

America—A Nation Out of Control

By [Wayne Jackson](#)

An optimist views everything in the most favorable light possible. On the other hand, a pessimist sees things rather negatively. The optimist sees a silver lining in every cloud; the pessimist believes a dark cloud obscures every silver lining. The realist is somewhere between these extremes. Most of us would like to think that we are realists, and, if anything, that we tip towards being more optimistic than pessimistic.

I really don't know where I fall in my perspective of our future. In the divine orchestration of earthly affairs, I am supremely confident. I know that the sovereign Creator of the universe will eventually bring his divine plan to fruition. The major lesson of the book of Revelation is this: The cause of Heaven will be triumphant ultimately. Victory will belong to the faithful because the Lamb of God has overcome by virtue of his death and resurrection (Revelation 5:6; 12:11). And all who stand in opposition to the King of Kings will be vanquished.

On the other hand, I am somewhat pessimistic about the future of this nation. And that concerns me for the welfare of my children and grandchildren—and yours. I am not unaware that a "Jonah" could arise, proclaiming a message of repentance that might turn the whole country towards a moral reformation (cf. Jonah 3:5ff). Thus far, though, I've not seen him.

Sometimes a country has to "hit bottom" before drastic changes are made. I know this: if righteousness exalts a nation (Proverbs 14:34), unrestrained sin will destroy it. I also know that Jehovah has a moral standard by which he judges nations, and when they reach a certain depth of depravity, he will bring them down (Genesis 15:16; 18:22ff). God gave Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, forty days to get their act together (Jonah 3:4). When they repented, Heaven relented. Assyria then continued for another century and a half. However, the Assyrians degenerated again, and the prophet Nahum was sent to proclaim their "full end" (Nahum 1:9). Nineveh fell—completely and finally—in 612 B.C.

What makes America labor under the illusion that she is an eternal empire? This country is on a collision course with oblivion. It likely will not come in our day, but the indications are painfully obvious that serious decay is underway. Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Rome—none of these superpowers lasted more than a few centuries. Decadence consumed them. And there are clear signals that the same weaknesses are eating away at America's vitals. Let us reflect upon four areas of national concern—economic irresponsibility, a degenerating educational structure, a lax judicial system, and a declining moral climate.

Economic Irresponsibility

America is on a spending binge unlike anything we have ever known, and this signals the fact that we are materialistic to the core. Our national debt is in excess of \$5 trillion. Since February of 1995, this staggering sum has increased at the average rate of \$659 million each day. The average person's share of this burden is around \$20,000. It is difficult for us to even fathom the enormity of our indebtedness when the figures reach such astronomical proportions. If you had \$1 trillion, and you spent \$3,000 each day, it would take you a million years to spend it all. It is very doubtful that this materialistic trend will be turned around. We are a people out of control in terms of our spending. Economists suggest that within a few years many of our social programs will be bankrupt.

In addition to the national debt, many Americans are head-over-heels in personal debt. Some have multiple credit cards "maxed out." Who is going to pay for all of your expenditures? Declaring bankruptcy has almost become a national pastime. Seventy percent of those who file for bankruptcy never pay back a dime of what they owe. What if you die unexpectedly? Will you leave your loved ones saddled with your unpaid bills? How does the Lord view this matter? "The wicked borrows and pays not again" (Psalm 37:21). The Bible views indebtedness as a form of servitude (Proverbs 22:7). Every Christian should diligently work to be free of such restraints so that he may serve the Lord with greater vigor and deeper levels of sacrifice. Only those treasures which are spiritual will last into eternity (Matthew 6:19-21).

The Educational System

Another segment of our society that is out of control is the educational system. Gone are the days when the American school room was a place of "readin', writin', and 'rithmetic, taught to the tune of a hick'ry stick." Nowadays, many youngsters cannot read—even when they leave high school. They cannot write decently, and they cannot balance a

simple checkbook. As for the “hick’ry stick,” it has been banished to the Smithsonian museum, while the schoolyard has become a war zone.

There are three major problems with the modern school system: (1) it does not educate; (2) it is a propagandizing tool with a humanistic agenda; and (3) it has become an environment of extreme danger. Let us consider each of these areas.

On the first point, journalist Charles Sykes has produced a bombshell volume titled, *Dumbing Down Our Kids*. The *Washington Times* characterized the book as “a scathing indictment of the educational establishment and should be required reading for all parents still in denial about the true condition of K-12 education in America.” Sykes subtitled the book, “Why American Children Feel Good About Themselves But Can’t Read, Write, or Add.”

