***Ignorant Intellectuals, No. 8  
  
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In our study of the book of Revelation, we are now on the letter to the church in the city at Philadelphia. This church has been promised that it would escape the judgments of God, which are going to be poured out upon all humanity in one climactic catastrophic blow, which, Scripture indicates, is a period of seven years immediately following the removal of the church from this earthly scene. That seven-year year period is called a time of tribulation.

**The Bible**

Every human being eventually makes a decision about the truthfulness of the Bible. That's where it all begins. Everything begins with whether you look at the Bible as a book of truth, or as a book that is not exactly true, or partial truth and partial falsehood. The claim of being a book from God is what everybody must face – whether it really is a book from God with spiritual truths which are not subject to human approval or to human ratification. Some people decide this issue about the Bible by actually investigating its contents. Others do it by simply ignoring the Scripture and accepting general attitudes and opinions that people have concerning the Word of God. The Bible is such an abused book, particularly in the hands of religious leaders today, that to most people, it seems like a ridiculous superstition. It seems to be a book which is only for the simple-minded, and it has no real importance. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth.

The reason this opinion (this attitude) toward the Bible is so prevalent is because Satan has very carefully manufactured that attitude. Satan has turned mankind against the Bible, because it alone stands in the way of his ambition to be like God and to rule this universe. If it were not for the Bible, humanity would have long since gone down the drain. It is the Word of God that has kept the hands of Satan tied, even though he is the ruler of the world system at this point in time.

**Ignorant Intellectuals**

So, the Word of God is of supreme and monumental importance. Satan is always out to undermine it. The way he has done this is by poisoning the thinking of mankind by a series of very influential and prominent men, over the period of some centuries, who came to some decisions on the basis of human reason, apart from the divine viewpoint perspective of the Bible. The human viewpoint opinions of these human good men now form the basis of all modern societies. If you're not aware that these men have lived, and if you're not aware of what these men have taught, then you have no connection with the general line of thinking that characterizes the people that you meet with every day, and that you are supposed to be a witness to. As a matter of fact, you are a sitting duck for being contaminated yourself by these lines of thoughts, because you're not able to spot them as they are promulgated against us from every conceivable source that surrounds us all the days of our lives: religious; educational; social; and, entertainment. In every direction, the ideas of these men is the basis upon which our society functions.

So, modern man now builds his civilization on the shifting sands of these human viewpoint illusions. They are illusions because they are out of touch with reality. As a result of these influential thinkers, men now believe that there are no absolutes of truth that are binding on human conduct. There is no recognition of a supernatural personal Creator as a source of life in all of its forms. There is no esteem for freedom based on free enterprise and the principle of the private ownership of property. There is no subjection to an inerrant Bible with authority that is above human reason and opinion. There is no compunction about using the public schools to bring about socialism based on the religion of secular humanism. There is no human soul and there is no real moral guilt, which can only be resolved for regeneration by faith in Jesus Christ. There is no basis for a rational, objective contact with God to give meaning to human existence. While these statements might be something that you would recoil from and say, "That's false," it is only because you have been informed. For most of the people that you know, every one of these statements is an accepted position. A person thinks that way, and he acts upon that viewpoint.

**Søren Kierkegaard**

We have come, in our series of men, to the man called Søren Kierkegaard. Søren Kierkegaard taught that truth was subjective, following the concepts of Kant and Hegel. Kant and Hegel interjected the poison into human thinking that you could only know what you could know through your five senses. Beyond that, you could know nothing. So, it's impossible to know anything about spiritual things and about God. Furthermore, thinking is relative. There are no absolute truths. What is right is right now. But it may not be right some other time. It is always a situation that determines the morality of the moment. Spiritual reality, therefore, with Kierkegaard, was to be found in how one reacts inwardly to external experiences. Kierkegaard said the truth is not out there. It is not in some propositions of doctrinal statements in a written Scripture. Truth about everything is how you feel about it. It's down deep inside of yourself.

