

LAMPLIGHTER

"Prophecy is like a lamp shining in a dark place." - II Peter 1:19

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The Decay of Society



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Observations by the Editor

Sad Days

Jack Hibbs, the dynamic and outspoken pastor of the Calvary Chapel in Chino Hills, California, has perhaps summed up best the spiritual situation we face today in our nation: "It's a sad thing to watch a nation die on your watch."

There is no doubt that our nation is writhing in its death throes. America is caught up in a downward spiral into a black pit of immorality and violence. We are reaping what we have sown since the 1960's when we turned our back on God and decided to do our own thing. Since that time we have become obsessed with materialism and the pursuit of pleasure. In the process, the God who blessed us so richly has been shoved aside and treated with disdain as a nuisance.

The theme article in this issue presents my overview of our nation's rapid drift into secular paganism. It is an essay that is extracted in part from a book I wrote in 2000, but as you will see, it is even more relevant today than when it was written.

The rest of the articles in this issue concern the sin of homosexuality. You might wonder why I decided to focus on this sin when our society is wracked by so many sins. There are several reasons I decided to highlight the sin of homosexuality.

The first is the fact that our nation is currently in the process of trying to convert this sin into a virtue. It is a classic example of calling evil good and good evil (Isaiah 5:20).

Second, homosexuality is a sin that society is trying to justify by equating it with race and arguing that it is a violation of civil rights to put any kind of restraints on it.

Third, it is the first sin to be openly embraced and endorsed by churches in direct opposition to God's Word.

Fourth, it is a sin that the homosexual community claims is a lifestyle that is inescapable because it is "natural."

Fifth, the homosexual community, through demanding same-sex marriage and adoption rights, is determined to undermine the traditional biblical concept



Dr. David R. Reagan

of the family, which is the basic building block of society.

Sixth, the Bible identifies an epidemic of homosexuality and its approval by society as a sign of a collapsing society.

The bottom line is that homosexuality is a sin, and as such, it represents rebellion against God. There are no excuses or explanations that can convert it into something good and acceptable, any more that can be the case with adultery, pedophilia, or bestiality.

The good news is that there is hope for homosexuals, and that hope is the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit that comes when a person puts faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. I personally am aware of several persons who have overcome the homosexual lifestyle through God's power.

The testimony of one of those persons is included in this issue. I have received similar testimonies from others, and I hope to print them in future issues of this magazine. ✚

On April 1st we celebrated the 32nd anniversary of this ministry, for which we **Praise the Lord!** Starting a ministry in 1980 was not an easy matter. Today, if you have something worthwhile to say, you can develop a ministry quickly due to worldwide access through the Internet. But the Internet did not become usable for the general public until the mid-1990s. So, it took us almost ten years to get firmly established and to develop a reputation for responsible interpretation of Bible prophecy. We praise God for sustaining us through those difficult years. And we praise God for our Prophecy Partners through whom God works to sustain us today. ✚

Note: The image on our cover was provided by iStockphoto.com.

The Decay of Society

Dr. David R. Reagan

[Editor's note: This article is extracted in part from a chapter in Dr. Reagan's book, *Living for Christ in the End Times*.]

An American sports legend, Magic Johnson, reveals that he has AIDS. Rumors begin to fly that he is bi-sexual. He is confronted on national television about the rumors. Instead of simply denying them, he begins to boast about how macho he is, claiming to have been to bed with as many as six women at one time! Is America outraged? No. President Bush appoints him to serve on a national AIDS commission.¹

The actress, Suzanne Somers, appears on the TV program, *Good Morning, America*. She is trying to jump-start her flagging career. The appearance is prompted by her agreement to pose nude for *Playboy* magazine. The interviewer asks, "Why would you pose nude for *Playboy* now, when you sued them several years ago for publishing nude photos of you?"

Ms. Somers explains that the previous photos were taken by an amateur photographer and were published without her consent. "I decided that since there were bad nude photos of me that had already been published, I might as well get some good ones published."

She proceeds to explain that she laid down two conditions for the new photo spread in *Playboy*. "First, they had to let me select the photographer. And second, they had to let me select the photos to be used." She then makes the announcement that she decided to get her son (who was 19 at the time) involved in the project. "I spread out the photos on the floor and let him select the ones to be used in the magazine."

"Oh, that was so thoughtful of you," replies the interviewer.²

The Rapid Decay of Our Nation

What's the point? A nation that once honored God has plunged into a moral abyss. And the decay has reached the point where, in the words of the prophet Jeremiah, the nation "does not even know how to blush" (Jeremiah 6:15).

The descent has been swift. When I was born in 1938 —

- Abortionists were considered the scum of the earth and were sent to prison.
- Homosexuals were still in the closet and were thought of as queer.
- Pregnancy out of wedlock was thought of as scandalous, and "living together" was unthinkable.
- Drugs were something you bought at a pharmacy (or "drug store").
- Alcoholism was considered a sin, not a disease.
- Popular music was free of demonic beats and words.



- Movies were devoid of nudity, passionate love scenes, mindless violence, and filthy language.
- Eastern religion was still in the East.
- The corrupting influence of television was non-existent.
- Pornography was something that circulated underground.
- Public school students prayed in their classes and read the Bible, and creation could still be taught as an alternative to evolution.
- High school graduates could read their diplomas.
- The Ten Commandments were still legal.
- AIDS was a gift of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:28 refers to the gift of aids or helps, depending on the translation).
- Our governments — local, state and national — still promoted Judeo-Christian values rather than lotteries, horse racing, and casino gambling.
- Christian teaching focused on sacrificing for Christ rather than confessing materialistic success.
- Governmental authority was respected. Police were held in high esteem.
- Houses and cars were never locked.
- Social security was a job. Living on welfare was considered a disgrace.
- Language was civil. Manners still prevailed. Women were treated with dignity and respect.

Reaping What We Have Sown

Looking back over the last 60 years, the old Virginia Slims cigarette ad seems to sum it up best: "We've come a long way, baby!" Yes, we have, and it has been in the wrong direction.

- Today, we are murdering 4,000 babies a day in the name of "freedom of choice" for women.
- We spend more on gambling each year than we do on food.
- We are assaulted by a glut of pornography in books and movies and on the Internet.
- We are consuming 55% of all the illegal drugs in the world, even though we constitute only 5% of the world's population.
- Our families are being destroyed by an epidemic of spousal violence, child abuse, and divorce.
- Our prisons are overflowing because of a breakdown of law and order.
- Our cities are jungles of violence where people dare not venture out at night.
- Our homes are fortresses with bars on the windows, guns in the cabinets, and electronic security systems monitoring

the doors and windows.

- Our schools are filled with drugs, rebellion and violence.
- Our governing bodies are shot full of corruption.
- Our churches are apathetic and compromised by worldliness.
- Our entertainment industry has become a purveyor of violence and immorality, and as we export its products abroad, we serve as the moral polluter of planet earth.

Our Schools as a Mirror of Society

The best way I can think of to summarize the decay of American society is to consider the results of a public school survey that was conducted in the mid-1940's and again in the mid-1980's. The survey was taken by the Fullerton, California Police Department in conjunction with the California Department of Education. The purpose was to determine the major disciplinary problems in the schools. The comparative results speak volumes (see the comparative chart below).³

self." And we said, "OK."

Then the Supreme Court said that we could no longer post the Ten Commandments in our classrooms because they might influence our children, in violation of the concept called "separation of church and state." And we said, "OK."

Remember Dr. Benjamin Spock, who said we shouldn't spank our children when they misbehave, because their little personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem? And we said, "OK."

Then someone said that teachers and principals better not discipline our children when they misbehave. And our administrators said, "Whoa, no one in this school better touch a student when they misbehave

Leading Public School Disciplinary Problems

Mid-1940's	Mid-1980's
1) Talking	1) Drug abuse
2) Chewing Gum	2) Alcohol abuse
3) Making noise	3) Pregnancy
4) Running in the hallways	4) Suicide
5) Getting out of place in line	5) Rape
6) Wearing improper clothing	6) Robbery
7) Not putting paper in wastebaskets	7) Assault

In January 1993, *Time* magazine reported some sobering statistics from the National Education Association that affirm the deterioration of our schools. According to the NEA report, every school day:⁴

100,000 students tote guns to school
160,000 skip classes because they fear physical harm
40 are hurt or killed by firearms
6,250 teachers are threatened with bodily injury
260 teachers are actually assaulted

That's *every day!*

An insightful commentary about what has happened to the children of America was posted on the Internet recently: ⁵

What a Concept!

Whoa! What in the world is happening with our kids today? Let's see . . . I think it started when Madalyn Murray O'Hare complained that she didn't want any prayer in our schools, and we said, "OK."

Then someone said you had better not read the Bible in school. After all, it says: "Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbor as your-

because we don't want any bad publicity, and we surely don't want to be sued."

Then someone said, "Let's let our daughters have abortions if they want, and we won't even tell their parents." And we said, "OK."

Then someone else said, "Let's give our sons all the condoms they want so they can have all the 'fun' they desire, and we won't tell their parents." And we said, "That's another great idea!"

And then some of our top officials said, "It doesn't matter what we do in private as long as we do our jobs." And we said, "As long as I have a job and the economy is good, it doesn't matter to me what anyone does in private."

So now we're asking ourselves why our children have no conscience, why they don't know right from wrong, and why it doesn't bother them to kill.

Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we can figure it out. I think it has a great deal to do with "we reap what we sow."

Whoa! What a concept!

Rejecting the Ten Commandments

In 1980 in the case of *Stone v. Gramm*, the United States Supreme Court ruled that it is unconstitutional to hang the Ten Commandments on the wall of a school room.⁶

Think about that for a moment. The Ten Commandments are the foundation of Western Civilization. Our entire legal system is rooted in them.

