating Reformation Day each 31 October.

Reformation Day Vs Halloween

It was on 31 October 1517, that Dr. Martin Luther nailed the *95 Theses* on the door of the *Slosskirche* (castle church) in Wittenberg, Germany. His bold challenge against the unBiblical practices of the medieval Roman papacy inspired the Protestant Reformation.

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” Romans 12:21

The Battle for the Next Generation

The Bible tells us that God seeks *“Godly offspring...”* Malachi 2:15. As parents and teachers our first priority is to ensure that our children love God and His Word. Some of this can be taught, but most of it will be caught. It is vital that we teach our children to love and honour God and His Word, but it is even more vital that they see their parents and teachers love God and His Word. Our daily example is, in many ways, a more important teaching tool than our words. Whatever we teach our children, we need to model by example for them.

Aborting God Retroactively

The theory of evolution, as so often propagated by films, and in many children's books, and in state school textbooks, is an attempt to abort God retroactively. Evolution destroys all meaning, purpose, direction, justice and hope in life. *"You came from nothing. You are going nowhere. Life is meaningless!"*

The Bible says: *"The fool says in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good."* Psalm 14:1

Eradicating God and His Word

Secular humanist education attempts to kill God by eradicating Him from the classroom and from the minds of the next generation. By eliminating the Bible as the basis for all knowledge, humanists remove the very foundation of Truth. They prohibit the only objective standard by which reality can be evaluated.

"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world, rather than on Christ." Colossians 2:8

Wide Gates to Hell

Dr. Martin Luther warned: *"I am much afraid that schools will prove to be wide gates to hell unless they diligently labour in explaining the Holy Scriptures, engraving them in the hearts of the youth. I advise no one to place his child where the Scriptures do not reign paramount. Every institution in which men are not constantly occupied with the Word of God must become corrupt."*

"Since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, He gave them over to a depraved mind..." Romans 1:28

Ideas Have Consequences

What we see influences what we think, and what we think influences what we become, and what we do. Ideas have consequences. Actions flow from thought patterns. What form of education is moulding your thought patterns? What entertainment and news media is filling your child's mind?

"Be very careful then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil." Ephesians 5:15-16

The Battle for the Bible

The battle for the Bible is foundational in the World War of Worldviews. *"You will know the Truth and the Truth will set you free." "Let the Word of Christ dwell in your heart richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom and as you sing Psalms, Hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."* Colossians 3:16-17

Know God and Make Him Known

We need to know the Word of God and we need to know the God of the Word. We need to know God and to make Him known. We need to guard our hearts and our minds, and we need to understand the times and know what God's people should do.

Understanding the Times

In this World War of Worldviews, we need to know **what** we believe, and **why** we believe it. And we need to know **how** to defend it in argument. I strongly recommend that you obtain a copy of *Understanding the Times* by Dr. David Noebel, or the abbreviated version of this great book: *The Battle for Truth*. You will also find the complementary book: *Mind Siege* most helpful. Dr. James Kennedy said that if you master *Understanding the Times* you will find it more beneficial than a university degree

Biblical Principles

In South Africa we have produced *Biblical Principles for Africa* and *The Biblical Worldview Manual* as textbooks for our **Biblical Worldview Summit**. Many of these lectures are now available on audio-CDs, in Boxsets, and on MP3s. It is vital that we are thoroughly grounded in the Biblical worldview, and understand the competing worldviews, particularly the threat of secular humanism.

Creation Vs Evolution

In this culture war, it is vital that we understand the war between Creation and evolution. Science textbooks and museums are a most strategic battleground in the World War of Worldviews. Answers in Genesis of Ken Ham has provided a tremendous service for Christians to appreciate the foundational Truths of Genesis, and the scientific answers to counter the lies of evolutionism. The establishment of the Creation Museum provides believers with a powerful resource for celebrating the scientific heritage of our Faith.

Way of the Master

It is not enough for us to know what we believe, and to know how to defend it in argument; it is vital that we also be effective soul winners. Ray Comfort and Kirk Cameron of *Way of the Master* have provided us with invaluable resources for evangelism. Using The Ten Commandments as the schoolmaster to lead people to Christ, we find that *“The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.”*

Evangelism Explosion

Dr. James Kennedy’s *Evangelism Explosion* training course and manual is the best all round evangelistic training programme. This ministry of multiplication is vital for fulfilling the Great Commission.

MovieGuide

Dr. Ted Baehr’s MovieGuide (www.movieguide.org) is another vital resource in the battle for the culture. It is important that we know before we go. We need to learn to discern. We must choose the best family-friendly films, and avoid the worst anti-Christian films out there.