So, he was the super subjectivist who turned completely opposite to the position of Scripture, which is super objective. The Bible says that there is an historic point in time where these realities were executed, and that the truth is based upon historical, real experiences, and that that is the foundation of our faith. It is not some blind leap into an absurd faith.

The truth with Kierkegaard was only what happens to a person – what he feels at any moment in time, not something external. So, we don't function under these external authorities of biblical truth. For Kierkegaard, life was absurd. It had no meaning. Man was seen as an island alone in the universe, left to make his own way as best he could – grappling and groveling along. The only important thing, therefore, under this condition, Kierkegaard said, was now. He was the father of the concept of "the now generation" – the instant gratification. That is the concept of having everything taken care of right now, at this moment, without any regard to the past or without any regard to the future.

Kierkegaard said that there was no way to have a rational relationship between heaven and earth. All you could have was a religious experience now. And you *pretend* that there is something out there? Kierkegaard said that there is no way to know what is out there. There is no way to know what happens when you close your eyes in death. Yet, there has to be something more. Something in his own soul cried out that there has to be something more. So, his position was, "Just make an absurd conclusion that there is something out there. Reason says that's not so, but make a leap of faith and say that there exists some reality beyond the senses, even though your mind says that that's absurd."

That was a pathetic place for a theologian (for a preacher) to come to. And yet, Søren Kierkegaard interjected a very serious poison into the mental thinking of the human race. It is really pathetic when you think about it, that some very famous, well-known evangelists can actually stand up and say that Søren Kierkegaard was an excellent example of a Christian theologian who has given us some very valuable insights. Most of the stuff that Søren Kierkegaard has given us is dumb, because it is out of touch with the reality of Scripture. Don't be deceived because some influential religious leader stands up and starts making cute comments about what Søren Kierkegaard has said. He is the father of everything that is tearing our society apart – the now generation.

The idea of existing at this moment expresses itself in all kinds of ways. It's always in advertising. That's the moment right now. Have you seen this ad about the lady with the headache? She says, "I have this headache, and it starts at the back of my neck and head, and then it creeps over my ear, first my left ear, and then my right ear. Then it gets over my eyes ... Then she takes this medicine, and instantly now in time, all that is solved. It's all a variation of the only one thing that's important – right now. Maybe you should have that headache. Maybe God is telling you something through physical signals that need to be corrected in what you're doing, and that's why the headache is there, and you need to act upon that physical correction in order to remove the headache. But the concept is now. No matter what came before, and no matter what the conscious consequences are going to be – it's all about now.

Well, the mental poison of Mr. Kierkegaard is expressed in a word that you've heard many times I know: existentialism. Existentialism is the concept of "everything is right now." This is where it's all at – at this moment in time. Forget the past. It had no effect upon this point. Forget the future. It will not be affected by what you do now. The belief that there are no absolutes and that neither the future nor the present are significant, but only the present, is the outcome of Kierkegaard's idea. Truth is subjective, so there is no definite reason for life or truth. What one does at any moment of existence has no relationship to what has been in the past or what's going to be in the future. Without truth, you're going to have to find some relative base for your life. Man has no meaning; no purpose; and, no significance relative to secular earthly matters.

So, what has taken place in the human race, as a result of this existential idea, is an extreme depressive pessimism. Depression overwhelms Western civilization today because there is a pessimism when you live under the condition that there is no future. What's it all worth? Do you realize what you're going to do? You're going to go to bed tonight. You're going to get rested, so that you can get up tomorrow morning and can go to work, so that you can tire yourself out, so that you can earn some money, so that you can come home and buy some food and pay for some necessities of shelter and clothing, so that you can get up again the next morning, and go and do it all over again, until further on down the line you finally die. That was the end result of Kierkegaard's thinking – that the only thing you have before you is to die like a dog.

