

*The Christian World View of  
the Making of Disciples*

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## What is the Coalition on Revival?

The Coalition on Revival is a network of evangelical leaders from every major denominational and theological perspective who share a vision for and a commitment to revival, renewal, and reformation in Church and society in America.

People of Anabaptist, Arminian, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Wesleyan denominational backgrounds are all represented among COR's leaders. Pre-, a-, and post-millennialists are cooperating with each other, sharing the exciting task of getting God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven insofar as that is possible between now and whenever Christ comes back to Earth. Charismatics and non-charismatics, covenant and dispensationalist theologians, have joined arm in arm in prayer and hard work to see revival, renewal, and reformation in the Christian Church and the American culture.

COR's vision is to see Christians everywhere doing all they can in the power of the Holy Spirit to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), in every aspect of life. Toward that end, we have developed a series of worldview documents that set forth what we believe are the fundamental and essential points of the total Christian world and life view. The COR worldview documents state what we believe are the biblical principles for all spheres of human life including theology, evangelism, discipleship, law, civil governments, economics, education, family, medicine, psychology and counseling, arts and media, business and professions, and science and technology. We believe that the COR worldview documents state where the entire Church must stand and what action it must take to accomplish its task in the remaining years of the Twentieth Century and on into the next century.

COR steering committee members from all walks of life were joined by many hundreds of other interested Christian scholars, pastors, and laymen in developing the COR documents during many series of workshops and conventions. Each document therefore, reflects input from theologians, philosophers, professionals in their respective fields, pastors, and lay Christians. We have sought to avoid denominational and theological bias in the documents; our aim has been to focus on principles so fundamental that we are convinced no Bible-believing Christian who studied the major questions related to each sphere of life would come to a contradictory conclusion.

COR views itself as a "Bible obedience, holiness movement" that crosses denominational and theological lines. The next step on its agenda, now that its basic documents are complete, is to disseminate them widely and to educate hundreds of thousands of Christians on how to make Christ Lord of absolutely every aspect of life. We plan to do that through publications, and through seminars, and training workshops in the major cities of America and Canada. COR will also work in cooperation with other Christian networking groups to help unify the pastors in major population centers around the vision of mobilizing their people to "Get God's will done in their city as it is in heaven" to whatever degree that is possible before the return of Christ. We believe America can be turned around and once again function as a Christian nation as it did in its earlier years. We believe that wherever the pastors of any city in the world join together in unity to make Christ Lord of every sphere of life, and, with Spirit led strategy, mobilize their people into a unified spiritual army; that city can and will become "a city set upon a hill" and be "a place where righteousness dwells."

## About the 17 World View (Sphere) Documents

COR developed the 17 World View Documents, which set forth what we believe are fundamental and essential Biblical principles governing 17 major areas or *spheres* of human life and activity: law, government, economics, business and professions, education, art and media, medicine, science and technology, psychology and counseling, Christian unity, local and world evangelism, discipleship, helping the hurting, educating Christians about social and political moral issues, revitalizing Christian colleges and seminaries, marriage and the family, and pastoral renewal. These documents offer Christian leaders concise and comprehensive Biblical principles of how to apply the Truth of the Bible to all spheres of life and ministry. Each document includes short, creed-like statements of affirmation and denial that we believe state non-negotiable Biblical truths for that sphere of reality.

The 17 World View Documents were developed within 17 different committees made up of leaders with experience and expertise in the 17 different fields over an intensive three-year period of dialogue, critique, editing, and finally, a consensus conviction. Sixty of COR's National Steering Committee members with over 300 other theologians, pastors, lawyers, doctors, businessmen, and Christian workers made up the 17 committees. COR sends forth these documents to the Church at large with the prayer that they may be used by God's Spirit to get God's will done on earth, as it is in heaven—to whatever degree that is possible prior to the Return of Christ.

## Preface

Making disciples is the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, a work in which spiritually mature believers cooperate with the Triune God in reproducing other disciples of Christ who are in the process of becoming mature Christians.

This responsibility includes bringing people to repentance and faith in Christ, to baptism, and to obedience to all of the commands of Christ (Matthew 18:19,20; Colossians 1:28,29).

