

# Reaching Out

Issue #98

Welcome to **Reaching Out**, a Christian magazine to serve the community. Our goal is to offer Biblical solutions to the problems facing our society today.



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# Sugar Pills

by Clay Zimmerman

Years ago, when a doctor ran into one of those head scratching cases where he couldn't identify the problem he might sell the patient a placebo or "sugar" pill—something totally harmless but with no healing value. There may have been several reasons for this. It could help the doctor save face. (What trusted expert wants to admit he doesn't know what to do?) Or he might have suspected an illness that was either supposed or psychologically induced. If it worked, great! Everyone was happy, and none but the doctor needed to be the wiser.

But this is not just a yesteryear practice. Experts are aware that some problems can still be treated in this way. Studies now show that the mind can trick the body into relieving symptoms even without outside chemical induction.

One of the most interesting recent studies in this subject is astounding. Tests now show that the placebo (sugar pill) can have good effects even when the patient **knows** what is going on! The effects, they say, are possibly best if it is an expert (white lab coat), in a professional setting, that is prescribing the treatment with the thought presented that this could help. But for those who would like to save money, I understand that one can buy his own "sugar pills" on Amazon or possibly other places. Why not buy empty capsules at a health food store and make your own? Of course, without an expert involved to prescribe them, it might take a bit more mental work to convince your brain. Is that all I

need for my illness? Maybe I could get someone to prescribe Mountain Dew for my ailment and thus "enjoy" my meds a bit more!

Experts do tell us that this kind of treatment cannot shrink tumors but can relieve various symptoms including some of the effects of IBS, migraine headaches, and some other chronic pain and stress issues. In the end, we are fearfully and wonderfully made, as the Bible says, and we undoubtedly still have a lot to learn.

I am afraid some people are trying to treat their spiritual illness ("all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God") with "sugar pills." Does it help you feel better to tell yourself you are "not that bad"? Does going to church occasionally, or regularly, seem to tip the balance toward holiness? What about doing some good deeds to help relieve the symptoms of a guilty conscience?

Finally, it does feel good to do good things, but the problem we all have is so big that we need much more than a placebo to relieve some effects. To remove the cancer of sin that has run through our whole spirit, soul, and body, there is only one cure that the Great Physician has offered. That is the forgiveness that comes through the blood of Jesus Christ. This is only attained through genuine repentance, selling out totally to God, and letting Him impart that divine nature within us. Get the only cure that works and stop relying on "sugar pills"!

The sugar pill crowd is mentioned in Matthew 7:21-23. Read it.



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### So You Want Friends?

by Roger L. Berry

As a teenager, I lived in the same rustic, mountain community as a young fellow who frequented gang meetings. He seemed to get into trouble at almost every turn. His mind was like an open sewer of filthy jokes and blue streak profanity.

My mother insisted that I not hang around Bill. Happily I listened to her. But another young fellow in the neighborhood, Ronnie, did associate with Bill. Ronnie's mother wanted him to be sociable and have friends. After all, so few boys in the immediate neighborhood were his age.

What happened to Bill and Ronnie? Their lives were wrecked. Bill caroused with the gang. He eventually married but soon got a divorce. And Ronnie? He kept living it up with his so-called friends in the gang. One night he got involved in a fight between his gang and another. Shooting ensued and Ronnie was killed—a sad tragedy that came from a crowd that was not friends after all. Why did this happen. The Bible gives the answer: *“Evil communications corrupt good manners”* (1 Corinthians 15:33). In other words, “Evil company ruins right living.”

Ronnie's mother was sure her son's acceptance and popularity hinged on being in with Bill, but this led to gang involvement and its consequences. My mother was certain that too close an association with such people would ruin my life, and she was right. I did have some friends and they helped me rather than hindering me.

Many young people have finally admitted that the people they work so hard to impress are not really their friends. One girl admitted that trying to impress her so-called friends was driving her crazy. She could never completely please them, and when she truly needed help, they would abandon her. They were using her rather than appreciating or helping her.

