

Culture Impact Team Manual

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INTRODUCTION.....	1
I. CASTING THE VISION.....	4
CULTURE IMPACT TEAM IN THE LOCAL CHURCH	4
Informing.....	5
Equipping.....	6
Alerting	7
Mobilizing	7
CULTURE IMPACT TEAM IN THE COMMUNITY	8
II. GETTING STARTED.....	9
FORM THE TEAM.....	9
Pastor Generated	
Member Generated	
DEVELOP A STATEMENT OF MISSION/PURPOSE.....	10
ORGANIZE THE MEMBERS.....	11
Leadership.....	11
Communications.....	11
Research.....	11
Mobilization.....	12
Strategy.....	12
DEVELOP A BUDGET.....	12
SET UP A CULTURE IMPACT CENTER.....	13
BEGIN STRATEGY MEETINGS.....	13
III. MOVING FORWARD.....	14
STAY INFORMED	14
COMMUNICATE WITH THE CONGREGATION	16
START SOME BASIC PROJECTS.....	18
FOLLOW GUIDELINES FOR PASTORS AND CHURCHES	24
IV. MAKING AN IMPACT.....	27
MAINTAIN PRIORITIES.....	27
AVOID BURNOUT.....	27
EXPECT OPPOSITION.....	27
LOOK HEAVENWARD.....	28
APPENDICES:	
BIBLICAL BASIS	
VOTER REGISTRATION	
SAMPLES	
POLICY GOALS	
PROJECTS	

INTRODUCTION

Christians are dual citizens. We are citizens of the Kingdom of God by faith in Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:20). We are also citizens of an earthly "kingdom." Consequently, we have obligations in both realms. Jesus commanded: "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's" (Matt. 22:21). As citizens of God's Kingdom, we are to serve Jesus above all others as the King of Kings. As citizens of America, we are to submit to the civil government and obey the just laws of the land as a positive witness (1 Peter 2:15-17; Rom. 13:1-7). If the laws of the two kingdoms come into clear conflict, then as Peter and the Apostles put it: "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Our allegiance is first, last and always to Christ and his Kingdom, but we also have a responsibility as citizens of our nation.

Unlike citizens of the Roman Empire, Americans are blessed to have, as Abraham Lincoln put it, a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." Have you noticed that the original parchment of the Constitution begins "We the People" in big, bold letters? The bottom line: Our American form of government requires our active involvement. How can we "give to Caesar what is Caesar's" as citizens in America today? By praying for our officials, engaging government policy by speaking out on moral and social issues, voting for candidates and laws that promote righteousness and justice, paying taxes, serving in the military, holding public office, etc. The point is that we can obey Christ and serve as Christian citizens.

Not only do we have a dual citizenship, but we have been given dual commissions. Most Christians know about the "Great Commission" to take the Good News about Jesus to everyone, everywhere and to help those who receive the message become fully devoted followers of Christ (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8, etc). Fewer believers are aware of the "Cultural Commission," which is the practical application of the first instructions God gave humankind. God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them have dominion over...all the earth... God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it..." (Gen. 1:26, 28). From the beginning, God delegated the development of culture and society to humankind.

Obviously, Adam and Eve sinned, thus we are all sinners by nature and by choice, and therefore all the cultures and societies we populate and shape are infected with sinful perspectives and values. Yet the Cultural Commission is still God's mandate. In fact, we are commanded by Christ to be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world" (Matt. 5:13-16). Simply, we are to resist the rot and dispel the darkness in every sphere of reality. We are to counter the pernicious and pervasive sinful influences in our culture by our own persistent and persuasive influence upon every part of the created order with the righteous and winsome values of the Kingdom. As Paul put it: "Don't be overcome with evil, overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). This includes exerting a positive influence on public policy and government because of the profound impact on our lives.

Not only do we have dual citizenship and dual commissions, but Jesus gave us two Great Commandments: Love God with all our heart, soul, and mind and love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 22:37-40). If we love God and love our neighbor, we will take seriously our dual citizenship and the dual commissions. Loving our neighbor certainly includes sharing the Good News, but it also means that we will actively promote the common good in the context of our community, state, and nation.

Respecting the basic human right to life, strengthening marriage and the family as the foundation of society, and protecting the right to practice one's faith freely and publicly – all contribute to the civility and wellness of a people. In part, we can accomplish those goals by advocating for public policies and seeking to elect public servants that best line up with these Kingdom values. The consequences are significant: “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked rule, the people groan” (Prov. 29:2). So there is a great need for the church to assume an active role in protecting human life from conception to natural death, shoring up biblical marriage, and defending religious liberty.

If we don't do it, who will? And hasn't that been the problem over the past 50 years? The Church has been mostly missing in action, and the cultural consequences have become intolerable. In the absence of Christians taking their dual citizenship seriously, obeying the dual commissions faithfully, and attempting to follow the dual commandments devotedly, the devil's crowd has taken over key places of influence in our culture largely by default, even in a nation where professing Christians are still in the majority. The solution is for God's people to return to Him (2 Chron. 7:14) and to function as the salt and light as Jesus expects. For more on the biblical worldview supporting such a ministry in the local church, see the “Biblical Basis” tab.

This manual is designed to equip a team of concerned Christians, commissioned by their pastoral leadership, to help encourage their local church toward exerting a more effective Christian influence as the salt of the earth and light of the world, especially in the public arena. The suggestions offered in this manual are meant to assist both leaders and members to create a Culture Impact Team and mobilize their local church, but they are only suggestions. Every individual Pastor and believer, each Culture Impact Team and church must earnestly seek the Lord's will in their unique expression of what Jesus meant by “salt” and “light.”

We hope this manual will prove useful not only for churches taking the first steps toward cultural engagement but also for those fellowships that are already experienced at applying Christian principles to the culture. In short, this manual offers practical help for all who are serious about making a positive impact on their community, their state, and our nation.

About Family Research Council

Since 1983, Family Research Council (FRC) has advanced faith, family and freedom in public policy and public opinion. FRC's team of seasoned experts promotes these core

values through policy research, public education on Capitol Hill and in the media, and grassroots mobilization. We review legislation, meet with policymakers, publish books and pamphlets, build coalitions, testify before Congress, and maintain a powerful presence in print and broadcast media. Through our outreach to pastors, we equip churches to transform the culture. Strategically located in Washington, D.C., FRC is the leading voice for the family in our nation's halls of power. FRC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. For more information, please visit us on the web at www.FRC.org or call 1-800-225-4008.

I. CASTING THE VISION

With all the diversity in the body of Christ, the churches that are having the greatest impact for the common good typically share a common conviction: there is no substitute for obeying the Great Commission and the Cultural Commission. The body of Christ must provide persuasive moral influence in the public arena as the “salt” and must engage in personal evangelism as the “light.” There is no plan B. There is something else these successful churches often share in common: More often than not, the churches that are reaching people for Christ have an intentional plan for evangelism and the churches making a positive impact on the moral health of their community have a ministry team devoted to this purpose as an official part of their ministry structure.

