

We stated earlier in this article that children are being influenced earlier and earlier in their (not so innocent any longer) young lives to *accept* a world view of sinful acts and behaviors that are *not* in accordance with God's Word. If Christians have any intentions of reversing this trend, it is *imperative* that each of us shares the Gospel with as many as will listen — not only doing great things for the souls of *those* individuals — but *also* for the souls of their children who are being ingrained at such a young age with a *worldly* view rather than with a *Godly* view. Parents who become aware of the spiritual status of their *own* soul should instinctively pass on that awareness to their children. Applying Biblical principles from God's Word rather than worldly principles from secular and ungodly sources will improve society as a whole as more and more individuals align themselves with God's teachings.

The decay of society's desire to follow Godly principles is becoming more and more evident as evil and sinful behavior is being accepted as "normal." The shame and embarrassment that was once associated with sin, has morphed into pride and acceptance in a world that is flagrantly making efforts to deny that Christ ever existed — thereby denying the moral code demanded in God's Word. Blatantly embracing evil is one thing — and generally quite obvious to those who love God and follow His ways but the *subtle* efforts that so easily go unnoticed are the dangerous ones. Efforts such as —

- changing BC/AD to BCE/CE
- the gradual *acceptance* of previously shameful acts and behaviors as "normal"— e.g. living together out of wedlock or pregnancy out of wedlock
- educators teaching students that deviate behavior is not *wrong*, just "different"
- introducing Kindergarten age children to books like *Heather Has Two Mommies or Daddy, Papa and Me*
- the recent law removing the words "mother" and "father" from passports and replacing them with "parent 1" and "parent 2"
- *normalizing* the occult and witchcraft through popular TV shows and novels
- TV shows targeting teens that depict immoral and reckless behavior as normal

The list could go on and on. These *subtle efforts* are the things that are likely to corrupt the minds and hearts of the young and unsuspecting. It all just seems "normal" to *them* — they grew up with it — so they begin to deny God through their own *actions* — because they have *accepted* the unacceptable as "normal" — with no regard to God's Word in the matter. They will have been *successfully* immersed in a world view rather than God's Word being their foundation. Their own actions as well as their conciliatory silence regarding society's decay could very easily lead *them* as well as an entire country to destruction.

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# DILIGENCE

*"We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure." — Hebrews 6:11*

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Issue 1

## Without God in the World

Recently, while doing research to study the origin of the idea of BC (Before Christ) and AD (Anno Domini or Year of our Lord) — CE (Common Era) and BCE (Before Common Era) was presented as a "less Christ-centered approach" to replace the use of BC and AD. This is of course not new but it does illustrate the extent to which a *large* segment of mankind desires to remove *anything* that is a reminder of Christ. However, simply attempting to deny that Christ ever existed *can* not and *does* not change the historical facts regarding His life, death, burial and resurrection.

Without going into all the history of the designations of BC and AD, it is enough to say that the birth of Jesus the Christ was an event of such magnitude that calendars reflected its occurrence. Several centuries after the BC/AD demarcation for historical dates became popular, a movement among some scientists, historians and religious leaders referred to the time following the birth of Christ as the "Vulgar Era". Vulgar, at *that* time meaning "common" rather than distasteful or obscene — thus CE or the "Common Era".

In addition to the efforts to replace BC and AD with BCE and CE, there are numerous other ways in which people in current times are striving to eliminate the impact of Christ in the world *and* in their own lives. We should be thankful that — in this country — we are still able to express our beliefs as openly as we do today. This too could come to an end if people who view *any* mention or reference to Christ as distasteful are allowed to have their way.

For example — when some of us who are reading this were young, sinful acts and behaviors had a certain degree of shame and embarrassment associated with them and were therefore generally kept somewhat private. This is no longer the case. Many of those things are now rather enthusiastically embraced as causes not only worthy of public display but even flaunted — often for the purpose of fund raising efforts to *assist* those who are engaging in such acts and behaviors. The prevalent philosophy of today is that if there are enough people out in the open about their sinful acts or behaviors, society will become a support system to make their sins more acceptable and therefore have far less "painful" consequences — *rather* than society upholding Godly principles and continuing to associate shame and embarrassment with the sins. Additionally if one *fails* to equally embrace the sinful acts *society* has deemed acceptable, that individual is often portrayed as a "hateful bigot" — intolerant of behaviors that differ from his or her own.