The reasoning of the Court was right out of the “Twilight Zone.” The Court stated that “if the posted copies of the Ten Commandments are to have any effect at all, it will be to induce the school children to read, meditate upon, perhaps to venerate and obey, the Commandments.” The Court then proceeded to state that these were not “permissible objectives.” Is it any wonder that so many of our schools have become jungles of drugs and violence?



Modernizing the Commandments

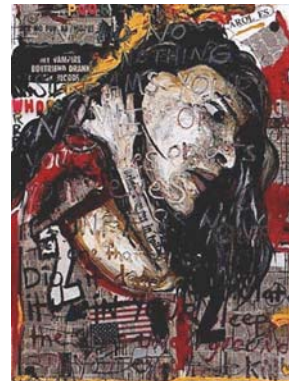
A man by the name of Ken Matto has revised the Ten Commandments to reflect current values. He calls his revision “The Ten Replacements.”⁷

- 1) **Thou shalt create gods in man’s image** to confirm the deity of man and the evolution of intelligence. Your gods may be created according to self-revelation.
- 2) **Thou shalt make unto thyself images** and symbols of your beliefs. If your image is a cow or a rock star or a pentagram, that is fine. All things are relative in the evolution of the species.
- 3) **Thou shalt take the name of God and Jesus in vain** since Jesus was not God, and God is anything you care to make him — or her.
- 4) **Thou shalt profane the Sabbath Day** because you get double time on Sunday, and your family need not be in church since it is full of hypocrites. And furthermore, isn’t making money the important thing?
- 5) **Thou shalt dishonor thy father and mother** because they are only good to bail you out of jail or put a roof over your head. Too bad they don’t possess the wisdom and knowledge of the years like you do, being a 13 year old.
- 6) **Thou shalt kill** since you will only be acting on pent up rage because your father disciplined you one time when you were 5.
- 7) **Thou shalt commit adultery.** After all, we have a free thinking and open society, and since your faith is in science, you know they will soon come up with a cure for AIDS or Herpes Simplex II.

- 8) **Thou shalt steal**, for isn’t everybody doing it? When you get out into the workplace you can steal time, pencils, products, and anything else you deserve. After all, didn’t you have a deprived childhood because daddy and mommy refused to buy you \$90 attitude pants with the crotch down to your knees?
- 9) **Thou shalt bear false witness.** After all, it really isn’t false witness; it is just looking out for number one. If a good lie at the right time saves your hide, come on, why not?
- 10) **Thou shalt always covet your neighbor’s things** because if you outdo them, your self-esteem will skyrocket, and you will finally be someone special. Remember, your pride is the most important thing.

The amazing thing is that in the midst of all this moral depravity, we have the audacity to call ourselves a “Christian nation”! The fact of the matter is that we are a post-Christian nation that is now wallowing in secularism and paganism. The comedian Steve Allen summed it up well in a remark he often made about the American entertainment industry: “We have vulgarians entertaining barbarians.”

Where did America get off course? How have we managed to move so quickly from a God-fearing nation to one that thumbs its nose at God?



The Road to Depravity

An outline of our course to depravity can be found in the writings of the Apostle Paul. In Romans chapter one he states that the road to destruction for a nation begins when its institutions decide to “suppress the truth in unrighteousness,” an action that will ultimately lead to people worshiping the creation rather than the Creator (Romans 1:18, 25).

The decade of the 1960’s proved to be the turning point for America. But the cultural revolution against God that characterized that decade was rooted in developments that occurred early in the 20th Century. The two most influential were intellectual tides that swept into America from Europe. They arrived almost simultaneously.

One was Darwinism with its atheistic attack on the very concept of God. The origin and purpose of Man was called into question. Man was reduced to a mere animal, a product of chance with no particular purpose.

The other was the German School of Higher Criticism which challenged the Bible as the infallible revelation of God. The Bible was viewed instead as Man’s search for God and was therefore considered to be full of myth, legend and superstition.

The Christian worldview suddenly came under attack from without and within the Church. The faith of many was shattered.

Embracing Moral Relativism

As the authority of God’s Word was undermined, and Man’s purpose became meaningless, moral relativism gradually took

center stage. People began to challenge traditional concepts of right and wrong. As in the days of the Judges of Israel, people began to do what was right in their own eyes (Judges 21:25). They called it, “different strokes for different folks.” Each man became a god unto himself, able to determine for himself his own values and ethics, if any. And anyone who would dare judge someone else’s actions was declared “intolerant.”

By the 1980's America had reached the point referred to in Judges 2:10 — we had produced a whole generation “who did not know the Lord . . .”



We had “suppressed the truth in unrighteousness” by banning prayer from public schools, prohibiting the posting of the Ten Commandments, and declaring that evolution was the only theory that could be taught about the origin of the universe.

Suddenly government was actively promoting all sorts of abominable activity such as gambling, abortion, and homosexuality. Eastern religions and mystical intellectual philosophies like the New Age Movement began to penetrate Christianity.

Earth Day became a national celebration. People gathered to worship “Mother Earth” rather than the Father God who created the earth. They joined hands and hummed to get synchronized with the rhythm of “Mother Earth.” They further celebrated their new religion by hugging a tree or stroking a salmon.

Millions of people paid hundreds of dollars each to attend self-discovery seminars of various types. What they all had in common was the teaching that God resides in each of us, and that we must learn how to release our “god power.”

Wallowing in Despair

By the 1990's, America had fulfilled another prophecy of the Apostle Paul about the end times. It is found in 2 Timothy 3:1-5:

But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power . . .

Notice that this prophecy predicts that the society of the end times will love three things: self, money and pleasure. The love of self is Humanism, the religion of America today. The love of money is Materialism, America’s god.

When your religion is focused on self, and your god is money, the result is always a lifestyle based on the love of pleasure, which is Hedonism. Needless to say, that is the lifestyle of the “liberated” American as he enters the 21st Century.

But God cannot be mocked (Galatians 6:7). Humanism,

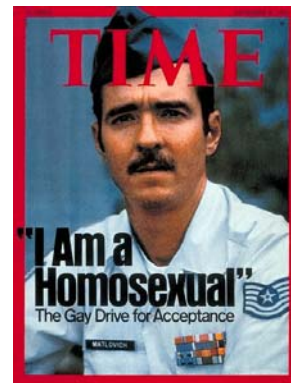
Materialism and Hedonism constitute a deadly combination. They always produce the same pay-off. It is what philosophers call Nihilism, which is a sixty-four dollar word for despair.

Look again at 2 Timothy 3:1-5. The passage describes a society wallowing in despair. The description reads like the news that we witness on TV every evening. The news reports are full of boastful, arrogant revilers who are ungrateful and unholy — as well as stories about rebellious children and reckless, conceited haters of good. And we are constantly bombarded with the opinions of those “professing to be wise” but who in reality are fools (Romans 1:22).

God’s Discipline for Nations

In Romans, Paul tells us how God deals with people in rebellious nations. He says that God “gives them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity” (Romans 1:24). In other words, God steps back, lowers His hedge of protection around the nation, and allows sin to multiply as a judgment upon the nation.

The first consequence is a sexual revolution like the one that occurred in America in the 1960's. Paul refers to it as the “dishonoring of their bodies” (Romans 1:24).



Paul says that if this judgment does not produce repentance, God will take another step back and lower His hedge of protection even further. In this second stage, He will deliver the nation to “degrading passions” (Romans 1:26). Paul explains that this judgment will be manifested in a plague of homosexuality. He says women will exchange the natural function for that which is unnatural, and men will abandon the natural function of the woman and burn in their desire toward one another, “men with men committing indecent acts” (Romans 1:26-27). Paul even mentions that those who participate in such evil will receive in their own bodies “the due penalty of their error” (Romans 1:27). Thus, the modern day AIDS epidemic is portrayed clearly as a judgment of God.

Nor is that the end of the process. Again, Paul notes that if the society persists in its rebellion, God will take another step back and lower His hedge of protection even further, giving them over “to a depraved mind” (Romans 1:28). At that point Paul says the society will become like the one he describes in 2 Timothy 3 — “filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful . . .” (Romans 1:29-31).

He then adds a sobering thought: “We know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things” (Romans 2:2).

Teetering on the Edge of Destruction

America has reached the third and final stage that leads from judgment to destruction. God has placed judgment after judgment on our nation in an attempt to call us to repentance — judgments like the war in Vietnam, the drug epidemic, the AIDS

plague, the disintegration of the family, civil riots, violence in the schools, and natural disasters.

But we have refused to repent. We have, in fact, set our jaw against God, determined to go our own way and do our own thing. This attitude was manifested in the incredible proclamation issued by President Bill Clinton in June of 1999 when he called for Americans to “celebrate” homosexuality. He declared June 1999 to be Gay and Lesbian Pride Month.⁸ I responded by sending him an email message in which I asked, “What will you ask us to ‘celebrate’ next? Will you proclaim Adultery Pride Month? What about a month honoring prostitutes or pedophiles?” President Obama resumed this practice of designating the month of June to celebrate sexual perversion, but he has expanded it to include the LGBT community (lesbians, gay, bi-sexual and transgendered).



August 15, 2011

[The following paragraph was written in the year 2000.] The interesting thing is that despite our continuing rebellion, God has not yet touched our false god — the Almighty Dollar. I suspect He is still patiently waiting for us to repent, and if we fail to do so, He will destroy our god with the greatest economic collapse in recorded history, one that will reduce us to Third World status and remove us from our position as the world’s only super power.

