

GNITN

#340

Vanishing Christianity: America's Descent into Darkness

The Faith Of Our Fathers

Whether the phrase “Faith of our Fathers” refers to the various versions of a hymn or to the beliefs of the founding fathers of America, it points to highlighting the faith of those who have gone before us and it implies the need to carry it on and even pass it on to the next generation. And if you believe that America was founded on the Bible and those who commented on it, well you would be part of a group of people who sadly, are declining here. Regardless of our founders hopes for the country there are warning signs that not just the faith of the founding fathers is waning, but Christianity itself. Is this just a false alarm? No, it’s not. In an [article](#) by author David Fiorazo we read this:

Americans are rejecting God and following their hearts to destruction and emptiness.

A sobering conclusion to a brand-new study is that it appears America “is on the precipice of Christian invisibility.” The new study from the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University reveals the five core beliefs rejected by 8- to-12-year-olds are: the Bible, absolute truth, means to salvation, the purpose of life, and success.

If true, a generation of Americans are going to end up living out a worldview that will create a country in which situational ethics will rule the day.

Nothing To Pass On

In the same article Fiorazo points to a the poll and tells us this to support the conclusion of a disappearing Christian influence in America:

Director of Research, Dr. George Barna, states “children are following in the unfortunate spiritual footsteps of the generations that have preceded them,” and this trajectory leads to the total abandonment of Biblical Christianity in record numbers.

In a discussion about a strong Biblical faith in God and His Word, a recent guest on Worldview Matters profoundly stated you cannot give away what you do not possess. Research continues to show a decreasing percentage of Americans embracing the Biblical worldview, including only 2 percent of parents of young children today.

A Biblical worldview is indeed a precious commodity these days. And we know that nature abhors a vacuum and in this case the moral void created by not having a Biblical worldview promoted will be filled, but by what? Fiorazo tells us:

What then, are they teaching and modeling for their children? Secularism, moral relativism, atheism, or religious pluralism.

The Constitution Matters

Going back to our founding fathers, without believing in God the very rights mentioned in the Declaration of Independence are moot:

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.

The word “endowed” is important. It can mean to have something you were born with and in this context it clearly means the rights are given to us by God at birth and in citing them, they are in effect telling Great Britain that curtailing them is an affront to the God who bestowed them on the fledgling colonies. So, taking God out the equation those in power can just come in and say they come from them which is the danger we’re facing. Going back to Fiorazo’s article we are asked what will happen to the freedoms mentioned in the Declaration of Independence and he references another author in doing so:

Sadly, since God has basically been removed from our culture and government, how can the nation remain truly free and maintain individual rights?

Author and Washington Times editor, Cheryl Chumley commented on this new research due to the fact our rights and liberties come from God, and government serves only to protect those individual freedoms and rights. She concludes from this study that by removing God, America will instead get ...” government granted; government disbursed; government redistributed — government of Marxism and communism.”

And that’s exactly where we are headed, and in some people’s minds it’s our current state of affairs.

How Bad Are Things?

Chumley digs a little deeper in the research in her original [article](#) and tells us this:

From this study: Only 60 percent of those between the ages of 8 and 12 years old have read even a part of the Bible. Only 21 percent of this preteen grouping look at the Bible as the arbiter of determining right from wrong. Only 21 percent believe in the concept of an absolute moral truth — such as the Bible teaches. Only 27 percent of the preteens believe their number one purpose in life is “knowing, loving and serving God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength,” the survey stated. Most think their top priority in life is to make “the world a better place,” or seek and find “their own happiness” — two pursuits that play into the soft-and-fuzzy form of religion that’s taken over much of the church community; the kind the preaches love is love and so long as it feels good and isn’t hurting anyone, well then, love is love so just do it. What of the cross? That’s the point. These types of beliefs utterly dismiss the sacrificial act of Jesus on the cross — where he died to save all of humanity from their sins so all may have everlasting life — and instead place the focus on self.

She declares this as “Dangerous times. Dangerous beliefs.” And then there is this excerpt: “Only one out of six [preteens, 17 percent] consider the most accurate definition of life success to be consistent obedience to God,” the study stated. That’s because they’re falling into the trap their parents fell into and regarding success in terms of money, fame, personal happiness, economic freedom and the like.

America, wake up and smell the atheism.

She then notes this:

A country filled with citizens who take their marching orders from their own hearts and minds, from their own desires and wills, rather than from a sovereign, never-changing authority — God — is a country whose citizens are destined to fall into moral decay. So goes the culture; so goes the politics. So goes the family; so goes society.

The numbers bode darkly.

Dark indeed.

