

UNCERTAINTY KNOCKS ON FREEDOM'S DOOR

Introduction

After World War II this nation was broken. The war cost to the United States was 288 billion dollars (5–6 trillion in today's monetary value) and ~296,000 lives.¹ In other countries another 57 million individuals died!

- Following this time of grieving, Pulitzer Prize winning author W. H. Auden published a book (as a poem), *The Age of Anxiety*.²
- He portrayed that bleak moment in history that most prayed would never be repeated. But – that resolve to bring peace and restore what was lost was tragically followed by other wars (to restore peace). In spite of complex treaties and the United Nations, the world still flounders for solutions to “get along.”

Waves of uncertainty have recently broken on the shores of America. The mental health of its citizens has grown more “apprehensive.” The National Institute of Mental Health noted in 2017 that 18% of people are experiencing **deep anxiety** in an “ethos of relentless worry and [even] agitation.”³ Political turmoil has reached an all-time intensity, creating widespread insecurity.

In addition, a cultural divide is deepening within America and in several European countries. This is part of a growing social turmoil. Recent studies reveal that this is associated with an increasing rejection of religious values. That, in turn, is bringing uncertainty as many search for an elusive “purpose” – some “meaning” in life.⁴

The Divide (by Dennis Prager, a brilliant columnist and talk show host)

Judeo – Christian (diminishing)

People are not inherently good

Evil comes from human nature

Utopia on earth is impossible
(will only come in the hereafter)

God and the Bible instruct us how
to live properly

Promoted through free choice and appeal

Wants America to be great

Leftism (increasing)

People are basically good

Evil comes from capitalism, religion,
nationalism, corporations

Utopia is to be created
(no inequality, racism, sexes, greed;
and everything is free)

Feelings bring divine instruction

Promoted through coercion and force

Contempt for America⁵

¹ <https://www.whatitcosts.com/world-war-ii-cost-united-states-facts/>

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Age_of_Anxiety

³ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/18/magazine/americas-new-anxiety-disorder.html>

⁴ <http://www.dailywire.com/news/35023/prager-explaining-left-part-ii-dennis-prager>

⁵ <http://www.dennisprager.com/explaining-the-left-part-iii-leftism-as-secular-religion/>

Heretofore, religion had brought meaning to the vast majority of human beings. Without God, a higher purpose to honor relationships becomes meaningless and mechanistic. It fosters burgeoning selfishness, which ends in conflict.

- Alarming things are altering individual attitudes. Willful ignorance is being peddled in the media. Even the push to make “America First” and “America Great Again” has as its main foundation secular ideals and need for power. God remains only a “symbol” for goodness but not a guiding force. He is not a pivotal leader but helpful to “reference.”
- Are we witnessing what has been anticipated? “As the restraining power of the Holy Spirit shall be withdrawn, because of the impenitence and ingratitude of men, terrible things will be witnessed in the earth.”⁶

Will there ever be again “moral purpose” within society?

President Donald Trump sensed on August 27, 2018, a growing threat to the ideals of America and democracy, as he addressed one hundred Christian leaders in the White House. With urgency and concern, he noted:

- “This November 6 election is very much a referendum on not only me, it’s a referendum on your religion, it’s a referendum on free speech and the First Amendment.”
- America has moved into uncharted waters. The **security** of Christianity in this country may hinge on the vote this November.⁷ The President also said that if the progressive left prevails, violence will come to America.

For Now, God is “Not Needed”

There is a continuous drop in the percentage of Americans who claim to have a Christian affiliation. “Most denominations and congregations report declining membership and attendance... more and more congregations are closing their doors forever.”⁸ Adding to this is the observable dissatisfaction of the youngest generation to attend church. “Religious News Service” proposed several reasons:

- Prosperity and affluence distract people from regular church attendance and reduce a strong sense of need to be in church, gradually eroding not just church attendance but Christian identity.
- The fading of cultural Christianity means that fewer and fewer Americans feel any social or familial expectation to be in church or practice Christianity. “It was good enough for grandpa” just doesn’t cut it anymore.
- American Christianity is not producing many compelling leaders, and thus the average church is not especially inspiring or visionary. Many ministers “play it safe” with entertainment in order to keep their jobs or, simply, many are not that talented.
- The collapse of any **meaning** for a day of worship.

⁶ White; *The Review and Herald*, September 3, 1889.