The emphasis in discipling is authenticity and integrity in becoming more like Jesus Christ by a process of continuing change through a growing, intimate association with Him. This concept is primary to a Biblical understanding of discipleship. It is a lifelong commitment of apprenticeship in which philosophy and way of life are completely identified with Him (2 Corinthians 10:5). It is a process of increasingly aligning one's heart and life with the purposes of God. The process of following and learning often is misunderstood as fanatical when compared with the usual pattern of Christianity (Luke 6:40).

A major obstacle to Bible-obedient living is the accommodation to the value structure of a dangerously secular society. While publicly denouncing the obvious issues of secularism, Christians often subscribe, incrementally and unwittingly, to unbiblical values as a result of media saturation. The corporate effect is passivity and apathy toward the issues of personal purity, Biblical truth, and social justice and ethics (Philippians 3:17-20; 1 John 2:15-17; Ephesians 4:17-19; 2 Timothy 4:10).

With the passive acceptance of a worldly mindset, the mandate of our Lord for self-denial generally is not taken seriously. Being a self-denying, Biblical Christian is commonly perceived as an optional feature in Christian living (Luke 9:23-25; 14:25-33).

Pre-occupation with self has enthroned "me" to the practical exclusion of God. Personal feelings have replaced the Word of God as a determinant for Christian living. This lack of adherence to Biblical principles has spiritually incapacitated many believers.

Leaders must take seriously the mandate of the risen Christ to make disciples (Matthew 28:19,20). Inwardly, this requires that leaders be examples of purity and spiritual maturity. Outwardly, this requires that leaders systematically teach the whole Church the need and cost of becoming a disciple of Christ. In addition, leaders—and the rest of the Body of Christ—must pray for the flock of God that disciples will be drawn to Christ and trained in righteousness (1 Timothy 4:16; 2 Timothy 3:16,17).

With these thoughts in mind, we offer the following affirmations and denials as initial steps in developing a Biblical understanding and practice of the making of disciples.

## Statements of Affirmation and Denial

1. We affirm that the making of Bible-obeying disciples of all nations and the bringing of all things under the lordship of Christ is the primary purpose and defined objective of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19,20; 2 Corinthians 10:5)

We deny that becoming a Bible-obedient disciple of Jesus Christ is optional to the Christian life.

2. We affirm that the process of making disciples includes teaching Biblical truth sufficient to compel a decision both to repent and receive Christ for justification and to choose a life-long commitment to become an obedient follower of Jesus Christ.

We deny that acquisition of Bible knowledge alone, without accountability to other Christians, is sufficient in itself to produce an obedient disciple of Jesus.

3. We affirm that discipleship is a complete commitment to Jesus Christ in the totality of life, and that such a commitment always results in increasingly Biblical behavior.

We deny that it is possible to be an obedient disciple of Jesus while maintaining a life-as-usual relationship with the world's value system.

4. We affirm that the local church, through spiritual leadership, has the responsibility to make disciples in the environment of caring and accountable relationships.

We deny that the making of disciples through leadership should violate the disciple's personal priesthood or restrict the disciple's development in the expression of his spiritual gifts and abilities.

5. We affirm that the making of disciples is principally the work of the Holy Spirit, in which spiritually mature believers cooperate with Him in reproducing disciples who are in the process of becoming mature Christians, and that this takes place as a disciple follows his spiritual leader as that leader follows Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).

We deny that discipleship is possible apart from the work of the Holy Spirit.

6. We affirm that renewal by the Holy Spirit, resulting in repentance and an obedient disciple relationship with Jesus Christ, would greatly reduce the Church's compromise with world values and its lack of impact on society.

We deny that continued compromise with the world and its values is consistent with the ministry of the Holy Spirit in producing obedient disciples of Christ.

7. We affirm that the scriptural aim of discipleship is to manifest the character of Christ and to fulfill His commission by the Holy Spirit.

We deny that the forming of the character of Christ and the fulfilling of His commission is possible without the discipline of scriptural goals.

8. We affirm that the essential elements of Christian maturity are identifiable, measurable, and attainable, and that they must be taught to and expected of all believers.

We deny that Christian maturity is vague, measureless, or unattainable until Christ's return, and that God expects Christian maturity only for the few especially motivated Christians.

9. We affirm that obedience to God's Word proceeds out of a faith relationship with Jesus and His Church and that it will mature, liberate, and bring a person into his place in Christ (James 1:25).

We deny that obedience to God's Word is man-centered and destructive, and that Paul referred to Biblical obedience when he wrote of the "letter" that "kills" (2 Corinthians 3:6).

