

A PROPHETIC LOOK AT THE TERRIBLE TEENS AND THE ROARING TWENTIES

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As we close not only a year, but also a decade, 2010-2019, I thought I would offer a prophetic look back as well as a prophetic glimpse of the next decade. Reflecting on the past decade, I wish that I could list great spiritual accomplishments, but I believe it could prove to be one of the most destructive in our nation's history.

I want to be very clear about some fundamentals. God has created the family, the Church, and the government as the three divine institutions to express His care and concern over His creation. In each, believers are called to be stewards and to bring the influence of our Eternal King. The family, the Church, and the government have clear and distinct roles in God's design for His creation to work most effectively. With this foundational philosophy, I offer reflections on the "terrible teens."

Family

A galactic distortion of sexual identity and family. Over this past decade we have watched the blurring of God's image of male and female. Just recently I saw the headline: "Transman and non-binary partner give birth using female sperm donor." I can't even unravel who did what in this scenario, but it illustrates the fact that some have decided that anybody can be anything they want with the right surgery, hormonal replacement, or mindset.

During the terrible teens, the Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage. The rationale given in the majority opinion was that culture has "evolved." This is ironic given that there is absolutely no evolutionary advantage of legalizing the marriage of two individuals who cannot propagate the species.

Not only is this distortion of sexual identity and marriage inconsistent with God's heart for people, but also it is destabilizing our culture.

Despite the availability of legal marriage, those with same-sex attraction (5% of the US population) marry about 10% of the time, as opposed to 50% of heterosexuals (the remaining 95% of the population). Same-sex marriage is now featured in many trendy commercials but it represents only .5% (10% of the 5%) of the U.S. population. That's right; one half of one percent, leaving 99.5% told they must accept this new reality.

Normalized immorality and the widespread availability of pornography. The notion of unmarried couples saving themselves until their marriage night has never seemed more outdated than today. Cohabitation is widely accepted in our culture, with nearly 20% of 25-34 year olds choosing this over marriage, up from approximately 5% at the beginning of the century and .1% fifty years ago.

Our culture has accepted the lie that immorality leads to personal discovery and happiness. LGBT concepts such as “gender fluidity” teach that sexual experimentation is the only manner in which a person can discover “what” they are as they discover what feels good to them. Believers know that nothing could be further from the truth.

Rapidly increasing at the same time as, and in connection with, the growing acceptance of immorality is the availability and use of pornography. The fact that free porn is only a couple of clicks away has produced porn traffic amounting to 30% of all the traffic on the internet.

Pornography not only breaks the heart of God, it rewires a person’s brain, producing addiction paths and unrealistic expectations that ruin real relationships.

The Church

Tolerance produces a false love mandate. During the terrible teens, a push for tolerance produced what I am calling a “false love mandate.” The mantra of this call for tolerance was “love me the way I want to be loved, without any judgment.” Initially, this may have seemed reasonable, but as the root of this distorted love has taken hold in our culture, it has grown like a playground bully. Now any questioning of the current twist on morality draws fire. For example, city officials in Houston subpoenaed sermons of pastors who spoke out about homosexuality, threatening to prosecute them for their views. A recurring strategy is to take a moral issue, turn it into a political issue, and tell Christians they have no right to speak about it. (This is an example of the blurring of lines between the Church’s role and government’s role.)

This new “love” requires that we accept anybody’s thoughts and behaviors not only as real, but also as acceptable, which neutralizes our ability to talk about moral issues. It removed any thought of a universal moral code and placed each individual as the center of the universe.

True love desires God’s best for the individual, regardless if they agree or not. This view now seems judgmental and is no longer acceptable.

Post-liberal Evangelicalism. There is a new post-liberal worship of

“justice” that has destroyed the meaning of evangelicalism. In the past few decades, many of us would describe ourselves as Evangelicals, meaning that we subscribe to Biblical, orthodox Christianity and believe in salvation through Christ alone. This meaning has been turned on its head, leaving orthodox Christians who want to share salvation in Christ with others in a state of dysphoria, not knowing how to describe ourselves.

The false love mandate has twisted the biblical concept of justice touted by vocal leaders in what I believe is Post-Liberal Evangelicalism. In their fight for justice and for those who have been treated unjustly they are championing transgender people, those with same-sex attraction, illegal immigrants, and Muslims. Fighting for justice is not wrong—a very biblical mandate—yet the message of salvation only through Christ and the Truth of the Bible has been forgotten, leaving this movement full of angry individuals and no divine power.

This point was emphasized late in this decade when it was discovered that a widely respected Christian business, Chick-fil-A, known for its biblical ethics, will no longer contribute charitable dollars to Christian ministries. Rather than support conservative Christian organizations like FCA and the Salvation Army, they have decided to focus their financial support on justice organizations. It was also discovered that they have been funding extremist organizations such as the Southern Poverty Law Center for years.

The God of the Bible is all about justice, but justice of flawed men and women in need of salvation through a Savior.