God brought the Soviet Union down overnight, and He can do the same to us, just as He did to the super power Babylon in ancient history. At the time He touched the Soviet Union, it was the world’s greatest military power. But all its nuclear weapons and missiles could not protect it from the hand of God. Overnight the Soviet Union was reduced to political and economic chaos.

Begging for Judgment

The destruction that will fall upon us will be much worse, “for to those to whom much is given, much is expected” (Luke 12:48). The Russian people can say, “We did not know.” But what can Americans say? We have been blessed like no other nation since ancient Israel. In addition to our political and economic blessings, we have been blessed spiritually with a saturation of the Gospel. We have an average of five Bibles in each home, we have radio and television evangelists, and we have an over abundance of churches. We have no excuse before God.

The Bible teaches that God never pours out His wrath without warning. He has been warning America for three decades through His judgments and His prophets. He has raised up prophetic voices throughout the land to warn the people of impending judgment — voices like Dave Wilkerson in New York City, whom I considered to be God’s Jeremiah to America. [Wilkerson was killed in a car accident in 2011.]

Non-Christians have understandably mocked these warnings as “millennial madness.” What is tragic is that many Christian leaders have also responded with ridicule. Many Christians seem to believe that God sits on His throne draped in an American flag, and that He would never touch His “anointed nation.” After

all, isn’t He dependent on the wealth and influence and technology of America to spread the Gospel all over the world?

A Biblical Example of National Arrogance

It has happened before. When God got ready to pour out His wrath on ancient Judah, He raised up prophets like Micah and Jeremiah to warn the people of their impending doom. And what was their response? They pointed to the Lord’s Temple and assured the prophets that God would never allow anything to happen to it (Jeremiah 7:1-4). They were safe, they thought, because the Shekinah glory of God resided in their Temple. The prophets were “full of wind,” they argued, because God would protect His Temple and the nation to which He had entrusted it (Jeremiah 5:13). Their attitude was arrogance gone to seed.

And so it is in America today. We are a proud nation. After all, we are “number one.” In our pride we have turned our back on God. Like the Jews of biblical times, we want the blessings of God but not the God of the blessings.

A Biblical Type of America

Our prophetic type in the Bible is the nation of Judah. If you want to read about America in Bible prophecy, read Isaiah 5 and Jeremiah 5 and 6. These two prophets list the sins that motivated God to destroy that nation. The sobering reality is that they are the same sins that characterize America today.



Isaiah speaks of injustice, greed, pleasure seeking, blasphemy, moral perversion, intellectual pride, intemperance, and political corruption. Regarding moral perversion, Isaiah says people were “calling evil good, and good evil” (Isaiah 5:20). That’s precisely what we are doing in America today regarding abortion, homosexuality and gambling. Isaiah sums up the root of his nation’s decay (and America’s) by asserting, “They have rejected the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel” (Isaiah 5:24).

Jeremiah, writing about 75 years later (God is so patient!), lists the same sins as still prevailing in the land. But he adds some new ones to the list: immorality and religious corruption. His summary statements are very revealing:

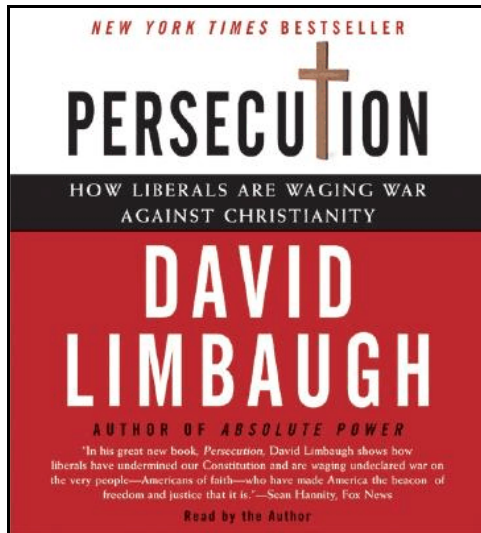
“They have made their faces harder than rock” (Jeremiah 5:3).

“They have refused to repent” (Jeremiah 5:3).

“This people has a stubborn and rebellious heart” (Jeremiah 5:23).

“They do not even know how to blush” (Jeremiah 6:15).

God destroyed this nation. Why would He deal any differently with a modern day clone? God “is the same yesterday and today, yes, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). Or, as it is stated in Malachi 3:6, “I, the Lord do not change.”



As America descends further into a moral abyss, Christians are going to come under increasing attack. Already society has written off evangelical Christians as “intolerant bigots” because they are the only ones speaking out today in behalf of righteousness.

The media have declared open season on Christians. Christianity, the Bible and Jesus are openly mocked in movies, books, television programs and the arts. Similar attacks on blacks, homosexuals, Jews, or even Muslims would not be tolerated. But everything sacred to Christians can be trampled. There is no escaping the fact that we are in the midst of a culture war in America. The forces of paganism, secularism, atheism and humanism have launched an all-out attack on Judeo-Christian values.

The two sides in this war were well represented in the responses to the Columbine High School massacre in the spring of 1999.

Speaking from a Judeo-Christian perspective, Billy Graham said: ⁹

I agree with those who have remarked that the problem is not guns. Rather, it is the hearts of people which need to be changed. I would add that only God can change our hearts. That is the reason Jesus said, “You must be born again.” Only God can give us a new nature that is demonstrated by love.

Speaking from the pagan perspective, Howard Stern, the radio “shock-jock” said: ¹⁰

There were some really good-looking girls running out with their hands over their heads. Did those kids [the killers] try to have sex with any of the good-looking girls? They didn’t even do that? At least if you’re going to kill yourself and kill all the kids, why wouldn’t you have some sex?

A Double Standard

As the culture war intensifies, the press is practicing a double standard. For example, when reporting acts of violence against blacks, homosexuals or Jews, the deeds are instantly

categorized as “hate crimes.” But with regard to the acts of violence specifically aimed at Christians, these are written off as “random acts of violence.”

Nationwide, people are being discriminated against in job hirings and promotions simply because they are Christians, something that would have been unthinkable in this country just a few years ago. Churches are being harassed as never before by zoning boards and building inspectors.

The situation is going to get worse rather than better. Jesus told His disciples that the world would hate them just as it hated Him (John 15:18-19). Jesus also prophesied that in the end times, right before His return, all true believers would be hated on account of His name and would be persecuted (Matthew 24:9). The only reason more professing Christians are not being persecuted today is because most have become so compromised by the world that it would be hard to find enough evidence to convict them of being Christians!

The Prospect of Suffering

In addition to specific persecution, we as Christians face the suffering that is going to engulf our nation if Jesus tarries and delays His return until after America is judged for its rebellion. When God judges a nation, the rain falls on the just and the unjust. Believers are not immune to the suffering, but they are promised that God will walk with them through the suffering and sustain them. As God got ready to destroy Judah, He spoke reassuring words to the true believers in the land (Isaiah 43:2-3):

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, Your Savior.

Many of the believers who heard these words suffered terribly from the long siege of Jerusalem. Many were carried into captivity. But the Lord was always there to encourage them and to see to it that their basic needs were met.

Crucial Questions

As those of us who are Christians face both focused persecution and generalized suffering, how then should we live? How can we live victorious lives in the midst of societal chaos? How can we endure persecution and suffering? How can we remain faithful to the Lord? Are we to withdraw from the world? Are we to arm ourselves, flee to the wilderness, and hunker down in bunkers?

No! A thousand times, No! We are to stand up for Jesus and speak out for righteousness. ✚

Notes:

- 1) Interview of Magic Johnson by Roger Mudd on the program, 20/20, produced by ABC Television, 1992. Exact date of the broadcast is unknown. The interview was witnessed by the author.
- 2) Interview of Suzanne Somers on the program, Good Morning America, produced by ABC Television, 1984. Exact date of the broadcast is unknown. The interview was witnessed by the author. The *Playboy* spread of her photos was published in the December 1984 issue.
- 3) Ezra Brown, "Getting Tough: New Jersey Principal Joe Clark kicks

up a storm about discipline in city schools," Time, February 1, 1988, p. 54.

4) "The Week, January 10-16, 1993," Time, January 25, 1993, p. 23. Time cites the source of the statistics as the National Education Association.

5) An item taken from the Internet in the summer of 1999. Widely circulated, with no date or author indicated.

6) *Stone v. Graham*, 449, U.S. 39 (1980). For a good survey of court decisions that have impacted America's schools in a negative way, see David Barton's book, *America: To Pray or Not to Pray*, (Aledo, Texas: WallBuilder Press, 1991).

7) Mailed to the author in 1997 by Ken Matto. Ken lives in Edison, New Jersey where he works as a production planner in a coffee company. He holds a Doctor of Ministry degree from Bethany Theological Seminary.

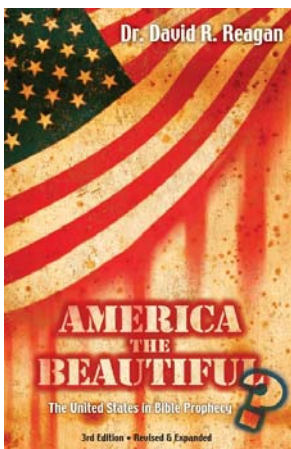
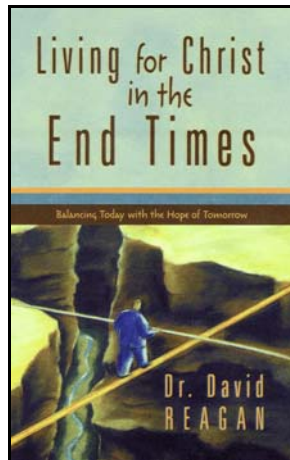
8) Bill Clinton, "Gay and Lesbian Pride Month, 1999," June 11, 1999. A proclamation by the President of the United States of America. Presidential proclamations are available on the Internet at <http://www.whitehouse.gov>.

