

*The Christian World View of
Pastoral Renewal*

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What is the Coalition on Revival?

The Coalition on Revival is a network of evangelical leaders from every major denominational and theological perspective who share a vision for and a commitment to revival, renewal, and reformation in Church and society in America.

People of Anabaptist, Arminian, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Wesleyan denominational backgrounds are all represented among COR's leaders. Pre-, a-, and post-millennialists are cooperating with each other, sharing the exciting task of getting God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven insofar as that is possible between now and whenever Christ comes back to Earth. Charismatics and non-charismatics, covenant and dispensationalist theologians, have joined arm in arm in prayer and hard work to see revival, renewal, and reformation in the Christian Church and the American culture.

COR's vision is to see Christians everywhere doing all they can in the power of the Holy Spirit to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), in every aspect of life. Toward that end, we have developed a series of worldview documents that set forth what we believe are the fundamental and essential points of the total Christian world and life view. The COR worldview documents state what we believe are the biblical principles for all spheres of human life including theology, evangelism, discipleship, law, civil governments, economics, education, family, medicine, psychology and counseling, arts and media, business and professions, and science and technology. We believe that the COR worldview documents state where the entire Church must stand and what action it must take to accomplish its task in the remaining years of the Twentieth Century and on into the next century.

COR steering committee members from all walks of life were joined by many hundreds of other interested Christian scholars, pastors, and laymen in developing the COR documents during many series of workshops and conventions. Each document therefore, reflects input from theologians, philosophers, professionals in their respective fields, pastors, and lay Christians. We have sought to avoid denominational and theological bias in the documents; our aim has been to focus on principles so fundamental that we are convinced no Bible-believing Christian who studied the major questions related to each sphere of life would come to a contradictory conclusion.

COR views itself as a "Bible obedience, holiness movement" that crosses denominational and theological lines. The next step on its agenda, now that its basic documents are complete, is to disseminate them widely and to educate hundreds of thousands of Christians on how to make Christ Lord of absolutely every aspect of life. We plan to do that through publications, and through seminars, and training workshops in the major cities of America and Canada. COR will also work in cooperation with other Christian networking groups to help unify the pastors in major population centers around the vision of mobilizing their people to "Get God's will done in their city as it is in heaven" to whatever degree that is possible before the return of Christ. We believe America can be turned around and once again function as a Christian nation as it did in its earlier years. We believe that wherever the pastors of any city in the world join together in unity to make Christ Lord of every sphere of life, and, with Spirit led strategy, mobilize their people into a unified spiritual army; that city can and will become "a city set upon a hill" and be "a place where righteousness dwells."

About the 17 World View (Sphere) Documents

COR developed the 17 World View Documents, which set forth what we believe are fundamental and essential Biblical principles governing 17 major areas or *spheres* of human life and activity: law, government, economics, business and professions, education, art and media, medicine, science and technology, psychology and counseling, Christian unity, local and world evangelism, discipleship, helping the hurting, educating Christians about social and political moral issues, revitalizing Christian colleges and seminaries, marriage and the family, and pastoral renewal. These documents offer Christian leaders concise and comprehensive Biblical principles of how to apply the Truth of the Bible to all spheres of life and ministry. Each document includes short, creed-like statements of affirmation and denial that we believe state non-negotiable Biblical truths for that sphere of reality.

The 17 World View Documents were developed within 17 different committees made up of leaders with experience and expertise in the 17 different fields over an intensive three-year period of dialogue, critique, editing, and finally, a consensus conviction. Sixty of COR's National Steering Committee members with over 300 other theologians, pastors, lawyers, doctors, businessmen, and Christian workers made up the 17 committees. COR sends forth these documents to the Church at large with the prayer that they may be used by God's Spirit to get God's will done on earth, as it is in heaven—to whatever degree that is possible prior to the Return of Christ.

Preface

The Church, the Body of Christ, is a divine institution, ordained by God to express and extend Jesus' rule and gospel throughout the earth. Those who lead His Body have the greatest challenge and task of any leaders on earth.

