

What in the World are We Doing?

Here I sit, a fifth of the way into the 21st century. I look around me at the “world” and the “church”, and I don’t see much difference at all. In fact, sometimes the church seems to elevate things that are really contrary to the Bible, while some radical worldly factions actually get some things right, even if it is not consciously. I think the problem is that the church as a whole is pretty Biblically illiterate. Most Christians have conveniently bought into the worldly idea that only experts can understand certain things. Since most of us are not pastors or Bible scholars, many Christians feel they aren’t “qualified” to read and understand the Bible themselves. They feel it must be interpreted to them by pastors, teachers, authors of devotionals and other “experts”. This leaves the church very malnourished. Most malnourished creatures eventually become sick. The church just becomes irrelevant and ineffective.

The parts of the American culture that are most alluring to Christians are the same ones that everyone else is caught up in. The Bible warns us that the wisdom of God is foolishness to the world and that the way that seems right to a man leads to death. In the 20th century, Man became God in the USA. Man decided that with his god, Science, he could control all nature and determine the fate of mankind as well as the planet we live on. Man “created” all kinds of chemicals and machines that would mitigate the evil effects of nature. We have insecticides to kill all those nasty bugs, herbicides to kill all those nasty weeds, fungicides to kill any kind of fungus, machines to control our climate so we never have to stop and rest because it is too hot or too cold. Now, since we are working so hard, we don’t have time to worry about growing, harvesting or cooking food. We let more machines and chemicals do that for us in the form of processed food, either bought in a box at the store or prepared for us at a restaurant. We have machines to wash our clothes and do everything but sleep for us. Now we can’t sleep because we have all those blue lights of our electronics keeping us awake, and we have to leave our phones on all night just in case an Amber Alert or something important happens.

Even early in the 20th century, scientists knew that the compounds they were developing to “make life better” were dangerous poisons, not just to the target organisms, but to humans as well. They dismissed this, I believe based on their omnipotent idea that they could counter the effects of these poisons with the marvels of modern medicine. Even if they could only cure half of the diseases they caused, it was just a human sacrifice to the greater good of humanity, or to their false god.

Early in the 20th century, people who cared about farming and nature were concerned about this idea of “combatting” nature, fighting nature and working contrary to nature. But gradually, everyone but a few fringe people who were labeled as conspiracy theorists or just plain crazy, accepted that this idea of making life better by death was good and acceptable and modern. How can death bring about life in the physical realm? Yes, Jesus’ death on a cross brought us life. But if we kill one another, that is not bringing life. Jesus alone holds the keys to death and to life. We have no right to kill and destroy the world God has given us to be stewards of. The devil is the one who steals, kills and destroys. If we participate in those behaviors we are following him, not our Creator God.

Life is good, right? Death is bad, right? The Bible says that we will call good evil and evil good. We have accepted that Science has Proven that we cannot live without killing. Think of the religious ramifications of this. This false religion has all the components of the ancient false religions, including the deluding influences that draw those that call themselves followers of God into the heart of idol worship. This religion has lots of literature (its form of a Bible). This literature then has its preachers, teachers and missionaries. The preachers are the scientists, the doctors and philosophers at universities are the teachers and the missionaries are the ones taught by them that go out into the public as school

teachers, nurses, public servants and leaders and workers in non-profit organizations that do “good works”. Ah yes, the good works. That is a key component of any false religion, that one must earn points by doing good works. Somehow this will lead to a good result some time after we die, or even in this life. So we do food drives, blood drives, clothing drives and wear pink ribbons and run races “for the cure”. We never think about how to prevent folks from needing handouts, blood donations or cancer. Remember God is the author of life, the devil comes to steal kill and destroy. So maybe the force behind hunger, homelessness and unhealthy lifestyles is really the god these people are enslaved to. Jesus said if we all followed his teachings no one would be poor. He then followed that up by saying that the poor would always be with us. Because He knew that we all would not obey his teachings.

As Christians we do need to have compassion on the lost and dying. However, giving them more of what made them sick and hungry in the first place is not compassion. We need to stop throwing money and processed food at the food pantry and take a hard look at what really makes people “food insecure” in our culture today. As always, the root of the problem is spiritual. But how do you reach these people with the gospel? First of all, I think we need to lead by example and be following the gospel ourselves. If our lives look just like theirs with the exception that we clean up on Sunday morning and go to church, and we have a job that pays the bills, we are to be most pitied. We can’t disciple them because we aren’t really following Christ ourselves. In truth we are as hopeless and depressed and without a vision as they are. We need to dig into the Word of God and find out who He really is and what He really wants each of us as an individual to do for His kingdom.

It is hard for any person to step back and look at their life from an outside perspective. We are all products of our culture and upbringing. As, Christians, however, we need to understand that our culture is not nor has ever been Christian. We are to be aliens and strangers, not of this world. We are called to the narrow road that few are taking, not the wide road that everyone else is taking. We need to understand that this is not narrowly defined by moral behavior. If we act morally while the rest of the world is not, that in and of itself is not being a Christian. If we talk different and don’t drink or do drugs and try to engage in “wholesome” activities instead of going to the bar, that also in and of itself does not make us Christians. What sets us apart is not what we do, but Whose we are. If we love God with all our heart, mind soul and strength and love others as ourselves, we will live differently, but not just because we are trying to do so. We will live differently because we ARE different.