9) The *Lamplighter* magazine, June-July 1999, p.13.

10) "Stern blasted for comments about Colorado tragedy," AFA Journal, June 1999, <http://www.afajournal.org/archives/23060000005.asp>.

For Further Information . . .

Dr. Reagan has written two books that deal in detail with the decay of American society. The first one, written in 2000 (from which the article above was extracted in part), is titled *Living for Christ in the End Times*. It focuses on the two greatest challenges to Christians at the beginning of the 21st Century: the rapidly increasing decay of society and the growing apostasy in the Church. After presenting these challenges in detail, Dr. Reagan presents ten keys to successful Christian living in the midst of a pagan world. 262 pages. \$15 plus the cost of shipping. To order, call 972-736-3567 between 8am and 5pm Central time, Monday through Friday. Or, you can order through our website at www.lamblion.com.



Dr. Reagan's other book that deals with the deterioration of American society is *America the Beautiful?* It provides an in-depth exploration of the United States in Bible prophecy, and it presents a chilling overview of the decline of our nation, showing how we are literally begging for the pouring out of God's wrath. This is the third edition of this book, and it brings the story of our decline right up to the beginning of the Obama Administration. 210 pages. \$15 plus the cost of shipping.

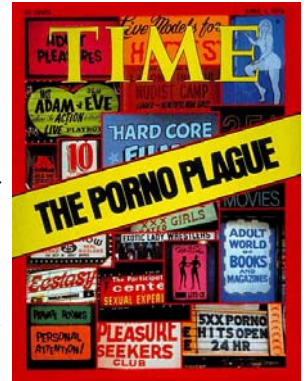
Both books can be ordered for \$25.

The Tragic Statistics of Our Nation's Decay

George Collich, Jr.

Pornography: 12% of all websites on the Internet are pornographic, totaling 24.6 million sites. 40 million Americans are regular visitors to pornographic sites. In the U.S., Internet porn pulls in \$2.8 billion per year, which is more than half of the worldwide total of \$4.9 billion.¹

Drug Abuse: In 2010 an estimated 22.6 million Americans over the age of 12 were current or former illicit drug users. Since 1980, the number of deaths due to drug overdoses has increased over 540%. Since 1990, the number of individuals who take prescription drugs illegally has risen over 500%.²



Cohabitation: There are over 12 million unmarried partners living together in 6 million households. The number of cohabitation unmarried partners increased tenfold between 1960 and 2007.³

Divorce: The divorce rate in America for a first marriage is 41%; for a second, 60%; and for a third, 73%. The divorce rate per thousand population increased from 2.6 in 1950 to 4.95 in 2010. The U.S. rate is the highest of any nation in the world.⁴



Children Out of Marriage: In 1980 the rate of births to unmarried women was 18.4%. By 2007, 27 years later, the rate had increased to 40%. Current trends indicate that by the year 2015, one of every two American babies will be born to a single mother, and illegitimacy will surpass divorce as the main cause of fatherlessness.⁵

Gambling: In 2007 Americans spent almost \$100 billion legally gambling in casinos and playing lotteries. Billions more were spent on illegal gambling. Households with incomes under \$13,000 spent, on average, \$654 a year on lottery tickets. Teen and college age gambling increased 600% between 2001 and 2005.⁶



Incarceration: The number of jail and prison inmates has increased exponentially since 1980 from half a million to 2.5 million. In 2009, the number of persons under correctional supervision (jail, prison, parole and probation) totaled 7.2 million.⁷

Abortion: A total of 54.5 million babies have been aborted since the Supreme Court legalized abortion in 1973. An estimated 43%

of all American women have at least one abortion by the time they are 45 years old. Half of all pregnancies among American women are unintended, and four out of ten of these are terminated by abortion.⁸



Domestic Violence: One in every four American women will experience violence in her lifetime. An estimated 1.3 million women are victims of domestic violence each year. The majority of domestic violence cases are never reported to the police.⁹

Child Abuse: Over 3 million reports of child abuse are made every year in the United States, many of which include multiple children. In 2009, 3.3 million

abuse reports were made involving 6 million children. More than 5 children die every day due to child abuse. It is estimated that 50 to 60% of child fatalities due to maltreatment are not recorded as such on death certificates.¹⁰

School Violence: Between 2003 and 2010, 116 students were killed in 109 separate incidents — an average of 16.5 student homicides each year. In 2007 a nationwide survey of students in grades 9-12 showed that 6% of the students carried a weapon (gun, knife or club) on school property during the month before the survey. And 22% of the students were offered, sold or given an illegal drug on school property during the year before the survey.¹¹



Crime: There are approximately 12 million crimes committed in the United States every single year, the worst record of any nation in the world. There are over 1 million members of criminal gangs inside our nation, and they are responsible for 80% of the crimes committed each year. There are over 100,000 rapes in the U.S. each year, the highest number of any nation. The city of Detroit, Michigan looks like a war zone and violent crime is thriving. So

far this year in Detroit, car thefts are up 83%, robberies are up 50%, burglaries are up 20% and property destruction is up 42%.¹²

Number 1: Americans love to be number 1. Here are some embarrassing areas where we rank number 1 in the world.¹³

- Prisoners
- Car thefts
- Obese people
- Credit card fraud
- Divorce rate
- Pornography
- Teen pregnancy
- Mental disorders
- Credit card debt
- Plastic surgery
- Government debt
- Reported crimes
- Illegal drug use

And we have the audacity to call ourselves a “Christian nation”? We have received more blessings than any other nation in history. Yet, we as a nation have turned our back on God. We are now reaping what we have sown. Like the old Roman Empire, we are rotting to death from within. Our only hope is a national revival that will turn people’s hearts back to God. Pray for it. ✚

Notes:

George Collich, Jr. serves as Director of Finance for Lamb & Lion Ministries. He is the ministry’s senior staff member, with over 20 years of service.

- 1) OnlineSchools, “The Stats on Internet Pornography,” www.online-mba.com/blog/stats-on-internet-pornography.
- 2) Michael’s House, “Drug Addiction Facts and Statistics,” www.michaelshouse.com/drug-addiction/drug-addictionstatistics.
- 3) Unmarried.org, “Statistics on Marriage,” www.unmarried.org/statistics.html.
- 4) NationMaster.com, “Divorce rate (most recent) by country,” www.nationmaster.com/graph/peo_div_rat-people-divorce-rate.
- 5) FirstThings.org, “Out of Wedlock Pregnancy Fact Sheet,” <http://firstthings.org/page/research/out-of-wedlock-pregnancy-fact-sheet>.
- 6) James Quinn, “American’s Gambling \$100 Billion in Casino’s Like Rats in a Cage,” www.casinowatch.org/commentary/like_rats_in_a_cage.html.
- 7) Wikipedia, “Incarceration in the United States,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incarceration_in_the_United_States.
- 8) Steven Ertelt, “54,559,615 Abortions Since Roe vs. Wade Decision in 1973,” www.lifenews.com/2012/01/23/54559615-abortions-since-ro-v-wade-decision-in-1973.
- 9) NCADV Public Policy Office, “Domestic Violence Facts,” [www.ncadv.org/files/DomesticViolenceFactSheet\(National\).pdf](http://www.ncadv.org/files/DomesticViolenceFactSheet(National).pdf).
- 10) ChildHelp.org, “National Child Abuse Statistics,” www.childhelp.org/pages/statistics.
- 11) Center for Disease Control, “Understanding School Violence,” www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention.
- 12) EndOfTheAmericanDream.com, “10 Facts About Crime In The United States That Will Blow Your Mind,” <http://endoftheamerican-dream.com/archives>.
- 13) EndOfTheAmericanDream.com, “USA #1? 40 Embarrassing Things That America Is The Best In The World At,” <http://endofthe-american-dream.com/archives>.

Homosexuality

Are Christians homophobic?

Dr. David R. Reagan

One of the many signs that we are living in the end times is the epidemic of homosexuality that is sweeping the world today.

Jesus said He would return at a time when society resembled “the days of Noah” (Matthew 24:37). The Old Testament tells us that in the time of Noah “the earth was corrupt in God’s sight” (Genesis 6:11). The New Testament reveals in stark detail the nature of that corruption.

The Nature of Noah’s Age

The description of Noah’s society is found in chapter one of Romans. Paul writes that the society was characterized first of all by the rejection of God and the worship of Man (Romans 1:18-25). Because of this stubborn and foolish rejection of their Creator, God “gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity,” and there was an outbreak of sexual immorality (Romans 1:24).

When they still refused to repent, God “gave them over to degrading passions,” and there followed an epidemic of homosexuality in which “women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural” and men likewise “abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another” (Romans 1:26-27).

Notice the progression here. Man begins to worship himself, his own knowledge and cleverness. As Man begins to worship himself, God is set aside, together with His moral laws. The result is an outbreak of sexual immorality. This leads ultimately to an epidemic of homosexuality, one of the final signs of the moral collapse of any society.

Does this sound familiar? It should. It is a vivid description of the moral decline which the world has experienced in this century. We have gone full circle. The society of Noah has reappeared, and it is characterized by the kind of ungodliness and wickedness which provokes the wrath of God (Romans 1:18).

The Biblical Viewpoint

There are those who argue that the Bible does not condemn homosexuality. That is sheer nonsense. Homosexuality is condemned as a sin against God in both the Old and New Testaments. It was one of the sins for which the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed (Genesis 19). It was specifically singled out in the Mosaic Law as “an abomination” (Leviticus 18:22). In fact, the Mosaic Law prescribed the death penalty for such activity (Leviticus 20:13).

