

WHY ARE CHRISTIANS LOSING AMERICA?

by David Kupelian

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(The tenor of this Baptist article is hard hitting. We felt its foundational message of such importance, our readers should hear its clarion call.)

“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” – Revelation 3:15-16 KJV

Most Americans call themselves Christians.

Twice they chose as their supreme leader Bill Clinton – a sexual predator and pathological liar who regarded the “religious right” as enemies and radical homosexuals as friends, and who by any meaningful and historical measure was a traitor.

After that, millions of Christians came within a hair’s breadth of electing Clinton’s partner in crime, Al Gore – another pathological liar, a radical environmentalist who reveres “Gaia” but believes the internal-combustion engine should be outlawed (according to his book, “Earth in the Balance”).

Christians have stood on the sidelines during the breathtaking transformation of their once-great Judeo-Christian culture into today’s neo-pagan, Sodom-and-Gomorrah-style freak show.

Christians have lost the 30-year war to protect the unborn. Even easy victories – like partial-birth abortion, which virtually everyone opposes – have eluded them.

Christians have lost the war for America’s schools – which have been scrubbed antiseptically clean of the Christian principles and traditions that once guided those institutions, and are now filled instead with every conceivable form of propaganda and perversion.

Christians have lost their former influence in politics, in the press, in entertainment, in literature – in virtually every major area of life.

And now, Christians are losing the war for their very own institutions – their churches. The clergy sex scandal is the tip of the iceberg. Both the Catholic Church and most of the major Protestant denominations are literally being ripped apart – from within – by double agents who pretend to be “faithful” but actually loathe Christianity’s historical precepts and values.

It’s a harsh indictment – but ..., the truth hurts.

In his recent book, “Abandonment Theology,” author John W. Chalfant describes the precipitous decline of Judeo-Christian influence in law, culture and public policy in America,

noting the 1947 Supreme Court decision that invented the modern “separation of church and state” and later decisions that outlawed Bible reading and prayer in the nation’s public schools. He writes:

“Once God was shown the door, America went into chaos. Scholastic Aptitude Test scores plummeted. Violent crime rocketed upward. The abortion mills did an unprecedented business as they devised ever-more-sadistic ways to kill children before and even during birth. Bill Clinton, elected president of the United States in 1992, aggressively advocated homosexuality, which God calls “abomination.” The Abandonment Clergy and their millions of undiscerning followers stood mute while America’s sudden loss of greatness became obvious even to the world.”

What’s this about an “Abandonment Clergy”? Chalfont explains:

“Abandonment Theology is a term devised by the author to describe a faith which deceptively pawns itself off as Christianity by operating in the name of Christ, but which produces fruits destructive to America’s God-given freedoms. It comprises what is left today of the militant, power-filled, full-dimensional Christian faith of America’s Founders after decades of erosion, watering down and trivializing of God’s action mandates by America’s Abandonment Clergy. It is a “feel good” theology that patronizes Jesus Christ and thereby gains legitimacy, while at the same time produces disobedience to the commands of God and desertion of Christian duty.

Chalfont describes how the “Abandonment Clergy” and their followers have responded to increasingly audacious attacks on Christian America during the past half-century:

“Incredibly, this was the ultimate hour for the Abandonment Clergy to see the light of truth. They faced blatant godlessness at every turn. They could have abandoned their own ways and made a comeback to the faith of the Founding Fathers. But what did they do?

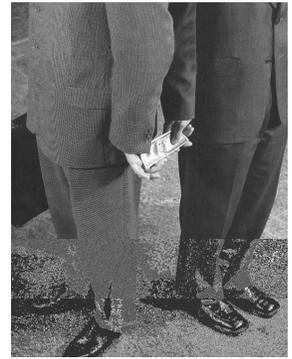
“They observed the horrible, deteriorating conditions in America, determined that she was headed into rubble just like pagan Rome and that we must be living in the prophesied “last days” and “end times.” Therefore, with the end and the “rapture of the church” so apparently near, why fight?

“After all, these clergymen said, “We’re in this world, not of it, so to heck with it,” and “Compared to eternity we’re here only for an instant.” They told us that all that really counts is that we ‘lead as many people as possible to salvation and let our corrupted country continue on its death course.’”