So, when people stop and think about that, they say, "Why am I doing this? What is the worth of all this if there is nothing beyond the here and the now." Then they go to the next step. They say, "If that is all there is to it, then I have to grab all the gusto I can in life because it's only going to come around once. And the now becomes the focal point of everything they do, and they don't care about the future. That is true even when God steps in, as He always does. Right now in the sexual now revolution, God has stepped in with the mounting venereal disease of herpes for which there is no cure. A mother who gives birth to a child with that disease will almost always (99% of the time, and some doctors tell me 100% of the time), that child will be born dead. There is no way around it. The consequences are enormous to the person. There's no way out. There's a God in heaven saying, "You can't break My rules." And what is man doing now?

There was advertising over the weekend of a big program coming on tomorrow about people who are confronted with this, and how you can live with it, and how you can deal with this, and man is going to try to find how to keep focusing upon the indulgence of his now in violation of the principles of the Word of God, and still get around the consequences of that indulgence. Man has no meaning. So, he makes a non-rational leap of faith, and he pretends that there is some meaning to life so that he can find some optimism. The mass media conveys this philosophy of despair and relativism. Parents don't understand their children who are the products of higher education, who are educated in this non-antithesis frame of reference – that there is no difference between right and wrong. A and non-A are all the same thing. They're all mixed up, so that their children now have grown up in a society that does not distinguish between what are the rules and what are not the rules. Therefore, their children don't know how to do what their parents want to do when their parents say, "I want you to be a good boy and a good girl," because they don't know what is good and what is bad. The lines have been blurred, and the admonition is therefore meaningless because the child always looks at things in relative terms.

They say that it's bad to steal – if you get caught, but if you don't get caught, you'll sure enjoy it. The love of money is the root of all evil – not money. The *love* of money is the root of all evil: "But I'd love to practice that evil a lot, and have all that money." The lines of distinction are blurred. They don't know what is right or what is wrong.

Well, the goal of existentialism, therefore, is centered, as we have said, in experience – experience to try to contact the non-rational world (the world that is out there). That centers in proving that you do exist. As the illustration has been used, there's a little old lady standing at the curb waiting to cross the busy street. You can help her across, or you can run her over with your car. It doesn't really make any difference. You have proven that you are a person; that you exist; and, that you can make things happen. That's what existentialism does. It drives you crazy because you're under the sense that you can't make things happen. You are just helpless. You can't make things happen. So, even crime becomes a justifiable expression under this concept, because you are making things happen, and you are demonstrating that you are somebody; that you do exist; and, that you have some resources of reaction.

That, of course, has behind these horrible abuses of children that we read about. What in the world possesses a man who will take a baby, or even a mother who will take a baby, and because that baby is crying (indicating that there's some problem), and that baby is irritating that mother, and they take the child and put him in scalding water? Don't give me that: "Well those are crazy people." They're not any crazier than most of you are. ... They are just regular human beings like you, and if you met them and talked to them, you wouldn't find them any different than anybody else. But at some point in time, their "now" (that they have been trained to focus on), is being irritatingly frustrated. So they decide to take action against the thing that's frustrating them, and that crying baby is dumped into scalding hot water.

The overwhelming desire for a non-rational experience (a leap into some spiritual reality) is also the motivation behind drug usage. It's the motivation behind Satan worship. It's the motivation behind all of the occult. Any time you try to reach out to reality, and you reject the Word of God, you always go down. Man is enclosed to a world like this. He has this world that he exists in. This is all he knows. When he wants to break out of this world to reality, the reality is up here with the triune God. But that reality is only found in the revelation of Scripture. When man tries to break out of his world, he always goes down to demonism; to drugs; to sex; to brutality; and, to all kinds of expressions of his own experience. Anytime he tries to break out to some reality beyond himself, it always goes down toward what Satan has provided. It never goes up toward God.

The book of Romans has made that very clear when it says that, "There are none righteous. No, not one. There is none that seek after God. No, not one." We seek after Satan by nature. We do not seek after God. The Bible comes in and says, "Wait a minute. Here's the reality. Here's the information that you cannot secure by yourself. Here's the revelation that God had to give you. Now you'll know." Not until then do you know how to move on up toward the living God.