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The need to teach young people Godly principles should be a high priority, but because society has *so* embraced the idea of *inclusion* — i.e. *accepting* as well as *supporting* — *all* sorts of evil, that is a very real challenge. It is a challenge however, that devoted Christians *must* accept as a part of their role as followers of Jesus Christ. It is hard to imagine the level of sin to which children are being exposed on a continuing basis. As they are taught to not discriminate and be inclusive of *every act* and *every* behavior, Godly principles are replaced with amoral secularism — each person determining his or her own morality.

God provides his Word as the text for instruction in Godly principles but too often — by the time it reaches the ears of our children they have already been immersed in the world view. Then — instead of God’s word being the *foundation* — it must establish itself as worthy of acceptance. And — unfortunately — when acceptance is defined in *world view terms*, God’s Word is framed as harsh and hateful. It is described as non-inclusive and intolerant of deviate behaviors.

Consider the battle that has occurred on an adult level concerning homosexuality and same sex marriage. When many of us were young this would not have even been a discussion. But, because of a constant and continual barrage of presenting homosexuality as a positive (and acceptable) lifestyle, failure to accept it is considered to be unseemly — simply *not* in keeping with the standard that is acceptable to modern day society. This is the same tactic used by the devil when he told Eve it would not be wrong to disobey God. Unfortunately public school systems have successfully taught — to *several* generations of children — that homosexual behavior is not wrong — just different.

In a similar manner, many of us grew up in a time when men and women living together (without marriage) as man and wife was frowned upon by society as a whole. But as with homosexuality, the practice of such a lifestyle is now portrayed as normal by society in general as well as on *numerous* TV shows. The “core” of those shows suggests that only a real prude still believes that individuals should not live together before marriage. In fact a couple of years ago — at a dinner we attended — several couples were present and one of the women who has several children boldly stated that she “*hoped* her children *would* live together with their would be mates before getting married.” She seemed to believe such an arrangement might increase their odds of having a *successful* marriage. (Statistics in fact show that just the opposite is true). Incidentally, that particular couple had married after *they* had lived together at a time when it was not as widely accepted. Unfortunately, they proclaimed then (and still do) to be good Christians, yet they hold this belief without any regard to God’s Word in the matter.

One of the arguments thrown around is that everyone sins, so why make such a big deal about lifestyles, etc. We have heard numerous parents make the statement that, “what are we supposed to do, young people are *going* to sow their wild oats...?”. Our answer is teach God’s Word and train them that it is then *their* personal rejection of His teaching if they choose to make sinful choices. Failing to teach God’s

Word to children because we lack the confidence they will obey it, is cowardice at its worst. Why not simply deliver them to the devil with intent and be done with it?

Lack of Bible teaching today is *granting permission* to the entire country as a whole to become saturated with false teaching of every kind. We must teach with great confidence that sinful acts are real as well as *offensive* to God and that they create a barrier to the peaceful relationship we should have with Him. Without calling sin, sin — silence is a form of endorsement.

Ephesians 2:1-3 states —

*“And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.” — NASB*

An understanding of this woeful spiritual status of mankind will never come from any source of education other than that of Biblical instruction. A lack of strong Biblical teaching over a period of years leaves many adults ignorant of their eternal destiny without obedience to God. *Ignorance* of the reality of heaven and hell does not result in the lack of accountability to God.

We must not only share the first part of the message in chapter 2 of Ephesians, but also the second part which follows in verses 4-10, for it is in *those* verses that a solution (or remedy) for that woeful spiritual status of mankind is given.

*“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared before hand so that we would walk in them.” — NASB*

Times in our country may become very difficult in coming years due to the Godlessness it has adopted as a “normal” and “acceptable” way of life with absolutely *no* awareness of the spiritual status of mankind. Our country is not protected from the fiercely negative impact of sins such as abortion, fornication, adultery, homosexuality, incest, etc. in our communities. Such sins are common to societies that depart from God and the teaching of His Word. The further a society moves from God and a knowledge of mankind’s lost condition, the easier it becomes to embrace evil as well as well as engage in numerous actions that are in opposition to God. It also becomes easier and easier to *succeed* at attempts to completely remove *anything* that is a recognition of God — e.g. changing BC and AD to BCE and CE.