

The Failure of the Church and Her Shepherds



By Kelleigh Nelson

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In such a fearful world, we need a fearless church. –C. S. Lewis

I believe that one reason why the church of God at this present moment has so little influence over the world is because the world has so much influence over the church. –Charles Spurgeon

That very church which the world likes best is sure to be that which God abhors. –Charles Spurgeon

We have no more thought of using our own powers to escape the arm of authorities than had the Apostles of old. No more are we ready to keep silent at man's behest when God commands us to speak. For it is, and must remain, the case that we must obey God rather than man. –Martin Niemoller

Our Holy Day celebrations are over for another year. Several days were spent preparing feasts and watching 1940s movies...all of which were without violence or expletives, and had such wonderful moral themes. Top Gun Maverick was rented for one evening and was a throwback to those good old movies.

Now we welcome a new year, hoping and praying that it will be better than the last few. Having just looked through our Christmas cards once again, my eyes welled up with tears for

the many friends and family who are no longer with us. As I addressed cards this year, I noticed how many names had been crossed out as I've aged. Just today I found we'd lost another family member in January of 2022. My sweet maternal grandma once said to me that the worst thing about growing old was losing family and friends. How right she was!

Our Judeo-Christian culture centers around the worship of our Creator. Church is an integral part of our Christian faith. Synagogues and churches are both houses of prayer, worship and study. In my youth, some of my best friends were children whose families were orthodox Jews. They went to shul on Saturday and we went to church Sunday. I remember being astounded that they had Sunday School and they also attended one other day of the week. Christians have Sunday School as well, and many churches also have a Wednesday worship and Bible studies.

As a child, I never missed Sunday School or church with my grandparents or my mom. Attendance continued throughout my adult life until the recent past.

As I age, I seem to weep more often. My country is rotting from the inside; she is disintegrating before my eyes attacked by dystopian tyrants bent on demonic control of the world. I keep asking, "Where are the shepherds, the pastors, the men of the cloth who are to guide and nurture the sheep?"

Silence.

Times have changed

Steve Bonta's 2000 article, [Liberty and the Chains of Virtue](#) was reprinted in the December 26th, 2022 New American Magazine. The subtitle states, "The Founding Fathers clearly understood that only a citizenry educated in morality and willingly bound by the self-forged chains of virtue can remain free of the chains of tyranny." It is a brilliant article

regarding our roots, the faith of the founders, religion and the republic and the role of education.

Bonta ends the article with this sentence, "Each generation of Americans must relearn the lessons of the past; each must build on the example set by the Founders to keep fertile the soil of public virtue in which the seeds of freedom are sown anew in every age."

America's education was infiltrated by the enemies of freedom in the 1930s. Parents would plant the seeds of faith and morality in their young, then send them off to public schools only to have the sprouting plants of righteousness radically wilt and die.

The Supreme Court removed prayer from government run schools in 1962. The Ten commandments were removed in 1980. Dr. Cathy Burn's book, [Billy Graham and His Friends](#), exposes the truth of one of America's most famous 20th century preachers. Many have questioned Graham's connection with the National and World Council of Churches as well as the ecumenical movement and for good reason.

On page 247, Dr. Burns' writes:

"A 1972 World Council of Church 'Salvation Today' Conference in Bangkok published a series of essays by such Marxist authors as Julius Nyerere, Roger Garaudy and Ignazio Silone. One essay told how to substitute Mao's Little Red Book for the Bible." This essay reminds me somewhat of a quotation from Billy Graham which appeared in a Tokyo newspaper.

*"In the May 28, 1973 Mainichi Daily News, published in Tokyo, Graham declared, 'I think communism's appeal to youth is its structure and promise of a future utopia. **Mao Tse-tung's eight precepts are basically the same as the Ten Commandments.** In fact, if we can't have the Ten Commandments read in our schools, **I'll settle for Mao's***

precepts.'"

And that was half a century ago.

Denying the Ten Commandments

Andy Stanley, son of Southern Baptist Pastor Charles Stanley, [claims the Ten Commandments are from the Old Covenant and Christians are not bound to obey any of them.](#) He believes they don't apply to Christians today. Stanley certainly opens a vile can of worms with this statement. The Ten Commandments are a portion of the 613 laws given by Moses. One wonders if Andy Stanley has actually studied the New Testament Words of Jesus (Yeshua Hamashiach) and St. Paul.

Nine of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the New Testament. They are Christ's Laws, which match nine of the Creator's Ten Commandments given to Moses. They are God's Laws for humanity.

If Stanley chucks the law, then he has no basis for calling sinners to repentance, because sin is transgressing God's law (1 John 3:4).

And not all of the Ten Commandments fit into Christ's command to "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." The Lord said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me; Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image; Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; Honor thy father and thy mother.

Jesus of Nazareth instructs us with His commandments, the Ten Commandments of God given to Moses on Mt. Sinai.