Government

Un-criminalization of criminals. We are just now learning about criminal action by the very officials that are supposed to be protecting the innocent and fighting against criminal activity. It is becoming clear that during the terrible teens, high level Department of Justice officials put in place “insurance” measures—spies, incriminating relationships, and more—in order to control the outcome of national politics. We have watched officials lie to Congress concerning actions from years ago and leak secret information to media outlets in order to control the narrative reported about their testimonies. We have watched secret FISA courts—that are needed—rely upon fake documents, known to be fraudulent and paid for by political rivals, to gain warrants in order to spy on political rivals. All of this maleficence occurred over years and is coming to a head as this decade closes.

All of this corruption occurred without a single crime conviction. The cover-up tactic is consistent: blame your political enemy of doing what

you are doing. This creates a cover, causes confusion, and makes any investigation look politically motivated.

People cry out when justice is held back.

The rise of sanctuaries. During the terrible teens, we witnessed the rise of “sanctuaries.” The first kind of sanctuary related to the legalization of marijuana in states like Colorado. Banks that marijuana producers used could not legally receive money from illicit behavior—growing and selling marijuana—if they had bank branches in other states where marijuana was illegal. So federal law needed to change or not be enforced. Next we saw a growing number of cities declared as sanctuaries for illegal aliens in contradiction of federal law and policies.

What followed is small cities, municipalities, counties, and local boards decide they were not recognizing some law or not cooperating with some law enforcing organization. In other words, localities are deciding what laws they will submit to and what laws they won't. We are sitting on a powder keg of lawlessness that will some day explode. In my state of residence, Virginia, the Governor and new Legislator (that just flipped to a Democratic majority) has threatened to confiscate guns. As a consequence, every county in Virginia, except for three, has preemptively declared their county as a sanctuary for Second Amendment rights. The citizens in 92 Virginia counties have already said to the Governor they will not hand over their guns no matter what laws are passed. (I am strongly sympathetic to gun rights, but worried about localities rebelling against higher authorities.)

What's next? Will individuals declare their property is a sanctuary for people who want to break a law they disagree with? Lawlessness and disregard of authority will have tragic effects within our nation and the foundation has been laid.

The Power of Fake News

All of these trends started and grew as the amount and legitimacy of fake news grew. Early in the terrible teens, we hoped that there was not an agenda in news agencies. Then it became probable there was, and now it has become crystal clear that news agencies spin stories to produce their impressions and their version of the truth. The organized, unified talking points of the progressives are expressed day after day through the established news agencies.

Roger Ailes took over Fox News in 2001 and we saw the meteoric rise of this source of “fair and balanced” truth from a conservative perspective. Fox News became the most watched cable channel, even through much controversy (and wrongdoing) during Ailes' leadership.

Under the shadow of this behemoth are rising sources of trustworthy conservative news that are smaller, but more numerous. These new sources must search for a new way to fund their enterprises with smaller staffs, utilizing technology to impact millions.

One final illustration of the downfall of news sources came in the final moments of the decade as the trusted source for Evangelicals, Christianity Today, published an editorial that called for President Trump to be removed from office concluding, "The president of the United States attempted to use his political power to coerce a foreign leader to harass and discredit one of the president's political opponents. That is not only a violation of the Constitution; more importantly, it is profoundly immoral." This conclusion, presented in the magazine started by Billy Graham, is not even shared by every Democrat in the House of Representatives and certainly not by even one single Republican representative.

So, as we close this decade, where will go during the next decade?

Even as the family unit was attacked, the Church embraced the false love mandate, government corruption became more evident, all of this fueled by irresponsible press, I still remain hopeful. Some have said that God is sovereign and will accomplish what He wants, but I contend that He has delegated more authority to us than some think. In God's heart, He has the expectation that nations should be corporately obedient to Him (Jeremiah 18). And He provides the ability to do it. Here are reasons why I am hopeful that the 20's will be a decade of turn around.

Here come The Roaring 20's

Last century, the roaring 20's were a time of great economic prosperity with popular culture solidifying around music and dancing. I believe there will be a different type of roaring 20's in this century.

The roar of the intercessor. I hear in the Spirit (and see in the natural) a rapidly increasing roar of those burdened to pray for our country. Everywhere I go, people tell me something like this: "Recently I have a burden to pray for our nation, never had it before, but now I do." This supernatural phenomena is a sovereign work of the Spirit who is equipping the Church to rule in this day. When God burdens His people to pray, He is about to do something great.

The roar of the quiet majority. I am seeing more and more believers who have quietly sat on the sidelines or been mildly involved in God-given civic duties reach a point where they are stirred to do something. I believe rising out of this moral chaos are leaders and organizations that will speak to moral issues in ways that will

correctly align the roles of the Church and government and will gather, inspire, and motivate. This roar will begin early in this decade and grow through intercession for the Church.

The roar of the fight. The clash over moral issues in this past decade resulted in a series of moral and governmental defeats. I believe that God will begin to empower His people through strategy and intercession to begin to see moral victories expressed through government. From the dust of the Post-Liberal Evangelicals will rise a new brand, with new defining labels that will lead in a balanced expression of justice and salvation and be attractive to a whole new generation.

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