Count yourself blessed that, someplace along the line, because of your godly parents, or because of some influence of one kind or another of some concerned friends, you have been brought into contact with the Word of God. Nobody ever sits in this auditorium, I'll guarantee you, but it has been a supernatural experience, often without them being aware of it at the moment. It has been a supernatural drawing of God. We could have some very fascinating times the rest of this service, just by having people stand up and say, "Here's how I came into the Berean ministry, and into a Bible exposition type of teaching of the Word of God, and to the authority of the Word of God being upheld, above all, in the finest tradition of the reformers who brought us out of the dark ages of Roman Catholicism." It is God who puts His hand on you and leads you into that enlightenment. So, consider yourself blessed and chosen indeed. Otherwise, you'd be out here with all the rest of that sad, ignorant lot trying to punch your way out to some existential moment of reality, only to find yourself going down toward his majesty the devil.

Well, with the rejection of the Bible as the absolute authority and revelation from God, and His propositions of truth, the scene is set for the tribulation world. The tribulation world is a world that is going to be a demonic-worshiping world. The tribulation world is a world that will be completely under the domination of the now generation. It will be completely under the domination of existing for the moment. That's all that they'll know out there. Societies all over the world have been prepared for this by the concepts interjected by Kierkegaard.

The existentialism of Kierkegaard, then, meant that the individual exists in a world in which he must fend for himself. He must assume that there is no God, as far as his sense is telling him. But he must pretend that there is a God so that he can maintain some rationality. He has to work out his own values. Furthermore, he recognizes that he has to make choices. He never feels comfortable about those choices. He does not know what's going to happen as a result of those choices. He doesn't know where they're going to lead him. So, he views himself as a resident in an in inhospitable world fighting for survival, and it's a losing battle. And there is no meaning.

A few years ago, we were hearing the expression, "God is dead." That was quite a powerful movement, that "God is dead." That was Søren Kierkegaard's logical consequences again, because the Bible was a book that you cannot verify by your senses. It is a revelation from God. Therefore, the Bible became a book which was no longer relevant to man. If you're going to look within yourself for truth, then the Bible is of no meaning. So, everything that the Bible had to say about God was irrelevant. So, the expression was coined, "God is dead." He's irrelevant to modern man.

But for the Søren Kierkegaard type, that was uncomfortable. There are two variations of existentialism. One was the atheistic type. Atheistic existentialism was represented by Jean-Paul Sartre, a French philosopher, who recently died and discovered what a monumental mistake he had made. John Paul Sartre, the French philosopher, said, "There is no external authority given to man. There is no control factor anywhere in the universe." And that's the point. He rejected, therefore, all rules of morality. Sartre said, "If there is no God, then what is right is what is. What is right is what people agree to do. And that will be the prevailing rule in the tribulation period. That's why it was such a violently degraded, debased, evil society. It will revert to the same condition that Nimrod interjected before the flood in human society. Whatever people want to do, and whatever people will tolerate, that's what is acceptable. There are no rights and wrong.

**Atheistic Existentialism**

Atheistic existentialism said that man is never fixed, but that man is evolving all the time from his choices, and he's moving on from one choice to another, and that's all he's doing. But he has a lonely existence. He is hung over with anxieties, and down the line, there's only one thing, and that is death. Atheistic existentialism says that that's all that awaits him. Consequently, he's going to go out into nothing. Ultimately, no matter what you do in life, it's all going to come to naught. No matter how much you learn; how skilled you become; or, how good a person you become, death is going to wipe it all out. That is the frame of reference of the atheistic existentialist. It's a protest movement against mass society, in a way, to frustrate all individual attitudes and all individual thought.