Only one commandment is missing in the New Testament, the Fourth Commandment, to honor the Sabbath Day and Keep it Holy. Christians are taught that every day is a Holy Day unto the Lord. We know that whichever day we choose to gather together to worship is the Lord's Day, whether it be Saturday,

Sunday, Wednesday or any other day of the week.

Many Christians choose Saturday worship as the Torah states in Exodus 20:10 where the Lord's Law declares the seventh day of the week is a Day of Rest and worship.

After Jesus' Resurrection, Sunday was held sacred as the Lord's day in remembrance of His Resurrection on that day (see Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2). From that time on, His followers observed the first day of the week as their Sabbath.

However, we are all free to choose.

Decay

Few families take their children to church, fewer even attend. A majority of our churches have been infiltrated with false doctrines, and cultural mores that fall drastically distant from the instructions in our Manufacturer's Handbook.

Women lead as pastors, sometimes married couples are the pastors together, and more often than we know, many pastors are openly homosexual or lesbian and are accepted in the church, despite the teachings in Leviticus, the third Book of the Torah, and the New Testament's Book of Romans. Doctrinal beliefs are widely varied rather than having sound articles of faith throughout.

In one of the largest Christian denominations, Zelda Caldwell of the Catholic News Agency [writes](#), "One of the newest members of the Pontifical Academy for Life appointed by Pope Francis is an outspoken advocate of abortion rights, having recently shared her opposition to the overturning of Roe v. Wade on Twitter."

Shocking? Yes!

I watched as the denomination I was raised in fell away from Biblical truth and adopted the rot of secular socialism that has infiltrated every facet of society. Our elected

politicians openly deny America's Judeo-Christian heritage and show their support for those who flaunt their immorality in God's face.

According to a Christian Post article, *The American Worldview Inventory 2022* examined more than three dozen beliefs held by pastors. Researchers found that in addition to believing that people can merit salvation based solely on their good works, one-third or more of senior pastors surveyed also believe the Holy Spirit is not a person but rather "a symbol of God's power." Others said that moral truth is subjective; sexual relations between two unmarried people who love each other is "morally acceptable" and biblical teaching on abortion is "ambiguous."

At least a third of those surveyed also said they believe "socialism is preferable to capitalism and that allowing property ownership facilitates economic injustice," which researchers say could point to the "increase of cultural and political influence into the church."

That, my friends, is the core of Marxism.

Nearly 40% of these pastors do not have a Biblical world view, and 38% didn't answer in the affirmative that human life is sacred. They didn't even believe that having faith in God is the reason for salvation. They stated that having faith is important, but in whom or what apparently is not.

Evangelical Survey

On October 9th, 2022, Pastor John MacArthur preached a sermon on "The State of Theology. It concerned a survey about evangelicals. What he exposed showed defection from the truth of those who are to shepherd the flock. They have become heretics and apostates.

MacArthur went on to explain that most people who claim they are evangelicals don't even know the definition of the word...

1. They believe the Bible.
2. They believe Jesus.
3. They believe the Gospel.
4. They believe they were responsible to communicate the Gospel to others.

The answers to a few of the [survey questions](#) to evangelicals and pastors were shocking and disheartening and proof that the serpent has actively infiltrated the church.

1. 50% believe God changes and adapts, despite the fact that both Old and New Testaments teach that God never changes. Numbers 23:19; Malachi 3:6; I Timothy 1:17.
2. 65% agree that everyone is born innocent in the eyes of God. Innocence ended in the Garden of Eden. We are all born with a sinful nature. Ecclesiastes 7:20; Psalm 51:5; Psalm 58:3; Romans 5:12.
3. The core of Christian faith is the confession of sins and the acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Savior/Messiah, but 30% of pastors didn't answer this in the affirmative.
4. 55% of evangelicals agreed the Bible is not literally true. Ps. 119:160; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 2:15.

The bottom line for salvation is faith...it is faith alone that guarantees the Lord and His heavenly kingdom. The Old Testament saints were all saved by what? Faith alone in our Creator.

For those of us who believe on Messiah Jesus, He is our Savior...the final perfect Lamb of God sacrificed for our sins. He is a Jew, from the Tribe of Judah. He came, not for gentiles, but for His fellow Jews. Gentiles were [grafted into the olive tree](#) because like the Canaanite, Rahab, we believed on the One True God.

The story of Rahab's faith is in the Book of Joshua 2:1-24. Rahab hid Joshua's spies and told them she knew that the Lord

was with them. She said, "And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."

Every book in the Bible, both Old and New Testaments are written by Jews, save one, the New Testament Book of Luke, the physician. All the apostles were Jewish. Our Creator engraved Israel in the palms of His Hands, (Isaiah 49:16). So, if you hate the Jews, you literally hate God, Jesus and the entire Bible.