In the New Testament, Paul specifically condemns homosexual activity. He says it is unrighteousness and that it will keep one from inheriting the kingdom of God: “Do not be deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

In his first letter to Timothy, Paul again refers to the sin of



homosexuality. He classifies homosexuals with those who are “lawless and rebellious,” “ungodly,” “unholy and profane” (1 Timothy 1:9-10).

The Humanist Viewpoint

Many humanist Christian leaders have tried to explain away these scriptures. In the process, they have endorsed homosexuality as an “alternative lifestyle,” and they have tried to justify the ordination of practicing homosexuals.

These religious leaders are caught up in spiritual darkness. They are the type referred to by Paul when he wrote: “Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them” (Romans 1:32).

These deluded leaders usually argue that the Old Testament expresses superstition about homosexuality and that the New Testament expresses Paul’s personal prejudice. These arguments, of course, reveal a rejection of Scripture as being inspired by the Holy Spirit.

They then add insult to injury by asserting that homosexuality could not be all that bad because Jesus never condemned it. What a pitiful argument! That’s like saying there is nothing wrong with child molestation, incest, or bestiality because Jesus never specifically condemned these sexual perversions.

The Viewpoint of Jesus

The fact is that Jesus had a lot to say about sexual morality, and what He had to say clearly rules out homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle before God.

In Matthew 19, Jesus taught that all sexual unions must be judged in reference to God's original intention and not in terms of human opinion and desire. And Jesus proceeded to point out that God's original intention was that "a man shall leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh" (Matthew 19:5).

In other words, Jesus clearly taught that the only moral sexual relationship is the one that occurs within a marriage between a man and a woman.

The Homosexual Response

Increasingly, the homosexual community is responding to criticisms of its lifestyle by arguing: "We are born as homosexuals. Being homosexual is as natural as being left handed. We have no more choice about our sexual orientation than a person has about his skin color. We should therefore be given special civil rights protection like other minority groups."

It sounds good. But it is a lie of Satan. The Word of God places no condemnation upon a person's sex, skin color or national origin. In fact, the Bible says that "God is no respecter of persons" (Romans 2:11). But the Bible clearly condemns a sexual preference for a person of the same sex. Would a loving God who sent His Son to die for the sins of the world condemn someone for something they have no control over? The answer is obvious.

Furthermore, there is no credible scientific evidence whatsoever that sexual preference is genetically determined like skin color. Several scientists have made the claim, including some recently, but none of their studies have stood the test of scientific investigation. In fact, all the evidence points to the fact that homosexuality is a lifestyle choice.

Certainly there are people who seem to be naturally tempted by a person of the same sex. Such temptation derives from the sin nature that all of us are born with. But that does not mean that giving in to the temptation is okay. After all, people with a normal sexual orientation are often tempted to have sexual relations outside of marriage, but the Bible clearly condemns both fornication and adultery.

"Normality"

Homosexuals also like to respond to their critics by arguing that the scientific community has declared their lifestyle to be "normal." In this regard, they point to the decision that was made by the American Psychiatric Association in 1974 to remove homosexuality from its list of pathological psychiatric conditions.

It is true that the APA took such an action, but what is not so well known is the fact that the action was entirely political in nature, and not motivated by any new scientific discoveries. This became evident in later surveys of the members of the association. Those surveys showed that the majority of the APA membership still viewed homosexual behavior as pathological. And four years after the vote, another survey revealed that 69%



of psychiatrists still believed that homosexuality "usually represents a pathological adaptation."

"Homophobia"

Another response of homosexuals to their critics has been to label them "homophobic." This is a very effective response, because no one wants to be accused of being prejudiced.

But a phobia is an irrational fear. Is it irrational to fear homosexuals? I think not. They are carriers of deadly diseases. They are determined to destroy the God-ordained concept of the family. And the Bible teaches that their unchecked presence in any society will ultimately result in God pouring out His wrath on that society. As you can see, there are some very rational reasons to fear homosexuals.

The Attack on the Family

Let's consider for a moment the homosexual political agenda. It's a radical one that most people are not really aware of. If enacted, it would serve to undermine the biblical concept of the family.

The first goal, of course, was to repeal all state laws against sodomy. Until 1961 every state in the Union had a law against sodomy. Since that time, state after state has repealed its anti-sodomy law due to pressure and threats from homosexual activists and organizations like the ACLU, despite the fact that the Supreme Court consistently upheld the constitutional right of states to pass such laws until 2003 when the Court reversed itself and held that all sodomy laws are unconstitutional.³

Another goal high on the political agenda is to get special laws enacted that would prohibit any kind of discrimination against homosexuals. The proposed laws are broad in scope. Some would prohibit a person from refusing to rent a room in his home to a homosexual. Others would go so far as to penalize a church for refusing to hire a homosexual, and organizations like the Boy Scouts would be required to recruit homosexual leaders. The most ominous laws are those that would classify verbal attacks on the homosexual lifestyle as "hate crimes." The latter laws could be applied to media ministers as well as preachers in the pulpit.

Pressure is mounting from homosexual activists groups and their allies (the ACLU, the NEA, and NOW) for the legalization of homosexual marriages. Certain other demands go hand in hand with this one. One is that homosexual couples be given the same tax breaks as traditional families. Another is that such couples be given equal consideration in the adoption of children. And, of course, there are demands that the homosexual "family" be presented in the public schools as an alternative lifestyle.

The "Gay" Lifestyle

Let's take a closer look at the perverted lifestyle of homosexuals. Promiscuity is the norm. In a 1978 study, 43% of homosexuals admitted to having sex with more than 500 partners, and 28% to having sex with more than 1,000! They also revealed that most of their sexual partners were anonymous persons with

whom they had sex only once. A 1981 study found that only 2% of homosexuals are “near monogamous,” meaning that they had 10 or fewer sexual partners in a lifetime.⁵

The sexual practices of homosexuals are even more appalling, so much so, that I am reluctant to share them. But you can find them listed in scientific reports on the Internet.⁶

The Deadly Pay-Off

Satan has attempted to disguise the sinfulness of homosexuality by having it dubbed “the gay lifestyle.” But God will not be mocked. The Bible teaches that we reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7).

The Apostle Paul says that homosexuals suffer the consequence of their sin by “receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error” (Romans 1:27). The truth of that statement has always been evidenced in the psychological suffering of homosexuals.

But the statement has taken on new significance in recent years with the sudden outbreak of specifically homosexual diseases like AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), originally known as “the Gay Plague.”

The result of their filthy sexual practices and their gross promiscuity is that the homosexual community is plagued with disease. Two-thirds of all AIDS cases result from homosexual activity, and homosexuals account for one-half of all syphilis cases even though they constitute only 1% of the population.⁷

It is no wonder that the average age of homosexuals dying with AIDS is 39. The average age of homosexuals dying of all other causes is 41. And only 1% of homosexuals live to the age of 65! That compares to 73% of heterosexual males who live to age 65 or over.⁸

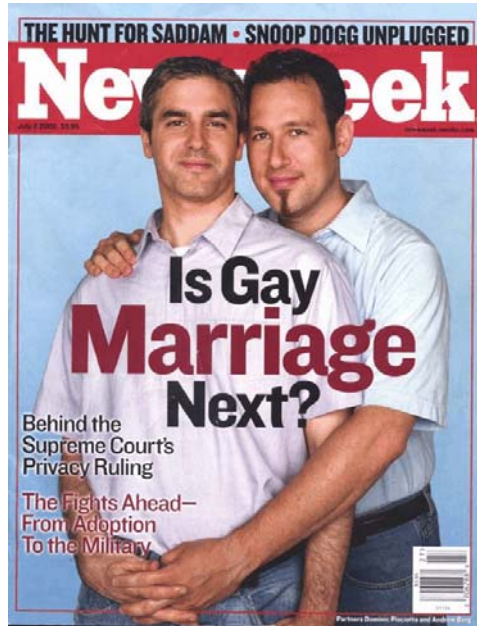
Homosexuality is not an alternative “lifestyle.” It is an alternative “deathstyle”!

The Only Hope

Is there hope for the homosexual? Yes, there is. The only hope is Jesus Christ. Through the power of His Spirit, the homosexual can be delivered from bondage to his sin, either by receiving complete deliverance from his perverted lust or by receiving the power to control the lust.

The most encouraging message any homosexual could ever be given is one contained in the Word of God in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. This passage begins with some very bad news, but it ends with incredibly good news. The bad news is put in the following words: “Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God.”

Paul minces no words in this statement, and the impact is devastating. Homosexuals are condemned with the worst of sinners. But in the very next verse, Paul provides a wonderful glimpse of hope for the homosexual: “And such were some of



you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.”

Isn't that marvelous? Those words were addressed to saved children of God! Paul says, “And such were some of you.” Yes, some of the Christians at Corinth had been sexual perverts, but they had been delivered from their bondage by the power of God in Christ Jesus. Their sins had been forgiven and forgotten by a God who does not wish that any should perish (Hebrews 8:12 and 2 Peter 3:9).

Like all sinners, the homosexual will find forgiveness and deliverance when he gets on his knees and repents of his sin. He will also find acceptance in the Church.

The Church

The Church has been severely criticized for having a “condemning attitude” toward homosexuals. The criticism is unjustified.

The Church cannot receive homosexuals into its fellowship when they come without repenting, demanding that the Church endorse their sin. To do so would be equivalent to the Church accepting adulterers who brag of their sexual conquests and refuse to repent.

