

STRAIGHTWAY

“And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.” (Mark 1:18)

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“How Should We Then Live” In the Days of the Demise of Honorable Culture?

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Straightway, August–October 2017 (Updated)

Cultural revolutions have been great and accelerating influences upon humanity especially in the last one hundred years. What is a cultural revolution? How does it sweep over a society, nationally and internationally? Unfolding the breadth of this term will help to understand its far-reaching magnitude upon global societies. A cultural revolution often embodies the desires and ambitions of what a man or group of men see for the future of humanity.

The Concept of Culture

Several cultural revolutions have occurred over the past millennia that have paved the way for a final End-time culture. To what degree we will witness their influences upon the future culture will depend upon what God permits man to achieve with his End-time city-concept of Babylon, or to what height God will permit man to build his final Babel tower up to heaven. The Christian must always remember that God is fully in control of every aspect of history, including to

what degree man’s decisions will be manifested and fulfilled.

In his detailed description of the End-time apostasy (2 Timothy 3), the apostle Paul eventually speaks of the depth of man’s sin and darkness: “But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men.” This perspective will also be true even in the depth of the workings of Antichrist when he makes his appearance in history. The prophet Daniel clearly reveals that only a certain amount of time will be given to this Man of Sin and his controlling power over the world, a mere three and one-half years. The need for this providential restraint by God is not that mankind will overthrow God; God knows that if mankind continues in his dark manifestation of depravity, he will destroy himself, all of humanity, and everything on the planet. We must remember that the end of sin is death, destruction, and ultimately suicide. Death resides at the very core of sin. Sin innately is self-destructive. Its very nature is suicidal. It destroys any form

of life!

Just what is culture? Perhaps all of the potential of what man wants to accomplish, either for God or away from God, to honor God or to commit acts of hatred against God, falls under the term *culture*.

We must carefully note in this introduction the various contexts and social sciences of this word *culture*. Yet, what would happen if all of these contexts and social sciences converged into a singular, orchestrated, demonically-energized hope in defiance of God? Would all of this empowered culture enable man with powers and abilities to bring himself beyond what God intended for him to be?

Our tendency is to think of culture in the context of the “fineness of feelings, thoughts, tastes, and our manner of living.” Such culture is manifested in our dress, art, poetry, music, and ar-

chitecture including the décor of our buildings. In the outworking of man’s feelings, thoughts, tastes, and manner of living, the inherent principle of sin tends to bring man to wretchedness. In contrast, the grace of God brings man’s natural living to dignity, respectability, and nobility.

Cultural Revolutions

We must candidly acknowledge cultural revolutions that ideologically have had a profound effect on the rising End-time civilization’s culture. One such global revolution came through the communist planners Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, and Vladimir Lenin. This revolution enabled communism to control over half the world at its height of influence. Apart from religious reformers throughout history (such as Martin Luther), Karl Marx (1818–1883) had one of the most influential impacts politically and socially on the doctrinal teaching of world culture. There is no parallel in the whole history of philosophy. His teachings directly affected the mind of the masses of working people in various nations, not only by appealing to their material interests but even more so by a confidence in the falsifying of truth in his statements, writings, and predictions. Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), an intimate friend, collaborator, and supporter of Marx, remained in the background but provided money, encouragement, and innumerable services to Marx and his communist endeavors. Lenin helped seize political

STRAIGHTWAY

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power during the Bolshevik Revolution (1917).

Without Lenin, Marxist socialism in its rigid shape would not have been established and maintained as the exclusively ruling creed in Russia. He truly was the greatest thinker of the Russian revolution. But in general ideas, he depended upon Marx. According to Lenin, Marx had sufficiently explained the world and left to Lenin the task of changing this world. Yes, communism and socialism truly were cultural revolutions at the turn of the twentieth century. They affected every aspect of life, from economy, productivity, business, lifestyle, allegiance, collectivism, and an ideal for the perfect life without God.

There was also the revolution of Mao Zedong following the rise of communism in China. Mao believed the elitist in leadership were leaving the communist revolution that came to China in 1949. Therefore, he started the Cultural Revolution in 1966 to bring the country back to the revolution's purpose. Over 30 million Chinese were put to death in this atheistic revolution.

The Culture Revolution Within Western Civilization

How has the culture of Western civilization changed over the past sixty to seventy years, especially on a global perspective? Although a number of national events have affected national cultures over the centuries, perhaps the rock-n-roll group called *The Beatles*

will go down in history for bringing about a cultural revolution throughout an entire civilization. This will be especially noted in the subtle influence of one member of the group, John Lennon. This cultural revolution took place in the late 1960s, and in the ensuing years Western civilization began radically changing in its outward manifestation of living to a lower level of thinking, dressing, working, and the very living of life itself.

America has seen a number of cultural revolutions in the past fifty years that must be acknowledged; they have been silent cultural revolutions that have subtly and secretly swelled in massive takeovers in our nation and throughout Europe. This cultural revolution has included an abundance of all types of drugs upon humanity. The cultural revolution of sodomy in all of its multi-shades of strangeness has now legalized same-gender marriages. Just nine years ago only 39 percent of America tolerated sodomy; today, the Gallop poll estimates 60 percent tolerate sodomy. We have seen its progressive stages from toleration, to permissibility, and now to open promotion in all of the public arenas of human living. The bombardment of the media to educate America in this wicked, obsessive, strange sin has now convinced 51 percent of Americans to believe that such people are born genetically with this proclivity.