These ministry teams are known by various different names—Christian Citizenship Committees, Salt & Light Groups, Moral Concerns Ministries, Current Issues Councils, etc.—but their function is the same: to provide in-house leadership for congregational response to the moral and social issues that impact the community, state and nation. We’ve chosen to call these groups Culture Impact Teams (CIT). Regardless of what you call yours, helping you to establish an effective one in your church is the desired outcome of this manual.

The Culture Impact Team in the Local Church

Why a team and not just an individual? While a passionate individual can have success, a team can best accomplish the goal of mobilizing the entire membership to engage in informed activism. There are several spiritual and practical reasons for this approach, such as biblical accountability, maximum effectiveness, and utter survival. Consider Solomon’s wisdom: “Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:12). Christians working together in the local church tend to be more influential in the long run than those trying to go it alone.

What are some of the values of a successful Culture Impact Team? Consider the following:

1. Depend on God’s wisdom and strength and not themselves.
2. Submit to pastoral authority instead of acting independently.
3. Apply biblical principles to moral issues instead of giving in to partisan politics.
4. Pray for elected leaders and all those in authority before criticizing them.
5. Speak the truth in love.

There are numerous roles and responsibilities that a CIT could fulfill in your church. We suggest four fundamental areas on which to concentrate. Basically, it is the CIT’s responsibility to:

1. *Inform* the church leadership and congregation about the moral issues being debated and acted on in the public arena;

2. *Equip* the membership as to how they can engage these issues;
3. *Alert* them when prayer and action is needed;
4. *Mobilize* them for various forms of action with a goal of making a positive impact for the greater good.

Let's look at each one more in depth.

1. Informing

And this I pray, that your love may abound more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ. Philippians 1:9-10

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

The initial role of the CIT is educator. Clarifying Christian duties toward the community and providing your church with accurate and pertinent information on moral issues should be first on your agenda. "Why should Christians be concerned about social issues?" "What exactly should we be concerned about?" Answering these questions is your top priority.

Busyness is pandemic in our culture; most people just cannot find the time to stay informed. Ministers are notoriously overworked and far too busy to keep up on every social issue. The CIT is first and foremost a friend to the pastor. By supplying your leadership with the information to direct the congregation in matters of public policy, you will provide a desperately needed service. If your information is consistently balanced, thorough, and reliable you will win both gratitude and confidence. This confidence from your pastor is perhaps the single most necessary ingredient for the success of the CIT. Consider the church leadership your primary constituency. You will serve the church best by serving the leadership well.

Lack of time is also a big reason why church members may be uninvolved in the public square. This factor, along with a lack of reliable information, prevents the confidence they need to get involved. Under the guidance of the pastor, your second priority should be to educate the congregation both on current moral concerns and on the basic matters of Christian citizenship.

Your church probably has a committee devoted to evangelism or missions whose job it is partly to remind folks that every believer has a role in fulfilling the Great Commission. Likewise, while orchestrating church involvement in social issues, the CIT also reminds the congregation that every Christian has a responsibility here as well. Many Christians today are woefully misinformed about the ramifications of their faith in the public arena. Your presence helps the pastor to teach the congregation about these things. By informing and modeling the role of the Christian in society, you help to disciple the body of Christ!

The resources found in this manual will assist you to accomplish your two primary responsibilities as educator: to give your church reliable information on the moral issues of the day, and to disciple them into a fuller expression of their faith in action as the salt and light.

2. Equipping

All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service. Ephesians 4:11-12

Education is the first step in the discipleship of the Christian. But once informed, the question then becomes "What should we do?" "How do we respond?" The second role of the CIT is to equip, to provide the resources necessary for action. Merely knowing that I should do something is not enough to get me out of the pew and into action; you must also provide tools and show me how to get involved. It is not uncommon for the novice to experience an overwhelming sense of frustration when confronting the magnitude of today's problems. In order to prevent the typical swing from apathy to futility, folks need to have a useful response for information you share.

"Whom should I call?" "Where should we go?" "Are there any experts who can help us?" "Are there any organizations that specialize in this "arena?" "Has anyone dealt with this before?" The CIT must expect these types of questions and offer opportunities for involvement whenever a concern is shared. The good news is that there is no need to re-invent the wheel; most social issues that your church will face have already been dealt with effectively by folks no braver than you! Therefore, your job is not to be a resident expert on everything from A to Z, but a resource center for the church, the Team with the connections. The information in the Appendices of this manual and the Family Research Council's (www.FRC.org) family of websites (like www.CultureImpact.org and www.iVoteValues.org) will be very helpful in knowing where to turn to equip your congregation for effective action.

Again, the pastor is your foremost responsibility here. When it comes to taking action as a congregation, the pastoral leadership will be the ones to make the final decision; but you should educate and equip them. Pray regularly and specifically for wisdom and power as a Team. Schedule time to pray with the pastor. And when the opportunity comes to step out as a congregation, be an advisor. Recommending a course of action is yet another way to help the church leadership do their jobs. Knowing that you have already identified helpful resources and time-tested ways to be involved will further encourage your pastor's confidence in you, not to mention your own self-assurance.

3. Alerting

Now as for you, son of man, I have appointed you a watchman... Ezekiel 33:7

For if the bugle produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle? 1 Corinthians 14:8

Sometimes informing and equipping must then lead to a call to action. Far too many opportunities for Christian influence in the public square have been lost due to someone being asleep at the wheel. The third role of the CIT requires perhaps the most diligence and discernment. This is the role of watchman, sounding the alarm when the time comes for the church to take action. As the passage in 1st Corinthians puts it, the alert must be clear. The need to be both timely and accurate is obvious. It is no less important to have a well thought out plan of action. Above these three things there must be adequate prayer.

Submission to church leadership is critical at this point (Heb. 13:17). Your role as watchman is to bring both the alert and your recommendation to the attention of the leadership. But the decision to act lies with the one in authority. The actual call to arms is where most church leaders grow wary. If you have been reliable and responsible up to this point, it will likely translate into permission to move forward. However, if the leadership is not comfortable with moving forward, continue to build the relationship. Don't get discouraged. Continue providing intelligence reports and pray that the pastor will take the next step of allowing for an alert to the church.

