

Whether or not we should seek to impeach offending justices of the Supreme Court, we certainly concur with Paul Weyrich that the present liberal majority poses a serious threat to the future of this nation. That danger is not new, of course. Our founding fathers were also concerned about future generations forgetting the principles on which the country was based. They understood the implications of a secularized society in which God had no part. The following warnings from these early leaders reverberate from across the centuries and speak to the excesses of our present day:

* "... the Christian religion, in its purity, is the basis or rather the source of all genuine freedom in government ... (A)nd I am persuaded that no civil government of a republican form can exist and be durable, in which the principles of that religion have not a controlling influence."
--Noah Webster, no year given (22)

* "Religion and liberty are the meat and the drink of the body politic. Withdraw one of them and it languishes, consumes, and dies ... Without religion we may possibly retain the freedom of savages, bears, and wolves, but not the freedom of New England. If our religion were gone, our state of society would perish with it, and nothing would be left."
-- Timothy Dwight, President of Yale, 1798 (23)

* "Whenever the pillars of Christianity shall be overthrown, our present Republican forms of government, and all the blessings which flow from them, must fall with them."
--Jedediah Morse, Father of Samuel F.B. Morse, inventor of the telegraph, 1799 (24)

* "Without morals a republic cannot subsist any length of time: they therefore who are decrying the Christian religion, whose morality is so sublime and pure ... are undermining the solid foundation of morals, the best security for the duration of free governments."
--James McHenry, Secretary of War under Presidents George Washington and John Adams, 1800 (25)

* "Moral habits ... cannot be safely be trusted on any other foundation than religious principle, nor any government be secure which is not supported by moral habits."
--Daniel Webster, 1820 (26)

* "It is impossible to mentally or socially enslave a Bible-reading people."
--Horace Greeley, 1852 (27)

* "I've lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth -- That God Governs in the affairs of men. If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the sacred writings, that 'except the Lord build the House they labor in vain who build it. I firmly believe this, and I also believe that without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel."²⁸
--Benjamin Franklin, 1787

These stern warnings by our founding fathers have validity for us because they reflect the admonitions of Jehovah, Himself, as recorded in the Book of Deuteronomy and quoted below. Though He was addressing the nation of Israel,

His words reveal an immutable standard of righteousness which applies of all generations.

"You may say to yourself, 'My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.' But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today. If you ever forget the Lord your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed. Like the nations the Lord destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the Lord your God."

--Deuteronomy 8:17-20, NIV

It is folly to assume that those sobering words have no relevance to the day in which we live. Although they were spoken more than 4,000 years ago, the parallel to our affluent, arrogant nation is striking. Furthermore, we find similar New Testament passages that warn of evil and apostasy. For example, the apostle Paul said, "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness" (Romans 1:18, NIV). Later in the book of Romans he wrote, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23, NIV).

If God's judgment befalls wicked nations as well as disobedient individuals, as Scripture clearly indicates, how can our own country escape His wrath -- a land wherein 30 percent of our children are born out of wedlock, where 1.5 million defenseless babies are killed in the womb, where crime and violence have become a way of life, where heterosexual and homosexual promiscuity are flaunted and celebrated as in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, where child abuse is rampant and where God is mocked and His name defiled in that which we call "entertainment"? We have forgotten the moral and spiritual principles with which we began and now we stand, as Paul Weyrich wrote, at the most important crossroads in our history. One road leads to continued rebellion and defiance of the Holy One of Israel. Traveling further down that slippery slope will lead, I believe, to the destruction of the social order as we have known it. The other road brings us to repentance, forgiveness, obedience, wholeness and health as a nation. King David tells us, "Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord" (Psalms 144:15, NIV). Everything depends, therefore, on the choices we will make at this critical juncture. Nothing short of a sweeping spiritual revival will save us from our own foolishness.

That is the conclusion drawn by our board of directors during a recent two-day meeting devoted to our nation, its heritage and its future. Specifically, we addressed the question, "What is the role of this Christian ministry in a post-Christian world?" For six hours we pondered the implications of this subject and ended late that evening in a time of fervent prayer for the Lord's guidance. It was a defining moment in the 19-year history of Focus on the Family.

The mission of this ministry was confirmed and sharpened during that wonderful time together as a board. We agreed to devote more of our energies and resources to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the only source of light in an increasingly dark and sinful world. Those who follow our broadcasts and publications in coming months will hear more about this emphasis and how it will be implemented. We also plan to redouble our efforts to secure what has been called "the defense of righteousness" in the culture.

