

Apologetics

Christianity In America

(II Ch 7:14-22)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Evening
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of lessons on "Apologetics"
 - a. Jesus A Historical Figure
 - b. Dinosaurs & Human Side By Side
 - c. Evidence For A God
3. America Today
 - a. Our nation has fallen under dire times spiritually.
 - i. We have become a nation of...
 1. Politically correct instead of spiritually straight forward.
 2. Unquestioned acceptance no matter what the offence.
 3. Striving to live in godlessness no matter what the consequence.
 - ii. We were not always this way.
 - b. Solomon once said "That which has been is what will be, That which is done is what will be done, And there is nothing new under the sun" (**Ec 1:9**).
 - i. This should bring comfort to all Christians as it lets us know that we are not going through something that has not been gone through before and thus it is something we can learn from biblically.
4. How to change America back...
 - a. First we must see how far we have come before we can see where we must go back to.

I. Separation Of Church & State Misused & Abused

- A. The origin of the statement
 1. In circa 1801 the Danbury Baptist Association wrote a letter to President Thomas Jefferson.
 - i. They were concerned "over their lack of state constitutional protection of religious liberty and against a government establishment of religion." (<http://tinyurl.com/6h2996w>)
 - ii. "Our Sentiments are uniformly on the side of Religious Liberty — That Religion is at all times and places a matter between God and individuals — That no man ought to suffer in name, person, or effects on account of his religious Opinions - That the legitimate Power of civil government extends no further than to punish the man who works *ill to his neighbor*:" (<http://tinyurl.com/2f9fk2d>)
 - a. As one can see they were worried about the religions in the majority would make a state religion at the expense of the religious minorities.

Apologetics

2. On January 1st 1802 Thomas Jefferson responded to that letter.
 - i. "I contemplate 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 & State." (<http://tinyurl.com/8uox6>)
 - a. Notice Jefferson does not say that religion should be removed from government and all associated with government but that government should not make a state religion or prevent others from practicing religion.
 3. In 1781, Jefferson said right after the ratification of the Massachusetts constitution, " 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 the Gift of 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; that His justice cannot sleep forever." (<http://tinyurl.com/67u6af7>)
 - i. Jefferson never intended for government & religion to be separate in every area, only that they be separate from organizing a religion or hindering others from following their preferred religion.
- B. How the statement as been misused & thus led to religious abuse
1. Over and over you hear people say that the government should not or rather cannot be attached to religion in any form and this statement is raised.
 - i. "In other words, they equate the phrase "separation of church and State" with absolute refusal by the government not only to engage in any religious activity, but also to passively allow any religious activity in the public sphere." (<http://tinyurl.com/6h2996w>)
 2. This has lead to the "ten commandments" statue to be removed from the Alabama's state judicial building." (<http://tinyurl.com/3b2gwzv>)
 - i. Or the phrase "under God" to be attacked from the Pledge Of Allegiance. (<http://tinyurl.com/y68q34>)
 - ii. Or the cross being removed from veteran memorials. (<http://tinyurl.com/3s4757r>)
- C. Many use the "Establishment Clause" in the First Amendment
1. They use it as a proof text for "separation of church & state."
 2. It is said that this was the intent of James Madison the father of the First Amendment.
- D. Did Madison mean want a separation of church & state as it is used today?
1. Madison's original draft had this, "The civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall any **national religion** be established, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner, or on any pretext, infringed" (<http://tinyurl.com/6h2996w>)
 - i. The now know version of the first amendment was revised and discussed in 1789.

Apologetics

- ii. On Aug 15, 1789 New York Representative Peter Sylvester "expressed his dislike for the revised version, because it might have a tendency "to abolish religion altogether"." (Ibid)
 - iii. In response to the concerns Madison said, "he apprehended the meaning of the words to be, that Congress should not establish a religion, and enforce the legal observation of it by law, nor compel men to worship God in any manner contrary to their conscience, or that one sect might obtain a pre-eminence, or two combined together, and establish a religion to which they would compel others to conform." (Ibid) also see (<http://tinyurl.com/3pq6dgo>) (<http://tinyurl.com/2akzgj>)
 - a. Even Chief Justice Rehnquist stated concerning the Establishment Clause "It seems indisputable from these glimpses of Madison's thinking, as reflected by actions on the floor of the House in 1789, that he saw the Amendment as designed to prohibit the establishment of a national religion, and perhaps to prevent discrimination among sects. He did not see it as requiring neutrality on the part of government between religion and irreligion. Thus the Court's opinion in Everson -- while correct in bracketing Madison and Jefferson together in their exertions in their home State leading to the enactment of the Virginia Statute of Religious Liberty -- is totally incorrect in suggesting that Madison carried these views onto the floor of the United States House of Representatives when he proposed the language which would ultimately become the Bill of Rights." (<http://tinyurl.com/3k2r2wr>)
2. Madison had this to say concerning religion, specifically Christianity, and the government ie its officials.
- i. "I have sometimes thought there could not be a stronger testimony in favor of religion or against temporal enjoyments, even the most rational and manly, than for men who occupy the most honorable and gainful departments and [who] are rising in reputation and wealth, publicly to declare their unsatisfactoriness by becoming fervent advocates in the cause of Christ; and I wish you may give in your evidence in this way." (<http://tinyurl.com/6box97o>)
 - a. Letter to his friend William Bradford. (<http://tinyurl.com/3ktlbk9>)
 - ii. "In these my confidence will under every difficulty be best placed, next to that which we have all been encouraged to feel in the guardianship and guidance of that Almighty Being whose power regulates the destiny of nations, whose blessings have been so conspicuously dispensed to this rising Republic, and to whom we are bound to address our devout gratitude for the past, as well as our fervent supplications and best hopes for the future."
(<http://tinyurl.com/4489k5v>)
 - a. Madison's inaugural speech.

