

Guest Opinion Article First Published in Loveland Reporter-Herald 4/28/2025

By Don Overcash

The real problem is neither Trump nor Biden; it is us

"Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other." John Adams

Throughout history, various forms of government have risen and fallen, with most leaving behind a legacy of oppression and tyranny. The question before us today is whether the republic of the United States of America will survive. The societal changes experienced over the last sixty years are associated with the diminishing influence of Judeo-Christian values in the country. Benjamin Franklin recognized the importance of cultural morality when he stated, "Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters." Reflect for a moment on the prevalent bureaucratic burden faced by the populace, Mr. Franklin's poignant point is confirmed. With its populace sliding into a state of moral dissolution, the longevity of this republic nation is uncertain.

The Bible is rife with teachings that underscore the importance of morality in both individual conduct and societal governance. Proverbs 14:34 states, "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin condemns any people." This suggests that a society grounded in moral values will experience prosperity and justice, while immorality leads to decline and destruction. When citizens uphold moral principles, they provide a check against the government's potential overreach.

To clarify, it is the elected and appointed officials who are government. It is these officials that reflect the society from which they emerge. They embody the values, attitudes, and beliefs prevalent among their constituents. The Founding Fathers recognized that a government's character is inherently tied to its people's character. James Madison famously noted that "if men were angels, no government would be necessary," emphasizing that governance must grapple with human fallibility.

When citizens possess strong moral convictions, they select leaders who reflect those ideals. Conversely, a society lacking in moral fiber may choose leaders who perpetuate unethical practices, enabling tyranny to flourish. This relationship underscores the importance of an informed, morally conscious electorate that rejects apathy and values

accountability.

As referenced in Romans 13:1, “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.” However, when the governing body strays from its moral compass, the people must have the virtuous backbone to contest and hold leaders accountable. When virtue is not prevalent among people, hypocrisy can become more common as morality is applied selectively and primarily for political influence, which may contribute to further moral decline.

The caution against moral decay echoed by Paul in 2 Timothy 3:1-5, warns of “terrible times” in the last days when people will embrace selfishness, materialism, and a lack of self-control. In such a climate of moral decay, governments can become predators that prey on their constituents rather than protectors of the pillars of freedom and justice.

A morally aware populace is essential not only for preventing tyranny but also for establishing a mechanism for accountability. As articulated in Micah 6:8: “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” When citizens embody these qualities, they can challenge unjust laws and advocate for moral governance on a consistent basis.

The teachings of Jesus in Matthew 5:13-16 emphasize the role of individuals as “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world.” This metaphor illustrates how moral citizens can preserve societal values and illuminate the truth in the face of darkness. When the people embrace a common moral framework to seek justice, they function as guardians of democracy, ensuring that the government serves its purpose—to protect the rights of its citizens rather than infringe upon them.

In *How Should We Then Live?: The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture* by Francis A Schaeffer (1976), Schaeffer analyzed reasons for modern society's situation and offered what he believed to be the only viable solution, a return to the God of all creation rather than following the false gods of the created. We can choose wisely or not; I encourage choosing the abundant life offered by the one true God.