**Theistic Existentialism – Karl Barth (Neo-Orthodoxy)**

Søren Kierkegaard's viewpoint was also taken up by the religious group, and they came with a theistic existentialism. This one was represented by a man named Karl Barth. Karl Barth was a Swiss theologian, and he was the father of a new kind of liberalism called neo-orthodoxy. The old liberalism had a terrible blow with World War I. The old liberalism, you remember, said that everything was coming up roses. Man was getting better, and society was getting better. Then, suddenly, we had World War I. So, it shattered them a little, but they regrouped their forces, and liberalism came charging right back. Remember that that liberalism had absorbed all these ideas that we've already looked at in the human race. The Bible was a zero book with them. It was all that which was within themselves. Then, along came World War II, and the horrible nightmare of Nazi Germany. That finished liberalism. Those preachers could no longer stand up and look their congregation in the eye and do any preaching about God and about the progress of the human race. They were shattered.

So, along came Barth, and Barth said, "You know, the trouble is that we don't have any authority. We've got ourselves off from the Bible. So, he returned to the basics of the Bible. And pretty soon, some fundamentalist Christians started getting all excited. The liberals were coming back home, because suddenly they heard, in liberal churches, talk about man being a sinner. Boy, they hadn't heard that in decades. Suddenly, they heard, in liberal churches, talk about the Bible being the Word of God. They hadn't heard that in decades. All the concepts of the knowledge of God through Jesus Christ suddenly began to be talked about. They talked about faith, and it suddenly became a big subject. They hadn't heard about that in a long time. Suddenly, it seemed that Barth had led liberalism back into a relationship to the Word of God.

But there was a rattlesnake in the woodpile, because Karl Barth still held the basic concepts of the higher critics. He still held to the principle that the Word of God was simply a book that men had written. It was full of mistakes, and human reason had to interpret it. So, suddenly, people discovered that there was no real difference. They were just using words that fundamental Christians used. Barth was still thinking of our friend Wellhausen, and his thoughts about the Bible being a good book that people had written.

Do you ever talk about the Bible as a good book? That makes my skin creep a little bit: "The good book." That is a human expression. It's not just a good book. It is *the* book. It is the Word of God. And it is not just some fine production of human writers that made a good book. So, the result was that Christians suddenly found themselves talking to people who talked about being saved, and they thought they were talking about what Paul talks about as being saved: trusting in Christ as Savior; and, securing absolute righteousness through faith in Christ, which you have to have to go to heaven. Instead, they discovered that when these people talked about being saved, they were talking about cleaning up the slums. They were talking about helping the poor have more food. They were talking about sobering up the drunks, and cleaning up the dope addicts. They were talking all about these social improvements, which, if you had, still would not take you into heaven. Hell is full of moral people.

So, Karl Barth was in the same position. You want to be careful that when somebody comes and they talk to you about God, that you be sure you understand what they mean by those terms, because Karl Barth was in the same position as Kierkegaard. For him, man had to make a non-rational leap of faith to optimism rather than to return to the historic view that the Bible is indeed the written Word of God.

So what does neo-orthodoxy do? It separates religious truth from contact with historical truth of Scripture. It pretends that Christianity does not exist in time and space. Don't be tricked by that. Christianity exists in time and space. As it has been said, if you had been in the city of Jerusalem, outside that wall, on the hill of Calvary, that hill which has the appearance to this day of a skull – if you had been on that hill, and you had walked up to the cross on which a man named Jesus of Nazareth was hanging in agonies preceding His death, and you rubbed your hand on that cross, it was real wood, and you could have gotten a sliver in your hand, and it would have hurt, and you would've had to pull it out. It actually took place. Whereas, Karl Barth is saying, "It doesn't matter whether it took place. Just pretend that it took place. Reason is not involved." And that's so false. Christianity is not a dummy faith. Christianity appeals to your reason. This concept that it's all within yourself (the emotionalism): how many times have you heard preachers say, "Now if you want to be saved, you have to have a heart faith in Jesus Christ, not just a head faith" – a heart faith and a head faith.

