

The Reformed Analysis

"For the Commandment is a lamp; and the Law is light; and reproofs and instruction are a way of life."
Proverbs 6:23

An Analysis Newsletter for the Serious Christian Educator
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Knowledge vs Opinion

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. (1 John 2:3 AV)

But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. (1 John 2:5 AV)

There is a grave distinction between *knowledge* and *opinion*. Mere opinion, based upon less than all the facts, can lead to great error in judgment. It is not enough to simply "think" that a certain idea or practice is beneficial, or detrimental, one must be sure. This kind of certainty must be based upon truth alone.

While everyone maintains a *personal opinion* about certain issues, not everyone maintains a *proper judgment* concerning those issues. Personal, as well as public judgment, *must* be based upon true and factual evidence. Contemporary, Harvard University scholar, Daniel Yankelovich, declares that the quality of public opinion must be based upon the extent in which "the public has faced up to the consequences of its convictions."

Public opinion concerning state-funded education is recently beginning to face up to the consequences of their convictions. This is not because of some glorious realization that the system of state-controlled, paganized education doesn't work, but rather because they are being forced to review the failure through hard statistical data. While it may have seemed to be a splendid idea at the start, free, state controlled education has shown itself to be the "Leviathan" of the American culture.

According to Yankelovich, it is not until the public embraces the effects of their opinion, that they can be truly called proper citizens. A well informed citizen, accustomed in drawing proper judgment and skilled in making responsible decisions, is the only true citizen.

Founding Father John Witherspoon, member of Congress, signer of the Declaration of Independence, and Princeton University president, stated it this way: "He is the best friend of American Liberty who is most sincere and active in promoting true and undefiled religion and who sets himself with the greatest firmness to bear down profanity and immorality of every

kind. Whoever is an avowed enemy of God, I scruple not [do not hesitate] to call him an enemy to his country."

Witherspoon uses a direct quote from the Book of James (James 1:27) to identify the Christian faith as the "True and undefiled Religion. As far as the founders of America were concerned, any student instructed apart from the Holy scriptures was doomed to become an "educated criminal."

RESPONSIBILITY FOR FAILURE

In order to be fair, we must conclude that the modern education system, in and of itself, is not entirely responsible for its failure. The blame falls upon many. However, if we had to focus upon the single most important factor, or catalyst, responsible for the contamination of our youth and the degradation of our culture, we must conclude it to be the depravity of mass public opinion. This "group think" mentality often is the fuse of the humanistic powder keg. Like lambs to the slaughter, the public has been led to believe a myriad of lies.

By the introduction of pagan and humanistic philosophies, the original intent of the God-honoring American system was infiltrated. Philosophies such as Hegal, Voltaire, Marx, and Nietzsche are among those who have polluted the purity of Christian America.

Hegal: Hegal was a socialist who argued to legitimize all power, control and deliverance in the hands of the state. In Hegal's assertion that the state is God walking upon the earth, he set the stage for the fundamental posture of many of today's American people and the mindset of the America modern government. Such a view places the state as the all-seeing, all-knowing, and all-providing god. This view catapults the state to the position of Messiah.

Voltaire: Voltaire, (Francios Marie Arouet) an immoral Deist, who believed that God was removed and inactive in the affairs of life, and that men must fend for themselves, is widely believed today by even some practicing Christians. Voltaire brought about the conflict between religion and philosophy

and paved the way for the bloody French Revolution. His famous slogan, "Crush the infamous [evil thing]", was directed at Christianity and the organized church. In his elder years he headed a campaign to remove blasphemy and homosexuality as crimes.

Marx: The teachings of Karl Marx, who was a student of Hegel, are also widely entrenched in our society, especially in our government. His idea of a free and state controlled education policy was one of the 10 prerequisites of a Communistic existence.

Nietzsche: Friedrich Nietzsche had a passionate contempt for God and is known today as a most powerful world influence. His teaching was the basis for Nazism. Nietzsche's idea of the world was in direct opposition to the Scriptures. As a consequence of his concept of *purposeless* he believed that the world was incomprehensible. As the for-runner of existentialism, he also held that life was meaningless and disorderly. It is no wonder why so many of America's youth battle with the question of meaning and purpose. It is also no wonder that a high percentage of teenage suicide rate is perpetuated by such a concept of life.