CAUTION: The call to action can be the most overused function of the CIT. Sounding too many alarms, like the story of the boy who cried "Wolf!," is perhaps even worse than no alarm at all. Ill timed or imprudent battle cries are to be avoided at all costs. Deciding when and what to alert the congregation about is a crucial matter for prayer in the CIT and with the pastor. It is quite common for those who get immersed in social issues to develop a sense of urgency not shared by others less familiar with the subject. This deep sense of urgency can be a liability, intimidating to those who are "outside" the situation. The CIT must exercise restraint in its capacity as watchman, showing prayerful wisdom over when, how often and in what fashion they will sound the alarm. When done correctly, however, the importance of this role is difficult to overestimate.

4. Mobilizing

And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly. Romans 12:6

... make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Philippians 2:2

Once the church leadership has agreed to a course of action, the pastor may return the ball to your court. The task at hand is then mobilization: to coordinate church

involvement through the duration of a project. In some cases this role remains in the hands of the pastor, but they will often delegate to the CIT the responsibility of guiding the congregation through the particular involvement. Publicizing the action or event, coordinating volunteers, arranging for materials - these are types of activities that will require some administrative skill.

Knowing that this responsibility may be yours could help to moderate the frequency and ambition of your "alarms," but this is also a very rewarding function of the CIT. Seeing the church in action and watching the joy people experience as a result of actually being salt and light in the community is very satisfying indeed. And, of course, the more timely and appropriate the involvement (i.e. the better you fulfill your role), the more likely your church will be to participate the next time! Inform, Equip, Alert and Mobilize: these are the basic ways in which the CIT can serve the body of Christ.

The Culture Impact Team in the Community

There are friends both inside and outside the church ready and willing to help. Another significant role of the CIT is to enlist those friends to join the effort to advance faith, family and freedom. This is the role of liaison; acting as the link to other churches and organizations.

To assist you in this task, FRC provides resources for churches on its website such as regular Bulletin Inserts on various topics that can serve the educational purpose of your CIT. FRC focuses primarily on what is going on in Washington, DC, and it is important that you or members of the CIT sign up for free updates on national matters (www.frc.org). FRC's sister organization, Family Research Council Action, provides voter guides and other channels of action concerning elections and pending legislation. It is also important to keep up to speed on moral issues in your state, so locate your state Family Policy Council and subscribe to their communications as well. For information about legal issues impacting culture and religious liberty, the Alliance Defense Fund (www.alliancedefensefund.org) provides free email informational services.

By acting in liaison with the FRC and other organizations in the state, the CIT can tap into a nationwide network. As we mentioned before, there is no need to re-invent the wheel; most social issues that your church will face have already been dealt with effectively. A liaison does not need to be an expert on everything, but serve as a resource for the church.

As you develop your CIT, different members of the Team could be responsible for monitoring certain sources of information and relaying it to the proper person on the Team whose function is dissemination of the information. The goal is to encourage synergy, where the total effect of cooperative action is greater than the sum of individual efforts.

II. GETTING STARTED

So far, we have summarized the vision of the CIT in the church and in the greater network of pro-family groups. Now we turn to the nuts and bolts of creating such a Team in your church.

Form the Team

The most basic prerequisite for any sort of Culture Impact Team is getting the consent and blessing of the pastor and church leadership. This is not to say that a pastor must run the Team or even attend every meeting, but submitting to pastoral authority is a biblical necessity (Heb. 13:17). Of course, it also stands to reason that the church which most exemplifies a respect for moral authority has the best chance of promoting it in the community. Therefore, the pastor must give assent to the establishment of the Team and be consulted on major undertakings for maximum effectiveness.

Pastor Generated: There are a variety of ways to start a Culture Impact Team in your church. The pastor may be the catalyst that gets it started. Given the great demands placed upon most pastors, we recommend that a qualified church member be identified to chair the Team. As mentioned above, however, a system of pastoral accountability must guide the Team in fulfilling its responsibilities. Churches with a team of pastors will want to designate one of the pastoral leadership team to be the point person relating to the CIT.

Team leadership requirements may be different from what characterizes the stereotypical "activist." While the Lord has blessed some people with a tremendous amount of energy and tenacity, the most important qualifications of a CIT leader should include depth of spiritual maturity, a servant heart, a gift for consensus building and no overt tendencies toward rebellion or fruitless confrontation (1 Tim. 3:2-12, Titus 1:6-9). Political "flamethrowers" will be more destructive than helpful.

People Generated: If you are a member who is feeling the call to increase the cultural engagement of your church, you might first want to identify other church members who share your concern. Support may be as close as your church's pro-life group, home-school network, or Bible study. The next step is to approach your pastor. Perhaps you would want to broach the topic of cultural engagement by going through this manual together. You may also wish to present the material about a Biblical Basis for engagement that you have been provided in the tab or consider inviting some of the church leadership to view Lesson 9 of *The Truth Project* (see www.TheTruthProject.org) on "The State."

Regardless of whether you are pastor or church member, leader or follower, novice or veteran, prayer is the order of the day, both in identifying folks who share the vision and in approaching those who may have less affinity for the social dimensions of Christianity. Unless all these undertakings begin and continue through the power of the Holy Spirit, they will be of little eternal value and may actually do more harm than good!

Develop a Statement of Mission/Purpose

Before outlining specific functions of the members of the CIT, we suggest that you prayerfully craft a mission/purpose statement. It might be helpful to look over some sample statements:

“To improve and enhance the witness of Jesus Christ in the area of government, politics, and social issues.”

Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, CA Salt & Light Ministry

Inspired by God, our vision is an American society that affirms and practices Judeo-Christian values rooted in biblical authority. Empowered by God, our mission is to awaken, inform, energize, equip, and mobilize Christians to be the catalysts for the biblically-based transformation of their families, churches, communities, and the nation.

First Baptist Church, Lebanon, TN, IMPACT Team

“The Watchmen Ministry is a non-partisan information center providing resources that promote good government according to Biblical principles without any political party affiliation.”

Calvary Chapel Chino Hills, CA, Watchmen Ministry

“Our Mission is to promote and protect Judeo-Christian values by educating and uniting the Church to be able to engage our community in the issues of the day.”

Bell Shoals Baptist Church, Brandon, FL, Community Issues Council

“The purpose of this ministry is to educate Christians about current events, to examine those events from a Biblical perspective, and to pray for our leaders and our country.”

Horizon Christian Fellowship, San Diego, CA, Salt & Light Ministry

"Our ministry is to inform on local, state, national and moral issues touching our daily lives."

First Baptist Church of Orlando, FL, Current Issues Council

A couple more detailed statements may be found in the “Samples” tab. Obviously, the mission/purpose statement for your CIT should be adapted to your particular congregation.

Organize the Members

Team structure is first determined by size. In a small church the Team may not be much larger than you; but if there are many interested people, the group may decide to organize either functionally or topically. If folks have general concerns and specific skills, you may divide labor functionally with roles such as team leader, researcher, editor, and event coordinator. If you have more people with specific concerns and general skills, you may divide labor topically under categories, such as abortion, sex education, religious freedom, etc.