While Christian leaders exercise diverse ministries, the risen Lord gives some individuals to the Church as shepherds and servants of His people—that is, to care for, nurture, and discipline the flock (Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Peter 5:1-3).

Pastoral leaders have a difficult, stressful role. They must perform many tasks and solve complex problems. All the while, Christ's adversary, Satan, attacks them. We should not be surprised when people oppose them, for Satan knows that undermining leaders seriously weakens God's people (Zechariah 13:7).

Pastoral leaders therefore are key to the revival, renewal, and reformation of the Christian Church. While today there are diverse understandings of how to encourage revival among God's people, Scripture clearly expresses elements of pastoral leaders' character and behavior essential to effective leadership. Without those elements, they cannot lead effectively.

In light of the functions and responsibilities of pastoral leaders, we present the following affirmations and denials:

Statements of Affirmation and Denial

Pastoral Training, Qualifications, and Responsibilities

1. We affirm that pastoral leaders must meet all Biblical qualifications of personal character and lifestyle before a local church should allow them to fill any leadership role: i.e., those qualifications expressed in 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1, and all other scriptures regarding Christian standards of righteousness, including maintaining divine order in the home (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:21-28; and 1 Timothy 3:4,5).

We deny that local churches and denominations have authority to substitute their own standards in disregard for the qualifications stated or implied in Scripture; that pastoral leaders can neglect family responsibilities and yet fulfill their ministries; and that a church has the right to keep a man as pastor if he does not have the respect and willing obedience of his wife and children.

2. We affirm that pastoral leaders must be devoted to knowing, loving, obeying, and teaching the inerrant Scriptures as the only authoritative rule for faith and practice, and that they have a duty and opportunity to instruct Christians from all professions and vocations, challenging them to think Biblically about their areas of influence.

We deny that pastoral leaders can govern the Body of Christ correctly if they do not first submit to Scripture as the inerrant Word of God, and if they believe that scriptural truth is limited only to religious categories of life.

3. We affirm that pastoral leaders should be marked by ongoing repentance that results in humility and tenderness toward God and His people (Matthew 3:8; Joel 2:11; Isaiah 57:17); that they should pray constantly and rely on the Holy Spirit for guidance and power for all that they do (1 Corinthians 2:1-5; 3:1-6); and that only a God-given pastoral strategy can contribute to His cause.

We deny that anyone can successfully advance God's Kingdom and combat the world, the flesh, and the devil in his own strength, i.e., relying on techniques and programs (Psalm 127:1,2). We further deny that the majority of pastors can arm themselves properly, get their hearts into proper perspective, or accomplish adequate intercession for their flocks without spending at least one hour per day in prayer.

4. We affirm that pastoral leaders should govern and care for the people of God from a willing and loving heart—not for personal gain—with the goals of presenting every man and woman complete in Christ (mature disciples) and developing gifts and ministries in others (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Colossians 1:28), and that pastoral leaders should view personal and congregational sanctification and revival as ongoing needs.

We deny that it is Biblical to allow some under our pastoral care to maintain a state of spiritual immaturity as a settled way of life or not to strive to reach Christian maturity, and that any persons in our congregations have a right to claim that Jesus is their Savior if He is not also their Lord as demonstrated by their aggressive obedience to the Bible.

5. We affirm that the essence of the Great Commission is that we should make Bible-obeying disciples of all nations, and that everyone under our pastoral care must be nurtured, urged, loved, pushed, and exhorted if necessary to become a fully functioning, Bible-obeying disciple.

We deny that anyone can fulfill the Great Commission without making disciples (men and women whose beliefs and lifestyles conform to Scripture and who are fully integrated into the Body of Christ), and that pastoral leaders are the only ones who have gifts for developing disciples. We further deny that it is Biblical to teach that there are two categories of Christians—one of Bible-obeying disciples and a second of “sheep” who are disobedient believers and who have no intention of living in full, aggressive obedience to the Bible (Titus 2:3-5; Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Timothy 2:2).