“Faulty Christian teaching,” says Chalfant, “is the only way to explain why so many well-meaning Christians are paralyzed into inaction: “The Abandonment Clergy and their followers have been teaching, preaching and saturating the media and their church members with the doctrine of surrender and political non-involvement. They are not teaching us to surrender to Christ through obedience to the commandments of God. Rather, they tell us that America is finished, that the collapse of our heritage and our freedoms has been predetermined within a definable near-future time frame and is therefore beyond our control.”

Chalfont takes direct aim at those obsessed with their own imminent “rapture.”

“The legitimate study of eschatology (the future in prophecy) has been converted into a doctrine of futility and surrender by the clergy who, in defiance of Christ’s injunction (see Mark 13:32, 33), insist upon assigning near-future dates to the “last days,” the “rapture of the church” and the “second coming” of Christ.... At the very least the clergy should understand that their “last days” teachings are nothing more than personal speculations. Christ taught that futility of attitude denies the faith and leads to enslavement. He promised great rewards for those who endure to the end in His cause of freedom.”



Chalfont is right. But the problem with contemporary Christianity goes way beyond mere political non-involvement. Do we dare take an honest look?

One reason for the multitude of attacks on Christianity is that evil always attacks good – because it is good – because good shines a bright and painful light on the works of darkness. Jesus Himself warned His followers to expect to be persecuted, just as He was persecuted. This is the reason, and a profound one, that Christians offer to explain why they, their values and their institutions are always under attack.

However, there is another, and far more decisive, reason for the spectacular decline of Christianity in our modern era: Christianity today is very different from what it once was.

America is full of people who have accepted the idea that Jesus Christ died for their sins, and that this belief guarantees them a place in Heaven.

Some are very sincere. They are truly mortified at their former sins, genuinely contrite before God and those they have offended, and they grieve over their continuing compulsions. They have awakened from their former life of gross sin, and now want nothing more than to do the will of their Creator – whatever that may be, wherever it may lead them, whatever they may suffer. They take seriously the commandments and principles given by their Savior, and make their life revolve around emulating Him, to the best of their ability. They are, quite literally, followers of Christ – that is, Christians.

On the other hand, there are countless “Christians” who believe they have a ticket to Heaven, and nothing else really matters very much to them. Their attitude can only be described as brazen. They live lives of shallowness and selfishness, of petty emotions and jealousies, of distraction and escape, of ego and pride, and sometimes of gross corruption and treachery – remember, Clinton is a churchgoing “Christian.” This version of Christianity, more prevalent than you can imagine, literally justifies and excuses dirty rotten scoundrels. Its adherents, while living it up under the smug delusion that they’re “saved,” drive other people crazy (and away from real Christianity) with their hypocrisy.

And then there are, of course, millions of “lukewarm” Christians in between these two groups. They go to church and sing songs and sometimes read the Bible, and maybe “try to be a good

Christian” – but they’re basically clueless. Their marriage is on the rocks and their children are wearing tongue studs. They believe in society’s atheistic “experts” and they’re addicted to Internet porn.

Some Christians are actually worse off after being “saved” than before. At least before they were “saved,” they had a natural respect for, or fear of, ultimate justice – an inborn sense that somehow we all reap what we sow. After being “saved,” that’s gone for the insincere “Christian.” For him or her, belief in Jesus amounts to a “get-out-of-Hell-free” card, a sort of spiritual “diplomatic immunity.” It’s like the profligate teenage son of an important Arab diplomat who knows he won’t be prosecuted under U.S. law while living here, so he drives recklessly, molests women and generally lives it up with impunity. And because the natural and necessary fear of consequences has been unwisely removed from his life, he falls that much more easily to the temptations of his lower nature.



What does God require of us?

For millions of people, Christianity has become a bumper-sticker religion. Simply by saying, one time, a single phrase – “I accept Jesus Christ as my savior and repent of my sins” – you are guaranteed salvation and eternal life in heaven, no matter how insincere or selfish or shallow your motives for doing so.

