***Young People in American Society

Colossians 1:1-2

COL-102***

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Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing as far as a division of the soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

2 Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is inspired of God, and profitable for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

Please open the Word of God once more this morning to the Book of Colossians 1:9-14. Our subject is "Prayer for the Colossians," segment 36.

The apostle Paul, in Colossians 1:12, expresses his thanks to God the Father for qualifying the Colossians for an inheritance in heaven – those who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior. He says, "Giving thanks to the Father, Who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light." By the kindness of God's grace, He has permanently saved us from a destiny of suffering forever in the lake of fire. By the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, the Father has enabled us to serve Him with divine good works, resulting in eternal rewards. These are the two things behind this word, "having qualified us," for which the apostle thanks God. The only way we can be qualified to go to heaven is by an act of the grace of God. The only way we can be qualified to serve Him is by the power of the Holy Spirit guiding us.

It is these two factors that make life meaningful. For the person who has not the qualification of salvation, life is a very sorry experience. For the person, even a Christian, who does not have the knowledge of the Word of God, and the capacity of temporal fellowship understanding to live by the guidance of the Spirit of God, that life is a life of misery: of defeat without purpose; without meaning; and, without significance. Just stop and think how many people in the circle of your experience who are doing nothing except ticking off the allotted timespan that God has given them for life – ticking that off to their death. Most of the people we associate with are doing nothing in life but ticking off their timespan of life, and moving toward the point of death. In between, there's nothing. There's nothing of any significance. There's no meaning. There's a lot of frenzy. There's a lot of religious activity. Oh yeah, those people have a life, but it's a dog's life. It's meaningless. And when they die, they will find, as unbelievers, how terribly meaningless it was, as, for eternity, they recognize the consequences of having to suffer for their own sins rather than to have accepted the merit of Christ.

The Christian who has squandered his life, and who never got hold of the fact that whatever you do in life, nothing is more important than instruction in the Word of God. Forget everything else in life. Focus on that. And the rest will fall into place. There is no greater tragedy than a person who is doing nothing but ticking off their lifetime to their death. And I've seen people over the years who once were very significant as Christians. They were very significant in God's service. Then they came to a point, and they made a foolish decision, and it detached them from the lifeline of instruction in the Word of God. And then I've watched them as the years go by on a treadmill, doing nothing but waiting for the end of their life.

Many years ago, one lady was so pleased that finally she got a new house. And then that house preoccupied her. There was nothing but that house. She was all up in the air over what she could do with the house. And I told Mrs. Danish, "Here is a woman who is doing nothing but waiting for the time of her death." And that's a sorry life. And indeed, that's all she did. She had her house, and from then on, she did one thing: she just waited for the time to check out.

Now the apostle says, "We have something more than that. We are, first of all, qualified to go to heaven by an act of God's grace. We are, furthermore, qualified to be able to live in the pattern of Jesus Christ. Our steps can be His steps. His steps can be our steps." And that is the exact calling and purpose of the Christian life.

Now, whatever comes into your life: up or down; good or bad; or, tough or easy, you at least know that life is purposeful. Life is going somewhere such that, at the end, you're going to look back and say, "It was good to have lived." These two factors, constituting the inheritance of the believer, result from possessing the light of the Word of God – doctrinal truth. It's in the Bible. It's not in the human mind. And the sadness of the Christmas season makes this very clear. A lot of people understand the truth because they have the biblical perspective. Most people don't have the foggiest notion of what the Word of God really has to say about Christmas. And Christmas is a dark season for them, rather than the season of glorious light.

Because of God's qualifying work in believers, He has delivered them from Satan's domain of spiritual darkness into the spiritual light of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, His Son. And so we read in Colossians 1:13, "For He delivered us (rescued us) from the domain of darkness (the realm of Satan), and He transferred us to the Kingdom (the realm of light) of His Beloved Son." Those who believe one of the world's systems of religion created by Satan are in spiritual darkness.