6. We affirm that the local church should have a significant part in training future pastoral leaders through Scriptural instruction and practical apprenticeship; that formal training can be an important part of preparing pastoral leaders; and that a basic ingredient in pastoral training is to help the trainee become a man of God who can train others to become men of God.

We deny that academic training alone is sufficient to prepare pastoral leaders fully for their ministries.

7. We affirm that, in light of the current occult explosion and the great commission of Mark 16:15-20, all pastors must be trained in taking authority over and binding the power of demons in the name of and by the blood of Jesus Christ.

We deny that demons are unreal or inactive in human affairs today, and that it is impossible for true Christians to be affected, harassed, oppressed, or attacked by demons.

Pastoral Needs

8. We affirm that pastoral leaders need to be accountable to each other and to their own boards for righteous living and personal care for both effective leadership and protection from falling into sin, error, and heresy (1 Corinthians 5:11-13; Galatians 2:2,14); and that God requires mutual accountability when He commands, "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28).

We deny that it is normally possible for pastoral leaders to live successfully for God without close relationships of support, encouragement, and accountability, ideally with other mature believers, including other pastoral leaders.

9. We affirm that it is God's will that pastoral leaders unite in local fellowships for the sake of mutual encouragement, prayer, and cooperation wherever possible in advancing God's cause (John 17:21,23).

We deny that pastoral leaders can cooperate effectively while openly or secretly competing with other pastoral leaders or churches (3 John 9), listening to criticism of pastoral leaders without determining if the one criticizing has already personally confronted the accused (1 Timothy 5:19; Matthew 18:15-17), or engaging in slander of others (Galatians 5:15; Ephesians 4:29).

Pastoral Authority and Church Discipline

10. We affirm that pastoral leaders must be called and anointed by God in order to exercise their authority with confidence and courage, and that those who are so called and who so serve under God's authority need never doubt His presence and power, no matter how difficult their tasks (Joshua 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 2:2-4; Titus 2:15).

We deny that such verses as Hebrews 13:17 ("Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves . . .") and 1 Timothy 4:11 ("These things command and teach.") are contradicted by the priesthood of all believers.

11. We affirm that pastoral leaders need to exercise discipline in the Church for the sake of preserving the purity of the Body of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Galatians 6:1; 1 Timothy 5:20) and restoring erring brothers or sisters; that in some cases this will mean excommunicating members who refuse to repent (1 Corinthians 5:1-5); and that this must always be done according to Christ's instruction in Matthew 18:15-20.

We deny that God will bless a church that tolerates unrepentant sin or obvious heresy; that proper exercise of Church discipline is unjust or unloving; that any church should receive an excommunicated member from another church without carefully investigating the issues to maintain the unity and purity of the Body of Christ; and that Biblical revival or reformation will come to any church that refuses to discipline erring members.

12. We affirm that pastoral authority is limited by Scripture to those areas of life on which Scripture clearly speaks, and that outside those areas pastors ought humbly to give wise counsel without insisting on strict obedience as a condition of continued fellowship or shepherding (Romans 14).

We deny that pastoral authority ever entails a duty on the part of laymen to disobey God's laws in deference to pastors, to accept all pastoral counsel outside the clear revelations of Scripture, or to break down proper Biblical authority structures within family, church, and society.

13. We affirm that, while we have applied these elements of pastoral renewal to pastoral leaders, they apply equally to other church leaders and leaders of parachurch ministries who, though not pastors of churches, still exercise considerable influence and authority over many Christians; that parachurch ministries and their leaders should place themselves under ecclesiastical authority; that they are equally in need of pastoral renewal; and that if they do not place themselves under ecclesiastical authority they risk great harm to themselves and to Christian people.

We deny that parachurch leaders and ministries ought to function without accountability to ecclesiastical bodies.

14. We affirm that an indispensable quality for the local pastor is an ability to be a leader of men so that the men in his congregation respect him and desire to follow him.