⁷ <http://religiousliberty.tv/november-election-a-referendum-on-your-religion-trump-tells-evangelical-leaders.html>

⁸ <https://religionnews.com/2016/09/06/why-is-christianity-declining/>

- It is harder for parents to pass the faith onto their children in a wired world in which parental influence is in decline.
- No one really knows how to “share the Christian faith” any more in a way that connects with people, and many Christians have stopped trying.⁹

In Christ’s day, in face of irrefutable evidence that He was the Messiah and had divine power, resistance against His teaching and influence accelerated even among most Jewish leaders. They perceived Him as leading a “counter-culture” movement that threatened their leadership. So today, in face of stunning historical evidence that Judeo–Christian mores brought harmony, growth and virtue to society, a revisionist spirit minimizes and denies that advantage.

Anti-Christian Oppression

The left cannot win without deception, labeling or outright vengeance against Christianity. That is inherent within their ideology. They also excel in opposition politics.

Franklin Graham, head of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, strongly criticized the New York Times, (August 2018) for calling Vice President Mike Pence a “holy terror.”

- Graham called that “a slanderous, vile op-ed piece about the Vice President.... They were specifically attacking his faith, which really is an attack on all of us who believe in God and His Son, Jesus Christ...” “I am disappointed that the New York Times would stoop so low. I’ve never seen such hatred poured out against such a good man.”
- “Pence’s original and most damning sin is that he’s a Christian who actually believes what Christians [should] actually believe. Imagine that.”¹⁰

Because of the actual burgeoning of anti-Christian trends in America, James Dobson recently warned Christians to “vote or lose freedom.” “Defend what has been purchased with the blood of patriots.”¹¹

Kristina Arriaga, Vice Chair on The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, said: “The biggest danger to freedom is complacency.” (Suggesting that America now needs activism and the voting booth.)¹²

For the average citizen in the “free world,” there is a “complacent” spirit because things seem so “comfortable.” But moves by the left against our historic liberty are bringing uncertainty and changing times.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ <https://www.wnd.com/2018/08/franklin-graham-n-y-times-slanderous-vile/>

¹¹ <https://www.wnd.com/2018/07/james-dobson-sounds-urgent-alarm-for-christians/>

¹² <https://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2018/07/31/watch-u-s-religious-freedom-commission-vice-chair-the-biggest-danger-to-freedom-is-complacency/>

Example One:

- A judicial announcement came from the Arizona Court of Appeals, June 2018, affirming a Phoenix ordinance that mandated a Christian company support and endorse same-sex marriage with their products and art work.
- That company was made up of two young, female Christian artists who ran Brush & Nib, a custom calligraphy service. The court's decision now requires the government to **compel** these artists to convey a message about marriage they disagree with.¹³

Example Two:

Kathleen Lorentzen, a clinical social worker, was employed by the Health Source of Saginaw, Michigan. A homosexual couple was referred to her for counseling. She requested that they be referred to another counselor because of her Biblical beliefs about marriage. Heath Source fired her.

- Though it was a civil rights violation by discriminating against her Christian beliefs –
- She was summarily interrogated about her faith, subjected to dismissing comments about her convictions, then terminated.

Lorentzen had twenty years of successful experience in counseling.¹⁴

Example Three:

At the expense of Christian teaching, there is a growing trend to have public school students learn about Islam.

- A required writing assignment to copy the Shahada, the Islamic profession of faith that Allah is the one true god, has been mandated by a West Virginia high school.
- Teaching the tenants of Islam as part of the regular curriculum in a San Diego, CA, elementary school.
- A cartoon video that teaches seventh grade students the five pillars of Islam is decreed in a New Jersey middle school.
- An Islamic prayer room, specifically made for Muslim students to pray on campus during school hours, has been made in a Texas and in a Minnesota high school.
- Whitewashing Islamic extremism, including the compromised status of women, in sixth to twelfth grade textbooks was a special task by "ACT for America."
- Seventh graders have been forced to learn Islamic terms and proverbs and recite portions of the Quran in a California school.¹⁵

¹³ <https://www.wnd.com/2018/06/court-ok-with-forcing-christians-to-violate-faith/>

¹⁴ <https://www.wnd.com/2018/05/christian-therapist-fired-over-biblical-marriage-beliefs/>

¹⁵ <https://www.wnd.com/2018/06/court-ok-with-forcing-christians-to-violate-faith/>

Example Four:

The Supreme Court of Florida refused to hear a religious liberty case that upheld a lower court decision that deputies can withhold a Bible from an inmate. It was ruled that a Bible is not “mandatory” for a religious belief.¹⁶

Example Five:

Governmental employees who work for the Transportation Security Administration just got legal protection if they touch the private parts of individuals they are screening while in uniform at airports.¹⁷

Uncertain times are here. When and how we might have our religious convictions capriciously thwarted is now ever present in America.