Education

To educate the next generation, Accelerated Christian Education (ACE), Bob Jones University (BJU), Christian Liberty Press (CLP), Theocentric Christian Education (TCE), and other Christian schooling and home schooling textbook providers, provide us with the invaluable educational curriculums needed to make disciples, teaching obedience to all things that the Lord has commanded.

True Love Waits

True Love Waits is another very important ministry to inspire and strengthen young people to resist secular humanist sex education through the entertainment industry and secular schools.

Win the Lost for Christ

I would strongly recommend Mark Cahill’s books: *One Thing You Can’t Do in Heaven* and *One Heartbeat Away* as very practical and inspiring resources to motivate and mobilise Christians to win the lost for Christ.

Reforming our Families

Some of our contributions to the World War of Worldviews include the new book: **Reforming Our Families**. This powerful new resource for families is packed with positive and practical insights and strategies that fathers and mothers can use to raise God-fearing children.

The Power of Prayer

The Power of Prayer Handbook has been produced for those who want to revive their prayer life, restore their church prayer meetings, and see the course of history changed by prayer. This handbook includes chapters on *Prayer and the Sovereignty of God*, *Praying for the Persecuted*, *Praying for Justice*,

Imprecatory Psalms, How to Revive our Devotional Lives, Guidelines for Extended Prayer Focus, National Repentance and Revival.

Back to the Bible for Reformation and Revival

The Greatest Century of Reformation is packed full with stories and pictures of some of the most courageous and influential Reformers in history. The book begins with a fast-moving overview of the dramatic events and geo-strategic conflicts involved in the 16th Century, and then provides inspiring chapters on each of the great Reformers: Wycliffe, Hus, Luther, Zwingli, Tyndale, Farel, Calvin, Cranmer, Viret, Bullinger, Malanchton and Bucer. The courageous examples of these Reformers inspire us to go back to the Bible for Reformation and Revival.

Resources for Reformation

The Reformation Society has produced over a hundred inspiring presentations which are available on audio-CDs, PowerPoints and MP3s to enable pastors to inspire their congregations, teachers to train their students, and missions and ministries to equip their workers, with an understanding of the events, characters and doctrines which God so mightily blessed and used to galvanise the most incredible movement for Faith and freedom the world has ever seen.

The Great Omission

We have been distracted from fulfilling the Great Commission and diverted from obeying the Cultural Mandate. Through guilt manipulation, the rewriting of history and the distortion of reality Christians have been overwhelmed, undermined and neutralized.

Salt and Light

We are called to be Salt and Light – to preserve what is good, to expose what is bad, and to create a thirst for the living waters of Christ. We are commanded to make disciples of all nations, teaching obedience to all things the Lord has commanded.

Evangelise or Fossilize

We are to evangelise or fossilize. Pray or perish. The last command of Christ must be our first concern. We must give up our small ambitions and follow Christ.

Our Supreme Ambition

The Great Commission must be our supreme ambition. We are working towards the fulfillment of Christ's Great Commission and the complete and utter destruction of communism, Islam and humanism.

“All the ends of the earth will remember, and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before Him, for dominion belongs to the Lord and He rules over the nations.”

Psalm 22:27-28

Encouraging Trends

The rise in Christian schooling and home schooling, the growth of Focus on the Family and Summit Ministries, the establishment of the Creation Museum near Cincinnati, are encouraging signs of a new movement towards Reformation.

Christian community radio stations like Good News Community Radio, Radio Khwezi and Radio Tygerberg are breaking the secular humanist monopoly of the air waves. JOY! magazine is breaking into what has been a secular dominated market in the magazine racks of supermarkets and shops. There is a great spiritual hunger growing with tens of thousands of men turning up at Angus Buchan's Mighty Men's Conference and at the rallies at Loftus Versveld and Newlands Cricket Stadium.

Successful Christian films such as Mel Gibson's *Passion of the Christ*, C.S. Lewis's *Narnia* series, the *Expelled! No Intelligence Allowed* film; *Amazing Grace* – the film on the victory of William Wilberforce

against the slave trade; the new *Hansie* move, *Facing the Giants* and *Fireproof*, are signs of a Christian counter attack in the entertainment industry.

A Vision of Victory

We are called to be the light of the world. All the darkness cannot put out the smallest light. ***“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”***

Habakkuk 2:14

“The Lord will be awesome to them when He destroys all the gods of the land. The nations on every shore will worship Him, everyone in its own land.” Zephaniah 2:11

This is what we pray for in the Lord’s Prayer: ***“Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”***

Matthew 6:10

This is what it means to fulfill the Great Commission: ***“All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given unto me. Therefore go and make disciples of all the nations...teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you...”*** Matthew 28:18-9

May God find us faithful to His Word and effective in His service.

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