10. We affirm that as a result of discipleship nations will be shaped by the Gospel of and the Kingdom of God (Matthew 28:19).

We deny that there are better strategies for reaching nations than discipleship.

## **A Call to Action in the Making of Disciples**

### *General Actions*

Because of the preceding convictions, we call upon all men and women who name Christ as their personal Savior and Lord to join us in:

1. examining earnestly these affirmations and denials in the light of God's Word to see if they are true, and informing us directly of those points in which they believe we have departed from Scripture or logic;
2. re-examining our own theories and practices of making disciples and asking God to show us where we are falling short;
3. repenting of all known sins, confessing and forsaking them, asking forgiveness both of God Himself and of all those who have been offended, and then making all possible restitution;
4. praying for God to fill all of His people with the enabling power of the Holy Spirit in order that we may bring our personal lives and our theories and practices of making disciples into closer conformity to His revealed will on a permanent and consistent basis;
5. seeking guidance from our brethren and local church authorities as to how we can mutually support and influence one another to make our practices of making disciples glorifying to God.

Having dealt with our own personal sins and failures, and placing ourselves accountable to the Bible and to the brethren, we now commit ourselves to:

1. influencing any known Christians or Christian associations with whom we work to consider seriously our affirmations and denials with the goal of enlisting their responses;
2. influencing those in the field of making disciples who agree with our affirmations and denials to implement these proposals in their work;
3. mobilizing and networking our Christian resources and working in concert with the other professional spheres both inside and outside COR, to see the behavior of the Body of Christ and our nation changed to approximate more closely the view of reality and morality presented to us in the Holy Scriptures.

### *Specific Actions*

To these ends, we commit ourselves to the following specific actions:

1. We must put forth an urgent and united call to the entire Body of Christ that all who name the name of Christ should rethink our commitment to Him as Lord, count the cost of living under His Lordship as He commands us to do, and take what steps are necessary to become truly Bible-obeying disciples of Him if we are not already. Jesus Christ calls all Christians to be willing to lose our lives for His sake, to deny ourselves, and to take up our crosses daily, following Him (Matthew 16:24,25). This call is incumbent upon all Christians. The Bible allows no distinction between “disciples” and “mere Christian sheep.” Active obedience to the commands of Scripture is what Christianity is designed to bring about. It is what we mean by living under the Lordship of Christ.
2. We must urge pastors and other Christian leaders to develop within their churches and organizations, if they have not already, discipleship training programs to nurture all their people and to train and mobilize them for Christian service. We must stress the great values of having both small group and one-on-one discipleship training within local churches and parachurch organizations. And we must humbly offer assistance, praying that pastors and other leaders will accept it, to churches and organizations setting up such discipleship training programs.
3. We must launch a program to re-educate the Church about the nature of Christian discipleship that includes the following points:
  - 3.1 The making of Bible-obeying disciples is the essence of Christ’s Great Commission to the entire Church.
  - 3.2 Discipleship is mandatory, not optional for any Christian.
 

Pastors must become convinced that 100 percent of those under their care must be urged and expected to become Biblically mature. Having a church with people who for years are content to remain immature is Biblically unacceptable.
  - 3.3 A Bible-obeying disciple will be recognizably different from the “life-as-usual” world that surrounds him. He will generally “swim upstream” against the cultural current and will spontaneously and constantly be salt and light to his little portion of the world.

- 3.4 Biblical discipleship involves participation in intimate relationships, commitment, confrontation, and accountability. It must reach down into the daily details of life: decision making, finances, relationships, habits, values, etc. Much of what travels under the name of “discipleship training” is merely the transfer of academic Biblical principles from one notebook to another without the essential ingredient of accountability and changes in thought and behavior.
  - 3.5 Every Christian needs to be trained in recognizing, encountering, and overcoming demons by the blood and authority of Jesus Christ.
  - 3.6 A true disciple will make disciples of others as well as being disciplined himself.
4. In view of our strong commitment to Bible-obeying discipleship as mandatory, not optional, for the entire Church, local church leaders must consider their need for developing small groups within the body for the purpose of maturing believers in a long-term environment of loving accountability, encouragement, and practical care. For those churches that wish to structure or restructure their congregations along these lines, the names and addresses of churches that are doing this successfully and of parachurch organizations that effectively help churches to accomplish are available from The Coalition on Revival, P.O. Box A, Sunnyvale, California, 94087 and from various denominational headquarters and seminaries.