

Post Christian Christianity

Believers are upset because America is now said to be a “Post-Christian nation.” This is bad enough, but far worse are the indications we are living in the era of Post-Christian Christianity.

General William Booth foresaw the day in which we live. He said, “I consider that the chief dangers which confront the coming century will be religion without the Holy Ghost, Christianity without Christ, forgiveness without repentance, salvation without regeneration, politics without God, and heaven without hell.”

I believe it was A. T. Pierson who said, “The church is standing in the world bearing witness to Christ when it should be standing ‘in Christ’ bearing witness to the world.” Herein lies the heart of the problem: our center is in the world instead of in Christ.

Throughout the Scriptures, we find the “world” system presented as hostile to God’s people. The world is:

- The enemy of God – James 4:4
- Something to keep unspotted from – James 1:27
- The satanic “course” unsaved people live in – Eph. 2:2
- The reason Demas forsook the faith – 2 Tim.4:10
- Corrupted by lust – 2 Pet. 1:4
- Polluted – 2 Peter 2:20
- Something to be repudiated – I John 2:15
- Not of the Father – I John 2:16
- Something to overcome, not imitate – 1 John 5:4
- “Crucified unto me” – Galatians 6:14

The spirit of the age (world) is incompatible with the holiness of God. Today we are told we must adapt and become *all things to all men* in order to “reach people.” If you go far enough in becoming “all things to all men” you end up being nothing to God! (You don’t need to dress like a transvestite to reach transvestites.) “In the world, but not of the world,” is far more than a catchy phrase. Our bodies may be located here on earth, but God’s people are not centered in the world. The *narrow way* calls for holy (separated) living, and to repudiate virtue is to take sides against God.

Much of the “innovation” popular within the church growth movement could be categorized as “earthly, sensual, devilish.” One of the problems with this “cleverness cult” is its readiness to bend the Bible around the culture instead of bending the culture to

fit the Bible. Auditoriums can be filled with warm bodies without the Holy Ghost. After hearing a church growth expert, my friend approached the speaker and commented, “I believe I could pray about it and your program would work.” The expert assertively replied, “It will work whether you pray about it or not.” Consider this—guaranteed results without God!

A local newspaper carried a feature article titled “Saturday Night Live.” The story was about one church’s attempt to connect with our culture. The youth pastor’s wife dressed up like Marilyn Monroe and entertained the crowd. Think of it, imitating a harlot in the name of evangelism!

Countless youth ministries now model their services after the MTV format. Can you imagine the Apostle Paul using the most defiant, degenerate, defiling, and decadent role models in his heathen culture as the hook with which to “reach people” with the gospel?! It appears the goal is no longer to reconcile the world to God, but to reconcile God to the world.

Liberal methods are the forerunner of a liberal message. It seems the militant evangelicals can tolerate just about anything except fixed principles rooted in the holy nature of God and His Word. A pastor was working with two Bible School graduates who had “shacked up.” Lovingly, he along with the parents, were reasoning with the couple and encouraging them to obey the Scriptures. The young man and woman went down the street to a contemporary church which sanctioned their sin with silence and complete acceptance (no repentance required). Mind you, these were not unchurched people who knew no better; they were Bible College graduates living in sin.

Scores who have rejected a harsh legalism have now embraced a broad libertinism. If your “grace awakening” leads you to justify sin, do not doubt your “awakening” is in reality a “disgrace” which has nothing to do with God’s grace. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, *denying ungodliness and worldly lusts*, we should *live* soberly, righteously, and *godly, in this present world*” (Titus 2:11-12).

Henry Van Til said, “Culture is religion externalized.” American culture is the collective outworking of what Americans believe about God. When it comes to the Christian community, popular “Christian culture” is the consequence of the commonly held view of God.

We used to sing *Take the world but give me Jesus*. But Post-Christian Christianity offers people “Jesus,” and the world to boot! This “new Jesus” will accommodate Himself to just about anything in order to win approval and acceptance. One man in a high profile ministry told me that a prostitute could be saved without changing her profession! This type of sheer nonsense is more common than most Christians realize.

The question today is not “WWJD—What Would Jesus Do?” The issue is “WDJD—What *Did* Jesus Do?” Scores are mining the Bible for moralisms (how to live) while failing to proclaim Christ’s finished work on the cross. Gimmicks and cleverness are not a substitute for the gospel. Sadly, the gospel is rarely presented well enough to be rejected. The gospel is Christ died for our sins, was buried, rose again, and was seen by hundreds of people. He gave His life to pay our debt of sin in order that we might receive His righteousness.

On one hand we find a progressive Christianity which puts no difference between the sacred and the profane. On the other hand, we observe a traditional Christianity which adheres to a “form of godliness,” but lacks the power of God’s manifest presence. NEITHER ACCURATELY REPRESENTS GOD! Separation without Holy Spirit saturation draws no one into the Kingdom.

Spurgeon in his day said, “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.” Later, James Stewart wrote, “In the study of church history we find that the pilgrim church never had so much power over the world as when she had nothing to do with it!”

A genuine revival might well bring a measure of sanity to the moral madness to some on the religious left and without question would rain down an unearthly power in the spiritual graveyards of American churches. The New Testament standard is only possible by the dynamite energy of the Spirit. I, for one, am hungering for a mighty outpouring of mercy, love, and power from above.

Our country may be in a post-Christian era, but take heart: “Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world!” Darkness may currently dominate a large portion of the spiritual landscape; however, any Christian can experience a flood of light in his own soul. Your spiritual environment exists with your permission. The apostasy may surround us, but it has no place in us. We should be like Caleb whose body was in the wilderness, but his heart was in the Promised Land.

Are you standing “in Christ” bearing witness to the world, or standing in the world trying to bear witness to Christ? Centered in Christ, we can anticipate everything that pertains *to life and godliness*. May the glory return and usher in a tidal wave of “Christian Christianity.”

Harold Vaughan

HOME