Our thoughts need to be captured by Christ, and our motivation is to please Him and to be like Him. This means that our lives are not divided into the secular and the sacred. When I say or do anything it is displaying who I am and Who I belong to. How I spend my time, how I care for myself and others, how I interact with the natural world God made all displays what I really believe and what God I really serve. If I think that taking care of the world God made is not important, or that only earth worshippers do that, I am sadly deceived. God gave His people the stewardship of the earth. Along with that, we need to realize that those who are not of God will try to make a world without Him. This will lead to death and destruction because it follows the god of this world, the devil. Who of course as I already stated has only come to steal, kill and destroy.

God made everything good in the beginning. When the curse came because of Adam’s sin, the earth began to groan. Thorns infested the ground and man was charged with getting his daily bread by the sweat of his brow. This was intentional on God’s part to build in a reminder to man that he was under a curse and thus dependent on God for salvation. It was no coincidence that Christ wore a crown of thorns at his crucifixion. This symbolized the curse of the ground, which Jesus was taking on Himself. Now we have access to forgiveness through Him. But, this does not mean we are free to destroy God’s good

world, to poison it with chemicals and to feed this poison to ourselves and our children and wonder why we are sick.

We have bowed to the god of our age – Science – and have accepted that everything that is said and done in its name is good. Science says that man can control wind and waves, climate, creation of new life forms, travel to the reaches of the universe and the fruit of the earth. Think about that. The disciples knew Jesus was God because He commanded the wind and the waves and they obeyed Him. Man cannot do this. Only God can create any form of life. No one else has that power. Man was given dominion over the earth, but not the heavens – where outer space is. God created the dry land, the vegetation on it, and man himself from the dust of the earth. Man and his god, Science, cannot create soil, plants or living creatures. We cannot improve on the system God created. We cannot take God's good food and process it until it has no resemblance to what it once was and it be better than what it was when it started. How can man improve on what God has called good?

It is time for Christians to lead in the areas of conservation and stewardship of God's good earth. Why should people who are not following the creator speak like they love His creation more than we do? Now, to be fair, I believe if a person really does not believe in God, he or she will be selfishly motivated to do "good works" and their solutions will lead to a dead end or even more destructive actions than what they are trying to stop. We, as Christians need to be prepared to show a better way. A way that truly leads to life, joy and peace.

Another reason we are so slow about this is that we ourselves are disconnected from nature and God's natural world. Statistics say that only 12% of the population of the U.S. now lives in rural areas. That means that 88% of folks have to work very hard to find any way to be in touch with nature on any regular basis. Playing soccer on a little patch of worn out grass does not count. Neither does keeping your perfect lawn with no weeds. God did not make perfect lawns with no weeds. He made a diverse ecosystem with many interlinking parts that is so complicated no man will ever unravel it all. By sterilizing it and bringing it down to just a few organisms, we have destroyed the beauty and diversity of what God intended and inadvertently caused death and destruction to things God created for a purpose. This purpose was not understood by our "scientists", because anything they didn't understand they eradicated or dismissed. They either labeled it "bad" or just irrelevant, like the way they originally labeled large portions of our DNA "junk" simply because they didn't understand its function.

When we are out in nature, we need to stop, look and listen and take in the beauty and diversity God created for our pleasure and enjoyment, as well as our nourishment. God wants us to look at, listen to and enjoy His world. That is why He made it so beautiful. We respond by cramming earbuds in our ears and listening to man-made noise to drown out the bird songs and the frogs and the other noises of nature. We certainly don't want to "be still" and know that He is God. He may try to speak to us. We don't want to slow down and take a walk, even down the sidewalk from one destination to another. We have to climb into our climate controlled vehicle with the radio blaring and speed so fast through the countryside we couldn't see what was out there if we wanted to. We don't have time to breathe in fresh air and take a refreshing walk. No, we have to hurry to sports practices and games where we witness parents yelling at each other over childish incompetencies. Yes, that promotes that quiet rest and family closeness we all crave.

Do we have to live the whirl-wind lifestyle that is so busy and loud that God and His creation are pushed aside? Do we have to buy into the culture that says that there is no time to cook nutritious food, that it doesn't matter anyway, you'll be fine. Just look at Grandpa, he's eaten this way his whole life. Oh, that's

right, he is sick and maybe even dead in his 60's. Do we have to just throw away millions of tons of trash, food, broken plastic things that never really did anything anyway? Can we consciously think about things before we buy them? Can we think things like – will this last? Is it useful to use, to teach, to make one healthy or wise or to bring one closer to our Creator? Is the cheap price the only consideration when we buy food, clothing or other things we need? Do we think about how they were produced? Was someone enslaved in a factory in Asia to make cheap clothes for me? Was this food trucked from California where they have a drought and rely on poorly compensated immigrant labor to pick the vegetables? Am I helping support local businesses and the economy of my hometown and surrounding area even if it costs a few pennies more? If I choose healthy, local food and take the time to cook it, am I thinking about how it not only benefits those who produced it, but it is better for my family and their health and may save me in medical bills down the road? Maybe well-nourished children will do better in school. Maybe they won't break bones so much or get injured so much. Maybe they won't get sick as much, either. Maybe they will grow into healthy adults who can then teach others how to be healthy. How can sickly people witness about Jesus? I am not saying all sickness is caused by this. I am just saying that there are some promises in the Bible regarding lifestyle and health and we are largely ignoring them.

It is time we as Christians recognize that God is not just there for our spiritual well-being. He made us to be mind, body and spirit. This is why we are commanded to love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength. We are not to just love Him with our soul, and forget about the rest. If we do, we will be loving the world with the rest of ourselves. This is only to our detriment. We can be saved and compartmentalize like this, but we will not live a free, joy-filled Christian life. We will be bound by the parts we have given to the world. This will leave us in a perpetual state of unhappiness, fear, uncertainty and doubt. God wants us to be free. He wants us to be sold out to Him completely. His way is the way to Life.