



PRAYER IS THE MIGHTIEST FORCE — 2 Chronicles 7:14

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Challenging Christians to Pray — January - February 2022

The State of 'Delusion'

"And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie" (2 THESS. 2:11).

Delusional comes from a Latin word meaning **"deceiving."** So delusional thinking is sort of deceiving oneself by giving adherence to outlandish things. For example, if a politician promises to his voters, sun, stars and moon and everything else in it, probably he is delusional or deceiving. It is no exaggeration to say that our culture is entrenched in creating and spreading **"delusion and illusion"** without any concern for reality.

Someone has said, **"Lies travel around the world twice before truth ever gets out of bed."** God is the greatest reality in the world. It seems reality is very hard for man to take and man is drawn to **'delusion'** and always has been. **HORACE**, Roman poet and scholar wrote over 2,000 years ago, **"Mundus vult decipi; ergo, decipiatur."** That means, roughly, **"The world wishes to be deceived; therefore, let it be deceived."** Or, as **T. S. ELIOT** said in a more contemporary context: **"Mankind cannot take very much reality."**

In our culture of **"delusion,"** reality is ignored, and **"illusion"** is glorified. For example, look at how our society promotes **"gambling and other vices;"** it portrays the glamour, the jubilation and the excitements of winning; but does it ever portray the heartache, the broken and shattered lives, the misery and the abandonment of families? Of course not. Our culture has a way of contaminating and entrapping us with **"vanity and illusion."** Isn't it time for an honest dialogue on reality? **Have you ever seen a "group of farmers" on national television, having a debate on whether God exists or not, like the academia?** Farmers are busy working to feed the world and thanking their Maker for His bountiful provision as they labor for the good of mankind. God's hand is guiding the unknown way. On the other hand, **Satan is always creating "havoc"** and he never retires from the business of deluding and ruining God's children if he can.

The culture in which we live now is a culture of self-pity, self-justification, self-gratification, self-aggrandizement, alibis, resentments, innuendos, character assassination, and misinformation galore. Consequently, millions are trapped without a way of escape; **that is precisely why Jesus came to give us 'faith and hope' for a life of 'joy and fulfillment.'** The profound words of **THOMAS R. KELLY** are worth remembering: **"The deepest need of man is not food and shelter, important as they are. It is God!"** In this, self-obsessed and deluded culture of ours, if one attempts to live a godly life, with old fashioned values; the world might caricature you as an impossible fuddy-duddy, and will ostracize you for not subscribing to their lifestyle.

Look at the 21st century now we are part of; it is a century of carnage, genocide, euthanasia, beheading, persecution of Christians, and killing of millions of defenseless babies, and yet we pride ourselves as progressive thinkers and innovators. So let me ask you, are we progressing or regressing? Currently, we're witnessing the unbridled deception

on parade worldwide through technology. When people exhibit no fear of God, they become angry, hateful, fearful, confused and deluded beyond imagination!

As a restless society, we are always trying to analyze ourselves to death. One can analyze himself till cows come home, but it cannot lead a person to a vital relationship with the living God. As one psychoanalyst has put it, there is a new version of the **“Ugly Duckling”** story. The ugly duckling never discovers he is a swan. He just undergoes analysis after analysis and adjusts. Christians should not be ashamed of being real and godly. **It seems the world has convinced many Christians that they cannot be ‘godly and real’ in an ungodly and delusional world. I say — “Bah Humbug!”** The world is not our model; **Jesus is our example in all things.**

The words of **PROFESSOR EMILE CAILLIET** worth remembering, **“In drawing attention to the character of modern frustration . . . we may ascertain the true nature of our problems. They all are spiritual problems, that is to say, primarily . . . theological.”** **DR. CARL JUNG**, the eminent psychiatrist was profound when he said, **“The central neurosis of our time is emptiness.”** People are empty even though they have the latest technological toys and other luxuries. No wonder **ST. AUGUSTINE** said, **“Oh, Lord, thou hast created us and our hearts are restless until they find rest in thee.”** The immortal words of **PASCAL**, the French philosopher and mathematician come to mind, **“When God created man he left a hole in him.”** **It’s amazing to see how people try to fill that hole with everything imaginable other than Christ, the Giver of life and grace. Jesus came to give us life, eternal life, not create “delusion and illusion” that lead to amusements and diversions of all sorts.**

PROFESSOR ERNST M. LIGON, the greatest of modern child experimenters, had given four years of his scientific life to the **Yale Theological Seminary**, only to prove that **“Jesus Christ was the soundest psychologist ever to guide mortal behavior.”** A humble believer knows that his behaviors are guided by the hand of a sovereign God, and he is not ashamed to proclaim it. In fact, he declares his utter dependency on God from the roof-top for the entire world to hear. **Jesus Christ is the greatest reality in the world.** Man may attempt to meddle with God’s sovereign purpose by manufacturing artificial **“delusion;”** but he cannot change the seasons or natural occurrences. Someone has wisely written, **“We may move the hand of a clock to suit us, but we do not change the time.”**

In our **‘delusional’** state of mind, we are apt to think that **“right is wrong and wrong is right.”** **“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!”** (ISAIAH 5:20, 21). Don’t let the enemy neutralize you and mute your Christian influence in a world of delusion! A man is a fool who tries to deceive either God or himself. **“Be not deceived; God is not mocked . . .”** (GALATIANS 6:7).

How to Avoid Delusion?

First of all, believe and live the truth of God’s Word, and don’t be mesmerized and bamboozled by those who attempt to spread delusion!