In 2002, 41 percent of Americans believed that to have a child out of wedlock was morally acceptable. Today it

is 61 percent. If you are a baker in America, you can refuse to cater a sodomite wedding for any reason, such as “I am too busy,” or “I will be taking several days off at the time you need the cake,” etc.—for any reason, except using the words, “I don’t approve of such a marriage.” If you declare you are against this lifestyle, you will not only be vilified, but you will also be bankrupted through mounting court costs and fines of discrimination. America has come to believe we must not judge others for anything, even if what they are doing is destructive. This pervasive cultural revolution around the world is eclectically breaking down the distinctions of races, religions, nations, philosophies, and even realms of logic.

There are those who are pressing to mongrelize all of the nations in order to destroy patriotism and allegiance within any nationality or culture. The elite controlling philosophers of the world will even use allegiance to a culture or race in order to ultimately destroy all allegiances. They are methodically chiseling away against one race or one culture by the use of all the other cultures. This is done by turning one culture against another and then another until they are all destroyed. Cultural revolutions take place to destroy cultures and every facet or con-

cept identified with them.

The Future of Man’s Culture

The philosophical leaders of the world and their billionaire cohorts have come to mutually believe (amidst all of the cultural revolutions that have taken place in the various arenas of science, technology, medicine, etc.) that there must be a final cultural revolution with the superlative intent of the final overthrow of God on this planet.

This postmodern global environment that has done away with all concepts of right and wrong and the questioning of ethics is now desiring to place man in a position where he is able to do anything without being questioned or

It is not transhumanism that we need! We need a transformation and a transfiguration of life in *Christ*, and to become continually conformed to His image! This is the only hope for man!

judged morally. Their self-rationalization of the universe and the world around them has created a moral relativism. The global presupposition of man’s full autonomy has now opened a whole new world where man becomes his own God.

Science and technology are aggressively pressing themselves into every field of epistemology with the intent to mutually come to an hour when they can collaborate all of the human accomplishments into a final frontier that will declare them to be God—in their thinking. The global elite believe

they are now ready to create the future of what man is to be.

The sins of mankind that pervade every aspect of humanity are now screaming for another cultural revolution of humanity itself to be brought forth “in the image and likeness of man.” This cultural revolution is to speed up the evolutionary process of man and bring him to a perfection never known before. This is to be a disease-free perfection of the body, of a non-demented mind, of a charismatic personality, of a gender-less or bi-gender entity, and a life that can never die. All of this is to be performed without God and without the redemption of God.

Such a humanistic, secularistic hope in more recent years has brought an escalating rise of many movements, including the 2045 Initiative, founded in 2011 by Russian entrepreneur Dmitry Itskov. This atheistic Russian multi-billionaire initially sought to bring together Russian specialists to create artificial organs and systems for the human body including the adaptation of “neural interfaces and robotics.” But this initiative has now become a global network of researchers in the field of what is being called *life extension* and *Evolutionary Transhumanism*.

The main goal of the 2045 Initiative is presented on their website:

To create technologies enabling the transfer of an individual’s personality to a more advanced non-biological carrier, and extending

life, including to the point of immortality. We devote particular attention to enabling the fullest possible dialogue between the world’s major spiritual traditions, science and society.

In his opening speech at the 2013 Global Future 2045 International Congress, Itskov stated the following:

We, the team of the 2045 Initiative, have a special name for this strategy: We call it Evolutionary Transhumanism. In realizing this Evolutionary Transhumanism, we need to create and carry out two revolutions. Firstly, a spiritual revolution, we need this to make sure that people will benefit from the technologies, and that we raise the level of public consciousness, to be safe with the kind of technology that we hope to develop. The other revolution is techno-scientific, and the aim of it is to develop the means of transferring one’s personality/one’s consciousness to a non-protein, more capable body carrier.

People call me a dreamer, and even some colleagues of mine call me a dreamer, but this dream, this huge future that we are going to create, I think it is worth dreaming of, because in this future people will be young, beautiful, they will not suffer from illnesses and diseases. They will have multiple bodies, not just one. The biological body will be able to live on earth and the non-biological body will be able to travel the cosmos. In the hologram-like body, people can

stay in places where you cannot stay in the physical body.

This kind of body will probably be *radiant*, as the Russian scientist Tsiolkovsky called it. He was known to probably have a similar dream, because he wanted humanity to be transformed to a kind of radiant humanity, which will not be even material, but a sort of energy.

Itskov continued:

In this world of the future there will be no diseases, no death, no hunger, no wars, no tensions between nations, and on the contrary, there will be abundance, freedom, creativity, and everyone will be concentrating on spiritual self-improvement, I believe. Scientists are very rational and they don't actually like talking about dreams, they prefer to deliver, and not to overpromise from the very beginning. But what I want to emphasize is that this dream helps the speculation that we have in the project, and can actually drive the science. Throughout the whole history of humanity, curiosity and the thirst for new discoveries have actually driven science and encouraged science. So obviously, what we are going to develop through the realization of the Avatar project is not speculation at all. It is realistic and I hope the Congress will show that we have enough ground to claim that it is realistic.