[Neither Jefferson or Madison believed religion, ie Christianity, should be kept out of government.]

Apologetics

II. America Is Headed Down A Too Familiar Path

- A. Things that have contributed to the destruction of nations in the past
1. Homosexuality
 - i. Sodom & Gomorra were found needing of destruction in part because of their rampant homosexuality.
 - a. **Jd 7** "as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to **sexual immorality** and **gone after strange flesh**, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."¹
(emphasis mine)
 - b. **Ro 1:26-28** "For this reason God gave them up to **vile passions**. For even their **women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature**. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the **natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful**, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting"
 2. Murder of children
 - i. God children, Israel, were destroyed in part due to their killing of children.
 - a. God sees an unborn baby and a born baby as the exact same. There is no difference to him. (**Lk 1:41; 2:12**) (see the Greek)
 - b. **Je 19:4-7** "Because they have forsaken Me and made this an alien place, because they have burned incense in it to other gods whom neither they, their fathers, nor the kings of Judah have known, and have filled this place with the blood of the innocents 5 (they have also built the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command or speak, nor did it come into My mind), 6 therefore behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "that this place shall no more be called Tophet or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter. 7 And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place, and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies and by the hands of those who seek their lives; their corpses I will give as meat for the birds of the heaven and for the beasts of the earth."
 - ii. An ABC News/ Washington Post poll conducted in June of 2008 found that 53% of Americans thought abortion should be legal.
 - iii. A Gallop poll in May of 2008 found that 82% thought it should be legal.
 - a. Only 17% thought it should be illegal. (<http://tinyurl.com/69v9ojf>)

¹ All scriptures are from the NKJV unless otherwise noted.

Apologetics

3. Treating God's people poorly
 - i. God will not tolerate His people be treated poorly by nations. See what happened to Assyria.
 - a. **Na 2:12-13** "The lion tore in pieces enough for his cubs, Killed for his lionesses, Filled his caves with prey, And his dens with flesh. 13 "Behold, I am against you," says the LORD of hosts, "I will burn your chariots in smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions; I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messengers shall be heard no more.""
 - iii. Or to Rome...
 - a. **Rv 6:10, 15-17** "And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth...And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, 16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?""
- B. Our country was not founded with the idea of protecting these immoral acts
 1. Homosexuality
 - i. It was illegal in England before we had our independence.
 - a. Sir William Blackstone wrote "Commentaries on the Laws of England" from 1765-1769.
 1. These books were the most highly regarded legal source by our American Founders.
 - b. "WHAT has been here observed..., which ought to be the more clear in proportion **as the crime is the more detestable**, may be applied to another offence, of **a still deeper malignity; the infamous crime against nature**, committed either with man or beast.... But it is **an offence of so dark a nature**...that the accusation should be clearly made out....I WILL not act so disagreeable part, to my readers as well as myself, as to dwell any longer upon a subject, **the very mention of which is a disgrace to human nature**. It will be more eligible to imitate in this respect the delicacy of our English law, which treats it, in its very indictments, as a crime not fit to be named..."
(<http://tinyurl.com/69v9ojf>)
 - ii. It was illegal in America in all 50 states at one time. (Ibid)
 - a. It was punishable by death in some states which include New York, Vermont, Connecticut, and South Carolina. (Ibid)
 - iii. Even George Washington called it an abhorrence and detestation when he court-marshaled a man for being homosexual.
(<http://tinyurl.com/3uek8x6>)

