



AMERICA'S VANISHING ANCHORS

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INTRODUCTION

The idea for this book came when I was working on another book about seven great anchors of God. As I was writing that book I began to think about how nations also have core anchors that shape their character and determine their destiny. It occurred to me that of the seven great anchors of God, four of these apply directly to the nations of the world.

I began to think about how the Pilgrims and our Founding Fathers founded this great nation on those four anchors. As I began to do research on these historic anchors I was alarmed at how these anchors seem to be vanishing. It became clear that these anchors are being eroded by cultural currents in America today. Because of this concern I decided to put some of my thoughts into writing and thus came what I hope will be a contribution to our nation's destiny. My goal is to accomplish the following:

1. To show how America was founded on four Biblical anchors that made us a great nation. To support this belief I will refer to the historic documents of our First and Founding Fathers. We will hear from these men **in their own words**. Our First Fathers I refer to as the Pilgrims who landed at Plymouth Rock. A Founding Father is someone who was a prominent government or military leader and had a significant influence on the founding of this nation.
2. To trace how our four historic anchors have been under attack for at least the last fifty or sixty years and how popular cultural currents continue to erode the anchors upon which this nation was founded.
3. To contribute to a movement to restore our historical anchors to their original condition based on the universal truths of the Bible which include: Belief in the ultimate authority of a Creator God; an objective truth and morality based on the "Common Law" of the Bible; civility based on "The Common Law of Love." And a belief that if we restore these anchors our destiny will be to glorify God by providing people with the opportunity to pursue "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."
4. To further contend that every nation acts according to its anchors; that these anchors form their worldview and shape their character. Once you determine the anchors and character of a nation you can also predict with a high degree of accuracy its actions and its ultimate destiny.

I hasten to admit that I am not claiming to be an expert on international affairs nor American history. I am simply sharing some observations that I believe will be helpful. I love our country and want it to continue to be a beacon of good will to the rest of the world. This, I believe, can only happen if we restore our historic anchors to their original condition and then live by them. If we do not stop the cultural erosion, we are in jeopardy of losing our anchors.

I want to express my appreciation to David Barton, the WallBuilders organization and their willingness to graciously make available thousands of first edition historical documents on their website. I suggest you go to the Wallbuilders website and read for yourself how our First and Founding Fathers believed in the four anchors on which this book is based. If you do I'm sure you will be as I was, overwhelmed by the preponderance of historical evidence that America was indeed founded on the principles of the Bible. David Barton has also written an excellent resource that will supply you with much more information and primary resources regarding the godly heritage of our nation. I believe his book *Original Intent* is a must read for anyone who desires a comprehensive view of the original vision that our Founding Fathers had for America. Small group leaders should read this resource. Another excellent resource is the Heritage Foundation website where they offer books and other information on the first principles of our nation. I highly recommend *We Still Hold These Truths* by Matthew Spalding.

SMALL GROUP RESOURCE

This book can be used as a small group resource. There are questions at the end of each chapter that will stimulate discussion and help people apply what they read. One of the goals of this book is that people learn how our nation was founded on four great anchors of God and how to live by these anchors. A small group is an excellent way to use the information in this book in a practical way. I especially encourage churches to consider using this resource to equip people to restore these anchors in their own lives as well as in our nation.

As I write this book (2011) our nation prepares for next year's elections. This is a good time to help people understand our historic anchors and to vote for people who live by these anchors. In Appendix B I give some guidelines on how to conduct a small group. If you are going to lead a small group I strongly suggest that you read this section. As you can imagine some people will hold very strong opinions on this topic and will not be afraid to voice them strongly. Because of this I suggest some boundaries for the groups.



SECTION 1

HOW CULTURE AFFECTS ANCHORS

CHAPTER 1:
The Essential Nature of Anchors

CHAPTER 2:
How Anchors Predict the Destiny of a Nation

CHAPTER 3:
The Three Stages of Cultural Erosion

CHAPTER 1

THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF ANCHORS

Hebrews 6:19

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure...

“The general principles upon which the Fathers achieved independence were the general principles of Christianity... I will avow that I believed and now believe that those general principles of Christianity are as eternal and immutable as the existence and attributes of God.” (John Adams, second President of the United States, in a letter written to his wife Abigail on the day the Declaration was approved by Congress).

ANCHORS

The Fastnet Race is one of the most difficult and prestigious yacht races in the world. It is the final event in a series of five races that make up the Admiral's Cup. In the summer of 1979, 303 yachts started this famous race from the Isle of Wight in the English Channel with their goal being first to finish the 608 mile distance.

The race started on Saturday in perfect weather. However, by noon on Monday gale force winds created swells of water up to 40 feet high. The 2500 people who made up the crews of these yachts fought the raging winds and sea while being tossed about like toy boats in an ocean. The boats sent out mayday calls and British, Irish and Dutch teams in boats and helicopters came to the rescue. Despite the heroic efforts of these people, fifteen of the sailors died and only eighty-five of the 303 yachts reached the finish line. The race turned into the worst disaster in yachting history.

There were two major mistakes that precipitated this tragedy. The first mistake was that the crews were not prepared for this kind of a storm. There are two basic rules of the sea that were not observed. First, every boat except one did not use a device that could well have saved them. All boats were equipped with a sea anchor or set of drogues. These sea anchors were drag devices that could be used to steady a boat in high seas. They enabled the helmsman to maintain control. Only one boat used the sea anchors and that boat survived. Boats were abandoned and crews lost when a sea anchor could have kept the yachts afloat and the crews alive.

A second major mistake was made when some of the crews decided they would have a better chance if they jumped ship. Bad mistake! Many of those who exchanged their yachts for lifeboats and rafts died while those who stayed with the ships lived. Lifeboats should have been used as an absolute last resort. There are three major lessons we can learn from these mistakes:

The first lesson is that anchors are essential. From ancient times, anchors have been a symbol of hope and stability. The Pilgrims came to America anchored in the hope of carving out a land where they could be free to worship as they pleased and as the Founding Fathers later said, enjoy “...life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Our First and Founding fathers held tenaciously to four essential anchors that made their dream a reality. Today we live in the greatest nation in history because of those four historic anchors. I believe we are in the process of losing those anchors. They may still be on the ship but they are slowly vanishing. They are being neglected and are under attack. They are certainly not being used as our Founding Fathers intended.

The second lesson is that no matter how frustrated we become with our nation **we must not jump ship.** This country was made great by resilient people who not only dropped anchor at Plymouth Rock but weathered the storms of hardship, disease, death and differences that came as a result of establishing a new nation. No matter how severe the storm they never jumped ship. It was “we the people” of the past, anchored in deeply held beliefs, that survived our often stormy history. It is the responsibility of “we the people” today to restore our anchors and right the ship. We are not just passengers on a luxury liner, lounging by the pool sipping our drinks, waiting for the next gourmet meal. Our nation was carved out of hard times and sacrifice that came from a passionate belief in our anchors.

The third lesson is that we must **rediscover and restore** these anchors. We are a working crew, responsible to locate and restore our anchors to their original condition and deploy them as our Founding Fathers envisioned. These anchors are still on board but neglected and largely forgotten. Not unlike the anchors in the Fastnet Race they are buried in the storage shed. We must not listen to people who say America's anchors don't exist or that they were never part of our history. As Christians it is our responsibility to rediscover and restore these anchors, first in our own lives and then in the life of our nation.

WHAT ARE ANCHORS?

We are most familiar with traditional boat anchors. We know that anchors hold a boat or ship in place so it does not drift. They steady the ship. In case of a severe storm anchors can be the difference between a ship being safe in a harbor or being damaged. They can prevent a ship from being sunk because of the wind and waves or by drifting helplessly until it capsizes. Anchors are an essential part of ships.

It is plain to see why the term anchor is used to signify stability. It is commonly used to refer to that which holds everything else together, a constant. An anchor is something or someone that serves as a solid foundation for everything else. Television newscasts refer to their lead newscasters as anchors. Shopping Malls often call their largest or most prestigious store the "anchor." People sometimes refer to a significant person in their life as "my anchor."

Personal anchors

There are also personal anchors. Whether we are aware of it or not, we all live by some kind of personal anchors. These anchors serve as a foundation on which we build our lives. They stabilize us. They keep us grounded. Anchors serve as our "true north". They point us in the right direction. When the storms of life come, these anchors keep us from being blown off course or even shipwrecked. The quality of these anchors is very important. Some anchor people well and others do not. It is what these anchors are made of that is important. **These personal anchors are core beliefs and values that determine how we live our lives. Every thought and action is based on some kind of an anchor. They form our worldview and our worldview determines our character. Therefore we are the sum total of our true anchors.**

Who needs anchors?

Even superman needs anchors! Christopher Reeve, of Superman fame, faced a "perfect storm" in real life. Many of you will probably remember when Reeve was thrown from his horse and suffered a severe spinal cord injury. The diagnosis could not have been worse. In one brief moment Christopher Reeve had lost all movement of his limbs. He was a quadriplegic. In the years after his accident much is to be admired about the way Reeve and his family handled his loss. They stuck together and put their energy and resources into researching ways people who were paralyzed could function normally again. However there was something missing.

Reeve and his wife put their complete hope in a medical breakthrough that would allow him to walk again.

What you may not know is that toward the end of his life, Christopher recognized a need for a greater hope in his life than his hope for recovery. In an October, 2004, interview with Readers Digest, Reeve was asked, "You went nearly 50 years without religion in your life. What made you recently join the Unitarian Church?" Here was his answer.

"It gives me a moral compass. I often refer to Abe Lincoln, who said 'When I do good, I feel good. When I do bad, I feel bad. And that is my religion.' I think we all have a little voice inside us that will guide us. It may be God, I don't know. But I think that if we shut out all the noise and clutter from our lives and listen to that voice, it will tell us the right thing to do." (Readers Digest, October 2004, p. 113)

There is a basic principle of life to be learned here. I believe God has put within every person and nation a need for something to anchor them. Christopher Reeve sensed this calling from God for a "moral compass." He knew instinctively, in his heart, that he needed something more to hope for than the noble task of helping quadriplegics walk again. He needed a true anchor to give him a deeper sense of direction and satisfaction. God has put in the heart of all people a vacuum that can only be filled by Him. The Bible called this need, "... eternity in the hearts of men..." In a book of wisdom, King Solomon said:

"I believe God has put within every person and nation a need for something to anchor them."

Ecclesiastes 3:11

11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

The question that I believe Christopher Reeve and many people fail to carefully evaluate is, **"What is the source of authority for the anchors I choose to live by? Why should I trust them? What is the compelling evidence that these anchors are true?"** If we examine Reeve's anchor carefully we see that the authority for his anchor of truth and morality was how he felt. It was his feelings that were his standard for right and wrong. It was his "little voice" that guided him. This may all sound good but it is an inadequate anchor. What if everyone in the world based their truth and morality on how

they felt—the little voice inside? Has not the little voice of some caused immeasurable suffering in the world?

With no objective standard for truth and morality each person is free to set his own standards. We all need anchors based on objective truth. I believe that truth comes only from God and what he has revealed to us in the Bible.

THE FOUR ANCHORS OF NATIONS

Similar to an individual, every nation also has core anchors by which it lives. **The anchors of a nation are its core beliefs and values that shape its character, form its worldview, predict its actions and determine its destiny.** Not everyone endorses or lives by the prevailing anchors of a nation. There is much diversity among the population. This means we must address the question of whom or what determines the anchors of a nation. How is a nation's character formed and how does it change over a period of time?

I believe that when we look at the history of our nation we can see that there were four anchors that made this nation great. These anchors show how the character of America was originally formed. People came to America because of some deeply held, shared values. It was these commonly held values or anchors that drove people to take significant risks, make great sacrifices and develop the character of what was to become the United States of America. Following are the four historic anchors that we will focus on in this book:

1. The anchor of authority

Every nation is governed by some kind of authority. It is the kind of authority and how it is administered that forms an essential part of that nation's character. To understand the anchor of authority three questions need to be addressed. These questions are:

What or who is the ultimate authority?
How is that authority determined?
How is that authority administered?

2. The anchor of truth and morality

Every nation has certain standards for conduct. There is some kind of national standard for what is right and what is wrong. This anchor of morality is based upon some authority of truth. There are general rules in place whether written or unwritten. These standards, or rules, may be very rigid and

administered stringently or very lax and hardly enforced at all. The three questions we will ask about our nation's anchors of truth and morality are:

What is the standard or authority for truth?
How is morality discerned?
What are the criteria for good and evil?

3. The anchor of civility

Every nation also has some code of conduct for how people are to treat one another. As with morality there are written and unwritten rules or laws that prescribe the rights, privileges and responsibilities of its citizens. Civility is much more than mere courtesy. It goes much deeper and involves how human life is valued and how citizens extend love to one another. The three questions we will investigate about our nation's anchor of civility are:

How is human life valued?
What are the standards for treating one another?
What are the rights and responsibilities of the individual and family?

4. The anchor of purpose

If you in look deep into the soul of a nation and see its character you can discover its purpose and therefore its destiny.

The purpose of a nation is the reason for which it exists. The purpose of every nation should be to honor God by offering to everyone

"...life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." If leaders have a clear commitment to that purpose then much of what happens will be aligned with that purpose. It is a blessed nation that has a noble purpose and leaders who are faithful to carry out the purpose that promotes the general good of the people. You can get a clear indication of the purpose of a nation by understanding its first three anchors. These anchors determine the purpose and how it is implemented. The questions we will ask about the purpose of a nation are:

What is the primary purpose of the nation?
Who or what decides this purpose?
How is the purpose implemented?

It is a blessed nation that has a noble purpose and leaders who are faithful to carry out the purpose that promotes the general good of the people.

THE CHARACTER OF A NATION

Every nation has a character; that is, there are distinguishing characteristics that set it apart from other nations. These distinguishing characteristics are determined by the core anchors of that nation. These core anchors are held by the government or the ruling regime. In a best case scenario these anchors are also held by the people. It is these two entities that give a nation its character. They have a symbiotic effect on one another. Ideally the regime would reflect the character of the people and the people hold the anchors of the regime. However since we live in an imperfect world there is a continual tension between those who govern and these governed.

Anchors determine the character of a nation and its worldview

The anchors comprised of core beliefs or values, form a larger worldview that drives a nation's behavior. Therefore a nation's actions will always reflect its character. If you know these anchors you can determine the character of a person, organization or nation. Nations will invariably default to their core anchors. The anchors are the foundation of a nation's soul. It matters not what the leaders of a nation say, or what they promise if it is out of character with who they are. In the end, character always prevails. A nation will always do what is in its soul.

The character of a nation predicts its actions

The most accurate indicator of what a nation will do in a given situation is its character. If you look at the core anchors that make up its character you can predict with a high degree of accuracy the critical choices that nation will make. If given enough time and the right circumstances it will default to its core anchors and character.

If the Allied Nations of the Second World War had understood the four anchors of the ruling regime in Nazi Germany, they could have saved millions of lives. They would have ignored Hitler's promises of peace because they would have understood his character and therefore the character of the nation. They could have predicted with a high degree of accuracy what Hitler would do. The blinders which kept the allied nations from seeing what was crystal clear were inexcusable because Hitler had written candidly about his anchors in *Mein Kampf*. Hitler painted an accurate portrait of his character for the whole world to see. Core anchors form basic patterns that can predict behavior.

Character determines the destiny of a nation

Destiny can be defined as a predetermined course of events that inevitably leads to a certain destination. There is a **seemingly** irresistible power that drives it forward. Often you will hear people say, "It was meant to be." Others will say, "It is my (our) destiny." I recently heard a football coach make that statement after upsetting a top ten team. What these people seem to be saying is that what happened was predetermined by some force and was going to happen regardless of personal choices or other extenuating circumstances.

I am not using destiny in that way. Destiny, as I define it here, is the destination that will be determined by the character of a person or nation. The character of a nation will influence its choices that will, in turn, determine its destiny. The only way to change the destiny of a nation is if its character changes or God intervenes to accomplish His sovereign will.

In this book we will examine not only the anchors but the character of our nation. From this will come a clear picture of how our character was formed in the beginning and how it shaped our nation. We will observe how anchors have been changing and how those changes are shaping the character of our nation today. Questions we will investigate are, "What is the character of our nation today and how is it being shaped by government, culture and the people?" "What is the condition of our anchors and where is our great ship headed?" The most important issue we will address is what we can do to restore our historic anchors and reclaim the character that made us a great nation.

THE ANCHORS OF NATIONS CHANGE

Anchors of a nation can and do change over time. There are forces that can turn the tide and change the character of a nation. The people of every nation must be vigilant in preserving the historic anchors of their nation and dropping anchor to maintain its character. When the people become complacent and allow those anchors to erode, the ship will drift and the nation will change. Those changes caused by vanishing anchors can be catastrophic and change a nation beyond recognition. Angelo Codevilla, in his book, *The Character of Nations*, gives us a valuable insight on how nations can change.

"Walking around the last of the rubble of postwar Germany as a college student, I found it difficult to understand how the solid burghers I met could have been party to the Holocaust. What

could have led such nice folks to do that? My political science courses hardly gave a clue. But Hannah Arendt explained, much as Aristotle would have, how their regime had made evil banal. I read that the Soviet Union had murdered on an even grosser scale. Arthur Koestler and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn—not political scientists—explained the effects of living by lies. How could the superpolite Japanese people, who are filling the world with Sonys, have wreaked unspeakable cruelties around the Pacific? General Douglas MacArthur explained how one face of this peoples' character gave way to another.” (The Character of Nations, Page x)

It is evident that what happened in Germany, Russia, and Japan was a result of regimes anchored in lies rather than truth. The good people of Germany stood by while the nation's anchors vanished right in front of them. William Shirer, author of *Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* and *Berlin Diary* wrote the following in *The Nightmare Years, 1930-1940*.

“What I failed to stress was that the church struggles never really affected or even much interested the vast majority of the German people in the early years of the Third Reich. I should have realized that a people who had so lightly given up their political, cultural and economic freedoms were not, except for a relatively few, going to die or even risk imprisonment to preserve freedom of worship.

What really aroused the Germans in the 1930's were the glittering success of Hitler in providing jobs, creating prosperity, restoring Germany's military might, and moving from one triumph to another in his foreign policy...”

It is important that we remember the past so that we do not make those mistakes in the future. As Philosopher George Santayana so wisely said, *“Those who do not remember the past are condemned to relive it.”* In the next chapter we will learn from the past of four nations so we do not relive their mistakes.

When Israel changed its anchors

We have in the Bible an alarming example of a nation that changed its anchors. Israel was God's chosen people but they chose to reject the God who had blessed them. They replaced the true anchors of God with “worthless” anchors. The result was years of suffering in exile after being taken captive by brutal nations. Here is what God said through the prophet Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 2:11-13

¹¹Has a nation ever changed its gods? (Yet they are not gods at all.) But my people have exchanged their Glory for worthless idols. ¹²Be appalled at this, O heavens, and shudder with great horror,” declares the LORD. ¹³“My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.”

Israel was warned of the danger of exchanging the true anchors of God for “worthless” anchors. This should have been appalling to them. If they had known what would eventually happen to their nation they would have “shuddered with great horror”. But instead they did the unthinkable. They “forsook” the true anchors of God and replaced them with “broken” anchors that were utterly useless.

We should take this warning of Israel to heart. God has greatly blessed our nation. No nation in history has enjoyed the peace and prosperity that the United States of America has. We dare not continue to allow the godly anchors upon which this nation was founded to be exchanged for “worthless” anchors.

CHAPTER 1 SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1: Start your small group time by reading *Hebrews 6:19* and the quote from John Adams at the beginning of this chapter. What do this Scripture and the quote from John Adams have in common?

2: In your own words define an anchor. What are the two most important anchors that anchor you?

3: What were the three lessons learned from the Fastnet Race? How could these three lessons help our nation right now?

4: What did Christopher Reeve fail to consider when choosing an anchor? What should be the basis for all anchors?

5: Give a one sentence description of the four anchors of a nation.

6: How do anchors determine the character of a nation and its worldview? How does a world view determine actions?

7: What determines the destiny of a nation? What would you say is the destiny of our nation right now?

8: Discuss Santanyana's statement, "*Those who do not remember the past are condemned to relive it*".

CHAPTER 2

HOW ANCHORS PREDICT THE DESTINY OF A NATION

Matthew 7:15-20

¹⁵ "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. ¹⁶ By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

"Without morals a republic cannot subsist any length of time; they therefore who are decrying the Christian religion, whose morality is so sublime and pure...are undermining the solid foundation of morals, the best security for the duration of free governments." (Charles Carroll - signer of the Declaration of Independence - Portrait of Charles Carroll)

ANCHORS PREDICT DESTINY

We have seen how the core anchors of a nation make up the worldview of a nation, shape its character, predict its actions and determine its destiny. If you want to know the destiny of a nation, closely inspect its anchors. It would be presumptuous to claim that one can predict with one hundred percent certainty exactly what a person or nation will do in a specific circumstance. I do believe, however, that it is possible to increase the probability of predicting what a nation will do and make effective decisions by understanding its four anchors. Anchors will inevitably reveal the character and destiny of a nation.

THE USE OF "THIN SLICING"

Can four core anchors really determine a person's or nation's character? Is it possible to predict behavior based on such a limited sample? I believe such predictions are possible. In his bestselling book, *Blink*, Malcolm Gladwell makes a compelling case for the power of what he calls "thin-slicing", filtering the very few factors from the many variables to come to effective decisions.

"Thin-slicing' refers to the ability of our unconscious to find patterns in situations and behavior based on very narrow slices of experience." (pp. 23)

Of the many examples Gladwell uses, I will use only two to illustrate my point. The first example Gladwell uses is that of John Gottman, University of Washington psychologist. Gottman has proved successfully that you don't have to know everything about a couple to predict with a high degree of accuracy who will stay married and who will eventually divorce. Since the 1980's Gottman has brought more than three thousand couples into a small room he calls his "love lab" to have couples discuss for one hour any area of contention they may have in their marriage. He videotapes the couple and analyzes the interaction based on twenty separate categories of communication. Based on these calculations Gottman is able to predict with 95 percent accuracy which couples will still be married fifteen years later. If he reduces his analysis to fifteen minutes his accuracy is still ninety percent.

As remarkable as this is, it gets even better. Through many years of experience Gottman has found that by focusing on only four of the twenty elements he can discern most of what he needs to know. And out of those four categories there is one, "contempt", that is by far the leading indicator of couples who will eventually divorce.

A second intriguing illustration discovered by Gladwell was in regard to how Emergency Room doctors were able to dramatically improve their diagnosis of people who were having chest pain and were worried about having a heart attack. The normal policy was that when someone came to an ER complaining of chest pains, the medical staff would gather as much information as possible. They would ask a series of questions and then a technician would give the patient an electrocardiogram or ECG. From all this information the ER doctors would make an estimate. The problem was that the estimate wasn't very accurate. Between 2 and 8 percent of patients with a true heart attack were sent home. There was so much information being gathered that it became confusing to the doctors, who often disagreed on the diagnosis.

This problem was tackled by a man by named Brendan Reilly. In 1996 Reilly became chairman of the Cook County Hospital's Department of Medicine. Cook County Hospital in Chicago was the place of last resort for the noninsured. Reilly was faced with how to parcel out care for the some 250,000 patients who came through the ER each year. One of the major problems he wanted to resolve was to figure out who was having a heart attack and who was not. In his search for answers he examined the work of a cardiologist named Lee Goldman. Goldman, working with a group of mathematicians, evaluated hundreds of heart attack cases and came up with an

algorithm; an equation that he concluded could increase the accuracy of diagnosing those experiencing heart attacks.

“Doctors, he concluded, ought to combine the evidence of the ECG with three of what he called urgent risk factors: (1) Is the pain felt by the patient unstable angina? (2) Is there fluid in the patient’s lungs? and (3) Is the patient’s systolic blood pressure below 100?” (PP.134)

Dr. Reilly decided to try Goldman’s algorithm. First the staff would use their own methods of diagnosing heart attacks for a few months. Then they would try Goldman’s method. They would see which was most effective. The results were astounding. Goldman’s approach was 70 percent more effective than the old methods.

We can learn an important principle from Goldman’s and Gottman’s research. Complex problems can be reduced to simple patterns. We tend to make things more difficult than they have to be. I think this is especially true in the political arena. Who could possibly understand a thousand page Health Care Bill and make informed, effective decisions? Where is the ten page summary that someone could possibly understand? More is not always better. I heard this little saying somewhere and it has stuck with me. *“If plain sense makes sense don’t look for further sense or you will end up with nonsense.”* Common sense usually comes in small doses.

THREE KINDS OF “SENSE”

The use of “thin slicing” is a way of eliminating a lot of nonsense and taking advantage of the common sense that God has made available to man. It seems to me that there are three kinds of sense:

1. There is “uncommon sense”

What I call uncommon sense is actually much more than uncommon; it is divine—supernatural sense. I am speaking here of the wisdom of God revealed in the Bible. The Bible refers to this uncommon sense of God as *“God breathed.”* That is, God *“breathed”* into certain people His words to be recorded and passed on to man in the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It is this uncommon sense of God which formed the foundation for our nation’s anchors. The Bible is the source of all truth and the basis for all wisdom. A Proverb says:

Proverbs 2:6

“For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.”

2. There is “common sense”

Common sense is the practical application of the uncommon sense of God. Common sense is the wisdom of God applied in practical ways. Common sense is always consistent with the principles found in the Bible. Common sense never contradicts the uncommon sense of God. Common sense is available to everyone—not just Christians. It is based on the common law of God. We will examine this common law more closely in future chapters. Common sense flowing from the uncommon sense of God allows the world to function in a somewhat moral and civil way (Romans 1:18-32; 2:12-16). Psalms says of common sense:

Psalm 111:10

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise.”

Psalm 112:1

“Praise the LORD. Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who finds great delight in his commands.”

3. There is “nonsense”

When people deny or disregard the uncommon sense of God and the common sense that is based on the truth of the Bible they often end up with nonsense or no sense at all. The Bible says:

1 Corinthians 1:20

“Where is the wise man?”

“Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?”

When people deny or disregard the uncommon sense of God and the common sense that is based on the truth of the Bible they often end up with nonsense or no sense at all.

These questions are answered in the Bible. If God created the vast expanse of the universe and created us with our incredible bodies, then He must be the source of all knowledge. If He is the source of all knowledge and wisdom then it stands to reason that whatever opposes or disregards that essence of wisdom will result in nonsense. When examined in the light of God’s wisdom, knowledge, principles and opinions that deny and disregard the Bible will make no sense at all. When closely scrutinized they will lack coherent meaning. As the Apostle Paul said, *“...Has not God made foolish the wisdom of*

the world" (1 Cor. 1:20)? "Nonsense" is what happens when people chose to disregard God and become wise in their own eyes and the live by the authority of their own truth.

THE "THIN SLICING" OF FOUR NATIONS

When we identify core patterns or anchors, decision making can be more effective. By focusing on core anchors we can eliminate non-essentials and focus only on essentials. By studying the four anchors of a nation we can discover its worldview, understand its character, and predict certain behaviors. Most importantly its destiny will be revealed.

We will see how the destinies of Germany, Japan, Russia and Iran could have been determined by thin slicing. I will give a brief summary of the four core anchors of each of these nations to illustrate how the principle of "thin slicing" can be affectively used to better understand nations. I am not claiming to be an expert on any of these nations. I am only reporting what can be plainly observed by anyone who is willing to do some research. I do, however, believe these observations to be an accurate description of core anchors of these nations at some point in their history. I realize that much more could be said about the anchors and character of these nations. These are very succinct observations.

THE EXAMPLE OF GERMANY

We will look at the four core anchors of Germany leading up to and during the Second World War. There was one person who developed these false anchors and persuaded the other leaders of a regime to hold to them as well. While many of the good people of Germany did not personally embrace these anchors they stood by as the anchors were implemented and watched as they caused havoc among the nations. The silent majority allowed one deranged dictator and his vocal minority of followers to dictate the nation's anchors, shape its character and eventually fulfill its "destiny" to kill millions of people while destroying their own nation.

Anchors

The Anchor of Authority

The only authority that existed in Nazi German was Hitler and his Third Reich. It was absolute rule downward with each person in total submission to the one over him. In Nazi Germany democracy was stamped out and replaced by the "Fuehrerprinzip". The authoritarianism of the Prussian Army was outlined in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. It can be summed up by this statement:

"... the decision will be made by one man...only he alone will have the right and authority to command...This principle—absolute responsibility unconditionally combined with absolute authority—will gradually breed an elite of leaders such as today, in this era of irresponsible parliamentarianism, is utterly inconceivable." (**Mein Kampf**, pp. 449-50)

Anchor of Truth

Truth in Germany was to be found only in the beliefs of Hitler. His absolute authority included dictating what people believed. Truth was in *Mein Kampf*, the Hitler "Bible". The standard for right and wrong came from Hitler alone. It was he who decided what was morally acceptable and morally unacceptable. In the thirty-point program that Hitler's government set up for the establishment of The National Reich Church of Germany we can see clearly this false anchor of truth. Article 14 reads:

"The national Church declares that to it, and therefore to the German nation, it has been decided that the Fuehrer's Mein Kampf is the greatest of all documents. It...not only contains the greatest but it embodies the purest and truest ethics for the present and future life of our nation."

Article 19 goes on to say:

"On the altars there must be nothing but 'Mein Kampf' (to the German nation and therefore to God the most sacred book) and to the left of the altar a sword."

Article 24 of the party program said that there would be, "... liberty for all Christian Denominations in the State in as far as they are not a danger to the moral feelings of the German race."

Anchor of Civility

In Hitler's Germany the only people who deserved civil treatment were Aryans who complied with the rigid requirements of The Third Reich. Everyone else was dispensable. The false anchor of civility condoned cruelty and genocide of epoch proportions. The anchor of civility was a natural product of the first two anchors. The standard for human value and the treatment of people came from the evil mind of one man. In his own words Hitler laid down the ground work for his atrocities.

"Blood mixture and the resultant drop in the racial level is the sole cause of the dying out of the old cultures; for men do not perish as a result of lost wars, but by the loss of that force of

resistance which is continued only in pure blood. All who are not of good race in this world are chaff.” (*Mein Kampf*, pp 296)
A Nazi textbook gives further insight into civility during the Nazi reign of terror:

“The teaching of mercy and love of one’s neighbor is foreign to the German race and the Sermon on the Mount is according to Nordic sentiment an ethic for cowards and idiots.” (Hans Hauptmann, *Bolshevism in the Bible* (Nazi textbook), 1937, quoted p. 28, *The War Against God*, edited by Carl Carmer).

Anchor of Purpose

In 1932 Gauleiter Adolf Wagner of Bavaria proudly read the following proclamation by Hitler:

“The German form of life is definitely determined for the next thousand years. The Age of Nerves for the nineteenth century has found its close with us. There will be no other revolution in Germany for the next thousand years.”

Hitler had made this purpose for Germany clear in *Mein Kampf*. He dreamed of a “Thousand Year Reich.” He refers to Germans as being “lords of the earth.” He addressed the problem of *Lebensraum* (living space). Speaking of Europe he wrote,

“...but nature has not reserved this soil for any future possession of any particular nation or race. On the contrary, this soil exists for the people who possesses the force to take it.”

Hitler’s purpose for himself and Germany was documented for everyone who was interested to see; “world power” first and then “world mastery.” It was Hitler’s belief that the world would be a better place when dominated by the “Master Race” and led by the new “lords of the earth.”

Destiny

If the Allied Nations of World War II had understood these four core anchors of Nazi Germany many of the strategic actions of Hitler could have been predicted. Perhaps millions of lives could have been saved simply by understanding that you cannot negotiate with evil based on ill intent and lies. In *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, William Shirer writes of Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*:

“But it might be argued that had more non-Nazi Germans read it before 1933 and had more foreign statesman of the world perused it carefully while there still was time, both Germany

and the world might have been saved from catastrophe. For whatever other accusations can be made against Adolf Hitler, no one can accuse him of not putting down in writing exactly the kind of “Germany” he intended to make if he ever came to power and the kind of world he meant to create by armed German conquest.” (pp. 80)

Remember that Hitler clearly explained what he felt was his destiny and the destiny of Germany. It was no less than be “lords of the earth” for one thousand years.

