

Your Relationship with Jesus Christ is under siege!

Colossians 2:6-8

Verses 4-5 Methods of false teaching to take away your relationship with ***JESUS CHRIST***

- 4 **I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument.**
- 5 **For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.**

Verses 6-8 Protection against False Teaching

- 6 **Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk in Him,**
- 7 **having been firmly rooted *and now* being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, *and* overflowing with gratitude.**
- 8 **See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.**

America is in trouble!

The Church in America is in trouble!

**The three enemies of the believer
are running rampant now, with little to no restraint.**

If there was ever a time when every believer needs
the Word of God,
Bible doctrine in their souls,
it is today
and very few are making the effort
to **increase their Knowledge of God** (Colossians 1:10)
and to **grow in the Knowledge of Jesus Christ** (2 Peter 3:18).

Most Christian Americans are just too busy for church.

Right here in our own assembly, we use to meet together to study the Word of God, four nights a week, now very few can make it one night a week.

One night a week is just too demanding!

America is in trouble and the blame is not politics;
nor is the blame Hollywood.

There is a siege on the souls of every believer in *JESUS CHRIST*.

The following is by Michael Snyder

[Michael T. Snyder is a graduate of the University of Florida law school and he worked as an attorney in the heart of Washington D.C. for a number of years.]

Today, Michael is best known for his work as the publisher of **The Economic Collapse Blog**. Michael and his wife, Meranda, believe that a great awakening is coming and are working hard to help bring renewal to America. Michael is also the author of the book **The Beginning Of The End**

The underlines are my insertion and any comments are in italics.

“IS THIS THE GENERATION THAT IS GOING TO WITNESS THE END OF AMERICA?”

If our country stays on the path that it is currently on, it is very difficult to see how we are possibly going to make it.

Throughout human history every great society has eventually entered a period of decline, and sadly that is happening to us as well.

My hope is that we can wake the American people up while there is still time, and that we can return to the values and the principles that this nation was originally founded upon.

Most of us don't want to look at the negative while the markets are up but this gives us a false sense of security to what is really happening in our nation.

**BELOW ARE 16 FACTS THAT PROVE THAT AMERICA IS
IN DEEP, DEEP TROUBLE. MANY OF THESE NUMBERS
COME FROM MY NEW BOOK, AND MANY OF THEM
SEEM ALMOST TOO CRAZY TO BELIEVE...**

16 Facts that Prove that America is in Deep, Deep Trouble

#1 When Ronald Reagan won his first election, the U.S. national debt was less than one trillion dollars. When Barack Obama entered the White House, it was sitting at 10.6 trillion dollars, when the Republicans took control of the House of Representatives in 2010, it was about

14 trillion dollars, and now we have nearly reached the 20 trillion dollar mark.

We have been stealing money from our children and our grandchildren at the rate of more than 100 million dollars an hour, and yet most Americans don't seem to care that we are rapidly bankrupting our nation.

Economic bankruptcy

#2 In 1956, approximately 5 percent of all babies in the United States were born to unmarried mothers. Today, things have obviously changed tremendously. 2008 was the very first year in United States history when 40 percent of all babies were born to unmarried mothers, and we have now stayed at that level for eight straight years.

Moral bankruptcy

#3 In the early 1970s, well over 60 percent of all Americans were considered to be "middle class", but in 2015 that number dipped below 50 percent for the first time ever.

Political and Economic bankruptcy

#4 In 2001, nearly 16 million Americans could not afford the homes that they were currently living in, but by 2015 that number had more than doubled.

Economic bankruptcy

- #5** Our system of public education is a complete mess. A study of Millennials in 22 major industrialized nations conducted by the Educational Testing Service found that only two countries were worse when it comes to literacy proficiency, and we were dead last when it comes to math.

Literacy bankruptcy

- #6** In the early 1970s, 70 percent of all men in the United States from the age of 20 to the age of 39 were married, but today that number has fallen to just 35 percent. Instead of getting married and starting families, a lot of our young men are still living at home with their parents.

Today, 35 percent of all young men from the age of 21 to the age of 30 "are living at home with their parents or a close relative".

