

# Christ

*Life*

MINISTRIES

REPORT

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## The Sensual Revolution

*The Transforming of American Christianity*

In order to comprehend the times in which one lives, one must have some understanding of history. Our nation's present state is the result of our past. We are what we are because of the things that preceded current conditions. It is the beliefs and ideas of those who have gone before us that have shaped the present environment. Ideas have consequences.

The prevailing worldview of pre-1940 America could never have spawned the Rock Culture. An entirely new paradigm was necessary for this sub-culture to be born. The bedrock of our heritage, its absolutes and assumptions, had to be overthrown before the new order could take root. The conventions and moral consensus our forefathers established were attacked, demolished, and set aside.

Here is a possible explanation for our societal deterioration. Jamestown was settled in 1607 by 105 people – all of them were men. From the founding of our country to 1840 men were viewed as the providers, protectors, and leaders in society. The Industrial Revolution took the self-reliant men of the agrarian period, and moved them into cities. Having been displaced

from the home by virtue of their work, the influence of men began to diminish. Women began to be dominant in the home, church, and education. W.W.II took multitudes of men out of the country. Many were killed and a lot of those who came back never "came home." Their interest, time, and energy went into careers, sports, and hobbies. The foundation of male leadership had eroded to the point where the country was ripe for a revolution.

Standards of decency and propriety were swept away as the principle of authority faded. The appointed guardian, guide, and governor of the home had effectively gone AWOL. Men had left the home and the women followed. The stage had been set for sweeping changes. Parents handed their children off to the state to educate. The television became the nation's babysitter. The old order had been displaced.

Greg Harris notes three elements that were necessary to spawn the Youth Culture. First, there were long hours of age-segregated interaction where students pooled their ignorance and set their own standards in every area of life. Second, there was an indulgent media that refused to issue a call to a

higher standard. The media simply gave them what they already wanted. Third, there were unprincipled men who were willing to merchandize and commercialize products only a fool would buy. There were many contributing factors which totally transformed family life in America, and one of the main elements was birth of the Youth Culture.

Divorce, illegitimacy, sexual sin of all kinds, delinquency, drug addiction, and a host of other sins exploded and soon became the norm in the world. There was a time, in the not too distant past, when these things were the exception, not the rule. Of course these sins were not new, but the mushrooming volume was entirely new. So the question comes, what brought about the rapid changes in our civilization?

Rebellion, moral relativism (immorality), hedonism, narcissism, and the abandonment of restraint are the foundation stones of the Rock Culture which has forever changed the moral landscape of our nation. The Rock Culture is far more than music: it is a worldview, a way of seeing, a way of being, a philosophy of life.



## Personal Word

Revival always magnifies God in the hearts and minds of those who are affected by it. True revival also produces holiness of life in those who are revived.

G. Campbell Morgan said, "Sometimes we fight the battles of heaven with the spirit of hell." This is not my purpose here. I am well aware of the differences of opinion that people have, but the stakes are too high to sit on the sidelines.

Direction will determine destination. You can miss a hundred particulars, but you can never come out at the right place if the direction is wrong.

God's character and Biblical principles are the plumb line by which all things must be judged. Our sensual culture has been weighed in the balance and found wanting!

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## The Sensual Revolution continued from Page 1

### The Revolution Continues

It was the Rock Culture which gave birth to the Sexual Revolution of the sixties. Consequently, the mores of our society were drastically changed. Man came to be viewed primarily as a glandular being. Sex was considered amoral – not to be judged by principles of morality. In the Hippy movement we saw children from the best families model themselves after the dregs of society in speech, dress, and behavior.

What happened in the world at large forty years ago is now happening in the church in particular. We are now in the midst of the Sensual Revolution in American Christianity. The violence, vulgarity, impropriety, and sheer anarchy in the "Christian" Moshe pit would have been unthinkable in a more sane age. Is it possible that those who attempt to reconcile Christianity with the lewd, crude, partially nude, defiant head bangers have adopted the same worldview and values (or lack thereof) that gave birth to the modern Youth Culture?

Things have changed. No longer is the goal to reconcile the world to God. The religious marketers have attempted to reconcile God to the world. Just about anything is justified if it attracts a crowd. The problem is not so much that people come as they are; the problem is when they leave like they came!

You cannot co-opt an immoral culture without being corrupted. Henry Van Til said that culture is religion externalized. In other words, culture is the overflow of what people believe. Christianity has always been countercultural in the sense that it cannot adapt itself to anything which opposes God's character and Word. Those who parallel an immoral culture are contradicting Christ.