THE EXAMPLE OF JAPAN

Now we will look at the example of the super polite people of Japan. How could a nation of seemingly gentle and gracious people commit such atrocities in the Second World War? The answer to this can be partly explained by understanding its four historical anchors.

Anchors

The Anchor of Authority

Nationalists and militarists alike looked to the past for inspiration. Referring to ancient myths about the Japanese and the Emperor in particular being directly descended from the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu Omikami, they exhorted the people to restore a past racial and spiritual purity lost in recent times. They were indoctrinated from an early age to revere the Emperor as a living deity. The Emperor was God and their highest authority.

The Anchor of Truth

In Japanese society the men were taught that the greatest truth and virtue was honor. Life was not worth living without honor and honor for the military man was found in dying a glorious death for the Emperor. This core belief combined with the belief in divine rights and racial purity provided the foundation for the brutality demonstrated by the Japanese armies in World War II. It was the Japanese concept of racial supremacy through a “chosen race” that allowed the Japanese to rationalize the atrocities they committed on soldiers and civilians in territories they occupied. The teaching of Shinto (many gods) and Buddhism (salvation or Nirvana comes from belief in Buddha) did little to dispel these false anchors.

The Anchor of Civility

Because of their false anchor of truth, the Japanese did not see prisoners as human. In particular the Japanese believed that America was a direct threat to their racial purity and their divine right as the chosen people of God. If you combine these beliefs with the belief that honor is dying for the Emperor, you get a recipe for civil behavior that defies the imagination.

There was a Samurai code of ethics known as 'bushido' that can also help explain the wartime behaviour of the Japanese soldier in committing atrocities and "no surrender." This code can be found in the classic of Bushido, *Hagakure* written in the 18th century. It begins by saying, "Bushido is a way of dying." The basic belief of Bushido is that the Samurai is fully devoted to his lord and willing to die for his cause.

The Anchor of Purpose

War was believed to be a divine act through which one could purify one's self and his nation. However, the Japanese anchor of purpose went even further. The destiny of the nation was to purify the whole world. In view of this noble purpose, the inhumane treatment of all who stood in the way of Japanese domination and the sacrifice of life was not a shame but an honor.

Destiny

The worldview will reveal the character of a nation, predict its actions and reveal its destiny.

Japanese anchors were hidden in culture and therefore more difficult to detect and understand than those of the Third Reich. There was no book such as Hitler's *Mein Kampf* that clearly laid out the agenda of the nation.

But if someone had taken the time to study the history and religion of Japan they would have soon discovered their four historical anchors. And once you discover the anchors of a nation you can discern its worldview. The worldview will reveal the character of a nation, predict its actions and reveal its destiny.

Of course no one can predict a nation's precise strategy and actions during a war, but we certainly could have been better prepared for attacks such as Pearl Harbor. If we had known of Bushido we would have been better prepared for the extreme level of perseverance and brutality of the military. We would

have understood from the very beginning that Japan would not stop until someone stopped them. To a man they would die for what they believed was their destiny--racial purity and world supremacy. Death for the cause was an honor.

THE EXAMPLE OF RUSSIA

We will examine Russia's anchors before the fall of the Soviet Union. Some of those anchors seem to have changed. Some have not. It appears that Russia is still heavily influenced by its historic anchors. Lies die hard!

Anchors

The Anchor of Authority

Authority in the USSR was one party rule. During the Soviet era, the General Secretary possessed many powers. As chairman of the Politburo, he became a god-like figure. Statues and pictures of Lenin and for many years Stalin were everywhere. They were in every room of every official building. Lenin was their "god"; the Party was the only "church". The Party ruled the lives of everyone through cohesion, intimidation and brutality. People who did not comply were in constant fear of being reported and sent to brutal *gulags*.

The Anchor of Truth

Karl Marx was one of the main "authors" of truth for the Soviet Union. He saw religion as the "opium of the people" in the sense that he believed it provided only an illusion of happiness. For Marx, real happiness could only occur when a worker controlled the fruits of his own labor. This, he believed, could be achieved only in a communist society where everyone shared equally.

Atheism was the foundational belief system. It was imposed on the Russian people by the Soviet regime. Since there was no future life to look forward to, happiness was through the infallibility of the Communist Party and its ideology. Truth and morality were relative. They were whatever the Communist Party said was truth and morality. The Communist Manifesto contained some practical applications of truth in the Soviet Union.

The Anchor of Civility

Atheism was the main component in the Soviet Union's Anchor of Truth. It was this worldview that gave license to murder millions of people and terrorize millions of others.

When God is not a factor in the life of a nation there is no basis for civility. When truth is relative there is no objective standard for human rights. As Richard Wurmbrand who was tortured in communists prisons wrote:

*“The cruelty of atheism is hard to believe. When man has no faith in the reward of good or the punishment of evil, there is no reason to be human. There is no restraint from the depths of evil which is in man. The communist torturers often said, ‘There is no God, no hereafter, no punishment for evil. We can do what we wish.’” (Richard Wurmbrand, *Tortured for Christ, Bartlesville, OK: Living Sacrifice Books, 1990, pp 38.*)*

The Anchor of Purpose

The **stated** purpose of the Soviet Union was to provide happiness for all by building a classless society where all could enjoy the fruits of their labors. All property and wealth in this society would be shared and owned by everyone.

The **actual** purpose of the Soviet Union and communism turned out to be something very different. Communism set up an authoritarian government with the purpose of controlling the people with the best goods and services going to those who governed. The character of the nation had the distinguishing mark of incivility with total disregard for human rights and freedom. As noble as the original intent may have been, a godless society will always revert to selfish greed and control. There arises a cultural of incivility in which people neither value human life nor treat one another with dignity and respect.

Destiny

Since the fall of the Soviet Union some of those anchors have changed; how much is up for debate. There seems to be a residual effect from the old anchors. It will be interesting in the future to see if Russia can move on from the failure of its past and build true anchors. The destiny of Russia is up for grabs. The character of this nation is in the hands of the people and its leaders. Old, false anchors must continue to be replaced by true anchors if they desire to create an environment that will offer life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for everyone.

THE EXAMPLE OF IRAN

When we examine Iran's anchors we will look at both the past and the present. This is not an in depth study of a country and its religion but a brief summary of four core anchors. As with

each of these countries volumes could be written about their anchors.

With Iran it is impossible to understand its anchors without at least a basic knowledge of Islam. Islam is not easy to understand because there are not only the writings of Mohammad, its founding father, but other documents as well. Then there is the issue of interpretation. What did it mean when it was written and how is it understood by Muslims today? What is the practical application of the teaching of Islam today? What follows is what I will refer to as a **fundamentalist** interpretation of the Koran which is accepted as truth by the regime in Iran. This means that the entire Koran is interpreted as true and binding in its entirety. Some would refer to this as radical Islam.

Anchors

The Anchor of Authority

Allah or God is the ultimate authority in Islam. The *Koran* explains, “*Say: He is God, the One and Only; God, the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him.*” (*Sura 112:1-4, Yusuf Ali*) Unlike in the Bible there is no trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Koran (and some of the other related writings) is the second highest source of authority in the Islamic world. The Koran is seen as the inspired, infallible word of Allah revealed to the Prophet Muhammad.

The Supreme leader of Iran is currently Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The President of Iran is Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Iran in fact has two governments: its formal “democratic” government run by Ahmadinejad and a religious-ideological command structure headed by the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. This is an authoritarian structure where the people have restricted individual rights.

The Anchor of Truth

The Koran is the main source and authority for truth in the Muslim world. Islamic tradition says that the Koran was given to Muhammad from Allah through the angel Gabriel, over a period of some twenty years. The Koran is the Islamic Bible and considered infallible.

Sharia or Islamic Law is also an **authoritative source of truth**. It comes primarily from the Quran and the Sunna which means “path.” These are found in the Sira and the Hadith which are narrations concerning the words and deeds of the Islamic prophet Muhammad. Sharia law is a collection of the practices and teachings of the Prophet Mohammed and is the major source of the legal code in most Muslim countries. Sharia law is considered **perfect and sacred**.

The Anchor of Civility

Civility--the way people are valued and treated-- is a result of the first two anchors. Civil actions come from civil beliefs. It is important to know that it is collectivism, not the individual that is valued in Islamic theology. It is the vision of caliphate that is of upmost importance. Thus the individual human life is disposable when compared to the greater purpose of an Islamic world. When you understand this you are able to understand Muslims becoming martyrs and killing their own people. The greater good is being accomplished when caliphate is the destiny of Islam.

Some of the teachings of the Koran are civil and others are not. Some of the teachings justify cruel punishments such as amputation for stealing, stoning for adultery as well as a death sentence for those who depart from the Muslim faith (Sharia law). There is unequal treatment of women in inheritance, dress, and independence. Following are just two comparisons using the UN Declaration of Human Rights as a standard for civility:

On Freedom of religion:

The UN Declaration of Human Rights says:

“Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief....” (Article 18)

The Koran says:

“O you who believe! do not take the Jews and the Christians for friends; they are friends of each other; and whoever amongst you takes them for a friend, then surely he is one of them; surely Allah does not guide the unjust people.” (Sura 5, verse 51)

On the equality of men and women:

The UN Declaration of Human Rights says:

“Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,” (Article 2)

The Koran says:

“Men are superior to women because Allah has made so. Therefore good women are obedient, and (as to) those (women) on whose part you fear desertion, admonish them, and leave them alone in the sleeping-places and BEAT them; then if they obey you, do not seek a way against them; surely Allah is High, Great.” (Sura 4, verse 34).

The Anchor of Purpose:

Iran’s purpose is Caliphate; to create an Islamic world governed by Sharia law. This is a basic component of Islamic theology. But we cannot fully understand Iran’s anchor of purpose and therefore its destiny without looking into the beliefs and actions of its President. Here we find a portrait of Islamic extremism and how the Iranian regime can commit acts of terror and support terrorists.

Destiny

The rhetoric and actions of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad are clear. He snubs his nose at the nations of the free world. He especially hates Israel and America. He has said that he wants Israel “wiped off the face of the map.” He is not alone in that hatred. The Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in response to a speech by President Obama on June 4, 2009, said that “beautiful speeches” could not remove the hatred felt in the Muslim world against America. “People of the Middle East, the Muslim region and North Africa -- people of these regions -- hate America from the bottom of their heart.”

The sentiment of these two leaders is clear. Some want to write off Ahmadinejad as a madman who only rants and makes threats that he will not carry out. Remember we underestimated the evil of Hitler as well. We were blindsided by the evil of Japan’s regime. When we consider Iran’s destiny at the present time, the **best we can hope for** if Ahmadinejad stays in power, is that he and his cohorts will continue to lie, threaten and cause chaos and not try to obliterate countries from the map with a nuclear bomb.

I believe **the worst case scenario** for the destiny of Iran is that they do the “unthinkable” and throw the world into utter chaos by the use of nuclear or biological weapons. There

is a bizarre twist in the thinking of Ahmadinejad that we at least need to consider. It seems from statements he has made that Ahmadinejad believes it is the destiny of Iran to usher in an Islamic world. We do know for a fact that he believes in the return of an Islamic Messiah called The 12th Imam. This belief is that Allah shielded or hid Muhammad al-Mahdi as the 12th Imam until the end of time. This messianic figure is to return to save the world when it is in a major chaos. He is to bring peace and justice which could only be referring to an Islamic world. In an exclusive sit-down interview in Tehran with Ahmadinejad, NBC's Ann Curry asked him about the coming of the 12th Imam. Here is a portion of that interview:

NBC's Ann Curry: *"In your speeches, you pray for God to hasten the arrival of the hidden Imam, the Muslim messiah. Would you tell us, as I know you will speak about this at the general assembly, as well. What is your relationship with the hidden Imam, and how soon do you think before the second coming?"*

President Ahmadinejad: *"Yes, that's true. I prayed for the arrival of the 12th Imam. The owner of the age, as we call him. Because the owner of the age is the symbol of the – justice and brotherly love prevailing around the world. When the Imam arrives, all of these problems will be resolved..."*

Now here is the scary part. It seems that Ahmadinejad may believe that he has been called by God to hasten the 12th Imam's return. In Iran a group called the Hojjatieh to which Ahmadinejad belongs, believe that humans can stir up chaos to encourage him to return. In his book *Epicenter*, Joel Rosenberg warns of the following:

"The coming of the Twelfth Imam is never mentioned in the Koran. Rather it stems from supposed sayings of Mohammed and his followers soon after the Koran was complete. Thus not all Muslims share the brand of theology I have just outlined, nor do all Shiites. But Admadinejad and his close aides and advisors leave no doubt that they are driven by the belief that the Islamic messiah will appear in the next two or three years and that by launching a war to annihilate Israel, in particular, they can hasten that day."

(pp .123)

Whether or not you agree with Rosenberg's assessment there can be no doubt that Admadinejad is up to no good. Not unlike Hitler, Admadinejad has made his plans for the nation of Israel crystal clear. In a public address on IRINN TV on June 2, 2008, Ahmadinejad stated:

"The Zionist regime has lost its raison d'être. Today, the Palestinians identify with your name Khomeini, your memory, and in your path. They are walking in your illuminated path and the Zionist regime has reached a total dead end. Thanks to God, your wish will soon be realized, and this germ of corruption will be wiped off."

The destiny of Iran or any other nation is not irreversible. We need to pray for these nations. God is still sovereign over all nations. God continues to work in the nations to fulfill his purposes for the world.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

1. The first two anchors are the most important.

Notice the pattern. In all of these examples the nation created a centralized authority that excluded the sovereign God of the Bible. In some cases a combination of naturalism, relativism and humanism were the basis for truth. The two critical anchors of authority and truth caused the loss of civility. And these three anchors together determined the purpose or destiny of that nation.

In each case the sovereign God of the Bible was dethroned. In some cases the nation adopted other versions of God. Sometimes a leader or the government assumed the role of God. In all cases the nation replaced God's truth with its own special brand of truth. This was a toxic mixture that eventually poisoned that nation and destroyed others.

2. God is still in control

Rogue nations like Iran may think that they have free reign because God has not yet intervened. But these rogue nations and their leaders need not think that God is not watching. He will intervene to accomplish his purposes at the right time. Nothing happens in heaven or on earth without God's initiative or permission. As believers we do not need to fear. When God has seen enough, he intervenes. Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, discovered this the hard way. Because he failed to acknowledge that God was sovereign, God removed Nebuchadnezzar's authority and he became mentally ill. Eventually the King learned his lesson about challenging the sovereignty of the Creator of the universe. Here is what He said:

Daniel 4:34-35

³⁴ At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever.

His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. ³⁵All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"

3. Beware of ungodly alliances

You cannot negotiate with evil and yet it seems to be part of human nature to try. We try repeatedly to reason with leaders of nations that are unreasonable. Our government needs to study the four anchors of a nation diligently. These anchors will reveal which nations can be reasoned with and which cannot. Look closely at what a nation sees as its destiny. They will not veer from this course unless forced. Their actions will always default to their core anchors. They will not act in opposition to their character. The Bible warns that people accustomed to doing evil will always do evil.

Jeremiah 13:23

²³ Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil.

We try repeatedly to reason with leaders of nations that are unreasonable. Our government needs to study the four anchors of a nation diligently. These anchors will reveal which nations can be reasoned with and which cannot.

Our government should not make the mistake of thinking they can make alliances with ungodly nations or that those nations will not act in accordance with their core anchors. What we perceive as protection may turn on us in the long run. In the Bible there are numerous accounts of the nation of Israel making this mistake. They habitually made alliances with ungodly

nations and were always disappointed. What a surprise! God warned Israel:

Jeremiah 2:36

³⁶Why do you go about so much, changing your ways? You will be disappointed by Egypt as you were by Assyria.

God wanted Israel to trust Him for their protection, not ungodly nations. He was always faithful but they would invariably forget that He was sovereign and over all nations.

The prophet Jeremiah warned the Israelites that they would not only be disappointed with these alliances but they would eventually become dominated by them. He said:

Jeremiah 13:21

²¹ What will you say when the LORD sets over you those you cultivated as your special allies? Will not pain grip you like that of a woman in labor?

Perhaps it would be good for our government to consider the lessons that Israel learned. Are we not often disappointed in our alliances?

There are always rogue nations that are a threat to the United States of America and other nations. These rogue nations who pose a threat to the U.S and will not back down must be dealt with forcefully. The only negotiation with them should be **how** they will comply. These nations will only respond to strength and force. You cannot negotiate with a nation that believes its destiny is to rule the world and destroy other nations. They will stop at nothing to reach that goal.

4. Change must come through character transformation.

Those nations who wish to change will only experience true change through character transformation. We must understand that not all nations desire to change. Those who desire change will change only if their anchors change. This is how character transformation occurs. If we truly want to help nations achieve life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, it will not happen through money, technology, and education alone. Neither will it happen through force alone.

Change can only happen when we come alongside nations with grace and truth, helping them to build new anchors that will transform their character. Those who do not wish to change in this way should be left alone unless they pose a threat to our national security.

5. We must restore our historical Anchors if we are to truly influence other nations.

Character counts. Our character counts as individuals. Our character counts as a nation. What do we have to offer to other nations if we do not live by our true anchors? Our true and lasting influence with other nations will always be equal to the quality of our character. If our anchor of truth continues to vanish what will happen to our character? If we fail to preserve our anchor of the sovereignty of God, what will become of our character? If these two anchors are not

restored we will also lose our ability to be civil. Our destiny to share life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness with others will be compromised.

I believe it is naive to think that there is no connection between character in one area of life and not another. People say "What he does in his private life has nothing to do with his public service." Really? How logical is that? It is picking and choosing standards for truth and morality. This attitude is another example of how our anchors are being eroded by cultural currents. Someone needs to explain to me how someone who is unfaithful to his wife will not be unfaithful to his government. If someone is willing to break the sacred covenant of marriage will he or she not break another covenant when conflicting desires surface? Will that same character not prevail? Our souls are not divided. We always default to our true anchors. Character will always win out in our choices.

COMMON SENSE PREDICTIONS

Before we end this chapter I want to return to the topic of predicting the destiny of a nation. As we have seen it does not take an expert to know what to expect from a nation. Think of a nation that interests you. Do a little investigation on each of its anchors. When you have completed this summarize what you have discovered by describing what you believe will be that nations destiny.

Nation _____

1. The anchor of authority

What or who is the ultimate authority?

How is that authority determined?

How is that authority administered?

2. The anchor of truth and morality

What is the standard or authority for truth?

How is morality discerned?

What are the criteria for good and evil?

3. The anchor of civility

How is human life valued?

What are the standards for treating one another?

What are the rights and responsibilities of the individual and family?

4. The anchor of purpose

What is the primary purpose of the nation?

Who or what decides this purpose?

How is the purpose implemented?

Destiny (What are your conclusions? What is the destiny of this nation?)

CHAPTER 2 SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1: Start your small group time by reading in unison *Matthew 7:15-20* and the quote from Charles Carroll at the beginning of this chapter. In what way are these two statements linked together?

2: What do you think of Gladwell's theory of "thin-slicing"? Can you think of other areas where this theory is true?

3: Briefly discuss the differences in the three kinds of senses. Why are these distinctions important?

4: What lessons can we learn from Germany on how anchors of a nation can vanish quickly? What were some of the mistakes made by the Christians in Germany?

5: What happens when a nation removes the anchors of the authority of God and His truth? What are some of the consequences of an atheistic world view? What can we learn from Russia's anchors?

6: Based upon Iran's four anchors, what can we predict about its destiny? Explain.

7: Which of the five conclusions given by the author do you think is most important to remember?

8: Read *Daniel 4:34-35*. Why is it so important for us as individuals and a nation to acknowledge the sovereignty of God? What is at stake?

CHAPTER 3

THE THREE STAGES OF CULTURAL DRIFT

Colossians 2:8

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

“Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren till she transforms us into beasts.” Patrick Henry- 03/23/1775

CULTURAL DRIFT

A nation’s anchors are not lost overnight. They begin to vanish through the slow process of erosion. As a stream of water erodes not only soil but solid rock over a period of time, so cultural currents slowly but surely erode a nation’s anchors. This is true of America. There are cultural currents that are causing the historic anchors of our nation to be compromised and our ship to drift into dangerous waters. We will explore how this happens in three observable stages.

When the basic composition of an anchor begins to change ever so slightly, ships will always drift in the direction the current takes them. The stronger the current the greater the erosion and the further the drift. It is impossible to live in a culture and not be touched to some degree by the constant flow of cultural currents. Because of the growing volume of anti-God and anti-Biblical bias in our nation today, our anchors are in jeopardy. There are already clear signs of erosion.

THE DANGERS OF CULTURAL DRIFT

One of my best childhood memories is of the week each summer my Dad and I spent at my uncle’s little cabin on the shore of Lake Samish just outside of Bellingham, Washington. My greatest delight was to head out on the lake in a rowboat for a day of fishing. I would row out to a place where I knew there were fish, put the oars in the boat and lose myself in the excitement of catching fish. Because I had no anchor the boat would drift. I would have no sense of how far I was drifting and completely lose track of time. I can remember times when I would come out of my daze, look around and wonder where I was. I would be completely disoriented. I would feel

a rush of panic until I could spot something on shore that I recognized and regain my bearings.

What is cultural drift?

There is a close parallel here to how cultural drift occurs. **Cultural drift is the tendency of a culture to gradually lose its moral anchors and drift further and further away from God and His absolute truth.** Ever so slowly things change for the worse. Eventually shades of gray and half-truths transition into complete falsehoods. Truth is exchanged for a lie. This process is barely noticeable at first because it is so subtle. The anchors slowly begin to vanish. The end result is that true anchors are replaced by false anchors that are like polyurethane. This is a substance made to look like rock but is so light that it will float on water. A culture eventually relies on polyurethane like anchors for its choices and overall direction. The ship becomes vulnerable to the elements as it floats aimlessly in the sea of relativism.

Agents of cultural drift

I am not suggesting that there is one particular conspiracy theory. I do believe however that there is a concerted effort by some to corrupt the morals of our nation. As we will see there are efforts from a variety of special interests groups to introduce cultural currents designed to destroy the biblical anchors and morals of America. One of the primary currents that is setting the stage for eroding these anchors is the secularization of our nation through the revision of our historic anchors.

This is not a new phenomenon in history. We should not be surprised because the Bible says that Satan has power to corrupt cultures. The Bible warns us that Satan, “the god of this age”, conspires to blind unbelievers. The Apostle Paul says,

2 Corinthians 4:4

⁴ The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Jesus referred to Satan as the “*prince of this world*” (*John 12:31*) who is the “*father of lies*” (*John 8:44*). We need to be aware that God has given Satan limited powers in our age. We are warned that he has supernatural powers that he uses to scheme and deceive believers as well as unbelievers. The Apostle Paul says:

Ephesians 6:11

¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

I believe that by understanding cultural currents we can become aware of how the devil schemes and take our stand against the flow of his lies. Satan does use people and organizations to carry out his schemes. We can rise up and stand against these schemes and the culture currents that are eroding the historic anchors of our nation. Two of Satan's primary schemes are to dethrone God and redefine truth in a culture. He uses a variety of methods to accomplish this.

The cultural current that erodes our anchors is primarily a current of lies. Truth is exchanged for falsehoods ever so slowly. Believers can be caught up in the drift of these lies because at first the current seems so non-threatening. There is a false sense of peace while anchors are altered just so slightly. The change is hardly noticeable at first. That is why the Bible warns us to be alert to anything that may contaminate pure anchors. Paul was concerned that the Christians in the Corinthian church would be deceived and led astray. He said,

2 Corinthians 11:3

³ But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ... ¹⁴ And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.

It is only when we hold to the anchors of God that we are set free from the contamination of our culture. Jesus taught this clearly:

Now I want to be clear that when people are led astray from pure truth, cultural drift is not the main problem. Every culture since the fall of man has been faced false

anchors. God's people are constantly warned to separate themselves from these anchors and remain faithful to the true anchors of God. It is only when we hold to the anchors of God that we are set free from the contamination of our culture. Jesus taught this clearly:

John 8:31-32

³¹ To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

HOW CULTURAL DRIFT OCCURS

I believe that it is important to know how cultural drift occurs so that we do not become complacent and get caught up in the current. There are three distinct phases of a cultural drift that can be easily observed. Each phase employs a cunning strategy from the "god of this world" that can significantly affect a nation's anchors. We will see how the cultural current of each phase carries individuals, and a nation, further and further into dangerous waters.

In the following chapters I give numerous examples of how cultural drift occurs. But to simplify how the three phases work we will only follow the cultural drift of sexual immorality in this chapter. We will observe how the three phases can influence individuals as well as an entire nation.

Before we examine cultural currents we need to look closely at the biblical anchor of sexual morality. What the Bible says about sex is crystal clear. God's Word consistently instructs believers to be anchored in sexual purity. Scripture states that sex is reserved solely for a husband and wife. There is to be no sexual immorality of any kind outside of marriage (*Genesis 2:24-25; Romans 1:24-27; Matthew 5:27-30; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7. Job 31:1; Hebrews 13:4*). Sexual purity is a clear moral anchor with no exceptions. Paul states,

Ephesians 5:3-5

³ But among you there must not be even a **hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.** ⁴ Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. ⁵ For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. (Bold added)

1. THE INTRODUCTION PHASE: Goal is to familiarize

Ephesians 5:3

³ But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.

Those things in our culture that oppose the true anchors of God are introduced gradually. The cultural current flows to us in small, seemingly innocent streams or even trickles rather than in large obvious waves. Following are four characteristics of how I have observed cultural currents introduced and how Christians and many others generally respond.

Characteristics	Initial Response	Goal--familiarize
Only a glimpse	Shock	
Casual Portrayal	Disgust	
Done With humor	Uneasy	
Increasing exposure	Concern	

Only a Glimpse--Shock

At first there is not a full-blown attack on an anchor. There is no immediate tsunami that renders the anchor useless and sinks the ship. The attack is gradual and subtle. There is a simple introduction of the current that gives people merely a **glimpse** of what is to come and gradually erode the truth. Over time, however, the Biblical anchor will vanish and be replaced with a false one. While our first response might be **shock** to a single image or scene in a movie or something on TV, it might seem harmless enough. A book or a song might have a word or phrase that shocks us but in the overall scheme of things seems to be only a relatively harmless trickle.

Some of you may be aware that when "Lucy" was a hit show, Lucille Ball and Desi Arnez were not even allowed to be filmed in the same bed even though they were married on the show and in real life.

However, in what seems like a mere glimpse in Phase 1 is just the beginning. Unbelievably there was a point in time when TV had little or no sexual content. Some of you may be aware that when "Lucy" was a hit show, Lucille Ball and Desi Arnez were not even allowed to be filmed in the same bed

even though they were married on the show and in real life. Now that seems a little much but it does help us realize how far the cultural current has carried us.

At exactly what point the **introduction** of immoral sex on TV was introduced and that first glimpse of immorality was shown I do not know. Probably most of us cannot remember a point in time when a specific program introduced something that was sexually immoral, going over the line of what is appropriate. The very fact that we can't remember when it all started should tell us something. Each subsequent time that we were shocked it was because the line had been moved one more time.

Casual Portrayal--Disgust

Once the line of morality has been lowered and our initial shock has subsided, there is a casual portrayal of the themes and scenes with increasing regularity. While our initial response is, or at least should be, disgust we gradually become used to the content. It all becomes increasingly familiar to us.

Done With Humor--Uneasiness

Often humor is an integral part of the introduction of moral drift. It is much easier to introduce what should be offensive if it is **done with humor**. Consider how the gay lifestyle has been introduced into the mainstream of our culture. It was largely introduced with humor on TV. If you can get a person to laugh at something it is much easier to eventually get him to accept it. Humor is the great equalizer, lowering one's guard. We may laugh, but often we are also **uneasy** because we know that what is being introduced is wrong.

Increasing Exposure--Concern

Part of the introduction of an immoral theme in TV movies or others forms of media is **increasing exposure**. The more explicit images or language are displayed, the stronger the current and greater the chance of acceptance. Once something has been introduced the frequency of inappropriate themes and scenes increases, carrying an ever increasing volume of the same cultural current. Two things begin to happen simultaneously. We continue to be **concerned** while at the same time becoming increasingly **immune** to what we are seeing, hearing or reading. Because of constant exposure, the immoral content no longer has the same shocking affect on us as it once had.

Phase 1 has been successful when the **goal of familiarization** has been reached. Once we have become familiar with sexual themes it will not be long before we become accustomed to them. There is no doubt about the increasing exposure of sexual content in the media. A survey by the Parents Television Council reports the following about this cultural current in Phase 1.

By comparing this new 2006-2007 study period to a former PTC Family Hour report covering the 2001-2002 television season, the PTC found that incidences of sexual and violent content have increased by 22.1% and 52.4%, respectively.

Teenagers watching television are bombarded with nearly twice as many sex scenes as seven years ago, according to a new

study by the Kaiser Family Foundation in 2005. The current seems to be picking up strength. *Skins*, a MTV program for teens, has moved the line to an alarming new level. And there is surly more to come if the trend is not reversed.

2. THE INFILTRATION PHASE (Goal is to normalize)

1 Corinthians 5:6, 7a

“Your boasting is not good. Don’t you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast...”

Once the cultural current has been introduced and begins the process of eroding a true anchor and replacing it with a false anchor we become accustomed to its presence. The initial emotions of shock, uneasiness, disgust and concern subside. We still do not like what we see and hear. We may still find the content offensive, but our defenses are nevertheless lowered. This paves the way for the phase of **infiltration**. During Phase 2, sexual content infiltrates almost everything we see and hear in the media. Today a growing number of commercials have graphic sexual themes. Following are the four characteristics of this phase and how believers and many other people often respond to them.

Characteristics	Initial Response	Goal--normalize
Growing exposure	Alarm	
Displayed as normal	Accustomed	
Increasingly explicit	Tolerate	
Persuade to accept	Compromise	

Growing Exposure--Alarm

Once a cultural current has been introduced, the second phase of infiltration builds on the agenda of the first. After a false anchor is introduced, people become accustomed to it, if not accepting of its message. Encouraged by this success, the decision makers in special interest groups and the media become increasingly bold. In the media this is largely profit driven. Companies continue to push the envelope in their programming. The line of morality is lowered incrementally, inch-by-inch. Once one foothold has been established another is secured and the moral descent continues. There is a **growing exposure** to sexual content.

One example of infiltration is the introduction of homosexuality in the popular comic strip *Luann*. Other images of homosexuality are being flashed across the TV screen in advertisements and programming with increasing regularity. An immensely popular song among young teen-

aged girls some time back with a homosexual theme said, “I kissed a girl and I liked it.” This month (1/28/2011) a recent Entertainment magazine featured an article on Gay Teens on TV. The article states:

“...a bold new class of young gay characters on shows like Glee is changing the hearts, minds and Hollywood...Audiences are learning with greater frequency such lessons this season than any other times in TV history. More than two dozen gay teens currently populate airways on cable and network shows in regular and recurring roles...Thanks to Glee and its 14:1 million viewers, gay teens characters are now reaching more eyes than ever. (Entertainment, pp. 38-40, 1/28/2011)

As you can see, the introduction and infiltration phases surge on. For some the **alarm** bells continue to ring. For others the bell no longer rings. But strongly anchored Christians remain alarmed at this growing exposure to sexual content. They understand the danger when people are constantly exposed to currents of immorality and false anchors.

Displayed As Normal--Accustomed

The more we are exposed to something, even to those things we oppose or know are wrong, the more we become **accustomed** to them. The more we become accustomed to something the more normal it seems to us. On TV immoral attitudes and behavior are **displayed as normal**. There are literally no moral judgments made on such things as casual sex, living together, and homosexuality. These things are displayed as being a normal and acceptable way of life. Because of this infiltration it is not difficult to understand why many believers, while not necessarily condoning this view of morality, have nevertheless become accustomed to it.

Increasingly Explicit--Tolerate

What is permitted becomes the norm as people become accustomed to the belief systems and actions that are portrayed in the media.

What is permitted becomes the norm as people become accustomed to the belief systems and actions that are portrayed in the media. Sexual content becomes **increasingly**

explicit. The line of morality is persistently moved lower because people **tolerate** what they see. People continue to watch programs or movies, tolerating the sexual content, because they otherwise enjoy the characters or story line.

