In the first century church the Great Commission was fulfilled without much in the way of resources or technology. Today we have plenty of both, but the Great Commission remains unfulfilled. Why? Could it be one of strategy and emphasis? This book looks at that factor in great detail. Emphasizing reaching political leaders for Christ was something they did then that we don't do now. This book makes the case for that. A must read for those interested not only in missions, but in changing the direction of a nation. US SENATOR STEVE DAINES Montana

The church often ignores its key task to speak the love of Christ to a world in desperate need. Ralph Drollinger challenges the church do first things first, which he defends Biblically to mean sharing God's love with leaders. Most of the Old Testament was written to political leaders, by political leaders, or about political leaders. Paul's mission took him to capitols all over the known world. Prophets throughout the Bible challenge leaders to righteousness. God cares about leaders and how their leadership affects people; maybe it is time we start to care about God's work with leaders as well. Ralph Drollinger lays out the Biblical path for those who want to follow Christ as you mentor leaders. US SENATOR JAMES LANKFORD Oklahoma

When City Council Members are strong in Christ, the course of our nation reflects that; the opposite is true also. In *Rebuilding America*, if what is stated here is emphasized by church leaders, the aforementioned will occur. This book contains the best way—albeit long term—for the Church to positively influence and impact the State.

US Congressman Scott Garrett New Jersey, 5th District

In *Rebuilding America*, Ralph Drollinger makes a compelling case for the pressing mission of reaching our nation's political leaders—both at the state and national levels with the transformative news of the Gospel. Ralph's ministry has encouraged my personal spiritual life, and I pray this book will help spark a movement to restore our nation. US CONGRESSWOMAN MICHELE BACHMANN Minnesota, 6th District

Rebuilding America challenges church leaders to begin discipling government leaders. That is what my good friend Ralph Drollinger means when he says 'first things first.' One of the tangential results is this: The Member's Bible Study Ralph Drollinger teaches on Capitol Hill gives members of Congress a core, theological foundation derived from an in-depth, exegetical analysis of Scripture itself by which to weigh and measure the critical policy issues and decisions they face in Congress. It is next to impossible to build or rebuild any nation without this necessary component." US CONGRESSMAN TRENT FRANKS Arizona, 8th District

Rebuilding America, takes the reader on an insightful overview of the Bible's teachings and examples of the importance of ministering to "kings and those who are in authority" (1 Timothy 2:1-4). Drollinger serves as a kind of tour guide as we journey through Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, and from Abraham to the millennial kingdom, pointing out the many instances in which God's people both prayed for and witnessed to the political leaders of the nations. In short, *Rebuilding America* is a much needed wake-up call for all of us to place our evangelistic and discipleship efforts "first of all" where the Bible places them. LARRY PETTEGREW, TH.D. Provost, Shepherds Theological Seminary,

Cary, No. Carolina

This is a small book with a large and powerful message. The central focus of this significant volume may surprise you and will certainly bless you. The Lord has given Ralph Drollinger unusual insights to an often ignored, cutting edge approach to advancing the good news of the Gospel. This is a book you will not want to miss!

DR. PAUL CEDAR Chairman, Mission America Coalition, Palm Desert, California

It has been said that if the Apostle Paul were alive today, he would travel to Washington, DC, our nation's political capital, and to New York City, our nation's cultural capital, in order to make disciples for Christ. In an age when many Christians have written off any type of involvement with politics, here comes a welcome update of Ralph Drollinger's book, *Rebuilding America*. This book demonstrates the need for Christians to present Christ everywhere, even in Washington, DC. JERRY NEWCOMBE, D.MIN. Christian author, TV-producer, columnist, radio host, Florida

In an era of heated political debate that often includes deep-seated personal animosity, *Rebuilding America*, provides a fresh, and much needed, wind of grace and truth. My friend, Ralph Drollinger, has challenged us to keep first things first by engaging community and national leaders for the sake of the Gospel, not simply our political agendas. I am eager to see how the landscape of the church's political involvement will shift as more followers of Christ engage our leaders with Christ-like tranquility, quietness, godliness, and dignity! Ralph is right. Only when this shift occurs will we see God rebuild America!