Yes, the Church is a hospital for sinners and not a spiritual Phi Beta Kappa society. But the Church is a hospital for sinners who are willing to confess their sins and seek reconciliation with God. ✚

Notes:

- 1) Jim Burroway, “Today In History: APA Removes Homosexuality from List of Mental Disorders,” www.boxturtlebulletin.com/2008/12/15/7128.
- 2) Michael Mazzalongo, editor, *Gay Rights or Wrongs* (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Co., 1995), page 69.
- 3) Wikipedia, “Lawrence v. Texas,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawrence_v._Texas.
- 4) Matt Slick, “Statistics on sexual promiscuity among homosexuals,” <http://carm.org/statistics-homosexual-promiscuity>.
- 5) The Gospel Way, “Homosexuality and Gay Liberation: Alternate Lifestyle Or Immorality?” <http://www.gospelway.com/morality/homosexuality.php>.
- 6) John R. Diggs, Jr. MD, <http://catholiceducation.org/articles/homosexuality/healthrisksSSA.pdf>.
- 7) Eugene T. Gomulka, “Position Paper on the DOD Policy on Homosexuality,” <http://isme.tamu.edu/JSCOPE93/Gomulka93.pdf>.
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Christians Declare Speaking Out Against Homosexuality Is “Unloving.”

Nathan E. Jones

I was all prepared for a firestorm of protest from the pro-gay lobby when we published Dr. Reagan's article on homosexuality as an end times sign in our e-newsletter and blog. What I wasn't prepared for was how the primary opposition didn't turn out to be gays, but instead were fellow Christians who “love Jesus more than anything in this world.”

These professing Christians inundated our email box and the comments section claiming we were “throwing stones” by “condemning others.” We were “very cruel” and “hostile,” leaving them with a “bitter taste.” We were “complete ignoramuses” who were spewing “lies spread by bigots.” And, of course, we were what now has become the stereotype of anyone who says homosexuality is a sin — “hateful homophobes.” These last two labels are the world's buzz words wielded effectively to bludgeon any opposition into quiet submission. And these were the brethren!

As a member of the Post-Modern Generation, I realize it's anathema to say anything against any kind of sin. Without the Bible as one's moral compass, people turn to themselves to define what is right and wrong, usually based on how they're living. The only sin of this age is to offend. If one speaks out against homosexuality — the sacred cow of this day — because it's literally killing the practitioners and destroying society, well then you're just crossing the line. I just didn't think we'd be crossing the line of professing believers.

A Hateful Tone?

Just in case you're thinking the article was harsh sounding or that those affirming it acted like a torch-wielding mob so we deserved the backlash, neither was the case. Just what the Bible says about homosexuality was plainly laid out.

In God's own words, the Bible tell us that fornication (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 5:28; 1 Cor. 5:1-5; Heb. 13:4) and homosexuality (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:24-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:9-10) are sins and therefore are wrong. Jesus Himself in Matthew 19:4-5 reiterated the natural order of sexual union is between one man and one woman for life. Nobody was acting like a jerk unless the mere mention of the Bible makes one a jerk (which is really the crux of the issue).

Saved But in Rebellion?

Some objectors claimed that a person can be a practicing homosexual and still be saved. True? To answer the question with a question, “Is it possible for a person who is living in continued and open rebellion against God to be at the same time living in obedience to God in repentance and submission?” The answer is obviously “No.” To put it in another context, how could I be called faithful to my wedding vows if I was continually living in an adulterous relationship with a mistress?

Jesus Tolerant?

It was brought up that Jesus showed mercy to the adulteress and therefore He tolerates sin. But, didn't Jesus whip the money

changers out of the Temple because of their dishonoring God (Jn. 2:15)? Doesn't Revelation 19:13 tell us that Jesus' robe will be covered in the blood from the enemies He Himself will destroy upon His Second Coming? And, doesn't Jesus as judge finally send to the Lake of Fire everyone who ever rejected His salvation (Rev. 20:11-15)?



Nathan Jones

Yes, Jesus forgave, but He also told her to “leave your life of sin” (Jn. 8:11). According to Jesus' own words and requirements, we must leave our lifestyle of sin upon accepting Him as our Savior. To do otherwise leaves us remaining under God's wrath and final judgment in Hell (Jn. 3:36).

Loving People Straight to Hell?

Should the Christian response to those trapped in what the Bible calls detestable behavior (Lev. 18:22) just show “love and more love” and “endless forgiveness?” Certainly, we should love all people and show forgiveness as Jesus commanded. But, if anyone forgives a sinner yet the sinner hasn't sought God's forgiveness, then what does it matter? It really doesn't. A sinner can seek reconciliation with another person, but if they haven't done so with God, then that person still remains under God's wrath. If we don't proclaim this truth, our own apathy will “love” these lost ones straight to Hell. Christian enablers pass off their own forgiveness as God's, and that's when we are “loving” a person straight to Hell. That's a sin, and one the Lord says we'll be held accountable for (Ezek. 3:18-20; 33:6-8; Lk. 17:1-2; 1 Cor. 8:12).

Gay to Straight?

Protestations that Christians should stay away from the Bible and just leave it up to God to convict a homosexual caused a voice of experience to reply. A former lesbian responded that, “God does redeem and change people that were once caught up totally in homosexuality . . . after being confronted with the truth about themselves. Laying down sin is not self-initiated, it is part of divine, grace-filled correction.”

Victory over the shackles of a sin-addicted life is possible in Christ, but it must come by the “feet of one who brings good news . . . who proclaims salvation” (Isa. 52:7). You're likely to be labeled a “hateful homophobe” if you try in love to rescue a homosexual from eternal death, but some will respond in faith.

So, be brave! Come out of the apathetic, end times Church of Laodicea and show true Christian love by unapologetically bringing the lost homosexual the life-changing Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. ✚

A Biblical Response to “I was born this way.”

Mike Goeke

Recently, I was talking with my young son about his behavior with a babysitter. He had done some things clearly against “babysitter protocol,” and rather than own his error, he said: “Dad, I’m not perfect.”

He was using his innate imperfection as some form of justification for his poor behavior. The next day, I met with a young man dealing with difficult issues in his life and making questionable decisions. His primary defense to his behavior was his belief that he was only acting in



Mike Goeke

concert with how he had been born. He, too, was using his innate imperfection as a form of justification for his poor behavior. Another friend claimed that his “personality” somehow invalidated God’s commands to us to love each other, forgive each other and live in community with each other. His response to challenge was: “That is just not how God made me.” Somehow, we seem to think that God’s Word only applies to us when it is easy, or when it feels natural. In our self-absorbed culture, we rationalize our behavior by blaming our biology.

Our Innate Sin Nature

As a Christian, I believe that through original sin, we all enter the world with a sin nature and a propensity to do things that God calls sin. Sinning comes naturally. Few are taught to lie or to manipulate or to be selfish. Most people, and not just Christians, see “natural” parts of themselves that have the potential to be destructive in society or in relationships and they act to curb those tendencies.

We see few people claiming the identity of “liar” even though many people are tempted on a daily basis to lie about something. We see few people claiming the identity of “adulterer” even though many people deal with lust, at some level, on a daily basis. We see few people claiming the identity of “gossiper” even though many people are tempted to gossip on a daily basis. Certainly no one would seek to justify stealing or murder based on some innate desire to steal or to murder.

Those of us who are Christians see biblical guidelines as being about more than just the betterment of society or personal relationships. As Christ followers, we see God’s Word as written for us and for a purpose that goes beyond the surface of our lives. But many times God’s Word calls us to something that seems unnatural.

I know that I have struggled with many things for most of my life. I don’t know which of those things were part of me at my birth, and which were acquired by me as a result of the sinful world in which I grew up. But, in reality, I’m not sure it matters.

Struggling With My Sin Nature

Years ago I left my wife to pursue homosexuality. I made this decision for several reasons, but one major reason was that I had come to believe that I had always been gay and I would always be gay. The feelings seemed to go way back, and nothing in my childhood seemed identifiable as the “cause” of the intense feelings with which I had struggled for so long. Without an intervening cause, I decided that I must have been born gay and, thus, I had a loophole in God’s instruction for behavior and sexuality (sexual identity and sexual expression).

Even though I eventually returned home to my wife repentant and committed to allowing God to work in my life and sexuality, I continued to struggle with fears that some day there might actually be proof of a gay gene (a fear which has, as of today, not been realized). As I sought God’s Word, though, I realized that even if my same-sex attraction was somehow genetic, God’s Word still applied to me. And God’s Word did not give an “out” for genetic predispositions. I wasn’t told not to steal unless I just couldn’t help myself, or not to lie unless it felt really natural, or not to lust unless I had always felt the urge to lust. I was told simply to follow Christ no matter how I felt and no matter the depth of my struggles.

I also discovered that the call to follow Christ carried with it amazing promises. As a Christian, I was told that I was a new creation. I was promised abundant life. I was promised peace and joy and fulfillment. I was told that I would gain much more than I gave up. I saw in Paul that his lifelong struggles were allowed by God so that Paul would experience the sufficiency of God’s grace and the strength that comes in weakness.

I saw in the man born blind (John 9) that the man’s blindness was allowed so that God’s power might be displayed in him. I realized that to legitimize sinful feelings and behavior was to deny the reason Christ came in the first place. He came not to give me comfort in how I was, but to transform me and make me new. I may have been born one way, but He came to give me new life and new purpose and a new identity. Today, I am reborn completely new. My struggles may remain, but I am no longer a slave to them and am no longer controlled by them. More than anything, I am no longer defined by them.

I was born with lots of things, good and bad. And I was raised in a world full of other sinners and broken people. While sin came naturally to me, so did creativity and humor and friendship and many other things. Christ redeemed all of me, the good and the bad. He did not take away my positive traits or my negative traits, but he made them new.