Most groups incorporate both function and topic into their organization. Because three of your four fundamental responsibilities entail gathering and disseminating information, it makes sense that you have people with gifts in those areas. Someone must have the duty of leading the group and serving as a liaison to the pastor or one the pastoral staff. Someone needs to keep up to date on the issues. There also ought to be someone with writing skills in the group, since you will often need to present your information in written form (bulletin announcements, webpages, newsletters, etc.).

Specifically, here are some suggestions toward establishing job descriptions for Team members:

Leadership: Under the leadership of the pastor, the Team leader will be responsible for directing the team to accomplish the Culture Impact Team's mission of defending and advancing faith, family, and freedom. The Team leader will prioritize mission tasks, administrate team personnel, and oversee allocation of budget resources.

Skill Set: Must be able to see the big picture, good communicator/vision caster, organizer, and encourager.

Communications: These Team members will handle e-mail and social network communications through Facebook and Twitter as well as statements, releases, articles, editorials, interviews, and advertising. They will also assist the Pastor with coordinating and executing local and/or regional events, conferences, rallies, keynote addresses, campaigns, meet-ups, etc.

Skill Set: Must be good at written and verbal communication.

Research: These Team members will primarily do research on local, state, and national moral issues and share information with Team members in strategy meetings for further dissemination to the congregation and community. They will also assist the pastor by providing essential data regarding key issues and submitting written recommendations regarding key issues that might warrant public (i.e., pulpit) exposure. The goal is to provide the pastor with concise, brief and well-written information about the issues for prayerful consideration.

Skill Set: Must be tech savvy, conversant with movement websites, and able to prioritize multiple issues.

Mobilization: These team members will encourage grassroots participation and involvement in general mission tasks, such as signing up for the church's e-mail Impact network, subscribing to Impact News, petition drives, church-based, non-partisan voter registration, etc. However, there will also be encouragement toward involvement in pregnancy support centers, school board meetings, civil government gatherings, public office, service projects that show the love of Jesus in practical ways, etc. This will not only include enlistment of local church members, but also reaching out to other like-minded churches and Christian leaders in the area.

Skill Set: Must be a people person, good communicator, and not afraid to ask, enlist, delegate, and manage.

Strategy: All team members will be expected to help develop creative strategies for equipping the local church both to understand the critical moral issues and to engage their culture and community with biblical values.

Regarding the formal relationship of the Team to the church, a lot depends on your type of church government. In general, these committees tend to fall under the umbrella of Christian Education/Adult Ministries (since education and discipleship are essential) or Missions/Outreach (since social action is so closely related to evangelism). Discussion with the pastor should provide direction on how the Team is to fit into the organization of the church.

Develop a Budget

Churches who are committing to creating a CIT should consider committing a budget line item to facilitate the church's cultural impact ministry. Basically, entry level churches may want to start with 1% of undesignated receipts. Intermediate level churches may want to add another 1% for the state Family Policy Council (or like-minded state-wide group). Advanced level churches could add yet another 1% designated for the national Family Research Council.

In other words, a model formula would be as follows:

- 1% for the local church Culture Impact Team
- 1% for the state Family Policy Council (or Comparable Group).
- 1% for the national Family Research Council

Again, these are only suggestions. Churches may want to designate a dollar amount or even give higher percentages. It is up to each local church as to what investment they are willing to make in order to positively impact the culture.

Set Up a Culture Impact Center

Basically, this will be a resource center for church members. Having a designated location in the church will provide visibility for the ministry and give people an opportunity to become informed and, in turn, become involved. You can provide action alerts to church members who are interested, and church members can, in turn, call or write their governmental officials. You can also promote your ministry, identify prayer needs, allow people to sign up for action items, and answer questions regarding the issues. You can also host petition drives, offer voter registration, and provide voter guides for the members of our church.

You can begin with something as simple as setting up a table in the church. A step up would be a spindle or rack full of resources. The ultimate would be a booth presence. If you are interested, Family Research Council has some different types for purchase. When you purchase a Culture Impact Center, FRC will send an initial set of Policy Pamphlets. Afterward, they can be ordered for a nominal donation. An Order Form for three different types of Culture Impact Centers can be found in the pocket of the manual.

Begin Strategy Meetings

Again, size and structure play a large role in how your strategy meetings will be handled. In general, you may wish to start with a meeting every other week. Some CITs might meet as often as once a week, but at least once a month. The internet has made group communication without physical meetings more possible than in the past. The Lord's blessing and guidance should be invoked at the beginning of every gathering, and the essence of what takes place should be recorded by someone acting as secretary. These minutes should be kept on file for future reference, and a report should be sent to the pastoral staff.

Prepare an agenda beforehand in respect for your own time and that of your fellow Team members. It should always allow time for prayer, review of the minutes from the previous meeting, updates on current issues and projects, discussion of pending issues, and prayerful planning of action items for the church. In discussing information brought to the meetings, small groups may wish to proceed informally. However, larger groups may find it helpful to consult a meeting guideline, such as the popular *Roberts' Rules of Order*.

III. MOVING FORWARD

Now that we have laid the basic biblical foundations and offered some practical steps toward getting started, let's explore some of the means of staying informed, some methods of communication, a few examples of projects, and the legal guidelines that will prove to be helpful as you move forward with this ministry.

Stay Informed

If you have been following social and moral issues for a while, you probably have a pretty good idea what issues your CIT will address. If this is your first serious consideration of social involvement, you will want to start by becoming apprised of the shared concerns and relevant issues in your community. Either way, getting and staying informed is a high priority for the CIT.

Fortunately, you need neither a large budget nor a staff of researchers to stay informed, since there are many organizations with full-time staff to do that job for you. Most of their newsletters are relatively inexpensive or free. Local libraries may also carry books and periodicals helpful to your work. An effective CIT will have a regular flow of information from a variety of sources. The Online Resources represent a growing list of websites that offer both a general overview of the issues and deeper research on particular topics. In fact, as you are reading the list, it will likely already be out of date! However, we offer these in hopes that you will find what you need:

Find Your Elected Officials

Visit Family Research Council www.frc.org/contact-elected-officials

President:

www.whitehouse.gov and email @ president@whitehouse.gov

Congress:

Representatives <https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml>

Senators http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

Pro-Family Organizations and Research Sources:

American Family Association www.afa.net

Concerned Women for America www.cwfa.org

Eagle Forum www.eagleforum.org

Family Research Council www.frc.org

Focus on the Family www.family.org

Legal Organizations:

Alliance Defense Fund www.alliancedefensefund.org

American Center for Law and Justice www.acjl.org

American Family Association Law Center www.afa.net/clp

Christian Law Association www.christianlaw.org

Liberty Counsel www.lc.org

Liberty Legal Institute www.libertylegal.org

Prayer Organizations:

Congressional Prayer Caucus www.prayercaucus.com

Intercessors for America www.ifapray.org

National Day of Prayer Task Force www.nationaldayofprayer.org

Anti-Pornography Groups:

Citizens for Community Values www.ccv.org

Morality In Media www.moralityinmedia.org

PornHarms.com

Girls Against Porn www.girlsagainstporn.com

Black History:

African American Perspectives <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/aap/aaphome.html>

Freedmen's Bureau Online <http://freedmensbureau.com>

Harper's Weekly <http://blackhistory.harpsweek.com>

Neglected Voices (Biographies and Speeches of the first African American Congressmen)

<http://www1.law.nyu.edu/davis/neglectedvoices/index2.html>

Education:

Christian Educators Association www.ceai.org

Gateways to Better Education www.gtbe.org

Home School Legal Defense Association www.HSLDA.org

National Association of Christian Educators/Citizens for Excellence in Education

www.nace-cee.org

The Center for Education Reform www.edreform.com

Environmental Issues:

The Cornwall Alliance www.cornwallalliance.org

Founding Fathers:

Wallbuilders www.wallbuilders.com

Journals of the Continental Congress <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwjc.html>

Annals of Congress <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwac.html>

State Charters and Constitutions http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/statech.asp

The Federalist Papers <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fedpapers.html>

Online Library of Liberty www.ll.libertyfund.org/

Religion and the Founding of the American Republic from the Library of Congress

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/>

Thomas Historical Documents <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdoxmainpg.html>

Benjamin Franklin Autobiography www.earlyamerica.com/lives/franklin/

Benjamin Franklin Papers www.franklinpapers.org/franklin/

Benjamin Rush Essays www.deila.dickinson.edu/theirownwords/browseauthor.htm#qrs

George Washington Papers www.lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/GW/gwhome.html

George Washington Writings www.etext.virginia.edu/washington/fitzpatrick

James Madison Notes on Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787 and Addresses

www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/presiden/madispap.htm

James Madison Papers www.memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/madison_papers/

James Wilson Works www.deila.dickinson.edu/theirownwords/title/0006.htm

John Adams Family Papers www.masshist.org/digitaladams/aea/

John Adams Papers and Addresses www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/presiden/adampap.htm

John Dickinson Political Writings www.deila.dickinson.edu/theirownwords/browseauthor.htm#def

John Jay Papers www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/digital/jay/

John Quincy Adams Diaries www.masshist.org/jqadiaries/

Samuel Adams Writings (Vols. 2-4)

<http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/gutbook/author?name=Adams%2C%20Samuel%2C%20172-1803>

Thomas Jefferson Papers http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/jefferson_papers/

Origins:

Answers in Genesis www.answersingenesis.org

Discovery Institute www.discoveryinstitute.org

Institute for Creation Research www.icr.org

Pro-Life Groups:

American Life League www.all.org

Care Net www.care-net.org

Americans United For Life www.unitedforlife.org

Heartbeat International www.heartbeatinternational.org

Life Issues Institute www.lifeissues.org

Life Dynamics www.lifedynamics.com

National Right to Life www.nrlc.org

Priests For Life www.priestsforlife.org

Prolife.Org www.prolife.org

Psalm 139 Project www.faithandfamily.com

Pastors:

Family Research Council's Watchmen Pastors www.WatchmenPastors.org

Focus on the Family's Parsonage www.parsonage.org

Worldview Resources:

The Truth Project www.thetruthproject.org

Chuck Colson Center for Worldview Studies www.colsoncenter.org/wfp-home

Worldview Weekend www.worldviewweekend.com

Summit Ministries www.summit.org

While you may entrust the state and national pro-family organizations to provide information about their respective spheres of responsibility, the local scene is yours to monitor! As you grow, look for someone to follow meetings of the school board and city council (these are often broadcast live over local cable channels).

Communicate with the Congregation

With the alarming number of moral issues being debated in the public arena, it is imperative the Culture Impact Team provide clear and accurate information that will equip church members for their role as salt and light. So it is useful to consider the various ways to communicate with the congregation. Remember that the object is certainly not for the Team to end up doing everything on its own or even on behalf of the congregation, but to get the whole church involved. This may be accomplished in a variety of ways, all of which involve regular communication with the congregation. The most obvious is an announcement from the pulpit by the pastor. This vehicle carries perhaps the greatest weight, but be careful! Pulpit announcements should be used

sparingly so that it has greater effect at those times when you really do need the "big guns." There are other ways of setting up your regular dialogue with the congregation:

Email Blasts: One of the fastest and most cost effective means of communicating with the members of the congregation is by email. You should seek to get the pastor's approval for obtaining addresses from interested members and communicating through that means. Just be mindful that everyone is just as busy as you are and we all fight information overload. Keep communications short and simple and only send them when action is desperately needed. All of the Team members would work to cultivate the list, but only one of the Team members should work to maintain it and send to it.

Bulletin Inserts: Bulletin inserts arguably provide the broadest coverage of the congregation since almost everyone who comes to church will read one. A frequent drawback is the small amount of space available, but there may also be topical and stylistic limitations (e.g., modesty may prevent mention of certain concerns). Still, this can be an effective line of communication. Bulletin inserts are also available from Family Research Council (see http://www.watchmenpastors.org/resource_bulletins), state Family Policy Councils, and even from some denominational organizations. There are several examples in the Sample tab.

Church Publications (Digital and Print): Church web sites and blogs are becoming an option for groups of modest means in this age of electronic publishing. If your church already has an established print newsletter, online newsletter, blog or e-mail blast, you might consider seeking a regular column in it or including an insert; or you could start your own. Many of the pro-family groups listed in the resource section permit churches to forward and even reproduce their articles and publications under special arrangements. In this way, a very impressive publication can be assembled by a rather small team.

Relational Networks: Leaders of adult classes are a natural network within the church. Sometimes a bulletin insert or flyer may not be appropriate for the whole church to see (given that children will read it), so it could be more effective to distribute them through the adult Bible study groups instead. Building a relationship between the CIT and the various Bible study groups within your congregation is another way of getting the message out.

Small Group Studies: Keeping in mind the need to make disciples, the CIT could work with the Christian Education department to plan an adult education series on Christian social responsibilities. It could be something as pre-packaged as *The Truth Project* trainings or another video driven study, like Rick Warren and Chuck Colson's *Wide Angle*. Or you may want to develop a small group discipleship study on what the Bible says about the moral issues being debated in the public arena. For a more tailored message, someone from your state's Family Policy Council could be asked to speak to your congregation about current issues or a speaker from Wallbuilders could come and speak about our Judeo-Christian heritage. Or you could have representatives of local

prison ministries, drug and alcohol rehabilitation ministries, pregnancy resource centers, adoption ministries, sexual addition ministries, and the list goes on.

