Happy Marriage WHY ON EARTH?

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Is Masculinity Really Toxic?

Forgotten History That Reveals Our Future!

ost of you reading this live in safe, stable neighborhoods—some of you have lived in the same home for decades. Many enjoy the stability of a long-time residence, sending their children to local schools, knowing and trusting the neighbors, and the financial stability of paying off a home. However, life is not that way for everyone.

Today, we see mass migrations as people pick up what possessions they can carry and flee violent conflicts or set out for a better life. This is true in the Middle East and Africa, as well as in Central and South America. Millions fled Syria, not because they hated their birth country, but simply to survive. Although circumstances differ, we see mass migration out of Venezuela. People love their homes. They love their countries and their cultures, with their unique customs, foods, and ways of life. We can only imagine what it is like and mourn for those who must uproot their old lives to seek new lives elsewhere. It is difficult for most of us to fully understand what they are going through.

Moreover, it is difficult to imagine that in North America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and other currently stable countries, we could someday be in the same situation. What must it be like to lose everything you have worked for and set out to a destination unknown?

Mass deportations and migrations are not new. Just prior to the Second World War, thousands of Jews and others packed up and left Europe before escape routes closed, and those left behind found themselves captives in a hellscape, captives of the Holocaust. The American Dust Bowl and Great Depression years saw many in Oklahoma lose their farms and homes to start anew in the Central Valley of California. Others fled Russia during its revolution, earlier in the twentieth century.

Forgotten History, Lost Understanding

Most professing Christians are woefully lacking in understanding of the Bible and the history of the Israelite peoples. They do not know that the Jews were only a small portion of what was known as the nation of Israel, yet this is evident in the Bible for any who care to read it. After King Solomon's death, his son Rehoboam so angered the northern ten tribes that they rejected him as king and split off into a separate nation, retaining the name "the house of Israel." The Jews and Benjamites were left to form the house of Judah, still in allegiance to the throne of David and keeping Jerusalem as their capital. This is all a matter of history (1 Kings 12) and has relevance for our modern world.

One of history's greatest forced migrations occurred in the eighth century B.C., when the Assyrian Empire

overthrew these northern ten

tribes and relocated the population to an area between the Black and Caspian Seas.

More than one hundred years later, the Jews were also taken captive, but this time by the Chaldeans, who transported them to Babylon. It is difficult for Americans and British-descended peoples to relate

to losing on the battlefield and going into captivity, but Bible prophecy declares it will happen again—to us!

Think it can't happen? The United States still stands as a beacon of hope, the "Promised Land" for millions seeking safety and a more prosperous life. But all is not well beneath the surface. Consider America's debt of \$22 trillion and how divided the nation is. Yes, we look like the "king of the hill" at the moment, but can a house so badly divided against itself stand? And how long will a loving Creator tolerate our moral cesspool of casting off all restraint? How long will He tolerate the murder of millions of innocent babies, even *up to the moment of birth—and after?*

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The house of Judah became the people we know as the Jews, but what became of the the ancient house of Israel, to the north? That portion of Abraham's descendants are sometimes referred to as "the lost ten tribes," because most historians don't seem to know where they disappeared to. But are they truly lost?

They are certainly *not* lost at the end of the age, and the Bible describes them as being a people clearly distinct from the Jews. The prophet Ezekiel told of a time yet future when both Israel and Judah, represented by two separate sticks, will be gathered together and no longer divided (Ezekiel 37:15-24). How can this be if one "stick" does not exist?

At that time, ancient King David will be resurrected and made king over all twelve tribes of Israel, and the twelve Apostles of Christ will each rule over one of the tribes (Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24; Matthew 19:28). Why is that message neglected in the churches of our lands?

If the Jews and Israel are two distinct groups and both exist at the end of the age, the thinking person ought to be asking, "Who are these lost tribes? Can they be found?" You should care about the answers.