All of us, of course, want to be “accepted.” We want to be liked by others. Yet there are real pitfalls in doing anything people want us to do just so they will “accept” us. They eventually reject us and seek other more “exciting” company.

The Bible teaches us to be friendly and to do good to all. *“A man that hath friends must shew him-*

*self friendly”* (Proverbs 18:24). Jesus showed himself friendly to all kinds of people, even those like Bill and Ronnie. Yet He did not go along with their wrongdoing. He challenged them to do what was right, and was rejected by many people around Him.

The Bible teaches us to choose friends that will help us and encourage us to be our best. *“Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow”* (Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10). True friends will not pressure us to do what is wrong just to please them. They will understand our needs and challenge us to be better people.

My mother used to say, “Show me the company you keep, and I will show you who you are.” There's a mine of truth here. We all tend to copy the people we are around. If we are around those who do what is right and help us, we will want to be like they are. They will be friends who will not make us miserable with cruel expectations. We need to choose true friends with backbone, friends who will stand for what is right. They will help us to be better people. They will not try to force us to do what ruins our lives.

We will find true satisfaction in life and be delivered from misery if we choose friends who truly love God and want to take His way. Such friends will not “drive us crazy.” They will be willing to do anything to help us. Jesus said, *“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends”* (John 15:13). We may not need to literally die to rescue a friend, but we will be willing to sacrifice time and effort to truly help him.

The Bible teaches us to choose right friends, especially friends who love God. *“Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world [wrong people and wrong things] is the enemy of God”* (James 4:4).

You want friends. Sure you do! But be honest with yourself. Do your friends cause you to do what is right and to square your shoulders and walk a different line than the corrupt society around you? Will you be that kind of friend to others? *“A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity”* (Proverbs 17:17).







# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## Humanism and the Liberation Philosophy

by James W. Burkholder

*"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD" (Isaiah 55:8). God's ways and man's ways are as opposite as light and darkness. God's way lifts a person up; man's ways result in trouble, sorrow, and bondage. Finally, God's way issues into eternal bliss, but man's ways result in eternal torment (Proverbs 16:25).*

In spite of the importance of these unchanging, eternal truths, the humanists are boldly preaching their "man is the measure of all things" philosophy. Their anti-God, earthly thinking is summed up in this quote from their *Humanist Manifesto*:

*"We can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species. While there is much that we do not know, humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves. We strive for the good life, here and now."*

This kind of satanic permissiveness and serve-yourself philosophy was sown to the wind by the humanists in the past decades. America is now reaping the whirlwind of immorality, corruption, lawlessness, and rebellion. The "good life here and now" is obviously not as good as was anticipated.

### WHAT IS THE LIBERATION PHILOSOPHY?

Humanistic liberation philosophy is man's attempt to detach himself from binding rules of conduct, such as the Ten Commandments, which God has placed upon mankind. Self-indulgence is held up as being the "good life." Therefore, any laws that inhibit self-indulgence and self-expression are viewed as detrimental to human fulfillment.

A key word in humanism's philosophy is *amoral-ity*. The word carries the idea of there being no right conduct and no wrong conduct for human beings. All is neutral. Of course, this concept is based on the heresy that there is no personal God and that man is a result of evolution rather than a product of God's creative work.

### HOW IS THE LIBERATION PHILOSOPHY EXPRESSED?

**1. Situation ethics.** Since the basic thrust of humanism is "no God, no law; no right, no wrong," standards of conduct must be determined by the situation the individual finds himself in. And that can be quite confusing and just as dangerous. How would you like to drive on a highway where there are no laws and where each driver maneuvers according to his own common sense in each given situation?

Some public schools are actually holding situation ethics classes, where certain human problems are proposed, and the students are asked to give answers for solving the problems. Of course, there are no failing grades in this class because there really are no wrong answers.