Moral bankruptcy

- #7** Many Americans don't realize this, but the United States has the highest rate of illegal drug use on the entire planet. But we actually have an even bigger problem with legal drugs.

According to a study conducted by the Mayo Clinic, nearly 70 percent of all Americans are on at least one prescription drug, and an astounding 20 percent of all Americans are on at least five prescription drugs.

Moral bankruptcy

#8 According to the CDC, 110 million Americans currently have a sexually transmitted disease, and there are approximately 20 million new STD cases in the United States every single year.

Moral bankruptcy

#9 Thanks to decades of unchecked illegal immigration, membership in criminal gangs has absolutely exploded all over the country. Today there are 150,000 gang members living in the city of Chicago alone, and they outnumber the police by more than a 10 to 1 margin.

Moral and Political bankruptcy

#10 Today there are more than 4 million adult websites on the Internet, and they get more traffic than Netflix, Amazon and Twitter combined. Addiction to these websites has become a major national crisis, and yet very little is being done.

One major survey found that 64 percent of all Christian men in America view "adult material" at least once a month, and a different major survey found that 68 percent of all Christian men in America view "adult material" on a "regular basis".

Moral bankruptcy

#11 When a federal income tax was introduced in 1913, it was fairly simple and most taxpayers were taxed at a rate of just one percent. Today, the tax code is more than 2 million words long and the regulations are more than 7 million words long.

Economic bankruptcy

#12 Our government continues to waste money in absolutely insane ways. For example, the U.S. military actually spends 42 million dollars a year on Viagra.

Moral and Structural bankruptcy

#13 We are an extremely, extremely unhappy nation. If you can believe it, doctors in the United States write more than 250 million prescriptions for antidepressants each year.

Moral bankruptcy

#14 In 2007, 54 percent of all Americans were opposed to gay marriage and only 37 percent wanted it to be legalized. Today, 62 percent of all Americans support gay marriage and only 32 percent are still against it.

Moral bankruptcy

#15 The average rate of economic growth over the past 10 years has been exactly equal to the average rate that the U.S. economy grew during the 1930s.

I was stunned when I discovered that the U.S. economy had only grown at an average yearly rate of just 1.33 percent over the past 10 years, and that is the exact same average yearly rate that the U.S. economy grew during the decade of the 1930s.

Economic bankruptcy

#16 Since Roe v. Wade was decided in 1973, nearly 60 million American children have been murdered in America's abortion mills. Sadly, the number of children *that are aborted each day in this country is roughly equal* to the number of Americans that lost their lives on 9/11.

Moral bankruptcy

If we do not put an end to this, there isn't going to be any sort of a future for this nation.

Notice, that these reports gives no religious statistics, but almost every one of these reveal a spiritually bankrupt nation.

The new Revolution in America

The Sexual Revolution: think about it

- 1) Promiscuity or Fornication in America
- 2) Adultery in America
- 3) Wild, Weird Sexual Perversion
- 4) Pornography
- 5) Homosexuality

and now

- 6) Transgender
which John MacArthur correctly points out ins an attack against God. We have noted that Romans 1 points out that homosexuality is an attack against God and God's design and, therefore, called an "abomination" against God's design. While Fornication and Adultery are sins; They are against God's design of male and female; but homosexuality is an attack against God and His design.

But Transgender goes even further – this sickness, and being divorced from reality – was not known in Paul’s day, but this is where the human race is today.

Genesis 1:27

27 **God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them.**

As MacArthur has pointed out when a person ‘claims’ to be a transgender that person is cut off from reality. Cut off from a normal relationship in life. When one claims that they are “not who I actually am’, this is an abominable attack against God.

“I am not who God made me, I am what I want to be’—nothing. I do not fit with men or with women! It has been stated that a transgender is 40% more likely to commit suicide and why not they come to the reality that they are out of reality.

The sexual revolution is one of the manifestations of a people without God. The number of people ‘hooked’ on pornography is creating a sick mind, a mind that cannot, will not be satisfied with normal sexual activity with the same partner over a long period of time.

So, we have viewed how this country is falling by economic bankruptcy, and by moral bankruptcy and seen by the sexual revolution. But what about Spiritually?