The Avatar World: Man's Hopeful Cultural Future

But how is this cybernetic immortality going to be the answer for evolutionary transhumanism? There is a great race in a number of countries to perfect the computerized world of avatars. The term *avatar* appeared early in Hindu religion designating the incarnation of a Hindu deity, or an incarnation in human form. Today it has become a term for an electronic image "that represents and is manipulated by a computer user in a virtual space (as in a computer game) and that interacts with other objects in the space." (Merriam Webster)

On May 27, 2017, Walt Disney World Resort in Florida opened to the public "Pandora: The World of Avatar." In seeking to create an entertainment park based on James Cameron's film *Avatar*, Disney has pushed this concept into family acceptance. *Avatar* premiered in London on December 10, 2009, and was internationally released on December 16, and in the United States and Canada on December 18. During its theatrical run, the film broke several box office records and became the highest-grossing film of all time, as well as (in the United States and Canada) surpassing *Titanic*, which had held those records for twelve years (and was also directed by Cameron). It also became the first film to gross more than \$2 billion and the best-selling film of 2010 in the United States.

In the 2045 Initiative the timeline

goal for a true humanoid avatar controlled by a brain-computer interface was to be achieved between 2015 and 2020. Between 2020 to 2025 the goal is to “create” an autonomous life-support system for the human brain linked to a robot; then between 2030 and 2035 there is the hope of creating a computer model of the brain and “human consciousness” with means to transfer it into what is called an *artificial carrier*. The final initiative goal is to create a new era for humanity with holographic bodies by 2045.

The story of Pandora is based upon the belief that by 2154, humans will have depleted earth’s natural resources, which will lead to a severe energy crisis. “The Resources Development Administration (RDA for short) mines for a valuable mineral—unobtainium—on Pandora, a densely forested habitable moon orbiting the gas giant Polyphemus in the Alpha Centauri star system. Pandora, whose atmosphere is poisonous to humans, is inhabited by the Na’vi, 10-foot tall, blue-skinned, sapient humanoids who live in harmony with nature and worship a mother goddess called *Eywa*”[†]—all of this in a universe existing without the concept of God, or man/woman taking the place of God. It is obvious that Disney is “magically” involved in such films to entice the children of the world to be prepared for a radical paradigm shift of human existence where the human and the artificial merge into one existence created by man.

The present goal is to create an arti-

ficial brain into which the “original individual consciousness may be transferred” (Itskov). It is estimated by the timeline designated by the global elite that by 2025 they will be able to “transplant” a human brain at the end of life into an avatar, with an autonomous system providing life support. It is believed that at such a time in history there will be no more need of fertilization and conception, no need to face even death itself, and man will declare what the “image” will be. Man’s hope is to bring the synthetic and the natural together, of man creating a man even greater than the creation by God.

Conclusion

Cultivation has always been a term designated in the hand and the power of man in whatever context it may be. But it is evident that man has gone beyond the moral and ethical framework of life and is aggressively pursuing those cultivations that only God should be involved in. Decisions will become more complicated in the future for the Christian concerning how far he submits himself to the system of the medical world. How far do we go with transplants, or an artificial organ or system of the body, or vaccines, or alterations of gender and genetic coding? We must never conclude that anything should be viewed as being “right” or “beneficial” because God permits man to do it. God permitted the city of Babylon to begin as man endeavored to make himself a name to take the place of the Name of the

Lord. But there are these words:

And this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.

There is a point somewhere out there in time that God will bring confusion and a scattering, but how far will He let mankind go? This does not mean since God is silent to this hour that He is in agreement with what man is doing. Man has gone into areas in his cultural revolutions that we never thought God would permit: that of mapping out the DNA, the cloning of animals, and even creating artificial wombs in which to place test-tube babies (without ever using the woman for anything). And now, we read of altering the sex of a person and changing the gender of an individual. But there will be a limitation in this realm of transhumanism.

How should we then live in days of the demise of honorable culture? The biblical worldview must still be maintained in the Christian's mind and heart. We must not let the world and its various impressive technologies and accomplishments overthrow our faith in God's Word. We must embrace biblical thinking, not world thinking. It is not that men do not have enough

evidence about God to believe in His existence but that they suppress their knowledge of God; they do not like to retain God in their knowledge.

From the Christian perspective "In the beginning God" is the foundation for all meaning. Our worldview further proclaims that this powerful, intelligent God Who created all things in heaven and earth, is the same One Who took upon Himself human form in the person of Jesus Christ. Only the creationist perspective can account for the design in nature; even the robotic avatars have a designer. One of the unique principles that all of science and technology must have in order to work is a unanimity of the universe in intricate harmony of law, order, design, purpose, and beauty.

Dear Christian, the estate of human life and existence has been given over to those who hate God, those who will use the laws and the principles of His providence to destroy man, unless God intervenes to save man from the inevitable suicide of humanity.