The student's answers are based on what he thinks would be a proper solution. His religious or home background is to have no bearing on his decision. Is it any wonder that American youth are shiftless, frustrated, confused, and unprepared for life? Educators are using the golden years of the students' learning ability to feed them the trash of humanism.

All of this sounds much like the times of the children of Israel when "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Each of those periods ended in bondage rather than freedom. Can we expect God will treat America any differently?

**2. Home, school, and church permissiveness.** Humanists are exerting strong pressure on the politicians to do away with parental responsibility for the child. Such organizational efforts as "child's rights," "child

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abuse," and "the year of the child" are basically an attempt to take the responsibility for the control of children away from the parents and give it to the state. This is astounding and may seem impossible, but a close observation reveals that more and more people are thinking along these lines.

Furthermore, a host of educators and philosophers of our day openly challenge the Bible concept of punitive reward for disobedience (the use of the rod). One psychologist who was influential in public school counseling stated this in 1974: *"Traditional child-rearing methods don't work. The trouble with traditional methods is that they are years out of touch with reality .... Today's children are the last minority group to have won their equality. They see themselves as equal to adults, but adults talk down to them. When a child from his self-perceived stance of equality answers the adult, it's called sassing back. And that's where the conflict begins in the classroom"* (from the *Prairie Overcomer*, April 1974).

A "professor" of this caliber seems to perfectly fit the Apostle Paul's description in Romans 1: *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."*

But the cry for permissiveness is not only out there in the world. Even the conservative church groups seem to have a good supply of those who emphasize the need for more tolerance and permissiveness. Spiritual indifference, carnality, and worldliness are thought by some to be permissible. Those who have a vision of the results of this spirit and want to deal with such offenders are at times looked upon as unloving and uncompassionate. Could it be that the pressures of present-day humanism are filtering into the minds of some of God's people?

It was the late George R Brunk, a bishop, who made the brief but notable statement, "Love carries a big stick." Godly parents are in full harmony with that statement because they are well aware of the values of the firm use of the rod motivated by a heart of true love. The same thing is true in church life. Church members must know that there is a line drawn, and must know the results of overstepping that line.

**3. Social immorality.** Humanists have succeeded in setting America on the same course that Sodom pursued: homosexuality, promiscuity, and open lewdness. Some education centers are nothing short of prostitution houses. Humanistic school boards have planned for detailed sex education classes from kindergarten through grade 12. These classes openly endorse sodomy, self-abuse, birth control, abortion, and free love. Some of the best sellers in the magazine racks are in the rank pornography class. America is obsessed with unmarried

men and women living together, divorce, broken homes, and much more that is not even expedient to call to mind.

And to think, all this in the name of liberation! Satan must be having a good time watching this deception at work. Oh, the terrible perversion and bondage humanism incurs! *"Whoso committeth adultery ... destroyeth his own soul"* (Proverbs 6:32).

**4. Woman's rights.** A fourth expression of the liberation philosophy is the woman's rights movement. The traditional, Biblical concept of the woman ministering to her family at home is looked upon as misery and bondage. In the past few decades we have seen more and more women moving into the pulpit, the political arena, the business world, and even the armed forces. This is held up as being the fulfillment of the inner cravings of women. This is "liberation."

Obviously, while these women are pursuing "freedom," their families are missing their motherly touch at home, morals are being eroded in society, and the firmness and manliness of various institutions are lost.

## THE BIBLE ANSWER

Now, what does the Bible have to say about the liberation philosophy? First, let us listen to Peter: *"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage"* (2 Peter 2:19).

And this from the writing of Paul: *"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live"* (Romans 8:13).

Finally, let us hear Jesus: *"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"* (John 8:32).

One has to marvel at the mercy of God toward the *"crooked and perverse nation"* that we live in. But let us not be fooled. Peter makes it clear that the patience of the Lord relates to His long-suffering, not to His indifference. Someday God will act, His judgments will be severe, and there will be no respect of persons. *"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God"* (Psalm 9:17).