What is a heart faith, and what is a head faith? Let me see. There's a verse in the Bible that says, "For with the heart, man believes unto righteousness." So, a person is save by believing with his heart. Gee, I thought you had to think with your brain. But the heart is the place of thinking. There's nothing up in your head. Most of you know that. It's here in your heart. Right here in your heart is where you think. Right here in your breast – there is where your heart is.

Well, the subtlety was pretending that we are saved by some emotional reaction that has no connection with outward real truth. When the Bible talks about the heart, it means the mind – the mentality of your soul. So, the old Kierkegaard concept of theistic existentialism, under the form of neo-orthodoxy, came up with the odd situation that two mutually contradictory statements could still be true. That was what Kant told us. So, they said that Christ rose physically from the grave, because the Bible says He did, but He didn't, because we can't verify it. But it doesn't matter. Just pretend that He did.

Barth said, "There never was an Adam and Eve, and there never was a Garden of Eden. There never was a snake who attempted Eve, and there never was any fruit. None of that ever happened. But it's a good story, and just pretend it did, because it teaches a spiritual truth." So, suddenly, what happened was that theistic existentialism was trying to detach spiritual reality from historical truth – that's what I mean, that you'd get a sliver if you touch that cross. Do not fall for that line. Our spiritual reality is based in historical truth, and it is based on an external authority of the written Word of God.

When you can be smart enough (and nobody so far has been) to take the Word of God, and to prove that the Bible has ever made a false statement, or that it has ever been proven to be untrue, then you will have a basis for starting to reject the Scriptures. Nobody ever has, and nobody ever will. It is a supernatural book. Man could not have produced a perfect writing. Man could not have produced a book without self-contradiction over the span of centuries that this book was written. It is a book from God. Everybody has to make that decision someplace along the line. Everybody comes to the bottom line, which is: what do I think about the Bible? Once I decide that, I'll know what I think about Jesus Christ and everything else that goes with it that that Bible talks about.

So, for Barth, there's no clear line between being saved and being lost. There's no clear line between the world and the church. The reformation leaders stress that man can't save himself, but with his reason, he can search the Scriptures, and under the illumination of the Holy Spirit, he can find the answers to spiritual reality. That's why it's interesting to see these statues that have been erected, for example, in Geneva that we showed you at the banquet of reformation leaders. You will see how consistently and persistently their statues are made with a Bible in their hands. In one of them, the Bible is raised over the man's head – supreme demonstration that there is only one source of enlightenment for God, and that's the Word of God.

Now, Søren Kierkegaard poisoned our minds by telling us that we could not know spiritual things for sure. We had to just guess and pretend that they existed. That is a lie that Satan had to establish in order to proceed with his destruction of this world. Since men are finite, their reason cannot provide enough information to arrive at the absolute viewpoint of relating spiritual and earthly things. They have to have the Bible to do it. To find purpose in life, a person does not forget his reason, and take some blind leap of faith into the unknown. That is not true. What he does is he returns to the Bible as the source of information from the living God – a source of absolutes of truth. That's what he proceeds from. The basis for the idea that man can improve society by his own capacity, and that society is headed for a rosy future, is absolutely false. It is based entirely upon this idea of existentialism – that man, in his existence at the moment, can make something good happen, and that is absolutely false.

**John Maynard Keynes**

I have one more man, that I think you should know about, as the man whose thinking is going to be responsible for the nightmare of the tribulation world. This is the last one. His name is ... John Maynard Keynes. (That's pronounced as if it were spelled "Cains.") Everything that is taking place in our government today, you can lay at the foot of this man. Everything that is now being fought out in Congress, relative to the economic destiny of this nation, you can lay at the feet of John Maynard Keynes. One of the things that will characterize the tribulation world will be an impossible economic climate. It will be an impossible economic situation where people will not be able to put forth effort to exist, and be able to survive, because inflation will cut them to shreds. And it is Mr. Keynes who interjected the economic concepts into this nation, 50 years ago, that have now brought us to where we are teetering on the brink of national disaster.