We deny that any amount of other skills such as scholarship, oratory, administrative abilities, or fundraising can make up for a pastor's lack of strong leadership, and that a man should enter into training for the pastoral ministry or be called to the pastorate by a local church if he has not demonstrated an ability to be a leader of men.

15. We affirm that every pastor, to accomplish his task and stay encouraged, needs to surround himself with a few trustworthy, loyal men from among his church leaders who are in the process of catching his vision for their church and are eager to play their part in it and to be disciplined by him in how to be Christ-centered, Bible-obeying men of God.

We deny that any pastor can fulfill God's call in his life who only has superficial relationships with his church leaders or who holds himself aloof as a "Lone Ranger".

16. We affirm that, though tithing one's income and material gain may not be commanded in the New Testament, it is a Biblical and wise way to support the church's expenses and outreach.

We deny that those churches that encourage or require their members to tithe their income to Christ's work on earth are therefore legalistic or unbiblical.

A Call to Action in Pastoral Renewal

General Actions

Because of the preceding convictions, we call upon all men and women who name Christ as their personal Savior and Lord to join us in:

1. examining earnestly these affirmations and denials in the light of God's Word to see if they are true, and informing us directly of those points in which they believe we have departed from Scripture or logic;
2. re-examining our own pastoral theories and practices and asking God to show us where we are falling short;
3. repenting of all known sins, confessing and forsaking them, asking forgiveness both of God Himself and of all those who have been offended, and then making all possible restitution;
4. praying for God to fill all of His people with the enabling power of the Holy Spirit in order that we may bring our personal lives and our pastoral theories and practice into closer conformity to His revealed will on a permanent and consistent basis;
5. seeking guidance from our brethren and local church authorities as to how we can mutually support and influence one another to make our pastoral practices glorifying to God.

Having dealt with our own personal sins and failures, and placing ourselves accountable to the Bible and to the brethren, we now commit ourselves to:

1. influencing any known Christians or Christian associations with whom we work to consider seriously our affirmations and denials with the goal of enlisting their responses;
2. influencing those in the field of pastoral ministry who agree with our affirmations and denials to implement these proposals in their work, specifically by banding together regularly for support and mutual accountability;
3. mobilizing and networking our Christian resources and working in concert with the other professional spheres both inside and outside COR, to see the behavior of the Body of Christ and our nation changed to approximate more closely the view of reality and morality presented to us in the Holy Scriptures;
4. establishing retreats in which pastors can gather in a small conference setting to re-think their lives and ministries and learn from other pastors committed to the Coalition on Revival's world view and vision.

Specific Actions

Pastoral Qualifications

1. A booklet needs to be written stating the consensus opinions of a transdenominational group of recognized pastors on the Biblical and historical qualifications for a local pastor. This booklet then needs to be made available to seminaries, colleges, and a wide range of denominations and theological groups so churches may know what to require of a new, incoming pastor and new pastors may know what to expect and what may yet be lacking in their training.

Church Discipline

2. Church discipline and excommunication must be reintroduced into all Bible-believing churches as an absolute necessity for Biblical living and revival. Local pastors must band together to make it possible for church discipline to work in an inter-church manner as well as in each local church.

Home Cell Groups

3. A major effort must be launched to encourage all Bible-believing churches to establish within their structures weekly home cell groups in which all serious members of their congregations may enhance their Christian growth. These groups should be under the direction of the pastoral staff and elders and should include the three ingredients of:
 - 3.1. honest sharing of one's inner and outer life and prayer for one's life by other group members;
 - 3.2. commitment to the other members of the group to the point of sacrifice;
 - 3.3. members holding each other mutually accountable to live in obedience to all commands in the Bible that apply to us today.

Biblical Inerrancy Education

4. An educational program of books, tapes, seminars, and radio/television programs must be launched to re-educate those thousands of pastors whose college or seminary training has left them with the false and tragic belief that the Bible contains errors. No pastor can properly interpret the Bible, lead his people, or take the courageous stands needed at this moment in history unless he is convinced that the Bible is the inerrant, written Word of God.

