



July 25, 2010

Downward Spiral Into Darkness

Earlier this month I was at a public event for the national holiday and being in a large crowd you hear a lot of things that one might not otherwise be exposed to. One conversation that I heard was a young person who had been confronted by another individual for using Jesus name in vain. The statements this person made about “Bible thumpers” was so laced with profanity that I wouldn’t even think of putting any of it in this article. Last week I was picking some folks up from a meeting, which happens to be held in the basement of a local denominational church, when a car load of young “men” went by yelling obscenities at folks who they may have assumed were there for religious purposes. These are only two events but they mirror dozens of others that I have noticed over the past several years. It used to be that folks with such negative attitudes toward spiritual things were in the minority and you could generally tell who they were by the way acted and dressed in general. They were also not quite as demonstrative and kept their opinions to themselves unless someone else brought the subject up. Over the years it seems that the ranks of the irreverent are growing in ever greater numbers. That is the way of man as God tells us that the imagination of man is only evil continually from his youth (**Gen 8.21**). It seems that in urban areas there is a growing number of individuals who blame God and religion for the woes of the world and their personal problems. The entertainment industry fuels this by promoting ungodly ideas and casting religiously minded individuals in roles that depict everything from instability to insanity. This reflects the further reality that humans don’t like to take responsibility for their actions. Humans ultimately don’t want to be reminded of the presence of God. Paul mentions this in his letter to the Romans when he notes that humans did not like to retain God in their knowledge (**Rom 1.28**). God gets in the way of doing what pleases us. Reading the Bible makes it hard to do what we want without feeling guilty. For some who reject the Bible it is the feeling of guilt and the idea of sin that they want to do away with. The only way to do that is to do away with the idea of God. That is a problem and generally leads to chaos and ruin. God established laws from the beginning that have come down through the ages as moral codes. These commands, when respected, leads a culture to stability and strength. Historically it is interesting to note that when a power has corrupted the ideas God established, their culture unravels and spirals downward into darkness and ruin. Abandonment of these principles also creates a hardship for those who follow God as they are persecuted and even killed for what they believe in. Solomon states, “***Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.***” (**Prov 14.34**). Unfortunately the rejection of God in our day and time is partly the result of misrepresentation and misconduct on the part of those who claim to be Christians. It is difficult to separate the image of God from the image and reputation of those who claim to be his followers. John states, “***If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.***” (**1 John 1.6-7**). It is also imperative that we emphasize the need to teach only what the Bible teaches, and all that the Bible teaches (**1 Pet 4.11, Jas 3.1**). There is too much confusion in the world that fuels the fire of irreverence and unbelief. These things are to be expected. As Christians we need to make sure that we are working on being what God would have us to be at all times. We speak of bringing reproach on the name of Christ and his church but do not think that we might be doing that in subtle ways by not guarding our actions and doing the best we can at all times. In that way we can influence those who will listen and not become part of the problem.

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