

## **America's Rage Against Christ and His Kingdom:** *The Real Meaning and Consequence of Culture Wars*

By Charles Thomas Dennis, Ph.D.

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**T**here are only two explanations for man's existence, evolution or creation. If man were a product of evolution, then culture is the consequence of arbitrary principles that are forever changing based on the fatalism of chance. What occurs, due to the materialistic programming of each individual's brain activity—the product of electrical synapses and chemical reactions—is what can only be. English philosopher and atheist Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), explained this inevitability: “Brief and powerless is man's life; on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way.”<sup>1</sup> For those who believe this vein of thought, there is no logical account for moral absolutes; all man-conceived morality is relative, which in effect makes folly of any of their moral discussions. Culture is in chaos. There is no other choice.

Culture takes on a completely different meaning if man is a being created in the image of God. Since God is a moral being, then man must also be a moral being. Now, morality has a firm foundation: the nature of God Himself. Culture which is the association of like creatures bearing the image of their Creator is undergirded by moral absolutes. This is because all of God's creation operates based on the particular laws specific to each order. For humans, this means God's moral law, understood as the law engrafted in man at creation and because of “the fall” the law written in Scripture, summarized in the Ten Commandments. This understanding is stated in the Declaration of Independence as the “Laws of Nature and of Nature's God.”

Morality is fundamental to all cultures whether they admit it or not. It has a significant political characteristic in relation to American culture. This is the belief the Founders and Framers embraced in establishing our nation and framing our government. America is built on the conviction that only a nation which is under God will be a truly free nation. A nation under God is a nation who submits to His moral law. His moral law is what gives meaning to civic laws and guarantees equity for all. Conflict occurs with this necessary arrangement of law when not all the members of society desire to be under the protection of God's moral law. In fact, they do not want to have anything to do with God. This position is held by some religious as well as irreligious individuals and groups. This becomes extremely problematic when these people occupy the positions of leaders and magistrates. When this occurs, culture wars erupt. It must always be remembered that culture wars are moral wars, because social issues are moral issues. As a result these wars are against God's moral law and consequentially against Christ and His kingdom as the following will reveal.

It is an undeniable fact that America is at war with Christ and His kingdom. This reality is observable in certain actions of the State and those of the general populace who concur with the State's position. To level this charge of opposition to Christ and His kingdom is no slight accusation and warrants proof. The Bible details the dreadful condition of man with piercing clarity and finds it to be the indictment of God Himself. Our investigation begins with Psalm 1. This Psalm sets the tone for the entire Book of Psalms.

**1** Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. **2** But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in His law does he meditate day and night. **3** And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper. **4** The ungodly [wicked] are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind drives away. **5** Therefore the ungodly [wicked] shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. **6** For the LORD knows the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly [wicked] shall perish.

In this portion of Scripture is found the juxtaposition and dichotomy of the intrinsic conditions of man: the righteous and the wicked. There is no other demarcation. It is not about race, gender, age, economic strata, nationality, etc. Man either delights in the moral law of God or he disdains God's moral law, which is a primary indicator of man's view of God. The spiritual and cultural consequences: prosper or perish. Elaborating on this Psalm Matthew Henry (1662-1714), English Presbyterian minister and Bible commentator wrote:

This is a Psalm of instruction concerning good and evil, setting before us life and death, the blessing and the curse that we may take the right way which leads to happiness and avoid that which will certainly end in our misery and ruin. The different character and condition of godly people and wicked people, those that serve God and those that serve him not, is here plainly stated in a few words; so that every man, if he will be faithful to himself, may here see his own face and then read his own doom. That division of the children of men into saints and sinners, righteous and unrighteous, the children of God and the children of the wicked one, as it is ancient, ever since the struggle began between sin and grace, the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent [Genesis 3:15], so it is lasting, and will survive all other divisions and subdivisions of men into high and low, rich and poor, bond and free; for by this men's everlasting state will be determined, and the distinction will last as long as heaven and hell.<sup>2</sup>

