

THE UNSHAKABLE KINGDOM #21

“Ideas Have Consequences”

I. Introduction

A. Ideas Have Consequences

1. My title is taken from a book written back in 1948 by Richard M. Weaver, a young man who had been a socialist in his youth but later became a powerful voice for Christian conservatism.

2. What does it mean when we say, “Ideas have consequences”?

An idea is, quite simply, a thought. A consequence is that which results from the ideas, or the thoughts we think.

3. The biblical expression of “Ideas Have Consequences” was stated by Solomon...

Proverbs 23:7

For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he.

4. The Bible tells us that what we are is a consequence of the thoughts we think!

Eric Metaxas

“Ideas have far-reaching consequences, and one must be ever so careful about what one allows to lodge in his brain.”

5. Every great invention, every great company, every great advancement of civilization began with an idea, began with a thought!

6. On the other hand, every sin and every evil government began with an idea, began with a thought.

Steve Allen

Ideas have consequences, and totally erroneous ideas are likely to have totally destructive consequences.

B. The Prophetic Nature of the Book

1. Weaver wrote his book as a warning to Western culture about what the world would look like if it rejected the idea of ‘universal’ truth to embrace the idea of relativism.

Ideas Have Consequences

The decline of Western civilization resulted from the rising acceptance of relativism over a transcendent reality. In spite of increased knowledge, this retreat from the realist intellectual tradition has weakened the Western capacity to reason, with catastrophic consequences for social order and individual rights.

2. This is a precise prophetic picture of our present predicament; we are living in the consequences that come when a culture rejects the transcendent truth of God’s word and God’s law to embrace antichristian ideas like socialism.

3. Weaver warns us that any nation that rejects God’s biblical ethics on how to live will suffer the consequences that come when men make up their own idea of morality.

Richard M. Weaver, “Ideas Have Consequences”

“There are grounds for declaring that modern man has become a moral idiot. So few are those who care to examine their lives, or to accept the rebuke which comes by admitting that our present state may be a fallen state.”

4. What we are witnessing in our world today is the consequence that comes when men reject the moral authority of God and replaces it with his own ideas.

Richard Weaver (1910-1963)

“For four centuries every man has not only been his own priest but his own professor of ethics, and the consequence is an anarchy which threatens even that minimum consensus of values necessary to the political state.”

5. America became great because there was a consensus as to biblical values; the 10 commandments; Judeo-Christian ideas about good and evil, about right and wrong.

a. But when men become their own ‘priest’ or their own ‘professor of ethics’ anarchy appears that will threaten the entire nation.

6. Where there is no transcendent truth or moral authority, each man will make himself the measure of good and evil, of right and wrong.

a. This was the state of Israel recorded in the horrific events of the Book of Judges, a painful narrative of sin and backsliding, summed up in the last verse of the Book.

Judges 21:25

In those days, there was no king in Israel. Everyone did as was right in their own eyes.

7. After 21 chapters of national misery, God gives us the reason for all their trouble; where there is no transcendent authority, there will be anarchy. Ideas have consequences.

8. So what is God's word to a culture moving toward anarchy? Where everyone is doing what is 'right in their own eyes'? America? More especially, the Church?

"Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand."

9. God's solution now, as then, is the Kingdom; but it requires repentance; a 'change of mind'; a change in how we think; the Kingdom of God is an IDEA that will have amazing CONSEQUENCES.

10. Think of it this way. We are in a war; but our enemy is not 'flesh and blood'; it is a battle of two different ideas; two different ideas that will bring about two very different consequences.

II. The Battle of Two Ideas

A. The Leaven of the Kingdom

1. Last week we learned that...

Matthew 13:33

"The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

2. Jesus presented the Kingdom of God as the great universal truth, the ‘heaven’ that would *transform the world*.

a. It’s sad to say that some non-believers understand the idea of the Kingdom better than believers do!

H.G. Wells

“The most radical proposal (idea) ever presented to the mind of man is the proposal to replace the present world order with God’s order, which is the Kingdom of God.”

3. The early church had the right idea about the Kingdom of God; and the consequence turned the world upside down!

Acts 17:6-8 (Excerpt)

These men who have turned the world upside down have now come here also...and they are acting against all the decrees of Caesar, saying ‘There is another King...even Jesus.

a. Their message was not just John 3:16; it was a declaration that the government was not the final authority, a transcendent authority before Caesar; another King, even Jesus!

4. The Kingdom of God, rightly understood, is a threat to all the man-centered governments of this world.

Eugene Peterson

Everybody treats us so nicely. No one seems to think we mean what we say. When we say ‘Kingdom of God’, no one gets apprehensive; they don’t seem to know that we had just announced (or thought we had) that a powerful army is poised on their border, ready to invade.”

5. Many American Christians have a wrong idea of the Kingdom of God; they think it refers to heaven; they don’t seem to realize that it is a declaration of war on all the man-centered systems of this world!