Now, you can be as nice to them as you want. You can be as courteous, and civil, and friendly, and whatever. But if they have a system of religion that does not focus upon Jesus Christ as the only way into eternal life (He, and He alone – one door, and only one) into the sheep fold of eternal life, that is a religion created by Satan, and they must be pitied. They might be very nice people, but when they leave this life, there'll be no rejoicing. When a Christian leaves this life in the midst of sadness, there is the rejoicing to realize that this place is only a way station. That Christian never was supposed to be here. He was temporarily retained by God for a mission. And when that's completed, or he comes to the point in life where he won't complete the mission, out he goes. But at least, going out goes with great joy, because we know where this person goes. He goes to a far, far better state than that which he is in now.

Some of these religions of satanic darkness are very, while others are grossly evil. But both are spiritual darkness. None of these religions of Satan are true, whether they're moral or immoral. The Lord Jesus Christ has taught us that most of mankind will be trapped in darkness. They will be trapped in the falsehood of the darkness of the world's religions. So, they will be enslaved all their lives to a condition of spiritual darkness.

One of the most sobering indications of that is in Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter by the narrow gate, for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction. And many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it."

To that we may add the very focused requirement in John 14:6: "Jesus said, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father but through Me." Jesus is not just one of the great religious leaders of the world. He is not just one in the line of human prophets, through which one can reach God. But He's the only one. Without trusting in Him for salvation, there can be no salvation. There is no other way.

To this, we may add Luke 1:79, when Zacharias, this very old man, sees the baby Jesus being brought to the temple as prescribed by the Law, following a certain number of days after His birth. And God had told this old man, "You will not die until you see the Messiah." And sure enough, when he sees the baby Jesus, the Spirit of God says to him, "That's the one. And so he begins in Luke 1:67 in what we refer to as the Benedictus, because "Benedictus" means "blessing:" "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for has visited us," and so on. When you get down to Luke 1:79, Zacharias says, "To shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Most of the human race will never have the light of God shine upon them. Most of the human race will sit in darkness: gloomy, terrible, awful darkness.

Then what does it say? What is there for you in that darkness at the end? The shadow of death. That's it. Do you see what I mean by people who do nothing but are living their lives until the day of their death? That's all. That's all they're doing. They're living, waiting for the day of their death, while they surround themselves with toys and interests and a life that they create for themselves. But it's all without meaning. It's all purposeless. And it's going to mean nothing on the other side.

If you've ever taken a tour to Carlsbad Caverns, one of the things they did in the past (and maybe they still do): they get you down in one of the deepest caves, and then they have a little place where people can sit down. And, of course, these caverns are lighted as you walk along the paths. Then they say, "Now we're going to turn the lights off, and show you what total darkness is." And everybody has to get quiet. And then he hits the switch. And you literally cannot see your hand in front of your face. Pretty soon, you're sitting next to your wife there, and you begin to reach over to see if she's still there. You have to be sure to go in the right way, or you might reach over to the wrong person here. And the ranger says, "No noise. Everybody quiet." Then he could say, "Okay, that's the end of the program. If you'll feel your way out, we'll see at the top." What would you say? You'd be horrified. You'd literally be thinking: "Hey, the higher you go on these paths, and the drop drop-offs – are you telling me I'm sitting in darkness here, and I'm going to get moving? If I do, there's nothing in front of me but death."

That's what Zacharias said: "Shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death" – that's all their lives are. But suddenly, a life full of darkness becomes illuminated by the glory of the Word of God – the knowledge of doctrine. That's what really counts in life. If you have that, you have everything. If you don't have that, no matter what else you may have, you have nothing. Those who trust in Jesus Christ for salvation by receiving him as personal Savior, Paul says, are transferred immediately by God from this spiritual darkness into spiritual light. There is no other way to make the changeover except through Jesus Christ. But only a few people ever make it. Most of them go out into eternity, sitting in their darkness.