Today, I can see that my whole life is for one purpose — to bring Him glory. No matter how I was born, I was reborn for so much more. To settle with what we were is to miss out on the magnitude of what God empowers us to become. Claim your new identity, and prepare to receive much more than you give up. ✚

Mike Goeke is an associate pastor at Stonegate Fellowship Church in Midland, Texas. He leads Cross Power Ministries, a ministry of Stonegate that ministers to people struggling with unwanted same-sex attraction. Learn more at <http://www.stonegatefellowship.com/www2011/cpm.html>. He can be reached at mikegoeke@stonegatefellowship.com.

Archie and the Gang Go Gay

Nathan Jones

I wouldn't be the Christian I am today if it wasn't for a gang of fictional teenagers named Archie, Jughead, Betty, Veronica, Big Moose, and especially their real life creator Al Hartley.

I also wouldn't be the Christian I am today if it wasn't for my dad who introduced me to those characters in his ongoing labor of love in raising me to know Jesus Christ. My father spent his career getting Christian materials in the hands of people who needed to learn about Jesus. While working for the publisher Revell in the early '80s, he introduced his young son to Spire Christian Comics and the Riverdale High world of Archie.

Created by John Goldwater in 1941, Archie Comics have been going strong now for 70 years. But, the characters didn't "get saved" until the early '70s when comic book writer-artist Al Hartley asked Goldwater permission to license the characters. Goldwater, though being Jewish, supported the rewriting of his characters teaching biblical messages. Over the next decade Hartley produced 59 comics including 19 Archie tales, six Bible stories, and many adaptations of famous real-life stories like David Wilkerson's book, *The Cross and the Switchblade*.

Gospel Made Elementary

Hartley didn't hold anything back with the Christian Archie's when it came to sharing the Gospel. Special editions titled "Archie's One Way" and "Clean Slate" explained the plan of redemption in detail, emphasizing Bible verses while intermingling the heartaches and antics of the central characters.

Loveable but klutzy Archie was always trying to do the right thing. Betty learned how to put God's love first. Other characters like Veronica battled with materialism, Reggie fought with his ego, Big Ethel struggled with self esteem, and Jughead had an endless stomach — issues kids relate to very well. By the end of each issue, the young reader discovered what the Bible has to teach on each subject and received an abundant helping of the Good News.

I was so enamored with these simple, biblical messages that I kept all of my Christian Archie's so that one day my children might also cherish them. Now in their elementary ages, they do.

Trip to the Comic Store

My daughter and I have a monthly tradition of riding down to the comic book store so that she can get an issue of Sonic. We always see the ongoing secular line of Archie Comics intermingled on the racks. This time, though, I received a shock.

That the Archie Comics are a secular run outside of Al Hartley's time on this earth (he died in 2003) I fully understand,

but I wasn't prepared to see wedged between the Peanuts and Scooby Doo an issue of Archie openly promoting gay marriage! Nor was I prepared for my daughter to see this either. On one hand she knows Archie teaches the Bible, but now she sees him promoting homosexuality, something she already knows the Bible says is immoral (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:24-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:9-10). How is she to reconcile this?

Kevin Keller

Jon Goldwater, son of the comic creator and a former rock music manager now co-CEO of Archie Comics, announced his desire to bring the Archie universe into the 21st Century in an "inclusive and updated way." Under the September 2010 storyline "Isn't It Bromantic?" a new character named Kevin Keller was introduced. And, Kevin's gay. He's also extremely popular,

even elected class president. Every panel shows background people enamored with his presence. Kevin goes on to become an Iraqi war hero who takes a bullet rescuing a soldier under his command. Taken to a military hospital, Kevin recoups with the help of his male doctor Clay. They fall in love, and in Issue 16 of "Life With Archie" they get married. Kevin's absolutely perfect with none of the usual hang-ups people have who are struggling with their sexuality.

Reluctantly, I picked up a copy of this comic to see why the introduction of Kevin Keller produced the first ever Archie reprint. The gay marriage was tough enough to digest, but I was equally shocked by the classic characters' immoral lifestyles. Like an episode of Jersey Shore, Archie's having commitment issues with his wife and prefers work over time with his son. Betty and Reggie are living together unmarried. Veronica's flaunting her socialite self just like a Kardashian. The teens are now adults, but

ones right out of a soap opera.

Responses

Going up to the comic counter, I asked the 20-something workers why this comic on gay marriage was in the children's section. The response, "It's not graphic" (no pun intended). They saw no problem with the subject of homosexuality being put before children as long as it wasn't graphic. For graphic lesbianism, they told me, go to Batwoman.

Comics like these are not just in comic stores but in checkout lanes everywhere, like at Toys R Us. They are purposefully targeting children to become accepting of sinful lifestyles. And, the strategy is working. Many Christians even now are supportive of the gay lifestyle in an attempt to be loving, though denying the very sin that is sending people to Hell. I fear the Church has lost the cultural war on the issue of homosexuality.

Encountering a dark universe version of my childhood Christian characters, I cannot but help but feel an effective Christian witness has died. Certainly a whole generation is lost to the perils of immorality. ❖



1) Television and Video

Broadcast 52 weeks of *Christ in Prophecy* TV programs over five national networks and two regional networks with access to over 80 million homes inside the United States.
Broadcast via Daystar and Church Channel satellites to almost every nation in the world.
Produced 24 new *Christ in Prophecy* TV programs and revised 11 others.
Broadcast our 485th television program at the end of December.
Produced 7 new video albums and revised another.
Videotaped 26 programs to be broadcast in 2012.
Reproduced and distributed over 32,000 DVD video programs.
Purchased a new high definition field camera.
Conducted two remote video shoots, one in Israel and the other in the state of Georgia.

2) Internet and Website

Sent out 29 e-newsletters to 20,500 subscribers, sharing biblical messages and the electronic *Lamplighter* magazine.
Experienced 185,000 to 210,000 unique visitors to our website each month.
Experienced growth of "The Christ in Prophecy" Facebook group to over 4,600 members.
Posted 260 Bible prophecy related articles on "The Christ in Prophecy Journal" blog.
Answered hundreds of spiritual questions submitted by email and discussion forums.
Streamed over 180 "Christ in Prophecy" TV shows.
Produced 3 Bible Prophecy Insights videos.
Podcast over 80,000 mp3's per month.

3) Preaching and Teaching

Completed a total of 24 speaking engagements:
16 Weekend conferences at churches.
8 Bible prophecy conferences.
Participated in 5 radio interviews.

4) Publications

Published a Holy Land calendar for 2012.
Published a new edition of our catalogue of resources.
Produced 6 issues of the Ministry's magazine, *The Lamplighter*.
Continued publishing a version of our magazine in India.
Published a new book, *Jesus: The Lamb and The Lion*.
Completed the translation of *Wrath & Glory* in Spanish.
Authorized the translation of *God's Plan for the Ages* in Urdu, and *Wrath & Glory* in Bengali.



5) Missions

Shipped Bible study materials to individuals and missions in many different foreign countries.
Supplied over 500 Bibles to churches in Nigeria and provided more than \$19,000 for relief aid to Nigerian refugees.
Provided regular monthly financial support to 19 missions — 8 domestic and 11 foreign.
Conducted a missions trip to Nicaragua to confer with our Spanish translator and to conduct a Bible prophecy conference.
Donated a total of more than \$259,000 in cash and services to missions.

6) Israel

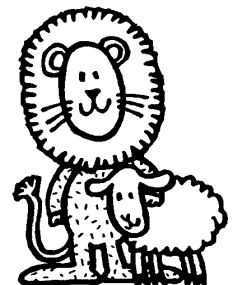
Conducted one Holy Land pilgrimage with 50 pilgrims.
Provided financial assistance to several ministries in Israel.

7) Conferences

Conducted our annual Bible conference with 750 attendees.
Hosted a conference in Lexington, Kentucky on the book of Revelation.
Participated in 6 Bible prophecy conferences sponsored by other ministries.

8) Finances

Received 20,970 gifts from 3,826 donors.
Experienced growth in Prophecy Partners to a total of 2,533.
Received re-certification as a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.
Received a four star rating (the highest possible) from Charity Navigator.
Ended the calendar year with all bills paid in full for the 32nd year in a row.



New Programs

Dr. David R. Reagan

We recently recorded several new TV programs featuring Eric Barger and Gene Getz. The Getz interview was broadcast in April. The interviews with Barger will be broadcast in the Fall of this year.

We interviewed Gene Getz about his revolutionary new study Bible, called *The Life Essentials Study Bible*. The Bible features 1,500 supracultural principles — principles that can and should be applied at any moment in history and in every cultural situation.

But what makes the Bible so unique is that each principle is accompanied with a QR code that can be scanned with a smart phone. The scan will then take you directly to a video on the Internet that will show Gene teaching about that principle! There is a total of 250 hours of video teaching available through utilization of the QR codes.



Dave and Nathan with Gene Getz

We shot three programs with Eric Barger, who is one of our viewers' favorite guests. We talked with him about the increasingly aggressive Atheist assault on Christianity, and we did a follow-up program concerning the questions that are most frequently asked by unbelievers. But the program we did with him that is likely to receive the greatest response was one about the new phenomenon called Chrislam, a movement to merge Islam with Christianity. (Eric is pictured below.)



