

Statement on the Jacket

It happened so subtly that few people noticed at first. Little by little, morality and freedom started to crumble. It came first in government, in education, in the media—and finally it began to shake our families and our own lives.

Something fundamental has changed. Law and government no longer provide a foundation of justice and morality but have become the means of licensing moral perversions of all kinds. Education has become the enemy of religious truth and values. And the media have provided the means for propagating the change.

In this explosive book, Dr. Francis A. Schaeffer shows why this has happened. First, he shows how we have failed to understand the problem—to see that the whole foundation for society has shifted radically from its original Judeo-Christian basis to a humanistic basis. As the humanistic view takes over, it necessarily destroys the whole way of life built upon the Judeo-Christian heritage. Second, Dr. Schaeffer calls for a massive movement—in government, law and all of life—to reestablish the Judeo-Christian foundation and turn the tide of moral decadence and loss of freedom.

A Christian Manifesto is literally a call for Christians to change the course of history—by returning to biblical Truth and by allowing Christ to be Lord in all of life. To do this, Schaeffer says, will involve a head-on confrontation with the false view that material or energy, shaped by chance, is the final reality.

Schaeffer's provocative conclusion is that when the state directly defies the absolute law of God, its authority becomes illegitimate. In this case, the Christian is bound to resist the state by whatever means necessary—through direct legal and political action, and possibly through massive demonstrations of civil disobedience.

THE ABOLITION OF TRUTH AND MORALITY, p.17-20

The basic problem of the Christians in the US in the last eighty years or so, in regard to society and in regard to government, is that they have seen things in bits and pieces instead of totals. They have very gradually become disturbed over permissiveness, pornography, the public schools, the breakdown of the family, and finally abortion. But they have not seen this as a totality - each thing being a part, a symptom, of a much larger problem. **They have failed to see that all of this**

has come about due to a shift in world view - that is, through a fundamental change in the overall way people think and view the world and life as a whole. This shift has been away from a world view that was at least vaguely Christian in people's memory (even if they were not individually Christian) toward something completely different - toward a world view based upon the idea that the final reality is impersonal chance. They have not seen that this world view has taken the place of the one that had previously dominated Northern European culture, including the US, which was at least Christian in memory, even if people were not individually Christian.

These two world views stand in complete antithesis to each other in content and also in their natural results - including sociological and governmental results, including law. It is not that these two world views are different only in how they understand the nature of reality and existence. They also inevitably produce completely different results. The operative word here is inevitably. It is not just that they happen to bring forth different results, but **it is absolutely inevitable that they will bring forth different results.**

Why have the Christians been so slow to understand this? There are various reasons but the central one is a **defective view of Christianity**. This has its roots in the Pietist movement under the leadership of P.J. Spencer in the seventeenth century. **Pietism began as a healthy protest against formalism and a too abstract Christianity. But it had a deficient, "platonic" spirituality.** It was platonic in the sense that Pietism made a sharp division between the "spiritual" and the "material" world. The totality of human existence was not afforded a proper place. In particular **it neglected the intellectual dimension of Christianity**. Christianity and spirituality were shut up to a small, isolated part of life. The totality of reality was ignored by the pietistic thinking. Of course in one sense Christians should be pietists in that Christianity is not just a set of doctrines, even the right doctrines. Every doctrine is in some way to have an effect upon our lives. But the poor side of Pietism and its resulting platonic outlook has really been a tragedy not only in many people's individual lives, but in our whole culture.

True spirituality covers all of reality. There are things the Bible tells us as absolutes which are sinful - which do not conform to the character of God. But aside from these the Lordship of Christ covers all of life and all of life equally. **It is not only that true spirituality covers all of life, but it covers all parts of the spectrum of life equally.** In this sense there is nothing concerning reality that is not spiritual. Many Christians do not mean what I mean when I say Christianity is true, or Truth. They are Christians and they believe in, let us say, the truth of creation, the truth of the virgin birth, the truth of Christ's miracles, Christ's substitutionary death, and His coming again. But they stop there with these and other individual truths. When I say Christianity is true I mean it is true to total reality - the total of what is, beginning with the central reality, the objective existence of the personal-infinite God. **Christianity is not just a series of truths but Truth** - Truth about all of reality. And the holding to that Truth intellectually - and then in some poor way living upon that Truth, **the Truth of what is - brings forth not only certain personal results, but also governmental and legal results.**