SHAWN THORNTON

Senior Pastor, Calvary Community Church, Westlake Village, California; Bible Teacher, All Things New Radio

Drollinger makes a compelling Biblical case for why it should be a priority for Christians to evangelize those in public office. Anyone truly concerned about transforming America should read this book. BRAD DACUS President, Pacific Justice Institute, California

Citizenship is one of our God-given Christian responsibilities. Drollinger has given us a clear blueprint to effective American citizenship when he urges us to prioritize sharing Christ with leaders in government, not because their souls are more precious than others, but rather because they have enhanced influence to share Christ with others and to affect government policy. And he supports his contention with numerous Biblical examples and citation, often using the original languages to clarify his message.

Those who wish to be "salt and light" in the world will benefit greatly from Pastor Drollinger's *Rebuilding America*. JOHN A. EIDSMOE

Colonel (MS), Mississippi State Guard Senior Counsel, Foundation for Moral Law, Alabama Pastor, Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

While it may be politically correct for Christians to remain quiet and subdued in regards to reaching government officials, it is not Biblically correct.

Ralph Drollinger, in his book *Rebuilding America*, provides a Scripture-based strategy for every follower of Christ. I wish every pastor and every person who cared about America would read this timely message. Will you engage and will you accept your God-given assignment to be disciple makers of local and national political leaders?

DUDLEY C. RUTHERFORD Senior Pastor, Shepherd of the Hills Churches, California

In the mid 1970s, there were concerted attempts to get believers and churches involved in government in order to change the trajectory of our nation, yet our national direction continued to spiral downward. Could it be that instead of focusing on the inanimate institution of government that we should rather have focused on evangelizing and discipling the hearts of our leaders? Drollinger makes a powerful, exegetically based argument for this adjustment in our thinking, and provides a plan to birth 1,000s of new ministries in city and county governments nationwide to bring health back to our nation. This is the same truth affirmed long ago by William Penn, the founder of government in Pennsylvania, who acknowledged that it is good hearts that produce good laws and bring good government.

> - DAVID BARTON Founder and President, WallBuilders

As a student of God's Word, I learned that New Testament saints were charged to carry the name of Jesus to all peoples, including governmental leaders. As a pastor, I saw our church impact our community and state by reaching elected and appointed governmental leaders. Now I am privileged to join my friend Ralph Drollinger as I lead the cooperative work of the 450 churches of the Northwest Baptist Convention to actively engage Public Servants with the Gospel and Biblical exposition. We need to be developing up-and-coming Public Servants for Christ everywhere! — RANDY ADAMS

Exec. Dir.-Treas., Northwest Baptist Convention

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INTRODUCTION

CAPITOL ministries®

When we think about the subject of restoring a nation, what immediately comes to mind for many is 2 Chronicles 7:14:

[If]...My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

This promise however was given specifically to the Old Testament nation of Israel. It is questionable whether this is a promise to believers in other nations today. Don't get me wrong, it is a good thing for believers to pray, humble themselves, and turn from their wicked ways. But is this a patent formula for restoring any other nation, like America? The promise is given only to Old Testament Israel, and it is not repeated in the New Testament.





So if the promise of 2 Chronicles 7:14 is not meant for us, does Scripture give us any other timeless principle for restoring a nation?

The answer is yes: Scripture *does* speak to the issue, and there is a prescription that equates to a timeless principle, not discussed much amongst earnest followers of Christ. Restoring a nation is difficult without a Biblically-informed strategy. In the pages that follow, I offer one such strategy for your consideration.

CHAPTER ONE

Paralleling America's Sports Ministry Movement

In 1996, my wife and I began Capitol Ministries.[®] This book, titled *Rebuilding America: The Biblical Blueprint*, is intended not only to explain God's strategy for rebuilding a nation but to simultaneously introduce the purpose of the ministry and the Biblical basis for it, as the two are one and the same.

When we started Capitol Ministries[®] in the California Capitol back in 1996, we did so with a desire to parallel the ministry methodology I had previously learned in America's sports ministry movement. I had ministered in the athletic community for 22 years, the last five of which I gave leadership to the trade organization of 87 separate local and national sports ministries. The big idea of how to reach athletes and coaches for Christ was and still is to place fulltime disciple-makers alongside High School, College,





and Professional athletes—locating disciple-makers on their respective campuses (likened to the historically-successful style of High School and College campus ministries). After its small beginnings in the 1950s, today there are hundreds of sports ministers representing dozens of fine organizations who reach thousands of Athletes for Christ every year! We praise God for the fruit He has borne in the sports world!

In a parallel sense, we began soon after starting the California Capitol ministry, to franchise from the California base with the goal of spawning ministries in all 50 US State Capitols, as well as in Washington, DC. The specific purpose then and now is not to lobby for Biblically-based legislation (as important as that is) but to reach legislators for Christ and build them up in the faith. It has been our experience that strong believers will vote right on the issues.

