

# The Battle Over The Bible

**Introduction.** Gerald was a great young man. He was raised in a godly home, and showed spiritual maturity at a young age. He was intelligent, good-looking, well-mannered, and had a great future. Any family would have been happy to have him as a son-in-law.

Then Gerald went away to college. Neither he nor his family were prepared for what would happen there. He had an atheistic professor who was able to destroy his faith in the Bible, and it was not long before he abandoned all he believed about God and the Bible. Gerald was not the first, or last, casualty in an ongoing war.

The United States, and indeed much of the Western world, is engaged in a war. It is a battle for survival between two starkly different visions of the future. Some have labeled it "the culture war," but the issues run much deeper. At its core, we are involved in a battle over the Bible. This battle affects much more than just religion, for it touches politics, education, entertainment, the courts, and many other aspects of life. The battle has already been lost in much of Western Europe, as religion is pretty well dead, and the Bible is more or less a museum piece. Indoctrination with evolution, deconstruction of the Bible, and two terrible world wars have largely erased belief in God and the Bible.

Holding out against this rising tide of disbelief in God and the Bible are many in the United States and a few other nations in the democratic West. Yet even here the efforts to uphold belief in God and Bible are facing an uphill battle. Last week, voters in the U.S. elected the first openly gay U.S. Senator, and legalized marijuana usage in two states (Colorado and Washington). For the first time, same-sex marriage is legalized through popular vote in three U.S. states (Maine, Maryland, and Washington). Finally, doctor-assisted suicide almost passed in Massachusetts. So although we like to think that we live in a "Christian" nation, we have to reluctantly admit that we are living in a post-Christian society. The basic foundation of the Judeo-Christian heritage in this country no longer exists.

## I. **High Stakes**

A. Is the Bible true? Is it the word of God? The stakes are high. U.S. court decisions increasingly reject longstanding laws rooted in the Bible. Some laws, like those prohibiting abortion, pornography, fornication, and adultery were thrown out long ago. Other laws, such as prohibiting homosexuality are now routinely overturned. Recent court decisions have shown downright hostility towards prayer, the display of the Ten Commandments, and the mention of God and the Bible in public life.

- B. People have been fired for having a Bible on their desk at work. Students have been punished for silently giving thanks for lunch at school. Bibles have been removed from school libraries. In Portland, Maine, the school board has mandated making birth control pills available to middle school girls and condoms to boys.
- C. If the Bible is not true, then abortion, fornication, religious freedom, gay marriage, profanity, pornography, and the teaching of evolution in schools are really non-issues, because there is no absolute standard of right and wrong. This is precisely why some want to undermine belief in the Bible. But if the Bible is true, then political, cultural, and religious leaders are leading millions of unsuspecting followers to ultimate destruction.

## II. ***Built On A Biblical Foundation***

- A. It does not take a history major to realize that American's founding fathers used principles from scripture as the basis for many U.S. laws. Many prohibitions, such as laws prohibiting murder, theft, lying, and adultery are rooted in biblical teaching. It has only been in recent decades that laws banning blasphemy, swearing, and obscene language in public have been wiped off the books.
- B. How did some of our founding fathers view our legal and moral foundation?
  1. George Washington, first president: "It is impossible to govern the world without God and the Bible." His farewell speech: "Of all the dispositions and habits that lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports ... Let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion."
  2. John Adams, second president: "We have no government armed with the power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and true religion. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."
  3. James Madison, fourth president and primary framer of the U.S. Constitution: "We have staked the whole future of American civilization, not upon the power of government, far from it. We have staked the future of all our political institutions upon the capacity of each and all of us to govern ourselves, to control ourselves, to sustain ourselves according to the Ten Commandments of God."
  4. John Jay, first Chief Justice of the U.S., said that to preserve the nation "we must select Christians as our leaders." Can you imagine a government leader saying that today? He is also said, "Providence has given our people the choice of their rulers, and it is the duty, as

well as privilege and interest of a Christian nation to select and prefer Christians for their rulers.”

5. Ronald Reagan, our 40th president: “Those who created our country -- the Founding Fathers and Mothers -- understood that there is a divine order which transcends the human order. They saw the state, in fact, as a form of moral order and felt that the bedrock of moral order is religion.”

### III. ***How The Battle Began***

- A. How did the United States stray so far from its religious and moral foundation? As happened in Europe and much of the rest of the world, the theory of evolution and supposedly scientific explanations of the existence of a creation without a Creator gained wide acceptance. Starting in the educational system, these views spread to all levels of society. Then the Bible itself came under constant criticism. Many critics, acting with incomplete information, rushed to judgment, claiming the Bible had many inaccuracies.
- B. In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, leading Western intellectuals clearly stated why they so readily accepted evolution and rejected biblical standards. Aldous Huxley, British philosopher, said, “I had motives for not wanting the world to have meaning ... The liberation we desired was ... from a certain system of morality. We objected to the morality because it interfered with our sexual freedom” (Ends and Means, 1946, p. 270). His brother, Julian Huxley, wrote, “The sense of spiritual relief which comes from rejecting the idea of God as a super-human being is enormous” (Essays of a Humanist, 1966, p. 223). At least they were honest about their reasons for not wanting God to exist.
- C. Little did they know they were simply echoing what Paul said about human reasoning so many centuries earlier (Romans 8:6-7).

### IV. ***Humanity’s Hostility To God***

- A. Man’s relationship to God and His word has never been very good. Ever since Adam and Eve, people have resisted others telling them how to live. Therefore, it should not surprise us that intellectuals and so-called “wise” men come up with all sorts of arguments against God and the Bible. Jeremiah declared that we have a great capacity for self-deception when it comes to seeing ourselves realistically (Jeremiah 17:9).
- B. Because of our sinful desires, it is no wonder that most reject God and His laws. It is easier to make up reasons to reject God than to accept Him, and admit that we must start living by His rules. Regrettably, this refusal has tragic consequences (Hosea 4:6). When God’s priests rejected Him, He then rejected them. So it is with all who reject God.