Why and How has this nation become a spiritually bankrupt nation?

The following is by **Sam Storms** president-elect of the Evangelical Theological Society

Biblical preaching has fallen on hard times in the western world.

There's certainly no lack of speaking and sharing and shouting. And dramatic presentations and video clips are prevalent in pulpits across America. But there is precious little biblical preaching. The Bible makes a token appearance here and there, but rarely to be explained and expounded and acknowledged as authoritative for how we think and live.

There are several reasons for this dearth of biblical preaching, ten of which I'll mention.

- 1 For one thing, pastors have stopped preaching because they have stopped studying.
In effect, they have stopped talking because they have little to say. If they do have a lot to say, it's typically their own ideas and idiosyncrasies unrelated to the inspired text.

2 This next statement may sound harsh, but so be it: **If you are not called to study, you are not called to preach.** I'm not suggesting you need a seminary education or a Ph.D. (although both would be wonderful, if God so leads you). But I am saying that a prerequisite for consistent, effective biblical preaching is devotion on a daily basis to in-depth study of the Scriptures. The 19th century Baptist pastor Charles Spurgeon once said, "If we are not instructed, how can we instruct? If we have not thought, how shall we lead others to think?"

3 The lack of study may be traced to several causes. The first culprit is simple laziness or sloth. Again, it was Spurgeon who said: *"If by excessive labor, we die before reaching the average age of man, worn out in the Master's service, then glory be to God, we shall have so much less of earth and so much more of Heaven!"*

And again, *"It is our duty and our privilege to exhaust our lives for Jesus. We are not to be living specimens of men in fine preservation, but living sacrifices, whose lot is to be consumed."*

Make no mistake: the kind of study that makes for effective exposition is hard work. It requires countless hours, week in and week out, prayerfully and passionately reading and analyzing and evaluating the text, together with careful construction of

messages that both accurately reflect what the text meant then and what it means now. There simply are no shortcuts to what God regards as successful pulpit ministry.

- 4 Another reason for the lack of study among pastors [and thus the dearth of biblical preaching] is a pervasive *anti-intellectualism* that has taken root in our churches. There is a revolt against the importance of the mind in the Christian life, especially among charismatic Christians. Many are paralyzed by the unwarranted fear that too much of the Word of God will eventually quench the Spirit of God. Pause for a moment and reflect on the absurdity of such a thought! We must remember that the mind isn't our enemy, the flesh is. Our flesh is to be mortified but the mind must be renewed (Romans 12:1ff.). Again, the problem isn't the intellect, but pride. Thinking isn't a threat. Arrogance is. It isn't the Word of God that threatens the vibrancy of life in the Spirit but ambitious, self-serving sinners.

5 Another reason for the demise of preaching is that many pastors have lost confidence in the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. If the Bible is not truly the word of God written, if it is not infallible and therefore trustworthy in what it says, no wonder that so few preach its texts. If the Bible is fundamentally no different from any other book, better to preach from what will arouse and entertain your audience. If you regard the biblical text as merely “inspiring” (as are also Shakespeare and Austen, etc.), but not “inspired”, your commitment to it will progressively wane and wither.

Preaching will not long survive if one does not embrace the truth of 2 Timothy 3:16-17
“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

Scripture, notes Geoffrey Thomas, “is the breath of God; every sentence and every phrase is the sigh of Jehovah... It is not their perfect reliability that gives the Scriptures their unique authority. It is not even their complete truthfulness. The Bible is powerful because it is the Word of God; what it says God says” (“Powerful Preaching,” in *The Preacher and Preaching*, 371).
Bryan Chapell concurs:

"Without the authority of the Word preaching becomes an endless search for topics, therapies, and techniques that will win approval, promote acceptance, advance a cause, or soothe worry. Human reason, social agendas, popular consensus, and personal moral convictions become the resources of preaching that lacks 'the historic conviction that what Scripture says, God says'" (Christ-Centered Preaching, 23).