Around the year 2000, as I prepared my weekly Bible study for teaching and discipling political leaders in the California Capitol, I discovered a recurring theme within the Great Commission: Scripture is replete with illustrations, examples, and commands that serve to underscore the importance of winning governmental authorities for Christ.

Illumined and excited about the insight God had provided, we began referring to this Biblical basis for our ministry by various names, some of them rather forgettable. Eventually that Bible study, with added research, evolved into this book, *Rebuilding America: The Biblical Blueprint*. As you will see in the pages that follow, the Apostle Paul and others were very much aware of this most efficient way of reaching the world for Christ and to the unparalleled positive impact such a strategy could have on a nation. I believe this was the means by which in the first century they "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6b, NKJV) in such a relatively short period of time. May this book serve to unfold and illumine the way they thought and challenge us to consider how we might better work to not only fulfill the Great Commission but simultaneously rebuild a nation.

Whereas a sports ministry movement is certain to have a positive impact on many, helping to generate a movement for Christ amongst governing authorities holds promise to change the direction of a whole country!







Chapter Two

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Coach John Wooden and First-Things-First

During my college days I had the awesome privilege of playing under one of the greatest basketball coaches of all time, John Wooden. It was a wonderful honor to have been on his last two national championship teams. Many books have been written accurately analyzing his success. But having played for him personally, here's how I see it: He won ten national championships in his last twelve years of coaching by following a very simple principle: He did "firstthings-first." That is to say he did first what was most important before he did anything else. Year after year our teams precisely executed the most important, rudimentary disciplines of basketball better than other teams. In a sequential sense we focused first on what was most important; every day of practice





we concentrated on doing what was most important before giving attention to lesser things. What resulted was total domination in the world of college basketball. One could say we "turned the basketball world upside down!"

A good example of the First-Things-First principle was the way in which Coach Wooden conducted the opening day of practice: He invested the first hours of each season carefully and redundantly instructing his players how to properly put on their socks and lace their shoes! He not only urged, but demanded, that his players—first of all—execute the most basic elements of the sport so as to construct the strongest foundation possible in order to attain college basketball's NCAA championship.

As a matter of fact, I would become the first player in history to go to four straight NCAA Final-Four Tournaments (due to the fact that in my freshman year, freshmen became eligible to compete on the varsity).

In a similar sense the Book of Acts records how a small band of men—the Apostles—in very short order impacted the *whole world* during the season in which they lived, and as one Bible translation states in Acts 17:6, Jesus' followers "upset the world"! These were not elite leaders, but a small team of uneducated, common men. How did they orchestrate such a huge upset in such a short period of time? How did they reach the world with the Gospel so quickly? *Have you ever stopped to think about that*? How did these guys in a matter of several decades manage to fulfill the Great Commission and change the world beginning in the first century? There were no printing presses to produce large amounts of literature, no radio or TV, no internet or social media devices. So how were they able to saturate the world with the Gospel—changing lives, changing culture—and eventually changing the Roman Empire? Scripture provides the answer: Not only did they do it one soul at a time through a ministry of geometric evangelism and discipleship, but they did it *by concentrating on and impacting a particular genre of society.*

Like Coach Wooden, they executed "first-thingsfirst." Notice 1 Timothy 2:1, 2, 4 in this light:

First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority,... God our Savior... desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

In this passage we find *Coach* Paul urging his team members (specifically Timothy, who is now pastoring the Church in Ephesus) to do first-things-first: To





pray evangelistically and evangelize (per vs. 4) not just "all men," but specifically "kings and all who are in authority."

Look at this passage more closely. Verse 1 begins, "First of all, then," or parakalo oun proton in the Greek. Parakalo is a compound word comprised of the preposition para and the verb kaleo. Para means "to come alongside" while kaleo means "to call." Together, parakalo is an emphatic verb that means (in its first-person tense) "I call you alongside." Coach Paul heightens his commanding voice by including the word proton which means "first of all," in order to stress the priority of what he is about to say. Importantly proton is used in the Greek language to signify first in importance versus first in sequence. More literally these opening words read, (my paraphrase): Let me say first (in the sense of sequence) what you need to do first (in the sense of importance). First-Things-First says Paul.

