

# Good News By Vic Dove

## A Spiritual Plan

*“Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity... but hasty shortcuts lead to poverty.” Proverbs 21:5*

A wise person once said, “If you aim for nothing, you are bound to hit it every time.” The truth within these words is evident in people who wander through life with no specific ambitions or goals. It just makes common sense to set goals and to have a plan to reach them. If we don’t give serious thought to how we plan to manage our time...our money...or our lives in general... they all will be dictated by others. Although Jesus said “Don’t worry about tomorrow,” He did not say, “Do not think about tomorrow.”

First step to any successful plan is setting and establishing some priorities. If you don’t establish your priorities, someone else will. For example, our Spiritual growth can be monitored by our priorities. When we become Christians our priorities change or they should

anyway. As we grow in our relationship with Jesus the things we place value on change. How we spend our time, our money will tell us what or where our priorities are.

A great way to choose and set priorities is by reading God’s Word...every day. It’s a proven fact...people who read God’s Word seriously don’t just read it to see what it says...they make it their instruction book so they can learn what to do...and then do it.

When we have a plan and that plan includes some priorities we can be sure that we will keep our focus on the main things...so that trivial matters do not knock us off course. This world is full of distractions amen. Priorities and a plan will ensure that you keep the first things first. It’s a way of saying...If I don’t do anything else; I want to make sure I ....”

There are many reasons for a plan, and even more reasons for priorities, but one of the main reasons...is so we can avoid those regrets...or those shoulda, coulda, woulda’s. I bet as you read this article you probably

have thought about something you intended to change last year or last week, but you let slip by and then justified it with some lame excuse. I have some good news for you...you are not alone...many of us have.

We all regret things we did or didn’t do, but regret and remorse do not guarantee anything will change. We can spend our whole lives regretting things and never make it across the finish line that separates regret from rejoicing.

If we don’t have a plan...if we don’t set some priorities...we will be left with good intentions, regrets and the cycle will repeat itself over and over, year after year.

I am amazed at the people I talk to...that admit they have a particular problem in a particular area but are unwilling to come up with a concrete plan and set some Spiritual priorities to change themselves and/or their positions in life.

Shoulder to Shoulder,  
Bro. Vic



**HISTORICALLY**  
current events through a historical lens  
**SPEAKING**  
Dr. James Finck, USAO History Professor

## The Politics of War

By James Finck, Ph. D.

1854 began the destruction of the Second American Party System. When Democrats fought to accept Kansas as a slave state, they were able to claim the mantle of the slavery party. Southern Whigs who supported slavery just as strongly began abandoning their party rather than looking soft on the institution. With the Whig Party crumbling, Northern Whigs began shopping around for a new party and many of them joined with the newly created Republican Party.

When the 1820 Compromise was repealed to allow the 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act, many Whigs were furious and joined with anti-slavery Democrats and members of the small Liberty Party to form the new Republican Party – the same Republican Party we have today.

This party differed from all its predecessors in two major ways. It was a sectional party that only had membership from the North — mostly old Whigs. Although the new Republican Party had similar planks in their platforms as their Whig colleagues, their primary issue was stopping the expansion of slavery into new territories. Another element that set this party apart from previous ones was that a percentage of its members were part of the new abolitionist movement which for the first time called slavery a moral sin that needed eradication.

With what will be known as the Third American Party System of Democrats and Republicans, ideologies began to change.

### New beliefs become visible

While Democrats remained the classic liberals of small government and liberty, they were now the ones pushing to protect the institution of slavery — much like modern conservatives wanting a small government and to protect tradition.

Republicans on the other hand closely mirrored modern liberals as they wanted big government to enact change. Being old Whigs, they desired positive (large) government to protect the nation’s economic future with high tariffs and banks, but also use the government to eliminate what the party called “the twin relics of barbarism: Polygamy and Slavery.” The new party started small, running its first candidate in 1856, and only received 33% of the popular vote. But it was still more than the combined ticket of the Know Nothings and the dead carcass of the Whig Party. Yet four years later the Republicans’ fortunes changed.

In 1860, the nation was a tinderbox ready to explode. Slavery was no longer off the table in Congress as a new breed of abolitionist politicians refused to compromise on the subject. Where national parties once held the nation together, now they were part of the cause for separation. The Republican Party had grown, but still only in Northern states. Southerners warned that if a sectional president won the election, it would cause their downfall and so threatened secession. Tensions ran high as voters went to the polls to choose a new president.

### The election of 1860

Going into the election, there was only one national party remaining. Republicans who nominated Abraham Lincoln only represented the North and ran on stopping the expansion of slavery. Non-Democratic Southerners formed a makeshift party calling themselves Constitutional Unionists. They chose John Bell of Tennessee and ran on the platform of a constitutional compromise on slavery. Democrats met in South Carolina to nominate their candidate. Going into the convention, Stephen Douglass was the leading candidate. At the meeting Southerners refused to support Douglass because he supported “popular sovereignty” (states should decide for themselves to be free or slave and Congress had to accept that decision) over the Dred Scot Supreme Court decision which finds that states did not have the right to outlaw slavery.

When Douglass won the nomination, seven Deep South states walked out of the convention. Not wanting to break up the last national party, Democrats decided to meet three months later in Baltimore. However, Douglass once again won; so, this time 11 Southern states walked out and formed the Southern Democratic Party and ran a strong states rights candidate, John C. Breckenridge of Kentucky. Southern Democrats ran on the platform of a constitutional guarantee of slavery. With the breakup of the political glue that held the nation together and with Lincoln’s election, unity was replaced with secession and civil war.

### Civil War defines parties

During the war, the South became a one-party nation with the Democratic Party in complete control. The North remained a strongly two-party system, with both Democrats and Republicans.

Republicans were able to hold onto both Congress and the presidency during the war, including a second win for Lincoln. After the war, Democrats remained strong nationally but continued to play second fiddle to Republicans.

Between 1860 with and 1932 Republicans held the White House for all but the 16 years of Grover Cleveland and Woodrow Wilson. That’s 56 years for Republicans and 16 for Democrats. Finally, in the 1896 election, Democrats were forced to change their ideology in an attempt to regain power.

*James Finck, Ph.D. is a professor of history at the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma and writes for the Southwest Ledger. You can follow Historically Speaking on Facebook or at [Historicallyspeaking.blog](http://Historicallyspeaking.blog). He can be reached at [Historicallyspeaking1776@gmail.com](mailto:Historicallyspeaking1776@gmail.com).*

## Is a public official working for the citizens when...?

- official doesn’t update government’s website and keep current
- official commonly uses derogatory ‘pet’ names for anyone who does not hold identical views or anyone perceived as questioning or challenging
- official limits information available on a government’s website
- official offers solution which isn’t a full solution, just to appear ‘helpful’
- official tells staff to ignore Open Records requests instead of responding to them, hoping that the person will not pursue the request
- official doesn’t look for ways to be transparent, particularly with online information, limiting citizens right to know
- official calls citizen by name and labels a liar during public meeting?
- official tells citizens to take care of matters themselves, instead of enforcing ordinances?
- official creates community budget and minimizes board/council or citizens their right to know in advance and give input?
- official changes meetings to accommodate employee creating attendance problems for board/council and citizens.
- official constructs narrative for citizen by saying official held public meetings about which board/council never were informed.
- official pits people against each other to make one feel right and the other one wrong.
- official controls all the decision-making about everything including the responsibilities of a board/council.
- official claims truth is what’s being said at the moment, instead of information in accordance with fact or reality
- official tells citizens to follow the law, but privately doesn’t do it him/herself.