I was in a business establishment in Irving this past week. It's owned by a Muslim. On the wall was a plaque which read: "Noah, Moses, Abraham, Jesus, Muhammad, may they be blessed, the prophets of Allah." This man is very sincere in his belief in Allah as the God whom he worships. Another plaque on the wall said, "Muslims live according to the Quran." Now, Allah was the Arabian moon-god. When Mohamed decided to bring polytheism to an end with the Arab world that he was able to influence, he selected Allah as the only god, the true god. And he placed Allah in that supreme position and said, "This is the true God." But it's not the God of the Bible by any means. Then Muhammad had these visions. He had these thoughts that came to him that he began writing down, and they became the book of Koran. The book of Koran is filled with spiritual darkness. Mohamed was not the prophet of the real God. He may be a prophet of Allah indeed, which is another name for Satan. And here, this man right here in the city of Irving, this place of great enlightenment, and of great opportunity to take him out of the darkness, and to shine the light of the Word of God upon him is making this terrible mistake.

In his plaque, "Noah, Moses, Abraham, Jesus, Muhammad" makes it clear that Jesus is inferior to Muhammad. And that's why the Muslim, several times a day, looks toward Mecca, and says, "There is no God but, Allah and his prophet is Mohamed."

Now what must Christmas mean to him? One thing: getting a lot of business. But Jesus, the source of real light, means nothing to him. Muhammad is spiritual darkness. And the one who is the true light does not shine upon that man. In John 8:12, Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." As long as that sincere businessman has this on his wall, and believes what he has up there about Muhammad being the superior prophet, and being the prophet of Allah, he sits in darkness. He does not follow Jesus. He will never know what it is to have spiritual light. And when he reads the Quran, and he believes that above the Scriptures, he's walking in darkness, because only in the Bible is there real spiritual enlightenment.

Now, those who believe in the religions of the world are in spiritual darkness. But the sad thing about that, as one of the Proverbs points out to us, is that these people think that they have the truth. They think that they know where they are going. Proverbs 14:12: "There's a way which seems right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death." If you walk in darkness, you're going to get hurt. Eventually you will die.

Now the Muslim proprietor is a classic example of a nice person who is in darkness, and who is destined, worst of all, for the eternal darkness in hell. And the Bible makes it very clear that hell is going to be like being on the inside of Carlsbad cavern. The pain and the flames – that will all be there. That's a place of darkness. It is not a place where you can sit and enjoy yourself.

In our society today, there is the spiritual darkness that surrounds us now as a nation. In the 1960s, a group of people came on the scene from the college community, both professors and students, who decided to have an expansion of their consciousness through drugs, and abandonment to sex, and a turning against all the immoral principles of the Word of God, and therefore everything that our nation had been founded upon – the principles of the Word of God. Now since the sixties, that rot has been expanding, and now we are finding ourselves with those people who now run the nation. These spiritual midgets are running the nation, while they are surrounded by nothing but blindness inside and out. Darkness rules their lives. Every time they open their mouths, they show us what blindness there is.

Our young people are growing up in that context in our society, because this darkness is everywhere. It's in school. It's in new movies. It's in entertainment. It's in literature. It's in advertising. It's everywhere you look. This darkness is there. And the darkness of American youth has been very well-documented by a group called the Barna Research Group. In the last issue of "Focus on the Family" by James Dobson summarized some of the things that the Barna Group, in their research have found about American young people today, not the least of which is that we presume that they know what one means when you say the 10 Commandments. And they were startled to find out how many of them didn't have the foggiest notion what the 10 commandments were all about, and what was included in them. Here's some of the conclusions they've discovered.

**What Truth Means to Young People**

Consider the issue of truth. About three-quarters of all adults reject the notion that there are absolute moral truths. Most Americans believe that all truth is relative to the situation and the individuals involved. Similarly, at least three-quarters of our teens embrace the same position regarding moral truths. Not only do more than three out of four teenagers say that there is no absolute moral truth, but four out of five also claim that nobody can know for certain whether or not they actually know what truth is. This may also help to explain why a majority of teenagers (57%) say that lying is sometimes necessary – not merely convenient; common; understandable; or, acceptable, but necessary.