The sensual revolution will change the face of Christianity as we know it. The moral world in which self-restraint was a virtue has been replaced with the psychological world, where the new virtue is self-gratification. Phillip Rieff said, "Religious man was born to be saved, but psychological man was born to be pleased."

A diminished concept of God has produced a diminished concept of sin, as well as salvation. Atonement is no longer the premier need, but some psychological technique. The problem here is a person's felt needs may not be his real need. Before you take a dip in Willow Creek, you had better find out what is in the water.

### The New Legalism

The engineers of the sensual revolution have been quick to brand as a legalist anyone who has principled reasons and convictions that determine appropriate behavior. Have the modern "apostles of grace" actually distorted the grace of God? Many of these proponents of "grace" are adamant in their belief that only those things that are expressly forbidden in the New Testament are sin. For example, the New Testament states, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth." However, it does not categorically state, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your ballpoint pen." Since the writing of corrupt communication is not strictly forbidden in the New Testament, are we then to understand that this practice is within the bounds of grace? Nowhere in the New Testament does it say, "Let no corrupt communication appear on your T-shirt." Neither does it say, "Let no corrupt communication be seen on the tattoo which appears on your bicep." Since these things are

not mentioned, are we to conclude that these are compatible with grace? What about bestiality, as well as a hundred other vices? Are these things allowable since they are not referenced by name in the New Testament? This “letter of the law” approach not only misses the spirit and intent of the Scripture, it virtually outlaws application of Scriptural principles.

Old school legalists adamantly imposed their extra-biblical preferences as absolutes. If these were guilty of adding *to* the Scripture, are not the new schooler’s guilty of taking away *from* Scripture? The new legalists are equally rigid, not in their desire to impose rules, but in their determination to collapse existing standards.

What we desperately need are principled reasons, based upon God’s Holy character and Holy Word, to shine light on the dimly lit path. These must guide our practice, not the surrounding culture.

## Against the Tide

The children of Issachar *not only* understood their times, they knew what Israel ought to do. The primary problem we are facing is not a post-Christian America, but a post-Christian Christianity! Another “clean-up” America campaign is not the answer. Boycotts, letter writing crusades, and the like will do no more to stem the tide of corruption than they have in the past. It is significant that Christians have lost on every moral issue for the last four decades.

The gravity, sober-mindedness, and devotion that once characterized believers have been relegated to the past. Let’s face it; the world has had a far greater impact on us than we have had on the world. There is more divorce in the “church-going” South than in the Catholic Northeast. Across the board, more church people get divorced than non-churched people. I heard that 42% of Christian young people watch MTV. In

just about any category, the sin among professing Christians parallels the world. How can preachers and churches speak with moral authority when they have willfully compromised their own morality?

God faulted His people when they profaned (made common) the Holiness of God. They put no difference between the holy and the profane. Every time Israel imitated the world they lost out with God. Speaking of His people God says they “were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works” (Ps.106:35). The imitation of every worldly genre will never produce a holy people. Identification with rebellion and blasphemy through immodesty and irreverence is not a crime, as is stealing, but it defies the redemptive message of the Gospel.

What we are facing today is not new. Psalm 106:39 says, “Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions.” Our generation has lost its mind, that is, its biblical mind. “Christians” today are rationalizing the irrational, defending the indefensible, and justifying the unjustifiable. The repudiation of Bible holiness is a personal assault on God and will never produce anything except apostasy. The scandal of the evangelical mind is its inability to discriminate and think categorically. This “embrace all,” inclusivistic mentality is not a biblical mind.

The old *liberals* preached a “social gospel” which was no gospel at all. Now the *conservatives* are embracing the “sensual gospel” which in time is sure to overthrow the true gospel. Martyn Lloyd-Jones said, “The glory of the gospel is that when the church is absolutely different from the world she invariably attracts it.” Moreover, our purpose is not merely to *attract* the world; we are the channels God wants to use to *attach* the lost to Himself through radical conversion.

For the record, I grew up in a liberal church where the youth group sponsored dances, held séances, watched Jesus Christ Superstar, and dialogued about opposing moral viewpoints. I have seen first-hand where this sort of activity leads, and frankly, I am not interested in returning to Egypt.

When a child is vaccinated, he is given a diluted form of the virus which prevents him from getting the disease. Could it be the sensual gospel is a diluted gospel, which just might insure that those who are immunized by it never get the real thing?