Persuade to Accept--Compromise

Phases one and two dull our spiritual senses so that what previously shocked and disgusted us becomes acceptable. In Phase 2 there is a clear **goal to normalize** all kinds of sexual immorality. There is an agenda by the “god of this age” to **persuade to accept** what the Bible clearly says is immoral, as normal acceptable behavior. While believers may not intentionally accept what is immoral they **compromise** in a variety of ways such as allowing the programs to be viewed in their homes and otherwise not making a strong stand against such blatant immorality.

We **compromise** when we fail to separate ourselves from what is clearly evil in our culture. Compromise is a deadly virus. It is the cancer of the soul. With the first compromise come others that grow progressively destructive. They will take us down a path that we never thought we would travel to a destination where we never imagined we would arrive and stay there longer than we ever would have believed.

I think that if we were asked if all the TV programs or movies we watch are acceptable, most of us would say no. Herein lies the problem that each of us must face. By allowing the depiction of sexual immorality in our homes we are guilty of compromise, which is a step toward acceptance. An example of how people compromise can be seen by the alarming statistic of what parents allow their children to watch on TV. The Parents Television Council reports,

“ABC’s Desperate Housewives Is the most popular Broadcast/network television show with kids aged 9-12 according to Nielsen stats. It airs at 10/9 p.m.” (PARENTS TELEVISION COUNCIL 1998-2007)

Children are being increasingly sexualized in our nation. They are being exposed to sexually explicit images at some alarmingly young ages. Consider the following statistics on child pornography use:

“9 out of 10 children between the ages of 8 and 16 have viewed pornography on the Internet, in most cases unintentionally (London School of Economics January 2002). Average age of first Internet exposure to pornography: 11 years old. Largest consumer of Internet pornography: 12 - 17 year-old age group (various sources, as of 2007). Adult industry says traffic is 20-30% children (NRC Report 2002, 3.3).

Once something is accepted it proliferates. Sexual immorality when accepted proliferates. Divorce when seen as acceptable and normal, proliferates. Homosexuality when accepted and seen as normal proliferates. Cohabiting and having children

out of wedlock proliferate when accepted as normal. Jesus used the word “leaven” to warn against the infiltration and acceptance of false teaching. He said,

Matthew 16:6

“Be careful,” Jesus said to them. “Be on your guard against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

Leaven was used in the baking of bread. It modifies or vilifies existing elements as it mingles with them. In the Bible the word is used to refer to sin that permeates and spreads causing people to be led astray from the truth.

3. THE INDOCTRINATION PHASE

(Goal is to standardize)

John 15:19

19 If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.

The final phase, indoctrination, is relatively new to our culture. The classic definition of indoctrination is when a person is exposed to a forceful, dominating and persistent point of view that is unusually partisan or sectarian. There is a time when the phases of introduction and infiltration drift ever so subtly into indoctrination. The current becomes stronger and eventually turns into a kind of riptide, then a tsunami. With the riptide, unless you swim with the current you most likely drown.

With indoctrination comes a new standard of right and wrong. People are indoctrinated into a partisan point of view that becomes increasingly mandatory. The ultimate goal is to make people conform to the false anchors of the regime. Everyone is required to ascribe to a new worldview. I believe that is now happening, especially among the youth in our culture. It seems like the cultural current of sexual immorality is well on its way of accomplishing the goal of the sexualization of America, especially our youth. Following are the four characteristics of this phase and how believers and many others generally respond to them.

Characteristics	Initial Response	Goal
Pervasive exposure	Acceptance	Standardize
Pressure to endorse	Approval	
Hostile Opposition of Anchors	Intimidated	
Persecution of Christians	Conform or face the consequences	

Pervasive Exposure--Acceptance

The logical progression of indoctrination is a kind of brainwashing. With **pervasive exposure** to a message, people's beliefs can be molded ever so slowly. It was the evil German propaganda chief Joseph Goebbels who said,

"If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie, and thus by extension, the truth is the greatest enemy of the State."

I believe this is now happening in our country. Our youth are beginning to believe the lies. Lies are being repeated with increasing frequency. Just think about how often our youth are hearing and seeing lies in the media. Think of the false anchors they are exposed to on a regular basis. This is bound to have an accumulative effect on their beliefs. It is no accident that The Barna Research Group has consistently found that the Biblical worldview of youth and young adults is vanishing faster than among adults.

During the indoctrination phase the cultural current becomes so pervasive that people become unmoored without realizing what has happened. This kind of brain washing can fly under the radar barely being noticed. A message is heard or seen so many times that it becomes part of a person's thinking. A true anchor of God is eventually replaced by a false anchor of the world that more closely conforms to the culture.

I believe that the sexual messages of the mainstream media are getting dangerously close to indoctrination. In the book *Porn Nation*, Michael Leahy calls attention to what he calls the "perfect storm" that is sexualizing our nation. He calls the first storm front "hypersexual media." Leahy sites these alarming statistics to prove his point:

There is an "unprecedented rise in both the use and acceptance of increasingly pornographic depiction of sex in all forms of mainstream media...For example, one popular study found that the amount of sexual content on basic cable and network Television nearly doubled between 1998 and 2005. The study found that 70% of all shows, excluding daily newscasts, sport events, and children's shows, include some kind of sexual content, averaging five sex scenes per hour."

When 70% of all TV programs contain some kind of sexual content averaging five sex scenes per hour, the message is pervasive and along with other forms of media can lead to **acceptance** of the lifestyle being displayed. Of course TV and movies comprise only part of the contamination in the cultural flow. Some say that television and movies only reflect the thinking and behavior of our culture. Others believe that it shapes thinking and behavior. Both are true. Either way we have a serious problem.

Another example of the pervasive is the proliferation of homosexual themed books aimed at the indoctrination of young children. There are now ninety one books aimed at children that are recommended by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network of Colorado. And remember that this was launched not all that long ago with books such as *Heather Has Two Mommies*, *Daddy's Roommate* and *Gloria Goes to Gay Pride*.

Pressure to Endorse--Approval

It is not enough to merely accept the false anchor; there is **pressure to endorse** it. This endorsement is often called "tolerance" in our culture. It is no longer enough to simply be tolerant in the traditional sense of accepting of peoples' right to think and act in ways we may disagree with. Today's cultural current has changed that definition. We now must wholeheartedly, without reservation, **approve** of and **endorse** the belief if not participate in the behavior.

This is most evident when it comes to homosexuality. In a growing number of schools and classrooms children and youth are pressured to not just tolerate homosexuality in the sense of respecting all people, but to approve of the lifestyle and behavior. Those who do not are often seen as hateful, ignorant, bigoted and homophobic. Children are often shamed when they do not agree. The consequence of this pressure is that some people either eventually change their beliefs or approve because of pressure. When false anchors are brought into the curriculum of schools as has happened with homosexuality, you can be assured that indoctrination has begun.

Indoctrination includes two dimensions with one often flying under the radar. There is not only **inclusion** but also **forced exclusion** which means that certain subjects or truths are prohibited from consideration by being excluded. An example would be the recent California Bill SP777 signed by former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger that prohibits teachers from using the terms mom, dad, husband, wife. They

are required to only use more “neutral terms” to designate parents. This is obviously a law enacted to accommodate gay and lesbian parents, but **excludes** the historical and traditional definition of parents.

Another example of **forced inclusion** is the teaching of evolution while not allowing equal time for divine design. Of course there are many more examples we could use such as sex education, prohibiting parents from being informed about pregnancy of their teenagers or an abortion. Our historic anchors are also being excluded from many textbooks as history is being rewritten to support the purely secular cultural current.

Hostile Opposition of Biblical Anchors--Intimidated

I believe that an indication that our culture has progressed to the Indoctrination phase is the increasing level of **hostile opposition to Biblical anchors**. Even when you respectfully and compassionately voice a different view of homosexuality, the response is often anger and at times even rage. I believe that the anger level has risen dramatically in the last five to ten years. I have observed growing hostile opposition to not just a Biblical view of homosexuality, but too many kinds of basic Christian beliefs. Some people opposed to Christianity become hostile when we say that we believe that Jesus is the only way to salvation. And if they are not hostile they certainly show contempt or at the very least strong disapproval. It seems like the level of anger has risen to hate. However we should not be surprised. Remember that Jesus said,

John 15:18

18 “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.”

Jesus goes on to explain to his disciples why the world hated them. He says that if they belonged to the world by conforming to its values they would be loved by those around them. It was because they belonged to another world, that they were hated.

John 15:19

19 If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.

It is not difficult to see why believers can become intimidated when faced with such hostile opposition. It is becoming increasingly difficult for people to confidently and boldly express their Christian views in public.

Persecution of Christians—Conform or face the consequences; the criminalization of Christianity

It seems to me that a logical conclusion of the progression of these three phases will be the **persecution of Christians**. I believe it has already begun with the assault on the Judeo-Christian values on which this country was founded. When tolerance is extended to everyone except Christians, persecution will closely follow. If we define persecution as negative consequences or sanctions for doing what is right in the sight of God, then persecution has already begun. How long will it be before the Bible is considered too dangerous a book for people to possess because of its teaching on homosexuality and the exclusiveness of Jesus as the only way to God? What will happen if the expression of these beliefs is considered a hate crime or a threat to national security? There may be a time where it will be illegal to say certain kinds of politically incorrect words.

If this seems farfetched or impossible, we must remember that the line of morality is moved very slowly. How long will it be before the line is moved again and churches and Christian organizations are required to hire homosexuals or face the consequences that could even include time in jail? Even long held rights such as the freedom of conscience provision for health care workers that allows doctors to not perform abortions are being attacked by the ACLU. An OBN surgeon friend of mine told me that he fears this freedom is in jeopardy. He said, “The day I am forced to perform an abortion is the day I will no longer practice medicine.” The **criminalization of Christianity** is a real possibility.

The desires of the flesh are never satisfied. They have a voracious appetite.

When will the line be moved again? What we often fail to realize is the progressive nature of evil. Evil thoughts lead to more evil thoughts. Evil thoughts lead to evil actions that lead to more evil actions.

The desires of the flesh are never satisfied. They have a voracious appetite.

What we also tend to minimize is the power of the “god of this age” schemes. The war for the anchors of our culture is a supernatural war. We are warned in Scripture not to underestimate the supernatural power of Satan and his organization of evil. I believe that Satan has specifically designed schemes for certain cultures and people (*Ephesians 6: 10-12*).

While some of the consequences I have mentioned may seem alarmist or at least remote, a review of recent history should convince us that almost anything is possible. The power of a small vocal minority can destroy the anchors of a country and result in unthinkable horrors. When the moral majority remains passive, once strong nations can become corrupt and crumble. Remember that it has been less than 70 years since Hitler turned Germany into a Nazi State, persecuting and killing Jews, Christians and others who did not conform to his ideology.

Indoctrination takes different forms at various times depending on the culture. The latest form in our nation is “political correctness.” This is a form of indoctrination that defines any opposition to such things as homosexuality, abortion, and pornography as morally wrong. Political correctness has a strong bias against all absolutes with the exception if its own absolute of intolerance against those who believe differently.

The ultimate goal of persecution is **standardization** where people are forced to participate or face severe consequences. This will not be *de facto standards* which mean that the standards are followed informally or by dominant usage. They will not be *voluntary standards* that are suggested for the “good” of our country. These will be *de jure* standards of speech and action that are legally binding laws or regulations.

As these new standards are enforced, various forms of persecution will intensify and people will begin to succumb to the pressure. Far too many will respond by conforming and participating. Those with weak anchors will conform out of fear or apathy. Only those with strong anchors will stay moored when the consequences of holding Christian beliefs results in severe emotional, physical, or economic pain or even death. Let me hasten to say Christians do not have to be threatened by persecution. Throughout history persecution has only made peoples’ faith stronger and the Church of Jesus Christ stronger.

WHAT’S NEXT?

Once we understand the progressive nature of evil we can predict with certainty that what is happening in our culture now will spread like leaven until someone or something stops it. What alarms us today will seem mild compared to what is coming next. To prevent being swept along with the cultural currents we need to focus on “what’s next?” not just what we see in the present. Where will these beliefs and behaviors lead?

The decisions of the Supreme Court and our lower courts are a major part of the “leaven” that is contaminating our culture and eroding our historic anchors. In the last sixty years we can see how the stages of Introduction, Infiltration and Indoctrination have effected many decisions regarding the First Amendment and the free expression of religion.

In 1947 the Supreme Court reached a landmark decision in the *Everson vs. the Board of Education* Supreme Court case. In this case on religious rights the Court reinterpreted the original intent of our Founding Fathers for the First Amendment. From that point on the free expression of religion would never be the same. Subsequent Court cases of the sixties activated that decision. These cases opened the door for a godless current of secularism to infiltrate our culture and begin eroding our historic anchors eventually leading to indoctrination.

We will look closely at how the First Amendment was reinterpreted by the Court in chapter five. The following research demonstrates the affect that this ruling has had on our culture. This should cause us great alarm. As always we should ask the question, “What is next?”

On November 18, 2010, the Pew Research Center in association with TIME magazine and complemented by an analysis of demographic and economic data from the U.S. Census Bureau, released a study entitled “*The Decline of Marriage and Rise of New Families*” They call the trends of the last 59 years “transitional.” When you read the follow data you will see that what is called “transitional” embodies three phases of cultural current that are destroying our anchors and transforming our country.

Children Born Out of Wedlock

The share of births to unmarried women has risen dramatically over the past half century, from 5% in 1960 to 41% in 2008.

The Definition of Family

By emphatic margins, the public does not see marriage as the only path to family formation.

Fully 86% say a single parent and child constitute a family; nearly as many (80%) say an unmarried couple living together with a child is a family; and 63% say a gay or lesbian couple raising a child is a family.

Rise of Cohabitation

As marriage has declined, cohabitation (or living together as unmarried partners) has become more widespread, nearly doubling since 1990, according to the Census Bureau. In the Pew Research survey, 44% of all adults (and more than half of all adults ages 30 to 49) say they have cohabited at some point in their lives. Among those who have done so, about two-thirds (64%) say they thought of this living arrangement as a step toward marriage.

Is Marriage Becoming Obsolete?

Nearly four-in-ten survey respondents (39%) say that it is; in 1978 when TIME magazine posed this question to registered voters, just 28% agreed. Those most likely to agree include those who are a part of the phenomenon (62% of cohabiting parents) as well as those most likely to be troubled by it (42% of self-described conservatives).

RED FLAGS

The strong cultural current that is eroding the anchors in our nation is wide spread. Occult figures in the media such as the current Vampire craze, have a strange mixture of good and evil. There is pressure to accept all lifestyles including behaviors such as sex outside of marriage, adultery, homosexuality, cohabitation, and having children out of wedlock as acceptable and normal. We should see all these things as red flags. Red flags have long been warning signs of impending danger. The three phases of how true anchors are eroded by cultural currents and replaced by false anchors should raise some red flags of warning for all of us. Here are just three to carefully note:

1. The Red Flag of Speed and Intensity

I believe one of the changes that has happened in the last ten years is the speed and intensity with which the cultural current flows through the three phases. Once a cultural current has introduced a change it seems to arrive at the final stage of indoctrination very quickly.

2. The Red Flag of Many Currents

I focused mainly on the current of sexual morality in the media and especially TV, because it was easy to demonstrate the flow of the three phases. Obviously there are many elements that converge to destroy the true anchors of a culture. Movies, books, advertising, magazines, music,

education, government and special interest groups, are just a few that converge to replace true anchors with false anchors. The following currents should raise red flags: Take some time to write down what you have observed about these red flags and what you believe might be next.

New definition of family

The rise of the occult

New definition of tolerance

Relativism

Acceptance of cohabitation

CHAPTER 3 SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1: Start your small group time by reading in unison *Colossians 2:8* and the quote from Patrick Henry. How does this verse apply to the quote by Patrick Henry? What does it have to say to us today?

2: According to the author what is cultural drift? What are its dangers?

3: The author contends that two of Satan's primary schemes are to dethrone God and redefine truth in a culture. How do you see this being carried out in our current culture?

4: Review the Introduction Phase. Which of the four characteristics have you observed in our culture in the last decade? What about the last few years?

5: The goal in the Infiltration Phase is to "normalize". How do you see that happening in our culture today? How is this infiltration influencing your children or other youth you observe?

6: The final Phase is Indoctrination with a goal of conformation. What in our culture alarms you about this stage? What pressures do you see on our youth to conform to the lies of our culture?

7: The author states that we also need to ask, "What's next?" What "leaven" do you see rising in our culture that could someday poison or destroy our anchors?

8: What Red Flag in our culture are you most concerned about right now?



SECTION 2

AMERICA'S FOUR VANISHING ANCHORS

CHAPTER 4:
The Anchor of Authority

CHAPTER 5:
The Anchor of Truth

CHAPTER 6:
The Anchor of Civility

CHAPTER 7:
The Anchor of Purpose

CHAPTER 4

THE ANCHOR OF AUTHORITY

Psalm 33:10-12

¹⁰*The LORD foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. ¹But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.*

¹²*Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he chose for his inheritance.*

"...in this first official act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty being that rules over the universe, who presides in the councils of nations and whose providential aids can supply every human defect..."

(From George Washington's Inaugural Address to Both Houses of Congress, April 30, 1789)

AUTHORITY

FUNDAMENTALS

Every successful athletic team, business, organization, and marriage, knows this: make sure you get the fundamentals right. Make sure the basics are correct. Then wear them out and your likelihood of success is greatly enhanced. John Wooden, revered UCLA basketball coach, considered his commitment to a few basics the reason for his success. In his "Pyramid of Success" he taught others how to attain success by focusing on those same basic principles. Boot camps teach the basics. Training camps are designed to teach and review the basics. Our First and Founding Fathers built this nation by focusing on just a few basic principles. They got it right and they practiced those fundamentals faithfully. In this book I refer to those fundamentals as "our historic anchors." Those anchors that were the foundation of our nation were made of solid rock. Jesus taught the importance of rock solid foundations.

Matthew 7:24-27

²⁴*"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ²⁶But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."*

ANCHORS OF OUR FOUNDING FATHERS

In this section we will take a close look at the four anchors that serve as the foundation for the character of our nation. As we examine these fundamental anchors we will get a clear picture of how they shaped the character of our nation. It will be important to observe how these historic anchors have been changing and how those changes are beginning to **reshape** the character of our nation. Here are some critical questions we will explore in the remaining chapters:

- How has the cultural flow eroded our historic anchors? What do our anchors look like today as compared to the past?
- What is the character of our nation today and how is it being shaped by government, culture and the people?
- How will the vanishing anchors and changing character of our nation affect our destiny? Where is our great ship headed?
- What can we do to restore our historic anchors and reclaim the character that made this nation great?

THREE GREAT HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

I want to first review three of the great historical documents of our nation. The Mayflower Compact and the Declaration of Independence combine to form the earliest and best resource for determining the anchors on which our country was founded. These documents were authored by our "First Fathers" (Mayflower Compact) and our "Founding Fathers" (Declaration of Independence). These two documents provided the foundation for the Constitution. We will see how these documents refer to four great anchors of God as we read what the writers said **in their own words**.

The Mayflower Compact

The Mayflower Compact was a written agreement created by the Pilgrims who arrived at New Plymouth in November, 1620. Before leaving Holland for the new country, Pastor John Robinson sent a letter with the Separatists outlining a plan for a new government based on democratic principles. The Mayflower Compact was a result of Pastor Robinson's guidance. This Compact with fair and equal laws was developed for the good of the people in the new settlement.

All 41 adult members on the Mayflower signed the Compact on November 21, 1620. The Compact became the constitution for the new colony. It was the first document in the new land establishing “government of the people, by the people, for the people.”

*In the **name of God**, Amen. We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord, King James, **The Grace of God**, of England, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, etc. **Having undertaken for the Glory of God, and Advancement of the Christian Faith**, and the Honour of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia; do by these presents, solemnly **and mutually in the Presence of God and one of another**, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick, for our better Ordering and Preservation, and Furtherance of the Ends aforesaid; And by Virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the General good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In Witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape Cod the eleventh of November, in the Reign of our Sovereign Lord, King James of England, France and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth. **Anno Domini, 1620.**” (Bold added)*

The Declaration of Independence

The United States Declaration of Independence was a statement adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, which declared that the thirteen American colonies were now independent states, and no longer a part of the British Empire. The document was written primarily by Thomas Jefferson. The Declaration is an explanation of why Congress had voted to declare independence from Great Britain.

*When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which **the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them**, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.*

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their

just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. --Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world...

*We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, assembled, **appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions**, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, **with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence**, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor. (Bold added)*

The Constitution

Our Founding Fathers never saw the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution as two separate entities, but rather one seamless philosophy. The Declaration of Independence was the “heart” of this philosophy while the Constitution was the “hands”. The “heart” expressed what the Government was to be, its spirit, and the hands told how it was to be done. The Constitution was a practical guide that embodied the values and the spirit of the Declaration. Because of its length I am not going to include the

Constitution in its entirety but I do suggest that you read it. You can go on line or there is a copy of the Constitution in the book *Original Intent*.

EXAMINING OUR ANCHORS

There are many other documents and writings of our Founding Fathers that demonstrate their belief and commitment to the four anchors we will discuss in this chapter. For the sake of brevity and simplicity I will refer primarily to these two great historical documents, the Constitution and a few others. There is an excellent website you can visit that allows you to read hundreds of original documents of our Founding Fathers. On this website you will discover more overwhelming evidence that proves our nation was anchored in the Word of God. (See www.WallBuilders.org) It is essential to read what the Founding Fathers said about our historical anchors **in their own words!** Today there are many voices that are putting words into the mouths of our Founding Fathers. These voices are finishing their sentences with words they never uttered. Our true history is being rewritten by those who want their own beliefs to take root and dominate our culture.

THE ANCHOR OF AUTHORITY

Every nation is governed by some authority. The kind of authority and how it is administered is an essential part of that nation's character. To understand each anchor, three questions need to be addressed; the questions that concern the anchor of authority are:

What or who is the ultimate authority?
How is that authority determined?
How is that authority administered?

OUR HISTORICAL ANCHOR OF AUTHORITY

Authority and the original Intent of The Mayflower Compact

The Mayflower Compact leaves no doubt about the ultimate source of authority for the new colony. This document starts by invoking "The name of God..." and continues by referring to "...the grace of God." The acknowledgement of the sovereignty of God would shape the future of the nation. There was a general agreement among the First and Founding Fathers that there was a sovereign Creator of the universe who was ultimately in control.

Authority and the Original Intent of The Declaration of Independence

The ultimate source of authority is also crystal clear in the Declaration of Independence. This document leaves no doubt that our Founding Fathers believed in a sovereign God who was ultimately in charge of everything that happened in heaven and on earth.

"We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent states;" (Bold added)

In this historic statement we see all three questions of authority answered. The ultimate authority is in the **"Supreme Judge of the world"**. That clearly is God. The question of how human authority is to be determined is found in the statement **"in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies."** How authority is to be administered was by representatives chosen by the people, **"We, therefore, the representatives..."**

The common man, under God's rule, delegated the authority for running our country to officials elected by the people to preserve the freedom and rights given to the people by God. Elected officials were employees of "we the people". They were called, "public servants", a term largely forgotten in our nation.

Authority and the Original Intent of the Constitution

The Constitution was developed to provide a working framework for the philosophy of government envisioned by our Founding Fathers.

The Constitution was developed to provide a working framework for the philosophy of government envisioned by our Founding Fathers. It did not mention religion because the nature of the document did not call for it. It was a practical tool to enable government to function properly.

These men would have found it unnecessary to refer to the Biblical anchors they made so clear in the Declaration of Independence and numerous other personal writings and documents. It was assumed that those who their own words they said:

John Adams, second president of the United States:

"We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion...Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any others." (**The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States**)

Samuel Adams, signer of the Declaration of Independence:

"Before the formation of this Constitution...this Declaration of Independence was received and ratified by all the states in the Union and has never been disannulled." (**Samuel Adams, The Writings of Samuel Adams, Harry Alanzo Cushing, editor, Vol. IV, p 357**)

The words of these two Founding Fathers and many others could not be clearer. Those in our country today that would have us believe that our Founding Fathers believed in a godless Constitution completely ignore the hundreds of historical documents that would argue otherwise. The Constitution was formed to implement the philosophy of a government founded on the authority of God and Biblical principles.

Authority: In their own words

What did some of the individual Founding Fathers believe about the source of authority in government? There is a strong movement today that would deny that our Founding Fathers were very religious at all. But what did our Founding Fathers say in their own words? Following are just a few of the many words written by our Founding Fathers.

Proclamation by Congress for a day of prayer and thanksgiving, October 18, 1787:

"Whereas it hath pleased the Supreme Ruler of all human events to dispose the hearts of the late belligerent powers to put a period to the effusion of human blood by proclaiming a cessation of all hostilities..." (**Congress approved day of prayer and thanksgiving on October 18, 1783**)

Speech delivered to George Washington by Benjamin Franklin at the Constitutional Convention on June 28, 1787:

"I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground

without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise and fall without His aid? We have been assured sir, in the Sacred Writings, that "except the Lord build the House, they labor in vain that built it." I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building not better than the builders of Babel."

John Dickinson, signer of the Constitution, Governor of Pennsylvania:

"These rights essential to happiness...We claim them from a higher source from the King of kings and Lord of all the earth." (**The Political Writings of John Dickinson, Wilmington: Bonsal and Niles, 1801, Vol. 1, p. and 111.**)

James Madison, President of the United States, Co framer of the Bill of Rights:

"I do therefore issue this my proclamation, recommending to all who shall be piously disposed to unite their hearts and voices in addressing at one and the same time their vows and adorations to the Great Parent and Sovereign of the Universe...to render Him thanks for the many blessings He has bestowed on the people of the United States." (**Richardson, Compilation, Vol. 1, p. 532, July 23, 1813**)

James Wilson, signer of the Constitution; U. S. Supreme Court Justice:

"All laws, however, may be arranged in two different classes. 1) Divine 2) Human...But it should always be remembered that the law, natural or revealed, made for men or for nations, flows from the same Divine source: it is the law of God...Human law must rest its authority ultimately upon the authority of the law which is divine." (**The Works of the Honourable James Wilson, Bird Wilson, editor, Philadelphia: Lorenzo Press, 1804, Vol. 1, p 103-105; "Of the General Principles of Law and Obligation."**)

A Historical Definition of Authority

Based on these three documents and on the stated belief of our First and Founding Fathers in the ultimate authority of the sovereign God of the universe, I offer the following definition of authority.

The historical authority of our nation is based on the acknowledgment of a sovereign creator God who is in ultimate control of all that He has created and holds mankind responsible to administer His common laws of morality and love.

The United States grew and became a great nation because of a nationally embraced worldview that accepted God as the center of the universe. The earliest writings of the Founding Fathers clearly expressed not only a belief in the power and authority of God, but also a belief in the goodness of His teachings as found in the Bible. For the first 125 years of American independence, a Biblical worldview was prominent. While there were “Theists” who believed in a personal God and “Deists” who believed in a less personal God and some Atheists and Agnostics who did not believe in God at all, there was an overall consensus that religion was essential to the building of a great nation. We are now in a period where that worldview is rapidly changing to a secular worldview.

OUR VANISHING ANCHOR OF AUTHORITY

Beware of evoking the name of God today unless you are swearing. If you pray in public be careful to end the prayer with “In the name of whom it may concern.” Be ready to be accused of being narrow minded, ignorant or even dangerous if you hold to certain beliefs such as a sovereign God in control of the universe; the Bible as divine authoritative truth; that Jesus is the only way to God; that there is an objective moral code revealed in the Bible. Be ready for the consequences of the “Indoctrination Phase” of the cultural current if you make these beliefs known.

Signs of cultural erosion

There is an obvious assault on the anchor of authority in our nation. A noticeable cultural drift is eroding the historical anchor God's sovereignty. This can be plainly seen by the relentless movement to remove everything religious from government, public places and even private domains. Consider some of the following indicators:

- We no longer have Christmas breaks but more politically correct “Winter Breaks” in schools. There is no longer an Easter break but a “Spring Break.” Merry Christmas has been changed to “Happy Holiday” by many who do not want to “offend.”
- The Ten Commandments displayed in the public arena is seen as a violation of the “separation of Church and State.” There are many lawsuits to have these removed from schools and public places by the ACLU.

- When a second-grade class was told they could choose songs to lip sync in front of the class, one child was forbidden to lip sync “My God is an Awesome God” because it would violate “the separation of church and state.”
- A kindergartener in New York was told she could not pray before snack time.
- A high school student was suspended for passing out invitations to a church event even though it was outside his classroom and before the school day had started.
- The parent of a kindergarten student was not permitted to read a Psalm from the Bible as part of a “Me Week” program that was supposed to feature the child's favorite book.
- In Medford, New Jersey, Zachary Hood, a first grade child was told he could read a story of his own choosing as a reward for his good reading skills. When he chose the story of Jacob and Esau from the Bible the teacher told Zachary that he could not read it.

School and government officials with the backing of the ACLU will often cite concerns about violating the so-called “separation of church and state” to justify cases like these. The problem is that this phrase is not in the First Amendment to the Constitution. What the First Amendment says is that:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances. (Bold added)

Is a child choosing to read from the Bible in a classroom an establishment of a religion or is it the freedom of speech? Is a child praying on their own in a classroom the establishment of a religion or is it the freedom of speech? Does the display of the Ten Commandments constitute the establishment of a religion or is it simply honoring an anchor of our Founding Fathers? I believe the answer is obvious to any fair minded person. It also should be obvious that in denying these freedoms, the First Amendment is being violated by “...prohibiting the free exercise thereof...” The First Amendment promises us freedom **of** religion not freedom **from** religion!

The Current of Naturalism

This attack on our historical anchor of sovereignty has been greatly affected by a growing cultural current of Naturalism. Nurtured during the Enlightenment Period, Naturalism is the belief that the natural world is a closed system where nature alone affects it. Naturalism relies solely on the scientific method and denies anything supernatural. Naturalism is deeply rooted in the theory of evolution. Most who hold to a naturalistic worldview are Atheists or Agnostics. Those who have an atheistic worldview are sometimes called secularists, although the term is often used in a broader sense. The word secular is derived from the Latin, meaning "of this world." It is the opposite of religious. From naturalism came relativism and individualism. We will discuss these later.

ARE WE A CHRISTIAN NATION?

A hotly debated topic is whether or not America is a Christian Nation. In a speech in Turkey, our President proudly referred to the United States as a secular nation and not a Christian nation. Was the President right or wrong? What would you say?

The President was right

The President was right in saying that America is not a Christian Nation if he meant that we do not have one government-sanctioned religion. The First Amendment to the Constitution clearly states that the Government may not establish a religion.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...

Our Founding Fathers were resolute about the new Government not establishing any particular sect or religion as the official religion of the nation. They wanted people to be free to worship as they pleased or not worship at all. They wanted no part of what they had experienced under the heavy handed rule of England where there was an established government religion supported by taxes.

The President was wrong

The President was wrong in saying that America is not a Christian nation and not clarifying what that means. To indicate that America is a secular nation is to ignore over two hundred years of precedent. America was founded on Judeo Christian principles and was always looked at as a Christian

nation. Former President John Quincy Adams said,

"From the day of the Declaration, the people of the North American Union and of its constituent states were associated bodies of civilized men and Christians... They were bound by the laws of God, which they all, and by the laws of the Gospel, which they nearly all, acknowledged as the rules of their conduct. ..."