So, here's an amazing insight to American young people. They don't think that there is right and wrong. That's what we mean by absolute truth. There is not something that God says, "You can never do this without violating My character. If you violate My holiness, that is sin. And that is always sin." What they're saying is: "Sometimes it's sin." Like the song titles used to say: "This Can't be Wrong – It Feels so Good." And what that was saying was that some people say: "Here, this is wrong, but not in my case." So, what is morally right or wrong cannot be determined in any way. That's even worse. There's no standard. Why not? Well, because in the 1960s, the nation accepted the abandonment of the Bible. Now it's everybody's idea. It's everybody's opinion what is okay.

**The Spiritual World is not Real to Young People**

Here's another thing they found out: "Because the Bible and most religious activities are foreign to them (that is, to youth), and seem irrelevant to what real life is all about, they perceive two parallel worlds coexisting: the spiritual impractical world that contains many pure and absolute and impractical dictums such as truth, morality, love, and faith; and, the real world – the one they inhabit, which deals with the hard stuff of daily living. Truth may be a wonderful concept, but many teens don't have sufficient interest in such an impractical or unrealistic concept to explore it further. Millions of those who do have the interest do not have the philosophical, intellectual, and spiritual foundations to take such an exploration to the next level."

The young people don't know. They think that the spiritual life is impractical. Why? Because everybody around them rejects that spiritual life. Everybody around them does exactly the opposite. And unless you happen to be of a temperament, which most young people are not, such that you are willing to be an independent person in terms of taking the stand for the right, you want to be like everyone else. And it is a rare kid to be highly esteemed, who says, I'm going to do what's right, no matter what my peers do. I don't have to be one of the gang." And if there's anything that parents need to teach their children, and hope that they will accept, it is: "I don't have to be one of their gang." What in the world happens to young people who have great opportunity to do right and don't do it? They chose to be one of the gang. They wanted to be accepted.

**Young People are Interested in Spiritual Matters**

Here's another thing that the Barna Group found: "Teenagers are not flocking to Christian churches, but they are intentionally interested in spiritual matters. The parents of an increasing number of them have neither encouraged their spirituality nor left a spiritual legacy for them to explore. Consequently, they're attracted to different faith systems. Many teenagers, Barnes says, believe that a major component of America's illness is that we have lost our sense of the divine and the mystical. Millions of teenagers are seeking to incorporate their spiritual understanding into their daily existence, making faith more than a Sunday experience, but rather a life filter. Make no mistake about it, though, 'spiritual' is no longer synonymous with 'Christian.'"

That's what will throw you. Yes, the unsaved man wants something spiritual. All you have to do is go into the darkest jungle, and you find that these benighted people, who have no access to the Word of God, want something spiritual. So, they create it. They create their gods. They build their idols. They build their systems of worship. Then they proceed to appease their gods, which they've made in their own image.

**Meditation**

So, when American, unsaved, godless, unbelieving youth say that they want something spiritual, they're talking about something that is an emotional expression – an expansion of their consciousness, and a moving off into a world that they feel is out there, but they have no contact with. And that's how the drug culture began in the first place. It was to find that world that was out there. And this is the world that then, in time, the new age religion came along, and said, "We can get the same experience by meditation." And that introduced a whole new realm that they could kick up by meditation, where the spirits of the demonic world come in and take hold of a person's consciousness, and they have tremendous experiences. They think that they're really expanding themselves, just like they did on drugs.

Well, does our society frowned upon it? Do the adults say, "No, that's not real spirituality?" Well, we have another Dallas Cowboy who's on the line for using cocaine. And they pulled one of their proper legal testing that they can do on the athletes, and this one didn't happen to be one of the regular scheduled ones. So, he is found all shot up with the evidence of cocaine. The lawyers come right back. The owners and the officials of the Dallas Cowboys come right back and say, "You can't hold us against him. This was not a scheduled testing. You should have told him, so that he could knock off the drugs for enough time to get his system clear, so that they wouldn't find it." How many people are going to be outraged about that? How many people are going to call the Dallas Cowboy and say, "I'm going to tell you, I'm not going to watch your game next week, and I only want to know one thing: that you lose."