Foreign Anti-Christian Activists

Such stories are almost endless. Two stand out with deep concern:

1. China recently passed a law that churches must fly its national flag. That flag is a symbol of one’s embrace of Communism that began in 1949. The state-run newspaper, *Global Times*, derided critics and said: “‘Religions are exclusive’ and the government has a responsibility to work on ‘strengthening people’s national and civic consciousness.’”

That publication applauded the move to help “assimilate religion into a socialist society and as progress for religious development.” China required (forced) parents in Tibet this past spring to sign a document that their children will have no contact with religion during the summer months.

The U.S. State Department’s annual International Religious Freedom Report has noted that China is experiencing some of the most brutal religious repression in the world.¹⁸

19.2% of the world’s population lives in that country. Divine intervention is needed so they can hear the convicting truth about Jesus Christ.

2. Russia passed an “anti-extremism” law in 2016. Then in 2017 the country’s Supreme Court targeted Jehovah’s Witnesses and ordered their dissolution. Twenty-two of their leaders have been detained and face up to ten years in prison. Why?
 - Bible reading and prayer groups have now been classed as “extremist activity.”
 - Thousands have since fled to other countries.¹⁹

¹⁶ <https://www.wnd.com/2018/06/court-agrees-cops-can-withhold-bible-from-inmate/>

¹⁷ <https://townhall.com/tipsheet/katiepavlich/2018/07/12/judge-rules-tsa-can-grope-flyers-and-get-away-with-it-n2499493>

¹⁸ <https://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2018/08/02/china-forces-all-religious-buildings-to-fly-communist-flag/>

¹⁹ <https://www.breitbart.com/news/russia-pursues-jehovahs-witnesses-as-extremists/>

Ideological Vengeance

- A. Posting a video on Facebook in which an adult is seen enthusiastically indoctrinating very young children to the wonders of being homosexual, lesbian, bisexual or transgender, was most acceptable for that social medium.

But criticizing that video on Facebook, as did Robert A.J. Gagnon, Ph.D., former associate professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, led them to block his Facebook account because he engaged in “hate speech.”

“In that video, pro-homosexual Canadian television host Jessi Cruickshank promotes for young children ‘sexual diversity,’ ‘coming out of the closet,’ the importance of kids being ‘gay allies,’ and even explains how she had questions about her own sexuality as a child when she watched, over and over, a nude Jodie Foster cavort on screen.”

“This clip is about celebrating sexual perversity” Gagnon said, “not ‘sexual diversity.’ It was produced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the Canadian equivalent to our PBS, paid for by tax dollars. No indoctrination or recruitment going on here (or on PBS), right?”²⁰

- B. Former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn, personal Attorney to the President, Michael Cohen, and Paul Manafort have been targeted by the Department of Justice’s Special Counsel. They are “criminal victims.” The most private areas of their lives are being investigated **to find crimes**. They are assumed to be guilty of crimes still to be discovered! That approach is actually a federal offense.

“All of this makes for great headlines and intrigue” said Bernard Kerik, NYPD 40th Police Commissioner, “but what bothers me more than anything, is that it doesn’t bother many members of Congress, or the ACLU, or the criminal justice reform advocates — like dozens, maybe hundreds of them.”

“Doesn’t that bother the members of Congress sitting on the House and Senate Judiciary Committees? That our government **weaponized its criminal justice** system to specifically target the president and in the process, are destroying American citizens for selective and political reasons.”

The dynamics of this are stunning for America and for any freedom-loving citizen! “I was also stunned when the government raided Cohen and Manafort’s homes, offices” and seized their “personal and professional records. This action was above and beyond the norm, but done for a purpose: to create a conflict between the president and his former counsel, and to insure that Cohen and president couldn’t communicate, and then to apply pressure on Cohen, like Flynn and Manafort, to flip on the president — in this case, his own client.”²¹

It is now possible that such coercive acts could be used against Christians with unpopular beliefs to “discover” or find a “crime” that can be punished!

- C. With hardly a whimper from the mainstream media, Facebook, Apple, Twitter, YouTube and Google, have banned together to throttle freedom of the press, speech and religion.

²⁰ <https://www.wnd.com/2018/06/criticize-child-abuse-on-facebook-get-banned-for-hate-speech/>

²¹ <https://peterweisswritings.wordpress.com/2018/08/02/muellers-weaponized-justice-system-a-post-by-bernard-kerik/>

- Google and Facebook control 75% of the digital advertising market.
- Most Americans and a growing number of foreign individuals get their news from those internet media powerhouses.