John Quincy Adams, Addresses Delivered at the Request of the Committee of Arrangements for Celebrating the Anniversary of Independence at the City of Washington on the Fourth of July 1821, Upon the Occasion of Reading the Declaration of Independence Cambridge, MA: Hillard and Metcalf, 1821, p. 28)

In another speech Adams said,

"The Declaration of Independence cast off all the shackles of this dependency. The United States of America were no longer colonies. They were an independent nation of Christians." **(John Quincy Adams, An Oration... July 4: 1837, p. 18)**

In 1892 the Supreme Court issued a ruling on The Church of Holy Trinity vs. the United States in which it described America as a religious nation where Christianity had always been its foundation. The lawsuit was brought against the U.S. Government because the Church of Holy Trinity had attempted to employ a clergyman from England whom the U.S. Attorney opposed. The hiring was opposed because of a law that's sole enactment was to prevent the hiring of slave-like foreign labor from other countries. The Court ruled in favor of the Church of Holy Trinity and went on to document many examples of how America was founded on Biblical principles and was indeed a Christian nation. I will cite just a few of the many examples from this landmark case:

"When the Constitution of the United States, which is supposed to have little touch upon the private life of the individual, contains in the First Amendment a declaration common to the constitutions of all the states, as follows: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," etc., and also provides in Article I, Section 7, a provision common to many constitutions, that the executive shall have ten days (Sundays excepted) within which to determine whether he will approve or veto a bill." **(Page 143 U. S. 470)**

*"There is no dissonance in these declarations. There is a universal language pervading them all, having one meaning. They affirm and reaffirm that this is a **religious nation**. These are not individual sayings, declarations of private persons. **They***

are organic utterances. They speak the voice of the entire people. While, because of a general recognition of this truth, the question has seldom been presented to the courts..." (p. 143 U. S. 470) (Bold added)

*"These, and many other matters which might be noticed, add a volume of unofficial declarations to the mass of organic utterances that **this is a Christian nation**. In the face of all these, shall it be believed that a Congress of the United States intended to make it a misdemeanor for a church of this country to contract for the services of a Christian minister residing in another nation."* (p. 143 U. S. 470) (Bold added)

It should alarm us when people in government proudly state that we are not a Christian nation.

In this case the Supreme Court overwhelmingly affirmed our historic religious anchors. As you can see our Founding Fathers and the Supreme Court certainly believed this was a Christian nation. It should alarm us when people in

government proudly state that we are not a Christian nation. It demonstrates a redefining of our nation as a people no longer identified by strong historical Christian roots and values.

While we are still a highly religious people there is an alarming trend appearing on our landscape. People of faith are not disappearing but there is a definite downward trend in commitment to religious principles. The trend certainly alerts us to the fact that while the "frog in the kettle" has not yet been boiled he is splashing about, clues that the water is getting hotter by the minute.

The percentage of Americans who identify with some form of a Christian religion has been dropping in recent decades, and now stands at 77%, according to an aggregate of Gallup Polls conducted in 2008. In 1948, when Gallup began tracking religious identification the percentage who were Christian was 91%. The number of people identifying themselves as atheistic has gone up fourfold.

Perhaps our historic philosophy of sovereignty can best be summed up by one of our Founding Fathers. **Benjamin Franklin in a speech given at the Constitutional Convention of 1787 said:**

"God governs in the affairs of man. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured in the Sacred

Writings that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. I firmly believe this. I also believe that, without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel" (**Constitutional Convention of 1787**)

ARE WE A BLESSED NATION?

The history of our nation is truly amazing. It starts with a handful of people on a small ship who had a vision of a new world where they would be free to worship as they wished. This small group of Pilgrims, who set foot on this continent, believed that they were there "by the grace of God...", "... for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian Faith." (The Mayflower Compact) During the following two hundred years of hardship and sacrifice, colonies were established and the foundation of a nation was laid. I believe that these First Fathers were convinced that they were in the new land for a Divine purpose and were blessed by God.

Then came the seemingly impossible vision of forming a democratic government. The baton was passed from those First Fathers to our Founding Fathers who formed the government as we have it today. In 1783 such a government was unique in the world. There was no precedent for what they were about to attempt. There were no truly democratic governments in history to follow. There was no evidence that this experiment of a free people, governing themselves would work. All this did not daunt the enthusiasm and resolve of our Founding Fathers. They went to work, writing a Constitution that created the first democratic nation that the world had ever seen.

Led by George Washington, the writing of the Constitution began. As they started this task, Washington said, *"Let us raise a Standard which the wise and honest can repair. The event is in the hand of God."*

Washington believed without God's blessing it would be impossible to form a democratic government and Constitution. (**Washington: The Indispensable Man, James Thomas Flexner, pp. 205**)

There is no doubt that this daunting task really was in the hand of God. The very fact that a diverse group of men with no pattern to follow and no previous experience could design a document that would assure a free democratic society over two hundred years later seems to me like nothing short of a miracle. What was decided by those men then is how our nation is to be governed today.

On February 4, 1789 George Washington became the first President of the United States. On April 30, 1789, Washington spoke to a joint meeting of the houses of Congress. In this first inaugural address **religious passages comprised almost one third of the address!** Following is some of what Washington said about the importance of God's blessing on the new venture:

*“Such being the impressions under which I have, in obedience to the public summons, repaired to the present station, it would be peculiarly improper to omit in this first official act my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe, who presides in the councils of nations, and whose **providential aids can supply every human defect, that His benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the people of the United States a Government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes, and may enable every instrument employed in its administration to execute with success the functions allotted to his charge. In tendering this homage to the Great Author of every public and private good, I assure myself that it expresses your sentiments not less than my own, nor those of my fellow-citizens at large less than either. No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men more than those of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency.”*** (Bold added)

There you have it. It seems that there was no doubt in George Washington's mind that it was the divine providence that would produce a nation that assure its people liberties and provide a land where people could enjoy life. “Every step” according to Washington involved God's “providential agency.” It is evident from many other of their writings that our First Fathers believed the words of the Psalm, “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord...” (Psalm 33:12). They were convinced that whatever they accomplished was because they were a blessed nation. This is a very consistent theme in the writings of our Founding Fathers.

THE THREE KINDS OF SENSES AND THE ANCHOR OF AUTHORITY

In chapter two I promised that we would revisit the “Three Kinds of Senses” to see how they apply to our anchors. The hot button issue I would like to use as an example here is global warming. This is not a discussion of whether the earth is or is not warming, but how the three senses can help us understand major issues like this. This issue does relate to the

sovereign authority of God as you will see.

Remember that **uncommon sense** is divine—supernatural sense. It is wisdom that comes directly from the Word of God as revealed in the Bible. **Common sense** is how we apply the uncommon sense of God to everyday situations. **Nonsense** or “no sense” is what we get when the uncommon sense of God is denied or disregarded.

While the Bible does not specifically deal with the topic of global warming it does address it with general principles. We will first look at what the uncommon sense of God has to say, then what practical things common sense would have us do and finally what nonsense we need to avoid.

While the Bible does not specifically deal with the topic of global warming it does address it with general principles. We will first look at what the uncommon sense of God has to say, then what practical things common sense would have us do and finally what nonsense we need to avoid.

Uncommon Sense

(1) The Sovereign Creator of heaven and earth sustains it and controls its destiny.

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Isaiah 40:25-26

²⁵“To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One. ²⁶Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.

The Bible claims from beginning to end that God created the heavens, the earth and everything in them. He created us as the crowning glory of creation. The same power that created the world also sustains it (*Genesis 1-3; Isaiah 40:25-26; Hebrews 1:1-3*).

Common Sense

If God created the heavens and the earth then it makes common sense that we should be in awe of His creation and trust Him to sustain it. How can we not trust Him who names the trillions of stars and controls the galaxy to take care of our small planet?

Nonsense

It makes no sense to completely disregard the divine design of God. It is nonsense to ignore God's role as sovereign creator and ruler of the universe and think we alone can control the destiny of our planet. It is nonsense to assume for ourselves God's role of sole sustainer of earth.

Uncommon Sense

(2) The Sovereign Creator has delegated authority to mankind to manage the earth.

Genesis 1:27-31

²⁷So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

²⁹Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so.

³¹God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

God made us to be the crowning glory of His creation. This is an important point. He made us to rule his creation not to be ruled by it! God has put every aspect of his creation under our supervision. That includes every living organism and the entire environment.

Common Sense

Since God gave us the responsibility of ruling His creation we should rule it well. We should be good stewards of all that He has entrusted to us. This means that we should hold ourselves accountable to God to take care of all that He has created.

Nonsense

It makes no sense for the creation to rule those who were appointed by God to rule. It is nonsense to allow what is created to dominate and rule that for which it was created. Everything that was created was given to us for our use. Exalting what was created above the Creator or his people is

making a god out of nature. This false god will rob people of their freedom to enjoy the fruits of that which was created.

Uncommon Sense

(3) The heavens and the earth are winding down according to the sovereign will of God.

Romans 8:20-22

²⁰For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

Remember: When plain sense makes sense don't look for further sense or you will end up with nonsense. The earth is wearing out in keeping with God's sovereign plan. It is subject to God's will and will last until He gives us a new heaven and a new earth. Every sign of decay, including any global warming, is a sign that the end is drawing near. God will liberate the earth and its people from decay at exactly the right moment; no sooner, no later.

Common Sense

Common sense would tell us that since it is God's plan that creation is wearing down, we have no need to panic. It is God's choice to let the earth decay and therefore He has a better long term plan. A common sense approach to any global warming that might be taking place is to take **reasonable** measures to correct man made contributions to any possible decay. And then trust God for the ultimate fate of His earth.

Nonsense

It is nonsense to go to extreme measures to control something that is only under God's control. It is nonsense to raise extreme alarms about something as debatable as global warming while ignoring our historic belief in the sovereignty of God and the wisdom of the Bible. Shouldn't the "third lens" of Scripture at least be consulted?

Uncommon Sense

(4) The present heaven and earth will be replaced by a new heaven and earth at exactly the right time.

2 Peter 3:8-10

⁸But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a

day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.
⁹ *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.* ¹⁰ *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.*

Revelation 21:1-2

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² *I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.*

God is preparing a new heaven and a new earth for us where we will live with Him for eternity. The good news is that we will also have new redeemed bodies to go with our new home (*Romans 8:23*). This is the hope of every believer (*Romans 8:24-25*). A restored heaven and earth will be at a predetermined time known only to God. God is delaying the end of time so that people have a chance to come to know Him.

Common Sense

Common sense would say that our focus should be on living for eternity not just for this short life on earth. Our hope should be centered on a new heaven and a new life where we will live with God for eternity. The Psalmist said:

Psalm 39:4-7

⁴ *Show me, O LORD, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life.* ⁵ *You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man's life is but a breath.* ⁶ *Man is a mere phantom as he goes to and fro: He bustles about, but only in vain; He heaps up wealth, not knowing who will get it.* ⁷ *But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in you.*

Nonsense

It is nonsense to “*bustle about*” trying to change things that are under God's control. It makes no sense to become so enamored with today that we forget that life the span of our years are as nothing before God. We will soon depart from this earth. It makes no sense to hope only for this life when God has promised us eternal life with Him in a new heaven and a new earth. I am not saying that all the decisions about the environment should be based on Scripture alone.

But neither should the anchors of authority and truth be completely ignored. To live like there is nothing but today-- no divine plan for our planet-- seems like nonsense to me.

CHAPTER 4 SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1: Start your small group time by reading in unison *Psalm 33:10-12* and the quote from George Washington's Inaugural address. In what ways do these two statements speak to the same issue?

2: Review *Matthew 7:24-27*. How can this passage apply to the four anchors of nations?

3: Review the Mayflower Compact. Based solely on this document, what do you think our "First Fathers" believed about the authority of God and government?

4: Review the Declaration of Independence. What anchors do you see in this document? Based on this document alone, how did our "Founding Fathers" view God's role in government?

5: Do you agree or disagree with the author's "historical definition of authority"? What would you add or delete? What signs do you see that this anchor is vanishing in our nation?

6: How do you see the Current of Revisionism and naturalism impacting our nation's anchors?

7: What do you think? Are we a Christian Nation? How would you define this term? Are we a blessed nation?

8: Do you agree or disagree with the author's view of global warming through the three senses?

CHAPTER 5

THE ANCHOR OF TRUTH

John 8:31-32

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

"He who made all men hath made the truths necessary to human happiness obvious to all... Our forefathers opened the Bible to all." ("American Independence," August 1, 1776. Speech delivered at the State House in Philadelphia by Samuel Adams)

TRUTH

Our nation was largely founded on these first two anchors of God. If either of these anchors is eroded in any way or vanishes it affects everything else. The sovereignty of God and the truth of God provided the foundation for how this country was to function. When we acknowledge the authority of a sovereign God, who created and sustains the universe, it follows that this God is not only all-powerful but also must be all-knowing. He must also be the source of all truth. From Him comes the authority to set the standard for right and wrong. This is called morality.

Every nation has certain standards for conduct. There usually is some kind of national consensus for what is right and what is wrong. This anchor of morality is based upon some authority and standard of truth. There are generally written or unwritten rules in place. The standards or rules may be autocratic and administered stringently or lax and hardly enforced at all. The three questions we will ask about our nation's Anchor of Truth are:

Who or what is the standard or authority for truth?

How is morality discerned?

What are the criteria for good and evil?

OUR HISTORICAL ANCHOR OF TRUTH

I want us to look at the beginning sentences of the Declaration of Independence to lay the groundwork for examining our historical anchor of truth. This document begins by stating:

*When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which **the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them**, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. **We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.***

What are "laws of nature" and "nature's God" of which the Declaration of Independence speaks? It seems obvious that these "self-evident truths" were based on some commonly held beliefs. This document speaks of people being "**created equal.**" To be created requires that there be a Creator. "Unalienable rights" were given to everyone by "**nature's God.**" What can be plainer than that? While they were not referring to a national religion, they were speaking about the God of the Bible and the Bible of God. I believe that is a sound basis to legitimately conclude that the Founding Fathers were talking about a Common Law of Morality that was anchored in the Bible.

In their own words

Following are just a few of the many references our Founding Fathers made about our historic anchor of truth and its importance in the foundation of this nation.

Samuel Adams, "Father of the Revolution", Signer of the Declaration of Independence:

*"The only true basis of all government is the laws of God and nature. For government is an ordinance of Heaven, designed by the benevolent Creator." (Samuel Adams, *Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 269, "Vindex," December 19, 1768)*

John Adams Second President of the United States, Signer of the Declaration of Independence:

"It is religion and morality alone which can establish the principles upon which freedom can securely stand. Religions and virtue are the only foundations...of republicanism and of all free governments." (Works, Vol. 1X p. 401; p. 636)

John Quincy Adams, sixth President of the United States:

"Three points of doctrine, the belief of which, forms the

foundation of all morality. The first is the existence of God; the second is the immortality of the human soul; and the third is a future state of rewards and punishments. Suppose it possible for a man to disbelieve either of these articles of faith and that man will have no conscience, he will have no other law than that of the tiger or the shark; the laws of man may bind him in chains or may put him to death, but they never can make him wise, virtuous, or happy.” (Letters of John Quincy Adams to His Son on the Bible and its Teaching, Auburn: James M. Alden, 1850, pp.22-23)

James McHenry, Signer of the Constitution; Secretary of War:

“The Holy Scriptures...can alone secure to society, order and peace, and to our courts of justice and constitutions of government, purity, stability, and usefulness. In vain, without the Bible, we increase penal laws and draw entrenchments (defenses) around our institutions. Bibles are strong entrenchments (protections). Where they abound, men cannot pursue wicked courses.” (Bernard C. Steiner, On Hundred and Ten Years of Bible Society Work in Maryland, 1810-1820, Baltimore: Maryland Bible Society, 1921, p. 14)

James Wilson, Signer of the Constitution, U. S. Supreme Court Justice:

“Human law must rest its authority ultimately upon the authority of that law which is divine...Far from being rivals or enemies; religion and law are twin sisters, friends, and mutual assistants. Indeed, these two sciences run into each other.” (The Works of the Honourable James Wilson, Bird Wilson, editor (Philadelphia: Bronson and Chauncey, 1804), Vol. 1. p. 104-106, “Of the General Principles of law and Obligation.”)

A HISTORICAL DEFINITION OF TRUTH

Based upon our Founding Fathers' belief in the wisdom of the Bible and the Ten Commandments as a guiding principle for the functioning of our nation, I offer the following historical definition of truth.

The historical definition of truth in our nation is that there is a common law of truth and morality revealed in the Bible by a sovereign God, for the good of the people, to be a standard for right and wrong.

We will now look at these “*laws of nature*” and “*self evident truths*” to which the Declaration of Independence referred.

What did our Founding Fathers have in mind when they penned these statements? To what were they referring?

NATURAL OR MORAL LAW

Those who signed the Declaration of Independence and the framers of the Constitution saw natural law as originating with God. James Wilson who signed the Constitution and originated the first legal training in America, concluded:

“In compassion to the imperfection of our internal powers, our all-gracious Creator, Preserver, and Ruler has been pleased to discover and enforce his laws by a revelation given to us immediately and directly from Himself. This revelation is contained in the Holy Scriptures. The moral precepts delivered in the sacred oracles form a part of the laws of nature, are of the same origin and of the same obligation, operating universally and perpetually...The law of nature and the law of revelation are both Divine: they flow through in different channels, from the same adorable source. It is indeed preposterous to separate them from each other. The object of both is to discover the will of God and both are necessary for the accomplishment of that end.” (Wilson, Works, Vol. I, pp. 120, 137-138, “Of the Law of Nature.”)

The Decalogue (Ten Commandments)

The Decalogue or the Ten Commandments given by God to Moses on Mt. Sinai served as a foundation for the “Common Law of Morality” that served as a guide for our nation's moral conscience and laws. These commandments are at the heart of our Judeo Christian heritage. John Quincy Adams who fought in the Revolution, and became president stated:

“The law given from Sinai was a civil and municipal as well as a moral and religious code; it contained many statutes . . . of universal application-laws essential to the existence of men in society, and most of which have been enacted by every nation which ever professed any code of laws. . . . Vain, indeed, would be the search among the writings of profane antiquity . . . to find so broad, so complete and so solid a basis for morality as this Decalogue lays down.” (John Quincy Adams, Letters...to His Son. pp 70-71).

The Natural Law and Non-believers

I would hate to see what this world would look like if there was not a common law of morality that served as a standard for truth. We can see what this world is like when we look at the atrocities of nations that have totally rejected that truth.

But God, in His ultimate wisdom, put in place a common law based on His Divine Word that, if followed, would contribute to a well ordered world and at least some degree of peace.

Think of the genocide inflicted on millions of innocent people by dictators and regimes in Germany, Russia, Uganda, and Cambodia. But God, in His ultimate wisdom, put in place a common law based on His Divine Word that, if followed, would contribute to a well ordered world and at least some degree of peace.

People are aware of this natural law to some extent even if they do not acknowledge God. The Apostle Paul in the New Testament of the Bible explained:

Romans 2:14-15 (NIV)

¹⁴Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, **do by nature things required by the law**, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵**since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts**, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them. (Bold added)

The Apostle Paul was referring primarily to the Law or Ten Commandments given to Moses on Mt. Sinai. The Bible contends that all people have, at some level, the requirements of the law of God written on their hearts. This is what the Founding Fathers referred to as “natural” or “moral” law based on the Bible. This explains how some nations, who do not hold to the God of the Bible, nevertheless have practices that agree with the many of the virtues of the Bible. They care for the sick, honor their parents, condemn adultery, and treat one another with civility, just to mention a few. Even those with an atheistic worldview, while they would fervently deny it, are influenced by God’s common law of morality. Randy Alcorn in his book, “If God is Good” talks about this basic knowledge of right and wrong.

“To say that an atheistic worldview provides no basis for the existence of good and evil does not mean that atheists have no sense of right and wrong. They do. They have a culture influenced by a historic belief in God and the morality revealed in Scripture. This provides a residual basis for believing that moral categories are important, while their own worldview doesn’t.” (If God is Good, pp.110)

This explains why those who make no pretense of being

religious or even disbelieve in the Bible still feel guilty when they do wrong and feel good when they do right. Where does this standard of right and wrong come from? If there is no natural or common law of morality why does not everyone do what is right in their own eyes with no sense of guilt? The only answer that makes sense to me is that from the very beginning of time God has given all his creation a basic knowledge of right and wrong.

The historical anchor of truth is essential to the continued success of our nation. If our commitment to this historical anchor of truth found in the basic principles of the Bible is eroded, our morality will erode with it. Our character as a nation will be compromised and our destiny as a world leader, as an example of what is good, will end. As Angelo M. Codevilla, in his book “*The Character of Nations*”, so profoundly states:

*“The most fundamental struggle of all will be precisely over the meaning of decency. Every regime has its set of basic commandments, of actions that define good people and bad. The United States was founded by a group of men who held **certain truths to be self-evident**. The Declaration of Independence listed a small number of the truths that its signers and their neighbors accepted as divine guidance for their lives: **the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness**. Had any been asked for a more extensive list, they likely would have begun with the Ten Commandments.” (Character of Nations, 77-78)*

OUR VANISHING ANCHOR OF TRUTH

The best way to destroy the foundations of a nation is to attack its beliefs. If you can change what a person believes you can transform his behavior. You can control his actions. That is why the attack on our historical anchor of truth is proving to be so devastating.

The Current of Relativism

Relativism is the philosophy that there is no absolute truth and all points of view are equally valid. Since there is no objective truth everything is merely a difference in perception. Truth is always relative to some particular frame of reference. All points of view are equally valid. Therefore morality is also relative. Right and wrong is how people see it. It is what they feel is moral or immoral.

Here is one of the many weaknesses in this philosophy. If you can convince a person that truth is relative and that there is no authoritative standard for truth you can then

convince him of almost anything. If truth is not anchored in an objective authority then what one person believes is just as valid as what someone else believes. This opens Pandora's Box. When it comes to the individual or a nation, right or wrong becomes an individual choice based upon their feelings or desires. Angelo Codevilla warns of what he sees happening to our historical anchor of truth.

"Today, those who make laws in the Western society find no truths to be self-evident, and their concept of decency is a grab bag of elements for which they have developed a taste. Hence drawing up the list of the moral imperatives by which we should live has become a contest of tastes, decided by trials of political force." (Character of Nations, 78)

The **introduction** of relativism began to emerge in our nation about the turn of the century. Until that time the natural law of the Bible was the standard for law and government for our Founding Fathers. Then competing philosophy of relativism began to be introduced into the universities. As early as the 1870's Harvard Law School Dean Christopher Columbus Langdell, influenced by Darwin's philosophy of evolution reasoned that laws must also evolve. Since there is no sovereign authority or absolute truth, then as man evolves so must laws and the Constitution. As we will see, this introduction of relativism has had a devastating effect on the original intent our Founding Fathers had for the Constitution and laws.

When we observe history we can clearly see what happens when nations reject the sovereignty of God and the natural law of morality

The current of relativism began to infiltrate the courts and culture and has now affected almost every aspect of law. We see the consequences all of around us. There are no longer fixed standards based on the natural law of God but flexible standards based solely on the whim of

activist judges. They, not the Constitution decide what is best for man. They become the new judges of theology and what is best for society. The judges now decide on evolving standards of morality. The Constitution is now what the judges say it is rather than what it was originally meant to be. Obviously some judges see themselves as being more enlightened than our Founding Fathers. We will see how the current of relativism made revisionism possible and with revisionism came indoctrination.

When moral imperatives are based on the whim of the

individual or the regime (Government) and not based on objective truth, the consequences for the civility of a nation will be devastating. When we observe history we can clearly see what happens when nations reject the sovereignty of God and the natural law of morality. Good people stand by as regimes invent their own truth to accomplish their purpose and impose it on everyone. This explains how the good people of nations can stand by and see atrocities done by their governments. Angelo Codevilla, suggests how the lost anchor of truth causes nations to change.

*"Walking around the last of the rubble of postwar Germany as a college student, I found it difficult to understand how the solid burghers I met could have been party to the Holocaust. What could have led such nice folks to do that? My political science courses hardly gave a clue. But Hannah Arendt explained, much as Aristotle would have, **how their regime had made evil banal**. I read that the Soviet Union had murdered on an even grosser scale. Arthur Koestler and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn—not political scientists—explained the **effects of living by lies**. How could the superpolite Japanese people, who are filling the world with Sonys, have wreaked unspeakable cruelties around the Pacific? General Douglas MacArthur explained how one face of this peoples' character gave way to another." (Page x, Character of Nations)*

The current of "banal" evil

We can assume that when there is no clear sense of right and wrong then evil will also be relative. When this occurs evil becomes "banal" or trivial. People are desensitized and lose their outrage over what is happening around them. This was what happened in Germany during the Second World War. One of the results was five million Jews killed because the only standard for right and wrong was the belief of one madman who did not value human life. He decided Jews were the main cause of all the world's problems, worthless and less than human and therefore must be terminated. The people stood by as this happened.

Evil may not yet be banal in our nation but there certainly is a current carrying us along in that direction. The worship of the god of Political Correctness is causing leaders in our nation to act as if true evil does not exist. Too many want to eliminate the evil behind Jihad, and to not refer to Muslim terrorists as evil because it might offend someone.

Our current Administration has gone out of its way to use "correct" words and by doing so gives the impression that we do not really believe in evil. The Department of Homeland

Security changed the term “terrorism” to “man –caused disaster” it seems, to avoid admitting that there is such a thing as Radical Islam or Muslim Terrorism. Fox News commentator Bill O’Reilly was condemned by hosts of the ABC Television program “The View” for saying “Muslims killed us on 9-11.” I believe that all this hyper-sensitivity suggests that we are moving toward a banal view of evil. Bestselling author Joel Rosenberg, a communications strategist who has worked with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu among others gives this warning:

“Too many in Washington today have a modern, Western, secular mind-set that either discounts—or outright dismisses—the fact that evil is a real and active force in history. They insist on interpreting events only through the lenses of politics and economics. Yet to misunderstand the nature and threat of evil is to risk being blindsided by it, and that is precisely what happened on August 2, 1990, and September 11, 2001.” (Epicenter, pp. 47)

The prophet Isaiah warned the nation of Israel about the dangerous current of banal evil. The people had lost their anchor of truth and had lost their clear sense of right and wrong based on God’s law. Isaiah warned:

Isaiah 5:20

²⁰Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

The center of the communist worldview is atheism. It set the stage for leaders to murder a hundred million people. Richard Wurmbrand, who was tortured in a communist prison, warns:

“The cruelty of atheism is hard to believe. When man has no faith in the reward of good or the punishment of evil, there is no reason to be human. There is no restraint from the depth of evil which is in man. The communist torturers often said, ‘There is no God, no hereafter, no punishment for evil. We can do what we wish.’” (If God is Good, pp. 116)

The Current of Revisionism

Relativism paves the way for revisionism. Revisionism is the denial or distortion of well-established historical facts. It is the reinterpretation of orthodox views regarding historical events. It is evident that what we are seeing today is a strong trend toward revising our history and redefining our nation as a purely secular country **not** founded on a belief in the

sovereignty of God and Biblical principles. The philosophy behind the erosion of the anchor of authority and truth can be seen in a poem written by William Ernest Henley. In his nineteenth-century poem *Invictus*, he ends the poem with belief:

*It matters no how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.*

Revision begins when man decides to dethrone God as the master of his life and the ruler of the universe.

Revision begins when man decides to dethrone God as the master of his life and the ruler of the universe. When he attempts to usurp God’s authority he must exchange the truth for a lie. What happens next is that

the “captain” replaces orthodox beliefs with his own brand of truth. The “captain” discards the anchors of God and creates his own anchors. While this has been emerging in America for years it is now beginning to happen at an alarming rate.

Historical revisionism occurs when facts are denied, ignored, or changed to fit an agenda. The goal is to manipulate people and entice them into buying into a certain agenda. That is exactly what is happening to the historic anchors of our nation. There is a concerted effort by some vocal minorities to ignore important aspects of our American heritage in order to convince people that we are a purely secular nation. This is happening on several fronts including our popular culture. Following are two examples of revisionism:

Education: Omitting our religious heritage from our textbooks

Textbooks are beginning to leave out references to America’s strong religious heritage. David Barton, in his book *Original Intent* cites the following examples:

“Other similar examples of religious omissions from history texts were documented by researches funded through the U. S. Department of Education. For example, at the elementary level they discovered:

One social studies book has thirty pages on the Pilgrims, including the first Thanksgiving. But there is not one word (or image) that referred to religion as even a part of the Pilgrims’ life. Other examples of the washing out of religion are such

explanations as, "Pilgrims are people who make long trips"...The Pilgrims are described entirely without any reference to religion; thus at the end of their first year they "wanted to give thanks for all they had" so they had the first Thanksgiving. But no mention is made of the fact that it was God they were thanking.

At the high-school level, one national textbook listed eighty-three important dates in American history, and only one (the first Thanksgiving in 1621) was religious. Revisionists would have us believe that there have been no religious events of historical importance since 1621." (Original Intent, P. 291-292)

These are not isolated cases. There are numerous examples of revisionism. Just recently I heard a respected professor of history claim on a TV newscast that George Washington was not at all religious. She did this based on her opinion rather than historical evidence. This kind of revisionism is a popular and growing trend in our universities.

Government: The revising of the First Amendment

Revisionism can be most plainly seen in the judicial branch of government although there are certainly signs in the Legislative and Executive branches as well. Revisionism can best be seen in how our First Amendment has been reinterpreted and in a sense "rewritten". The non-revised wording of The First Amendment reads:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..."

The original intent of the First Amendment was to remove the Federal Government from jurisdiction over religious expression. There was to be no government approved religion or single denomination. A landmark decision in *Everson v. Board of Education*, 330 U.S. 1 (1947) reversed over a hundred and fifty years of precedent. At issue was a case brought by a New Jersey man who was against a tax funded school district that reimbursed parents of both public and private school children taking the public transportation system to school. While the Court ruled in favor of the Board of Education, the Justices went on to "revise" the First Amendment religious clause adding the term "wall between church and state." The Court announced:

"The First Amendment has erected a wall between church and state. That wall must be kept high and impregnable. We could not approve the slightest breach." (Everson v. Board of Education, 330 U.S. 1, 18 (1947))

It was not the First Amendment that erected this wall but the Supreme Court. This phrase did not appear in the Constitution but was first used in an exchange of letters between President Thomas Jefferson and the Baptist Association of Danbury, Connecticut. In his letter Jefferson reassured the Baptist Association that the Federal Government would not interfere with their religious expression. In doing so he stated,

"...I contemplate that with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church and State." (Jefferson, Writings, Vol. XVI pp 281-282 to the Danbury Baptist Association, January 1, 1802)

The "wall" Jefferson referred to was a wall preventing the establishment of a national religion or interference with religious expression of the Baptists.

For more than 150 years Before the Everson decision, the First Amendment imposed limits on the federal government, but the states retained the rights to determine religious expression. The court reversed this by making itself the complete arbitrator of all things religious and rendering the states powerless. They accomplished this by two unprecedented concepts:

First, was by combining the "wall of separation clause" with the "establishment clause" of the First Amendment. In this decision the Supreme Court took the first step to revise the Constitution.

The second step was accomplished by coupling the "establishment clause" of the First Amendment with the "due process clause" of the Fourteenth Amendment. This is something that had never been done before. It gave Government—the Judicial Branch—the authority to dictate what kind of religious expression a state or individual can or cannot practice. Nine Judges now dictate theology in our nation or at least how it can be expressed.

When the Supreme Court coupled the First Amendment to the Fourteenth Amendment they created a very "odd couple" because the Fourteenth Amendment was a civil rights guarantee. Its primary purpose was to assure blacks their right to citizenship. Section 1 states:

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

While this was purely a civil rights issue the Court arbitrarily decided that it applied to religion. Now we have the new “wall of separation” added to the First Amendment combined with civil rights. Combine these two and you have a very broad interpretation of the First Amendment. It is plain to see how the free exercise of religious expression has been almost eliminated from the public sector of our nation. Now in First Amendment cases contemporary courts include the phrase, “the First Amendment made applicable to the States by the Fourteenth Amendment...”. This interpretation provides our modern courts the right to intervene in almost all the practices of the States, especially religion.

The rights of the minority, no matter how small a representation, trump the rights of the majority.

Now a voluntary school prayer or a mention of Christ in a speech is not allowed because it might violate this impenetrable wall that has been erected or the “civil rights” of one

person. The rights of the minority, no matter how small a representation, trump the rights of the majority.

From this point on, the stage was set for everything to change dramatically in America. The “introduction phase” of this revision would soon move on to the “infiltration phase”. In the 1960’s the courts began to seriously implement the revised First Amendment with a series of important cases. We have now arrived at the “indoctrination phase” in our nation. Consider these subsequent Supreme Court cases and their impact.