Instead, people say, "No, it's okay. Hey, winning – that's it. That's it. That's where it's all at." And we've already had it with a previous Dallas Cowboy – they slapped him on the wrist, and he's right back in there, because football and athletics: that's where God is. That's where real spirituality is.

Now, what do you think some young person is going to find out? Is he going to say, "I'm ashamed of that group," like one splendid radio commentator did. He said, "I've had it with them, and I am not going to teach my daughters or my son that it's all okay. And we're not going to go around wearing the Dallas Cowboys coats and jackets and their symbols." This is not the days when Christianity was an honorable part of the team, and when people who stepped out of line were severely punished, whatever it did to the team, and where they could even go to Dallas Seminary and say, "We want one of your professors to come and act as the chaplain for the Dallas Cowboys, because we want some spiritual orientation in our athletic program."

So, what do we Christians do? We act like Ninnies, and say that it's all right. So, what do our young people do? They say, "Yeah, it's all right." Whereas, the Word of God – what does it say? It says that it's a shame even to mention what these people do in private. And what we should do, as believers, is rebuke them openly, and not give them our approval.

**Young People think that Suicide is Acceptable**

Here's another thing Barna discovered among young people. "Now suicide is viewed as just one of many viable choices available to a healthy, functional, young person. Many kids view it not as a sign of weakness, but as a rational choice in which the alternatives are less attractive. Today, the decision to reject suicide is a conscious statement of priorities and values. In essence, this is the first generation of teenagers who are intentionally making a choice between life (a decision that was initially made for them); and, death (a decision that they may control)."

Now, how wacko do you have to get to even think about suicide? These young people are saying, "That's one of the great choices for my life." Do you see what I mean by sitting in darkness, and having no purpose but waiting to die; and, for a Christian to act like he's sitting in darkness and just waiting to die? And that's the purpose of his life?

**Adult Expectation of Teenagers**

Barna also commented on adult expectations of teenagers, and the subsequent result: "We expect them (the teens) to develop a viable value system, even though schools are warned to avoid the communication of values; churches have failed to teach a practical and coherent set of values; and, parents continue to abdicate the responsibility for passing on a value system to their offspring. It is no wonder that teenagers are baffled about values. Few adults understand the debate, although they intuitively know that values are important."

But most of these adults now, we're finding, don't even know what's in the 10 commandments. . . . And when people are told, "Well, here is what is in the 10 commandments: this; this; and, this, people get mad. What do you mean? How dare they tell me I can't do this? And people are getting angry when they find out what is in the 10 Commandments. They didn't realize the absolute truths which are condemning the desires of the sin nature of the lust pattern.

**Teenagers have little Family Time**

Here is another point from Barna: "Teenagers noted that they spend incredibly little time with their family during the week. It is becoming less common these days for a teenager to have time isolated for focused interaction with family members. Most of the time they spend with their family is what you might call "family and TV;" "family and dinner;" or, "family and homework," etc. The lives of each family member are usually so jam-packed that the opportunity to spend time together doing unique activities: talking about life; visiting special places; playing games; and, sharing spiritual explorations has to be scheduled in advance, if you do so."

And that's what I have meant by a phrase that you have heard me using recently – that parents should live with their children. Parents don't live with their children. Parents have children, and they have a life of their own. And they get a life, and their children are practically an irritant. They don't have the freedom. Women don't have the freedom to live with their children. And their children grow up, and live without them.

**The Definition of Family**

Another observation is that, several years ago, we discovered that a majority of adults now define family to be any and all individuals whom they deeply care for, or who deeply care about them. Not surprisingly, teenagers have now adopted the same perspective. Almost two out of three teens currently believe that this . . . definition of family is the most accurate. So, what are we talking about? We're talking about young people who think that anybody can be part of their family. Now, that means opening to some very close personal relationships.