Oh, dear reader, how should we then live in an age that we never thought would and could come upon us? We must be careful not to get involved and enticed in "science fiction" and all of its infatuations and speculative novelties. We must live in the light of belief in the personal, Eternal God. We must live in the reality that the first man disobeyed his Creator and thus plunged himself into sin, bringing the law of sin and death upon all of humanity. We must live in the light that

our problems are not the imperfections of a Creator, but man has brought himself into his own corruption, his own depravity, and his own, ever-deepening destruction. In the living of life itself—in his marriages, in his social relationships, in wars, in terrorism, and in all that man touches—all turns to death because the wages of the sin principle governing the man is death. God Himself is our only hope for the radical change of our human culture and everything it stands for.

When Christ comes into the life, He not only brings a right relationship between man and his Creator, but also a right life to live, a changed life, a Christian perfection life, a recovered life that God intended for man at the time He created a perfect man on a perfect planet. Only God can bring to man eternal life, both in its quality and duration. It is not transhumanism that we need! We need a transformation and a transfiguration of life “in Christ,” and to become continually conformed to His image! This is the only hope for man! And it is only when the God-Man, Christ Jesus, comes to set up His Kingdom that it will be ruled universally in peace and knowledge and love. Outside of Him,

there is no hope of recovery from man’s own fall into sin!

God created us in His image and likeness; He gave us a personality of intellect, emotions, will, and a self-entity. He wants to save both our soul and life, both to be poured out into Him, not into the world that has rejected Him and all that He is.

The psalmist declares in Psalm 95:7, 8:

For he is our God: and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness.

And, we also read the following in Psalm 100:3:

Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

How should we then live in the days of the demise of honorable culture? We live for Him, and in Him, and have our being and existence unto Him.

[†]IMDb.com. (n.d.). Avatar. IMDb. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0499549/plotsummary/>

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“How Should We Then Live” In the Days of the Demise of Biblical Spirituality?

Dr. H. T. Spence

Straightway, August–October 2017

In God’s providence, the Protestant Reformation was the movement that brought the public message of the church back to the soundness and absoluteness of the Scriptures. This important belief reestablished that the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith are based upon supremacy of the Word of God alone. Through the centuries leading up to the Reformation, Roman Catholicism’s apostasy had destroyed the Scriptures’ public effectualness.

Biblical Spirituality

In the Revivalist movement of the 1700s, God moved in a deeper spiritual way bringing a greater consciousness of the Christian life, the Christian experience, and the call to biblical spirituality. A variety of definitions of spirituality honorably came forth from men of assorted theological backgrounds. Noah Webster’s 1828 dictionary gives a simple but biblical definition:

Spirituality is the quality which respects the spirit or affections of the heart only, and the essence of true religion.

Webster’s definition also included spiritual exercises and holy affections, or “a person given to the things of God rather than to the temporalities.”

The apostle Paul gives the under-

standing of spirituality in his defense of the spiritual versus the flesh in writing to the Corinthians. First Corinthians 12:1 begins, “Now concerning spiritual gifts,” (Gr. *pneumatikos*, “spiritualities,” in the plural). Scripturally, spirituality includes the concept of living and the concept of the inward workings of God in the human heart. Though men throughout the centuries wrote on this principle of spirituality and called it by different terms, they addressed the same thing. Often, their understanding grew in their progressive quest for God, and within the quest they came to know the spirituality that marks a true walk with God. They came to an *intention* to “give myself up to God.” They found this to mean that they were to give the heart completely to God in a love that was so deep they longed for more of Him. Many of these Christians called this spiritual quest the *inward religion*, or the *religion of the heart*. William Law’s book *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (1728) calls this spirituality a “Serious Call.” Others called it “Christian Perfection” or “Christian Maturity.” Even later, men such as Andrew Murray called it being “Holy in Christ.” Collectively, they all had one declaration: *to experience God within the life*.

“How does one come to know God?” This question is perhaps the call of

most religions, for the term *religio* means “to bind back” (back to God). Following this binding back the question arises of what must one do or how should one live?

The New Testament speaks of degrees of knowing God. The Greek word *gnosko* speaks of an accrued knowledge of Him in the mind (though all religions have different perspectives of how that knowledge comes). The Greek word *oida* is a perceptive knowledge of God. Finally, the Greek word *epignosko* speaks of an experiential knowledge of God. *Epignosko* is the highest form of knowledge and the one that should be most coveted.

In Philippians 3:10, the apostle Paul declares, “That I may know him.” It is one thing to know *about* God, even

ences, of knowing God, or of their perspective of God or gods. They believe their religion is the true one, and their experiences are true from those gods or God. Western civilization largely has been dominated by Christianity, even though this public Christianity often was the apostasy of Roman Catholicism. In more recent centuries European countries have all been profoundly affected by the apostate powers of Protestantism, particularly the powers of liberalism and modernism. These countries also have been affected by Deism, Unitarianism, and the apostasy of Protestantism found within the Neo’s (Neo-Orthodoxy, Neo-Morality, Neo-Evangelicalism, and Neo-Pentecostalism leading into the Charismatic movement). There has also been the encroachment of the

In these days of the declared experiences of both false religions and the Neo-Christianity, we must ever remember that it is the *inward religion* of biblical Christianity that is the true *experience* of heaven.

cults such as the Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, Christian Science, and Seventh Day Adventist.

through the study of the Scriptures; but to truly “know Him” means that this knowledge must somehow lay hold of me and become the experiencing of God within. The Bible speaks of the workings of grace, the workings of the atonement, and the workings of Christ *within* the human heart and life.