6. The Kingdom of God is a comprehensive system of how we think about all things, including civil government.

Abraham Kuyper

“No single piece of our mental world is to be hermetically sealed off from the rest, and there is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over *all*, does not cry: “*Mine!*”

7. So what’s holding us back? Why is the leaven of the Kingdom moving so slowly? Jesus gave us the answer. He said there is another kind of leaven we’ve not been aware of...

B. The Leaven of Bad Teaching

Theme

In Matthew 13, Jesus had taught His disciples that the Kingdom of God would leaven the earth like yeast leavens bread. But in Matthew 16 He warned them to beware of another kind of yeast...bad teaching.

Matthew 16:6, 12

Be careful, Jesus said to them, be on your guard against the yeast (leaven) of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

1. The leaven of the Kingdom is missing from much of the American Church because of *the leaven of bad teaching*; nor is this a new problem!

F.B. Meyer

There is abroad today much teaching which may be compared to leaven. The germs of hurtful and false doctrine are as thick as microbes. Propagated by the agencies of the spoken address and the written page, they produce fermentation and unrest in the young and unstable. We must judge these pernicious teachings, not by their pleasant and innocent appearance, but by their effect on heart and character.

2. Remember: Ideas Have Consequences. If American Christians don’t like our consequences we have to get rid of the bad ideas we got from bad teaching.

Adam Clarke

**Bad doctrines (teachings) act in the soul as leaven does in meal; they assimilate the whole spirit to their own nature.
A man's particular creed has a greater influence on his tempers and conduct than most are aware of.**

Pride, hypocrisy, and worldly-mindedness, which constituted the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, ruin the major part of the world.

Albert Barnes

Erroneous doctrines are like leaven in the following respects:

- 1. They are at first slight and unimportant in appearance, just as leaven is small in quantity as compared with the mass that is to be leavened.**
- 2. They are insinuated into the soul unawares and silently, and are difficult of detection.**
- 3. They act gradually.**
- 4. They act most certainly.**
- 5. They will pervade all the soul, and bring all the faculties under their control.**

3. Where do bad ideas and bad teaching come from? Partly from...

C. The Educational Corruption of Our Young People

1. The socialists always seek to control the young people!
2. This was the philosophy of Russian Marxism.

Leon Trotsky

“We must approach the youth with the propaganda of atheism and socialism, for only this defines the place of man in the universe.”

3. Historians tell us that controlling the youth was a key to National Socialism’s rise to power in Adolf Hitler’s Germany.

Adolf Hitler

“He alone who owns the youth, will gain the future.”

- a. The Socialists see our children as wards of the State.

Adolf Hitler

“This new Reich will give its youth to no one but will itself take youth and give to youth its own education and its own upbringing.”

b. The socialist strategy is to reeducate the young people through their government schools; they sow their seeds of leaven by deceiving the parents.

Adolf Hitler

“The State must declare the child to be the most precious treasure of the people. As long as the government is recognized as working for the benefit of the children, the people will endure almost any curtailment of liberty and almost any deprivation.”

c. Socialist doctrine in Germany began small; but when Hitler fully came to power, Pastors who preached the word of God came under persecution.

Pastor Richard Wurmbrand

A man who spent 14 years imprisoned and tortured in Communist Romania. His crime? He publicly preached that Communism and Christianity are completely incompatible.

d. In his book, “Tortured for Christ”, Wurmbrand said this:

Richard Wurmbrand, “Tortured for Christ”

“If the Communists discovered parents that taught their children about Christ, their children were taken away from them—with no visitation rights.”

4. All this came to America. Way back in 1958, in his book, “The Naked Communist”, W. Cleon Skousen listed a number of socialist strategies the Communists would use to take over America, including this:

The Naked Communist, W. Cleon Skousen (1958)

“Get control of the schools. Use them as transmission belts for socialism and current Communist propaganda. Soften the curriculum. Get control of teachers’ associations. Put the party line in textbooks.”

5. American Christians abandoned the battle for the public school system long ago; today, even some Christian schools are teaching socialist values. Then they wonder why their children lean left.

a. I found this warning from a noted libertarian over a 100 years ago:

Voltaire de Cleyre (1866-1912)

“If the believers in liberty wish the principles of liberty taught, let them never entrust that instruction to any government; for the nature of government is to become a thing apart, an institution existing for its own sake, preying upon the people, and teaching whatever will tend to keep it secure in its seat.”

b. There was a time when there was prayer in America's public schools and students were taught the 10 commandments. But no longer...

Neil Boortz

"Government schools will teach children that government is wonderful."

c. Our country will soon be in the hands of a generation marinated in the idea that government will save us. And those ideas have consequences.

6. The leaven of socialism is working. This was on Fox News Friday:

WHAT MESSAGE WOULD YOU SEND TO GOVERNMENT

Leave Me Alone		Lend Me a Hand
Now	36%	57%
2019	55%	34%
2018	51%	41%
2016	54%	39%
2011	50%	44%

7. The slide toward socialism is reflected in the number of people who are now looking to the State to save them.

8. Another sign of the leaven of bad teaching is how we allowed the coming of the Corona virus to be used as an excuse for government overreach.

