

Kingdom Report

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Cultural Degradation and the Culture War of the Church

There is a cultural war now raging in the world. It is not about race or class or East vrs. West. At its core it is a centuries old war on the man created in the image of God and the satanic attack to turn man into an animal and his culture into a battleground of predators and prey. And the Church has a battle on its hands....

In my current series I am taking a week by week look at our world landscape and identifying issues that the Church will inescapably have to confront as we move forwards in time.

I started by warning that the Middle East on the 70th anniversary of the nation of Israel is not some wonderful sign of the 'end times" and the soon return of Christ. This is a theological dead end that is going to end badly and we evangelicals like the early church is going to get the world wide blame and persecution for a policy of Christian Zionism instead of Kingdom dominion.

Next I warned you that the storm clouds are already forming on the world economy and the Church's dependence on a failing world financial system and false teaching on prosperity which is dependent on that failing system. When this economic house of cards built on debt and a degraded culture of consumerism finally collapses there are going be tragic bitterness in many evangelical movements with the question....but where are the promises of financial prosperity?

The issue I am going to present to you in this blog is that of world wide cultural degradation that is already having devastating consequences for the stability of nations and the operations of economic markets and the viability of planet earth to continue to sustain mankind....the very issue of civilization is at stake!

To put it broadly let me try to explain....

When in 1992 Francis Fukuyama published his seminal book "The End of History" the basic theme was that liberal democracy was the crowning achievement of the upward march of western and world civilization and liberal democratic capitalism was the economic crown of that achievement. There is no alternative to either two and that is it....now what lies ahead is the endless growth of civilized nations and economies....end of history!

Except....it is not the end of history...just the "end times" of a world civilization experimenting with the idea that man can act civilized and conduct his own affairs apart from a morality that is based on the premise that God is the creator of reality.

Democratic self rule only works when you have a citizenry who are moral and free enterprise capitalism only works when you have moral marketplace participants who practice not only free trade but moral fair trade.

This whole civilizational construct of what we call "Western Civilization" has its roots not in Athenian democracy but in Biblical values carried forward by generations of church people who had a basic biblical morality about how to conduct themselves in life....also called either "the Protestant work ethic" or old style Victorian values...meaning no matter what a cad or sinner you were, in public there is a certain way you behave.

That is all gone. A 500 year war since the Reformation has now culminated in our age in what we call "post modernism"...and it is destroying the very fabric and viability of the current world political and economic order to survive.

There are two historical streams that have been at war for the last 500 years...

When the Lord launched the Reformation 500 years ago it was the start of the decade by decade growth of not only the revived church of Jesus Christ but also the revival of the concept of man made in the image of God. The end result of that road is the plan of God as stated in Revelation 1 "for He has made us kings and priests unto God". The purpose of God is a vast family of priest/kings reflecting the image of Jesus Christ in the world. On such a disciplined people who are ruled by Christ in their heart you can build a civilization and a free market economy.

And that is what started with Luther's attack on the priesthood of the Catholic church and Calvin and Puritan's attack on the "divine right of kings". The moral effect of vast numbers of people who now can freely read the Bible and come out from under the oppression of Feudal tyranny allowed new republics and capitalism to prosper.

However parallel to that started a long term satanic program to destroy that very image of God in man and the trust in the revealed truth of scripture as to the creation of man in God's image and the morality of a God centered creation.

The purpose of this stannic attack is to remold the thinking and actions of mankind into the concept of "man is an animal", there is no personal God and there is no transcendent morality. There is only instinct and in the human jungle there are predators and there are prey. All "morality" therefore is the morality of survival instinct....you are ruled by base animal needs of food, sex, dominance, fight or flight, predator or prey.

The Philosophical Battle: God is Dead

I don't have the space here to enumerate much of the battle except to highlight the parameters of the conflict. But we can say that at least from Kant through Hegel and the British empiricists such as Hume. Bentham, Locke....you have the steady attack on the basis of truth...which in many ways goes back to Plato and Aristotle...with Plato basically arguing for a reality that transcends man's sense experience and Aristotle arguing for a reality mediated through our senses.

By the time you get to the end of the 19th century you have several hundred years of attack on truth as revelation from God to finally man as advanced animal. The

resulting cultural shift was ably exemplified by Nietzsche and his "God is dead...and we have killed him and for that we shall cry a river of blood".

Everything in the philosophical tradition of hundreds of years was geared towards this conclusion....kill God in the mind of man and the behavior of the world.

Nietzsche in his seminal book "The Antichrist" saw what lay ahead and described the new 20th century....it will be the era of the "ubermensch" the superman and the will to power. The domination of the strong over the weak. What followed in the 20th century from the "death of God" movement was the "post modern movement" of social deconstruction led by the revolutionaries of the Frankfurt School, Derrida, Foucault, Marcuse, Sartre, and many others.

The idea was that society had to be first "deconstructed" and then reconstructed. All foundations of morality and accepted truth and systems of civilization broken down and then rebuilt.

The war on God and man and morality and civilization were waged on all fronts: art, music, literature, economics, politics, sociology, psychology....all sense of order and balance and harmony deconstructed.