•Engle v. Vitale, 1962

To allow voluntary prayer in school is to establish an “official state religion” (Result: no more prayer of any kind. Not even bowing your head for a moment of private prayer even though for 170 years after the Constitution and Bill of Rights no Court had ever ruled against prayer in any form).

•School District of Abington Township v. Schempp, 1963

To allow voluntary reading of the Bible in school violates “a complete separation of the spheres of religious activity and civil authority”. (Result: no Bibles allowed in classrooms).

•Stone v. Graham, 1980

To allow the display of the Ten Commandments in a school is plainly religious and unconstitutional. (Result: No public display of religious symbols and a destroying of over 2,000 year of the Ten Commandments being a basis of civil law).

•Allegheny County v. Pittsburgh ACLU, 1989

To allow a creche (nativity scene) “conveys an endorsement of religion in violation of the establishment of religion clause... therefore must be permanently enjoined (prohibited)”. (Result: All kinds of trivial and foolish decisions).

In all of these examples the courts have ruled the religious expression unconstitutional ignoring historical precedent and “revising” the First Amendment.

How far have we come?

Just yesterday (June 2, 2011) I read of a court case in Texas that is a clear example of how far we have come since the Everson decision.

“A federal judge has ordered a Texas school district to prohibit public prayer at a high school graduation ceremony. Chief U.S. District Judge Fred Biery’s order against the Medina Valley Independent School District also forbids students from using specific religious words including ‘prayer’ and ‘amen.’

The ruling was in response to a lawsuit filed by Christa and Danny Schultz. Their son is among those scheduled to participate in Saturday’s graduation ceremony. The judge declared that the Schultz family and their son would ‘suffer irreparable harm’ if anyone prayed at the ceremony.

Judge Biery’s ruling banned students and other speakers from using religious language in their speeches. Among the banned words or phrases are: ‘join in prayer,’ ‘bow their heads,’ ‘amen,’ and ‘prayer.’ He also ordered the school district to remove the terms ‘invocation’ and ‘benediction’ from the graduation program.

These terms shall be replaced with ‘opening remarks’ and ‘closing remarks,’ the judge’s order stated. His ruling also prohibits anyone from saying, ‘in [a deity’s name] we pray’.

Should a student violate the order, school district officials could find themselves in legal trouble. Judge Biery ordered that his ruling be 'enforced by incarceration or other sanctions for contempt of Court if not obeyed by District official (sic) and their agents.'” (By Todd Starns, Published June 02, 2011; FoxNews.com)

Notice the blatant attack and disastrous consequences of the revising of the First Amendment. If this judgment holds, there is now no free speech because the “civil rights” of one family has been violated and they have suffered “irreparable harm”. In fact, this is so serious that the judge has threatened incarceration. That means jail time for bowing your head or saying “amen”. How far have we come? We have landed squarely in the indoctrination phase with the criminalization of Christianity. This decision is under appeal and will probably be reversed but it does show that there is a blatant attack from those who do not believe in God to use the courts to eliminate from the public (and private) square any and all references to God. And some judges are only too glad to oblige.

OUR LOST “THIRD LENS”

Our Founding Fathers had a “Third Lens” through which they viewed the world and made important decisions. This third lens was the anchor of truth which came from the natural law of God. Joel Rosenberg warns about the consequences of our nation losing this “Third Lens.”

“What is fashionable in our times is to analyze world events merely by looking through the lenses of politics and economics; it is also a serious mistake, for it prevents one from being able to see in three dimensions. To truly understand the significance of global events and trends, one must analyze them through a third lens as well: the lens of Scripture. Only then can the full picture become clearer.” (Epicenter, p. 47)

A Government that fails to use that third lens fails to use the wisdom and clear sense of right and wrong that made this nation great. This third lens is essential to a worldview.

OUR LOST BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

As discussed previously, a worldview is a set of beliefs through which the world is perceived. It serves as a person’s, organization’s or nation’s decision-making filter, affecting their choices and overall behavior. Our worldview is being distorted by the current of relativism.

The Barna Research Group has studied the biblical worldview of individuals beginning in 2005. They define a biblical worldview as “believing that absolute moral truth exists; the Bible is totally accurate in all the principles it teaches; Satan is considered to be a real being or force, not merely symbolic; a person cannot earn their way into Heaven by trying to be good or doing good works; Jesus Christ lived a sinless life on earth; and God is the all-knowing, all-powerful creator of the world who still rules the universe today.” In the research, anyone who held all of these beliefs was said to have a biblical worldview.

Barna’s current research revealed that only 9% of all American adults have a biblical worldview. Even among born again Christians, less than one out of every five (19%) had such an outlook on life. One-third of all adults (34%) believe that moral truth is absolute and unaffected by circumstances. The research data showed that one pattern emerged loud and clear; young adults rarely possess a biblical worldview. The current study found that less than one-half of one percent of adults in the Mosaic generation-i.e., those aged 18-23-have a biblical worldview, compared to about one out of every nine older adults.

THE TRUTH SETS MAN FREE

Jesus taught people that it was only by holding to the truth that they could be free. Our Founding Fathers knew that it was the anchor of truth that would set people free to experience life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. People who live by lies will end up being slaves to what they believe. True freedom comes from the absolute truth of God as revealed in the inspired Word of God.

John 8:31-32

³¹ To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

THE THREE KINDS OF SENSES AND THE ANCHOR OF TRUTH

We will end this chapter by looking at how the “Three Senses” apply to the anchor of truth. The issue we will address is the **definition of marriage**. This is a huge issue and will affect everyone in some way. If marriage is redefined to include anything other than a man and a woman, our historical anchor of truth will be severely damaged. It will have been essentially changed to include a lie opening the door for many more lies.

Remember that **uncommon sense** is divine—supernatural sense. It is wisdom that comes directly from the Word of God revealed in the Bible. **Common sense** is how we apply the uncommon sense of God to everyday situations. **Nonsense or “no sense”** is what we get when the uncommon sense of God is denied or disregarded.

Uncommon Sense

(1) God created only male and female in His perfect design

Genesis 1:27-28

²⁷ *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

The Sovereign God had an absolute plan for creation which included only two sexes—male and female. There was no third or fourth option. His creation was perfect, exactly as He planned.

Common Sense

God's Word is perfectly clear in regard to creation. He states what He created, why it was created and how we are to function in the world He has given us. The laws of nature are absolute and so are His laws regarding people. God created male and female vastly different, but also so they would complement each other perfectly; physically, emotionally and spiritually. Common sense tells us that the parts fit only in one way. Procreation can only be produced by a male and a female.

Nonsense

It makes no sense that a God who so perfectly created the universe and male and female, would not include a third option if that was in His plan. He would have designed the body differently. There is no physical possibility of reproduction between same sex couples. God would have made it clear that homosexuality was an acceptable option if that was His will.

Uncommon Sense

(2) God created male and female to bear children and rule the earth.

Genesis 1:28

²⁸ *God blessed them and said to them, “**Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.**” (Bold added)*

God's purpose for creating male and female was not random. He had a specific purpose for His design. Here we see God's ideal plan: males and females bearing children in two parent families. This was clearly to be the norm.

Common Sense

Common sense tells us that the optimal environment for raising emotionally, physically and spiritually healthy children is in a two-parent family with a mother and father. The majority of studies affirm this as a fact. Common sense also helps us see that in an imperfect world that is not always possible. Through death, divorce and single parent births, some children are raised in single parent families. It makes sense to believe that while this may not be the best option, children can be raised in loving, single parent families and become emotionally healthy individuals. This does not change God's ideal plan for a mother and father raising children in two parent families.

Nonsense

The further we deviate from God's perfect plan in any area, the greater the consequences.

It makes no sense to believe we will escape the consequences if we play God and redefine marriage and family to include the third option of homosexuality. I am not saying that homosexual

couples are incapable of raising children in a nurturing environment, but it is nonsense to think that this is normal and will not affect the child in some way. The further we deviate from God's perfect plan in any area, the greater the consequences. Homosexual “marriage” makes no sense when it comes to God's command to “*be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth...*” How could homosexual couples fill the earth?

Uncommon sense

(3) God created the institution of marriage to unite man and woman in a sacred covenant.

Genesis 2:24

²*For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.*

Marriage is a sacred covenant between a man and woman and God. It is God who creates covenants, not man. He created

the covenant of marriage for our benefit. In a single sentence God revealed this covenant which was for all people for all time. God said; *“For this reason”* (Marriage), *“a man will leave his father and mother and be united to His wife.”* (The covenant: A permanent bond of marriage with a male and female in a two parent family),

Common Sense

It only makes common sense that God's design for marriage was perfect. However after the “fall” when Adam and Eve rebelled against God, the world was no longer perfect. There was something wrong with everything including relationships within marriage. I want to say that I do not think the greatest threat to the institution of marriage is the gay community's attempt to redefine marriage. While I acknowledge that this is a serious threat, an even greater threat is the breakdown of marriage among believers where the divorce rate equals that of unbelievers. It is the erosion of the biblical anchors of believers that concerns me most. We must first restore our own anchors and get our house in order before we can influence others.

Nonsense

If you believe in the authority of God and His Word, it makes no sense that His design for marriage and the covenant relationship would be anything other than one man with one woman until they are separated by death. There is no hint that it includes anything else.

Uncommon sense

(4) Sexual intimacy was designed for male and females and only within marriage.

Genesis 2:24

²⁴ *For this reason a **man** will leave his father and mother and be united to his **wife**, and they will become **one flesh**.* (Bold added)

Matthew 5:27-28

²⁷ *“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’*

²⁸ *But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

First we see that God designed sex for husbands and wives. The phrase *“...become one flesh”* in the original Hebrew language primarily denoted sexual intimacy, but had a larger meaning of emotional and spiritual intimacy. Sex was to be a sacred act designed by God for the pleasure of a man and

woman and the birth of children. In the Bible homosexual relationships are specifically forbidden and called *“indecent acts.”*

Romans 1:25-27

²⁵ *They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.* ²⁶ *Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for **unnatural** ones.* ²⁷ *In the same way the men also **abandoned natural relations** with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed **indecent acts** with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.* (Bold added)

Common Sense

There are some common sense issues here that are clear. Today we are accused of being homophobic, ignorant and hateful if we view homosexuality as being unnatural. If we call it sin we are accused of being right-wing fundamentalist. However the uncommon sense of God requires us to stand up for the truth of the Bible. It is not what I think that is important but what God thinks. His Word says that homosexuality is *“unnatural.”* (*Romans 1:25*). It is God's uncommon sense that tells us that there will be consequences for homosexual behavior; that people will *“...receive in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.”* (*Romans 1:27*)

I see another side to common sense when it comes to the issues of homosexuality. Jesus came to the earth in *“grace and truth”* (*John 1:14*). He related to people with one hundred percent grace and one hundred percent truth. He loved people so much he told them the truth in a loving and compassionate way. He was there to meet peoples' needs no matter what their social status or lifestyle. Jesus meant this to be our example.

Common sense says that we need to treat all people--homosexuals included-- with love, compassion and respect. That respect does not need to include respect for the homosexual lifestyle but for the person. As part of the human race they are God's deeply loved children just as we are. We must also stand on the truth that the homosexual lifestyle is sin. But all sin is sin. There are not some sins that are greater than others. Sex with anyone other than your own spouse is sin. The Bible does say that all sexual sin has greater consequence no matter who commits it (*Romans 1: 27; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20*).

Nonsense

There are also some things that make no sense in light of God's uncommon sense. It is nonsense to say that anyone who disagrees with the homosexual lifestyle is homophobic, ignorant and hateful. There are certainly some people who are, but to brand all people in this way is nonsense. You can disagree with a person's lifestyle no matter what it is and still show love and respect to that person as a child of God.

It is also nonsense to demand that everyone accept or endorse the homosexual lifestyle. It is nonsense to say that people must agree that homosexuals have a right to marry just like everyone else. If we redefine marriage to include homosexuals then should we not expand the definition to include all kinds of arrangements no matter how bizarre they might be? Where will the line be drawn? Would this not end up being nonsense?

I want to conclude this section by reemphasizing the importance of grace and truth. We will never influence anyone if we do not temper truth with love. It is only when we have a balance of one hundred percent love with one hundred percent truth that we relate to people as Jesus did. The Bible says,

John 1:14

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

CHAPTER 5 SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1: Begin your group by reading in unison *John 8:31-32* and the quote by Samuel Adams. Take a few moments to thank God for the many Founding Fathers that founded our government on the Bible.

2: Review the historical definition of truth. Do you agree or disagree with this definition? Explain.

3: What in the Declaration of Independence confirms that our Founding Fathers believed that the authority of God and His laws were an essential foundation of the new nation?

4: What do you think that the Founding Fathers were trying to communicate when they used the terms “laws of nature” and “nature’s God” in the Declaration of Independence?

5: Discuss the Court’s revision of the First Amendment. How have you seen this impact our culture?

6: The author talks about the current of “banal” evil. What do you think will happen if our nation continues to lose its sense of right and wrong and evil is trivialized?

7: In your own words define a Biblical Worldview. What do you think is the cause of only 19% of born again Christians holding a Biblical Worldview? What is the solution?

8: Do you agree or disagree with the author’s view of the definition of marriage as viewed through the three senses?

CHAPTER 6

THE ANCHOR OF CIVILITY

Matthew 22:37-40

³⁷Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself."⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

"The doctrines promulgated by Jesus and His apostles include lessons of peace, of benevolence, of meekness, of brotherly love, and of charity."

(John Quincy Adams, *An Oration Delivered Before the Inhabitants of the Town of Newburyport at Their Request on the Sixty-First Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence* (Newburyport: Morss and Brewster, 1837), p. 61.)

CIVILITY

From the acknowledgement of a sovereign God comes the anchor of absolute truth and morality. From the anchor of truth and morality comes civility. Civility is a code of conduct concerning how people are valued and how they are to treat one another. Every nation has some written or unwritten rules or laws that prescribe the rights, privileges and responsibilities of its citizens. Civility is much more than mere courtesy. It goes much deeper and involves how human life is valued and how citizens extend love to one another. The three questions we will investigate about our nation's anchor of civility are:

How is human life valued?

What are the standards for treating one another?

What are the rights and responsibilities of the individual and family?

OUR HISTORIC ANCHOR OF CIVILITY

The Declaration of Independence clearly laid the groundwork for civility in the new nation. It started with acknowledgement that there is a sovereign, creator God; "...all men are **created** equal..." It seems obvious that the Founding Fathers believed that there was an objective authority that was to anchor this new nation. It followed that the authority of the Creator would involve His standard for truth. There

would be given "self-evident truths..." which would ensure "the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them." As equals they were "**endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights...life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.**" (Declaration of Independence)

For people to enjoy equal rights they would need to first be seen through the eyes of God and valued as His creation. Each person whom God created would need to be treated in a civil manner in order for him or her to be able to enjoy the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This could only happen in a culture that valued human life and treated one another with love and respect. Our Founding Fathers believed that each person mattered to God and therefore each person should matter to others. This would necessitate an objective code of moral conduct that would encourage loving one another. Our Founding Fathers believed that religion was an indispensable part of the practice of moral behavior which resulted in civility. Charles Carroll, a signer of the Declaration of Independence said:

"Without morals a republic cannot subsist any length of time; they therefore who are decrying the morals, the best security for the duration of free governments." **Charles Carroll - signer of the Declaration of Independence | Portrait of Charles Carroll [Source: To James McHenry on November 4, 1800.]**

The word *civilité* shares the same etymology as the words *civilized* and *civilization*. The word in its simplest form means to be a member of a household. Just as there are rules in a family that promote love and responsibility so that members of that household can live peacefully, so a society must have such rules. The question is, "What was our Founding Fathers' basis for civility? What was the objective authority for standards of conduct?" The answer to these questions is that the anchor of civility proceeded directly from the authority of God and the anchor of truth and morality. Civility is at the heart of moral truth. Therefore when there is a decline in truth and morality there will also be a noticeable decline in civility.

In their own words

Our Founding Fathers had much to say about the connection of religion to civil actions. Here are just a few of their comments:

Patrick Henry, Secretary of State under George Washington:

"Give me liberty or give me death"

Joseph Story, U. S. Supreme Court Justice, Father of American Jurisprudence:

"The great pillars of all government and of social life...are virtue, morality, and religion. This is the armor, my friend, and this alone, that renders us invincible." (Moses Coit Tyler, **Patrick Henry New York: Houghton Mifflin Cp., 1897, p. 365, to Archibald Blair, January 8, 1799.**)

Henry Laurens, President of Congress:

"I abhor slavery. I was born in a country where slavery had been established by British Kings and Parliaments as well as by the laws of the country ages before my existence...In former days there were no combating the prejudices of men supported by interest; the day, I hope, is approaching when, from principles of gratitude as well as justice, every man will strive to be foremost in showing his readiness to comply with the Golden Rule." (Frank More, **Materials for History Printed from Original Manuscripts, the Correspondence of Henry Laurens of South Carolina**)

Daniel Webster, Secretary of State, Candidate for President:

"The cultivation of the religious sentiment represses licentiousness... inspires respect for law and order, and gives strength to the whole social fabric. Moral habits...cannot safely be trusted on any other foundation than religious principle nor any government be secure which is not supported by moral habits...Whatever makes men good Christians, makes them good citizens." (Daniel Webster, **Works, Vol. 1, p. 44, Discourse Delivered at Plymouth, December 22, 1820**)

John Witherspoon, Signer of the Declaration of Independence:

"Virtue and piety are inseparably connected; then to promote true religion is the best and most effectual way of making a virtuous and regular people

"Virtue and piety are inseparably connected; then to promote true religion is the best and most effectual way of making a virtuous and regular people. Love to God and love to man is the substance of religion; when these prevail, civil laws will have little to do." (Witherspoon, **Works, 1885, Vol. VII, p. 118-119, Lecture 14 on Jurisprudence**)

THE GREAT COMMANDMENT

Of all the truths that God has revealed to man, the one truth that impacts civility the most is the "Great Commandment." The most important truth of all is to "love God and your neighbor." Jesus referred to this Great Commandment when an expert in the Jewish law asked Him this question; "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" (Matthew 22:36).

Matthew 22:37-40

³⁷ Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Jesus was quoting from an Old Testament passage that the Jews to whom He spoke would have been familiar. In fact most of them would probably have memorized this passage during their youth.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

This passage in the Jewish Torah (or Pentateuch—the first five books of the Bible) is known as the *Shema*, which is Hebrew for "hear." It became the Jewish confession of faith, recited daily by pious Jews and quoted regularly in the Synagogue. The *Shema* is still an important part of an orthodox Jewish family's faith. Many Jews recite the *Shema* at least twice daily: once in the morning and once in the evening. Parts of the *Shema* are written on a small scroll which is then rolled up and put inside a mezuzah and displayed much as it was when this passage was written.

The Commandments to which Moses referred in this passage were The Ten Commandments. Following is a succinct version of The Ten Commandments upon which our Founding Fathers based many of the laws that guided our nation. The first four Commandments refer to the Sovereign authority of God. Notice that the final six deal with morality and civility—how to treat one another in a civil manner.

As you read these ask yourself, "What is so objectionable about these guiding principles? Are these not great anchors to guide a nation? What will be the consequences if our historical anchors of truth such as these commandments are completely eliminated from public life?"

The 10 Commandments (Deuteronomy 5:7-21)

1. *You shall have no other god's before me.*
2. *You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything...*
3. *You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God...*
4. *Observe the Sabbath by keeping it holy...*
5. *Honor your father and your mother...*
6. *You shall not murder.*
7. *You shall not commit adultery.*
8. *You shall not steal.*
9. *You shall not give false testimony about your neighbor.*
10. *You shall not covet...*

In Jesus' answer to what is the greatest Commandment we can see the first three anchors. Jesus starts with the **anchor of authority** when He says, "*Love the Lord your God*" (Matt. 22:37). The word "Lord" indicates one who has power and authority over others; a ruler to whom service and obedience is due. Because the Lord is sovereign ruler over all, His **anchor of truth** is absolute and His commands are to be obeyed. The **anchor of civility** can be seen in what Jesus refers to as the second commandment which He says is like the first; "*Love your neighbor as yourself*" (Matthew 22:39).

Jesus later explained what it meant to "*love your neighbor*" when He told the story of the "Good Samaritan". This story began when an expert in the law decided to test Jesus. He asked, "*What must I do to inherit eternal life?*" (Luke 10: 26) Jesus in turn asked the man what was written in the law. The "expert" answered by quoting the Great Commandment. Jesus replied that he was correct but the expert wanted to justify himself. He asked "*Who is my neighbor?*" (Luke 10:29)

Jesus answered this question by telling a story about a Samaritan. Samaritans were hated by Jews and looked at as low life half-breeds. In the story, the Jew who had been robbed, beaten and left to die on the side of a road was befriended by a Samaritan. Jesus uses this story to explain how civility includes showing love and mercy to those who are not like us and have no way of paying us back for what we have done for them. He defined a neighbor as "anyone you see who is in need". Jesus said:

Luke 10:36-37

³⁶ "*Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?*"

³⁷ *The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."*

In case there was any further doubt about how to apply the "Great Commandment" principle, Jesus summed it up with this brief statement that is called "The Golden Rule."

Matthew 7:12

¹² *So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.*

The Golden Rule is a practical application of the Great Commandment. The question we need to ask ourselves is, "How would I like to be treated?" The answer is to that is a no-brainer. We all want to be treated in a civil manner with consideration and respect. We want to be valued as a human being of worth. That is the essence of civility. Treat others in the same way you want to be treated.

A HISTORICAL DEFINITION OF CIVILITY

Based on the Ten Commandments, the "Great Commandment" and "The Golden Rule", I believe the following reflects our historical definition of civility:

Civility is loving others as we want to be loved by treating them in the same way we would like to be treated.

OUR VANISHING ANCHOR OF CIVILITY

When Roe vs. Wade made it legal to take the life of an unborn child, civility was redefined in our nation.

It is difficult to know exactly when our anchor of civility began to erode but one thing is clear. When Roe vs. Wade made it legal to take the life of an unborn child, civility was redefined in our nation. No longer was all human life of equal value. For this dramatic reversal in the sanctity of human life to occur God would have to be dethroned and replaced by a secular god where truth was relative. The new god of secularism claimed that life did not begin at conception but later at some undefined time. God's sovereignty was ignored and His truth abandoned and the definition of civility was changed. What the Bible had to say about when human life began was denied or ignored. The Psalmist clearly states when human life begins:

Psalm 139:13-16

¹³ For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, ¹⁶ your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Is civility in our nation vanishing?

Is civility actually on the decline in our nation? If so, in what ways is it vanishing? While I believe that the majority of Americans are civil and do care for the well being of others, there are signs that the anchor of civility is vanishing. There is a cultural current that is eroding this historical anchor. It is not that we ever have been or ever will be a perfectly civil nation. We are flawed people of the "fall." Our Founding Fathers had their imperfections as do we. Despite these considerations there are still some cultural currents which should alarm us.

More than a dozen years ago there were red flags that the anchor of civility was eroding. There was a report in U.S. News & World Report entitled: *"The America Uncivil Wars—how crude, rude and obnoxious behavior has replaced good manners and why that hurts our politics and culture."* This article asserted:

"From one end of the country to the other, parents and teachers complain of the lack of civility among children and the disrespect they show their elders. The problem cuts across all class and racial lines. In the recent survey of educators by the American Association of School Administrators, the teachings of the golden rule—treat others as you want to be treated—was found to be an urgent necessity."

And things certainly do not seem to have improved. In a recent survey of more than 1,000 U.S. adults conducted by Weber Shandwick and Powell Tate in partnership with KRC Research discovered that a majority of Americans view the erosion of the anchor of civility in our culture today as a major problem. The survey Conducted in April 2010 revealed the following:

- 94% of all Americans consider the general tone and level of civility in the country today to be a problem, with approximately two-thirds believing it is a "major" problem (65%).

- Most Americans believe that civility has worsened in the past few years (72%) with the financial crisis and recession hastening erosion.
- Americans consider government/politics and our roads as the most uncivil aspects of our society. Roughly seven in 10 Americans perceive these to be uncivil (72% and 69%, respectively). Conversely,
- 87% of Americans indicated that this responsibility falls on the shoulders of the general public itself, although they also pointed to other sources of leadership and influence... Government/Politics; Traffic on roads/highways; American public; Talk Radio; High schools; Hollywood celebrities; Professional sports; TV; Blogs

According to another study: *"Habitat for Profanity: 'Broadcast TV's Sharp Increase in Foul Language,' released by the Parents Television Council in the fall of 2010, there has been an almost 70% jump in bad words on broadcast TV (ABC, CBS, Fox, NBC and the CW) in the last five years. Most disturbing to the PTC is that the time period showing the biggest gains is not the 10 p.m. hour when more adults are watching, but the 8 p.m. and 9 p.m. hours, which attract younger viewers."*

All the above does indicate a vanishing anchor of civility. I believe this can be directly attributed to the erosion of the first two anchors of Authority and Truth. If there is no objective moral authority and standard for truth, what is left to guide people to practice civil behavior? If the media is the standard of how people are to treat one another I am sure you will agree we are in big trouble. Reality shows have taken civility to new lows. Is it any wonder people are beginning to imitate such outrageous uncivil behavior? Where are people to look? Can they look to Athletes? How about Politicians? It seems to me they are about equal in the amount of trash talking and rude behavior that they exhibit.

Here is the root of the problem. If truth is relative so is civil behavior. It depends on how you think another person should be treated. In addition to the current of relativism there is another current that is causing our historic anchor of civility to vanish.

The Current of Individualism

This brings us to the current of individualism. The philosophy of individualism is imbedded with naturalism, relativism and humanism. Humanism sees all people as independent and

sovereign entities because of their inherent natures. This is a false anchor!

Now I know that our nation was carved from rugged individualism. Strong individuals came to this country so they could have inalienable rights as individuals. They championed the rights of freedom for all and the dignity of the individual. The Bible condones this kind of individualism. It is a gift from God.

Our Founding Fathers would have defined individualism in this way. They believed individualism was a gift from God and to be used for the overall good of man. Man was not solely an independent and sovereign entity, but an interdependent part of society. Individualism always was to include freedom with responsibility and accountability. The only way this emerging nation could flourish was if people would use their individual rights to respect the rights of others and be civil in their behavior. This civil behavior was based on the common law of God which started with "The Great Commandment."

If we constantly hear the message of "Look out for #1", and demand our individual rights, the less we will think about the rights of others.

If self-centered, humanistic individualism is on the rise in our nation, civility will be on the decline.

The more people live for themselves the less civil they will be towards one another. The more people live for themselves the less morally accountable they

will feel toward God and others for their behavior. If we constantly hear the message of "Look out for #1", and demand our individual rights, the less we will think about the rights of others. Individualism, when correctly defined, is a noble character trait. But when we make individualism an idol, we eventually become slaves to what we have created. Those who believe that they are gods unto themselves will treat others as lowly subjects to be used for their own good. Think of how different our nation would look if people adopted the "Golden Rule" as its motto for how to treat others.

Matthew 7:12

¹²*So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.*

On June 8, 1783 in anticipation of returning to private life, George Washington sent a letter to the Governors of all the states stressing the importance of relying on "The Divine Author" for an example of civility. He said:

"I now make it my earnest prayer that God would have you and the State over which you preside in His holy protection ...that He would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristic of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, without an humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation." (George Washington, *The Last Official Address of His Excellency George Washington to the Legislature of the United States*).

THE THREE KINDS OF SENSES AND THE ANCHOR OF CIVILITY

We will end this chapter by looking at how the three kinds of senses apply to the anchor of civility. The issue we will address is the issue of **tolerance** and **political correctness**. I believe these are similar philosophies that merge into a single current that is eroding our historic anchors of truth and civility. Before we examine tolerance and political correctness in the light of the three senses I want to offer what I believe to be our popular culture's definition of both:

Popular culture's definition of tolerance

Tolerance is to hold that every belief, practice and lifestyle is equal and valid. Tolerance (and therefore civility) means we must not only respect these differences but accept and endorse them as normal and morally right.

An example of this can be seen in a definition of tolerance that United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization states in its Declaration on the Principles of Tolerance. If you examine this definition you will see that it closely resembles the cultural definition above. *"Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. Tolerance is harmony in difference."*

On the surface this statement may seem to promote civil behavior, but upon closer scrutiny you will see that it teaches tolerance for everyone **except** those who do not accept and endorse every belief, practice and lifestyle. We must not only respect the people and the right to their lifestyle and beliefs but we must **accept** and **appreciate** those differences, even if we believe they are morally wrong. An example of this can be found in one of the lesson plans that UNESCO created to accompany a *Teaching Tolerance* magazine article for elementary school age children entitled "*Exposing Hidden Homophobia*." Of course anyone who believes that

the homosexual lifestyle is wrong will be exposed as having “hidden homophobia.”

Popular culture's definition of political correctness

*Political Correctness is the avoidance of expressions or actions that can be **perceived** to exclude or marginalize or insult people of any race, culture, gender, sexual orientation or religious belief.*

Political correctness redefines terminology so that it is aligned with a set of beliefs and practices that are deemed “correct.” An example of political correctness is a recent change in terminology on U.S. passport applications. The words “mother” and “father” are now “parent one” and “parent two.” The explanation that the assistant Secretary of State gives is, “These improvements are being made to provide a gender neutral description of a child's parents in recognition of different types of families.”

Political Correctness is a cultural current that claims to have as its goal making everything fair and equal but in reality has a very different agenda. Behind their goal of fairness is an attempt to redefine right and wrong, good and evil. They do this by suppressing the beliefs, speech and practice of those who disagree. What will be next? Husband and wife will be politically incorrect because that will offend gay couples. These historical designations may end up being redefined as “spouse one” and “spouse two.” Think of what has changed in just the last few years:

- We are not to use the term “terrorist” or “terrorism” because it might offend some Muslims. Instead, as the Secretary for Homeland Security suggested we might want to say “man caused disaster.”
- We are not to use the term “Christmas” because it might offend someone who is not a Christian. (Christmas tree, Christmas vacation, etc.)
- If we pray in public we are not to use the name of Jesus as it might offend a non Christian.

We will now look at how the three kinds of senses kinds of senses apply to four principles of civility:

Uncommon Sense

- (1) There is good and evil, right and wrong

Ecclesiastes 7:20

²⁰*There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins.*

Proverbs 29:18

¹⁸*Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but blessed is he who keeps the law.*

*Left to his own desires,
man has a natural
capacity for evil.*

The Word of God clearly states that there is good and evil. Jesus is the only one who has never sinned. Left to his own desires, man has a natural capacity

for evil. We can see clearly from history that where there is “no revelation” or authoritative standard for right and wrong, people can and often will revert to extreme uncivil actions toward one another. The standard for right and wrong comes from the sovereign creator and ruler of the universe through His revelation.

Common Sense

Common sense should tell us that there must be an objective standard for right and wrong or people will make up their own standards to rationalize their own behavior and advance their own agendas. If man were perfectly righteous this would be no problem, but we know that man often does what he wants rather than what is right. To be politically correct someone must decide who or what is correct. Someone plays God and becomes the ultimate authority for truth.

Nonsense

It is nonsense to believe that there is no objective standard for good and evil. It is obvious not only from history, but also from the present, that this is not true. It makes no sense to think that man apart from some authoritative, objective standard can decide what is right and wrong and enforce it fairly.

Uncommon Sense

Do not switch the price tags! Do not call evil good or good evil!

Isaiah 5:20-21

²⁰*Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.* ²¹*Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight.*

Not only is there good and evil but the uncommon sense of God warns us not to redefine what He calls right and wrong. God says that those who think that they are wiser than Him will suffer the consequences. The nation that allows its regime to redefine good and evil, right and wrong, will eventually become morally bankrupt.

Common Sense

It is only common sense to realize that we are not wiser than God and are not clever enough to create new standards for right and wrong. We are not to redefine what is good and evil. It is only common sense to allow the Biblical principles upon which this great nation was founded to continue to be the basis for what is right and wrong.

- Common sense tells us that the definitions of good and evil that come from the historic anchors that made us a great nation should not be changed by the whim of the regime
- Common sense tells us that to redefine an historic definition like “mother”, “father”, “wife”, “husband”, and who knows what else will weaken the moral fabric of the family.
- Common sense tells us that you can be tolerant, kind, accepting and fair without agreeing or endorsing or accepting the beliefs or lifestyle of someone else.
- Common sense tells us that once the floodgates of redefining good and evil are opened, the flood of political correctness and tolerance will be difficult to stop.