Affecting Mental Health

Another writer, Sarah Holliday reviewed the same report as both Fiorazo and Chumley and saw a correlation between the absence of a Biblical worldview and the declining mental health of teens and pre-teens. In Holliday's [article](#) she lays out the state of affairs for children and teens this way:

A recent study conducted by Common Sense Media (CMS) found that America has a teen mental health crisis. Yet, with the way social media has plagued the younger generations, is anyone really surprised by this? But it goes beyond technology, as many factors contribute to the decay of younger generations and their mental health.

She then states this:

And at a time in history where the world is warring over the topic of identity, how are developing youth supposed to know what to believe about anything? Marlo Slayback, national director of Student Programs at the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, shared with The College Fix that over time, "the culture surrounding Gen Z [has changed]. It's a recipe for despair, hopelessness, nihilism, disaffection." She described it as a "decaying culture" that causes young people to "feel alienated and lost at sea."

Also in her [article](#), she turns to the research and adds her take on it:

While many societal factors could be considered, the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University conducted a survey that found children between eight and 12-years-old, preteens, are increasingly denying biblical truths. Is this a coincidence amid the growing mental health crisis? I don't think so.

Barna explained, "Children are intellectual and spiritual sponges in their preteen years. They are desperately trying to make sense of the world, their identity, their purpose, and how to live a meaningful and satisfying life." As such, it's obvious how toxic social media and other issues have caused mental health problems among this group. But it's also worth emphasizing the spiritual aspect.

Holliday points to another part of the research and lays part of the blame on social media, but then quotes this nugget of truth:

In addition to the preteens, the survey found similar results in children's pastors and parents of young children, who also had low statistics. George Barna, the director of Arizona Christian University's Cultural Research Center and Family Research Council senior research fellow, said these results only reflect the lack of biblical worldview present in the lives of many today. He added, "[W]e are on the precipice of Christian invisibility in this nation unless we get serious about this crisis and invest heavily in fixing what's broken."

When I was growing up, life wasn't as crazy as it is now, but I still had to face the realities of its brokenness. And it was my biblical worldview that allowed me to persevere through any hardships growing up. Young people now are growing up in a society that believes men can become women and vice versa. They are being raised to believe that marriage has nothing to do with God, and that sex (specifically outside of marriage) has no consequences. Truth is subjective, and children can carve out their own reality as they enter adulthood. This is detrimental for physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

Mob Rule In Our Future

According to Chumley a descent into being ruled by mobs is what we have to look forward to as seen further in her [article](#) about the same research:

Without a biblical worldview, individuals live as they please; they fail to recognize they were born into sin — or to recognize their sins at all — and as such, become subject to the ever-changing human definitions of right and wrong, good and bad, moral and immoral. Absent concerns of any after-life accountability, mob rule becomes the governing force. Those with the loudest voice, biggest platforms, most powerful or powerfully persuasive means of imposing will are the dictators of law and order. “Lord of the Flies,” anyone?

And she is right. For anyone who needs the context of that last statement, one only needs to have read the book by William Golding, *Lord of the Flies* which tells the fictional story of a group of children left to govern themselves and how fractured they become with no morality other than what they make up. God is nowhere to be found in the published book. Ironically, the original manuscript contained an adult figure thought to represent God but was taken out in editing.

Chumley then adds these prescient statements:

Yes. America needs God.

Americans need biblical worldviews to stay godly, so that society, government, politics, culture and the rest stay godly, as well.

And she is spot on. She references the research and elaborated on it this way:

“Because of the strong correlation between biblical worldview and genuine Christian discipleship,” Barna said, “we are on the precipice of Christian invisibility in this nation unless we get serious about this crisis and invest heavily in fixing what’s broken.”

And by invest, it’s meant — go to church. Get your children to church. Read the Bible. Apply biblical teachings to modern life.

America’s fate depends wholly on whether or not parents start teaching their children in the biblical ways to go.

That sounds an awful lot like a certain Bible verse, **Proverbs 22:6**:

Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it. (NASB)

Reading it in other versions adds a little depth to it:

Teach a child to choose the right path, and when he is older, he will remain upon it. (TLB)

Point your kids in the right direction - when they’re old they won’t be lost. (MSG)

Is There Hope?

Of course there is, but it comes from bringing back what was lost. Fiorazo gives us the way:

Again, we cannot pass on what we (today’s young parents) do not possess. Paul wrote to Timothy providing a great example of raising up children in the ways of the Lord: “For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well.” (2 Timothy 1:5)

Moms and dads, it is your responsibility to model Christ and teach the truth to your kids.

Christians, true believers in Jesus Christ and His truth must be aware of increasing ministry opportunities at a time when more people are seeking answers, struggling to find hope, and may be open to the good news of the gospel.

Amen to that.