The Barna letter goes on to say, "This new definition of family is frightening. It renders a family of fluid and transitory aggregation, based upon the emotion of the moment and the most recent experiences individuals have had with each other. Considering this view of family, the people who represent your family today may not be considered your family tomorrow, by virtue of changes in emotion; experience; peer pressure; or, other whims."

Many years ago, when I was a teenager, a man who had a major impact upon my life once told me to always view my friends as a transitory relationship. He said, "These close relationships; somebody that you are really close with; someone that have great friendship with; and, somebody that you kind of let your hair down and talk to (as the saying goes), in time, they become your worst enemies. And if you haven't found that out, then you haven't been living in the real world. I have found that out repeatedly. These are people who are so enthusiastic; so friendly; so close; and, with whom you share so many things, and then something develops, and they're no longer your friend.

**Bad Behavior Becomes Acceptable**

Here is another point from Barna: "We have also detected that one unfortunate outgrowth of the new family is that behaviors that have traditionally been discouraged: divorce; cohabitation; births without marriage; extramarital affairs; and, even polygamy become acceptable to some, because the definition of a family permits anyone and everyone to share emotions; housing; and, intimate relationships. It becomes a family on the fly existence, in which family, like everything else in our culture, exists only to gratify our immediate needs without regard for long range consequences."

**Premarital Sex**

Then there is one more example of darkness in American society: "More than four out of five kids (82%) have had sexual relations with a member of the opposite sex by the age of 19. This means that, prior to marriage, most young adults will have had sex with others, and less than one-fifth of newlyweds will be virgins. Before they even graduate from high school, one-fifth of all students will have had at least four sex partners. One consequence of this promiscuity is that more than one million teenagers are likely to contact a sexually transmitted disease this year. If current trends continue, a majority of today's high school students will live with a partner prior to getting married. In a large proportion of those situations, the cohabitants will not marry each other, although they have sexual relations with each other many times before dissolving the relationship. Sure, teens will age and marry, and most will have one or two children. But divorce will likely wreak havoc on many of the formal unions. We can expect to see millions of children born to single parents, and others born to cohabiting parents.

**Accessibility to Darkness**

So, here's a group which has its finger on the pulse of what goes on in the area of young people, to whom the nation and the society will be entrusted. And the picture is darkness. And, in large part, it's because parents have so lost the authority line in their families that they cannot even tell their kids, while they're under their roof and under their care, what they may and may not do; and, where they can come and go. Parents don't have the judgment to realize that the darkness is out there, and the problem is accessibility to it. One of the greatest ways to make darkness accessible to your child is to get him a driver's license. Everybody is itchy to get a driver's license. It's almost impossible for any parent to say, "My kid does not get a driver's license until he is a senior in high school. And then he doesn't drive, under most circumstances, unless I'm sitting next to him. He's not going to tool around on his own.

Everybody has to make their own decision, in your own circumstances, and the demands of your family. But I'm telling you that there is no higher factor of accessibility to darkness than once you get a vehicle, and that you're on your own. And it's even worse if your parents are foolish enough to let you own it. What's going to happen? You're going to get a job. After all, it might interfere with Christian service, but what's that? We are people of the darkness, and we know that it's very important to have your own vehicle, so that you can be on your own, because there's nothing so irritating in life than parents. They think they know better than you do. And they might even tell you that you can't tool around where you want to tool around.

Well, think it over, if we live in a society like the Barna Group says we do, and they're absolutely right, then you are inviting the kiss of death upon your young person when you allow that youngster to get out from the wisdom that you have – the wisdom for everything that kid should do until he walks across that stage, and they hand him his high school diploma.

In Israel, it was 20 years of age, but then the parents said, "Adios. . . . You're on your own." And now their responsibility was now their responsibility.