Amidst this stirring up of the polluted pot of Christianity and its own present-day questioning of what is truth, we have had the rise of atheism, agnosticism, secularism, and other powerful ideologies that have pervaded all Western civilization. All of these forces converging on the West have destroyed its sound thinking and its ability to reason.

The Pluralism of Religions into the Pot of “Spirituality”

Other religions speak of experi-

In the latter part of the twentieth century, the Far East’s mystic and sur-

realistic religions have been westernized. These Eastern religions have been placed into the melting pot of Western cultural thinking. As a result, Americans have become increasingly receptive to these forms of logic, convincing us that all religions should be part of modern American culture.

In more recent decades, America has likewise invited postmodernism's denial of all absolutes into its social and national logic. The resulting pervasive relativism cries out, "There is no true religion," and that all religions must be equally accepted or tolerated (at least for now). This equality of all religions or religious "pluralism" has been forced on all Western civilization and its countries. In order to bring the world together to accept all nations, cultures, and religions, everyone is being forced to become pluralistic. Even in America we have become a pluralistic society diverse in language, dress, food, art, music, literature, and lifestyle. Biblically, God intended for such a pluralism of cultures to be expressed by *the distinction of nations*. It is only when sin infects and pervades a culture to harm others that a culture becomes dangerous. Increasingly, England and America are becoming melting pots of varied cultures. Such a perspective is yielding a bold form of genocide that will destroy a nation from within.

We have come to an hour in global history of an aggressive political push for each country to become religiously pluralistic. Although religion is often a

by-product of culture, more often culture is a by-product of a religion. At its beginning, America was influenced largely by biblical Christianity; today, America has intentionally become a pluralistic society of religions and cultures.

Yet within our pluralistic society of religions, a few religions still claim absolutism. Christianity is one of those religions. It declares it is the only true religion, and thus it is the only way to God and to heaven. Islam is also a religion of absolutism, claiming there is only one Allah, and Mohamed is his singular prophet; to them, Islam is the *only* religion.

In this present environment, increasingly people are very apprehensive of anyone making claims of extremism or absolutism in the name of any philosophy or religion. Because of this national mood (intelligently designed) politically and educationally, we are going to witness increased hatred against those who will not tolerate other beliefs and concepts of faith. We must remember that the Roman Empire did not denounce Christianity because it declared Jesus to be God; Rome denounced Christianity because it declared that Jesus *alone* was God. It presented itself to be the only true religion, making all other religions false. This absoluteness is what brought about the imperial persecutions during those earlier centuries. For Jesus made the claim: "I am the truth," the only truth, and the only way and the only life.

Even today true biblical Christianity is a non-negotiable claim of absoluteness amidst a pluralistic, postmodern society. But again, the governments of the world are pressing for religious pluralism, seeking to destroy any religion of absolutism. The world leaders have come to a firm belief that all religions are essentially the same and lead to the same goal. Therefore, socialistic pressure is being placed upon all religions to come together with a common unity of purpose through *Interfaithism*. Such pressure globally will force all religions to relinquish their individual distinctives.

How can this collectivism come about when the obvious and clear differences between the religions are evident, especially in their fundamentals? Buddhism is not a true religion (though it purports to be). It is more a philosophy that does not believe in any particular god. Hinduism believes in more than 33 million gods, and their caste system promotes reincarnation. The three monotheistic religions believe in a one-God concept, but their belief of Jesus Christ is radically different, with only Christianity believing He is God. And there are irreconcilable worldviews of each of these religions. All religions speak of “the way” of their religion. But again, they are different. What is the gate to the way, and what is the way? Only Christianity declares clearly that Christ is the only way to God—the only way to live.

Conclusion

Sadly, Christianity’s historic claim to absoluteness is greatly diminishing as the pressures of postmodernism now control governments, education, and broader world philosophies. Public Christianity now believes it must leave its position of absoluteness and ecumenically become one of the many. It must be acknowledged that modern Christianity has led the way for the present-day ecumenicity as well as encouraged Interfaithism. Present-day Christianity has denounced the Bible (its book of revelation), purporting it to be a myth and outdated. By doing so it has opened its doors of doctrine to become a melting pot with accommodation for all the other religions. Do we not remember that a number of years ago Billy Graham (viewed as spokesman for Evangelical Christianity) announced to Robert Schuller (of the then-famed Crystal Cathedral) his belief that there are other roads to God, and there will be others from different religions that make up the body of Christ and will enter heaven? Similarly, the mega churches today have done away with the absoluteness of the Gospel message. Yes, there is an intense subversion within Christianity to overthrow the distinctiveness of the message of Christianity.