By embracing these and other pagan and anti-Christian ideas, the public has lost its Biblical moorings. This influence has infiltrated so much of American culture that public judgment has been reduced to "destructive folly." This development has certainly become an important factor in the establishment and the perpetuation of the fall of American culture.

PROPERLY DIRECTED PRINCIPLES

Abraham Baldwin (1752-1807) was a signer of the Constitution of the United States, a member of Congress, U.S. Senator, statesman, lawyer and educator. He wrote:

"When the minds of the people in general are viciously disposed and unprincipled, and their conduct disorderly, a free government will be attended with greater confusions and evils more horrid than the wild, uncultivated state of nature.

It can only be happy when the public principles and opinions are properly directed, and their manners regulated. This is an influence beyond the reach of laws and punishments, and can be claimed only 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..."

THE CHURCH AND PUBLIC JUDGMENT

By now it should be obvious that this nation was established upon the Law of the Scriptures, and by a people committed to the service of the Almighty. To deny such a fact only proves that the modern education system of the United States has been successful in obscuring the

truth almost to the point of its eradication.

Another important reason behind this shift in public opinion rests at the foot of the Christian Church. Whenever the Church strays from its position of positive influence upon the people, the society suffers. Since the religious values of a nation both reflect and determine the course and well-being of the culture, we must conclude from the cultural evidence that there has been spiraling change downward. *As the church goes, so goes the nation.*

Too often, modern pastors are mis-focused toward worldly matters, rather than upon practical spiritual matters. Although their language is couched in Biblical terms, the erroneous conclusions and applications are always the same.

The gospel preached has become a marketing approach of one thing or another. Some clergymen seek to develop self-awareness rather than an awareness of God's will. For others, preaching becomes a tool that calls the Christian to a life of religious isolationism. This causes the church to hide itself under a bushel, denying its Divine commission to be as a *"City upon a hill"*, and a *"light upon a candlestick"*. Engaging the culture with Biblical values **is** the will of God.

Material security is another popular topic which has blinded the eyes of those who should be wise and understanding. Generational continuance is seldom heard from the pulpits because the church has fallen prey to the philosophy of "immediate satisfaction".

In a society of overwhelming debt and oppressive taxation, parents can barely supply daily needs, let alone an inheritance for the future prosperity of the Kingdom's work. This cultural confusion and the insurgence of paganism in our society is a direct result of the church's failure to follow the warnings of Scripture and the Founding Fathers.

In 1823, Daniel Webster put it this way:

"If religious books are not widely circulated among the masses in this country, I do not know what is going to become of us as a nation. If truth be not diffused, error will be; if God and His Word are not known and received, the devil and his works will gain the ascendancy; if the evangelical volume does not reach every hamlet, the pages of a corrupt and licentious literature will; if the power of the Gospel is not felt throughout the length and breadth of the land, anarchy and misrule, degradation and misery, corruption and darkness, will reign without mitigation or end."

SOCIAL ORDER

Concerning “public” education, the issue of “order” must be addressed. Education is perhaps the strongest link of any society. If education is flawed, then the society of that education system will also be flawed. This is an inescapable dynamic. Every society is held together by what is called, “Social Order”.

Education and social order are intimate yoke-fellows, and work together. Sometimes they work in harmony, while at other times they work antagonistically. Historically, whenever a society initiated a change, it was done through education. The principle is simple: **Control education, and you control society. If you would control society, then you must control education.** In other words, the character of the education system will determine the character of the social system.

THE FOUNDATION OF SOCIAL ORDER

The founders of the American social order based the entire plan upon the God of Order, i.e. the God of the Bible and the precepts of Christianity. Wherever the Christian faith was promoted, society benefited. This was the express purpose of the settlements in New England during the 1600’s.

COTTON MATHER 1662-1727

The esteemed Reverend Cotton Mather explains in great detail the reasons and hopes of the settlers of the Pilgrim and Puritan age. In his two volume work, “The Great Work Of Christ In America”, he wrote:

“It hath been deservedly esteemed one of the great and wonderful works of God in this last age, that the Lord stirred up the spirits of so many thousands of His servants, to leave the pleasant land of England, the land of their nativity, and to transport themselves, and families, over the ocean sea, into a desert land in America...on the account of pure and undefiled Religion, not knowing how they should have their daily bread, but trusting in God for that, in the way of seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness thereof... That within a few years a wilderness was subdued before them, and so many Colonies planted, Towns erected, and Churches settled, wherein the true and living God in Christ Jesus is worshipped...”

