

Dr. Scott Lively is running for Governor of Massachusetts as an Independent. The following is an article published in November of 2012 when he was contemplating a run as a Republican. This article reflects his political philosophy and advice to the GOP on how to restructure itself to better reflect the values of the grassroots.

TIME FOR A NEW COALITION IN THE GOP

By Pastor Scott Lively

The RINOs (Republicans in name only) are up to their usual post-election tricks trying to blame social conservatives for losses they caused themselves. I suggest that instead of playing defense again, or making yet another run at reviving Christian values within the existing framework, lets just stop playing by the “establishment” rulebook and rethink the whole thing.

First of all lets strip down the GOP to its core principles: biblical values. This is where it started as an alternative to the pro-slavery Whig and Democrat Parties, and what has defined the appeal of its best leaders, the last of whom was, of course, Ronald Reagan.

Now let’s start selectively adding issues and constituencies back in based on their compatibility with our values.

Of course we want to keep the pro-life and pro-family wing, which thankfully constitutes the overwhelming majority of the GOP grass roots activists.

We also want to keep the constitutional and limited government factions, and the Tea Parties, since their philosophies are rooted in the Constitution, which is in turn rooted in the Bible (even if some of these allies have forgotten this fact) One such faction we want to retain is the 2nd Amendment conservatives, though many of these are secularists who need reeducation as to the true nature of liberty as understood by the founders (to overcome revisionist, anti-Christian teachings they learned in public schools).

We’re of course going to continue being strongly supportive of small business, since this has always been the engine of our economy, and, at its best, exemplifies the biblical values of personal responsibility, hard work and local investment for the common good. There is work to do with this constituency in reinforcing those virtues and reducing the influence of the amoral corporate giants but there’s a natural alliance here, grounded in a mutual interest in family-centered community.

This alliance doesn’t necessarily exist with “big” business, meaning especially the large multi-national corporations (though we would welcome business people of all stripes who share our morality). The culture of that part of the business world is largely antithetical to Christianity, openly embracing “greed” as a positive value, and emphasizing profit over both principles and people. Indeed, as America has shifted slowly from a Christian to a humanistic consensus, the business practices of the corporate realm have grown increasingly corrupt. Who really trusts “Big Pharma” these days? Agri-business? Banks? And look how easily the majority of them now accommodate and often generously fund the abortion and homosexual agendas.

Yet isn’t this the constituency that actually pulls the strings of the GOP “establishment?”

I personally found it very disturbing that the Romney campaign was heavily funded by billionaire casino owners. These are men whose vast wealth was (and is) gained by the selfish and callous exploitation of the weaknesses of others. And their only apparent concern about Obama was the amount of money he would extract from their bloated bank vaults. Why again are we protecting these social parasites from paying more taxes? (Other than to keep it out of the hands of profligate-spending politicians? -- but that’s a separate problem).

This leads me to a constituency I think we don’t have but should add: ethnic minorities and the working

poor. Now I'm no socialist, and I recognize that the entitlement system in its current state is one of the most shameful results of Marxist ideology in the Democratic Party, but there is a certain amount of truth in the arguments of the "social justice" crowd. I live in the inner city as a missionary and I see it first hand.

I say we should start working to rescue the "social justice" movement from the Marxists and rebuild it on a Christian foundation. We should use our vastly superior skills at managing money, and our philosophy of "teaching how to fish" (instead of "giving away the fish") to systematically turn the dependent class into self-sufficient citizens (to the fullest extent possible). At the same time reducing the costs of the programs and lowering taxes accordingly. A Christian society has a duty to help the poor, and we can meet that duty much better and cheaper than the Marxists can.

Why will ethnic minorities join us in the first place, before we've been able to prove ourselves champions of true social justice? We will make a simple appeal to the thing we most share in common. "Our Bond Is Family!" There's our pitch and strategy in bumper-sticker simplicity. The typical African American or Hispanic person is generally more Christian and pro-family than the average American (as are the Russian, Eastern European, East Indian, African and Asian immigrants). RINO Republicans could never build a bridge to these minorities because they don't share these values. But we can and should.