Christianity publicly has denied the very heart and soul that God gave to it. The church has become a byword in the world because of its many compromises and changes. By leaving its very foundational identification it has

fallen away. The biblical concept of spirituality found within the Scriptures (and overflowing in the hearts of the remnant over these many centuries) is now ridiculed, mocked, denied, and even condemned from within Christianity. The true spiritual experiences have become so existentially interpreted that postmodernism has shaped a global spirituality declaring that all religious experiences must be equally valid. The spiritual experiences of Buddhism and Hinduism are equated with the Christian call to the new birth, the only difference being its terminology.

The rebirth of the New Age movement and its ever-mutating influences opened the door to “experiences of spirituality” now being westernized, along with the “spirit experiences” declared by other religions. They all are being forced upon us as being the same experiences. The new birth and the infilling of the Holy Spirit are now presented in every religion, with each expressing its own definition of the experience. And we are told that one’s religious presentation cannot be differentiated or denounced as “not the same” by another religion.

To the Christian, these experiences are not the same. Other religions do not know the true and living God. Even Judaism’s monotheism is not the same as Christianity, because Christianity is a Trinitarian monothe-

ism and Judaism is not. The Jews and their religion are in apostasy today. Within the public presentation of Christianity with its different labels and tags, brands and breeds, the true remnant must be careful. A Roman Catholic does not know the true Christ; their Christ is the Roman

We must come to the
 Scriptures, to the Christ of
 Scriptures, and call upon Him
 for a spiritual, God-wrought
 work.

Catholic Christ within the Eucharist. Whatever they experience is not of the Christ of Scripture and there-

fore, not a biblical experience. The liberals and modernists may speak of the existential leap of faith where they have an encounter with God. However, their god is not the God of the Bible, and their experience is not of the Holy Spirit.

Men such as Joel Osteen, Benny Hinn, and others on the ever-increasing list of Neo-Christianity do not believe in the God of the Bible. They believe in the fabricated god of their faith, the product of their faith (which does not come from the true God). How often people speak and testify about experiences they have had: voices of God, visions of Jesus, dying and coming back (a biblical death is when the soul leaves the body, not when the heart stops). Spirituality is now being viewed as a spirit experience, a metaphysical experience, an existential, surrealist experience; these are not biblical experiences of the true God. Such professing people have met something, a demon coming

as an angel of light, an experience of the mind, perhaps, but not the true God. Therefore, it is imperative to judge everything we experience through the Bible. Was it a true new birth? Was it according to Scripture? Was it a John's Gospel experience? Was it a First John fruit-bearing experience? Or was it a feeling? Was it simply a God-consciousness that a child experiences? Was it guilt that abated? Or was it a definite, life-changing experience in God?

How should we then live in days of the demise of biblical spirituality? We must come to the Scriptures, to the Christ of Scriptures, and call upon Him for a spiritual, God-wrought work within a broken heart and a contrite spirit. How should we then live in the days of the heresy of the Charismatics and modern-day Pentecostalism? We

must pray for the Holy Spirit to empower and live within us! Our inward walk with God in communion must ever be based on the Word of God. We must ever be diligent in the study of true spirituality in the context of the Scriptures, not in feeling or emotions as the manifesting evidence of the experience. We must seek God and pursue a life of holiness and devotion to Him. We must seek a consecrated life. Therefore, in these days of the declared experiences of both false religions and the Neo-Christianity, we must ever remember that it is the *inward religion* of biblical Christianity that is the true *experience* of heaven. True Christianity is the only religion identified and assigned to *the heart*, a heart that has been given by God and to God.

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“How Should We Then Live” In the Days of the Demise of Biblical Hope?

Dr. H. T. Spence

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Coming to the end of the nineteenth century, mankind began to anticipate that the twentieth century would be the century of hope for which man for thousands of years had been looking. In fact, the 1800s eagerly predicted that the twentieth century was almost guaranteed to be the century to usher in peace; it was prophetically called the “Christian Century.” This optimism was soon shattered by the ominous tensions that led to World War I. This bloodbath event brought a rude awakening to the continued reality of the true sinful nature of humanity.

Man’s Hope for Utopia

Following World War I, there continued to arise a growing hope that if mankind could indeed craft a world society where there was a wise administration of law, where an end to war and oppression could be achieved, and the basic necessities of life for every human being could be guaranteed, then world peace could be known. For three thousand years man has been dreaming of this hope. England’s Sir Thomas More coined the term *utopia* to represent this ideal when he published his work *Utopia* in 1516. This work was his suggested perfect government and social system.

The word *utopia* is from one of two almost identical Greek words that can mean either “good place” or “no place.”

In our language *utopia* has come to mean not only “perfection” but also in some contexts “unrealistic” or “impractical.” The idea of a perfect mythical kingdom in the ancient teachings of Tibetan Buddhism inspired James Hilton’s novel *Lost Horizon* (1933). Hilton named his Himalayan utopia *Shangri-La*. His Shangri-La was a paradise where people slowly grow old, never age in appearance, and live in perfect harmony.