Let us *"live in the Spirit."* Let us never be deceived into thinking we can *"enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."* Let us trust God who *"is able also to save [us] to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for [us]."* Truly, there is a way to live a holy life, even in such an evil day, for *"where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."*

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# THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE

## The Chambered Nautilus

by Elvin Stauffer

*"Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul . . .  
Till thou at length art free,  
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!"*  
**Oliver Wendell Holmes**

I had not gone on a fossil dig for a while, so I was glad for an invitation from my son to boat up a river to where some kayakers had discovered large ammonite fossils along with other shellfish. Ammonites are an extinct sea creature with spiral shells. The interior was divided into chambers. These are similar to the present-day chambered nautilus. Only six species of the nautilus are known today, but over 2,000 fossil forms of the ammonites have been found. Nautilus live in the South Pacific and are about the size of a fist. The largest may reach 10 1/2 inches.

### THE FOSSIL SITE

The river had cut a deeper channel around the side leaving a large section of river bottom exposed- about 300 by 1000 feet. This large plateau is strewn with round stones, basketball sized and larger rocks full of mollusk shells. These shellfish were evidently buried alive (the stone clams are clamped tightly shut) in a fluid mud deposit. The muds hardened through cementing action, pressure, and drying out and were then broken up, rolled along, and deposited in the present dirt layer. When the river eroded this layer some rocks were left on top and others are still buried.

We launched our boats below a bridge where a road crossed the river. The river varied in width (50-200 feet) with evidence of very high eroding waters at times. There were snags of dead trees across the river with narrow channels to find our way through at places. After traveling a few miles up river we landed our boats along the flat plateau which was the former river bottom. We immediately spread out with hammers and chisels looking for good fossils. The area was thickly strewn with fossil rocks, broken ammonites and other fossils partially exposed in the dirt bottom of varying hardness.

I saw a half exposed side of a large ammonite on the bottom and began cleaning the dirt away around it. After

undercutting the perimeter I could pry it up from the bottom. I got it out of the hole but when I tried to lift it I couldn't get it off the ground. My grandson came along and offered to carry it to the boat. When I got it home and tipped it up on the bathroom scales I understood why. It weighed 130 pounds! About 1/4 of this was rock adhered to the backside of the fossil.

### FOSSIL HUMAN FOOTPRINTS WITH DINOSAURS?

Rivers at various times have exposed fossils as they wash away sedimentary layers. A fossil is anything that is an evidence of past life. So footprints that were made in mud are fossils saying, "I was here!" The Paluxy River in Texas has eroded away a softer layer of sedimentary rock and exposed hundreds of dinosaur footprints. Strong controversy was created between creation and evolutionary scientists when some prints were claimed to be human. A few books were written with pictures and descriptions of these prints.

Evidently groups of dinosaurs walked across an area of freshly laid mud and immediately, before the prints could deteriorate a second flow with less cementing elements covered the tracks. When the river washed out the softer rock the hard footprints were exposed. It is significant that the footprints are generally going in the same direction. The state museum explanation is that the dinosaurs must have been migrating! A more rational, biblical cause is that they were fleeing rising waters.

Because of questions raised about the "human" footprints The Institute of Creation Research removed its book, *Tracking Those Incredible Dinosaurs & the People That Knew Them*, from distribution. There are some giant footprints (15 and 18 inches long) with five nice round toes, but it is also known that local people used to sell carved footprints to tourists. Films for Christ also withdrew *Footprints in Stone* from circulation.

Bible believers know that humans and dinosaurs lived at the same time, not because footprints prove it but because the animals were created with man on day six of creation week (Genesis 1:24-31). In the book of Job, God speaks of two large aquatic creatures "*chief of the ways of God*" named Behemoth and Leviathan. He says,



*A nautilus shell  
showing the chambers*



*"Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee"* (Job 40:15). There were no long, evolutionary ages between!