**Fabian Socialism**

He was born in 1881 in England. He died right after the war in 1946. He was born into a prosperous, educated family. His father was a professor of economics at Cambridge University, and had a sympathy for socialism. Keynes's himself was educated at the elite school for the upper social classes of England at Eton, and then later at Cambridge University. He was a good and a top-ranking student. He was associated in his college days with a group of students who themselves were radical thinkers who were to become the leaders of Fabian socialism in England. They all belonged to a club called The Liberal Club. This is why I tell you that the word "liberal" is a dirty word in its real implications and meaning. These men, in time, became the leaders of Fabian Socialism. Fabian Socialism has brought the mighty British Empire to its knees.

The word "Fabian" comes from a Roman general. His name was Fabius, and he faced the famous Hannibal in battle. Fabius used the tactic of non-confrontation, and brought about the defeat of the invincible Hannibal. Fabius' principle was to avoid direct confrontation with the forces of Hannibal, but just to chew them up little by little, and to undermine them. It was an indirect approach during World War II, when the destiny of Australia hung in the balance. General MacArthur was taken out of the Philippians and put in command of the situation in Australia. The first thing they had to do was secure the strategic base of the island of New Guinea from which the Japanese were operating. General MacArthur used the same tactics of General Fabius, and MacArthur described this as "hitting them where they ain't." No sooner would they establish, by intelligence reports, where the Japanese were massed in strength, than MacArthur would bypass them down the coast, hit them where they were weak; establish a foothold; expand from there; and, surround the stronghold, so that the stronghold was now isolated, and then they would be left to die on the vine. Then they would move down the coast, and "hit them again where they ain't." The most important thing was no direct confrontation where the forces could come to disaster.

So, the word Fabian Socialism, from the name of the Roman general, means no direct confrontation with the government as you bring socialism into the economic lifestyle of the nation – putting it in little-by-little so that nobody realizes what is happening. This began at the end of the Great American Depression in the early 1930s, when this government gradually came under the control of men who believed in Fabian socialism. At the head of that group, leading that attack upon the American economic system, was John Maynard Keynes, as he was closely associated with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

This man, Keynes, at Cambridge, came under the influence of an outstanding Fabian Socialist professor, Alfred Marshall. It was Marshall who influenced Keynes to become an economist, and he became a professor of economy at Cambridge University. He also became the secretary of the Royal Economic Society, and he influenced this prestigious publication toward socialism. During World War I, he registered as a conscientious objector, and helped a lot of his leftist friends avoid military service. He was a very clever man, and as a result of that, through speculative investments, he amassed quite a fortune. He served in the British government as an economist, and was an adviser at the designing of the Treaty of Versailles.

Keynes believed that the capitalist system was absolutely anti-social. In the Yale Review, in the summer of 1933, just to give you a perspective now of where this man is coming from, he had this to say: "The decadent international, but individualistic, capitalism in the hands of which we found ourselves after the war is not a success (that is, after World War I). It is not intelligent; it is not beautiful; it is not just; it is not virtuous; and, it does not deliver the goods. In short, we dislike it, and are beginning to despise it." He is talking about free enterprise capitalism. This man wrote a book that was published in 1936 that was his most monumental work: The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money. He himself felt that this book would be a revolutionary volume. It would be a book that would turn economic theory upside down. He was exactly right, because that's what it did. This book decisively turned all previous economic principles around?

You can't appreciate the difference because most of you were not alive in those years following World War II, when the economic principles of Keynes became so absorbed in this nation. He changed the attitude of Americans on things that were unthinkable? For example, Keynes said that paper money did not need to have the backing of gold or silver. The reason for this was that (then) the government could print all the money it needed to pay for social programs. As long as money has to represent silver or gold, then you can't print more than you have silver and gold to back it. So, Keynes said that, "This is a barbarous metal. Let's get rid of it." He said that saving money was bad because it hindered the flow of money from hand to hand, which kept business humming. He said that savings were bad.