The “new paradigm” churches are stripping themselves of the answers to modern life by reducing themselves to an echoing of modern life. Mimicking the rhythms of an immoral culture is not our calling. Rather, we must provide an alternative to a culture which has lost its moorings. Sooner or later the sensual revolution will be seen as the hollow charade, the empty mirage that it is. A “Christianity” which adapts itself to the culture to win a hearing will eventually have nothing to say. Conservative theology without accompanying practice is “functional liberalism.”

The erosion of theological character is, in fact, a worldliness that carries profound consequences. David Wells said, “Worldliness is that system of values, in any given age, which has at its center our fallen human perspective, which displaces God and His truth from the world, and which makes sin look normal and righteousness seem strange.” When churches and those who attend them are qualitatively no different from the pagan culture, it indicates conformity to the world and the lack of a renewed, transformed mind (Romans 12:1-2).

The saintly J.C. Ryle summarized it well: “We must dare to be peculiar.”

– Harold Vaughan

# Revival and Evangelistic Fires at MPA

Men came from as far as California to the Men's Prayer Advance, January 29-31. Larry Sauvageot from the Midwest and Jackie Hughes from Ireland brought convicting messages to our souls. A dominant theme that emerged was the desperate need to evangelize. Praise God for men who still preach with fire in their hearts! A flow of good reports have come in from different quarters of how men, homes, and churches were impacted because of the Advance. **GLORY!!!**



Rockbridge Alum Springs Campus, Goshen VA



Men's Prayer Advance

The Men's Advance for 2005 is planned January 27-29. Plan NOW to be a part!

## Ladies' Prayer Advance Blessing

What a time we had March 18-20 at the beautiful Rock Alum Springs Conference Center near Lexington, VA. God powerfully used Pastor Mike



The ladies' prayer time before each session

Aylestock and Carol Trahan to bring the Word of God home to the hearts of those in attendance. The spiritual atmosphere of the meetings was fantastic. Victories were won and several came to Christ for salvation!



Speaker Carol Trahan

The ladies loved the new facility and plans are to return there again next year. Sue Hermes, a converted nun, is scheduled to speak March 17-19, 2005. Her life message speaks deeply as she ministers.

## Web Update

Read Harold's analysis of the Super Bowl fiasco and the Gay Marriage issue. Go to our website [www.christlifemin.org](http://www.christlifemin.org), click on Special Articles at the bottom of the homepage, and select the article.

# Building Young People for Eternity at the Youth Prayer Advances!

In surveying “youth ministries” today, there are hundreds of opportunities for entertainment, recreation, and countless other activities. However, there are very few events geared to minister to young people with a heart for God.

Instead of continuing to “dumb down” the gospel, we desperately need to recover a biblical standard. It’s high time to raise our expectations concerning Christian young people! Let’s be done with modeling youth ministry after pop culture. Instead, why not adopt the demands of discipleship that Christ Himself laid down? Pastors, youth leaders, and parents are all encouraged to bring teachable young people.

We will be back at Camp Blue Ridge under the Big Tent for the annual YPA in Montebello, VA. This Advance will be held August 5-7.

The YPA SOUTH will be held August 12-14 at Ambassador Baptist College in Lattimore, N.C.

*Brochures for both Advances are available from our office (540) 890-6100 or online at [www.christlifemin.org](http://www.christlifemin.org).*

## Office Building Update

By the time you receive this newsletter we will be in our new building. Thanks to all who have supported this ministry and helped make this possible.



New Christ Life Ministries Office Building



Youth Prayer Advance at Camp Blue Ridge, VA



Youth Prayer Advance South at Ambassador Baptist College, NC



New Office work space



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# *Spiritual* **LIFE** **Crusade**

**May 3**

Colonial Baptist Church  
Pastor's Conference

**May 9-12**

Victory Baptist Church  
Rossville, GA

**May 23-26**

Friendship Baptist Church  
N. Huntingdon, PA

**June 4-13**

Ireland

**August 5-7**

Youth Prayer Advance Virginia

**August 12-14**

Youth Prayer Advance South

## **2005 Advance Schedule**

Men's Prayer Advance  
January 27-29

Ladies' Prayer Advance  
March 17-19

Youth Prayer Advance  
August 4-6

Youth Prayer Advance South  
August 11-13

Couples' Advance, October  
Williamsburg, VA

Contact us for brochures or

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