



WHAT WOULD REAGAN REALLY DO?

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With the constant invocation of “what would Reagan do,” the amnesia about what he actually did do and say about conservatism is amazing. In the midst of a grand celebration of Ronald Reagan’s 100th birthday, many Republicans rush to claim his name while ignoring his principles. Reagan worked tirelessly to coalesce social, economic and national defense conservatives and when he succeeded he won big. It wasn’t a political tactic to him. It was congruous with clear thinking and the resulting success came not by contrivance but by nature.

But some people who claim his legacy seem to have forgotten.

Washington Insiders have successfully convinced the Tea Party movement to stick to lower taxes and smaller government. The social issues will divide us, the Wise Men of the Beltway advise. But will lower taxes and smaller government alone save the Republic?

It is difficult to explain to a culture rapidly forgetting its foundation why that foundation matters. While churches and schools have left instruction in Western Civilization behind, the recipients of its strong underpinnings float aimlessly trying to redefine the definite and ignore the irrefutable. And here it is:

Western Civilization in general and America in particular was built on Judeo-Christian values. Those values shaped every area of life from government to finance to family. They brought order to all three.

Government was no longer top-down, but of the people. People were free to “pursue happiness” in part by choosing their own work. Judeo-Christian teaching taught them to work hard, make and keep contracts, treat employees fairly, pay an honest day’s wage, and keep their word. Prosperity followed from those foundational principles. It wasn’t the first time. In the fourth century, St. Augustine observed Christians becoming prosperous by following these new principles...then falling away seduced by their own success.

The moral foundations of Judeo-Christianity created boundaries in which strong families could be built. Stable families brought prosperity and success. Obedient children were productive and helpful. Wives were free to take care of home and personal interests, made secure by faithful husbands who in turn entered the workplace able to concentrate on the tasks at hand. Businesses were built, wealth created and the “pursuit of happiness” made possible by moral restraint.

As those values have unraveled, so has the order. Single parent homes have become fertile soil for poverty, crime and violence. Faithlessness in marriage has produced whole scale divorce and unruly children. Money once pursued to support family has instead been channeled to attorneys leaving parents and children impoverished. Disease and death have resulted from unrestrained sex between heterosexuals and homosexuals alike producing skyrocketing medical costs. Too many men are distracted; searching for satisfaction in the endless pursuit of sex partners or internet images while lonely, often angry women leave their children to fill the family void with video games, pop icons and texting. Children left to themselves are experimenting ever earlier with all kinds of sex, encouraged by web sites, media, and consenting-by-abstentia parents.

At the same time, America is mortgaged to the hilt, dangerously in debt and teetering on the brink of financial ruin. But somehow lower tax, smaller government champions don’t see the connection. They want order in finance but not in morality.

Social conservatives don't lobby to end abortion while ignoring the national debt. And they don't advocate limiting marriage to one man and woman while ignoring bailouts and the mortgage crisis. They understand what Reagan understood; there is a seamless thread binding it all.

A few years after Ronald Reagan stepped down, the concept of the "big tent" came into being. Pro-choice Republicans were actively recruited. The Party Leadership wanted power without principle. Ironically, they did not invite labor unions or higher tax advocates clearly understanding their purposes were at odds.

Log Cabin Republicans were the first openly "gay" group to try their luck in the Grand Old Party. Encouraged by the Bush administration, they were given unrivaled access to the White House. The Tent was growing. Homosexual voters would now become supporters of the Republican Party.

Ironically, Log Cabin Republicans loudly withdrew their support for President Bush once he publicly favored a Federal Marriage Amendment. So much for party loyalty and so much for the big, meaningless, tent.

"Go-Proud " is the latest endeavor into the fray. Supporters of open homosexuality in the military and hate crimes, they have a prominent place at the influential, DC gathering known as CPAC and other once clear-thinking conservative organizations. To further make the point, "Go-Proud" issued a release blasting potential Presidential contender, Tim Pawlenty, for his opposition to gays in the military.

Many groups and individuals have withdrawn from CPAC for this embrace, understanding that **while individual homosexuals may be conservative and welcome in the party, organizations formed around gay advocacy are at odds with the moral principles that bring sanity and clarity to it all.**

Order in government...order in finance...and order in the family produce solid foundations upon which wealth and happiness are both attainable. Ronald Reagan understood that. And if we are going to claim his legacy, so should we.

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Sandy Rios

www.sandyrios.com