

A Nation that has Forgotten God (2)

2009006

Topic 2535 (America)

Introduction:

- A. In our previous lesson, we discussed America's wholesale rejection of God in public places.
- B. As God is being removed from our society, history is literally being rewritten and a new *amoral* code is being implemented.
 - 1. Change agents not so concerned about older generations. Waiting for them to die off.
 - 2. They're going to work on our young people. Latch on to them at crucial times of development:
 - a. Public education system – first 175 years – biblically oriented. Immersed children in moral principles & religious doctrines of Christianity.
 - b. University system – faculty & fellow students openly hostile to traditional values.
 - c. Youth media
- C. It is having an effect. Wildly successful. Which we'll talk more about in a few moments.
- D. In our lesson tonight...
 - 1. Discuss the moral assault on youth culture and their worldview as a result
 - 2. Discuss ways we can counter-act what is happening in our world.

I. A moral assault on our youth.

- A. Judges 2:10-13 – refers to the dark ages of Jewish history.
 - 1. Focus on 2:10
 - 2. Make the application to today. (Miller example)
 - 3. Farfetched? Really? Observe:
- B. Sept 24, 2007 Barna Group Study: *A New Generation Expresses its Skepticism & Frustration with Christianity*.
 - 1. Large/growing majority of American youth are revolted by Christianity. People under 30 (Christian & non-Christian) are strikingly more critical than their peers were a decade ago.
 - 2. Consider young, non-Christian perceptions of Christianity:
 - a. 87% - judgmental; 85% - hypocritical; 78% - old-fashioned
 - b. 75% - too involved in politics; 90% - Christianity is "anti-homosexual"
 - c. 80% of respondents claimed to have spent at least 6 months attending church. 50% of them said they considered becoming a Christian – but rejected it.
 - d. 25% said Christianity has "changed from what it used to be" and that it "no longer looks like Jesus."
 - 3. Respondents felt that "Christians show excessive contempt & unloving attitudes toward gays/lesbians. Believe the church has made homosexuality

a “bigger sin” than anything else. They claim the church has not helped them apply biblical teaching on homosexuality to their friendships with gays & lesbians.

4. Barna concludes: “While Christianity remains the typical experience & most common faith in America, a fundamental recalibration is occurring within the spiritual allegiance of America’s upcoming generations.”
 5. The trend points to a far more diverse & secular nation in the decades ahead.
 6. Sara Robinson, a liberal blogger opines: *the goal of making America a Christian nation is actually receding into the distance as successive generations turn away from the faith – in no small part because they’re gagging on the overwhelmingly authoritarian stench that’s seeped in from the extremist edges toward the great middle.*
- C. Jan 12, 2009 – Barna Group Study: *Christianity is no longer America’s Default Faith.*
1. 50% of all Americans contend Christianity is just one of many options to choose from.
 2. A huge majority of adults pick & choose what they believe rather than adopt a church or denominational beliefs.
- D. We live in a time when it is not fashionable to stand for anything – especially long held moral principles & religious beliefs.
1. Consider an insidious slogan invented by those on the other side of the culture war: When questioned, we might hear a person say:
 - a. *Personally, I’m opposed to _____, but I can’t impose my belief on others.*
 - b. ***I can’t impose my belief on others*** has blanketed the thinking of our society – from baby boomers to Generation M.
 - c. E.g. from South Dakota.
 - i. When polled...overwhelming majority of South Dakotans feel abortion horrific and morally reprehensible.
 - ii. But yet...the state voters have failed to endorse abortion bans passed by the legislature in the two most recent elections.
 - iii. Could it be because people don’t want to impose their beliefs on others & that is reflected in the voting booth?
 2. July 21, 2008 *Newsweek* article reflects the views of the incoming President Obama:
 - a. *Newsweek* asked him: “Do you and Michelle talk to your girls about having a God? Jesus?”
 - b. “Well, we do, but we don’t have a systematic course of study for the girls,” he said. “We say grace at the table. They are inquiring minds, so whenever they have a question about God or faith, then I have a conversation with them.... **I’m a big believer in a faith that is not imposed but taps into what’s already there, their curiosity or their spirit.**”
 - c. As the leaders go...so goes the nation.
- E. We have truly entered what social scientists now call the “Post-Christian” age of American existence. We do so at our own peril!