Start Some Basic Projects

Praying for Elected Officials: Entry level projects for your include informing the congregation (with pastoral approval!) about who their elected officials are and reminding them of the biblical exhortation to pray faithfully for these public servants (1 Tim. 2:1-4). One of the first steps of the new Team could be the creation of a list naming all of your elected officials, from local school board all the way up to the White House (include address, phone numbers, and web pages if possible). This information may be obtained from your local library or registrar of voters (listed in the phone book) or through simple internet searches (see www.frc.org/contact-elected-officials). You may then provide the list for the congregation and update it appropriately.

Contacting Elected Officials: Once your church is comfortable praying for their elected officials, the next step would be to find out where they stand on the moral issues, and begin contacting them. Contact information for the President and Congress appears below:

Contact the President: Phone: Comment Line (202) 456-1111; Switchboard (202) 456-1414; Website: www.whitehouse.gov ; E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov

Addressing Correspondence to the President:

The Honorable (full name)
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Contact your U.S. Representative or Senator: Phone: (202) 224-3121 and ask for your U.S. Representative's and/or Senator's office; Websites: www.house.gov ; www.senate.gov .

Addressing Correspondence to a Senator:

The Honorable (full name)
__(Rm.#)__(name of)Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Addressing Correspondence to a Representative:

The Honorable (full name)
__(Rm.#)__(name of)House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Unfortunately, there is no shortage of issues your congregation can begin calling and writing their representatives about. Get fully informed about what they stand for, and then contact them by:

- E-Mail: You may find your senators and representative directly from Family Research Council's website. In most cases, you may also e-mail your elected officials directly. When writing an e-mail, follow the guidelines for letter writing given below.
- Phone Call: Remember that telephone calls are usually taken by a staff member, not the member of Congress.
 1. Identification: Identify yourself to the person who answers the phone, then ask to speak with the aide who handles the issue about which you wish to comment.
 2. Specification: After identifying yourself, tell the aide you would like to leave a brief message, specifying the reason for your call, such as: "Please tell Representative/Senator (Name) that I support/oppose (H.R.____/S.____)."
 3. Justification: You will also want to state reasons for your support or opposition to the bill.
 4. Clarification: Ask for your representative's or senators' position on the bill. You may also request a written response to your phone call.
 5. Gratification: Thank the person before hanging up.
- Letter: Remember these 4 guidelines as you write elected officials:
 1. Be Polite: When addressing the official, be sure to use the right title: Dear Representative or Dear Senator. When writing to the Chair of a Committee or the Speaker of the House, it is proper to address them as: Mr. Chairman or Madam Chairwoman, and Mr. Speaker or Madam Speaker.
 2. Be purposeful: State your purpose in the first paragraph of the letter. If your letter pertains to a specific piece of legislation, identify it accordingly, e.g., House bill: H. R. _____, Senate bill: S._____.
 3. Be Practical: Get to the point, include key information, use an example to support your position, address only one issue, and, if possible, keep the letter to one page.
 4. Be Pleasant: Remember who you are and whose you are. There is an old country saying that as a lot of truth: You can catch more bees with honey than

- FAX: Use the same guidelines as for letter writing. Remember, one page!
- Personal Visit: Sometimes the best way to lobby your elected official isn't with an e-mail, phone-call, letter, or fax, but with a personal visit. Here are 7-*Up's* of a personal visit.¹
 1. *Call up.* Make an appointment with your official's office, either the home district office, state office, or the office in Washington. If the official isn't available for a meeting, the scheduler may refer you to an assistant who deals with the issue you're concerned with. If that happens, don't be discouraged because officials rely on their personnel to be their information gatherers and gatekeepers.
 2. *Pray up.* Pray for God's wisdom in how to approach the official, for the words to speak, and for openness on the part of the official (Neh. 2:4).
 3. *Study up.* Consult For Faith & Family's website, and other sources for brief, concise, information on the issue in order to get handle on the most important points to make. Know your issue well enough to keep your conversation brief, since you may not have much time to make your case (Prov. 15:28a).
 4. *Dress up.* The commercials say: "Image is everything." It is not everything, but when meeting an official it is important. Being well dressed communicates confidence and respect—confidence in yourself and respect for the official (Esther 5:1-2).
 5. *Speak up.* As much as is possible, make your point in a compelling, winsome way (Prov. 22:11), and restraint the desire to become angry and combative (James 1:20). If the official is a believer, use Scripture, if not, don't. The Bible is true in every realm of reality; therefore there are all kinds of statistics to back it up. So use the evidence for your argument, not just a verse.
 6. *Close up.* Fifteen to twenty minutes is sufficient time if you're prepared well. Be sure to close the deal by making a specific request: "Will you co-sponsor this?" "Will you vote for this?" "Will you oppose that?" (Neh. 2:5-8). Once you've made your points, leave some information with the official, and express your appreciation for a hearing— and leave.
 7. *Follow up.* Less than a week after your meeting, send a brief note: 1) thanking the official for his or her time, and 2) restating your point.

If we are going to make a positive impact on the direction of America, we must let our elected officials know how we stand on the issues and what we expect of them as our representatives. The laws they pass today will set the course for your community's tomorrow and your nation's future! Make sure your voice is heard. Sharing the truth in love can affect their decisions.

¹ Adapted from Concerned Women for America's Penny Nance and her "how to" for training lobbyists.

Conduct Voter Registration: Alert the congregation about upcoming elections and register them to vote. If the members of your church are not registered to vote, which is quite often the case in churches across America, then they are not equipped to do the most basic thing they can do to be salt and light: cast an informed vote. The iVoteValues.org website enables the visitor to begin the voter registration process online, consider the values we should use to evaluate candidates, view the political party platforms, examine the legal Do's and Don'ts about holding a voter registration drive in your church, etc. The website also contains everything needed for a Christian Citizenship Sunday, including a patriotic message, PowerPoint, Bulletin Insert, brief videos, etc., so please consult that resource and download the free materials or you can purchase a Voter Impact Toolkit, a \$20 value, for only a nominal shipping and handling donation of \$5.00. Visit www.ivotevalues.org/resources for ordering information.

We recommend that you do a Christian Citizenship Sunday at least once a year, close to July 4, and conduct voter registration. We also ask that consideration be given to having recurring voter registration efforts during election years, especially 6-8 weeks prior to an important election. There is a helpful Voter Resource Guide tab at the back of this manual that contains everything you need and is supported by the www.iVoteValues.org website.

Use the resources from iVoteValues.org on that Sunday, announce from the pulpit that today is "Christian Citizenship Sunday," either hand out the voter registration forms in the pews or have volunteers staff a table with the forms, collect the forms that are filled out and mail them to your county election commission office or drop them off. That's really all there is to it! It may seem like a simple thing, but getting believers registered to vote is one of the most important things your Team can do to equip your church members to be salt and light in the public arena.