Local Pastoral Prayer Fellowships

5. An effort must be launched to get every willing, Bible-believing pastor to participate in a monthly, transdenominational meeting in which he can engage in fervent prayer on his knees for the life and ministry of other pastors in his town and know that they are praying the same way for him. Mutual accountability to live by the Bible should be an underlying assumption of such a prayer fellowship for pastors.

A similar effort must be launched to get every Bible-believing pastor praying at least one hour per day in his own quiet time or daily church prayer meeting.

Pastor's Loyal Core

6. Local pastors and seminary administrators must be made aware of the pastor's need to create around himself a loyal, faithful band of elders and staff who are committed to his vision for their church and to helping that vision be accomplished, and who are being disciplined by that pastor. The typical, status quo church in which this kind of relationship does not happen is incapable of producing a fully effective and fully Biblical congregation. This concept should be explained and published in several Christian magazines to spread the idea abroad.

Changing Society

7. Those pastors and churches that mistakenly think that neither pastors nor churches have any business trying to change society and stand for social righteousness by constitutional means must become exposed to the COR Manifesto and the COR sphere document *The Christian World View of Educating Christians about Social, Political, and Moral Issues*, in order to disabuse their minds of that false dichotomy.

Brokenness and Humility

8. As a pre-requisite to pastoral renewal and the revival of the local church, pastors and their staffs must come to a place of personal brokenness before the Lord in which the following personal realities exist in their souls:
 - 8.1. a sincere desire to see God glorified and His will done—a desire that outweighs their desire for their own prestige, financial security, or comfort and pleasure;
 - 8.2. the courage to confront both Christians and non-Christians over unrighteousness and falsehood, and the willingness to die for God's standards of righteousness and truth. (According to Francis Schaeffer, lack of courage in pastors to "rock the boat" or "make waves" and a knee-jerk response of accommodation to unrighteous situations have been primary factors in the church's emasculation and our culture's rapid disintegration.)
 - 8.3. a willingness to let what they had thought was their portion of the Kingdom's business be accomplished by others if this would bring more glory to God;
 - 8.4. a willingness to let others get the credit and to let successful projects travel under someone else's banner or be under someone else's control;
 - 8.5. a willingness to have their lives, ministries, and marriages examined in the light of Scripture and to be held accountable for scriptural living by their board, their denomination, and pastoral brothers;
 - 8.6. honesty, humility, and a willingness to be real and vulnerable with others;
 - 8.7. teachableness and a willingness to admit mistakes and miscalculations;
 - 8.8. a theological certainty that the Bible that gives them their marching orders is the very Word of very God, given to us inerrantly through the ancient human authors [No one can minister

in a full, Biblical way or with full aggressiveness without this certainty or without a deep commitment to live humbly in obedience to these inerrant words of God.];

- 8.9. personal experience of taking authority over and binding demons—which affect the lives of Christians and non-Christians—in the name of Christ and by the power of His blood.

Call to Repentance

9. A call to repentance must be issued to pastoral staffs and boards of elders and deacons to set aside a day or an over-night to fast and pray and repent of our sins and of our Laodicean contentment with substandard Christianity.

Pastoral Retreats

10. COR and other reformation groups should stage two intensive, two to five-day intimate retreats for pastors and parachurch workers in which vocational ministers come together to:
 - 10.1. re-think their ministry priorities and theological foundations for ministry;
 - 10.2. come to terms with COR's Manifesto and its eight ministry sphere documents as they apply to the local church;
 - 10.3. get loved, refreshed, and healed from the weariness and wounds of battle;
 - 10.4. gain inspiration and a bigger vision for their ministry and recommit themselves to their calling and to the Lordship of Christ;
 - 10.5. return with renewed vigor and a personally-hammered out, practical game-plan for their churches.

Major Pastors' Conference

11. A broad, transdenominational group of major pastors needs to stage a conference in the next few years for 7,000 pastors who have not “bowed the knee to Baal” to help them understand and apply the action plans stated in COR's eight ministry documents.