He wanted Timothy to keep up his past ministry emphasis of giving precedence to evangelism (undergirding evangelism with evangelistic praying) not only for all folks in general, but for "kings and those in authority." Concern for political leaders was not an afterthought in his game plan; rather it was a top priority and passion that ran the length and course of Paul's life after his conversion. Here uncovered is the underlying basis for the direction he took. *This* main concern in his ministry was one of the most significant—if not the most significant—elements that vastly differentiates first-century Church missions strategy from modern-day Church missions strategy. It explains, I believe, why the former was so much more impactful than the later. Keep in mind that the first century church fulfilled the Great Commission and changed the world to come in their generation whereas we have not.

Why is reaching "kings and those who are in authority" so important? It goes without saying that political leaders are often the most influential people in a society. Not only do they possess enormous power, but their capital cities are usually located near the center of the state. Political leaders and political Capitols represent the hubs of power, influence, communications, and transportation, with influence reaching into the countryside. Winning leaders for Christ and planting churches in these focal points makes sense for the practical reason of greater efficiency, effectiveness, and impact on the nation as a whole.





ABOUT THE AUTHOR

RALPH DROLLINGER is the founder and president of Capitol Ministries.[®] After starting a ministry in the California Capitol to governing authorities in 1996, the ministry has established similar evangelism and discipleship ministries in over thirty-eight of America's state Capitols, as well as overseas in Latin America. In 2009, he and his wife, Danielle, founded Capitol Ministries[®] in Washington, DC, where he teaches the Members Bible Study in our nation's capitol and they minister to members of Congress on a weekly basis. One can subscribe at no cost through www.capmin. org to the same weekly Bible studies he teaches on the Hill.

Ralph and Danielle are the Governmental Sphere Conveners of the US Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization, more commonly known as Mission America. Mission America is a consortium of many Evangelical ministries that, among numerous other initiatives, share the common objective of reaching all



of America's Public Servants for Christ in the years ahead.

Third-generation Californians, Ralph and Danielle are empty-nesters and when not in Washington, DC, or traveling to build ministries in capitals overseas, or mountain climbing in the Sierra Nevada, they maintain their residence in Southern California.

THE SPORTS CONNECTION

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Ralph Drollinger, at seven-foot-one, played basketball for legendary coach John Wooden at UCLA and was the first player to go to four NCAA Final Four Tournaments. During both his junior and senior years, he was an Academic All-American, graduating with a degree in ecosystems. He earned his Master of Divinity degree from the Master's Seminary some years later.

Drollinger turned down several NBA opportunities to play with Athletics in Action, touring the world and preaching the Gospel during the halftimes of their games. After his basketball days, he served in sports ministry as the director of the trade organization of America's sports ministry movement called Sports Outreach America before starting Capitol Ministries[®] in 1996.





A Word from the Publisher

FIRST-THINGS-FIRST: The Mission

"He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)

"...[T]he propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself has ordained...."

(President George Washington, 1789 Inaugural Address)¹

This book is about First-Things-First. The fundamentals come first. The basics. The essentials.

First, we must acknowledge and repent of our sins, turning to Christ, embracing Him, and acknowledging He is our Lord and Master—of the universe and of our souls. And be empowered by the Holy Spirit to begin living a humble and honorable and obedient life of peace and joy and service to our King Jesus and to our brethren and neighbors.

"And He said to him, 'You SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND." This is the great and foremost commandment.

¹ Quoted in America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations, compiled by William J. Federer. [Hereafter, "Federer"] Coppell, TX: FAME Publishing Inc., 1994, 652, Endnote 54 on 824.

GERALD CHRISTIAN NORDSKOG

The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and Prophets." (Matthew 22:37-40)²

"Our Saviour's great rule, that we should love our neighbors as ourselves, is such a fundamental truth for the regulating of human society, that, by that alone, one might without difficulty determine all the cases and doubts in social morality." (John Locke)³

"That religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and therefore all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love, and charity towards each other." (Patrick Henry)⁴

After His resurrection from the grave (on Easter Sunday) the very last words Jesus spoke to his eleven disciples on the mountain at Galilee was their (and our) Great Commission. We should heed these words and embrace them and His admonition to all of us:

"'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

"'Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to

² Publisher's Word Scripture quotes (unless otherwise noted) are all from The Founders Bible: The Origin of the Dream of Freedom, NASB, Signature Historian David Barton of Wallbuilders; Brad Cummings and Lance Wubbels, Editors. Newbury Park, CA: Shiloh Road Publishers, LLC, 2012.

³ Federer, 399. Endnote 133 on p. 781.