Equip the Congregation to Vote their Biblical Values: As Election Day draws near, you may encourage responsible voting by distributing non-partisan Voter Guides, which provide the candidates' stance on pertinent issues (see www.frcaction.org for Voter Guides). However, the Bible is the ultimate "Voter Guide" when it comes to moral issues and selecting leaders. Exodus 18:21, says: "But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens."

Remind the church that we not only have a responsibility to vote, but more than that we are also held to a higher standard of voting. Rather than having a blind allegiance to a political party, we must take the time to investigate the issues as well as the candidates. We must discern if they are in alignment with the values of the word of God. Point out what God's word says about:

ABORTION: God made us in his image, He has known us, and cared for us from all eternity; therefore life is sacred. Psalm 139:13: *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.* Exodus 20:13: *You shall not murder.*

Should a woman have control over the life in her body? Ezekiel 18:4: *Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine ...* 1 Peter 2:16: *[Live] as free [men], not using your liberty as a cloak for [evil] ...* (See also I Corinthians 6:19-20)

Should a child who might be born deformed or handicapped be aborted? Exodus 4:11: *The Lord said to him, 'Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord?' Romans 9:20: But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did You make me like this?'*

Should a child conceived as a result of rape or incest be aborted? Deuteronomy 24:16: *The fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall the children put to death for their fathers.*

Should we create and destroy human embryos in order to obtain stem cells? Jeremiah 1:5: *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.*

Question: Will the candidate/proposition for which you plan to vote protect the lives of pre-born children?

DECENCY: God's word tells us to avoid every appearance of evil (1 Thess. 5:22). Certainly, pornography and sexually oriented businesses are harmful to individuals, marriages, and the family, and therefore our society. Romans 12:1: *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living holy sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.* Matthew 5:28: *But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.* (See also Romans 13:13-14; 1 Corinthians 6:13b; Revelation 2:20-23)

Question: Will the candidate/proposition strive to remove pornography and sexually oriented businesses from our community?

EDUCATION: God has delegated to parents and grandparents the primary responsibility of educating their children. Psalm 78:5: *He commanded our fathers, that they should [teach the commandments] to their children.* (See also Proverbs 22:6, Deuteronomy 6:6-9, Psalm 78:5-7, and Titus 2:1-8).

Question: Does the candidate/proposition promote giving parents the choice to decide where their child should go to school?

ENVIRONMENT: God has given us dominion over the creation as His stewards; we are not equal to or subject to the rest of creation. Genesis 1:26: *Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them have dominion over...all the earth...*

Question: Does the candidate/proposition seek to be a wise steward of the creation or push for punitive measures based on a radical agenda that will end up causing hardship on people?

FAMILY: God ordained the family as the basic building block of a healthy society. Jesus said in Matthew 19:4-9 *“Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”* They said to Him, *“Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?”* He said to them, *“Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality,^[d] and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”*

Question: Does the candidate/proposition promote healthy marriages and families and discourage no-fault divorce?

HOMOSEXUALITY: God opposes homosexual behavior. Leviticus 18:22: *You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination.* 1 Corinthians 6:9-10: *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. (See also Romans 1:18-27,32).*

Question: Does the candidate/proposition support or endorse the homosexual movement?

JUDICIAL SELECTION: God desires judges and justices who impartially pursue righteousness and justice. Deuteronomy 16:18-20: *You shall appoint judges and officers ... which the Lord your God gives you ... and they shall judge the people with [righteous] judgment. You shall not pervert justice; you shall not show partiality, nor not take a bribe...* (See also 1Samuel 6:7).

Question: Will the judge for whom you vote or support make the law his/her own? What core values do they possess that might influence their judgments?

POVERTY: God has charged believers (not government institutions) to help the poor and widows and orphans. Deuteronomy 15:7-8: *If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within ... your land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart, nor shut your hand from your poor brother, but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs* (See also James 1:27; James 2:15-16).

Question: Does the candidate/proposition support a state/federal welfare system that enslaves the poor, steals their dignity, and promotes immorality?

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY: God has given every human being the basic freedom of being able to relate to and worship Him both privately and publicly, a freedom which is enshrined in our First Amendment. Galatians 5:1: *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.*

Question: Does the candidate/proposition promote religious freedom in the public arena and seek to preserve our nation's Judeo-Christian heritage?

SECURITY: God has given us the right and a responsibility to defend our families, our homes, and our nation. Psalm 144:1: *Blessed be the LORD my Rock, who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle.*

Question: Does the candidate/proposition support the right to defend our families, our property, and our country?

There are many more issues to consider when voting. In fact, check out the Top 25 Policy Goals in a tab at the back of the manual. By way of caution, let it be said that there are probably more issues to be concerned about in the public arena today than any one church could possibly handle. As you begin to organize and operate your CIT, you must prioritize the issues that will command your attention. Start small!

Educating the congregation about one issue and alerting them to a bill in order to contact their legislators might be enough for one month. On the other hand, some issues will prioritize themselves. Local crises will emerge and demand your attention, such as an irresponsible sex education curriculum or the planned construction of a Planned Parenthood Clinic. However, the tyranny of the urgent is a hard master, and every effort should be made to strike a balance between addressing problems and preventing them. The need for prayer and the role of the Holy Spirit in setting the priorities for your CIT cannot be overstated.

Follow Guidelines for Pastors and Churches

Is all of this constitutionally permissible? Yes. Will we endanger our church's non-profit status with the IRS? No, because clear guidelines have been established by the federal government. Taking a stand on moral issues from a biblical perspective, educating your congregation, calling them to action, and exerting grass-roots pressure on officials are all well within the law for churches as tax-exempt organizations. So there is a great deal can be done, more than most churches realize!

Below is a brief outline of "Dos and Don'ts" for churches and pastors at election time, based on requirements by the Federal Election Campaign Act and Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The following are general guidelines. It is always a good idea to seek legal advice as you make specific plans for your church.

What churches MAY DO:

- * Conduct non-partisan voter registration/education drives.
- * Host candidate forums where all are invited and treated impartially.
- * Distribute voting records and candidate surveys in compliance with the neutrality rules set forth by the IRS.
- * Rent a church mailing list (at market value) to a candidate.
- * Publish an ad in the church bulletin for all who request, as long as the ad is purchased at the regular rate for such ads.
- * Publish news stories on political candidates, campaigns, and third-party endorsements of candidates.
- * Invite a political candidate to attend a church service or meeting. Should your church invite a candidate to church service, remember that other candidates for the office, regardless of party, should be given the same opportunity if they request it.
- * Contribute or expend up to 5% of its time or funds in any fiscal year to grassroots lobbying efforts, including contributing to ballot initiative campaigns.

