

Rise Up And Build

"So They said, 'Let us rise up and build,' Then they set their hands to do this good work," Neh. 2:18

November 1, 2020

Our Declining Moral Values

Notwithstanding the swiftly approaching election, much of the current news is centered on the riots, looting, and mayhem now going on in Philadelphia. Over 50 policemen have been injured, stores are being broken into, and countless people are walking out of those stores carrying stolen goods. And this is but the latest of such uprisings which have surfaced in many of the major cities in our land. Peaceful protest is one thing; rioting, looting burning cars, endangering human lives, etc., is something else.

But all of this is but a small segment of a worsening problem in our land, namely our declining moral values. Things are now occurring which would have been unthinkable a few generations ago. Perhaps one of the most disgusting and blasphemous items that we could mention is the fact that **Elevate Films** has developed a new film, one entitled "**Habit**," and which features Paris Jackson, a "bisexual" musician and daughter of the late Michael Jackson, playing the part of Jesus, featuring Him as a "gender-bending" Christ with a nose ring! Regarding this film, it was stated that "(Paris) Jackson...will play Jesus in the feature about a street-smart party girl with a Jesus fetish who gets mixed up in a violent drug deal and finds a possible way out by masquerading as a man."

If the preceding statements don't elevate your blood pressure, you have a problem! Fortunately, many, many concerned people have signed petitions urging the cancelation of this film, and I frankly don't know whether or not they have been successful. But the very fact that such a film was made speaks volumes about the depravity of those who would stoop to creating, participating in its production, or viewing it later. But I find it difficult to believe that a film industry, just a few generations ago, would have even conceived of such a film, let alone **produce** it!

But perhaps on a broader scale than the above, is the ever-increasing rate of divorce in our land. In 1890 there was one divorce for every 18 marriages in this country; today there is one divorce for every 2 and one half marriages. We are told that the rate of violence in our land has doubled since 1960. Some of us remember when legalized abortion would have been unthinkable, but since 1973 and the infamous Roe v Wade Supreme Court Decision over 62 million babies have been legally aborted (murdered!) while still in the mother's womb!

A few generations ago homosexuality was both illegal, and viewed as a mental illness; in fact, before 1962 it was viewed as a felony; now it is both legal and greatly encouraged by the thousands upon thousands of people who proudly and publicly march in numerous “gay pride” parades! A few generations ago homosexuality was considered a sin; now it is considered a “right,” and those who oppose it are called “homophobes,” and accused of using “hate speech.”

From the second chapter of Genesis until just a few years ago, human kind correctly understood that there were just two genders — “*male and female*” (Gen. 1:27). Nowadays, however, it seems that the number of “genders” keeps increasing. For example, we hear such terms as “Agender,” “Gender non-conforming,” “Cisgender,” “transgender,” “non-binary,” and that doesn’t include all the so-called genders which supposedly exist! And I must admit that I haven’t bothered to learn the real definitions of these words. But it is a sad commentary on a society when so many of its citizenry don’t know whether they are a “he,” a “she,” or something else, or even how long they will continue to be “this gender,” or “that gender,” or something entirely different!

Other disturbing statistics can be cited. For example, in 1981 69 percent of people believed prostitution is wrong, but by 2005 that number declined to 47 percent. The per capita rate of violent crime has doubled since 1960. In Colonial Massachusetts only one out of every 200 babies was conceived out of wedlock; in modern America 40 percent of babies are born to single women. In Britain we are told that “if current trends continue, by 2025 the majority of babies will be born out of wedlock.”