⁴ Federer, 288. Endnote 49 on p. 761

A WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER

observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'" (Matthew 28:18-20)

The Great Commission emphasizes not only evangelizing but discipling, and that this means not just individuals or communities but all nations for Christ. Discipleship includes training in Biblical laws and precepts and principles of individual and civil liberty—self- and civil government.

"The highest glory of the American Revolution was this; it connected in one indissoluble bond the principles of civil government with the principles of Christianity." (Pres. John Quincy Adams)⁵

Yet America today has forgotten God and rebelled against Him and thus declined exponentially in recent generations. Christians have shirked their duty of evangelizing and discipling even in our very own precious nation due to neglect in our lives and families and Christian duties.

"God who gave us life gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought to be secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the Gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever." (Thomas Jefferson)⁶

"History fails to record a single precedent in which nations subject to moral decay have not passed into political and economic decline."

(General Douglas MacArthur)⁷

⁵ July 4, 1821. Federer, 18. Footnote 51, p. 715.

^{6 1781,} in Notes on the State of Virginia. Federer, 323. Footnote 52, p.766.

⁷ After recapturing Seoul from behind enemy lines, to the Salvation

"...[T]he general diffusion of Christian knowledge hath a natural tendency to correct the morals of men, restrain their vices, and preserve the peace of society...." (Patriot Patrick Henry)⁸

"Rulers are 'ministers to God' to the people 'for good'; they are 'revengers to execute upon him that doeth evil' (Romans 13:4). They are to be a terror not to good works but to the evil (Romans 13:3). Their laws are to be conformable to the laws of God.... Human laws, therefore, in order to be obeyed, must accord with the laws of God: for where they differ, God is to be obeyed rather than man (Acts 5:29).... How can an infidel, who fears not God nor believes His Word nor regards His law, be a minister of God for good? Would not such a man, if made a ruler, in all probability be a terror to good works and not to the evil?... Let us resolutely resolve that we will spare no exertions to elect such rulers as God shall approve. This, believe me, is the only course of relief and safety to our afflicted country. Under the rulers of no other character has any Christian nation ever flourished for any length of time. Under rulers of a different stamp, nations have always degenerated and been finally brought to desolation and ruin." (Jedidiah Morse)⁹

Yet we can stem the tide—as we have many more Christians in America today than Jonah confronted in Nineveh

Army, December 12, 1951. http://freedomoutpost.com/2012/06/generaldouglas-macarthur-on-the-state--of-nations/#jhhjfcR3tYftHqhQ.99.

⁸ From the Preamble to "A Bill Establishing a Provision for Teachers of the Christian Religion" submitted by Patrck Henry in the mid 1780s. http://www.firstfreedomproductions.com/library/documents.php.

⁹ Rev. Jedidiah Morse, A Sermon, Delivered at Charlestown, July 23, 1812, the Day Appointed by the Governor and Council of Massachusetts, to Be Obseved in Fasting and Prayer Throughout the Commonwealth; in Consequence of a Declaration of War with Great Britain (Charlestown, MA: Samuel Etheridge, 1812), 30-32.

—despite our great decline from God's favor in currently experiencing His remedial judgment, *if* we get back to fundamentals, basics, essentials and cry out to our Master in repentance, seeking His forgiveness, and do the First-Things-First. And Love the Lord with all our heart, mind and soul, and love our neighbor as ourself. And pursue the *Biblical Blueprint* in the goal of *Rebuilding America*. This is our goal, this is our mandate, and our cry (like that of John Knox),¹⁰ *Give us America or we die, Lord*!

In this valuable book, in a First-Things-First approach, Ralph Drollinger wisely relates the strategic manner and focus in which we can participate in advancing the Kingdom of God on earth to fulfill the Great Commission ...starting here at home in America.

The author proposes—and he cites pertinent Bible Scripture showing this is a more Christ-centered mission—to focus on changing the hearts of public servants as the primary emphasis versus focusing on the laws they enact. This is his ministry's *Biblical Blueprint* for evangelism, discipleship, and reaching and teaching the leaders, the movers and shakers, the public servants in our nation in order to accelerate the worthy and vital mandate of *Rebuilding America*.

Let us join Ralph in this crucial battle for the soul of America! Together, with Bible study, prayer, perseverance, and thanksgiving, let us run the race for the glory of God!

> Gerald Christian Nordskog Easter Sunday, 2015

¹⁰ John Knox the Scottish Reformer was a mighty man of prayer. Here is an example of how he prayed, "O Lord, give me Scotland, or I die !"