Spiritual renewal must be translated into social action, as those who are transformed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ then begin to influence the moral fiber of the nation. In effect, the scriptural principles which our founding fathers incorporated must again be brought to bear on every aspect of life, including education, government and law. We have asked the Lord to make this ministry a beacon of light in a culture, and in a world, that is quickly forgetting the fundamentals of the Christian heritage. We will do our best to be faithful to that calling.

Thank you for standing with us as we seek to carry out this mission. Our resources are stretched to the limit during these summer months when people are away from home and thinking about other things. If we could hear from you at this time, it would be most encouraging to me and the staff of Focus on the Family. Blessings to you all. We are partners in this effort to preserve the things that matter most.

Sincerely,

James C. Dobson, Ph.D.
President

ENDNOTES

1. Roe v. Wade, 1973
2. Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Robert P. Casey, et.al., Nos. 91-744 and 91-902, June 29, 1992
3. 112 S.C. t at 2807 Planned Parenthood v. Casey (1992)
4. Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776
5. Planned Parenthood v. Casey, 1992 Nos. 91-744 and 91-902, June 29, 1992
6. Chuck Colson, "Pandora's Box," Breakpoint, March 11, 1996
7. "Court Backs Assisted Suicide," Reuters News Service, March 7, 1996
8. Carol Castaneda, "Ruling Favors Right to Die," USA Today, April 3, 1996, p. 1A
9. Paul M. Barrett, "Federal Appeals Judge Embraces Liberalism in Conservative Times," TheWall Street Journal, March 15, 1996, p. A1
10. P.J. van der Mass, J.J.M. van Delden and L. Pijenbrog, EUTHANASIA AND OTHER MEDICAL DECISIONS CONCERNING THE END OF LIFE: AN INVESTIGATION PERFORMED UPON THE REQUEST OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE MEDICAL PRACTICE CONCERNING EUTHANASIA, (Amsterdam: Elsevier Science Publishers, 1992), p. 178
11. "Doctor Unpunished for Dutch Suicide," New York Times, June 22, 1994, p. 10A.
12. van der Mass, 1992, p. 181
13. "Doctor Freed in 'Justified' Mercy Killing," Chicago Tribune, April 27, 1995, p. N21
14. Compassion in Dying v. State of Washington, 1996, No. 94-3554 (9th Circuit, Wash.), p. 3201
15. Compassion v. Washington, p. 3201
16. Mike Mills, John Schwartz, "Judge Blocks On-Line Smut Law Enforcement: Order Sparks Confusion Over Definition," The Washington Post, February 16, 1996
17. USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll, March 1996
18. Compassion v. Washington, p. 3261

19. MEMOIR, CORRESPONDENCE, AND MISCELLANIES, FROM THE PAPERS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, editor, (Boston: Gray and Bowen, 1830), Vol. IV, p. 27, to Abigail Adams on September 11, 1804
20. Writings of Thomas Jefferson, Albert Ellery Bergh, editor, (Washington, D.C.: Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1904), Vol. XV, p. 277, to William Charles Jarvis on September 28, 1820
21. Paul Weyrich, Direct Line, May 23, 1996, quoted with permission
22. DEFINING NOAH WEBSTER: MINDS AND MORALS IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC, K. Alan Snyder, Professor of History and Political Science, Indiana Wesleyan University (New York: University Press of America, 1990), p. 253
23. Timothy Dwight, "The Duty of Americans, at the Present Crisis, Illustrated in a Discourse," preached on July 4, 1798, New Haven, 1798 as cited in The Annals of America (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1968), Vol. I, pp. 33-36
24. Jedidiah Morse, A Sermon Exhibiting the Present Dangers, and Consequent Duties of the Citizens of the United States of America, delivered at Charleston, April 25, 1799, The Day of National Fast, (Hartford: Hudson & Goodwin, 1799), p. 9
25. Bernard C. Steiner, THE LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE OF JAMES MCHENRY, (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Co., 1907, p. 47)
26. THE WORKS OF DANIEL WEBSTER. (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1853), p. 44
27. THE NEW DICTIONARY OF THOUGHTS: A CYCLOPEDIA OF QUOTATIONS, originally compiled by Tyron Edwards, D.D. (Garden City, N.Y: Hanover House, 1852, The Standard Book Company, 1963), p. 48
28. THE DEBATES IN THE FEDERAL CONVENTION OF 1787 WHICH FRAMED THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES, reported by James Madison, Gaillard Hart and James Brown Scott, editors, (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1970), p. 181

This letter may be reproduced without change and in its entirety for non-commercial purposes without prior permission from Focus on the Family. Copyright (c) 1996 Focus on the Family. All Rights Reserved. International Copyright Secured.