It was not long after God created man that the conflict between good and evil commenced, and this Psalm makes plain the antagonism. Understanding these six verses of Scripture is very simple and does not strain the mind. There is no excuse for lack of comprehending their meaning. For those who either exhibit ambivalence or try to find common ground between these polar opposites, the problem is an unwillingness to admit the truth and a denial of reality, which today is all too common. The seriousness of the comparison cannot be overstated. Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892), English Baptist minister and one of the greatest preachers in the history of the Christian Church, explained the progression of the wicked:

When men are living in sin they go from bad to worse. At first they merely *walk* in the counsel of the careless and ungodly, who forget God—the evil is rather practical than habitual—but after that, they become habituated to evil, and they *stand* in the way of open sinners who willfully violate God’s commandments; and if let alone, they go one step further, and become themselves pestilent teachers and tempters of others, and thus they *sit in the seat of the scornful*. They have taken their degree in vice, and as true Doctors of Damnation they are installed, and are looked up to by others as Masters in Belial [used in this sense as Satan]. But the blessed man, the man to whom all the blessings of God belong, can hold no communion with such characters as these. He keeps himself pure from these lepers; he puts away evil things from him as garments spotted by the flesh; he comes out from among the wicked, and goes without the camp, bearing the reproach of Christ.<sup>3</sup>

With the extreme difference established between those who love God and those who despise Him, our investigation resumes with Psalm 2:1-3: “**1** Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? **2** The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, **3** Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.” This is the rebellion of all nations against Christ and His kingdom. The “bands” and “cords” represent the will and authority of the King of kings and Lord of lords. In relation to the obedience of the creature to his Creator, this will and authority is found in God’s moral law. The kinship of Psalm 2 with Psalm 1 is evident. The operation of Christ’s kingdom is directly related to His kingdom’s moral law; the wicked hate God’s moral law. Henry expressed it thus:

We are here told who would appear as adversaries to Christ and the devil’s instruments in this opposition to His kingdom. . . . Not the mob only, but the mighty (among whom one might have expected more sense and consideration) appear violent against Christ. . . . It is certain that all who are enemies to Christ, whatever they pretend, are enemies to God Himself. . . they are children of Belial [the same use as above].<sup>4</sup>

How does a nation in rebellion against God and His Anointed, “as adversaries to Christ and the devil’s instruments,” work to suppress the knowledge of Christ, His kingdom and God’s moral law? In a democratic system the answer should not be surprising. The rebellion is due to the actions of the rulers (magistrates) and the citizens who place them there supporting their policies. The actions in question by the magistrates are those that violate God’s mandate that “rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Will you then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and you shall have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to you for good. But if you do that which is evil, be afraid; for he bears not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that does evil.” (Romans 13:3-4) When this mandate of God is reversed by the rulers, when the good are treated as evil and the evil are treated as good then be assured Christ and His kingdom are under attack.

The first two verses of Psalm 82 address this issue: “**1** God stands in the congregation of the mighty; he judges among the gods [those who are like gods because of their positions and power]. **2** How long will you judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?” Concerning this passage, Henry stated: “God is pleased to make use of their service in the government of this

lower world; and magistrates in an inferior capacity are likewise the ministers of his providence in general, for the keeping up of order and peace in human societies, and particularly of his justice and goodness in punishing evil-doers and protecting those that do well.”<sup>5</sup> Only when leaders or magistrates of nations fulfill their fiduciary responsibility according to God’s delineation of good and evil do they operate legitimately on behalf of the nations they govern.

When they strive to do the opposite they are in rebellion to God’s mandate and are at war against Christ and His kingdom. Verses 3 and 4 of this Psalm reveal that the judges did not, “defend the poor and fatherless,” and “needy.” Instead, they gave deference to the “wicked.” Verse 5 reads: “They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.” The consequence of their reprobate governance is catastrophic to the foundation of social order. Again, Henry wrote:

They accepted the persons of the wicked because they were wicked; they not only countenanced them in their wickedness, but loved them the better for it, and fell in with their interests. . . . When justice is perverted what good can be expected? The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved . . . The miscarriages of public persons are public mischiefs.<sup>6</sup>