Mather’s concerns were many. Although the initial goal had been accomplished, reverend Mather knew that a long term effort must be promoted if prosperity and happiness were to exist.

His first desire was that a Godly social order would be established, which would create an atmosphere conducive to Christian living, social stability and economic prosperity. Once established he declared that it “*must be maintained throughout future generations*” by the reading of God’s Word, the application of God’s Word

and, most importantly, the establishment of an education system according to God’s Word.

Secondly, he called for a “*manifestation of the truth of things*” so that the events and purposes of the Colonies would not be misrepresented or omitted in the future.

“That the true original design of this plantation may not be lost or buried in oblivion, but known and remembered forever. [Psal.cxl.4: He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered.]”

The maxim that he built upon was that the *Truth serves a twofold purpose of attesting its own character and of exposing falsehoods.* In today’s system of education, this factual documentation of America’s origins are non-existent. It is as if Christianity had little or nothing to do with the birth of the nation. Nothing can be further from the truth!

The modern, standardized education system in the United States has ultimately falsified the true records of History, and used education as a means to re-organize public thought and opinion, so as to impede proper judgment. By perverting the truth, the society has dramatically changed over generations. John Whitehead observes that in reality we may conclude that we have undergone a silent “Second Revolutionary War”, where Truth has been taken hostage.

Mather continues his recommendations by issuing the following warnings.

1. *“That the names of such eminent persons as the Lord made use of, as instruments in His hand, for the beginning and carrying on of His work, may be embalmed, and preserved, **for the knowledge and imitation of posterity**, for the memory of the just is blessed.”*

This is an important statement. Mather knew that the biographies of Godly men were important for social order and prosperity. Men such as John Winthrop, Noah Webster, Fisher Ames, Benjamin Rush, John Adams, Thomas Shepherd, Dr. Jedediah Morse, John Dickinson, John Jay, J.P. Muhlenberg, Sir William Balckstone, Samuel Bradford, Patrick Henry, John Witherspoon, are but a few of those that formed this nation. While some of these names may be vaguely familiar to students, their vast achievements as *Christian* men are virtually unknown.

Today’s heroes are men and women of carnality and questionable integrity, to say the least. Our society’s deprivation has disintegrated into such a state as to elevate irreligious barbarians to the position of “Social Messiahs.” Pop-star harlots and entertainment professionals are adulated by both

parent and child, while the Godly are reproached and mocked. Sports figures are idolized and receive excessive wages for a profession that holds no lasting social or Godly value. Evil is now embraced as good, while good is shunned as evil.

2. Mather further declared that *“the generations to come in New England, may know the God of their fathers, and may serve Him with a perfect heart and willing mind; as especially the first generation did before them; and that they may set their hope in God, and not forget His works, but keep His commandments.”*

3. Finally, Mather hoped that *“This present history may stand as a **monument**, in relation to future times, of a fuller and better reformation of the Church of God, than it hath appeared in the world.”*

CONSTRUCTIVE REFORMATION

What Cotton Mather was calling for was that each individual maintain a proper God-centered judgment. Public opinion must be an opinion formulated by applying Biblical logic. It is only when public opinion is properly formatted by the Truth that it can be effectual and beneficially used as public judgment.

Mather was also calling the citizens of the New Republic to be both individually responsible, as well as socially responsible. Public judgment must replace mass opinion. Truth must establish belief, and not belief truth.

CONCLUSION

Modern culture refuses to take responsibility for its failure. Like Adam and Eve in the Garden, the casting of blame on to somewhere other than upon oneself is common, even humanly natural. However, it is only after the public comes to a complete realization that it has developed a destructive conclusion on pivotal issues, and it is largely responsible for societal failure, that clarity of judgment will prevail. Furthermore, as an initiator, the general public must *experience* their own their own defeat in order to accept that their original opinion was faulty. Only then will it be possible for them to objectively re-think their position. Proper judgment, based upon truth, gives way to corrective and constructive reformation.

Rowland Berthoff, in a study of order and disorder in American history, writes,

“The history of American society strongly suggests that if men subvert or abandon the values embodied in a well ordained institutional structure, and so dismantle the social foundations for cultural achievement and spiritual serenity, they proceed at their own grave peril.”

“It cannot be emphasized too strongly of too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religion, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ...” Patrick Henry 1765

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