Nonsense

Once the price tags are switched and we begin calling evil good and good evil the result will be a culture we no longer recognize. Future generations will embrace the new definition of tolerance and the changing definitions of right and wrong brought about by political correctness. What is being introduced now will be the new normal. The nonsense of the new tolerance and political correctness is plain to see. The result of man defining right and wrong inevitably ends up looking foolish. Here are some examples on this kind of nonsense:

First is the impossibility of political correctness. If you try to please everyone you will end up pleasing no one. You will have never done enough in the eyes of the person or group

you are trying to please. They will always ask for more. As I write this the leaders of England, Germany and France have all boldly announced that Political Correctness has failed in their countries. Their attempts to give special rights to various groups of immigrants, mainly Muslims, has proven to be a colossal failure. Nonsense will always fail. The special privileges given to certain groups will only separate them from the culture rather than integrate them into the culture. In England where Muslims have been allowed certain rights to govern under some of the provisions of Sharia Law the outcome has been increased discontent and radicalism.

Civility must always include common sense. I hope that the failed experiences of these countries will serve as a wake-up call to the United States. Perhaps the drift toward multiculturalism can be reversed. While we have not gone as far as England, France and Germany, we have been allowing the current of multiculturalism to shape the policies of how we integrate various immigrant groups into our culture.

In the past the success of making our nation a great melting pot was not by giving the groups special rights to be separate; it was by the Americanization of its immigrants. Historically immigrants were expected to become part of the culture. They were expected to accept their new identity, learn the language and embrace the values of their new country. They were taught Anglo American history and American civics. In the past it would have been seen as nonsense to make special provisions for any immigrant group. This is isolation, not integration. And whatever the government does, you can be assured it will never be enough.

- When you attempt to please one group you will at the same time offend another group. When you make special provisions for one group another group will be in some way left out or required to compromise. As a result that person or group will want special provisions. No one will believe that they are being treated fairly
- It is nonsense to insist that a person cannot be respectful and fair unless they agree with and endorse another person's beliefs and practices.
- It is nonsense to believe that the only way to assure human rights for all people is to redefine historic terms to please some.

Uncommon Sense

(2) Stand up for right; stand against wrong

Acts 4:18-20

¹⁸Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God." ²⁰For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Acts 5:29

²⁹Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!"

God's people were always told to stand up for what was right and to stand against what was wrong. Never were they to compromise the clear standards of God's truth no matter what the consequences. Often the consequences were persecution and sometimes death. That is certainly what the first century Church faced from its culture. What those first Christians said and did was seen as politically incorrect. They were being intolerant. Therefore the ruling regime and religious elites tried to silence them. However, when they were commanded not to speak they said, "For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard" (*Acts 4:20*). Later when the Apostles were arrested and jailed they boldly said; "...We must obey God rather than men!" (*Acts 5:29*) We are called by God to do the same thing. I believe we will increasingly face persecution if our historic anchors are not restored.

Common Sense

•Common sense tells us that for transformation and renewal to occur in a nation the few must stand up for what is right so that the many will have the opportunity to hear the truth.

•Common sense tells us that when we stand up for the truth, those who call evil good and good evil will hate us. We will face persecution. This should not surprise us (*Matthew 15:18-19*).

•Common sense tells us that we must be prepared to suffer the consequences of obeying God rather than man.

*Common sense assures us that God will be with us as we stand for what is right and stand against what is wrong (*Romans 8: 35-39*).

Nonsense

Isaiah 44:24-25

²⁴"This is what the LORD says— your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the LORD, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself, ²⁵who foils the signs of false prophets and makes fools of diviners, **who overthrows the learning of the wise and turns it into nonsense,** (Bold added)

I fear we have our own "false prophets" and "diviners" who are attempting to overthrow common sense and are introducing nonsense into our culture. Following is a sampling of some of that nonsense:

- It is nonsense to believe that man is wiser than God and can overthrow His divine truth.
- It is nonsense to believe that God is not in control of all things and will not intervene in the affairs of men whenever He chooses.
- It is nonsense to believe that you can silence true believers with a godless code of speech and with a threat of persecution if they do not follow it. Through persecution we will become stronger at the broken places.

Isaiah 40:6-8

⁶ A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. ⁷The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers and the flowers fall, **but the word of our God stands forever.**" (Bold added)

CONCLUSION

A civil nation is one that understands that God is the source of love and that the Bible sets a standard of how we are to treat one another. Think about the kind of world we would live in if people just obeyed the Great Commandment and lived by the Golden Rule. We must restore this vanishing anchor.

CHAPTER 6 SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1: Start your small group time by reading in unison *Matthew 22:37-40* along with the quote from John Quincy Adams. How do these two statements complement one another?

2: In what ways is civility a direct result of the anchors of authority and truth?

3: Review the historical definition of civility given by the author. What changes would you anticipate seeing in our culture if people lived by this definition?

4: Think about it. What is so objectionable or dangerous about the Ten Commandments being displayed? What would the Founding Fathers have said about these efforts?

5: What signs have you seen that the anchor of civility is vanishing in our nation?

6: What is the current of individualism as defined by the author? Do you agree or disagree that this has contributed to the lack of civility in our nation?

7: Discuss the author's definition of tolerance and political correctness. How do you see these definitions affecting our culture?

8: What should a believer's response be to tolerance and political correctness based on Scripture?

CHAPTER 7

THE ANCHOR OF PURPOSE

1 Peter 2:9

⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

“No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy.” (Abraham Lincoln--Proclamation Establishing Thanksgiving Day, October 3, 1863)

PURPOSE

If you in look deep into the soul of a nation you can determine its anchors, its character and therefore its purpose. The purpose of a nation is that for which it exists. If the leaders have a clear commitment to that purpose then most of what happens will be aligned with that purpose. It is a blessed nation that has a noble purpose and whose leaders are faithful to carry out that purpose for the general good of the people. You can get a clear indication of the purpose of a nation by understanding the first three anchors. **It is from the anchors of authority, truth and civility that the purpose of a nation is created.** These anchors glorify God by producing what is promised in the Declaration of Independence. These three anchors determine the destiny of a nation. The three questions we will ask about the purpose of a nation are:

What is the primary purpose of the nation?

Who or what decides this purpose?

How is the purpose implemented?

OUR HISTORIC ANCHOR OF PURPOSE

Following is the Declaration of Independence in its entirety. I would like you to read this historical document of our Founding Fathers. In the space that follows write a brief summary of what you believe to be the purpose of our nation based solely on this document.

The Declaration of Independence

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected

them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. --Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world...

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.

“We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

It was “we the people” who established the purpose of this nation based on Biblical principles. Government leaders saw themselves as the voice of the people. They knew it was their duty to “promote the general welfare” of the people by being responsible to the people who elected them. They were there to **secure** the blessing that were from God.

3. How is this purpose implemented?

The first three anchors ensure the implementing of the fourth anchor of purpose. It is through the acknowledgement of the **authority** of a sovereign of God; the **truth** of Scripture and the natural law of God and **civility** based on the “Great Commandment” of love that the purpose of a nation can be fulfilled. The purpose or destiny of a nation is a result of a commitment to these anchors.

The purpose of our nation is implemented when “we the people” live by these anchors and elect those who will govern according to our historic anchors. Our destiny will be reached when we hold our elected officials accountable to these historic anchors and we the people work diligently to uphold them.

•Implemented by following the Constitution

The Constitution of the United States was carefully designed by our Founding Fathers so that the elected representatives of the people would have a practical, unchanging guide and authority by which to govern. As we have seen there are more than a few today who claim that this was a “godless” constitution. There are some who say the purpose of our nation is found only in the Constitution and it is silent on the subject of God. They contend that even if our Founding Fathers believed in these anchors it means nothing. We now have a “living” Constitution that must be interpreted not on original intent but upon the “needs” of our current culture. If the secularists refer to their view of the constitution as “living” then it seems logical that they believe the Constitution of our Founding Fathers is “dead”. What they believed about the importance of Biblical principles must be buried.

•Implemented by Public Servants who honor the Constitution

It is interesting to note that representatives of the people were often referred to as “ministers” as well as servants. The Founding Fathers and “the people” regarded the duty of those who were elected to minister to or serve the people. In the forming years of our country elected leaders were not career politicians, but often common people who took leave of their occupations to sacrificially serve their country and then return to their jobs. George Washington did not want to be President. He wanted to do the things He loved on his farm in Montclair. He certainly did not desire a second term. He served as President, not out of selfish ambition but out of a deep love for his country. He felt it was his duty to serve.

This view of leaders as ministers or servants can be seen in many of the Election Sermons that were common at the time of the Founding Fathers. Prominent Pastors were invited by government officials to give these Election Sermons to the newly-elected government officials. An example of this can be seen in an Election Sermon given by Timothy Stone, Pastor of a Church in Lebanon, Connecticut in 1792. Here is a portion of this sermon:

“Viewing yourselves in the light of truth as the ministers of God to this people for good, you will realize the important connection between the moral government of Jehovah and those inferior governments which He hath ordained to exist among men.” (At a General Assembly of the State of Connecticut, held at Hartford, on the second Thursday of May, A.D. 1792)

It seems to have been well accepted that those who were elected were servants, ministers of God to serve the good of the people. They were reminded by these pastors to view themselves as such and honor the connection between the God of the governed, the people of the governed and the leaders of the governed. These pastors were speaking from their knowledge of the teaching of the Apostle Paul who said:

Romans 13:1-4 (NIV)

*¹ Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. . .⁴ For he is **God's servant** to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. (Bold added)*

It is evident from the documents and writings of our Founding Fathers that they believed embracing the sovereignty of God, the truth of God and the love of God was essential for a government that would assure life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all.

Purpose: In their own words

Our Founding Fathers had much to say about the noble purpose of our nation. Following is a small sampling of their thoughts:

James Madison, President of the United States; Co Framers of the Bill of Rights:

“No people ought to feel greater obligations to celebrate the goodness of the Great Disposer of Events and the Destiny of Nations than the people of the United States...And to the same Divine Author of every good and perfect gift we are indebted for all those privileges and advantages, religious as well as civil, which are so richly enjoyed in this favored land.” (James D. Richardson, *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897, Published by the Authority of Congress, 1899, Vol. 1, p.561, March 5 1815*)

Benjamin Franklin:

“Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters.” (Benjamin Franklin, *The Words of Benjamin Franklin, Vol. X, p. 297*)

Samuel Adams, Signer of the Declaration of Independence:

“Divine Revelation assures us that ‘Righteousness exalteth a nation’. Communities are dealt with in this world by the wise and just Ruler of the Universe. He rewards or punishes them according to their general character.” (Samuel Adams, *The Writings of Samuel Adams, Harry Alonzo Cushing, Editor (New York: G. P. Putman’s Sons, 1907), VOL III, p. 286, to John Scollay, April 30, 1776*)

John Witherspoon, Signer of the Declaration of Independence:

“Whatsoever State among us shall continue to make piety (respect for God) and virtue the standard of public honor will enjoy the greatest inward peace, the greatest national happiness, and in every outward conflict will discover the greatest constitutional strength.” (John Witherspoon, *Works, 1815,*

Vol. IV, p. 270, Sermon Delivered at Public Thanksgiving After Peace.”)

Abraham Baldwin, Signer of the Constitution:

“A free government...can only be happy when the public principle and opinions are properly directed...by religion and education. It should therefore be among the first objects of those who wish well to the national prosperity to encourage and support the principles of religion and morality.” (Charles C. Jones, *Biographical Sketches of the Delegates from Georgia to the Continental Congress (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1891, p. 6-7)*)

AN HISTORICAL DEFINITION OF PURPOSE

Based upon the historical documents and writings of our Founding Fathers I offer the following historical definition of the purpose of our nation:

“Because all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, we the people through our representatives, assure His gift of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all.”

OUR VANISHING ANCHOR OF PURPOSE

If we lose the first three anchors, the anchor of purpose will also be lost. Our character will be damaged and our destiny as a blessed nation that blesses others will be lost. We will turn inward, away from God, away from the good of people, and become a nation that is purely secular. Angelo Codevilla in *The Character of Nations* notes this growing trend:

“Nevertheless, until recently, only revolutionary governments (preeminently those of the French Revolution and the Soviet and Nazi regimes) have willfully departed from the rule that secular law never contradicts the fundamental tenets of religious law. Recently, however, as machtschaft has expanded and civil society has shrunk, governments throughout the West have tended to act as if they could make up standards as they went along and have increasingly treated religion, which they call ‘fundamentalism’ whenever it asserts itself, as the enemy of secular order rather than as its basis.” (pp. 68)

The Current of Humanism

There is one final eroding cultural current we will observe. There is a growing current of Humanism that is damaging our historic anchors including the anchor of purpose. Humanism

Humanism is a system that believes in the intrinsic goodness of man apart from God or any religious system.

is a system that believes in the intrinsic goodness of man apart from God or any religious system. This system believes that within man there is natural goodness that without any help from the divine will enable him to act in a civil way towards his

fellow human beings. Following are some excerpts from the *Humanist Manifesto* published in 1973. This philosophy has not changed and is still eroding our anchors today:

- *Ethics: We affirm that moral values derive their source from human experience. Ethics is **autonomous** and **situational**, needing no theological or ideological sanction.*
- *The Individual: The preciousness and dignity of the individual person is a central humanist value. Individuals should be encouraged to realize their own creative talents and desires. We reject all religious, ideological, or moral codes that denigrate the individual, suppress freedom, dull intellect, dehumanize personality. We believe in maximum individual autonomy consonant with social responsibility.*
- *Sexuality: In the area of sexuality, we believe that intolerant attitudes, often cultivated by orthodox religions and puritanical cultures, unduly repress sexual conduct. The right to birth control, abortion, and divorce should be recognized. While we do not approve of exploitive, denigrating forms of sexual expression, neither do we wish to prohibit by law or social sanction, sexual behavior between consenting adults. The many varieties of sexual exploration should not in themselves be considered "evil."*

As the number of people of faith declines in our country, the number of humanists is rising to fill the void. A survey on U.S. religious identification conducted by the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, recently asked: "What religion do you identify with, if any?" Those responding "no religion" comprised over 14 percent of the sampling--representing nearly thirty million people. Of those not citing a religion, the number who consider themselves to be "humanist" rose a remarkable 70 percent over the past ten years. Humanism is gaining momentum as a strong cultural current that will continue to erode our historic anchors.

The River of Secularism

Secularism is not just a current, it is a mighty river that is

attacking the very foundations of our nation. Secularism is the sum total of the currents of naturalism, relativism and humanism. When they flow together you have a "perfect storm". Just to be clear as to exactly what secularism is all about I will quote from the National Secular Society's website. Following are three of the Society's five General Principles:

- The National Secular Society affirms that this life is the only one of which we have any knowledge and human effort should be directed wholly towards its improvement. It asserts that supernaturalism is based upon ignorance and assails it as the historic enemy of progress.
- Affirming that morality is social in origin and application, the National Secular Society aims to promote the happiness and well-being of humanity.
- The National Secular Society demands the complete separation of Church and State and the abolition of all privileges granted to religious organizations. As you can see, these secular principles are clearly based on naturalism, humanism and relativism as I have defined them in this book. There is nothing new here. The secularist believes that "Supernaturalism is ignorance and is the enemy of progress" (Naturalism). They firmly believe that "It is only human effort that will insure progress" (Humanism). The secularist insists that "Morality is social in its origin and application (humanism and relativism).

Because of this philosophy the secularist agenda is determined to privatize religion, eliminating it from almost everything so there can be "progress". Organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union want to remove God not only from government, but from every sphere of life including law, education and the workplace.

This is exactly what Hitler did as the people of Germany remained silent. His agenda of secularism was clear. It was there for everyone to see. The agenda of secularists in our nation is also clear. We should not forget how that agenda changed the destiny of Germany and how it could change our destiny as well. Erwin W. Lutzer in his book "*When A Nation Forgets God*" reminds us of what happens when secularism is allowed to dominate:

"And so it was that secularism was imposed on the German people. The role of the church was minimized by privatizing faith and instituting laws about what could or could not be said from a pulpit. Religious leaders who opposed the secular

steamroller where intimidated by threats to them and their families. With God and religion removed from government, the values of Hitler's socialism filled the vacuum. The church would increasingly become the enemy of the state.” (pp. 24)

The destiny of secularism is almost always totalitarianism. Without belief in a sovereign God, objective truth and civility based on The Great Commandment the regime becomes increasingly authoritarian recognizing no limits to its control. It attempts to regulate every aspect of public and private life. It promises much but delivers little. Is that what we want for our nation?

Here is what the secularists want for our nation and they have a well thought out strategy. Their vision and mission is very clear. The Secular Coalition for America has a “Secular Decade Strategic Plan”. Following is the vision and mission for a secular America outlined by Director Sean Faircloth just this year. (2011)

Mission

The Secular Coalition for America seeks to:

1. Increase the visibility of and respect for nontheistic viewpoints in the United States; and
2. Protect and strengthen the secular character of our government as the best guarantee of freedom for all.

Vision

An America that has returned to its secular roots and where secularism is an influential, respected force in American civic life, and in which there are numerous openly nontheistic elected officials. (www.secular.org/decade)

Have these people ever read the original documents of our Founding Fathers? Do they really think protecting and strengthening the “secular character of our government” is the best guarantee of freedom for all?

It is interesting that those who deny our nations heritage--that would stamp out every trace of religion--enjoy the privileges that are a result of what they are trying to destroy. They can enjoy the gift of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness because of our four historic anchors. They are free to write their own stories because our nation was built on the common law of God and the Great Commandment. Would they really want to live in a country that was purely secular? Do they really grasp what that would be like? They need to

look at what life was like in the Russia and the other countries of the former Soviet Union.

A NEW DESTINY

When the anchors of a nation begin to erode, the purpose for which it was founded also erodes. When true anchors begin to vanish false anchors take their place. As the false anchor of secularism begins to take over, the nation begins to forget that it is a sovereign God who gives us liberty. The truth upon which the nation was built is replaced by the false anchor of relativism. Morality is as each person sees it. With the false anchors in place the character of the nation changes. It becomes what the power brokers want it to be. The meaning of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is changed. It is no longer the nation that our Founding Fathers envisioned. Thomas Jefferson warned of how liberties would change if anchors changed:

“God who gave us life gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are a gift from God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and that His justice cannot sleep forever.”

(excerpts are inscribed on the walls of the Jefferson Memorial in the Nations capital) [Source: Merrill . D. Peterson, ed., *Jefferson Writings*, (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, Inc., 1984), Vol. IV, p. 289. From Jefferson's Notes on the State of Virginia, Query XVIII, 1781)

Our Founding Fathers believed that if they lived by the anchors of authority, truth and civility it would **honor God** by assuring life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all. This would determine the destiny of our nation. It was this destiny that was spoken of passionately by George Washington in his farewell address.

*“Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, **religion and morality are indispensable supports.** In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these **great pillars of human happiness** – these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, “where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments*

*of investigation in courts of justice?" **And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion.** Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."* (Bold added)

To restore the purpose and destiny of our nation we must, as George Washington said, "*maintain the great pillars of human happiness.*" We honor God by living by His great anchors. Our destiny as a nation is dependent upon this one thing. In the next chapter we will explore what could happen if we continue to allow the anchors that support our great pillars of human happiness to vanish.

CHAPTER 7 SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1: Start your small group time by reading in unison *1 Peter 2:9* along with the quote from Abraham Lincoln. How do these two statements relate?

2: Share with the group your thoughts on the purpose of our nation based only on the Declaration of Independence.

3: Why is the character of a nation so closely connected to its purpose? Can they be separated?

4: Write some thoughts on what “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” mean to you.

5: Where do our rights come from according to John Adams? Is this a widely held view? What roles does the Constitution play?

6: In what sense do the first three anchors determine the purpose and destiny of a nation?

7: What have you observed about the current of Humanism and the river of Secularism?

8: If current trends continue what do you think will be the ultimate destiny of our nation?



SECTION 3

RESTORING AMERICA'S VANISHING ANCHORS

CHAPTER 8:
Shipwrecked! The Peril of Vanishing Anchors

CHAPTER 9:
How We Can Restore Our Vanishing Anchors

CHAPTER 8

SHIPWRECKED FAITH: THE PERILS OF LOST ANCHORS

1 Timothy 1:18-19

*"...fight the good fight, ¹⁹ holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have **shipwrecked** their faith. (Bold added)*

"A general dissolution of principles and manners will more surely overthrow liberties of America than the whole force of the common enemy. While the people are virtuous they cannot be subdued; but when they lose their virtue they will be ready to surrender their liberties to the first external or internal invader." (Samuel Adams, "Father of the American Revolution; instigator of the Tea Party, Singer of the Declaration of Independence; Statement made while the Declaration of Independence was being signed)

THE CAUSES OF SHIPWRECKS

Shipwrecks are caused by a variety of circumstance and conditions. Some are caused by incompetent or careless crews. Some are caused by inadequate or missing anchors. Some are caused by hitting obstacles while others ships are blindsided by violent storms. Following are some conditions and circumstances that could possibly cause a shipwreck of our nation.

BE ON THE ALERT FOR CULTURAL CURRENTS

The danger of cultural currents is that they lull you to sleep. They do not seem threatening at all. You hardly know that you are drifting off course until it's too late. I believe that is what is happening to our nation. The cultural currents we have discussed are causing our historic anchors to vanish. They vanish before our eyes and we hardly notice. This poses a great threat to the character of our nation and inevitably results in a shipwreck. Not all shipwrecks totally sink ships. Some ships are damaged so that they are barely recognizable. The ship still floats, but its appearance and functions are forever changed.

REMEMBER THE TITANIC

The problem with ships is that they are manmade. There is no such thing as an unsinkable ship. It's a shame that the

Captain of the Titanic ignored that fact. The Titanic was the most spectacular ship ever constructed when it was launched in 1912. The Press lauded it as "unsinkable". The massive 46,328 ton ship was 1/6 of a mile long and 92 feet wide. It had elaborate safety features that convinced many that nothing could cause it to sink. You can imagine the euphoria and confidence of passengers as it set sail on its maiden voyage.

On the night the Titanic sank, Captain E. J. Smith disregarded six iceberg warnings. The seventh never made it to the bridge. The rest is history. The Titanic hit an iceberg and two hours and forty minutes later only 750 of the 2,227 passengers and crew were alive. There is a consensus among experts that it was overconfidence that led to the disaster. The Captain and crew simply ignored the fact that the ship was made with human hands and therefore imperfect and vulnerable.

There is a warning to heed and a lesson to be learned from the Titanic. We all have a tendency to think we are unsinkable--that we can do a better job of running our lives than God can. This is true of individuals as well as nations. There are many personal shipwrecks that happen because of overconfidence. We mistakenly think we are in control and ignore the safety of God's anchors while in reality we are not in control of much of anything. What happened on 9/11 was a wake-up call for America. People were shaken to the core. Most of us will never forget where we were when we heard the news that America was under attack by Muslim extremists. We had no option but to admit that our ship was vulnerable. For a while America looked to her anchors. Churches filled up and prayer vigils were held. We felt vulnerable.

But how quickly we forget! Churches soon returned to business as usual. Prayer meetings stopped and we became complacent. Although life was altered and we will never feel quite as confident as we once did, we nevertheless have regained much of that overconfidence. We are ignoring our vulnerability and the "icebergs" that could sink the ship.

BEWARE OF THE PERFECT STORM

In October of 1991 there occurred a storm so violent that it is referred to as "The Perfect Storm". Such tempests happen rarely—perhaps only once in a century. This nor'easter was created by such a rare set of factors that it is impossible to imagine anything worse. With winds of 120 miles per hour and waves ten stories high, the storm raged as few on earth

had ever witnessed. Sailing towards its center was the six-man crew of the *Andrea Gail*, a commercial fishing boat. The tragic ending was that the crew was doomed. There was no hope for the fisherman caught in such a storm. No ship could survive.

There are times when a set of factors creates such a violent storm in our lives that we wonder if we will survive. A perfect storm is when a simultaneous occurrence of events is many times more powerful than if they happened individually. This can also happen to a nation and cause a horrific shipwreck. This could certainly happen to America if our anchors continue to vanish. It is impossible to predict what the simultaneous occurrence of events could be but I offer these as a possibility. There are three conditions that could bring a perfect storm to our nation:

1. A major event occurs:

We could experience a major event or events that cause a chain reaction that results in significant loss and anxiety. I am not predicting that the following three events will be part of a perfect storm that could hit our nation but I offer this as possibility.

•**Another terrorist attack.** Many national security experts believe this is inevitable. But what if that attack is biological or even nuclear? I am not meaning to be a doomsday prophet but only raise possible scenarios.

•**An economic meltdown.** Like passengers on the Titanic we believe that a complete economic meltdown such as the Great Depression or worse is impossible. We have been assured by “The Crew” that this will never happen. Our government will take care of us. However, with our soaring national debt and a fragile global economy, is this part of a perfect storm gaining momentum? Could it possibly be an economic meltdown of epic proportions?

•**Loss of personal freedoms.** There are already signs that this is beginning to happen. It is possible that this storm cloud could gain momentum if we continue to neglect our historic anchors. When anchors are weak or lost they can be replaced by false anchors that only appear to be strong. Regimes and interest groups can use times of national crises as an opportunity to accomplish their agendas and restrict personal freedoms.

2. We are vulnerable

A second part of a perfect storm in America is vulnerability. Vulnerability caused by vanishing anchors will make it difficult to deal with the combined forces of the perfect storm. When true anchors begin to disappear a nation becomes weak and vulnerable. When these anchors are replaced by false anchors the nation is in jeopardy. As cultural currents erode our historic anchors they are incrementally transformed into false anchors that are like polyurethane, a substance made to look like rock, but so light that it will float on water. These polyurethane rocks can appear real. Sometimes you have to look closely to see that they are fake. A culture eventually relies on these lie-based anchors for its choices and eventually its destiny.

What are the consequences of these false anchors that have been introduced into our culture, infiltrating almost every area of public and private life? I want us to look briefly at what has happened since the 1947 *Everson vs. The Board of Education* decision “revising” the First Amendment. This “revision” was activated by the Supreme Court’s 1962 ruling in the *Engle* case striking down a 170 year tradition of prayer in public schools. This launched the infiltration phase with a series of court cases attacking religious expression.

Of course not all negative changes can be attributed to the Supreme Court’s decision, but it is plain to see that attempting to remove God from our culture has had severe consequences for marriage and families. Consider these alarming statistics, some of which I have cited previously in this book:

Children Born Out of Wedlock

The share of births to unmarried women has risen dramatically over the past half century, from 5% in 1960 to 41% in 2008.

(U. S. Census Bureau)

The Definition of Family

Fully 86% say a single parent and child constitute a family; 80% say an unmarried couple living together with a child is a family; and 63% say a gay or lesbian couple raising a child is a family. (U. S. Census Bureau)

Cohabitation

As marriage has declined, cohabitation (living together as unmarried partners) has become more widespread, nearly doubling since 1990 according to the Census Bureau. Living together jumped 13 percent from 2009 to 7.5 million according to the 2010 Census.

Is Marriage Becoming Obsolete?

Nearly four-in-ten survey respondents (39%) say that; in 1978 when TIME magazine posed this question to registered voters, just 28% agreed. **(2010 Pew Research Center and TIME magazine analysis of demographic and economic data from the U.S. Census Bureau, a study entitled “The Decline of Marriage and Rise of New Families”)**

Married couples

Married couples are now a minority for the first time in U. S. history. 2010 data from the Census Bureau shows a drop from 52 percent to 48 percent.

Since there is nothing to anchor the ship in safe waters, it floats aimlessly and drifts out of its safe harbor into troubled waters where a perfect storm can be gathering. When the perfect storm hits, the ship is at its mercy. When the tempest hits, a shipwreck is inevitable. Perfect Storms will always upset a nation's equilibrium much like what happens to people caught in a violent storm. In his book, *The Perfect Storm*, Sebastian Junger explains how this happens:

“In violent storms there is so much water in the air, and so much air in the water, that it becomes impossible to tell where the atmosphere stops and the sea begins,” writes Van Dorn. “That may literally make it impossible to distinguish up from down.” (The Perfect Storm, Sebastian Junger, Harper and Collins Publishers, New York, N.Y., 1997, pp. 174)

There is a parallel here. If we lose our anchors and a violent storm hits America, we will not be able to distinguish “up from down.” People will become disoriented. Our leaders will become disoriented. Since they have no “true north” they will not be much help in righting the ship. The decisions our government leaders make will lead us into even more troubled waters.

3. We are unprepared

Remember the lessons that were learned from the Fasnet

If we do not restore and maintain our historic anchors we will not be prepared to use them when the inevitable storms come.

Race? The first and most important lesson was that if they had been prepared to use their anchors when the storm hit, the yacht and the crew would have been saved. There were sea anchors on board that would have steadied the boat so they could

maintain control. The only boat that used these sea anchors survived. The analogy should be clear. If we do not restore and maintain our historic anchors we will not be prepared to use them when the inevitable storms come. We will be blindsided because of our neglect. We really have no excuse. There is an old hymn titled “*We Have an Anchor*” that reminds us that we should be prepared to use our anchors.

WE HAVE AN ANCHOR

Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,
When the clouds unfold their wings of strife?
When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain,
Will your anchor drift or firm remain?

We have an anchor that keeps the soul
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll,
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Savior's love.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SHIPWRECKS

Will our nation's anchors hold in the storms of life? Will they drift or firm remain? They certainly will not if we continue to neglect them. If the cultural drift continues our anchors will vanish causing us to drift into dangerous waters. There will be serious and possibly disastrous consequences. Here are some things that could happen:

WE COULD LOSE OUR BLESSING

Is American a blessed nation? We sing “God Bless America.” People say, “God bless America.” But what do we mean when we say those words? Does God really bless America? Is there something special about our country? I believe there are three parts to the answer to this question:

1. God is sovereign and therefore can and does bless whomever and whatever He pleases for whatever reason He chooses.

A sovereign God can bless whomever He chooses for whatever reason He chooses whether that be a person or a nation. When a person or nation was blessed in the Old Testament it usually referred to God bestowing pleasure and prosperity. For example God blessed Abraham and promised to make him into a great nation.

Genesis 12:2-3

²*"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

This was a special blessing that was part of a Covenant between Abraham and God. Israel was to be God's chosen people through whom the Messiah would come. I do believe we are a blessed nation but not in that exact same way. God established only one chosen nation which was the Hebrews.

2. God's special blessings are reserved for those whose "God is the Lord".

Since God is sovereign He is completely in control of all people and nations of the world. Nothing happens without His initiative or approval. There is a Psalm that gives us insight into God's special blessing for all nations who acknowledge Him.

Psalm 33:8-19

⁸**Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him.** ⁹*For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. ¹⁰The LORD foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. ¹¹But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations. ¹²Blessed is **the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he chose for his inheritance.** ¹³*From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all mankind; ¹⁴from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth— ¹⁵he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do. ¹⁶No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength. ¹⁷A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save. ¹⁸But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, ¹⁹to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine.* (Bold added)*

It is "the nation whose God is the Lord", that receives a special blessing (v. 12). God's eyes and blessing are on those "... who fear Him, on those whose hope is in His unfailing love" (v. 19). There is a specific reference to Israel here, but this

passage also contains a general application to all people and nations as well.

3. Blessings are a result of living by the anchors of God

There is also a cause and effect to receiving the blessing of God. The Bible teaches the law of the harvest. People and nations will reap what they sow. The Bible says, "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows" (Galatians 6:7). The following Psalm describes how God's blessings are received through the law of the harvest:

Psalm 1:1-3

¹*Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.*

One who loves God's laws--His anchors-- and lives by them day and night will be blessed in everything he does. He will be successful. He will prosper. He will reap what he sows. The law of the harvest will produce good fruit. The fruit includes both physical and spiritual blessings. The Bible says:

James 3:18

¹⁸*Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.*

Proverbs 11:18

¹⁸*The wicked man earns deceptive wages, but he who sows righteousness reaps a sure reward.*

Proverbs 22:8

⁸*He who sows wickedness reaps trouble, and the rod of his fury will be destroyed.*

How has America been blessed?