The earliest concept of a utopian society was conceived by Hesiod (750?–650? B.C.). In *Works and Days*, Hesiod described his dream of such a place in a time when “the fruitful earth spontaneously bore abundant fruit without stint. They live in ease, and peace upon their land with many good things, rich in flocks and beloved of the blessed gods.” Yes, this was the longing of man for a place free from war, disease, famine, injustice, and marked by tranquility. These concepts of utopia have been the hope of man seeking a place of peace and abundant blessing amidst all of the sin and destructive side effects of sin. Even the prophet Haggai spoke of a day when “the desire of all nations would come” (2:7).

The Greek philosopher Plato was more of a realist in his utopian vision. It is this platonic vision of a new world that our present world leaders are urg-

ing upon us. Plato knew that people were too indifferent or lazy to want his version of utopia. Therefore, he crafted an ideal society in which the wise men or “philosopher kings” would rule. In turn, they would control every aspect of social existence in the name of justice, order, freedom, peace, strength, stability, and goodness. The wise philosopher kings would not perform any of the work; they would organize the masses in their proper training, appointing their designated places in society. According to Plato, these philosopher kings were the only ones educated; the rest of the people performed their prescribed duties in which they were trained to contribute to the perfect utopia. Abortion and euthanasia helped control world population, more efficiently utilizing the planet’s resources. To complete his view, Plato also wrote of the imperative need of a class of soldiers who enforced the implementation of the continued plan of the philosopher kings.

It is interesting to note that all utopias of mankind have their origin from the utopian hope found about one hundred years after the Flood. This hope was Cush and his son Nimrod’s great plan of building the city of Babel with a tower that would express man’s tenacious

desire for a global city and religion that would become the perfect city and religion of man without God. The limited population at that time in Genesis 11 was perhaps around 35,000. But God came down and stopped what man began to do in his rebellion against his Creator. Ever since that time, man has endeavored to revive his hope of such a place.

Population Problem for Man’s Utopia

A growing problem for man’s utopian hope is the increasing world population on the earth. In A.D. 1, the estimated population of 300 million on the planet continued with moderate growth. By 1750, world population reached about 760 million. After the start of the Industrial Revolution (1760 to the early 1800s), living standards rose diminishing widespread famines. In some regions of the world, epidemics diminished and population growth accelerated. By 1800, the population had reached 1 billion; by 1950, 2.5 billion. In 2005, the world reached an astonishing 6.5 billion inhabitants. Today the population is over 7.5 billion with an estimated 9 billion or more by 2050.

As world leaders contemplate where we are in history (believing mankind

Man has come to such a point in his dying that he would rather have a false hope than no hope at all. Mankind is living in a world of false hope; its virtual reality is now believed to be its reality.

has come to the greatest hour of every form of technology, medicine, and science), they now believe that they must take over humanity's evolutionary process. They desire to meticulously control the world and its people in every aspect of human existence. World leaders now are talking more about the grand vision of a world order to finally realize the long-held hope of man's Utopia or Shangri-La. If the world is to come to universal peace and abundance of living, certain powers will have to negate all reasons for war. Collectively, the tens of trillions of dollars now spent on national defense could be rerouted and used for peacetime. This change could greatly improve global energy, ecological balance, the supply of pure water, medical health, bountiful food supply, and the necessary infrastructure of cities and villages around the world. The hope of such a world seems to be in sight. Yes, it is the hope of a day when one law will rule everyone, every country, all economies, and all of mankind.

The Demise of Hope

How do the rulers of this "new world order" initiate such realities amidst the need to address so many facets simultaneously? Its logistics are staggering. Throughout history one of the great strategies of Satan has been the powerful, intimidating use of *chaos* to bring a country or a people down. He intentionally foments anarchy within all branches and infrastructures of governments by terrorizing its people

and producing hopelessness in the ensuing chaos. Once this hopelessness is stirred up, the present context of existence can be overthrown. As a result, leaders are able to rebuild their desired government out of the ashes.

America, the last bastion of Western civilization existing on the planet today, has now witnessed a president whose administration recently has brought our nation to a most ripened hour for a national revolution in the world of ideas. We are poised on the threshold of a new era, a new world, and a new political theory of government. Everything is now collapsing, including a calculated implosion of the former ideology of constitutional history. America is dead in every aspect. We are now witnessing newly revealed international forces swiftly coming in that may initially take us into a trilateral world, but eventually into a new world internationalist system.

We are caught in demonically-empowered currents of ideology that are the offspring of postmodernism. All law and order has been thrown to the winds of relativity. Sadly, the people seem to love to have it so. In our lifetime, we have witnessed the rise and fall of communism. This atheistic ideology began as a star of hope, becoming the great utopia not only for certain countries but also for the world. It marched for nearly a century conquering everything in its wake. But in our lifetime, we have witnessed its dismantling; now only five countries are

fully given to its hope. Other communist nations now seek the hope of a better ideological power with an oligarchy.

We are now beginning to witness the fall of the revolution of secularism. From its beginning, secularism was focused intently on the overt de-Christianizing of America (as in the French Revolution). Secularism started with the dialogue about pluralism, tolerance, and relative values and morality. In the beginning of this revolutionary movement, secularism allured the intellectual. The educated population was tantalized by the ideas of the humanist dream, the logic of Darwinism, Freudian psychology, and even the Marxist-Leninist social theory. What secularism did was to open the American mind to become a playground of ideas. It was the hunger for the fruit of that tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the promise, "Ye shall be as gods."