This reveals, I think, for any thoughtful person, an abysmal darkness of a human being without the revelation of God's Word. . . . That darkness includes that most Americans don't know what we mean when we say: "The 10 Commandments." They don't have the foggiest notion as to what's in them. And why should people take it seriously? You have someone like Bill Moyers, a great and prominent person in the circle of the Southern Baptist Convention, and in the administration of Lyndon Johnson, one of the all-time greats of liberalism. And he is a graduate of the Fort Worth Seminary Theological School, and he was running this program on TV, explaining to people (the program is called "Genesis)) that there never was a place like the Garden of Eden. There never were people like Adam and Eve. That's a myth. It's a story trying to convey a spiritual concept to us. And all of a sudden, before he's through, he's telling us that you can't take the Bible seriously.

One man in his convention association said that he watched the program, but he didn't get it all, because he had to keep getting up and walking out of the room to throw up. So, he missed a lot of the program because it was so outrageous. And I remember there was a fellow one time named Jimmy Carter. I remember him well. And there was another man named Ronald Reagan. I remember him well. And Reagan was coming on with: "Government is the problem." Jimmy Carter said, "Government is not the problem." I heard it myself. And Reagan was coming and saying, "You trust the people. You let them keep their money. They will be enterprising. They will make our nation prosper. We don't need government coming in to take money away from people by great tax taxation, and make people do what some elitist think should be done," and so on. And this was the big debate.

Well, they had a big convention in the convention center in Dallas. I attended. And this was about the issues of: where does the Christian fit into the political scene, and where does the Christian's message fit into the nation's political, civic life? And I remember Bill Moyers standing outside, being interviewed. And we listened to one of the great speeches of what we're going to do, and what they intended to do, and that they were backing Reagan, and this new concept of decency, and biblical morality, and so on. And Moyers said, "I understand these people. I grew up among them in Marshall, Texas, and I once believed the way they did too" – these fundamentalist Christians. But he said, "In time, I grew more experienced, and I became acquainted with the real world. And I was disappointed then. I was saddened. I was just disappointed when I found the real world. And I have learned how to live now in the real world – the way things are." And then he said, "And these people in here, they're going to be disappointed too." And what he meant was that Jimmy Carter would win the election, and Reagan would not."

Now, if you don't know what the results were, I'm not going to tell you. You should be up on these matters. But the people in the auditorium were not disappointed. And I wish somebody would just get that tape, and play it again and again, for Bill Moyers, introducing his "Genesis" program. Wouldn't that be wonderful? These people who believe the literal interpretation of the Bible, and who believe what the Bible says literally – they're going to be disappointed. That would be a good way to introduce his program, and then to hold – put on the screen the results of the election.

I remember election night. I was driving the car. It was 6:30 at night. The radio news comes on, and says, "We have declared Ronald Reagan the president." I said, "What? Already?" And he said, "Yes, we have it." . . . I said, "You must be kidding." He said, "No we're not." Later, President Reagan said that he and his wife were taking a shower and they had just finished (probably separately, but maybe they have a big shower). But he said that they had just finished, and were both wrapped in towels. The news was playing. . . . He said that they heard it: "Ronald Reagan is declared the winner." He said, "We couldn't have been more shocked. The evening hadn't even begun." They had determined from their exit poles what the trend was.

Well, as I was driving down the street, I said, "How do you like them bananas, Bill Moyers? Now who's disappointed?" In the darkness, they're the people who are going to be disappointed, not the people in the light. You who are in the light – you're going to take a lot of flak, and you're going to take a lot of beating up, and you're going to take a lot of pounding. But you must never for one moment let anybody intimidate you, who know the Word of God, to think that you're in the darkness, because you're not. And no matter what your circumstances are, nothing in life is a problem for a person who's going to spend an eternity in the glory light of heaven. That is your inheritance. And that is not the inheritance of anybody else but those who have received (and trusted in) the Lord Jesus Christ. We will never reach our maximum enlightenment until we are in heaven. That's true. But in the meantime, we keep the light on, and intensify the light in which we stand by our learning of the principles of doctrine.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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