Here is but a sampling of some of the startling data Sykes presents. Twenty-five percent of high school seniors can barely read their diplomas. A standardized test, given to twenty-six thousand Americans (sixteen and older), concluded that eighty million Americans are deficient in the basic reading and mathematical skills needed to perform the rudimentary tasks of today’s society. When America’s finest students (the top one percent) are compared to the best foreign students, our youth come in dead last! What does all of this tell us about the task before us as we attempt to teach the future generation the great truths of the Bible. How can people study the Scriptures when they cannot even read competently? (cf. Ephesians 3:4).

Secondly, there is absolutely no doubt but that the national educational system has a subversive agenda, the design of which is to proselyte children to materialistic humanism. This motive is no longer even concealed. A recently published book, *Darwin’s Dangerous Idea*, urges teachers to admit that evolution refutes religion. The author, Daniel Dennett, said: “We will attempt to teach this [doctrine of organic evolution] to your children at our earliest opportunity.” Our youth are brainwashed with evolutionary propaganda in a variety of classes—astronomy, anatomy, anthropology, biology, geology, psychology, sociology, history, etc.

Note this quotation from a 1994 biology textbook.

Darwin knew that accepting his theory required believing in philosophical materialism, the conviction that matter is the stuff of all existence and that all mental and spiritual phenomenon [sic] are its by-products. . . . In Darwin’s world we are not helpless prisoners of a static world order, but, rather, masters of our own fate. . . . And from a strictly scientific point of view rejecting biological evolution is no different from rejecting other natural phenomenon [sic] such as electricity and gravity.

Third, aside from the foregoing factors, the American schoolroom has become one of the most dangerous environments in which your children can exist. And is it any wonder—when teachers are advocating the notion that there is no such thing as “eternal truth,” there are no absolutes relative to “right” and “wrong.”

Children and teachers alike are in danger on campus. Handguns and knives are common among students. Drugs are freely circulated, condoms are provided, and sexual promiscuity is rampant. Is this the sort of “socialization” that some parents are fearful their youngsters will miss if they are educated in private Christian schools, or in a home environment?

The Judicial System

Another symptom of a nation out of control is the manner in which our judicial system has decomposed over the past half-century. A very significant book arrested the public’s attention recently. It is titled, *Guilty: The Collapse of Criminal Justice*. The author was the late Harold J. Rothwax, a judge who presided over criminal cases in New York City for the past twenty-five years. Apparently Judge Rothwax was not conservatively-oriented. He stated that in his early life his hero was Clarence Darrow (the atheist who argued for evolution in the famous Scopes trial). Too, in his younger lawyering years, Rothwax was a card-carrying member of the ACLU. I mention these things to emphasize that this judge was not out of a strait-laced background.

The thesis of the judge’s book is this: the American justice system is in a state of moral collapse. He writes: “We have formalism and technicalities but little common sense. It’s about time America wakes up to the fact that we’re in the fight of our lives.” This prominent jurist further stresses: “The bottom line is that criminals are going free.” He notes: “There is

no respect for the truth, and without truth, there can be no justice.” Rothwax charges that “our system is a carefully crafted maze, constructed of elaborate and impenetrable barriers to the truth.”

There are many cases which illustrate the growing abuse of justice. We summarize two of these.

(1) On Christmas Eve of 1968, ten-year-old Pamela Powers was attending an event with her parents at the YMCA in Des Moines, Iowa. She went to the restroom and was never seen alive again. A few days afterward, a car was discovered in Davenport (one hundred sixty miles away) containing some of her clothes. Two days later, Robert Williams, owner of the car, surrendered to Davenport police. Officials in Des Moines dispatched two policemen to transport Williams back to the site of the abduction. They were strictly charged not to question him en route. Along the way, one of the officers commented that it was Christmas time, and it would be wonderful if the Powers family could at least recover the body of Pamela and give it a “Christian burial.” Sometime later Williams spoke up: “Okay, let me take you to the body.”

He directed the officers to the place where he had buried little Pamela in a ditch. Subsequent tests revealed that she had been raped and smothered to death. Robert Williams was convicted of murder. However, the conviction was overturned in federal court. When the U.S. Supreme court finally ruled on the matter, the majority opinion, written by Justice Potter Stewart, stated that Williams’s “rights” had been violated by the police officer’s “Christian burial” speech.

(2) At 2 a.m. on November 20, 1990, Leonardo Turriago was pulled over by two state troopers for speeding. The officers asked if they could look into his van; Turriago said they could. Inside, the troopers saw a trunk and asked Turriago about it. He sprang open its lock, then ran away. Opening the trunk, the troopers found the body of a man shot five times. Turriago was caught quickly.