This country was founded primarily by believers in God whose motivation was to build a new nation whose citizens would be free to worship God.

We are not "The New Israel" as some claim. We are simply The United States of America. Still God has blessed us in many unique ways. I believe we are a nation that is special to God's heart and have enjoyed a special relationship with Him because of our

historic anchors. Our First and Founding Fathers' founded a nation like no other in history. This country was founded primarily by believers in God whose motivation was to build a new nation whose citizens would be free to worship God. This land was birthed through a commitment to God, the foundation of the Bible and great sacrifice of the people. It was our First and Founding Fathers' love of God and freedom that created the nation that we enjoy today. I believe because of this we have enjoyed the blessings of God for over two hundred years.

We have also been blessed by the law of the harvest. That love of God and commitment to live by the great anchors of God has produced the fruit of love, peace, freedom and righteousness. None of these fruits are perfect. Certainly our fruit has been disfigured by our imperfections. However, we still are a nation whose "God is the Lord." Three quarters of our population still consider themselves to be Christians.

America has been blessed in so many ways. This is obvious when you see our nation's vast resources, our productivity, our standard of living and our freedoms. I believe God led us to this land for a purpose. God had a divine destiny for America. I believe we were founded and blessed so we would be an example of how a nation with Godly anchors could be successful. God has blessed us as a nation because we have revered Him. We have been a blessed nation that has seen itself as a moral and religious beacon to bless other nations.

God gives every nation a choice: Be blessed or be cursed

God gave Israel a clear choice. They could be a blessed nation or a cursed nation. If they obeyed God's commands they would be blessed. If they disobeyed God's commands they would be cursed. Moses told the people:

Deuteronomy 11:26-28

²⁶ See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse—²⁷ the blessing if you obey the commands of the LORD your God that I am giving you today; ²⁸ the curse if you disobey the commands of the LORD your God and turn from the way that I command you today by following other gods, which you have not known.

A curse revealed a divine judgment of God that had already been initiated. The curse was a judicial action of God, or a consequence of human sin (*Galatians 3:10, 13; Hebrews. 6:8; 2 Peter. 2:14*). The emphasis here is not on the pronouncement but on the consequence of sin. It was a reminder that the people had a choice. Be blessed or suffer

the consequences. The prophet Jeremiah reminded the nation of Israel of the consequences of their actions:

Jeremiah 2:19

¹⁹ Your wickedness will punish you; your backsliding will rebuke you. Consider then and realize how evil and bitter it is for you when you forsake the LORD your God and have no awe of me," declares the Lord, the LORD Almighty.

The commands they were to obey and the curses they would suffer if they failed to obey them are outlined in *Deuteronomy Chapter 27*. The blessings they would receive by obeying God's commands were given in *Deuteronomy Chapter 28*.

While this divine judgment was given specifically to Israel it has a general application to all nations. They have a choice. Obey God's commands and be blessed. Disobey God's commands and be cursed—lose your blessings and face the consequences. Moses warned:

Deuteronomy 28:49-50

⁴⁹ The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the ends of the earth, like an eagle swooping down, a nation whose language you will not understand, ⁵⁰ a fierce-looking nation without respect for the old or pity for the young.

Since Israel did not follow God's commands, the consequences they faced were severe. They were eventually conquered and taken into captivity by Assaria and Babylonia.

How we can lose our blessing

If we lose those moral and religious anchors that have been our foundations we could very well lose our blessings as well. This could happen if the toxic cultural current continues to erode our historic anchors in two ways:

- If we continue to allow our historic anchors to vanish we will become a largely secular culture. This will be because we have bowed to the minority who would have us to believe all religious symbols and references should be purged from our culture and replaced with the godless anchors of naturalism, humanism and relativism.
- If we fail to live by our four historic anchors and therefore deprive ourselves of the blessings that produce the good fruit of peace and righteousness in our personal lives and in the life our nation.

WE COULD LOSE OUR INFLUENCE

We have led the free world not only because of our unequaled prosperity but because of our noble character.

There is no doubt why America is referred to as “The leader of the free world.” From the very beginning we have led the world in freedom and peace. This was based on four historical anchors. We have enjoyed the fruits

of civility. People have been valued and treated as equals. The nation has been a leader in moral values. We have enjoyed the fruit of prosperity. We have led the free world not only because of our unequaled prosperity but because of our noble character. We care about others. Much of our national budget goes to help other nations become free and prosperous. We sacrifice money and lives to help other nations be free.

I believe it is largely because of our four historic anchors that we have been revered by some, envied by many and of course hated by more than a few regimes with opposing agendas. It is our four historic anchors that have been the foundation for our national policies.

As we have seen, our nation has a Judeo-Christian heritage from which we can learn much about how God makes a nation great. Israel is a model of how God blesses a nation and makes it a leader among the nations of the world. Listen to what Moses said to the people of Israel as they were about to possess the “Promised Land.”

Deuteronomy 4:5-8 (NIV)

⁵ See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the LORD my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. ⁶ Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” ⁷ What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him? ⁸ And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?

We have seen how important it was for Israel to observe the laws and decrees that God had given them through Moses. These decrees and laws were to be anchors for the nation. It was because of these anchors that other nations would say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” (Deut.v.6). It is our righteous laws and decrees based on

Biblical principles that make us a wise and understanding people. It is these anchors that have made us great among the nations. If we lose these anchors we will cease to be wise and understanding. We will look foolish among the nations and lose their respect.

If we allow our anchors to vanish a very different America will emerge. If our influence has been a result of our character, and our character changes, our influence will change as well. Some may believe that it is because of our military might or wealth that we exert influence on other nations. This might be true to some extent, but without a noble character we might be able to exercise control, but seldom influence. True influence only comes when people believe someone has their best interests at heart. This kind of care and concern only comes from virtuous character. That is what we have been, still are to a large extent, and what I hope we will continue to be.

Those who study Bible prophesy have noted that America is not mentioned in end time prophecies. They wonder why. You would think that a nation that has been a world leader would be a significant player in the end of the world. Could it be the result of the perfect storm? Might it be that we have lost our anchors and therefore our noble character and influence? No one really knows.

WE COULD LOSE OUR FREEDOMS

We have seen how the final phase of cultural currents is indoctrination. Indoctrination can look harmless enough in the beginning but in the end results in bondage. As anchors vanish we lose freedoms ever so slowly and become like the frog in the kettle. We swim about happily as the heat is turned up, the water boils and life as we know it is over. Indoctrination leads to the loss of freedoms. The purpose is to control people. Indoctrination happens when beliefs and behaviors are forced upon people. It consists of what is included but also what is excluded. Forced exclusion is what happens when a culture prohibits certain information and beliefs from being available or even expressed. Here is a brief review as a reminder of what happens in the phase of indoctrination:

Characteristics	Response	Goal
Pervasive exposure	Acceptance	Standardize
Pressure to endorse	Approval	
Hostile opposition of anchors	Intimidated	
Persecution of Christians	Conform, or face the consequences	

Following are three historical freedoms that are under attack. Under each I will list some specific areas in which our freedoms are being compromised. Take some time to ponder these and think of your own examples of how they are true. We have not yet lost all of these freedoms but if currents continue to erode our anchors we will eventually lose them.

1. Freedom of Religion

I am concerned that even now we are seeing some of our freedoms of religion compromised. It seems that everyone has freedom of religion except Christians who live according to our historical anchors. Our long held rights as Christians are being challenged by those with a purely secular agenda. I fear that the indoctrination will not cease until all traces of religion have been erased from the public arena and even the private areas of our lives. Here are some areas of concern:

- Loss of freedom to share our faith with others.
- Loss of freedom to express “narrow” views.
- Loss of freedom to disagree with other religions.
- Loss of freedom to display historic religious symbols in public places.
- Loss of freedom because of “revisionism” and “forced exclusion”.

2. Family

- Assault on the definition of marriage.
- Assault on the definition of family.
- Loss of parents’ rights to discipline a child as they wish.
- Loss of parents’ rights to exclusively teach children about sex.
- Loss of parents’ rights to be notified when a child opts for an abortion.

3. Morality

- Prohibited from expressing the view that homosexuality is wrong (hate crime).
- Prohibited from saying that almost anything is wrong.

- Prohibited from the choice to hire, rent, etc. based on moral beliefs.
- Prohibited from declining to do many other things that we believe are morally wrong.

BEWARE OF CHANGING ANCHORS

God warned the Israelites of the fallacy and extreme danger of exchanging true anchors for false anchors. Before Israel was taken captive into exile He said:

Jeremiah 2:11-13

¹¹Has a nation ever changed its gods? (Yet they are not gods at all.) But my people have exchanged their Glory for worthless idols. ¹²Be appalled at this, O heavens, and shudder with great horror,” declares the LORD. ¹³“My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

America would do well to heed God’s stern warning to Israel. As was the case in Israel, it is obvious that there is an attempt by some to change America’s Godly anchors. But what they want to exchange them for are not anchors at all! We should be appalled at this and take personal responsibility to help restore our nation’s true anchors. We must be aware that our nation is on a path to commit the two sins of forsaking God and replacing Godly anchors with ones that are defective.

CONCLUSION

John Hancock, Governor of Massachusetts and signer of the Declaration of Independence proclaimed a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer in the dark times of the Revolution. I think it fitting to end this chapter with his encouraging words:

*“In circumstances as dark as these, it becomes us, as Men and Christians, to reflect that whilst every prudent measure should be taken to ward off the impending judgments, ...at the same time all confidence must be withheld from the means we use; and reposed only on that God rules in the armies of Heaven, and without His whole blessing, the best human counsels are but foolishness...” (John Hancock, *A Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer, with a total abstinence from labor and recreation*. Proclamation on April 15, 1775)*

CHAPTER 8 SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1: Start your small group time by reading in unison *1 Timothy 1:18-19* along with the quote from Samuel Adams. How does “*fight the good fight*” support what Adams said?

2: Remember the Titanic! What lessons can we learn from the Titanic that can help our nation?

3: What are the three elements of the “perfect storm” that the author suggests could happen? Do you believe these three events could happen?

4: Do you think we are a blessed nation? If so in what ways? Do you think that the Scriptures that the author gives can be applied to America?

5: Do you believe America could lose her blessing? If so how do you think that might happen? What might be the consequences?

6: The author lists some freedoms that he believes we are losing or will lose. Do you agree or disagree? What would you add to the list?

7: America is not mentioned in end time prophecy. What has been discussed in this chapter that might answer this “mystery”?

8: End your group time by reading *Deuteronomy 4:5-8* together. How could this passage be a model for restoring our historic anchors?

CHAPTER 9

HOW WE CAN RESTORE OUR VANISHING ANCHORS

Isaiah 58:12

¹² Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.

“Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!”

-Patrick Henry-

RESTORING VANISHING ANCHORS

HOW ISRAEL'S ANCHORS WERE LOST

The history of Israel records multiple shipwrecks that happened during the hundreds of years they were ruled by Judges and Kings. Israel would be firmly anchored and then slowly allow her anchors to be eroded by cultural currents. The generation of Israelites who first possessed the Promised Land faithfully preserved the nation's anchors. But after their leader Joshua died, the next generation lost those anchors and the first of many shipwrecks occurred. The consequences of the shipwrecks were severe.

Judges 2:10-12,14

10 After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel. 11 Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baals. 12 They forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshiped various gods of the peoples around them. They provoked the LORD to anger. ..¹⁴ In his anger against Israel the LORD handed them over to raiders who plundered them. He sold them to their enemies all around, whom they were no longer able to resist.

Notice that it was “another generation” that paid the price for the apostasy of their parents. Because the parents did not stand against the cultural flow that eroded the nation's anchors, the next generation lost them completely. It was the children and grandchildren who experienced the shipwreck. We shouldn't forget that what we do with our anchors now

has a huge impact on what happens to our families and nation in the future.

There was a predictable cycle to Israel's many declines. After a major shipwreck God would raise a righteous Judge or King who would restore the nation's anchors and blessings would be renewed. Then another shipwreck would occur. This cycle was repeated over the centuries, but after hundreds of years of shipwrecks and restorations God had had enough. There came a time when God said, “No mas!” No more will I tolerate your disbelief and disobedience. I will remove the hedge of protection I have put around you so you will recognize your sin, repent, and wholeheartedly return to me. God told the prophet Amos of His decision.

Amos 7:7-8

⁷ This is what he showed me: The Lord was standing by a wall that had been built true to plumb, with a plumb line in his hand. ⁸ And the LORD asked me, “What do you see, Amos?” “A plumb line,” I replied. Then the Lord said, “Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.

God's people had been “built” by His standards—His anchors. The plumb line of God's Law was there to test the nation's anchors and measure its character. The people and their leaders were expected to be true to those standards but they were completely out of plumb when tested. The time had come for Israel to suffer the consequences of one final shipwreck. The Northern Kingdom fell in 722 B.C. and was taken captive by Assyria. The Southern Kingdom and Jerusalem succumbed to the ruthless Babylonians in 586 B.C. and was held in captivity for seventy years.

HOW ISRAEL'S ANCHORS WERE RESTORED

The goal of God's discipline is always restoration. It is God's desire that by allowing us to suffer the painful consequences of our actions we will return to Him in humble obedience. He always wants His deeply loved, prodigal sons and daughters to return home where they belong. This theme is consistent throughout the Bible. To remind God's people of His unconditional love He gave them a great promise. It was no surprise to God that Israel would lose its anchors. He knew that it would only be through His hard discipline that they would return to Him and restore those anchors. Here is the great promise that God gave to Israel and to us as well:

2 Chronicles 7:14

14 if my people, who are called by my name, will humble

themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

This is an eternal promise from the compassionate heart of God meant for every generation. Throughout the Bible our heavenly Father consistently promises that even if we rebel and have to be disciplined, He will always provide a way for us to be reconciled to Him and will restore our land. There were also specific conditions God's people were to meet in order to receive the promise. For their land to be healed and their anchors restored Israel would first have to trust God

They were to depend on God

In doing this they put their complete trust in God for the healing of their land.

First and foremost Israel was told to fully depend on God. They were to acknowledge that God was sovereign by humbling themselves before Him, praying and seeking His face. All this would show that they were willing to be under

His authority. In doing this they put their complete trust in God for the healing of their land.

They also were to acknowledge God's truth by repenting (turning from their wicked ways). This meant that the people would willingly live by the standard of God's truth. They would depend entirely on God for their standard of truth and morality.

God made this promise many years before Israel would experience that final shipwreck and suffer the painful consequences of their disobedience. After being held captive in evil Babylon for 70 years, their hearts were finally broken and they were ready for revival. In God's perfect timing the prophecies of Jeremiah and Isaiah were fulfilled through Cyrus, the King of Persia. Cyrus conquered Babylon and was told by God to let the Israelites return to Judah and rebuild the temple. Listen to the astounding fulfillment of these prophecies.

2 Chronicles 36:23

23 "This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: "The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Anyone of his people among you—may the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up."

Ezra and a contingent of people moved to Judah and began to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. During the reign of King Artaxerxes the building project was stopped because of opposition but it continued under the reign of King Darius. It was during this period that Ezra, the rebuilder of the temple, and Nehemiah, the rebuilder of the wall, appeared together in Judah. True revival had its beginnings and peoples' hearts turned back to God. They began the work of restoring the anchors of Authority, Truth, Civility and Purpose. Following is the story of how those anchors were restored.

They restored the Anchor of Truth

Nehemiah 7:73-8:3

When the seventh month came and the Israelites had settled in their towns, 1 all the people assembled as one man in the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the scribe to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded for Israel. 2 So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. 3 He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

Notice that It was "we the people"--the common folk of the land-- who initiated the restoration of the nation's anchors. They, "...told Ezra the scribe to bring out the Book of the Law" (8:1). They stood for hours as Ezra read the Book of the Law of Moses. When the people heard the Word of God they were in awe. It was like they were hearing it for the first time. God's people had an **unquenchable thirst for the Word**. They couldn't get enough of it as we can see from Ezra's account. They listened attentively. They recognized how far they had departed from the Law of God. They knew that this led to their downfall as a nation. As they heard God speak to them through the authority of His Word they began to praise Him as sovereign God.

They restored the Anchor of Authority

The next thing we notice is that the peoples' passion for worship was restored. As people heard Ezra read about who God was and the great things He had done they responded with hearts of worship, lifting up their hands and saying, "Amen! Amen!" Then, in an act of humble reverence, they bowed down and worshiped God.

Nehemiah 8:5-6

5 Ezra opened the book. All the people could see him because he was standing above them; and as he opened it, the people all stood up. 6 Ezra praised the LORD, the great God; and all the people lifted their hands and responded, "Amen! Amen!". Then they bowed down and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground.

Through the restoration of worship the anchor of God's authority was also restored. The people acknowledged that the one and only God of Israel was "...the great God." All the people said "Amen! Amen!" They bowed down, acknowledging the greatness and authority of the sovereign Lord of the universe. The Levites then led the people in praise of God's greatness. They lifted their hands and bent their knees in worship of the great sovereign God, creator and sustainer of the universe.

Nehemiah 9:5-6

5 And the Levite...said: "Stand up and praise the LORD your God, who is from everlasting to everlasting."
"Blessed be your glorious name, and may it be exalted above all blessing and praise. 6 You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.

They restored the Anchor of Civility*Nehemiah 9:2-3*

2 Those of Israelite descent **had separated themselves from all foreigners.** They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the wickedness of their fathers. 3 They stood where they were and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter in confession and in worshiping the LORD their God. (bold added)

They had allowed the cultural currents around them to erode their own anchors until those anchors were completely gone.

Through the process of introduction, infiltration and indoctrination the people of Israel had compromised their anchors, cohabited with the foreigners around them and eventually became entrapped. They came to embrace the false gods of those nations because they failed to separate

themselves from those cultures. They had allowed the

cultural currents around them to erode their own anchors until those anchors were completely gone. God had warned the Israelites that they were not to associate with the people they had conquered. They were to completely separate themselves from them. God knew that if they did not their anchors would eventually be eroded and destroyed by the godless culture.

Judges 2:2

2 "and you shall **not make a covenant with the people of this land**, but you shall break down their altars... (Bold added)

God's people disobeyed the clear instructions from God and allowed the conquered people to stay in the land. They paid the price for their compromise.

Judges 3:5-7

5 The Israelites lived among the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. 6 They took their daughters in marriage and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods. 7 The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD; they forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asherahs.

Because the Israelites did not separate themselves from the godless cultures they lost their moral bearings and their civility. Since they did not love God, His love did not flow through them to one another. They even lowered themselves to the abomination of sacrificing their children to idols. The final consequence of their disobedience was years in captivity.

But now we see a complete transformation of character. The first thing the people did after restoring the anchors of truth and authority was to **separate themselves** from "all foreigners." This was important because not remaining separate from idolatrous nations was an act of disobedience to God. This showed that they were ready to live by the authority and truth of God. Civility was a natural result of these first two anchors. While civility is not specifically mentioned here it certainly would have been included. The Ten Commandments which were the core of the Law of Moses would have been read. This included those requiring the civil treatment of others.

They restored the Anchor of Purpose*Nehemiah 10:28-29*

28 "The rest of the people-priests, Levites, gatekeepers, singers,

temple servants and all who separated themselves from the neighboring peoples for the sake of the Law of God, together with their wives and all their sons and daughters who are able to understand- 29 all these now join their brothers the nobles, and bind themselves with a curse and an oath to follow the Law of God given through Moses the servant of God and to obey carefully all the commands, regulations and decrees of the LORD our Lord.

Believers often make agreements or covenants with one another regarding the following of spiritual disciplines and obedience to the Word of God. They become accountable to one another for their commitments. That is exactly what the Israelites did after their return from captivity. The Scripture says they made a binding agreement with one another to follow the law of God. The purpose and therefore the destiny of the nation was now “...to obey carefully all the commands, regulations and decrees of the LORD our God.” In this way they would bring glory to God. How Israel restored their anchors can help us understand how we can restore our anchors.

HOW WE CAN RESTORE OUR ANCHORS

WE CAN GO BACK TO THE BASICS

“Machiavelli writes in the first chapter of the third book of his Discourses that regimes die of natural decay, which they can arrest only by restoring their character. This they can do only by repeating the acts and reaffirming the ideas that had given them life in the first place.” (Character of Nations, pp. 104)

When someone or something drifts from its original values and purpose, the “ship” veers off course and is difficult to turn around.

Think about how often the problem of natural decay happens. It not only occurs in nations but in organizations, companies, athletic teams, churches and in our personal lives if basic fundamentals are not constantly renewed. When someone or something drifts from its original values and purpose, the “ship” veers off course and is difficult to

turn around. The current carries it along at an increasingly alarming speed. The solution is to return to the lost anchors that once made that entity great. That is what God told the Church of Ephesus:

Revelation 2:4-5

*4 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love.
5 Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent*

and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

This church had neglected its anchors. It had forgotten to put first things first. The people had neglected the anchor of civility by forsaking their first love of God and others. The solution was to simply go back to the basics; “...Repent and do the things you did at first.” This church had failed to continue to do the things that made it great in the first place.

As we have seen, our nation is failing to do the things that made it great. To restore our anchors we must do the things our First and Founding Fathers did in the beginning. Following are some practical things we can do.

WE CAN PRAY FOR REVIVAL AND RESTORATION

2 Chronicles 7:14

14 if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

God knew that Israel would lose its anchors and would need restoration. Therefore early in the era of the Kings He told the nation what they would have to do to be restored. In a one sentence prayer God gave Israel the keys to revival and restoration.

1. Humility

Revival and restoration start with humility. Humility means that we acknowledge the authority of God. We acknowledge that God is supreme ruler of the universe and we are His subjects. He is in control of everything and we are to trust in His sovereign plans and purposes.

2. Prayer

When we pray we demonstrate that we do trust God and are dependent on Him. In prayer we recognize that God answers our prayer by releasing His power, forgives our sins and restores through healing.

3. Seek His face

Seeking His face means that we put first things first. By focusing on who God is and what He does, we are able to stay anchored in His Word. We reaffirm our purpose of glorifying God in all we do and say. Our priorities will be in place.

4. Turn from our wicked ways

This is a prayer of confession and repentance. Through confession we agree with God that we are sinners. God transforms us when we repent and turn to Him and away from our previous attitudes and actions. Repentance is initiated by God and completed by Him when we respond.

These are the four conditions that God gives us so that we will experience revival and restoration in our own hearts and in the soul of our nation. Most of all God wants us to depend on Him. Restoration only comes when His people respond in humble prayer, seeking His face, confessing and repenting from their sin of disbelief. This prayer for restoration is a prayer for revival. Revival is a term that you no longer hear much in the Christian community today. Historically it has referred to a dramatic return of God's people to Him. As we saw with Israel it includes a passion for worship, a thirst for God's Word, a confession of sins and a transformation of character.

REVIVAL TRANSFORMS NATIONS

The revival among God's people often results in a spiritual awakening in a nation where large numbers of non-believers turn to God and are saved. Revival has often come after a significant spiritual and moral decline. Every major revival in history has begun when God's people began to urgently pray for His intervention.

The Great Prayer Revival of 1857-58, when a million people were saved, was preceded by "union prayer meetings". These noon-hour prayer times were started with just 6 people by Jeremiah Lanphier, a lay missionary in New York City. Revival happens when God places a burden for a nation in the hearts of a **few people**. The revival first started small, with a few burning hearts in whom God ignited a spark. The spark was fanned by the flames with the Holy Spirit until revival fires consumed an area or sometimes an entire nation. As believers renew their passion for God and large numbers of people are saved, governments and cultures are changed. The Welsh Revival started when God gave a man named Evan Rogers, a coal miner from Wales, a burden for revival. For 13 years he prayed for revival until a tremendous revival broke out in 1904.

Revival in a nation means that people start restoring the great anchors of God in their own lives first. This transforms peoples' character and begins to change the entire culture of a nation. God's healing of a nation is supernatural and

Revival in a nation means that people start restoring the great anchors of God in their own lives first.

dramatic. An example of how this happens can be seen in what happened during the Evangelical Awakening, sometimes referred to as the Methodist Movement. John Wesley, who spearheaded this movement, created an outreach to the poor and disenfranchised during the spiritual and social chaos of the industrial revolution in eighteenth century England. French historian Elie Halevy popularized the theory that:

"... the Wesleyan movement spared England the kind of bloody revolution which France had experienced. Other historians line themselves up on either side of the "Halevy thesis," but generally agreed that the transformation of English society was largely due to the impact of Wesley and the movement he spawned." (A Model for Making Disciple, d Michael Henderson, pp. 29)

At the heart of this outreach was the "class meeting" where people were taught how to apply the anchors of God to their lives in a practical way. It was estimated that at one time a third of England was involved in the Wesleyan movement. All this because John Wesley and a **few** others responded to God's call to restore a nation's anchors.

The only way to restore our historic anchors and change the face of an entire culture is through the revival of God's people. Revival and healing will not come primarily through legislation or the courts or by getting Christians elected to office. It will not come solely because of our votes and participation in politics.

I am not saying that I think these have no effect or are unimportant. To the contrary, I believe our involvement is critical. I believe we have a responsibility to fully participate in these things but not to depend on them alone to change the character of America. It is essential that as Christians we must be louder than the vocal minority who want to replace the true anchors of God with the false anchors of culture. We must exercise our rights as citizens to do all we can to protect these true anchors.

"WE THE PEOPLE" CAN BECOME RESTORERS

Isaiah, who prophesied during the darkest days of Israel, foretold how the people would become restorers of the lost anchors of Israel. This can be a message for us as well.

Isaiah 58:11-12

¹¹*The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.* ¹²*Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.*

If the “age old foundations” of our nation are raised up and our broken walls are repaired it will be because “we the people” have heard God’s voice and have become His instruments of His renewal. The promise to Israel and to all generations is that God will guide us and satisfy our needs so that we can do His work. Restoration is initiated and empowered by God, but it includes our participation. God uses His people to accomplish His will.

The United States remains a predominantly Christian nation. More than three-quarters of all Americans identify themselves as Christian. And the vast majority of those who identify with any religion say they are Christian in some form or another. The population of the United States is over 300,000,000. This means that the voice of “we the people” who call ourselves Christians is potentially 200,000,000+ strong. Would not the voice of this overwhelming majority drown out the voices of the vocal minority that would take our nations anchors hostage?

A generation that seeks God

To raise up the age old foundations we first must restore our own anchors. Let’s become known as a generation that seeks God. Restoration must begin with us; person by person, anchor by anchor.

We ourselves must live by the anchors of God before we can help restore those anchors in our nation. We must first make sure that we possess a Biblical worldview and that our character has been transformed. It is only then that we can fulfill the destiny of becoming “Restorers” of our nation’s anchors.

I recently heard this wise saying, “*Be the change you want to see happen.*” We all want to see change happen, but we want someone else to change first. We often fail to see that it is our responsibility to change first. When we do change first, great things can happen. We often see people and institutions change in response to our character. There is a wonderful song based on *Psalms 24:3-6* that captures the spirit of how we are to restore our personal anchors and influence a generation.

God Give Us Clean Hands

*We bow our hearts,
We bend our knees;
Oh Spirit, come makes us humble.
We turn our eyes from evil things:
Oh Lord we cast down our idols.
Give us clean hands,
Give us pure hearts
Let us not lift our souls to another.
Give us clean hands,
Give us pure hearts;
Let us not lift our souls to another.
And, Oh God, let us be
A generation that seeks,
That seeks your face.
Oh God of Jacob;
And Oh God, let us be
A generation that seeks;
That seeks your face,
Oh God of Jacob*

2000 WorshipTogether.com songs/Six Steps Music CCLI Song #2060208

Psalms 24:3-6

3 Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false. 5 He will receive blessing from the LORD and vindication from God his Savior. 6 Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face, O God of Jacob.

I will conclude this book by suggesting some practical ways to restore the four historic anchors in our personal lives and in the life of our nation. First and foremost we need to pray for our nation and government leaders. The Bible stresses our responsibility.

1 Timothy 2:1-4

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone— ²for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³This is good, and pleases God our Savior, ⁴who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. (Bold added)

HOW WE CAN BECOME “REBUILDERS” AND “RESTORERS”

When the Israelites repented and turned to God they restored their nation’s anchors. They were called,

“Repairers of broken walls” and “Restorers of streets with dwellings” (Isaiah 58:12). I believe God is calling us to be “Repairers” and “Restorers” as we “rebuild the ancient ruins and raise up the age old foundational anchors of our nation.” (Isaiah 58:11)

1. How we can restore the Anchor of Authority

First I will give the historical definition of authority based on the beliefs of our Founding Fathers and then suggest several practical ways to restore the anchor.

The historical definition of authority is: The acknowledgment of a sovereign creator God who is in ultimate control of all that He has created and holds mankind responsible to administer His common laws of morality and love.

Personal restoration

Memorize the following Scripture and review it daily. Allow it to anchor you in the sovereignty of God.

Psalm 33:10-12

¹⁰ *The LORD foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. ¹¹ But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.*

¹² *Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he chose for his inheritance.*

Believe that nothing happens in heaven or on earth without God’s initiative or permission and that you can fully trust in God’s purposes and plans for your life and for the world.

Live like you truly believe that God is sovereign.

National restoration

Elect people to office who believe in the sovereignty of God.

Elect people who will be servant leaders and hold them accountable to be true representatives of “we the people.”

Resist in letter or in person all efforts of revisionism; that is

eliminating all traces of the Christian religion from private life, the public square and from the textbooks.

What I will do to restore the anchor of authority in my life and in our nation.

2. How we can restore the Anchor of Truth and Morality

The historical definition of truth is: There is a common law of truth and morality revealed in the Bible by a sovereign God, for the good of the people, to be a standard for right and wrong.

Personal restoration

Memorize the following Scripture and review it daily. Allow it to anchor you in the Truth of God.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

¹⁶ *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

Believe that the Bible is the infallible Word of God and that it is the authoritative standard for all truth and morality.

Make a commitment to study and obey fully the Word of God in all circumstances.

National restoration

Elect only people who **at least** believe that our nation was founded on the principles of the Bible and are willing to lead by following the common law of truth and morality as acknowledged by our Founding Fathers and revealed in the Bible.

Resist in person or in email all efforts, people or organizations that insist on relativism, abolishing moral absolutes and redefining marriage and family.

Use the four historic anchors as criteria to elect people to office. Evaluate character first. Then hold these people accountable to lead by these anchors.

What I will do to restore the anchor of truth in my life and in our nation.

servants” truly willing to lay down their lives for the people rather than serve their own needs (*Romans 13:1-5; Matthew 20:25-28*).

What I will do to restore the anchor of civility in my life and in our nation.

3. How we can restore the Anchor of Civility

The historical definition of civility is: loving others as we want to be loved by treating them in the same way we would like to be treated.

Personal restoration

Memorize the following Scripture and review it daily. Allow it to anchor you in the love of God and others.

Matthew 22:37-40

37 Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.

Make a commitment to “Love God; love your neighbor as yourself” and “...in everything, do to others what you would have them to do to you.” (*Matthew 22:37-40; 7:12*)

Approach all people and people groups with civility demonstrating “grace and truth.” (*John 1:14*)

National restoration

Elect people who believe in civility based on the “Ten Commandments”, the “Great Commandment” and the “Golden Rule.”

Elect people who exhibit grace (God’s love) and truth (authority of the Bible) in their personal relationships and leadership style.

Elect people who have demonstrated that they are “public

4. How we can restore the Anchor of Purpose

The historical definition of purpose is: Because all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, we the people through our representatives assure His gift of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all.

Personal restoration

Memorize the following Scripture and review it daily. Allow it to anchor you in the purpose of glorifying God.

1 Peter 2:9

9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Commit wholeheartedly to living by the Anchors of Authority, Truth and Civility. If you do you will honor God by sharing His wonderful light with others.

Pray that the destiny of our nation will honor God by living by our four historic anchors, assuring life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all.

National Restoration

Elect people to office who are real public servants, entirely committed to the purpose that our Founding Fathers envisioned: A nation who believed in a sovereign God, the truth and morality of the Bible and the practice of civility that assures life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all.

Hold leaders accountable to lead by our four historic anchors, not just give lip service to them!