What was glorified was Darwin's man as advanced ape. Art was degraded from a celebration of meaning and beauty to the celebration of the irrational. What was left was "modern art" and the big joke that Picasso and Klee and Pollock played on the world. In literature you had the thousand pages of James Joyce and senseless drivel of Ulysses. In politics you had the rise of Bolshevism in Russia driven by Marx and Hegel and Nazism in Germany driven by Nietzsche and Heidegger. In music you had the rise of jazz and other forms of musical deconstruction. In psychology and human behavior you had the rise of Freudian analysis with the suppression of sexuality as the hidden anxiety of human failing, needing of course sexual liberation as a solution.

There is really much more that I will develop along these lines in future analysis but this "post modern" deconstruction of truth and morality is having a devastating effect now on our ability to carry on with what we call western civilization.

You see it especially in the effects of our youth. On college campuses where the tradition of protected free speech is supposed to be sacred...there is a "political correctness" that demands only one way of thinking. The era of thought crimes has arrived. The Catholic Inquisition has been revived...no thought allowed but correct thought...book burnings and restricted speech now in place.

You see it in the economic sphere. The very top men in business and politics invariably are avid readers and followers of Ayn Rand and her philosophy of "Objectivism" outlined in her seminal book "The Virtue of Selfishness" and her novels Atlas Shrugged and The Fountainhead. The only books read by Donald Trump, the favourite books of politicians like Paul Ryan and most of the executives of Wall Street. This is a philosophy that says I owe you nothing and my highest morality is to take care of myself. Greed is good.

You see this post modern deconstruction of morality in the opioid crises, you see it in the pornography addiction, you see it in the out of control epidemic of sexually transmitted diseases, you see it in the obesity crisis, we see it in the consumer and government debt crisis.

What are we seeing? We are seeing a destroyed humanity that is obsessed with body needs and pleasures for the moment, with no future vision, no sense of self control, no loyalty to higher truth or society values....its an international attitude of "what is in it for me", "what have you done for me lately", "how do I feel about this", "does it feel good"....and it is destroying the planet ecology, economies and societies.

Now here is my challenge to the church...

This world system in its present political and economic and social structure is doomed to fall. There is no escape out of this world before the fall. You cannot reform these nations and societies by thinking a better political platform, better government policies, better economic growth, better education etc are going to save this situation. Its too far gone for that.

We are challenged by the need for constructing an entire Christian culture. That means our only solution to the world is that when the world system collapses we have an alternate and parallel world culture in place to which we can invite the lost on the condition that they become a new creation in Christ Jesus.

That means that we start the very difficult job of cultural reconstruction on the basis of Biblical values with the foundation that we, mankind are made in the image of God and are made for His purpose in His world to reflect His glory and to be conformed to His image.

And that means we need to reflect that in our own systems of art, music, literature, philosophy, economics, schooling, governance....and on and on. Again I warn you...the world civilizational structure as it now stands is built on sand and the storms are here and we need to build an ark regardless of how difficult or challenging to ride out the coming storm.

I leave you with some quotes from a recent article I read from the UK paper the Daily Star of 2 June....this is where cultural degradation is heading.

Inside a porn addiction clinic with patients as young as EIGHT

SITTING in the waiting room of a top London Harley Street clinic is a 30-year-old man dressed in a designer suit, scrolling through his iPhone.

On the street outside his good looks and charming smile might catch the eyes of passersby, but in here he keeps his head down and avoids looking directly at the receptionist.

He is one of Britain's growing number of pornography addicts, whose shocking secret is one click away from destroying his life forever.

"What gives you a thrill one day doesn't do it for you the next," he later explains.

"You're always looking for a greater buzz and then it leads you into a darker place you never believed possible."

And one expert in the field now claims porn addiction is affecting children as young as eight. He knows, because he's treating them.

"This a physical dependency – people are self-medicating with porn and each time they need a greater, more hardcore hit," reveals Rob Watt, who has over 13 years experience treating addicts.

"It's a secret, shameful world which people struggle to admit – until it's too late.

"I'm currently working with kids as young as eight who are watching hardcore porn in the middle of the night and getting up first thing in the morning to watch it again before school. The effects are truly devastating and will only get worse.

"A school counsellor and a group of parents came to me because what they found on a child's phone wasn't even regular sex. We're talking necrophilia and bestiality. It had already gone that far.

"It gets dark quickly. I work with married, company bosses who spend six hours a day in porn chatrooms, those who've seen over 1,000 sex workers. I had a client watching porn involving roadkill – then heading out in their car in the middle of the night to act it out.

Nothing surprises me any more."

We spent the day with Rob inside Innisfree – Europe's first long-term treatment centre for pornography and sexual compulsivity – which he founded in 2015 after years working at The Priory.

He believes that due to the accessibility of more hardcore content online, porn addiction is set to reach epidemic proportions as the next generation who've grown up with unparalleled internet use struggle to form relationships and hold down employment.

"My background was alcohol and drug addiction but I found that more and more people with porn and sexual compulsivity were presenting themselves to me and we had no idea how to treat them," he says.

"The consequences are catastrophic but the regular 28-day programmes weren't working. I left in 2012 to start my own private practice and this is now the only one of its kind in Europe. I believe long term therapy and treatment as well as a period of abstinence is the only answer. "Some of the men attempt suicide through the shame"