The illegal immigration issue has unfortunately distracted both conservatives and Hispanics from the interests we hold in common, but from my experience I think most Hispanics who are legal citizens would gravitate naturally to the Republican Party and not the Democrats if our agenda were centered on family rather than fiscal matters (especially if we had our own social justice platform). Frankly, I'd happily trade any number of pro-abortion, hate-America White liberal suburbanites for the equivalent number of pro-life, pro-family working class Hispanic citizens. We'd be a much stronger country for it.

We should also invite into our new coalition the majority of Libertarians who hold to a Bible-based libertarianism in the mold of the Founding Fathers. I call these "Biblitarians" and count myself among them. Biblitarians embrace the same core values of personal liberty, minimal government regulation and local control as their secular counterparts but are more trustworthy on the fundamental social issues. As much as I respect Congressman Ron Paul, one of the most principled men in government, his secularized form of libertarianism allowed him to endorse open sodomy in our military, a grave philosophical flaw. We should work to recruit even these secularists and to educate them on the Christian roots of their ideology.

We should reach out to moderate and conservative-leaning environmentalists as well. Environmentalism is another movement we should rescue from the Marxists and rebuild on a Christian foundation. Our responsibility to be good stewards of the earth is a central tenet of Christianity, and we are certainly much more capable of fulfilling this duty in a balanced manner than the Marxists are. (Not to mention that we would do the world a great service to steer at least some portion of this powerful movement away from power-grabbing globalist goals such as Agenda 21 and "global warming" and toward authentic environmental needs.)

One key point in this arena that deserves immediate, urgent advocacy is opposition to genetically-modified foods. RINOs would never take this position for fear of alienating agri-business and mega-corporations like Monsanto, but we conservatives should.

Environmentalists might at first seem to be an impossible constituency to recruit, but Christians share an important common ground with them: an embrace of the natural and rejection of the unnatural. The most important concepts in environmentalism -- bio-diversity, eco-systems, and the inter-dependence of species -- rest on the clear "natural law" presupposition (central to Christianity as well) that there is an existing order in nature that should be protected by human beings. We also share a distrust of the corporate giants whose myopic pursuit of ever greater profits represents the greatest threat to the environment.

If we craft an appeal based on our common preference for the "natural" over the "artificial," and frame this as a logical basis for deciding social policy in every area, we suddenly have a powerful unifying theme for our entire slate that could win every intellectually honest environmentalist to our side: the natural value of

life vs the unnatural termination of unborn babies, natural marriage vs. un-natural homosexual unions, God-given liberty vs. man-made Statism, commerce among real persons vs. that with artificial corporate “persons,” natural foods vs. genetic experiments, a return to family farms and rejection of agri-business, a return to natural remedies and rejection of Big Pharma, etc..

While we’re plundering the “Progressive” base, lets not forget the labor unions. There’s nothing inherently evil or unbiblical about labor unions. The evil comes from the Marxist ideologues and organized crime elements who control them. Union members were the heart and soul of the so-called “Reagan Democrats” who crossed party lines in droves for Reagan because he sincerely espoused Christian values. This is a natural constituency for a newly Bible-centered GOP. The only reason we don’t have them now in any significant numbers is that the corporate giants don’t like them (for obvious reasons) and continually foster hostility against them among the Republican rank and file.

Public employees unions on the other hand pose a separate and larger problem rooted in the inherently corrupt system of allowing public employees to control both sides of the collective bargaining process. That problem could be solved by establishing an independent taxpayer approval process for all substantive contracts, but my guess is that these union members would be the least likely to accept our invitation (at least until after we had enacted our solution in law). Yet there are many Christians even among this group who might join our new coalition.

Perhaps the biggest change for the GOP with the adoption of this model would be a shift from “money driven” campaigning to a far greater emphasis on the grassroots. That would have been a big problem for the old GOP, but this new model seeks to unify the grassroots base of both the Republican and Democrat parties under a re-configured GOP “big tent.”

Surely there would be other issues and constituencies that would align with this approach. But importantly, adopting this biblically-grounded model for a reorganized GOP would establish a new coalition of partners who would stand on righteous principles and deny the amoral RINOs and their corrupt big-money backers control of the party once and for all.