Stand against everyone and everything that would fundamentally change the purpose of our Founding Fathers and stand for each and every anchor. Do this by every legal and civil action possible. Get involved in a least one specific thing. Campaign for a candidate who you believe lives by these four anchors. Send an email to your State Representative or Senator supporting or not supporting specific issue. The following organizations have websites that will keep you informed on current issues: Christian Coalition of America; Family Research Council; Focus on the Family; Alliance Defense Fund.

Sign the Manhattan Declaration as a pledge to live by and defend the vital institutions of our society that are based on our historic anchors. The following is a summary from that website. You can sign the document on www.manhattandecoration.org.

What I will do to restore the anchor of purpose in my life and in our nation.

In the book *Original Intent*, David Barton suggests the four questions that we should ask when evaluating a policy. I suggest reading the additional material in his book on this subject. Here is a brief overview:

1. In evaluating a policy, a citizen should first ask, "What will be the result of this proposed policy in the light of the principle of national accountability—or what the Founders called the principle of 'rewards and punishments'?" (What are the Divine consequences for political acts?)
2. "Is this act consistent with our form of government?" (The transcendent values of Biblical natural law were the foundation of the American Republic)
3. "Is the information undergirding this policy verifiable in primary sources or is it the product of revisionism?"
4. The fourth and most important practice vital to the creation of sound government policy is the election of leaders with moral and religious integrity. This entails

much more than just voting. It presupposes a thorough investigation of the private life and personal beliefs of a candidate. (**Original Intent, David Barton, pp. 337-356**)

A CALL OF CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE

Christians, when they have lived up to the highest ideals of their faith, have defended the weak and vulnerable and worked tirelessly to protect and strengthen vital institutions of civil society, beginning with the family. It was in this tradition that a group of prominent Christian clergy, ministry leaders, and scholars released the Manhattan Declaration on November 20, 2009 at a press conference in Washington, DC. The 4,700-word declaration speaks in defense of the sanctity of life, traditional marriage, and religious liberty. It issues a clarion call to Christians to adhere firmly to their convictions in these three areas.

MANHATTAN DECLARATION

We are Orthodox, Catholic, and evangelical Christians who have united at this hour to reaffirm fundamental truths about justice and the common good, and to call upon our fellow citizens, believers and non-believers alike, to join us in defending them. These truths are:

1. *The sanctity of human life*
2. *The dignity of marriage as the conjugal union of husband and wife*
3. *The rights of conscience and religious liberty.*

Inasmuch as these truths are foundational to human dignity and the well-being of society, they are inviolable and non-negotiable. Because they are increasingly under assault from powerful forces in our culture, we are compelled today to speak out forcefully in their defense, and to commit ourselves to honoring them fully no matter what pressures are brought upon us and our institutions to abandon or compromise them. We make this commitment not as partisans of any political group but as followers of Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen Lord, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

AMERICA'S EXCEPTIONALISM

I conclude this book with some thoughts on American exceptionalism. Currently there is a lot of interest in this topic. I do believe we are an exceptional nation. We have been, we are, and I believe we will continue to be if we fully restore our historical anchors. What has made us exceptional is not our power or our wealth or our

technology. As admirable as all these things might be they are still only things. I believe that America, from its founding, has been exceptional in the following ways:

Exceptional in its devotion to God

The ones who were less devoted or not devoted at all, at least acknowledged the importance of laws based on the wisdom of the Bible.

The Pilgrims started it all. They were devoted Christians. Our First Fathers came to this land so that they could have the freedom to worship God as they wished. Most of the Founding Fathers were devoted to God. The ones who were less devoted or not devoted at all, at least acknowledged the

importance of laws based on the wisdom of the Bible. The independent nation they created was dependent on God and the principles of the Bible. Morality came from these principles. It was Biblical anchors that provided the roots for this nation. Every good thing that was produced was a fruit from that root. It was that same devotion to God that created the exceptionalism of Israel. King David said to his son Solomon:

1 Chronicles 28:8-9

⁸“So now I charge you in the sight of all Israel and of the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God: Be careful to follow all the commands of the LORD your God, that you may possess this good land and pass it on as an inheritance to your descendants forever. ⁹“And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion ...”

There is a message here for us as well. If we want to pass on to future generations the exceptionalism that has defined our nation, we must renew our wholehearted devotion to God and restore our anchors.

Exceptional in its courage

America is exceptional in its courage. Courage comes from character and character from devotion. Our four anchors shaped our character and gave us the courage to fight for what we believed in. Courage is a result of believing in a cause so deeply that you will risk your life to see it accomplished. Our Founding Fathers faced overwhelming odds when they faced the formidable armies and wealth of

England. These were ordinary people who were unordinary in their courage. They had exceptional courage because of their devotion to God much like the first Christians. The book of Acts says of these exceptional believers:

Acts 4:13

¹³When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

Exceptional in its sacrifice

America is exceptional in its sacrifice. Let us never forget that we enjoy freedom today because of the character, courage and sacrifice of others. Others laid down their lives so that we could experience the fruits of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Our nation's exceptionalism was built from the suffering and loss of life of our First Fathers and the bloodshed of our Founding Fathers. Their sacrifice is epitomized in Jesus' words:

John 15:13

¹³Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

Our First and Founding Fathers laid down their lives for their “friends” in future generations. For this we should be eternally grateful!

Exceptional in its service

America is exceptional in its service. What has made us exceptional from the beginning of our nation is a willingness to sacrifice personal interests for the interests of others and the overall good of the nation; a willingness to lay down our lives for the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness for all.

This cannot be an attitude reserved only for the military. Our Armed Forces serve sacrificially on a daily basis. American exceptionalism is **all** Americans willing to lay down their lives for their country—not just on the battlefield, but in their unselfish service to our nation, other nations and one another. Exceptionalism is not competing with other nations to see who is best, but leading the free world because of our character. It is always about serving others. Jesus said it best when discussing what makes a person great.

Matthew 20:25-28

²⁵Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials

*exercise authority over them.*²⁶ *Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,*²⁷ *and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—*²⁸ *just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

You might be thinking, “Why must we defend America’s exceptionalism?” It is because there is a strong movement here and abroad that is attacking this belief. Here we see multiculturalism raising its ugly head again. In universities our youth are being taught that America is a bully, that we prosper at the expense of other nations, that all nations are equal and that it is arrogant to claim that we are exceptional. Our youth are being taught that we should mind our own business and not interfere in the business of other nations. This is pure indoctrination and yet it goes virtually unchallenged and is often supported by our tax dollars. These opinions are held by many in other countries such as Europe and in the Muslim world.

An example of this bias can be seen in a Newsweek magazine analysis of the world’s best countries. This August 16, 2010 report based its findings on five categories. They rated the **education, health, quality of life, economic competition, and political environment** of leading countries of the world. Following is where our country ranked:

1. Finland
2. Switzerland
3. Sweden
4. Australia
5. Luxembourg
6. Norway
7. Canada
8. Netherlands
9. Japan
10. Denmark
11. United States

What strikes you about this listing of the world’s “best countries”? Probably the first thing that stands out is that the United States ranks only eleventh on the list. But this is understandable when you consider what the people who created this report consider the five qualities of a “best nation”. Look at the criteria again and notice what is missing. Missing are the virtues and the character of a nation. Missing is the purpose of a nation. Do you see any mention of virtues such as morality? Where do you find the “Great Commandment”? I don’t see anything here about being a servant to other nations.

It is no wonder that the United States ranks so low in this report. As you can see the historic anchors that made our nation great are not a real factor. There is no mention of religious heritage. The sacrifice a nation makes to enable other nations to experience freedom is not mentioned in this report. What this report considers exceptionalism includes little of what has made our nation great.

If America is not all that exceptional why do millions of people still want to immigrate to the United States? Why do people risk their lives to come here? I’ll admit we are not perfect. We are self-centered and proud at times when we should

be giving and humble. We are not as virtuous as we should be. We make mistakes at home and abroad. But we are still exceptional for the reasons I have outlined. We still offer people the best opportunity to write their own stories. In America you are free to reach your full potential no matter what country you come from or your family background or social status. America is still the freest and most giving country in the world. We are still the best hope for the world. The American dream that so many people desire is still alive. We must all work to keep it alive. We must be diligent to restore and preserve those historic anchors that have made America an exceptional nation.

If our anchors are lost our exceptionalism will be lost. With our moral anchors comes the courage to defend our country against evil. With moral anchors comes the willingness to make great sacrifices including laying down our lives for our nation. If we allow these anchors to vanish we will not have the moral courage or motivation to defend our nation. We also will be unwilling to defend other nations.

We must remember that we have been blessed by God to bless other nations. Our exceptionalism has always meant that we were able to influence other nations for good. Our anchors have helped anchor other nations. God’s resources have flowed through us to other nations. I fear what the world will look like if we lose this influence. If we cease to be exceptional what will the nations do without our stabilizing influence? We can restore our anchors, continue to be exceptional and restore our godly influence. I conclude these thoughts with what the Lord said to Jerusalem and Judah. I believe these ancient words from God have a lesson for America today:

Jeremiah 4:1-2

"If you will return, O Israel, return to me," declares the LORD. "If you put your detestable idols out of my sight and no longer go astray, ²and if in a truthful, just and righteous way you swear, 'As surely as the LORD lives,' then the nations will be blessed by him and in him they will glory."

THE ANCHOR OF HOPE

In this book we have focused on just four anchors. But there is an underlying anchor that supports all anchors. It is the anchor of hope. On the cover of this book there is a Scripture that says it all:

Hebrews 6:19

*¹⁹We have this **hope** as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.*

Christ is our anchor of anchors. It is our hope in Him that will sustain us in the end—nothing else. *Biblical hope is the assurance that God is in control and will see us through every trial on earth and take us to be with Him in Heaven forever.* Biblical hope reminds us that we are on this earth for just a few years. Eternity is forever. Our hope always needs to be in God—who He is and what He does, rather than on someone or something. We can pray that our national anchors will be restored but our hope cannot depend on this happening. We can pray for our government and our leaders but we cannot put our hope in them. It is only hope in God that can anchor our soul. The Psalmist reminds us of this.

Psalms 33:16-22

*¹⁶No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength. ¹⁷A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save. ¹⁸**But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love,** ¹⁹to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine. ²⁰We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield. ²¹In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. ²²**May your unfailing love rest upon us, O LORD, even as we put our hope in you.** (Bold added)*

We must remember to always keep our eyes on the Lord and not our circumstances. No matter what happens to our nation or the rest of the world, God is in control. Nothing will happen without His initiative or permission. The end times will be exactly as He has planned them. Our part is to live by the anchors of God and work to help restore our nation's anchors. But our ultimate hope is in His unfailing love. The Bible says that in the end all will acknowledge that He is sovereign.

Psalms 22:27-28

²⁷All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, ²⁸for dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations.

A PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO LIVE BY THE ANCHORS OF GOD

The following statement is a statement of belief and a personal commitment to live by the four great anchors our God. It is a commitment that I suggest we all make.

*"I believe that there is a Creator God that is the sovereign ruler of the universe and has ultimate control of all things (**The Anchor of Authority**). Because God created the universe He must not only be all powerful but all knowing. Therefore He is the source of all truth and what He says is my standard for right and wrong (**The Anchor of Truth**). My sovereign, all-knowing God has said that the "Greatest Commandment", the law of love, is to anchor my relationships. Therefore I am to "love my neighbor as myself" doing unto others what I would want them to do to me (**Anchor of Civility**). And finally the sovereign creator of the universe has given me a standard for morality and love that will provide an environment for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all (**The Anchor of Purpose**)."*

WHAT ABOUT YOUR HOPE?

I want to conclude this book with a very personal question. What about your hope? *Hope is believing that God is in control of all things; that He will see me through trials on earth and because I have trusted in Jesus He will take me to be with Him in heaven forever.* If you can say yes to this there is no need to read any further. If you are not sure about this hope, if there is still an emptiness in your life, if you have questions or want to know how to have this kind of hope I invite you to turn to Appendix A. I will share with you the story of how I found hope and how you can find it too.

CHAPTER 9 SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1: Start your group time by reading in unison *Isaiah 58:12* and the famous quote by Patrick Henry. What do these statements say to us about restoring our national anchors?

2: What is the most important lesson we can learn from Israel about how anchors are lost?

3: Read and discuss *2 Chronicles 7:14* in your group. What were the major changes Israel made in belief and action when their anchors were restored?

4: What can we learn and apply about how revival transforms a nation? What can we do personally and as a church? What steps can we take that will make us a “generation that seeks God”?

5: Be ready to share your thoughts on the personal and national restoration of the anchor of authority. What are you willing to do?

6: Be ready to share your thoughts on the personal and national restoration of the anchor of truth. What are you willing to do?

7: Be ready to share your thoughts on the personal and national restoration of the anchor of civility. What are you willing to do?

8: Be ready to share your thoughts on the personal and national restoration of the anchor of purpose. What are you willing to do?

APPENDIX A:

MY STORY OF HOPE

My objective in sharing with you my story of hope is not to convert you. That is God's job. It is God who draws people to Himself, not man. I am only asked to tell about the hope that I have. The Bible says:

1 Peter 3:15

¹⁵ But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

Since you have chosen to read this section I will assume that you have some questions which I will attempt to answer by sharing with you the reason I have hope. I want to repeat my definition of hope so there is no doubt what I am talking about.

Hope is believing that God is in control of all things; that He will see you through trials on earth and because you have trusted in Jesus He will take you to be with Him in heaven forever.

MY LIFE WITHOUT HOPE

I was raised in a devout Christian family. While I was well taught I understood little of the true love of God and what I did know had very little effect on how I lived. During my teenage years I attended four different high schools, underachieving academically equally in all, and running with the crowd. I had little interest in spiritual things. At eighteen I enlisted in the Army. In my first year I got into an altercation with a fellow soldier and was court-martialed. I was given a six-month suspended sentence. The initial scare didn't last long and I violated the conditions of the suspended sentence twice without being caught. This was the height of stupidity because if I had been caught I would have been required to serve six months in the stockade. I thought I was invincible.

My first assignment after Field Radio Repair School in Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, was Sacramento Signal Depot in Sacramento California. Again I descended into foolishness and ended up in a Sacramento jail. This did finally get my attention. I remember realizing that if I did not stop the excessive drinking that accompanied many of my troubles, something disastrous would happen that I could not escape. The last fourteen months of my three year military term I was stationed in Germany, became a model soldier and actually attained the rank of Specialist 5th Class, (E-5).

The first few years after my discharge were pretty uneventful. There was no longer craziness, but neither was there any direction to my life. I worked, took a few college classes, eventually married. My wife assumed that I was a Christian when we got married. I really never gave much thought to what I believed and just went through the motions. One day she asked, "Why don't you ever want to go to church"? I guess that was the first time I really faced what I believed; and that wasn't much! I remember answering, "I guess I just don't believe. I'm not sure any of this is true". Her comment: "That would have been nice to know before I married you". I finally had to admit that I was an agnostic. I neither believed nor disbelieved. I just couldn't figure it all out.

We had two wonderful little girls. I worked as a construction laborer and provided a decent living for my family. I enjoyed my marriage and children but other than that felt pretty much empty. Everything I tried to fill up my life with did not satisfy. I knew that my emptiness would affect my marriage and family and I could well end up being another statistic if I did not change my ways. I knew that I must make a decision about God. The ways I was trying to fill up the empty spot would only lead to more emptiness.

HOW I FOUND HOPE (OR HOW HOPE FOUND ME)

People seem to be most open to God in times of trouble and transition. That was certainly true of me. I was troubled by the direction of my life. I knew I had to settle the God thing, I tried to reason things out. Was there really a God? Was the Bible true? How could I know for sure? My approach got me nowhere. Utterly frustrated I decided on another approach. I got up early one

morning, sat down with the Bible, opened it to the Gospel of John and prayed, "God, if you're really there you're going to have to help me believe. I tried this on my own and it doesn't work. If you're real, show me".

I don't recall anything specific that I read that convinced me, but about the third day I had a quiet assurance that God was real. God had come through. He had answered my prayer. I knew that He was real and that He loved me. I can remember praying, "OK God, I got it. I'm yours". That day I answered God's knock at the door of my heart and invited Jesus to take control of my life and things have never been the same. At that moment I was changed forever.

MY LIFE WITH HOPE

The direction of my life changed, but not all of my old patterns. Those old sinful thoughts and actions die slowly. Even to this day over forty years later, I sometimes wonder if I'm ever going to get it right. Fortunately I don't have to get it perfectly right because Jesus was perfectly right for me. He exchanged His perfect life for my imperfect life and now I am right in the sight of God. I will explain how this is possible in a few moments.

Perhaps the most significant thing that changed was that I no longer had to try to fill up my life with things that would never satisfy. My value, identity, and significance were now in a God who did satisfy. I knew that I was unconditionally loved by Him. My life had purpose because of my relationship with Him. I was secure in His love. This hope brought me joy and peace. I can honestly say to this day I am completely content. Not because my life is perfect or ever has been. Just like you, my life has had its share of failures, family issues, disappointments and pain. But because I have a personal relationship with God and trust Him, I am able to overcome these trials with joy and peace.

Through God's work in my life my character changed. Old thoughts were replaced by new thoughts as I learned the principles taught in the Bible. Old actions were replaced by new actions as God transformed my character. This process is called spiritual growth. I became a more compassionate person. I became a better husband and father. Anyone who knew me then and now will agree that the new version is much preferred to the old version!

When I chose to trust Jesus, I prayed, "I'm yours. I'm willing to do whatever you want me to do". That is a dangerous prayer to pray. God may have some purposes for your life that you never imagined. That was certainly true of my life. I had no interest at all in being a Pastor, but that was exactly what God had in mind for me. I went back to college at the age of thirty and by the time I graduated we had three children. I went on to graduate from Seminary a few years later. I then spent thirty-five years as a Pastor and counselor. When they heard about this my high school friends and Army buddies must have thought, "You got to be kidding"!

HOW YOU CAN HAVE HOPE

Something that puzzles me is how little thought most people give to where they will spend eternity. It seems to me like this would be a priority. It seems to me that people kind of slouch their way toward death and eternity not giving it much thought. There is little sense of urgency. We are kind of lulled to sleep by putting off thinking about difficult things like our mortality. I shouldn't be that puzzled, however, because that was me at one time.

The fact remains--in spite of our attempts to ignore it, we will all spend relatively few years on this earth compared to eternity. If it is true that there is an eternity which consists of a heaven and a hell where people will live forever, then the stakes are very high. Often it is not until we face the reality of death that we think seriously about the afterlife.

I recently watched an interview on TV of Christopher Hitchens, author of the book, "*God is Not Good*". The interviewer asked Hitchens, a outspoken atheist, if there was anything that could convince him that there is a God. I was totally shocked by his answer. He said, "I haven't seen anything yet that would convince me. But I like surprises". I expected a definitive and final answer of no. It was very unlike the cynical Hitchens to leave the door open to the possible existence of God. Here is what I suspect. He has cancer of the esophagus and very well could be facing death. It could be this reality that has seemingly led him to open the door to hope, just a crack. It seems to me that even atheists, when facing death must at least consider the possibility that there is a God and eternal life.

If you are one of those people who have avoided thinking seriously about eternity for whatever reason, I hope that you will take time to do it now. This is the perfect opportunity. This may be a divine appointment where God is speaking directly to you and giving you the opportunity to have hope in Him. Consider this:

- If you are reading this and are interested--God may be drawing you to Himself.
- If you sometimes wonder, “Is this all there is?” God may be drawing you to Himself.
- If you feel empty or sense that something is missing--God may be drawing you to Himself.
- If you wonder about the afterlife--God may be drawing you to Himself.

Why do I think that? You know that empty spot that I have been talking about? I believe it was put there by God. He has placed in each of us an emptiness that can only be filled by a relationship with Him. Solomon said:

Ecclesiastes 3:11

*¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time. **He has also set eternity in the hearts of men;** yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. (Bold added)*

We are made for eternity. It is set in our heart by God. It is only when we respond to God that His world makes complete sense. It is only then that we are completely satisfied. God wants us to respond to Him by opening up our hearts. The key is a real desire to know God—to have a personal relationship with Him. When we pray, “God show me that you are real”, He will always answer. The God of who created the universe and named the trillions of stars, is capable of knowing you personally. He will come to you in a way that makes sense to you. He will answer your prayer.

HOW TO HAVE A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

You may be someone who isn't quite sure where you stand with God. You may believe in God. You may believe in Jesus. You may believe in a heaven and a hell. You may think you are a Christian but are not sure. You may hope you have done enough to get to heaven. There are three questions I like to ask people that can help them determine where they stand with God. Take a moment to answer each of these by placing a check mark by the appropriate response and writing in the space below.

1. Would you say you have a personal relationship with Jesus or are you still in the process?

I have a personal relationship with Jesus.

I am still in the process.

2. If you were to die today are you absolutely sure that you would go to heaven or do you have doubts?

I am absolutely sure I would go to heaven.

I have doubts.

3. If you were to die today and stand before God in heaven and He was to ask you “Why should I let you into my heaven?” what would you say? (Write your response in the space below).

If you checked question #1 “I have a personal relationship with Jesus” then I would assume that you have placed your trust in Jesus and are a follower of Him. If you said that you were “still in the process” it would seem to me that you have not made a total commitment to receive Jesus and follow Him. There is no process to having a personal relationship with Jesus. At the very moment we put our trust in Jesus and invite Him into our lives we have a personal relationship with Him forever. There is a final step that you need to take that I will explain in the Bridge illustration that follows.

If you answered question #2 “I am absolutely sure I would go to heaven” then again I would assume you have placed your trust in Jesus and are a follower of Him. If you said “I have doubts” there could be two reasons. The first could be that you do not yet have that personal relationship with Jesus that comes from total trust in Him for your salvation. You may be religious. You may know about Jesus and “believe” that He is the Son of God but have never taken the step to invite Him into your life and trust Him to forgive your sins and guarantee that you will go to heaven when you die. A second reason might be that even though you have received Jesus you lack assurance because you have not been taught about God’s grace or fail to grasp it for some other reason. When you receive Jesus, at that very moment you are assured of eternal life. It is a done deal. The Bridge illustration that follows should help you clarify this issue.

If your answer to question #3 is anything other than something that indicates you trust in God alone for your salvation because you have received Jesus and been forgiven of all of your sins, past, present and future, you still have a decision to make. You have another step to take. If your answer included such things as: “I have tried to live a good life”; “I have followed the Ten Commandments”; “I go to Church”; “I read the Bible”; it is clear that you have not trusted in Jesus alone for eternal life. Some people look at what they have done on a scale. If the good deeds outweigh the bad deeds, then they think that they have a **chance** of getting into heaven. But the Bible clearly says that we cannot save ourselves by our good works and God does not grade on the curve.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this **not from yourselves**, it is the gift of God—⁹ **not by works**, so that no one can boast.* (Bold added)

We are saved though faith or trusting in God alone. There is nothing we can do to earn our salvation and yet that is what many people, perhaps even you, are depending on to get them into heaven. What seems to confuse people the most is the difference between religion and Christianity. The difference can be clarified with two words: Religion is “**do**” and Christianity is “**done**”. In all other major religions you must **do** enough to earn your salvation and gain eternal life. In Christianity Jesus has **done** for you what you can never do yourself—be good enough for eternal life. How do you know when you are good enough or have done enough? What happens when you fall just a little short? What is the standard for entering heaven?

Imagine this scene. You die and arrive at the pearly gates. There you stand behind Mother Teresa in a line of people who are being interviewed by God to see if they qualify to enter heaven. Imagine how you would feel if you heard God say to her, “You should have done more”? I’m sure you get the point. If someone who is regarded as one of the most caring people the world has ever seen, someone who did more for the poor people than anyone else in the history, hasn’t done enough good works to earn heaven, where would that leave you and me?

God’s standard for getting into heaven is perfection. This is because according to the Bible God is holy and cannot tolerate sin. Nothing impure is to enter heaven. That seemingly leaves us in an impossible situation. But God has made what is humanly impossible, possible through grace. Grace is God’s gift to us of eternal life. It is God’s gift at Christ’s expense. It is neither something we work for nor deserve. To explain how to receive God’s grace I will share with you an adaption of the “bridge” illustration, first developed by the Navigators, a Christian discipleship and publishing organization.

CROSS OVER THE BRIDGE

1: God's love and plan: He loves us and wants a relationship with us.

First we need to understand that God loves us and created us to have a relationship with Him. The first book of the Bible says:

Genesis 1:27

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

2: Our problem: Because of our sin we are separated from God.

Adam and Eve were given free wills but used that freedom to disobey God's clear instructions and do their own thing. Through them sin entered the world and since then everyone has sinned. The Bible says,

Romans 5:12; 23

*¹² Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned...²³ for **all have sinned...** (Bold added)*

Sin means missing the mark and choosing to be the boss of our own lives. Every sin is a sin not to trust God and live independently from Him, trusting in ourselves and our own resources. I'm sure you will agree that we all often miss the mark of even our own standards. We want to control our own lives.

3: Our solutions. We attempt to get back to God through our own efforts.

Most of us feel that separation from God in some way and attempt to reconnect with Him by doing good deeds such as helping others, giving to charities, reading the Bible and going to church. The Bible tells us that all of these things fall short

Romans 3:23

*²³ for all have sinned and **fall short** of the glory of God, (Bold added)*

Ephesians 2:8-9

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God- **9 not by works**, so that no one can boast. (Bold added)*

4: God's Solution: He provides a bridge to Himself through Jesus.

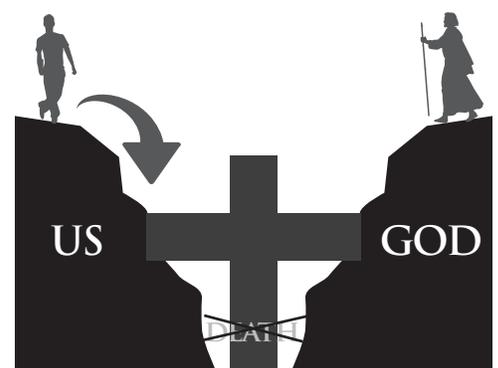
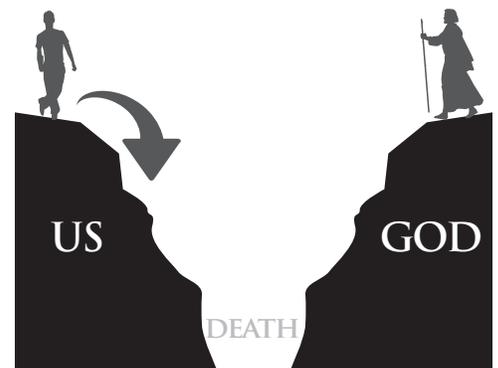
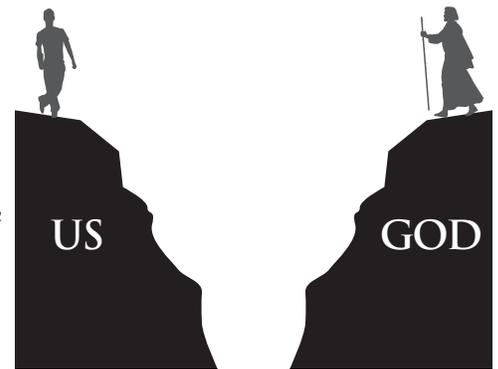
The good news is that God loves us so much that He has **done** something we could never **do** for ourselves. Through His death on the cross Jesus has provided a bridge back to Himself.

1 Peter 3:18

*²¹ For **Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit,** (Bold added)*

When Jesus was crucified on the cross He "bore" or paid the price for our sins so that we can be reconciled to God and stand perfect before Him on the day we die. The Bible explains it this way:

US GOD



1 Peter 2:24

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. 1 Peter 2:24

When we cross the bridge by putting our trust In Jesus, we become righteous or “perfect” before God. God sees our sins no more because He looks at us through the cross. Look at the illustration above and imagine God looking back at you through the cross. What does He see? He sees the cross, not your sins. He sees His Son, not you. Your sins are nailed to that cross. They no longer exist in God’s sight. The Bible says,

2 Corinthians 5:21

²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

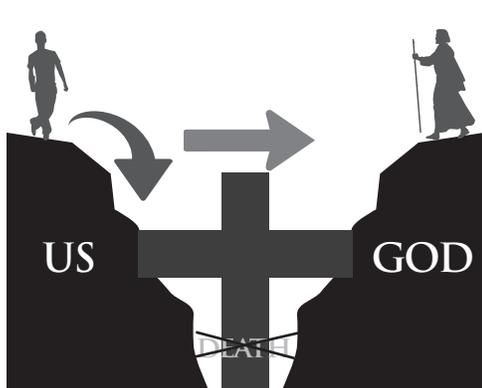
We know we have been made right with God. Our sins have been forgiven. Jesus has become sin for us. Our sins are blotted out forever. God remembers them no more. The Bible says,

Ephesians 1:7

⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace

The “redemption” we have in Jesus means that through Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross, our freedom has been purchased and our sins forgiven because of God’s free gift of grace. Is this not an offer too good to refuse?

5: Our Response: We need to cross the bridge



God is inviting you to cross over the bridge and be reconnected with Him. Where on the line would you say you are right now? If you locate yourself on the left side and believe you have not yet crossed over the bridge you can do that right now. You can cross over the bridge by praying to receive Jesus. The Bible says:

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-John 1:12.

The question is, are you ready to put your trust in Jesus and cross the bridge? This means trusting in Him alone for your salvation. This involves asking God to come into your life. It involves asking forgiveness for your sins and repenting (a commitment to turn around in your thoughts and actions and go in a new direction). If you do this it means that you are willing to turn control of your life over to God. Is this your commitment?

Prayer of commitment

If you are ready to make this commitment you can do this right now. You can pray the following prayer to receive Jesus:

“Lord Jesus, I invite you into my life right now.
I repent and ask forgiveness for my sins.
I accept you as my own personal Savior.
I believe you died for me to pay the penalty for my sins.
Help me turn from my sins and obediently follow you.
Thank you for giving me eternal life. Amen.”

WHAT'S NEXT?

It is important to connect to a church where you can receive teaching, support and fellowship. It is also important to be baptized. Baptism is a picture of what happens to you when you die to your old self and are raised to live a new life. Now I have an offer that you can't refuse. I have written a book on spiritual growth that I would like to send to you. This book titled *Spiritual Boot Camp* will help you understand more fully the commitment you have just made and give you valuable tools for growing in your new faith. You can email me at wayne@anchorsofgod.com. I would love to hear from you.

APPENDIX B: SMALL GROUP GUIDE

I have some suggestions for those of you who choose to use this book in your small group. Since this resource includes two of the most hotly debated topics--religion and politics--the discussion very well could be quite lively. As you are probably well aware, any discussion of politics can be especially volatile. People sometimes hold very strong views and are not shy at all in voicing those views. At times people can be rather intolerant of opposing opinions.

Group members will become frustrated if the discussion is allowed to go in too many directions. A study like this can quickly go too far astray from the topic. This will also frustrate group members. Because of these two issues I offer the following guidelines. Read these at your first group meeting and ask people to agree on the following guidelines. Review them as often as needed.

- 1. We agree to keep our main focus on the four historic anchors so that our discussions do not become irrelevant to the topic.**
- 2. We agree to keep our discussion centered on the small group questions so that we stay on task and don't get sidetracked.**
- 3. We agree to avoid debating political parties, personality and terms like "liberal" and "conservative".**
- 4. We agree to avoid making disrespectful or degrading comments about politicians, no matter how much we might disagree with them or dislike them.**
- 5. We agree to disagree without being disagreeable and give others the right to their own views.**
- 6. We agree to avoid conspiracy theories that while they may be interesting are still only theories.**
- 7. We agree to support our beliefs and opinions with facts as often as possible.**
- 8. We agree that if someone has not read the material he or she may not participate in the group discussion so that everyone is on "the same page" so to speak.**
- 9. We agree that the goal of our group is to become personally anchored in the four historic Biblical anchors and to help restore our nation's anchors.**
- 10. When we violate these agreements we give permission to our group leader to remind us of what we have agreed to without becoming defensive.**

I also suggest that to prepare to lead a group all leaders read David Barton's book *Original Intent*. This will give leaders valuable additional information.