In his apartment, police found eleven pounds of cocaine and guns. The suspect told them where to find the murder weapon. Turriago was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to forty-five years to life. The defense appealed, arguing that the troopers had no right to search the van. On June 6, 1996, Turriago’s conviction was overturned. A New York appellate court ruled that the police search had been coercive.

There are hundreds of similar examples. It is difficult to fathom how anyone could be so dense as to be unable to see that we have bent so far over backwards, to insure that those accused of crimes are not abused, that we have thrown truth and justice to the wind. Is it any wonder that respect for the judicial system is at an all-time low? Is it any surprise that the crime rate has skyrocketed? The judicial system is out of control. We have evolved a legal “kangaroo” procedure where the morality of biblical revelation is despised and ridiculed, while the Amendments to the Constitution are viewed as sacrosanct.

American Family Life

President James A. Garfield once said: “The sanctity of marriage and the family relation make the corner-stone of our American society and civilization.” A number of current conditions clearly suggest that that “corner-stone” is crumbling.

Materialistic parents are placing economic prosperity ahead of their children. The phrase “latchkey child” is too well-known to need elaboration. Many mothers have abandoned the home (cf. Titus 2:5), leaving their children at daycare centers—not because (in many cases) they are forced to work in order to survive, but simply because they want more “things” of a material variety. Children spend countless hours watching TV or playing video games without parental supervision. There will be a high price to pay for such parental irresponsibility.

A large segment of our society has abandoned the concept that God designed the marriage ordinances, and that such are not subject to human revision. For instance, the Bible clearly teaches that sexual gratification is an integral part of marriage. But sexual union is not an end within itself. Sexual activity outside of a legitimate marriage is fornication (cf. 1 Corinthians 7:2). At one time it was the case that a mere “live-in” arrangement was a matter of shame. Even Hollywood stars kept such liaisons under the cloak of secrecy. Now, fornicating relationships are common. Celebrities comment upon their “live-with” associations with no blush at all (cf. Jeremiah 6:15). We are told by experts that more than five million Americans are “living together” without the benefit of legitimate marital commitment.

Add to this the fact that divorce has become a national disgrace. Older folks can easily remember when a divorced person was not a viable political candidate. Now, divorce does not raise an eyebrow. Not only is society out of control in terms of the divorce evil, the church is virtually to that point as well. In recent years weird theories, one after another, have surfaced, the design of which is to justify those who have unscripturally divorced their mates and then remarried. Prominent names have been associated with these views. It is this writer's conviction that the biblical teaching on this topic—namely that a divorce and potential remarriage is allowed only to the innocent victim in a marriage breached by fornication (cf. Matthew 5:32; 19:9)—is now a minority view among believers.

In addition, the homosexual trend in this country is one of the most dramatic indicators that we are a nation out of moral control. An intimidating word has been coined to characterize those who oppose homosexual conduct: "homophobia." We had better be homophobic—if we remember what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah! Several political movements have attempted to promote homosexual "marriages," contending that discrimination against "legal" homosexual and lesbian unions is unconstitutional. It is certainly no secret that the present administration reflects the most pro-homosexual leadership in the history of this nation. More than one hundred "gays" have been appointed to administrative positions under the current president's watch. Our leader has openly commended the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Teacher's Network, a national homosexual teachers group, which, incidentally, is determined to teach the youth of the United States that homosexual relationships are normal and beautiful. Out of control!

Conclusion

Do nations turn around, once they have started a slide toward moral chaos? Tragically, they almost never do. Not even the great nation of Israel could be salvaged by the persuasion of the prophets. It took an Assyrian conquest and a Babylonian captivity (of seventy years) to bring the Hebrews to their knees. Even then a terminal judgment finally came in the form of the Roman destruction of Judaism in A.D. 70 (cf. Matthew 22:7).

I am certainly no prophet. I do not know what lies in America's future. I can, however, follow the flow of human history as such is revealed in the Scriptures. And what I see in that does not make me comfortable about our nation's prospects.

I know this: each Christian, consistent with his/her abilities, has a three-fold responsibility.

1. We must commit to lives of personal goodness as a savoring influence among our peers.
2. We must teach forcefully the positive truths of moral conduct.
3. We must oppose the teachings of the immoral vermin who would destroy this nation.

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Scripture References

Revelation 5:6, 12:11; Jonah 3:5; Proverbs 14:34; Genesis 15:16, 18:22; Jonah 3:4; Nahum 1:9; Psalm 37:21; Proverbs 22:7; Matthew 6:19-21; Ephesians 3:4; Titus 2:5; 1 Corinthians 7:2; Jeremiah 6:15; Matthew 5:32, 19:9; Matthew 22:7

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