

*The Christian World View of
Revitalizing Christian Colleges and Seminaries*

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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

Many Christian leaders of the coming generation will come through our present Bible schools, Christian colleges, and seminaries. It is therefore vitally important that our institutions of Christian higher learning produce effective Christian leaders.

History reveals the tendency of all educational institutions gradually to abandon the goals for which they were established. The loss of a Biblical world view is followed by gradual secularization, which leads away from the realization of original goals.

The goal of Christian colleges and seminaries should be to produce men and women:

1. who are willing and eager to pour out their entire lives for Christ;
2. who have an understanding of life based on a Biblical world view and a firm belief that the Bible is inerrant;
3. who are concerned and excited about personal holiness;
4. who hate sin and injustice with a passion;
5. who are committed to living above deliberate sin;
6. who are capable of courageously taking a stand for righteousness;
7. who have made an emotional break with materialism;
8. who have experienced “death” to their own egos under the living discipline of their heavenly Father;
9. who can be trusted by God with honor, money, free time, and His own reputation because they will not choose to spend those things on their own pleasure or prestige;
10. who are walking in the Spirit and receiving His power and guidance for their life and ministry.

In view of these facts, we issue the following statements of affirmation and denial.

Statements of Affirmation and Denial

Accountability

1. We affirm that the prime objective of each Christian college and seminary should be to present Jesus Christ as Lord of heaven and earth and Savior of His people by providing a Bible-based education.

We deny that Christian higher education exists to serve only the interests of particular church bodies, governing heads, or financial supporters, or only to gain credibility in the world of secular academics.

2. We affirm that those serving on the boards, faculties, and administrations of Christian colleges and seminaries must be selected and retained on the basis of total commitment to the Lordship of Christ, evidence of Christian maturity, and unreserved fidelity to historic Biblical doctrine, including the inerrancy of Scripture, and that they need to take a clear stance on crucial moral issues.

We deny that those serving in Christian colleges and seminaries should be selected primarily on the basis of their potential contributions, public prestige, or academic credentials, and that they should be allowed to continue if they fail to maintain the Biblical standard of leadership, if they depart from belief in historic Biblical doctrine, including the inerrancy of Scripture, or if they fail to apply the absolutes of Scripture to current moral issues.

3. We affirm that the funding of Christian colleges and seminaries must be consistent with their dependence upon God and with their honoring His inerrant Word as the ultimate authority for determining beliefs and curriculum.

We deny that it is wise or godly for Christian colleges and seminaries to depend on governmental funding, all of which makes them vulnerable to political and bureaucratic intrusion, and that it is godly stewardship on the part of God's people to fund those Christian institutions that have departed from belief in God's inerrant Word or the world view derived therefrom.

4. We affirm that Christian institutions should interpret and organize their academic areas by Biblical standards, and that every discipline known to man must be viewed through the filter of the Lordship of Christ and His Word over that discipline.

We deny that any pagan assumptions inherent in contemporary studies should be permitted to become part of student or faculty thinking without being challenged responsibly by Biblically informed principles.

5. We affirm that faculty members ought to have academic freedom to do scientific and sociological research in the pursuit and understanding of truth.

We deny that governing boards have a right to discourage or hinder such research.

6. We affirm that governing boards of Christian colleges and seminaries have the right to monitor the teachings of faculty members to determine if they are in agreement with the statements of faith and purpose of the founders of the schools.

We deny that governing boards have a right to ignore or change the statements of faith or founding purposes, or to avoid or evade their responsibility to ensure that faculty teaching and behavior harmonizes with the school's statements of faith and purpose.

7. We affirm that Christian colleges and seminaries ought to challenge students not to produce just what the members of their future congregations desire, but rather, as servants of Christ, to train their churches to be what God commands.

We deny that pastors should seek to please people rather than to obey God's commands.

8. We affirm that Christian colleges and seminaries must teach students the dangers of unbiblical institutionalism, which makes the maintenance of a Christian organization an end in itself rather than a means of fulfilling God's purposes in the world.

We deny that proper attention is being given to the danger of institutionalism in Christian organizations.

Curriculum

- 9.. We affirm that basic courses on the Bible and how to apply and communicate Bible teachings should be required of all students in Christian colleges and seminaries.

We deny that Bible and Bible-related courses should be removed from the required list of study and made electives.