## THE PEARLY NAUTILUS

The shellfish were created on day five when all the sea creatures were created (Genesis 1: 20-23). *"And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind."* There was no evolving from one kind to another. God wrote the original genetic codes perfect for each one (Psalm 139:16).

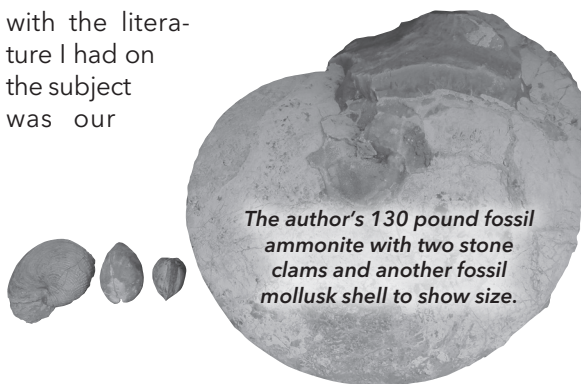
Evolutionists put ammonites over 70 million years ago as an early stage in the upward struggle of life. They propose a geologic column of sedimentary layers with simple sea worms in the bottom to complex mammals on top. This imagined order is not found anywhere in the earth. Three or four layers of rock may be in order but these groupings are rather ecological zones. Organisms that lived together were buried together.

The ammonites from the sea bottom we found were buried with a straight cone shaped variety, various kinds of clams and some curious, single sided, six-inch bivalves where the second shell was a plain closing flap below. At a higher level fish would be buried. Higher up would be the amphibians and reptiles and on top would be the land dwelling mammals. Their bone graveyards are found numerous places on our earth. Few humans would have been buried but fled to the highest hills. There likely was also much raft building in the first weeks of the 40 days of rising waters, but all finally succumbed, washing and rotting away (Genesis 7:23).

Although the ammonites are extinct, the nautilus gives us an idea of what its body looked like. The cephalopods include the squid and octopus. The nautilus has an eye and around 90 short tentacles. As it grows, its coil shell it makes a larger chamber, moves its body ahead and constructs a wall behind it. It may have up to thirty evenly spaced concave walls. A fleshy stalk runs through the chambers by which it controls the fluid and nitrogen gasses in the chambers to float or dive at will. It lives from 30 to 1000 feet deep. Below 2000 feet it is in danger of imploding.

There are also some differences. One rock had the broken off side of an ammonite exposed about 12 inches long revealing the chambers. I could stick my finger into the cells, which had a wavy wall rather than uniform concave divisions like the nautilus. The ammonites were also flattened with a keeled perimeter. Whereas my specimen is 22 inches across it is only

4 inches thick. Something I could not reconcile with the literature I had on the subject was our



*The author's 130 pound fossil ammonite with two stone clams and another fossil mollusk shell to show size.*

large sizes of 20 inches more or less. My fossil books said 2 inches and 6 inches diameter.

Where the body contacts the interior of the shell there is a rainbow coating of nacre (nay' Ker), also called mother of pearl. This is why it is called the pearly nautilus. When I chip off the rock on the backside of my ammonite specimen, it separates at the chalky shell line and this pearl essence can be faintly seen at places. Beauty is another evidence of God and his nature. In the drab utilitarian environment of evolution why should anything be beautiful? Beauty has no survival advantage. Beauty reveals God's good humor and glory.

## THE POEM

Oliver Wendel Holmes found inspiration for life in this "ship of pearl" and wrote "The Chambered Nautilus." He evidently found a broken shell on the seashore exposing the interior. *"Wrecked is the ship of pearl! And every chambered cell... before thee lies revealed."* He notes the creature's persistent growth. *"Year after year beheld the silent toil... He left the past years dwelling for the new... Built up its idle door... and knew the old no more."*

He acknowledges a "heavenly message brought by thee... Through deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings." Mr. Holmes then moralizes, revealing truth in the belief that there is a void in the core of man's being that cannot find rest until he makes his peace with his God.

*Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul, As the swift seasons roll!  
Leave thy low-vaulted past! Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast, till thou at length art free,  
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!*

## THE FAILURE OF SELF IMPROVEMENT

Many people have tried to improve themselves and found it a failure like the apostle Paul. *"For I delight in the Law of God... But I see another law in my members... bringing me into captivity to the law of sin."* He then cries out *"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* (Romans 7:22-24). Paul immediately responds with the answer in chapter eight. *"There is therefore now no condemnation . . . the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death"* (8:1, 2).

God's plan (the only way) for our salvation and a new life in Christ is to be born again (1 Peter 1:18-23), walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-25) and grow in sanctification (1Thessalonians 5:23, 24). This is only possible through the power in the blood of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:7).

A bible analogy of the Christians growth to the progressive growth of the nautilus is Paul's statement, *"This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 3:13,14).

**Resources:** The Bible - God's Word;

XOWA Wikipedia - Chambered Nautilus;

Fossil Collecting in Pennsylvania - Hoskins, Inners and Harper;

Fossils - by Rhodes, Zim and Shaffer - A Golden Guide

Texas Tracks and Artifacts - Helfinstine and Roth;

World Book - Nautilus



# THE CHRISTIAN HOME SERIES

## Where Are the Men?

by Marlin Kreider

*"And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" (Genesis 3:9).* It is very interesting to note that when Adam and Eve sinned and tried to hide (Genesis 3), God first called the man into account for the situation. The New Testament in Ephesians 6:4, addresses the man in relation to home and child training responsibilities. *"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* Also Scriptures such as Ephesians 5:25, Colossians 3:19, and 1 Peter 3:7, call the husband to love his wife and be the leader in his home. But in today's world of twisted values, broken homes, and single parent families, many husbands and fathers are missing from the home unit. So again we ask the question, "Where are the men?"

The Biblical love and leadership role of men is being eroded in our society, and is becoming non-existent in many places. The effects and fruit of this erosion are being felt in the church, home, and nation. There are several foundational issues that have brought us to where we are today. We will look briefly at a few of these contributing factors.

**1. "NEW AGE" HUMANISM AND "THE NEW WORLD ORDER"** are the propelling forces for change these days. Fueled by psychology, Eastern mysticism, and the social media, we are having a cultural and social revolution. God and Biblical truth with its moral absolutes are being discarded by many. Self-love and the deification of man (the god within you) with its "new" morality are in vogue. But, let it be known, that the so-called "new" morality is simply the old immorality. Satan, sin, and the fallen world have an array of enticements to offer that are almost as old as time itself.

All they can do is take the old sin and rebellion against God and market it in a new, more exciting and deceptive package. The wise and godly have always said a clear, firm, "No" to the whole package!

All the other issues we address in this article have their roots in this anti-God, antichrist system. This system will eventually be destroyed by the one true, righteous, and eternal God who will have the last word.

**2. THE PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM** has been at the center of this social, political, and religious revolution. The Bible and prayer have been replaced with godless evolution and humanistic social permissiveness. Computerized hi-tech methods are replacing the time-proven three Rs of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Via the screen, legible cursive handwriting, along with capitalization, punctuation, and good sentence structure are being lost. With computers, who needs to memorize the basic math facts? With this addiction to the screen, we are raising a generation that cannot read or write properly, nor have they enough math skills to count change at the cash register. The Bible is true when it says in Romans 1:22, *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."*

**The world never has fully recovered from the hippie rebellion of the 1960s.**



Today, with many homes failing and disintegrating, public education is trying to fill in some of the missing ingredients. However, the schools have usurped the home's authority and responsibility by teaching sex education. The illegitimacy of the entire effort is evident, when they then follow up providing birth control, in an effort to avoid the consequences of permissive behavior. And if that is not enough to wake us up? Then the same-sex marriage and trans-gender error should arouse us to what is happening. In some places, children are now being taught that they can choose whether they want to be a boy or a girl. What foolishness this is! This is called the "dumbing down" of society and its social structure. We are in a decadent, falling culture. This is why God-fearing parents choose to send their children to a Christian school or to home school. We encourage these options.