The relevance of this Psalm to our present national condition is apparent. It is plain to see that God is shaking America, as He is the rest of the world, and deservedly so. Verse 8 reads: “Arise, O God, and judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.” Spurgeon commented: “Come thou Judge of all mankind, put the bad judges to thy bar and end their corruption and baseness. Here is the world’s true hope of rescue from the fangs of tyranny.”<sup>7</sup> John Calvin, who had an immense impact on the Founders and Framers and their understanding of the “Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God” and form of government, commenting on this Psalm noted: “There is a certain devilish frenzy which infatuates the princes of the world, and leads them voluntarily to pay greater respect to wicked men . . . we have here condemned the monstrous stupidity of judges, who can remain indifferent and unmoved in beholding the horrible confusion of civil society, yea even the very earth shaken to its foundations.”<sup>8</sup>

The way God has orchestrated the governance of mankind—being created in His image—it is plain to see that when a nation rules against God’s moral law it rules against God Himself and His divine plan. This is truly “the monstrous stupidity of judges” as well as all rulers who follow suit. This leads us to Psalm 110, which states emphatically this is a direct attack against Christ and His Kingdom. The first two verses establish this fact: “**1** The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. **2** The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.” Spurgeon explained: “It is in and through the church that for the present the power of the Messiah is known. Jehovah has given to Jesus all authority in the midst of His people, whom He rules with His royal scepter, and this power goes forth with divine energy from the church for the ingathering of the elect, and the subduing of all evil.”<sup>9</sup>

This battle is not physical, but spiritual, yet it impacts the physical world, which is where the moral conflict is exposed. This conflict is not one that can be avoided; it is the nature of the case.

However, because it is a spiritual battle it should never equate to violence. It is a conflict of ideals that are derived from two totally different sources: the Redeemer and the tempter. Calvin added more clarity to the discussion of the attack on Christ and His kingdom when he expounded: “However numerous those enemies may be who conspire against the Son of God, and attempt the subversion of His kingdom, all will be unavailing, for they shall never prevail against God’s immutable purpose, but, on the contrary, they shall, by the greatness of his power, be laid prostrate at Christ’s feet.”<sup>10</sup>

Remember, this war in all its spiritual militancy was not started by the Church it was started by nations in league with the adversary of man’s soul. Jesus explained the battle this way: “The thief comes not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. (John 10:10) Henry added emphasis to this discussion when he elaborated:

Even Christ Himself has enemies that fight against His kingdom and subjects, His honor and interest, in the world. There are those that will not have Him to reign over them, and thereby they join themselves to Satan, who will not have Him to reign at all. . . . By the rod of His strength, or His strong rod, is meant His everlasting gospel, and the power of the Holy Ghost going along with it.<sup>11</sup>

The advancement of the kingdom of God is directly related to the preaching of the gospel. This results in impacting society by changed lives, brought about by God’s redeeming grace; as Scripture records, “they have turned the world upside down.” (Acts 17:6) With the expanding influence of Christianity, the dichotomy between the righteous and the wicked is magnified and spiritual conflict is unavoidable, thus the rage against Christ and his kingdom. This conflict is no more evident than in the ungodly or wicked policies government leaders execute that reflect their rage against God’s overruling providence and His moral authority. The governed are encouraged by these ungodly rulers (magistrates) in their sins and suffer the consequence of their own folly while the foundation of the nation crumbles. In Ezekiel 19:12, 14, it is written concerning the destruction of Israel : “her strong rods were broken and withered; . . . so that she hath no strong rod *to be* a scepter to rule.” Strong rods signify the leadership of a nation. These “strong rods” were “broken and withered” because they had become corrupt and wicked, and the majority of the nation reveled in the same debased behavior. The nation fell because it rebelled against God and His moral covenant. When a nation’s leaders fail in their moral responsibility and the citizens follow in their wake, there is no logical expectation but God’s judgment. The source of the destruction: “It was torn up in fury by the wrath of God.”<sup>12</sup> E. L. Allen expositing on this same passage stated the cause of God’s wrath:

Her fate was one of national suicide. She herself willed the policies which led to her undoing. . . . The lesson the prophet sought to teach his people was as salutary as it was unwelcomed. We all need it today. . . We need to learn that the fatal weakness is within ourselves, that just where we are confident and proud the fault begins which may one day destroy us, unless we guard against it in time.<sup>13</sup>

