

Kingdom Congress of Illinois

Position Paper on Ekklesia Convocation: The Reformation Power of Legislation

The word reformation means to re-form or to form over. Raw materials may take on a number of forms. For example, a peanut may be eaten in the form in which it grows or the peanut may be re-formed into peanut butter, oil, milk, or flour. George Washington Carver is credited with discovering over 100 uses for the peanut. What re-formed the raw peanut? What had to be applied before the peanut could change from its original form into another form? The answer is a new pattern. Elements of the earth can be de-created, which means torn apart from their current form, and then re-created, which means put together in a new form. To get the raw materials or the de-created parts into a new form, a different pattern must be applied. Following the new pattern through the re-formation phase will yield a new creation.

The examples that arise from the physical realm of the de-creation/re-creation process are numerous. A piece of furniture is a tree re-formed; a garment is a cotton plant processed into fabric that is rearranged; a meal is chicken reorganized and vegetables altered. The list of re-formed raw goods is endless. This principle applies to non-tangible areas as well as the tangible. Paul admonished the church at Rome to be formed over (Rom.12:2). “Be not conformed to this world” he tells them. That is to say, that the pattern of a fallen or sinful, worldly system should not be the template used when constructing a believer. Paul was indicating that the old man needed to be de-created. Onto the raw materials or the de-created parts, a new template needed to be applied. “Be transformed” Paul said; be formed again. What would be the new pattern for the new creation? Paul gave the answer: a re-newed mind. God’s word provided a new blueprint that would enable the believer to think re-newed and to live re-newed. Re-formation of a Christian is possible because a new blueprint can be applied to the raw materials or de-created materials of that person’s heart, soul, mind, will, and affections. Re-creation can only be possible if a new pattern is applied.

New patterns often come in the form of laws. For example, if a parent wishes the child to change a behavior, the parent will legislate what is allowed and what is not allowed. “Don’t touch that!” “You will practice your instrument an hour every day!” “You may only watch that TV show if a parent is present!” Why do parents make these kinds of rules? The answer is they desire re-formation. They know that a new template must be applied or there will be no re-creation. Parents are tasked with raising children or transforming them from one level of development unto the next. Therefore, new patterns are imposed as are age appropriate and, as such, produce one re-formation after another re-formation as the child matures.

All forms of governments make laws for the purpose of re-creating or re-forming. The most basic form of government is self-government. Every person has, at one time or another, put himself or herself under some form of resolution. Call it a diet, an exercise regime, a study regiment, or any other disciple; the resolution is for the purpose of imposing a new pattern. The idea is that the new pattern will allow the raw materials of the body or the intellect to be formed over. And, if the resolution is carried out, the results are re-formation.

Self-government, family government, church government, and civil government comprise the four basic spheres of government. In each sphere, new laws and new regulations provide new templates and yield transformations. This concept is fundamental to culture. Consider what happens when the civil government convenes to pass a new piece of legislation. If, for the sake of an example, the governing body of the US were to pass a law that the tax base for all private citizens and for all businesses were to be based upon a flat tax of 25%, that new

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law would create a re-formation of culture. (Note: the author is not advocating a 25% rate flat tax but is using the scenario as a hypothetical illustration on the power of law in conjunction with re-formation.)

As soon as the law was enacted, a trickle-down effect would begin. Policies within the IRS would need to be re-written based upon the new template. Citizens, whose income level and deductions had exempted them from paying federal income tax, would have to find revenue to pay the mandated 25%. Tax-payers who had previously been in a high tax bracket would suddenly find themselves keeping more of their earned income. Businesses would not be afforded loop-holes and deductions. Companies might raise the cost of goods and services to pass the new expenses on to the customers. Increased cost could make the product too expensive for purchase, thus threatening the viability of the business; or the higher price could be absorbed by the buying populace and the company might remain solvent.

Not only would policies and practices be forced to change, the law-enforcing side of the civil realm would have new mandates. Police, prosecutors, and the judicial officers would be required to alter their jobs to accommodate the new tax law. There could be a new class of law-breakers. Violators would need to be apprehended and prosecuted. Police only enforced laws. If there is no law, there is nothing to be enforced. If there is new law, there is a new restriction imposed upon the culture. Whether the populace wants the new law to re-form the culture or not, the will of the populace does not determine the re-formation. Culture is transformed by the presence and the enforcing of the new law.

On almost every level of society, culture would be formed over, if a 25% flat tax became the law of the land. What is enacted in the assemblies of the governors becomes the pattern of life for those who are governed. Re-formation of culture is based upon the laws enacted because the laws provide the pattern for cultural formation.

This principle goes as far back as Eden. Adam and Eve were placed into a garden where their God-given culture reflected the pattern of heaven and where the blessings were too abundant to count. The first couple, representative of all mankind, was given the dominion mandate, which was to take the raw materials of the earth and refashion them into new forms by ruling – or making choices – that could provide new blueprints. Humanity was granted both creative abilities and the power of choice. What man had the will to choose, he had the power to create. The raw materials were his; the will or volitional patterns were his; the re-creational abilities were his; and the culture he would build would be his. From the beginning, man had the power of re-formation. And, that re-formation would flow from the laws he enacted.

This power was first demonstrated in Adam. He and Eve convened the first legislative session in history. They had several options before them as to what would be the new law of the land. They could get heaven's blueprint by following the commands of God, or they could get another blueprint by following the ideas of the serpent. They voted. They passed the new law. The new legislation provided the new template for re-formation. They were re-formed; the earth was re-formed; the future was re-formed. Why? What is allowed in the legislative body or defined to be legal is what is allowed in the earth. Conversely, what is not allowed or defined as illegal is not allowed in the earth. Sound familiar?

The power to declare illegal and legal, which is another way of saying what is bound and what is loosed, is the exact power that Jesus was granting His ekklesia in Matthew 16:18-19. Jesus was calling his disciples unto a legislative work. He was declaring that His church should

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make laws that had the power to provide the blueprint for cultural re-formation. During the Acts 15 Council at Jerusalem, church authorities gathered to consider what to do with the new Gentile converts. Formerly, under the Abrahamic covenant and the Law of Moses, Jewish men underwent the rite of circumcision, meaning that the male organ was re-formed because of a law. With the influx of non-circumcised, non-Jewish converts, the church had to decide what to do concerning this rite. After inquiring with one another and with the scriptures, the ekklesia wrote a new law. No circumcision would be required.

The law did not stay contained within the walls of the convocation. The trickle-down effect began. Letters were written to the churches informing them of the new policy. Local leaders would enforce the new law. The old law would be taken off the books and would no longer provide a blueprint. The church underwent a re-formation because of the legal action taken by the Jerusalem ekklesia. Law always provides the pattern of earthly and cultural formation!

This position paper was written by Dr. Patti Amsden