

Truth in the Public Square: Strategies from Sweden

Twelve years ago the Swedish Evangelical Alliance was launched, with a two-fold the goal: to provide resources for the church and to become a public voice for the gospel. What have we done and what have we learned? It is evaluation time! How can Christians interact with the secular culture and even become a respected voice within it?

Stefan Gustavsson is a member of the European Leadership Forum Steering Committee and leads the Advanced Apologetics Network. He is director of Credo Academy, a Christian study centre in Stockholm, which focuses on cultural analysis, worldview studies, apologetics and evangelism. Stefan also serves as General Secretary of the Swedish Evangelical Alliance. He is the author of several books on Christian apologetics and the Christian mind and writes regularly for different Swedish magazines. Stefan is married to Ingrid with three grown children.

A. Should We Be Involved?

”In the thick of the battle for abolition, one of its many dedicated opponents, Lord Melbourne, was outraged that Wilberforce dared inflict his Christian values about slavery and human equality on British society. “Things have come to a pretty pass,” he famously thundered, “when one should permit one’s religion to invade public life.” (From *Amazing Grace* by Eric Metaxas)

The NT Encourages us to

- Be Involved, Rom 13:1-10, 1 Peter 2:11-17, 1 Tim 2:1-4, Titus 3:1-2
- Become a Prophetic Voice, Matthew 5:13-16

Vocations in the NT; “Caesar’s household” Phil 4:22, " Erastus who is the city’s director of public works" Rom 16:23, " Dionysius a member of the Areopagus” Acts 17:34

B. What is the Goal? Three models (Os Guinness)

1. Sacred public Square
2. Naked Public Square
3. Civil Public Square

C. Lessons from Sweden

1. Within the Church and Outside the Church
2. Developing Long Term Strategies for Education, Publishing, Activism
3. Launching New Initiatives: CredoAkademin, Svenska Evangeliska Alliansen, Apologia, Wilberforce Akademin, Claphaminstitutet ...
4. Engaging in Public Debates in Different Formats