10. We affirm that basic curriculum in a Christian college and seminary must have its scope and sequence firmly integrated with the doctrine of scriptural inerrancy.

We deny that any basic curriculum cannot reflect, to a greater or lesser degree, Biblical truth.

11. We affirm that the Bible department is of great importance to each Christian institution of higher learning, and that this department must be noted for its academic excellence, its Christian world view, and its commitment to the inerrancy of the Bible.

We deny that Bible departments are less important than other departments, and that their quality may rightly be lower.

12. We affirm that there is a need for more courses that equip students to disciple the nations for the Lord Jesus Christ.

We deny that Christian colleges and seminaries always provide adequate practical Christian training to ensure the quality of Christian leaders and their ability to function effectively in evangelism, missions, and discipleship.

13. We affirm that Christian colleges and seminaries should address the implications of Biblical truth for all vocations, exposing students to Christian professionals who are meeting the challenges in all areas of culture.

We deny that Christian colleges and seminaries should exist in cultural isolation or fail to address the implications of Biblical truth in all areas of life.

14. We affirm that Christian colleges and seminaries need to strive for academic excellence.

We deny that quality Christian education can be obtained apart from academic excellence.

15. We affirm that there is a need for more Christian graduate schools.

We deny that secular graduate degree programs are always adequate for the further education of graduates from Christian colleges and universities.

16. We affirm that the Body of Christ needs to encourage training in the Bible for lay people so that they are better prepared to live by, and witness to, the great truths of God's Word.

We deny that most Christian lay people are sufficiently prepared to live and witness to the life and teachings of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures.

17. We affirm that all Christian institutions of higher education must stress an understanding of the Biblical teaching of the ministry of the laity (all of God's people) in the home, church, marketplace, and wherever they go, and that all of God's people are to minister.

We deny that the Bible teaches a sharp distinction between the work of the clergy and laity so that the whole responsibility for ministry is to be on the clergy.

The Campus as a Fellowship of Believers

18. We affirm that Christian colleges and seminaries must function as families of believers who learn, minister, and worship together, and that those who teach the next generation of Christian leaders must relate to their students on a personal level as well as being their academic instructors.

We deny that Christian colleges or seminaries should operate solely as academic institutions or serve as substitutes for the local church.

19. We affirm that Christian colleges and seminaries must address and encourage personal, family, and spiritual nurture and the well-being of the students and faculty.

We deny that personal, spiritual, or family lives ought to be neglected in the pursuit of academic excellence or preparation for ministry.

20. We affirm that Christian colleges and seminaries need to help students develop a clear sense of direction in their vocational choices and a deep commitment to serving the Lord and the Body of Christ.

We deny that anyone ought to enter service in God's Kingdom without commitment, an attitude of servanthood, and a clear-cut "call" to that vocation.

21. We affirm that Christian colleges and seminaries should encourage their students and faculty to participate in small fellowship growth groups devoted to honest sharing, mutual accountability, and serious commitment to each other, and that this happens best in conjunction with a local church.

We deny that students and faculty are likely to develop Christian maturity without intimate fellowship and accountability in a small group, and that maturity can be attained without involvement in a Biblical local church.

22. We affirm that Christian colleges and seminaries ought to teach students how to deal with frustration and disappointments in their ministries, emphasizing practical solutions to the many problems that arise in Church work.

We deny that students are being adequately prepared to cope with the variety of problems that arise in church work.

23. We affirm that students called to minister in Church work need practical experience and internship programs.

We deny that students can be properly prepared by focusing only on academic work.

24. We affirm that students called into a vocational ministry in a church, mission field, or parachurch work should be trained primarily in how to be men of God and how to produce men of God.

We deny that any other skills have eternal value unless they are learned and applied for use in vocational ministry.

A Call to Action in Revitalizing Christian Colleges and Seminaries

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 Christian college and seminary theories and practices 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 Christian college and seminary theories and practice 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 Christian college and seminary practices glorifying to God by training Christians who can give proper leadership to the next generation and by producing men of God who can produce other men of God.

Specific Actions

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 Christian college and seminary renewal 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 reality and morality presented to us in the Holy Scriptures;
4. securing the cooperation of Christian colleges and seminaries in compiling a list of schools that agree with these affirmations and denials in order to assist churches, parents, donors, and prospective students in their choice of a school.