It bears repeating that the kingdom of God advances by the preaching of the gospel; God, by His

grace alone, saving the lost: and the redeemed engaging the culture. Culture engagement means true Christians standing for God's moral law and placing Christians in positions of authority—where Christianity and Biblical morality constitute the predominate influence on culture. Where the battle ensues is where the victory is accomplished. Again, this battle is not physical but spiritual. It is the natural consequence of the fulfilling of the plan of redemption. Scottish Presbyterian minister and theologian James Orr (1844-1913), gave an explanation of the moral relationship of the redeemed to his Maker that should be understood by everyone who professes Christ as Savior, who recognizes the plight of our nation, and who desires to see our republic restored:

Underlying a right conception of redemption is an adequate estimate of sin, and this connects itself, again, with just views of the character and moral administration of God. The ordinary theology has a clear and coherent doctrine on this subject. Sin, in its view, is not simply moral transgression—deviation from, or falling below, the standard of duty, or ideal of right, accepted by the individual conscience—but involves essentially a Godward relation, and has respect to absolute law. This necessitates as its counterpart the view of God as the Source and Upholder of moral law, Himself the ethically Good One, whose commanding will is the expression of His essential holiness, and whose administration is unchangeably directed to the maintenance of the good and the punishment of evil, the latter partly as a means to the recovery of the wrong-doer, but primarily as a reaction of His essential righteousness against that which infringes the moral order of the universe. Sin, in this view, is not that which must be, or ought to be, but is a violation of the normal relation subsisting between God and His moral creatures; the rupture of an original bond between the soul and God; an evil which has entered through the culpable misuse of human freedom, and which entails on the race that has admitted it a heritage of depravity and woe. Corresponding with this conception of sin is the idea of guilt, as not merely the feeling of self-blame at conscious deviation from a standard of the mind's own; but as having relation likewise to absolute law, and expressing the sense of accountability to God and of liability to the just effects of His displeasure. . . . The moral law is the expression of the doctrine of an essential righteousness of God.<sup>14</sup>

Within the realm of culture ethics plays an essential role, without which politics and governments become nothing more than domains of reprobates. In order for liberty to prevail, the ethical norm can never be less than that which can only be attained by a redeemed relationship of man with his Creator. Again, this is the cultural consequence of the proclamation of the gospel message punctuated by God's grace in the hearts of the hearers. Interaction of the truly redeemed cannot help but influence, for the good, any society in which they dwell. Unlike many of our current leaders, America's Founders and Framers were not ignorant of this causation. They recognized the necessity of national repentance and reformation in order to receive God's blessings and avoid His judgment. One shining example is found in the Continental Congress' proclamation of November 1, 1777. In this document is an appeal to "these United States" to confess their "manifold sins" and with "their humble and earnest supplication" ask "God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, mercifully to forgive and blot them out of remembrance." In addition to many other significant statements, the "United States" were to request of God that he might "prosper the means of religion for the promotion and enlargement of that kingdom which consists 'in righteousness,

peace and joy in the Holy Ghost [Romans 14:17].” The nation was asked by their representatives to pray God would advance Christ and His kingdom.

It is evident that today an enormous absence of moral leadership exists in America’s public square. Our culture has fallen to immeasurable depths of depravity and only a true response to a call for national and personal repentance will turn the tide of destruction. Christ and the advancement of His kingdom can never be thwarted. The issue is not who will ultimately prevail. The question is, “to what extent will America suffer God’s judgment before she turns from her wickedness and ceases her rage against Christ and His kingdom?” Or, will she continue to beg for complete devastation before God builds a new society on her ruins? Do the citizens of America desire to see their children and grandchildren dwell in a nation that experiences God’s blessings or His judgment? The signs are clear that judgment has commenced. Will America repent? God has set before America a choice of “life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life that both thou and thy seed may live.” (Deuteronomy 30:19) The wise will chose life and blessing.

America is experiencing a moral crisis of epic proportions that threatens her very existence. There is no substitute for the knowledge necessary to reestablish the bulwark, which is the only safeguard against the advance of tyranny. ***IRREFUTABLE: Why Christianity Is the Irrevocable Foundation of American Liberty*** exposes the truth necessary for stability to be restored.

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### Notes

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3. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David* (New York: I. K. Funk & Co., 1882), 1.1-2.
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