What churches MAY NOT DO:

- * Endorse political candidates or contribute to political candidates or political action committees.
- * Participate in fund-raising projects for political candidates.
- * Make an outright donation of a mailing list to a political candidate.
- * Sell a political ad at a discount rate if no other advertisers are offered discounts.
- * Distribute candidate political statements.
- * Pay to attend a caucus for a state or national political convention.

Consult the Voter Resource Guide tab for a more exhaustive list or visit www.iVotevalues.org, click on church leaders, and then on Legal Dos and Don'ts.

A Special Note about Pastors

As private citizens, pastors have the same rights as all Americans. Pastors may use the pulpit to take a stand on specific legislation, issues, or acts of government. The only place where limits have been set is with specific regard to campaigns and candidates. Basically, pastors can say just about anything from the pulpit except tell people how to vote. Now in their private capacity, they can take a stand on a political campaign and even endorse candidates. However, a pastor should always make it clear that any candidate-oriented efforts are those of a private citizen and not made on behalf of the church. No use of church facilities or resources or employee time should go toward the promotion of a candidate. Church funds must be kept separate from political campaign activities.

Churches and pastors with any questions should contact the Alliance Defense Fund (www.alliancedefensefund.org) regarding its Pulpit Initiative and Church Project. For

election sermons and sermons on Christian Citizenship, visit our website for pastors:
www.WatchmenPastors.org and click on Resource Arsenal.

IV. MAKING AN IMPACT

We have attempted to cast a vision for the Culture Impact Team, talked about how to get started, and gave some pointers on moving forward. Finally, here are some coaching tips on how you can continue to make an impact over the long haul in this challenging ministry.

Maintain Priorities

With all that can be done to advance Kingdom values in the public arena, make sure there is still time in your day for personal worship, prayer, and Bible study. In the resource section, there are links to online devotionals that can be helpful, but nothing beats a humble heart before an open Bible. And while you are trying to “save the world,” don’t forget to spend time with your family. They will help you with perspective. Finally, find some people with whom you can be honest and open about your spiritual life for the sake of balance and accountability. Keep your priorities!

Avoid Burnout

The ministry of cultural engagement can be exasperating and exhausting, so there looms the specter of burnout. Remember: You were never meant to do everything! Moses tried it, and it didn’t work, so his wise father-in-law Jethro counseled him to delegate some of the work (Ex. 18:17-26). So as soon as possible, bring others onto the Team and begin training others both to work with you and after you. Work toward not making yourself indispensable. Again, our work for the Lord should not push out our time with the Lord.

Expect Opposition

You will face opposition from professing Christians and members of the community. Some Christians are so “heavenly minded” that they are of no earthly good and will try to persuade us that we are wasting our time. The reasoning is that Jesus is coming soon and the Bible says that everything is going to get worse before that happens. While there is truth to that, Jesus told parables about servants who were given responsibilities while they were waiting on their master’s return, and they were rewarded according to their faithfulness or punished for their lack thereof (e.g., Luke 12:42-46; Matt. 25:14-30). In fact, Jesus himself said: “As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work” (John 9:4). There is work to do, and as us country folk say: “Daylight is a burnin’!”

On the other hand, some are so “worldly minded” that they see our efforts as unkind or even “hateful” because we confront sinful behavior, policies, laws, politicians, etc. The only way to counter to that is balance. As Paul said, we are to “speak the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15). If we say we oppose abortion, we should also help with the local Pregnancy Support Center. If we say we oppose the homosexual agenda, we should find a way to serve an AIDS Hospice or the like. Jesus was the perfect balance of

Grace and Truth (John 1:14) and he is our model for ministry. Remember, it was the mission of Jesus not only to seek and to save those who are lost (Luke 19:10), but also to expose the works of darkness and to destroy the works of the devil (John 3:19-20; 1 John 3:8). There are many ministries at www.RealCompassion.org that can help those of us with a prophetic, truth-telling personality to stay balanced.

Whether they are “heavenly minded” or “worldly minded,” both kinds of people can and will resist to your efforts, sometimes passively but oftentimes actively. Try to set a course which maintains uncompromising values and reasonable expectations. Any apparent progress or setback you experience should be evaluated on the basis of these two criteria. Remember that your call is to speak the truth in love and be a faithful steward of the gifts, passions and abilities that God has placed in you. Even if you could serve in this ministry flawlessly and with the purest of motives, your efforts would still be opposed, even by some who claim to share your faith in Christ. Don’t become discouraged because of opposition.

Look Heavenward

Lastly, be careful not to overlook the spiritual dimension of the battle in which we are engaged. Question: Who is ultimately behind the efforts to snuff out human life through Abortion and Embryo Destructive Research? Who is behind the efforts to advance the radical homosexual agenda, change the definition of marriage, indoctrinate our children, and even ruin our military? Who is behind the efforts take God out of every public school and government institution and silence our free speech as Christians? Who is behind all of that? Paul makes it crystal clear when he says “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against demonic principalities and powers” (Eph. 6:10-13).

So the real enemy is not the poor deluded souls who are promoting these ungodly agendas. They are simply pawns in the hands of their Malevolent Master. They are lost and they are only doing what lost people do. They need to be introduced to the grace of God in the person of Jesus Christ and set free (See John 8:34-36). The point is that the battle we fight is not just a political battle or merely a cultural battle, this is a spiritual battle. We are up against the organized, mobilized, demonized forces of hell. And to the victor goes the prize of the America our children will inherit, so this is a fight we dare not lose!

But we must fight the battle, first of all, on our knees. Samuel Chadwick stated: "The one concern of the devil is to keep the saints from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, he mocks at our wisdom, but he trembles when we pray." We need to remember that it victory comes not by political “might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord” (Zech 4:6). We need to remember that “some trust in chariots and some trust in horses” like politicians and political parties, but we need to “trust in the name of the Lord our God” (Psalm 20:7). As David said: “I lift up my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth” (Psalm 121:1-2). Remember, the battle is the LORD’s!

So devote yourself to prayer. Every great spiritual awakening can be traced to the people of God, in humble and repentant prayer, seeking His face and favor on them and their nation. Make prayer a priority as you undertake the weighty assignment of leading the congregation to be "salt" and "light" in your community. E.M. Bounds declared: "No man can do a great and enduring work for God who is not a man of prayer, and no man can be a man of prayer who does not give much time to praying." Prayer should precede any action.

So with your eyes fixed on the Lord, put your hand to the plow. Guided and empowered by his Spirit, give it all you've got. This is your moment to make an impact on our culture as the stinging salt and the shining light. And never forget: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving" (Col. 3:23-24).

Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.
1 Corinthians 15:58