From the rise of secularism to the fall of communism, the world has been enduring a 150-year assault on its very soul. We are in a global death so deep that the very idea of a utopian hope has proved unsuccessful. When something dies, that is its end. However, when a world dies, its existence transfers into another estate that is far deeper than merely death. We have come to the hour when God is in the process of giving us over because of what we have killed and aborted in truth and righteousness. Yet man believes that out of the chaotic death his

sin has produced, there is still hope to become like God in order to re-create a paradise, a utopian Babel, that will be the gate to eternal deification of man.

The world is now ripe for the final scene of this historical drama of fallen mankind; it is now the hour for the rise of a beast out of humanity that will convince man that we have come to a time in our mental powers that we can create the future of mankind and the future of the planet Earth.

We have observed in these articles the 2045 Initiative, a term declaring man's active first steps for this next frontier. Postmodernism has completely done away with the beliefs and absoluteness of six thousand years of fixed logic; now man is liberated to do what he wants, to believe what he wants, and to create his own new world, a world without God. And he believes this new transhumanistic world will reach up into heaven itself and establish its throne as the throne of God.

Conclusion

We must remember that existentialism (the mother of postmodernism) is built upon that which does not exist. Man has come to such a point in his dying that he would rather have a false hope than no hope at all. Mankind is living in a world of false hope; its virtual reality is now believed to be its reality.

How should we then live in days of the demise of true hope? There is no

hope for humanity *in* humanity.

Mankind's dreamers and evolutionary transhumanists have left out three important ingredients that guarantee the sabotage of their utopia: (1) the fallen nature of man; (2) that death will always be in man's wake; and, (3) the ever-growing power of deadly sin in whatever man touches. Violence and terrorism will always be imminent if man as a sinner is in the driver's seat of this world. We must also remember that the presence of spiritual evil on this planet is led by Satan himself; he is ever involved in all the workings of man.

Yet we must remember as a Bible-believing Christian that God is in absolute control of history, that even the wrath of man one day will praise God. Additionally, we must remember that His coming and His Kingdom are based upon Christ Himself.

How should we then live in the days of the demise of hope? Is there hope for the natural life, hope for the hereafter, and hope for the planet and mankind? We must emphatically declare, "Only God is the answer for man's hope!"

When a fallen, sinful man comes to God, he comes in hope, believing God will do what He says in the Scriptures He will do. God has promised that if we confess our sins, He will forgive us. He promises if we turn our lives over to Him, He will perfect everything concerning us. He promises that all things will work together for good, for our good if we love Him and are called ac-

ording to His purpose. Yes, we come to Him with the hope that He will change our lives. He has the power, the ability, to do exceedingly, abundantly above all that we could ask or think.

There is hope for a purpose for my life. I come to Him with the hope that He can change my marriage, my home, my children, and the state of my heart. No matter what circumstances may come outwardly upon my life or upon this world, I have hope for my life in this world. I have hope that when I die I will go to be with God in the utopia of the city of Sion in heaven.

But I also have hope regarding this earth and its future. This earth was a love-gift from the Father to His beloved Son. Though the earth has fallen and become the footstool of God, He has promised the hope of what He will do with this earth. We have hope of good things to come; we have hope that God will right all the wrong; we have hope that the kingdoms of this earth will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. He will do what the United Nations cannot do: beat the swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks; and make the earth a place where a lion and a lamb will lie down together, and a child will lead them. Yes, we have the blessed Hope that Christ will return one day, destroying all that man has made in his worthless, fruitless, miry-clay hope based on himself. Christ will come and set up His kingdom and rule and reign on

this earth. His peace, His knowledge, and His Word will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. We have hope that He will literally make a new heaven and earth; that men, human beings born without sin, will populate this earth; that this world will be restored to perfection; that God will move His throne to this planet; that we shall see His face; and, we shall serve Him forever!

Oh, dear reader, this is our hope in the day of the demise of human hope! How should we *then live* in this day

when the hope of man is fabricated, false, and existential? We must live in biblical, God-promised hope; we must walk in God's provided hope; we must converse in the hope of biblical language; we must love through God's eternal hope; and we must worship Him in the blessed hope of His Son's soon return. For hope in God is the only true hope! Yes, Christ's Kingdom's consummation is our hope, our Great Expectation in this life and in the life to come!

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How Should We Then Live?

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The preachers of God must now prophesy!

Give warning to those who obey!

The warning is giv'n in days of demise

Of manhood, his gender denied!

We must live as men, the "male," not despise!

Our gender must be dignified!

When sanity fails, and sound thinking dies,

When godly morality wanes,

We must guard our mind! Let sound thinking rise,

With thoughts and a life God ordains!

World culture has sunk to deep, miry clay!

As man lives in wretched despair!

How should we then live? We must hope and pray

To live as God's child and His heir!

How should we then live, in days such as these?

The answer is found in God's Word!

We must live for Christ, 'tis Christ we must please!

This power will come from the Lord!

—H. T. Spence—

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