More statistics could be cited, but this should be sufficient for us to get the message, namely this: Moral Values are declining in our modern world. Of course, this is not the first time this has happened. For example, we think about conditions before the flood; the text says “*the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*” (Gen. 6:5). The prophet Hosea was commissioned by God to address the northern kingdom, Israel, at a time when they had departed further and further from God. In fact, God described “*the inhabitants of the land,*” saying, “*There is no truth, or mercy or knowledge of God in the land. By swearing and lying, killing and stealing and committing adultery, they break all restraint, with bloodshed upon bloodshed*” (Hos. 4:1-2). The prophet Isaiah described the apostate condition of the Israelites of his day, saying “*they declare their sin as Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to their soul! For they have brought evil upon themselves*” (Isa. 3:9). Such language implies that they were actually proud of their immorality!

For every effect there has to be a cause. We have noted some of the tragic effects of the deteriorating morals which now plague our land. But what are the causes? I am sure this writer can not name all the causes, but we can name a few, including the following:

1. Darwinism. In 1859 Charles Darwin published “**The Origin of The Species,**” in which he reasoned (?) that we were not created; rather we evolved from a single cell which sprang into existence, which multiplied again and again, and eventually evolved into human kind. This theory contradicts true science, and it eliminates God from the equation. With there being no God, then we should be guided by **Situation Ethics**, and focus on the survival of the fittest. It is claimed that Karl Marx (the founder of Communism) and Adolph Hitler both embraced Darwin’s philosophy. This would help explain the evils of Communism and Hitler’s wicked attempt to exterminate people whom he deemed “inferior.” However, when one reasons (?) God out of existence, consistency demands that he accept the consequences thereof. Read Rom. 1:18-32 and Psalm 14:1-3 and note the inevitable immoral consequences which befall those who try to eliminate God from their lives!

2. Taking God out of the classroom. Some of us still remember when the school day began with the reading of a few verses of scripture, approaching God in prayer, and the Pledge of Allegiance. But that has dramatically changed. On June 25, 1962 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the reading of the Bible in public schools constituted the establishment of a religion, and was therefore deemed unconstitutional. The following year, for similar reasons (?) the court ruled that prayer in school was also unconstitutional. Space does not allow a refutation of the supposed reasoning behind these decisions, but suffice it to say, it opened the door for the culture wars which followed, and it laid the ground work for the spiraling rate of increased immorality which followed. Sadly, most of our students in public schools are taught the unbiblical and unscientific theory of Evolution, but a teacher could be fired if he (or she) dared to read the Bible to those in the class room.

3. The spiraling rate of divorce. Jesus gave but one cause (“*fornication*”) whereby the innocent victim in a marriage relationship could divorce his (or her) spouse and re-marry without the second marriage being an adulterous relationship (Matt. 19:9). As a result, not only are the parties to the divorce more likely to enter into sinful relationships, the children also are adversely affected. It has been documented that “children who grow up without a father figure are four times likelier to be poor, nine times likelier to drop out of school, 11 times likelier to commit violent crime, and 20 times likelier to be arrested.”

4. Parents abdicating their responsibility to teach, nurture, and discipline their own children. Children should be taught God’s will (Ps. 78:1-7; Prov. 22:6; 13:25; Eph. 6:1-4, etc.). They should be taught to work (2 Thess. 3:10), and they should be exposed to the good examples of godly parents. But alas! All too often, parents tend to begat and then forget, resulting in their children growing up (?) as irresponsible, spoiled brats, who believe the world owes them a living! You may say “your language is too strong,” but I ask “am I not stating the truth” as it exists in so many instances? The “bottom line” is this: children need God-fearing masculine fathers and feminine mothers who honor their parental obligations. Edward Gibbon in his book, “**The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire**” listed five major causes behind the fall of what was one of History’s greatest empires, and the first cause he listed was the breakdown of the family. No nation can be stronger than the families of which it is comprised.

Conclusion: More reasons could be cited as to why morals are declining in our fair land. But the reasons herein cited are among the major reasons as to why society is deteriorating before our very eyes. Let us, as God’s people, resolve to be the “*salt of the earth*” and the “*light of the world*” (Matt. 5:13-16), thereby making a difference in the world of which we are a part.

—B. Witherington