Many of you might say, "Well, I agree with him. I don't like to save. I like to get in there and spend it, and live it. You only come around once in life. Grab all the gusto." So, you live from paycheck to paycheck. You say, "This is the way it is. If I want something, I go out and I deficit spend. I spend money as if I had it. I just use this little plastic card. Then when I have to pay for that one, I use my other plastic card to pay for the first one. People walk around this long list of plastic cards. They're paying for one plastic card to the other. This whole concept of not saving was brought into the American attitude by Keynes. Keynes said business flows because people keep passing money along. You buy something, and I sell you something. I sell you something, and you buy something. Money keeps passing along. If you save it, that's no good. But of course, in modern civilization, if people saved money, who puts it in the mattress? Who puts it in the old cookie jar? Your grandmother. If you save money, it goes into banks. It goes into various financial institutions which are using your money. So, the money is being circulated. It is being put into use.

Keynes said that saving money was bad, but experience has now demonstrated that that's one of the worst things that has happened to us. When private business is not motivated to invest money, Keynes said (which will create jobs), then it's the government's responsibility to invest the money. This is bureaucratic planning. Somebody at the top has to invest money when people won't do it and when business won't do it. Businessmen say, "Hey, I'm not going to put my money into that. That's a bad investment." Then the government has to come and put the money in.

Now, that's an idea we've grown up with, but that was an idea that was absolutely revolting in all previous American history – that the government was to become an investor in business, because the government can only invest in business by taking it away from somebody else first.

I was watching Congressman Frost having a town meeting. One lady got up and pointed her finger at him and said, "We want some of that money from Washington coming down here to us, and we have put you in Washington to see that we get that money, and we want that money. And she kept running her fingers together as a symbol for money. And Congressman Frost sat they're looking frosted. What is he up against? He's up against this concept that the government is responsible to see that you get the money you need. If you can't get it from a job, then they are to take it from somebody else and give it to you. I wondered as I watched that lady whether she realized that that money she was asking for belonged to all the other people around her who had earned it, and who had put themselves out to secure it, and that the money she talked about being in Washington was money that government had taken from someone who had been productive.

But Keynes said that's the way it should be. Keynes said the government should manipulate the economy by taxation and investments in lagging industry. The goal of the national economy was not maximum production. Up to the time of Keynes, all governments took this attitude – that the goal of a national economy and the goal of government was to encourage maximum production: supply – produce. Then people will buy or not buy. Then business will be stimulated. Then jobs will be created. And somebody comes along and suddenly they've got something that nobody wants to buy. Like how many of you people are buying horse harnesses these days? Keynes said that you must not let the horse harness business go out. We must subsidize the horse harness business because we're going to lose jobs. The obsession was full employment. This is the man that created the words "full employment."

Therefore, Keynes came up with the dramatic new concept of economy which he laid out in his book: government should spend more than it takes in by taxation. Government should tax people, and then government should create programs that are more than those taxes will pay for. Then the government should make up for it by printing money and pouring it into the economy to pay for this. Keynes said that this will be like walking up to a country pump where you have to have a bucket of water there, and you pour the water down the pump to prime it, and then you start pumping, and the water comes out. Keynes said that if governments will do that (pour money down the pump in bad times), the money will start flowing, and business will start going, and then there will be so much money. We have to be fair to him. He did have a hope that, then, government would be able to pay off its deficit, and everything would be great. And then, when you're short again, prime the pump.

But the stinger in this was that when the politicians found what wonderful things could happen through a thing called inflation, which was printing this money for programs that they wouldn't dare tax people for, they suddenly realized that they had a wonderful bonanza in their hands for getting themselves elected year-after-year. So, as a key administrator in the Roosevelt administration said: "Tax; tax; spend; spend; elect; elect." That was the whole system summed up: tax; spend; and, get elected. And now what you and I are seeing is a nation struggling to disentangle itself from the poisonous thinking of John Maynard Keynes. There are a few things more that you should know about this. We shall look at this next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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