It’s very obvious that we live in a world of 24-hour news cycle, endless delusional pontification on every subject imaginable, and the ever increasing cascade of pessimism, doom and gloom, millions have become faithless, godless, hopeless and confused and disillusioned. **I, for one, am not interested in such glum surveys, wind-driven polls, and gloomy statistics that are not in conjunction with**

the Word of the living God. I am not sitting around clucking my tongue at the “delusional” state of the nation because I know my God reigns supreme. The world is full of sadness, sorrow and blighted hope. There is no need for us spreading further gloom; instead, let’s seize the opportunity to give encouragement to those who are in doubt. **GEORGE MATTHEW ADAMS** tells us that **encouragement is oxygen to the soul.**

Beloved, no power on earth can deprive us from praising our Savior’s name. No cloudy day shall dampen the sunshine in our soul; we don’t have to get permission from the Highest Court in our land to breathe the air God has created. God’s people are visionaries, and they always look ahead, never behind. As someone has said, **“Never look behind unless you plan to go there.”** Beloved, do not be hardened by post-modern, philosophical smokescreen. Be **REAL and FIRM** in your walk with God. **Remember, God is with us, beside us, our Captain and Refuge in times of spiritual and moral turmoil. With absolute, unshaken, unchangeable clarity, I can say that Jehovah God reigns supreme! Our future is in His hand, and this world is never outside the sphere of His influence.** At times, Christians appear to be “peculiar and foolish” in the eyes of our peers, and even members of our own family. We can escape the state of delusion by living in the shadow of God’s infinite love and mercy. **To know Christ is the highest and most blessed reality in life which nothing can change or alter. When we live in God, we are in touch with the past, present and the future. And that’s not delusional, but sublime reality, pure and simple!**

Don't be ashamed to wear the BADGE of “truth and reality,” which God has conferred upon you as a follower of Christ! Let's not fall into the trap of our “seductive culture” and all its delusional tactics! For the record, thank God, Christians are not delusional; they know a mirage when they see one!

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Speaking Candidly by *Matthew Skariafi*

The Cross, Our Home

There’s a German proverb and it goes like this, **“The main point is keeping the main point main.”** **What is the main point for us Christians? It’s the Cross of Christ.** There is no need for anyone to redefine Christianity; **Christianity is what it is and it will stand the test of time!** It does not fluctuate like politics, economy, and societal evolution. I feel sorry for those who attempt to interpret the Bible to accommodate the changing times.

Today many in our society are offended at the mere mentioning of the name of Christ, the Savior of the world. The very name of Christ alienates the world, because the world prefers to be alienated from God. As followers of Christ we must take the offense of the Cross in stride. It should never frighten or weaken our faith, but rather it should rouse us to overcome whatever the world may throw at us. The very presence of Christ pierces our heart, convicts our soul, exposes our motives, reveals our character, analyzes our hidden agenda, and brings us up against a brick wall where we have to make a choice either to follow Christ or not.

The immortal words of **DR. CHARLES MALIK**, a Lebanese scholar are worth remembering, **“Only the cross which shocked and condemned the world can reconcile it.”** It is unthinkable but true, that supposedly in Christian America, when we talk about the cross, many are quiescent and squeamish. On the other hand, one can speak about the nature, global warming, the environment, humanitarianism, vegetarianism, the goodness of man, the cultural diversity, the celebration of man’s ingenuity, the collage of human wisdom, the great religions of the world, many people seem to embrace you—**but at the moment when you speak about Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world who alone can save the world—immediately the conversation freezes and you become a social outcast and a hick.**

Some Christians have forgotten that embracing the cross means persecution and shame as well as suffering. Only a serious disciple of Christ can fully understand the glory of the Cross! As **C. S. LEWIS** put it succinctly, **“The popular ‘religion’ excludes miracles because it excludes the ‘living God’ of Christianity and believes in a ‘pantheistic god’ who is removed and remote.”** Beloved, the Cross is our home, resting place and our habitat!

“The way of the cross leads home.”

Speaking Prayerfully by Matthew Skariafi

The Power and Privilege of “Kneeling”

A prayerless Christian is a powerless Christian; perhaps he is a pastor, or an evangelist, or a conference speaker or a lay leader who leads a busy life, and talks a great deal about spiritual things in general; but such a life without a ‘devoted and ongoing’ prayer life is far removed from our Master who sought the will of His Father in Gethsemane and wept over the city of Jerusalem. **Personally, I would like to see more Christians on their knees at the altar in our Churches!**

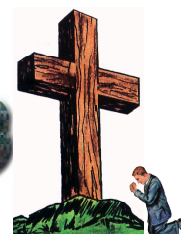
Prayer navigates us through the celestial city where we find intimacy with the living God. In prayer, there’s no browsing, no chat-room, no surfing, no cyberspace interactions. **It is just US and God. It is heavenly interaction pure and simple! Remember, it is the spirit of prayer that takes the flint out of our carnal nature! If those of us who claim to be His followers spent more time on our “knees” alone with God, we should have great spiritual awakening in our nation. As long as there are “praying and kneeling Christians” in America; God will spare this nation. (Read 2 CHRONICLES 7:14).**

OSWALD CHAMBERS, the prolific devotional writer was so profound when he said, **“Climbing in the spirit is accomplished by kneeling, and not by running, by surrender, and not by determination.”** Someone has wisely written, **“No man stumbles when he is on his knees.”** **WILLIAM COWPER**, the 17th century English poet and hymn writer was profound when he wrote, **“Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees.”**

Covet to be alone with God on your knees. In the Christian life, kneeling is climbing.



The WPB Ministries



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