

Disordered Love, Disordered Law: Why Christian Love Necessitates Christian Culture

Presenter: Jeffery J. Ventrella, J.D., Ph.D.

Abstract:

"Law is a backstage pass to theology." (Jonathan Burnside) The first and most fundamental Christian confession is "Jesus is Lord!" This confession joins both love and law: He who lovingly redeems and rescues men and creation is He who rules all men and creation. And, that same Lord defines love in terms of law (John 14:15), and He also defines law in terms of love (Mt. 22:37, 38). Jesus commands his disciples to shine their lights publicly so that good works may be seen, and then he promptly discusses this photon program in terms of law and ethics (Mt. 5: 16-20). Paul confirms that the public use of law to promote righteousness conforms with the Gospel (1 Tim. 1:8-11). Solomon reminds us that "[t]hose who forsake the law praise the wicked, but those who keep the law strive against them." (Pr. 28:4). The lack of public law undermines public love; and the lack of public love undermines public justice/righteousness. Loving one's neighbor, whoever he or she may be, cannot be done absent a public ethic that coheres with that love--the gospel demands it.

Bio:

Jeffery J. Ventrella, J.D., Ph.D.: Dr. Ventrella received the B.M.E. degree (magna cum laude) from the University of Northern Colorado where he specialized in trumpet performance. He then attended law school and received the Juris Doctorate degree from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law. He received the Doctorate of Philosophy in Church and State Studies from Whitefield Theological Seminary. Dr. Ventrella regularly lectures in churches, campuses, and conferences throughout the United States and has lectured on six continents.

Serving Alliance Defending Freedom on the Advisory Cabinet and as Senior Counsel and Senior Vice President of Student Training and Development, Dr. Ventrella oversees the design and implementation of the Blackstone Legal Fellowship and Collegiate Academy programs. He currently serves as a Research Fellow and on an ad hoc graduate thesis committee for the Department of Philosophy and Constitutional Law for the University of the Free State, South Africa. Dr. Ventrella is also a Distinguished Fellow of Law and Culture for the Center for Cultural Leadership and a Fellow with the Ezra Institute for Contemporary Christianity. He also engages the culture through formal debate, media interviews, and serves as an "approved speaker" for The Federalist Society.

His book, *The Cathedral Builder: Pursuing Cultural Beauty* (2007) is part of Alliance Defending Freedom's Blackstone Core Curriculum Project, which he also edits. He is the author of *Church and Culture: Isolation, Accommodation, or Transformation?* (2012), a booklet exploring how the church ought to function in the world between the Cross and the Consummation.

Dr. Ventrella is married, and with his wife, Heather, enjoys the challenge of rearing four very active sons and one beautiful daughter: Jefferson (24), Chandler (21), Kirklan (19), Jackson (17), and McKenzie (8).