The Missing Key

In the Bible, we read of end-time prophecies concerning Jerusalem and Damascus. There are also prophecies regarding Egypt, Ethiopia, and Libya—nations dwarfed by China, Russia, and India. If the Bible is relevant for all ages, why would we not expect to read about the United States, Britain, France, and Germany? The answer is that we do read of them, but not by these modern names.

Some prophecies apply to regions of the earth, such as that of an army of 200 million men coming from east of the Euphrates River (Revelation 9:13-16). Interestingly, that is the only region of the world that could quickly muster such an army.

Other prophecies are more specific and apply to nations in which many of you currently live, but those nations are referred to by their ancient names. Understanding the identity of modern nations provides the key to understanding end-time Bible prophecy, and the biblical picture for our day is not pretty, at least in the short term. Our Western nations have rejected our Creator, and our Creator is going to reject us: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you

have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children" (Hosea 4:6).

One of the most important publications we have ever offered is The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy. You need this resource, as it opens a world of understanding. Another resource is a crucial article, available upon request, which identifies another ancient nation: "Resurgent Germany: A Fourth Reich?" The ancient Assyrians are rising again, and the United States is encouraging them to do so, calling on them to spend more on defense. We haven't learned the lesson of two world wars.

I understand that it sounds preposterous to assert that America and the British-descended peoples are going to be conquered and taken from their comfortable homes into slavery, but it will happen. Note that you read it here. We are in for some startling events in the years just ahead—events that will propel our world toward the climax of the age.

Religious persecution, unthinkable three decades ago, is even now a reality in the United States, Canada, Australia, and parts of Europe. Biblical values, once the bedrock of our civilizations, are being cast off at lightning speed. Our world is descending into chaos, morally and geopolitically. As Robert Kagan writes in The Jungle Grows Back: America and Our Imperiled World, "[W]e have now forgotten, that when things start to go wrong, they can go very wrong very quickly, that once a world order breaks down, the worst qualities of humanity emerge from under the rocks and run wild" (p. 24).

Prepare for troubled times ahead. Going "off the grid" will not save you. Continuing to "serve God" with comfortable pagan practices will prove a fatal mistake. Our peoples need to repent of rejecting our Creator, taking Him for granted, and attempting to reshape Him into our own image. The world we know is coming to an end. Exactly how soon, I cannot say, but the handwriting is on the wall. Much has yet to happen in the fulfillment of end-time prophecies, but there will be surprises along the way for many-and when the end comes, it will come suddenly.

July Wester

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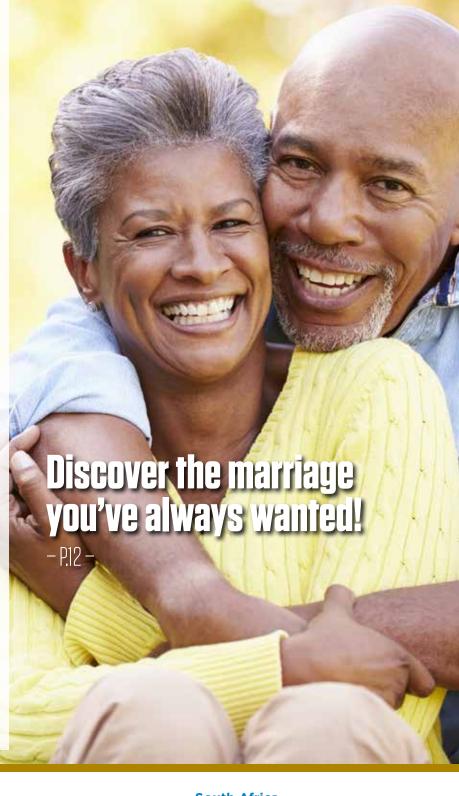
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By Wallace G. Smith

t's a confusing time to be a boy. Some tell us that the word "boy" is a nonsense word—just one small dot on a continuous spectrum of "gender" choices. Others tell us that "boy" is a well-defined word, but that it can apply to those of either sex, male or female, depending on how they feel or choose to "identify."