Traditional or Contemporary Worship

In a recent conversation with a friend, we talked about the modern music in today's church worship. Both of us concluded that the loud heavy metal rock music may carry with it evil spirits. Don't get me wrong. There are modern praise songs that are so lovely. [Because He Lives](#) by Bill Gaither is a beautiful modern hymn. And there are numerous Christian bands who perform wonderful songs of praise and jazz them up a tiny bit. Worship is the Holy ground of the Lord.

I'll never forget what my daughter's husband, who was from Persia, said to me. They were married in the church and we adored him. The one comment Joe made to me stilled my heart. He said it disturbed him to see people gather in the sanctuary, chatting with friends, the children running around and the noise of folks getting seated and calling out to others. He felt that worship in the sanctuary was a Holy Place of God and that there should have been more reverence. He was right.

In our former church, traditional worship followed an historic liturgy and included hymns, choir pieces, handbells, piano, and organ. The beautiful hymns of old, Rock of Ages, A Mighty Fortress is Our God, Nearer My God to Thee, Jehovah Let me Now Adore Thee, and so many more were sung in worship throughout

the year. I can hear the music and my mother's beautiful voice lifted in praise, a voice I failed to inherit. Those hymns were prayers to our Creator, to His wonderful gifts to those who believe and to our living and risen Messiah. Many of them I know by heart.

But now the church has changed. Should those of us who were raised with these marvelous songs of praise wish to attend the traditional worship service, we must rise early to be at church by 8 a.m. Most who were raised in the traditional services are now elderly and many no longer attend because of the time.

The blended worship is a mix of historic, traditional, contemporary, and global expressions of worship. Just what are "global expressions of worship?" They claim this service is a "mosaic" of several different worship styles. It occurs at 9:30 a.m.

The contemporary service is at 11:30 and led by a praise band, using a variety of instruments. The music is either printed in the bulletin or is flashed on a screen. The words are repetitious mantras, not the Holy Praise and Prayers of the past. Many have left the church believing Matthew 6:7 tells us, "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."

Friends of mine tell me they arrive late to worship to avoid the loud rock band music.

Drums, guitars, and electronic keyboards using synthesizers and digital pianos are common. It's loud. There are [scriptural reasons](#) the "rock beat" is evil in any form.

King David made a joyful noise unto the Lord, Psalm 100:1-5; 2 Samuel 6:13-15. This was right before King David and all the house of Israel brought up the Ark of the Lord with shouting and the sound of the trumpet, the shofar.

Today's pastors will tell you the music attracts the young people and then they will hear the truth of God's Word. But are they being fed the meat of the Word, or milk and Pablum? ([Hebrews 5:12-14](#))

Founding Era Sermons

In the early days of our country, the pastors tied liberty and freedom to faith in the One True Lord and Creator, Jehovah. There are hundreds of thousands of founding era sermons; the core of every sermon is the same. Religion, liberty and freedom were intermingled in every homily.

In 1798, Timothy White preached on "[The Duty of Americans at the Present Crisis](#)." Within his long address, he stated, *Religion and Liberty are the two great objects of defensive war. Conjoined, they unite all the feelings, and call forth all the energies, of man. In defense of them, nations contend with the spirit of the Maccabees; "one will chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight."*

In 1800, John Smalley gave a sermon on "[The Evils of a Weak Government](#)."

In this historic sermon, Pastor Smalley stated, *When the makers or judges of laws, are themselves notorious breakers of them, or of the laws of heaven, government will necessarily fall into contempt. It is also to be observed, that advancing to posts of honor, men of loose principles and morals, gives reputation to licentiousness, and stamps it as the current fashion. Their example will encourage evil doers, more than all the punishments they are likely to inflict, will be a terror to them. "The wicked walk on every side when the vilest men are exalted."*

Conclusion

In the Book of Jeremiah, Chapter 23, the Prophet is speaking to the unrighteous rulers of Judah, the leaders of the Nation

who are responsible for the calamity. He writes, "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! Saith the Lord.

The image for leadership in Scripture from Genesis to Revelation is that of a shepherd. God often reveals Himself as a shepherd to His people Israel (Genesis 48:15; Numbers 27:15-20; Psalms 23; Psalms 77:20; Mark 6:34). In many ways, this reflects God's character. Shepherds in the church must remember that they are under-shepherds to the flock under the supreme headship of the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4). The implications for this are significant.

Our country's Judeo-Christian culture was born in blood. The battle for liberty and freedom continued for seven long years. We were blessed.

Our nation has fallen from grace because we've left our first love and failed to learn the lessons of our past to keep fertile the soil of public virtue in which the seeds of freedom are sown anew in every age.

In the Book of Ephesians 6:12, St. Paul tells us, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

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E-Mail Kelleigh Nelson: proverbs133@bellsouth.net