### **3. THE "WOMEN'S LIBERATION" MOVEMENT**

is also a very subtle force in undermining the God-ordained roles for men and women. In all of the philosophies of humanism there are lies, hypocrisies, and intimidations at work. Women's lib is no exception. For example, by what we observe and hear, does it not appear that the battle between the sexes may be more about supremacy than equality? However, God, who made everything good, never intended for this conflict between the genders. Men and women were created equal in value. They are also given equal privileges in salvation. However, God created male and female distinctly different to fill two beautifully different roles. His design is not that the genders compete, but rather complement each other, especially in marriage and the home unit. This will provide structure, order, stability, and security for the human race from generation to generation.

Not all will or must marry. There are valuable places for singles to fill in God's work. In the course of life's events, there are widows and widowers. God is able to meet all our needs. The Bible teaches, and true Christianity believes, that marriage is one man and one woman till death parts. Also, true Christianity elevates the woman to her God-given place of respect, honor, and fulfillment far better than anything human philosophy can manufacture. A return to God's plan would remedy many of society's ills, including returning men and women to their God-ordained roles.

### **4. THE DRESS AND UNDRRESS OF OUR DAY**

is also contributing to the moral decay and the downfall of the male love-and-leadership role model. We must speak forthrightly to this issue.

How sinful and wicked is the public display of the human body by both men and women. Preachers and churches who will not take a stand and require a modest dress code have apostatized, and are contributing to the moral mess our world is in. We all know that a man is attracted to the feminine figure. God made it that way for good and holy purposes in marriage. Satan and the fallen world of fashion for money, lust, and carnal pleasure, have taken the high and noble down into the deepest ditches of wickedness. Widespread pornography, infidelity, incest, human trafficking, and the rape and murder of children are a few of the awful curses of our moral bankruptcy.

There is an epidemic of sexual harassment charges. No doubt some of them are legitimate. But may I ask everyone who feels you have been violated, "Has your conduct, your dress, and your body language been exemplary, as one that promotes godliness and moral purity?" If your body is on display, then you are as guilty of sin as the person who made improper advances. Men and women both need to take responsibility, if we will solve our problems. And parents, please clothe your young boys and girls, teaching the values of virginity and moral purity. Some things must change if we are to stop this downward spiral to judgment. History, both Biblical and secular, record the demise of other great societies because of their moral degeneracy. Unless there is repentance and change, our society will be no exception.

### **5. REBELLION AGAINST GOD-DELEGATED AUTHORITY ABOUNDS.**

The world never has fully recovered from the "hippie" rebellion of the 1960s. However, it is greatly accelerating in these last days. The Bible says that it will be this way. It is the spirit of this age. Read Scriptures such as Romans 1:18-32 and 2 Timothy 3:1-7. Rebellion can be either subtle or open and blatant. Even conservative Christian circles are not exempt from these pressures. There is a growing disregard for the father in the home, the preacher in the church, and the President or the policeman in the nation. All norms (standards) are being challenged, with a clamor for change. The news and social media are helping to fuel the fire. That is why God-fearing Christians choose to limit their exposure to these influences.

Many authority figures are growing weary in the battle. Some are capitulating and quitting. We need a spiritual and moral revival of church, home, and nation!

Where are the men? Can God count on you?



# THE WORLD TODAY

## The Christian and Political Action

by Roger L Berry

In 1982, a Protestant minister became dictator of Catholic Guatemala. Human rights abuses abounded during his stormy rule. In the United States, in the late 1900s, liberal religious leaders became involved in politics and later conservative evangelicals. Some politicians have courted the evangelical vote, claiming that they were born again. Is political action God's will for His people now in the 21st century or any time in history, for that matter?