- 6 A symptom of this loss of confidence in the authority of Scripture is the predominance in today's pulpits of the topical sermon. In one sense, of course, all sermons are "topical" in that they are about something specific. But there is a difference between a topical address or speech and a textual sermon. A discourse is not a sermon unless it is textual, i.e., rooted in a phrase, a passage, a paragraph of the Bible.

Many preachers, notes J. I. Packer, "simply do not trust their Bible enough to let it speak its own message through their lips. . . [The result is that] in a topical sermon the text is reduced to a peg on which the speaker hangs his line of thought [or a diving board from which he plunges into the pool of his own ideas]; the shape and thrust of the message reflect his own best notions of what is good for people rather than being determined by the text itself" ("Why Preach?" in Preaching and Preachers, 4).

- 7 Another reason for the demise of preaching again comes from Packer. "Low expectations," he writes, "are self-fulfilling". Many people today have never been taught to expect anything powerful from the exposition of Scripture, and so, not surprisingly, they receive little. "Today's congregations and today's preachers seem to be mostly at one in neither asking nor expecting that God will come to meet His people in the preaching, and so it is no wonder that this does not often happen".

- 8 Another factor is that rituals often push preaching into obscurity (or reduce the time available to devote to exposition of the word). This isn't necessary. I have been greatly enriched by the beauty and stability of liturgical worship. Ceremony and sacrament shouldn't, but on occasion do, tend to marginalize preaching.

The contemporary emphasis on congregational participation in virtually every phase of corporate worship (not a bad thing, by the way!) has led some to find preaching boring. Of the five senses, seeing, smelling, tasting, touching, and hearing, the latter has been minimized while the other four have been accentuated.

People in church today want to see pageantry, smell incense and flowers, taste the sacraments, and touch whatever can be

touched. But hearing the Word of God has largely lost its appeal.

- 9 Related to the previous point, preaching is on the wane because the power of the spoken word to communicate significant and life-changing truth has become suspect. We live in an action-oriented, visual, culture where mere “words” are trivialized and “sermons” are viewed as archaic.

Many applaud these changes, seeing in them a much needed shift from the logo-centricity (or word-centeredness) of traditional evangelicalism to what they perceive as a more holistic approach to Christian ministry.

- 10 Preaching has also fallen on hard times because, in fulfillment of Paul's prophetic warning, the time has come “when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths” (2 Timothy 4:3-4). People don't want biblical preaching and, sadly, few are willing to buck the tide of popular sentiment.

Paul identifies the problem. People will develop a distaste for “sound doctrine,” insisting that it is either irrelevant (“who cares what you believe, just as long as you live right”) or disruptive (“I don't like being told to repent of sins or hearing about hell, etc.”), or divisive (“people will take sides on controversial issues and split our church!”).

People will prefer entertainment to exposition (**“wanting to have their ears tickled”**). Hankering after the new, the odd, the unusual, the sensational, will replace the desire for the solid meat of the Word.

They will look to their own “desires” rather than the desires of God to determine what they will hear. One of the greatest temptations preachers face today is scratching the “itch” of so-called “felt-needs” among their congregation.

There is often a significant difference between “felt-needs” and “biblical-needs”. What people often want is not always what they need.

It must be remembered that the umbrella to Freedom, be it political or spiritual freedom is Authority. Authority in America is wasting away in the shadows in government, in society where people do not respect the authority of parents, the policeman, the teacher or the coach. And authority is drifting away in the church where the Word God is not the final authority. *And you wonder why America is in decline?*

When there is little to no allegiance to the authority of the Word of God by pastors or by Christians there is no hope for the nation!

O soul are you weary and troubled?
No light in the darkness you see?
There's light for a look at the Savior,
And life more abundant and free:

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face;
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace.

Through death into life everlasting
He passed, and we follow Him there;
Over us sin no more hath dominion
For more than conquerors we are!

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face;
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace.

I'd Rather Have Jesus Than Anything This World Affords Today.

I'd rather have Jesus than men's applause;
I'd rather be faithful to His dear cause;
I'd rather have Jesus than worldwide fame;
I'd rather be true to His holy name.

Refrain:

Than to be the king of a vast domain
Or be held in sin's dread sway;
I'd rather have Jesus than anything
This world affords today.