Is this the kind of salvation Jesus referred to when He said, “But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” (Matthew 24:13 KJV) Endure to the end? What’s with that? I thought this salvation thing was all settled by that altar call back in ’89.

Is this what He meant when He said, “If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.” (John 15:10) Many Christians don’t bother to pay any attention at all to God’s commandments. Hey, what ... difference does it make? I’m already saved!

Is this what Paul referred to when he said, “I die daily”? (1 Cor. 15:31) The apostle’s poignant and intensely meaningful reference to the duty of man to give up the life of pride in all its forms, to die to the “carnal mind” – considered central to Christians of past eras – is all but absent from most of today’s churches.

Christianity – the deepest, most meaningful and awe-inspiring religion ever, the magnificent driving force behind Western Civilization, and the transcendent hope of mankind’s future – has been dumbed down by these types into a comic-book religion. Turn on your radio and listen to some of the pitches: “Do you want to go to Hell – forever? Well, think about this: What if it really is true that Jesus is the Son of God, and that He is the only way to eternal life in Heaven? Do you want to miss out on eternal life? Then why not say yes to Jesus right now, just to make sure? You’ll like it – it’s a natural high.”

Such altar calls are little more than an insurance pitch. “Hey, buy a little extra insurance, then you can go on with your selfish life and be guaranteed a place in Heaven no matter what.”

Just repeat the salvation “formula” – like an Eastern mantra – and you’re saved. Period.

For this type of Christian, there’s no need to do good works, because they’re saved by grace, not works. No need to obey God’s commands, because they’re already saved, so why bother? They don’t need to try to help make it a better world, because they’re gonna be “raptured” soon and the rest of the [rascals] ... who are left behind can sort out the mess.

Is it any wonder the West is dying?

What’s missing in all of this, of course, is a love of truth.

“This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me,” said Jesus. (Matthew 15:8 KJV)

Truth predates the incarnation of Christ, it predates the Bible. It’s the substance of our bond with God. If you have a love of truth, you’re just not ever really satisfied with anything else, and you want to know the truth about everything – especially about yourself. If you’re wrong about something, you want to know it. If you’ve been living a lie, you’re willing to see it – no matter what the cost.

If you don’t have a little bit of this quality, you don’t have squat – even if you call yourself a Christian.

To a truth-seeking soul, the story of Christ – not as told by a plastic minister, but as told by someone, anyone, who’s real – has an internal reverberation of truth in the listener’s soul. It has the quality of a wonderful old story you heard long ago, in your childhood, but had forgotten.

At the core of this life-changing religion is the individual believer’s love and appreciation and acceptance and embrace of Christ’s sacrifice – the ultimate demonstration of God’s love for His wayward children.

But the problem with the way Christianity is “taught” today is that it doesn’t require a love of truth. It doesn’t require honest introspection, or courage, or self-denial, or patience. The only ingredient it needs is a guilty person who’s sick of feeling guilty, who wants relief, wants to feel better about himself and doesn’t want to go to Hell. But even the most insincere person wants to feel better about himself, wants relief from guilt, and fears death and what may lie beyond.

So, it’s this compartmentalization and trivialization of Christianity – into a mantra of belief – but separated from works, from obedience to God’s laws, and even more fundamentally, separated from basic honesty, integrity, love of truth and true repentance, that has ushered in a generation of shallow and ineffectual Christians.

Did you ever wonder why American founders like Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin completely rejected institutional Christianity – what some call “Churchianity”? Maybe even back then too many of the churches were just too pale a reflection of Christ’s true message for them to stomach.

The Christian Church in America needs a revival. But it doesn't necessarily need ever-bigger tents with tens of thousands of people swaying back and forth, singing songs, giving speeches and getting pumped up – and then going home and watching television.



America's real revival will happen when those same people go home, go to their room, close the door, take a deep breath – and take a good, long, hard look at themselves in the mirror. And then, quietly and humbly and fervently, they ask the living God for help, for insight, for direction – for salvation.

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Reference:

World Net Daily – August 9, 2002: "Abandonment Theology" by John W. Chalfant [available at WorldNetDaily's online store, ShopNetDaily.]

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