9. Americans have surrendered more personal freedom to the government in 6 months than in the past 240 years of our history put together. And it seems they are just getting warmed up.

a. The current socialist candidate for President has just announced that no one should be allowed outside their house without a face covering.

Socialist Presidential Candidate Joe Biden

"Every single American should be wearing a mask when they're outside for the next three months at a minimum."

(Socialists see nothing wrong with this kind of control)

Armond Bush

Ohio Democrat county executive Armond Budish just announced a new snitch line where county residents can report fellow citizens they see not wearing a mask. He released a phone number and online address where people could report their fellow citizens.

Bottom of Form

“If you see situations where people are not following the mask mandate, you may call that number or go to that web address. We will be watching you.”

b. L.A. Mayor Eric Garcetti goes even farther:

L.A. Mayor Eric Garcetti has urged citizens to “snitch” on businesses that violate the city’s stay-at-home order, and has promised “rewards” for those who do so.

10. All of these outrages come from the socialistic idea that government has the power to take away our personal freedoms in the name of ‘the public good’. We are now living in the consequences of that idea.

11. The great French historian Alexis de Tocqueville witnessed the government’s abuse of power in the horrors of the French Revolution. They beheaded the King and initiated a socialistic system of government.

Alexis de Tocqueville

(from IntellectualTakeout.org)

“Socialism denies the individual the right to think and act for himself. The final trait that best describes socialists of all schools and shades, is a profound opposition to personal liberty and scorn for individual reason, a complete contempt for the individual.”

Alexis de Tocqueville

“They unceasingly attempt to mutilate, to curtail, to obstruct personal freedom in any and all ways. They hold that the State must not only act as the director of society, but must further be master of each man, and not only master, but their keeper and trainer.”

Alexis de Tocqueville

“For fear of allowing him to err, the State must place itself forever by a man’s side, above him, around him, better to guide him, to maintain him, in a word, to confine him. They call, in fact, for the forfeiture, to a greater or less degree,

of human liberty, to the point where, were I to attempt to sum up what socialism is, I would say that it was simply a new system of serfdom.”

12. The idea of socialism has the consequence of the loss of our personal freedoms. Which raises the question: How far will it go?

Voltaire de Cleyre

“So long as the people do not care to exercise their freedom, those who wish to tyrannize will do so; for tyrants are active and ardent, and will devote themselves in the name of any number of gods, religious and otherwise, to put shackles upon sleeping men.”

13. Socialists invoke the name of many secular ‘gods’: Social justice; a woman’s right to choose; and they justify it all by telling us they will take care of us.

Richard M. Weaver

“The past shows unvaryingly that when a people’s freedom disappears, it goes not with a bang, but in silence amid the comfort of being cared for. That is the dire peril in the present trend toward statism. If freedom is not accompanied by a willingness to resist, and to reject favors, rather than to give up what is intangible but precarious, freedom will not long be found at all.”

- Will we allow our freedom to disappear in exchange for ‘the comfort of being cared for’?
- Are we willing to resist the ideas of socialism?
- Are we willing to reject the State’s ‘favors’ rather than give up our freedom?

14. Some Christians seem to be willing to wait it out; they been leavened with bad teaching; that Christians don’t need to get involved in politics; or not to worry because Jesus will come rescue us any minute. These need to heed the words of an 18th century Irish statesman named Edmund Burke, (1729-1797):

Edmund Burke

“All that is required for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.”

Edmund Burke

“The hottest fires in hell will be reserved for those who remain neutral in times of moral crisis.”

III. Conclusion

A. The Conforming Power of the World and the Word

Romans 12:2

Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds.

1. The leaven of the world has the power to conform us; but the leaven of the Word has the power to transform us!

2. The weariness of the world system of ideas is having terrible consequences:

CDC Suicide Watch

Last Thursday, the CDC released the results of a survey of 5400 adults asked if they had seriously considered suicide in the past 30 days. A whopping 10.7% said they had. The highest percentage was in young people, ages 18-24. 25% have contemplated suicide in the past 30 days.

3. We know from personal experience that Christian young people are not immune from suicide and depression. I lay the blame on those of us who lead churches that have failed to inspire our young people with the leaven of the Kingdom of God.

Lance Wallnau

Young people are looking for a challenge, looking for something to sink their teeth into. Young people are not attracted to the feminized Christianity that we have produced in our churches.

Lance Wallnau

Worship, presence, and intimacy with God is something David experienced as a warrior—but this emphasis on unconditional acceptance and love-love-love has lost the masculine element of the gospel—the prophetic edge—the thundering power that is congruent with an Elijah a Samuel or Jesus Himself—the One who will judge the world.

4. Ideas have consequences! Bad ideas and bad teaching has brought us down; Good ideas and good teaching can bring us back. Ideas Have Consequences!