"Christ in Prophecy" Broadcast Schedule

National Networks

Daystar Network DirecTV Channel 369 DISH Channel 263 On cable networks throughout the nation.				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Wed. 4:00pm	Wed. 5:00pm	Wed. 6:00pm	Wed. 7:00pm

Inspiration Network Available on cable networks DirecTV Channel 364 DISH Channel 259				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Sun. 3:00pm	Sun. 4:00pm	Sun. 5:00pm	Sun. 6:00pm

The Church Channel DirecTV Channel 371				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Sat. 6:30pm	Sat. 7:30pm	Sat. 8:30pm	Sat. 9:30pm

National Religious Broadcasters Network DirecTV Channel 378				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Sun. 2:00pm	Sun. 3:00pm	Sun. 4:00pm	Sun. 5:00pm

Golden Eagle Broadcasting Network DirecTV Channel 363				
Zone	Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern
Day Time	Tues. 4:00pm	Tues. 5:00pm	Tues. 6:00pm	Tues. 7:00pm

Regional Networks



"Christ in Prophecy" is broadcast throughout southern Louisiana on the **Family Vision Network** at various times. See: www.kajn.com/familyvision.



New Mexico Family Stations is a network consisting of two stations in Albuquerque. Our program is broadcast on Thursday at 11:00pm and on Saturday at 3:00pm.



Reminder of the 2012 Lamb & Lion Bible Conference

Theme: *Israel in the End Times*

Dates: June 29-30, 2012 (Friday evening through Saturday afternoon)

Location: The Marriott Hotel in Allen, Texas (a suburb of Dallas)

Speakers



David Reagan



Jeff Seif



Mark Hitchcock



A. Fruchtenbaum



Gary Frazier



Bill Koenig

Musicians

The conference will begin on Friday evening, June 29, with a concert by Ted Pearce. Jack Hollingsworth will sing throughout the conference and will present a concert at a banquet on Saturday evening.

The conference is free, but seating is limited, so registration is required. You can register by calling **972-736-3567**.

There will be a banquet on Saturday evening, and there will be a charge of \$35 for it. Dr. Reagan will be the featured speaker at the banquet.

Give us a call today to register for the conference. Out of town registrants will receive a listing of area motels. The host hotel, the Marriott, is already full. ☆



Ted Pearce

Ministry News

Special Revelation Conference: Dr. Reagan and Larry McCoy will conduct a Revelation Conference at Hikes Point Christian Church in Louisville, KY on Saturday evening, May 12. During the first hour, Larry and his musical group will present the book of Revelation in song. Following an intermission, Dr. Reagan will preach through the book during the second hour. The conference will start at 6pm and will conclude at 8:30pm. Seating will be on a first-come, first-serve basis. The conference is free of charge. Dr. Reagan will be preaching at the Hikes Point Church the next morning, on Sunday, May 13.

Other Speaking Engagements: In June, Dr. Reagan and Nathan Jones will conduct a weekend prophecy conference at the Hilltop Bible Fellowship in Ashdown, AR (2-3). The annual Lamb & Lion Bible Conference is scheduled for the end of June (29-30). Dr. Reagan and Jack Hollingsworth will be ministering together at Cornerstone Baptist Church in Lucas, TX on Sunday morning, July 1. In August Dr. Reagan is scheduled to hold a prophecy conference at Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church in Terre Haute, IN (4-5). Dr. Reagan will be one of several speakers at the annual Louisiana Bible Prophecy Conference sponsored by Maranatha Ministries. It will be held at First Baptist Church in Broussard, LA (24-25). While in Louisiana, Dr. Reagan will speak at Amana Christian Fellowship in Maurice (26).

Volunteers: We are very blessed to be assisted by a number of volunteers. Several of these are people who assist our Web Minister, Nathan Jones, with the Christ in Prophecy Facebook group. One of the moderators of that group is Tony Privitt.

Tony and his wife, Sarah, have been married for 5 years and live in Plano, Texas. Tony grew up in church but fell away into a very destructive lifestyle of drug and alcohol abuse. He also got caught up in the occult music scene which led to some terrifying occult experiences. He now strives to redeem the time by doing the work of an evangelist. He serves as a home group leader through his local church and assists Lamb & Lion as one of our Facebook moderators.



Tony and Sarah



Dave with Jerry Lanham

Prophecy Partners: Our Prophecy Partners provide the financial base of our ministry, and they serve as our prayer partners. We would like to invite you to become one by pledging to give \$20 a month or more for one year. You will receive a ministry update letter each month from Dr. Reagan, together with a gift, which is

usually a DVD program about Bible prophecy. Partners are eligible for discounts on purchases from the ministry. To sign up as a Prophecy Partner, just call 972-736-3567. Thanks! (Prophecy Partner Jerry Lanham is from Gravel Switch, KY.) ✚



**LAMB
& LION
MINISTRIES**

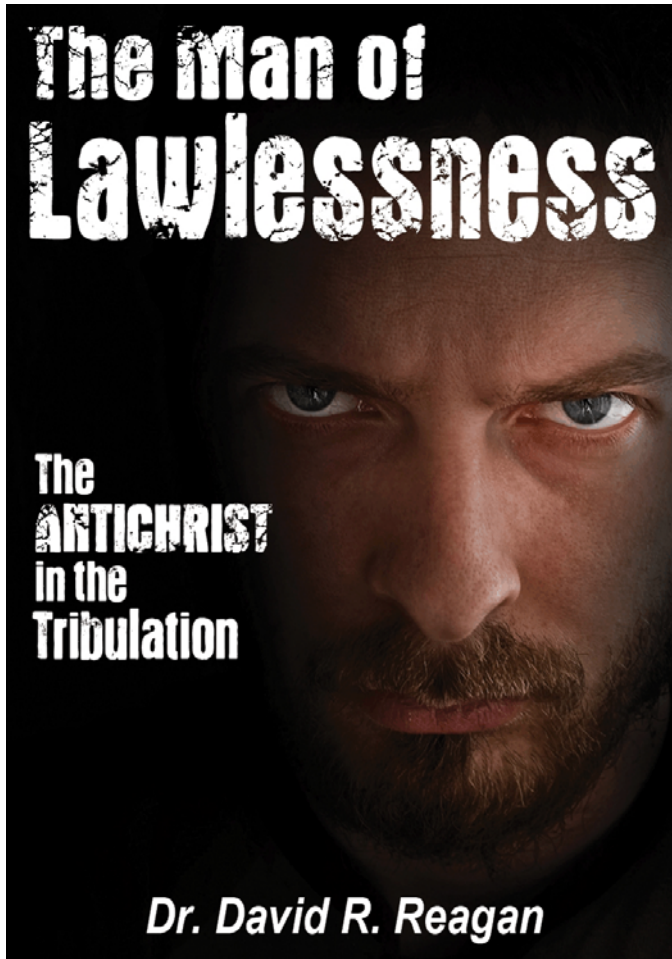
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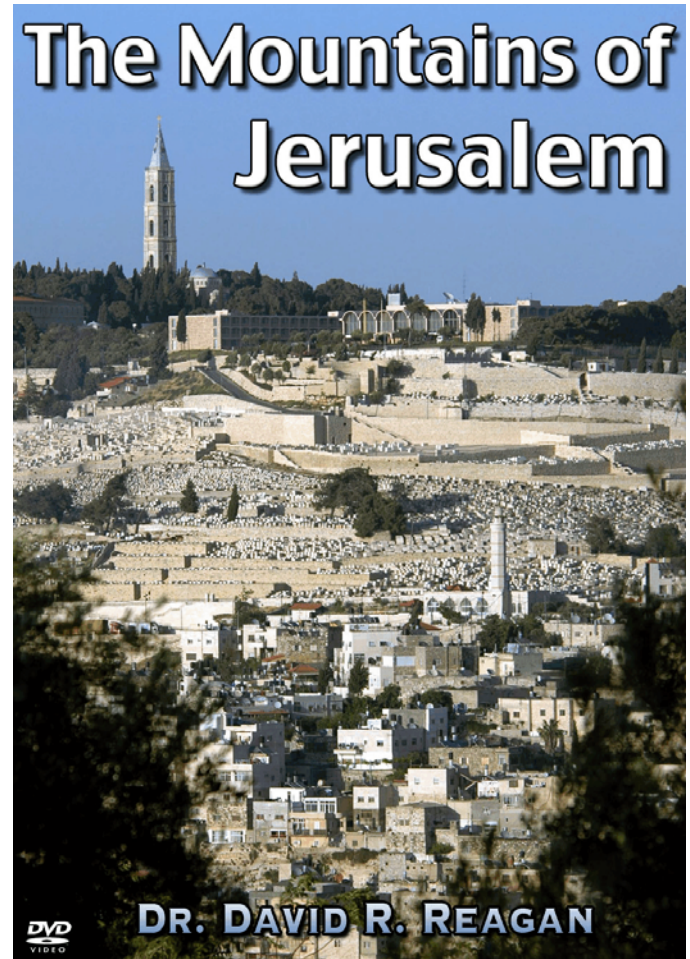
New Book



This book contains a survey of everything the Bible has to say about the Antichrist, presented in a down-to-earth, easy-to-understand style. One of its special features is a prophecy forum where the opinions of 22 Bible prophecy experts are presented concerning key questions about the Antichrist. It also features a series of in-depth essays about the Tribulation and the Antichrist. 221 pages. \$15 plus the cost of shipping.

Special Offer: Both for \$25 plus the cost of shipping. To order, call 972-736-3567 between 8am and 5pm Central time, Monday through Friday. Or, order through our website.

New Video



This video contains four programs that run about 25 minutes each. The programs focus on four mountains of Jerusalem — the Mount of Olives, Mount Zion, the Temple Mount, and Mount Herzl. Dr. Reagan conducts a tour of each mountain, pointing out sites related to Jesus and to His Second Coming. Each program contains teaching about Bible prophecy. \$15 plus the cost of shipping.

Bonus: A DVD featuring a 25 minute walk thru the Old City of Jerusalem.