Consider the "political" implications of 1 Timothy 2:1-4:

*"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."*

### THE FIRST CENTURY WORLD

Paul wrote this message to Timothy around the time of the Roman emperor, Nero. Nero unleashed intense persecution of Christians. Seldom in history since have rulers been so despotic. Yet Paul charged Christians to be respectful toward rulers and pray for them. This passage challenges Christians today to do the same, whatever the form of government—democracy, dictatorship, monarchy, or even communist.

### WHY PRAY

This passage tells us why Christians need to pray for kings, presidents, indeed all who are in authority, so that Christians may lead quiet lives, at peace with the authorities. What a practical concept for our own day! In 2 Timothy 2 the Bible gives us three reasons for living peacefully in any society: To live godly and holy lives. To bring unbelievers to the knowledge of the truth. To please God.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Obviously it is sometimes God's will for Christians to suffer persecution. The Scriptures say without equivocation: *"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution"* (2 Timothy 3:12). Persecution is not to be desired or sought after by the Christian, but it is an unpleasant reality. However, Christians are

to live godly and upright lives so they do not deserve persecution by the authorities. History suggests that Nero drummed up false charges that led to the unprecedented persecution of first-century Christians.

The Book of 1 Peter further describes the Christian's place and responsibility in society, even a persecuting society:

*"Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing. Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator"* (1 Peter 2:12, 15; 3:17; 4:19).

### GOD'S WAY TO CHANGE SOCIETY

Today many professing Christians are entering politics, convinced that they must help God change corrupt society. But prayer is a far greater force, and it is God's will for the Christian. Christians who get involved in politics must realize that they are attempting to usurp God's authority and prerogative when they seek to influence the state by political means. The Christian call is to put the Gospel first, sharing with the entire world what Jesus Christ can do to change their lives. Prayer for leaders, whether despots or democrats, is the Christian's God-ordained responsibility. Prayer must be followed up by godly living and faithful testimony to the transforming power of the teachings of Christ. Prayer and a godly life is the Christian's most powerful influence.

### THE CHRISTIAN'S MISSION

Repeatedly, attempts to Christianize society by political action have failed. The temperance movement and prohibition in the early 1900s illustrated the point. Prohibition laws did not change people's hearts—they would get strong drink any way they could. Sunday laws did not keep people who wanted to work on Sunday from doing so. This does not mean that government should not have laws for the order of society such as laws against theft and murder. But even those laws do not, in themselves, clean up lives. The Bible em-

phasizes that murder, adultery, and other sins begin in the heart. That is where Christians work at change.

I am convinced that the Christian can do the most good in society fulfilling the New Testament mandate to live an exemplary Christian life and to evangelize those around him. On a one-to-one basis, we can make a difference in our world as peoples' lives are changed. The destiny of the world rests not in "Christian" political action but in God's will. The Bible makes it clear that God is in control of the affairs of men, setting up whom He will. *"The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men"* (Daniel 4:17).

The Christian has a spiritual mission in the world—a mission that can and does bring change to men's hearts. May faithful Christians everywhere be stirred to action through prayer, consistent living, and telling the world about Jesus Christ.

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## Find Deliverance

### OPEN YOUR EYES . . .

Wickedness and sin are on the increase!

*"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away"* (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

### OPEN YOUR BIBLE . . .

Many claim to believe in God, but never read what God has said.

*"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes"* (Psalm 19:7, 8).

*"The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart"* (Hebrews 4:12).

### OPEN YOUR HEART . . .

To the transforming work of Christ!

*"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me"* (Revelation 3:20).

*"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"* (2 Corinthians 5:17).

### OPEN YOUR LIFE . . .

*Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord"* (Romans 6:11).

*Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly"* (John 10:10).