II. How can we respond? Can we *really* make a difference?

- A. 2 Chronicles 7:14-15; 19-22 – yes...there is hope...we do not *have* to be destroyed. But we must respond now.
 1. But the culture's too broad; too many people to influence. How can 1.2 million members of the church of Christ possibly make a difference?
 2. The prayer/actions of a few can influence the Mighty God!
 3. A difference can be made when we all begin to act on a personal, individual level.
- B. Renewing our commitment to serious **devotion** to God.
 1. Need more Christians seriously devoted to God.
 2. Sadly, many are lethargic. Overcommitted & too busy to care. Some not personally effected.
 3. Committed to reacquainting self to God & what it means to be His disciple.
- C. Demand **our families** do better.
 1. Promote stability. Do whatever it takes to save our families.
 2. Children under assault from sinister forces on daily basis.
 3. Deut. 6:24-25 – must insist that our kids follow our cultural & moral values.
- D. **Pray** – 1 Tim. 2:1-4
 1. We are in big trouble & need God's help.
 2. Daily Individual prayer; regular, public prayer; and prayer services that are dedicated to this subject.
 3. We need to seek God's help!
 4. Been said: *when people become comfortable with freedom and material prosperity and no longer appreciate the sacrifice made to achieve that – they deserve neither.*
 - a. The freedom we have is not license to do anything we want!
- E. **Political** participation
 1. Vote! *A few get their way because the majority does not vote.*
 2. Edmond Burke: *All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.*
 3. James Garfield – member of the Lord's Church – 1876:
 - a. *Now...more than ever before, the people are responsible for the character of their Congress. If that body be ignorant, reckless, and corrupt, it is because the people tolerate ignorance, recklessness, and corruption. If it be intelligent, brave, and pure, it is because the people demand those high qualities to represent them in the National Legislature.*
 - b. *If the next centennial does not find us a great nation it will be because those who represent the enterprise, the culture, and the morality of the nation do not aid in controlling the political forces.*
 4. Sounds prophetic...how hard to see moral corruption of many who serve in US Congress; governorships (IL Governor, etc.)?
 5. Brethren...it's not about the Republican/Democratic party! **Forget political parties & political affiliation!**
 - a. We are Christians **first** and need to vote accordingly!
 - b. When we vote, first thing we need to remember is not:

- i. The economy; war on terror; health insurance; social security
 - ii. But the relationship between **God & Government**.
 - iii. *How does my candidate feel about that?*
 - iv. *How does my candidate feel about homosexuality; gay marriage?*
 - v. *How does my candidate feel about abortion?*
 - c. Ex. 18:21; Pro 29:2, 4
 - d. Don't tell me the founding Fathers weren't moved by Christian principles: Benjamin Rush (a signer of the Declaration of Independence):
 - i. *I have been alternately called an aristocrat and a democrat. I am neither. I am a Christocrat. I believe all power will always fail of producing order and happiness in the hands of man. He alone who created and redeemed man is qualified to govern him.*
- F. We need **patience** & persistence.
 - 1. We have been too quick to give up. Our enemies are more determined than we may realize. They are patient. They will hold out until they feel it is the right time.
 - 2. We must be patient, stand up for the values we say we possess and trust in God to do the rest.
 - a. De Tocqueville 1835: (In America) *every principle of the moral world is fixed and determinate.*
 - b. We need not be ashamed to proclaim that our freedom is based upon morality! Not the morality we make up by a standard given by God!
 - 3. We must be willing to sacrifice. May involve making hard decisions about where we go, what we do, who we support.

Conclusion:

- A. America's founders were predominately Christian & their worldview was based upon the Scriptures.
 - 1. They intended for our nation to be a Christian nation.
 - 2. Yes...we have made grave errors through the years...but we *are* the force of good in the world.
 - 3. Our founder's writings are brimming full of their reliance upon God.
 - 4. God blessed us as a result.
- B. Psalm 33:12-14, 16-18
- C. God is in control of the nations. He is alive & well today & is aware of the direction our country is headed. We need to be aware of passages such as:
 - 1. Psalm 9:5, 8, 15-17, 19-20
 - 2. If we continue in the way we are...judgment is certain & inevitable.
 - 3. 9:19-20 – some might argue that America is in need of a good dose of humility & submission.
 - a. 1 Tim. 4:3-4 – we have certainly heaped up for ourselves teachers who tell us everything is OK. Not to worry.
 - b. Heb. 12:25- we must not refuse God.

D. How to start in fixing the cultural mess we're in? Make sure we are in a personal relationship with God. That's where it starts. All of us taking personal responsibility for ourselves & cleaning up our own act.

1. Do you need to come to God tonight to begin that process?

E. INVITATION