## V. ***The Conflict Continues***

- A. What are the results of this battle over the Bible? Recent studies reveal a discouraging story.
1. In just a little over a decade, 1991 to 2004, the number of adult Americans who do not attend church had almost doubled -- from 39 to 75 million.
  2. 60% of Americans believe it is acceptable to live together before marriage, and that sexual fantasies about others and gambling are "morally acceptable."
  3. 40% believe that abortion and adultery are acceptable.
  4. 33% accept profanity, pornography, drunkenness, and homosexuality.
  5. In just one week, a Barna Group survey in 2008 showed that of those aged 18-24, 33% sought pornography, 25% got drunk; 38% committed fornication, and 37% admitted to lying.
- B. The National Educational Association passed a resolution requiring teachers to support gay marriage. They stated, "The Association ... believes in the importance of observances, programs and curricula that accurately portray and recognize the roles, contributions, cultures, and history of these diverse groups and individuals ... The Association believes that legal rights and responsibilities with regard to medical decisions, taxes, inheritance, adoption, legal immigration, domestic partnerships, and civil unions and/or marriage belong to all these diverse groups and individuals."
- C. There is much debate about the Sex-Ed programs in our schools. Planned Parenthood has asked the South Dakota Library Board to remove *Campus Life* magazines from school libraries because it promotes abstinence. The A.C.L.U. and NEA and more than 100 other groups have asked the Health and Human Services Department to remove its *4Parents.gov* website because it says, "Abstinence is the healthiest choice for teens." Former president Bill Clinton said, "I hear all this talk about family values and all this stuff ... I resent it. I think it's immoral, I think it's unethical." U.S. Rep. Barbara Lee said, "An abstinence-until-marriage program is not only irresponsible, it's really inhuman."
- D. President Obama wrote, "I favor legalizing same-sex marriages, and would fight efforts to prohibit such marriages." In an interview, Barack Obama recalled a previous invitation to Saddleback Church: "I was invited to Rick Warren's church to speak, despite his awareness that I held views that were entirely contrary to his when it came to gay and lesbian rights, when it came to issues like abortion."
- E. Parents must be forewarned before they send their sons and daughters off to our colleges and universities. One professor was quite candid in

his goals, which are shared by many in our institutions of higher learning: "We try to arrange things so that students who enter as bigoted, homophobic, religious fundamentalists will leave college with views more like our own ... We are going to go right on trying to discredit you (fundamentalist parents) in the eyes of your children, trying to strip your fundamentalist religious community of dignity, trying to make your views seem silly rather than discussable. We are not so inclusivist as to tolerate intolerance such as yours" (Professor Richard Rorty, in his essay "Universality and Truth").

- F. It is too easy to blame lawyers and judges for this moral slide, but the truth is they only reflect the moral mindset of many Americans who wish to remove the moral stigma from sinful choices they want to make. Sadly, many see this as "progress," while those upholding biblical standards are labeled as bigoted, judgmental, homophobic, or worse.

## VI. ***How We Can Be Victorious***

- A. God warns us about this kind of perverted thinking (Isaiah 5:20, 25). If history is any guide, once a nation rejects God and His laws, it will seldom return (Proverbs 14:34). History shows only a few occasions where nations have turned back to the Lord.
- B. You may not be able to change our country, but you can do something. You can choose to serve God and allow His will to help you live by the standards and values that He has designed for our good (Isaiah 55:6-7). Here are three suggestions we can all practice.
  - 1. Pray for our leaders and our country (1 Timothy 2:1-3; James 5:13). They need wisdom and courage to stand against those who want to destroy our nation's values.
  - 2. Be a godly example (Ephesians 5:8; Colossians 4:5). By our lives, we can reflect the glory of God. Our influence can produce positive change.
  - 3. Preach the gospel (Isaiah 58:1; Acts 5:20).
    - a) Jesus came into a broken world, but He did not come to fix that world. He and His followers did not spend their time trying to fix "the mess in Jerusalem or Rome." The Jews were looking for a deliverer that would fix their world. Jesus let it be known that His kingdom was not that kind of kingdom -- but a spiritual kingdom in which one's citizenship was in heaven.
    - b) In recent years, many Christians have all but lost their faith in "the world to come." Hence, modern "Christianity" has redefined its purpose in the world. Instead of focusing on preparing people for the next world, a world that they no longer believe in, they

have had to find a different reason for "Christianity" to exist: "fixing" this world and its institutions.

- c) As a Christian, a citizen of heaven in a foreign land, I want to make the little part of this world where I can have some influence a better place to live. However, I must realize that I will not be able to fix this broken world. Paul said that evil men will grow worse and worse in spite of my best efforts to fix it (2 Timothy 3:13). When Jesus comes again it will still be broken. I must use the bulk of my time and effort in teaching the world's people how their lives can be fixed by the gospel which shifts the focus of their lives from this world to the one to come.

**Conclusion.** Ronald Reagan said, "We will preserve for our children this, the last best hope of man on Earth, or we will sentence them to take the last step into a thousand years of darkness." The future of our nation is at stake. Will we do our part?

Be sure your children are grounded in the faith before you send them out into the world. There are professors in many colleges and universities in our nation who are dedicated to the task of destroying the faith of their students. Teach them to take up the whole armor of God so they can fight against the devil and his influence in the world (Ephesians 6:10-17).

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