Apologetics

2. Murder of children
 - i. There is no way our founders could have imagined that America would make it legal to kill an unborn baby.
 - ii. Though statistics were not conducted back then we do see a trend that occurred in the courts.
 - a. Maryland was the first known to convict for "intention to abort" in 1652. (<http://tinyurl.com/5vg3j43>)
 - b. Maryland again in 1656 arrested a woman for murder after she had an abortion but the case was thrown out after she married the only witness and he refused to testify. (Ibid)
 - c. In Virginia there was a law passed in 1710 that made it illegal to conceal a pregnancy and then be found with a dead baby. (Ibid)
 - d. In Delaware in 1719 it became illegal for anyone to conceal one that had an abortion or committed infanticide. They would be prosecuted as an accessory to murder. (Ibid)
3. The treating of God's children poorly.
 - i. Our forefathers only saw Christianity as the religion for America.
 - a. While Frances was going through its immoral and atheistic revolution many American forefathers commented on what was going on there.
 1. John Jay Chief Justice of the Supreme Court spoke concerning his time in France, "During my residence there, I do not recollect to have had more than two conversations with atheists about their tenets. The first was this: I was at a large party, of which were several of that description. They spoke freely and contemptuously of religion. I took no part in the conversation. In the course of it, one of them asked me if I believed in Christ? **I answered that I did, and that I thanked God that I did....** Some time afterward, one of my family being dangerously ill, I was advised to send for an English physician who had resided many years at Paris.... But, it was added, he is an atheist.... [D]uring one of his visits, [he] very abruptly remarked that there was no God and he hoped the time would come when there would be no religion in the world. I very concisely remarked that **if there was no God there could be no moral obligations, and I did not see how society could subsist without them...**" (<http://tinyurl.com/3n8lkx6>)

Apologetics

- b. Patrick Henry wrote thus, "But, as to France, I have no doubt in saying, that to her it will be calamitous. Her conduct has made it the interest of the great family of mankind to wish the downfall of her present government; because its existence is incompatible with that of all others within its reach. And, whilst I see the dangers that threaten ours from her intrigues and her arms, I am not so much alarmed as at **the apprehension of her destroying the great pillars of all government and of social life; I mean virtue, morality, and religion. This is the armor, my friend, and this alone, that renders us invincible. These are the tactics we should study. If we lose these, we are conquered, fallen indeed.**" (Ibid)
- c. John Adams said on Oct. 11, 1798, "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 other." (Ibid)
- ii. Christianity has become the "it thing" to be against in America.
 - a. Rosie O'Donnell once said, "Radical Christianity is just as threatening as radical Islam..." (<http://tinyurl.com/3q4k28z>)
 - b. In a Newsweek article titled "The End of Christian America" Meacham wrote, "There it was, an old term with new urgency: post-Christian. This is not to say that the Christian God is dead, but that he is less of a force in American politics and culture than at any other time in recent memory. To the surprise of liberals who fear the advent of an evangelical theocracy and to the dismay of religious conservatives who long to see their faith more fully expressed in public life, Christians are now making up a declining percentage of the American population." (<http://tinyurl.com/3oazmnd>)
- iii. It has caused a drop in "Christendom" since 1990.
 - a. Even Oklahoma has had a 6% drop since 1990 with Texas of all places leading the way with a 20% decline. (<http://tinyurl.com/avmm5o>)

III. What Can We Do To Curve The Tide Of Immorality In America?

- A. First make sure we continually have a self-examination of our life
 - 1. We need to be completely devoted to our God; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit.
 - i. **Lk 10:27** "So he answered and said, "‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’""
 - ii. **Mt 6:33** "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness..."

Apologetics

- B. Secondly we must make sure we are continually training our families to serve God
 - 1. The family is under attack from every angle, however God has given us the blue print to a successful family that will help build the next generation to be better.
 - i. **Dt 6:6-7** "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."
- C. Thirdly we must pray
 - 1. Only fervent faithful prayer will have a reach beyond each of us individually.
 - i. **Ja 5:16** "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." (ESV)
- D. Fourthly we must be active
 - 1. Noah Webster, "[L]et it be impressed on your mind that God commands you to choose for rulers just men who will rule in the fear of God...The preservation of a republican government depends on the faithful discharge of this duty; if the citizens neglect their duty and place unprincipled men in office, the government will soon be corrupted.... If a republican government fails to secure public prosperity and happiness, it must be because the citizens neglect the Divine commands and elect bad men to make and administer the laws." (<http://tinyurl.com/3n8lkx6>)

CONCLUSION

- 1. James A. Garfield, member of the church of Christ & 20th President of the USA, said this, "Now, more than ever before, the people are responsible for the character of their Congress. If that body be ignorant, reckless, and corrupt, it is because the people tolerate ignorance, recklessness, and corruption. If it be intelligent, brave, and pure, it is because the people demand these high qualities to represent them in the national legislature.... If the next centennial does not find us a great nation...it will be because those who represent the enterprise, the culture, and the morality of the nation do not aid in controlling the political forces." (<http://tinyurl.com/3n8lkx6>)
 - a. We are a product of our making.
- 2. The question we must ask ourselves is thus...are we doing everything we can to be an influence for Christ which will have a positive influence on our country?
- 3. Invitation
 - a. God's Plan of Salvation
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Believe Jesus Is The Christ **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**