They have set up social algorithms that screen out or close down conservative and religious sites. They have become “gatekeepers” of information that is going to the public! As examples:

- They are penalizing news sources that report honestly what stunning things Trump has accomplished.
- They are propagandizing fake-news as part of a “cartel” with the main-stream media.

The First Amendment is being undermined and the Justice Department is not making any move to stop the horrors now occurring. This “cartel” is also working to penalize advertisers who support the conservative media.²²

Facebook is severely restricting the distribution of Christian-themed posts. “Christianity is being silenced,” noted Pastor Steven Andrew. His contacts, that once reached eight million people per month, have shrunk to 467,000 by their anti-Christian algorithms!²³

It is interesting that Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook, is imposing his personal values into how social media should operate. There is a measureable decline in conservative voices and a major increase in radical left-wing news.²⁴

Worrisome is the partnership that Zuckerberg has made with the Globalist Atlantic Council. Though its coalition has “noble objectives,” it is becoming a “misinformation” outlet ***to meddle in elections*** around the world.

- This powerful alliance can, in time, influence the opinions of millions of people.
- It can manipulate emotional reactions to the news.
- Facebook has become a tool for deception and manipulation.²⁵

Since January, 2017, this media coalition has decreased the number of conservative “pages” by 93%. They have demonized conservative lawmakers. This is a chilling precedent against free speech! Disinformation is rising and could swing the election.²⁶ The next “move” will be digital punishing of Christian conservatives for their “messages.” That content is increasingly being portrayed as evil. Will legal action follow?

²² <https://mobile.wnd.com/2018/08/president-trump-google-must-be-stopped/>

²³ <https://www.wnd.com/2018/07/pastor-facebook-throttling-christianity/>

²⁴ <https://www.breitbart.com/tech/2018/04/09/report-establishment-media-soaring-on-facebook-conservative-media-in-decline-following-algorithm-change/>

²⁵ <https://www.breitbart.com/tech/2018/05/17/facebook-partners-with-globalist-atlantic-council-to-interfere-in-elections-around-the-world/>

²⁶ <http://charleshughsmith.blogspot.com/2018/08/technocrats-rule-democracy-is-ok-as.html>

Such uncertainty of communicating the Christian witness and influence is being observed by our heavenly Father. He has a master plan to even utilize religious resistance. One reflects:

“They will deliver you up to councils, ... yea and before governors and kings shall ye be brought for My sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.’ Matthew 10:17, 18, R.V. Persecution will spread the light. The servants of Christ will be brought before the great men of the world, **who, but for this, might never hear the gospel.** The truth has been misrepresented to these men. They have listened to false charges concerning the faith of Christ’s disciples. Often their only means of learning its real character is the testimony of those who are brought to trial for their faith. Under examination these are required to answer, and their judges to listen to the testimony borne. God’s grace will be dispensed to His servants to meet the emergency. ‘It shall be given you,’ says Jesus, ‘in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you’ [Matthew 10:19]. As the Spirit of God illuminates the minds of His servants, the truth will be presented in its divine power and preciousness. Those who reject the truth will stand to accuse and oppress the disciples. But under loss and suffering, even unto death, the Lord’s children are to reveal the meekness of their divine Example. Thus will be seen the contrast between Satan’s agents and the representatives of Christ. The Saviour will be lifted up before the rulers and the people.”²⁷

Hope for Today

In this growing uncertainty, the Holy Word of God addresses these anxiety-producing times.

- *“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, **since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal**” (II Corinthians 4:16-19 – NIV).*
- Today, the drive to control, coerce and change people’s loyalties demonstrates a diminishing influence of the Holy Spirit on human hearts.

The invitation: *“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost” (Romans 15:13).*

Sufferings and persecution will bring to us a “final graduation test” for eternal life. Paul had an enrapturing thought: *“... so shall we ever be with the Lord”* – then urged his readers to *“comfort one another with these words” (I Thessalonians 4:17-18).*

Strange and difficult times are beginning to cover planet earth with a pall of uncertainty. The “blessed hope” that Jesus Christ will return (Titus 2:13) is a must-have asset to be able to cope with the horrors that lie just ahead. Christians have resources that are unavailable to those tyrannical minds of political and media leaders.

Jesus assures us: *“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27 – KJV).*

²⁷ White, Ellen G.; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 354.

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