And then there are those who declare that the collection of tendencies that often characterize boys and men—what many call "masculine traits"—are potential sources of harm, both to themselves and to those around them. Such people would define these personality traits and gender-based predispositions as "toxic" characteristics to be overcome. In fact, some claim that such masculine traits risk causing mental disorders, and that societal intervention is necessary at the earliest stages of life to ensure that boys avoid embracing these traits as ideals, lest they bring permanent harm to their psyches and become violent abusers of those around them.

The confusion caused by all of this extends beyond boys. It is a confusing time for men, in general, and for the girls and women in their lives who love them.

Is masculinity—the collection of traits commonly and traditionally associated with men—a source of mental illness? Is masculinity toxic? How would we know?

There is clarity to be found on this issue, but not among many considered to be "experts."

Masculinity as Mental Illness

Earlier this year, the American Psychological Association (APA) released an attention-getting new publication: *Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Boys and Men*. In it, the APA vaguely describes "a particular constellation of standards that have held sway over large segments of the population, including: anti-femininity, achievement, eschewal of the appearance of weakness, and adventure, risk, and violence. These have been collectively referred to as traditional masculinity ideology" (pp. 2–3).

Their conclusions about this "traditional masculinity ideology" could hardly be more blunt. As stated by Stephanie Pappas in an essay on the APA website, research allegedly shows that "traditional masculinity is psychologically harmful" ("APA issues first-ever guidelines for practice with men and boys," *APA.org*, January 2019). This conclusion is "the main thrust" of the APA's research on the matter.

Only months earlier, the APA described the "patriarchal ideal masculine construct" as including elements such as "toughness, heterosexism, self-sufficient attitudes and lack of emotional sensitivity" ("Harmful masculinity and violence," *APA.org*, September 2018).

To combat the problem of such masculine ideals, the APA recommends intervening in the lives of boys early on, to "decrease [each] adolescent's acceptance of traditional gender roles" and creating "marketing campaigns designed to modify social and cultural (Of course, the idea that Gillette did not hope to sell more products through the use of such an advertisement would be a naïve one.) Running at a little under two minutes, the video effectively—however mistakenly—paints the history of men as one in which the entire gender has not done enough to curb its own toxicity.

At many points in the video, the preachiness of its message peaks in a particularly soul-grating manner. For example, a little more than 30 seconds in, we see a collection of more than 15 men—each standing stoically behind his own, individual backyard grill—chanting, "Boys will be boys," in cult-like fashion, as they watch a young child bullying another one on the ground in front of them, no one intervening.

For all the voices defending the commercial and claiming that it was intended only to narrowly target bad behavior and not to indict all men, the careful design of scenes such as that one paint the opposite picture. The image of an army of men stereotypically

grilling and allowing one child to abuse another as they watch, until one lone, enlightened fellow repents and stops the bully, communicates a clear sentiment: Men, by and large, are the problem, and

MISBEHAVIORS SUCH AS BULLYING AND THE DENIGRATION OF WOMEN ARE NOT CONSIDERED TO BE DEVIATIONS FROM TRADITIONAL MASCULINITY. THEY ARE TREATED AS ITS NATURAL MANIFESTATIONS.

norms that endorse the unhealthy male code" (*ibid.*). And in the area of marketing campaigns, famous razor company Gillette was only too happy to oblige.

The Best an Ad Can Get?

Gillette has long used the motto "The Best a Man Can Get" to sell its line of shaving products. But, inspired, perhaps, by the popularity of the #MeToo movement and the attention given to the idea of "toxic masculinity"—and surely with a conscious eye toward their history of commercials featuring stereotypically beautiful women stroking the clean-shaven face of stereotypically handsome and athletic men—Gillette decided to wade into the gender wars with its own public declaration of loyalty to the social engineers seeking to rewrite what it means to be male.

The result was a feminist-designed commercial geared more toward chastising men than selling razors.

traditional masculinity (after all, "boys will be boys") is a wrong in need of righting. Apparently, misbehaviors such as bullying and the denigration of women are not to be seen as deviations from traditional masculinity. They are to be seen as its natural manifestations.

The idea that a corporation—and one in the news at the time due to concerns about shady business practices—would so blatantly decide it had the moral authority to instruct the men of the world about how they should behave generated a great deal of resentment. But more offensive than the messenger was the message itself. As of this writing, the video has been viewed almost 30 million times on YouTube, garnering 1.4 million dislikes and more than 423,000 comments.

But the culture warriors and social engineers determined to treat traditional masculinity as a defect to be fixed continue their march, undeterred. And the pressure to bow to such ideas is very real—and growing.

In her classic and, regrettably, accurate book The War Against Boys, libertarian feminist Christina Hoff Sommers identifies many of the social forces bearing down on boys and young men, seeking to turn them into something other than what boys and young men naturally are.

Boys today bear the burden of several powerful cultural trends: a therapeutic approach to education that valorizes feelings and denigrates competition and risk, zero-tolerance policies that punish normal antics of young males, and a gender equity movement that views masculinity as predatory. Natural male exuberance is no longer tolerated (pp. 39-40).

As Sommers explains, at some point in the past,

...it became fashionable to pathologize the behavior of millions of healthy male children. We have turned against boys and forgotten a simple truth: the energy, competitiveness, and corporal daring of normal males are responsible for much of what is right in the world. No one denies that boys' aggressive tendencies must be mitigated and channeled toward constructive ends. Boys need (and crave) discipline, respect, and moral guidance. Boys need love and tolerant understanding. But being a boy is not a social disease (pp. 3-4).

Is Sommers correct, and is natural masculinity a generally positive force, "responsible for much of what is right in the world"? Or are the American Psychological Association, Gillette, and other "enlightened" social engineers on the right track as they zealously seek to press men into a new mold of their own design? Will we only be freed of problems of bullying and misogyny, and will boys only be safe from mental harm and violent futures, if we throw off the shackles of traditionally masculine ideals and embrace the more neutered variety of "man" they are ready to prescribe?

Different by Design

It is true that individuals differ from one another, including within a particular sex. The accumulation and distribution of our individual traits and personality quirks can hardly be specified by only one variable even one as enormously important as sex.

But it is just as true that there are real and significant differences between those of the male sex and those of the female sex, and this should be no surprise! For the Creator of humanity, the God of the Bible, designed us this way. Jesus Christ declares, "He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female" (Matthew 19:4). No, gender is not fundamentally a socially constructed reality, and, no, there is no "spectrum." Humanity comes in two varieties by design, according to the will of the Designer.

As unfathomable as it may be to those who prefer to fantasize about creating a mythical genderless utopia, the differences between male and female continue to manifest themselves in society—century after century, and in culture after culture. Yes, there can be remarkable individual differences between eras and cultures, and yes, there are remarkable differences between individuals even within the genders themselves. But the basic tendencies are there for anyone to see.

Once we recognize that the sexes were *created* to be different, we also see the simple solution to our dilemma: If we desire to understand the sort of masculine ideals to which men should aspire, we should look at the instructions our Creator provided and the men He puts forward in His word as our examples.

Real Masculine Ideals

When we look to the Scripture as our guide to discovering the characteristics of a healthy masculine identity, we find many of the very traits the APA warns men against.

For instance, consider the typical masculine trait of valuing self-sufficiency or self-reliance. The Apostle Paul says plainly in Ephesians 5:23 that in a family, the husband is to lead—which, speaking biblically, means devoting himself to serving others (Matthew 20:25-28). Paul elsewhere says that a man who does not provide for his own family has "denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Timothy 5:8). Inherent in these ideas is the need for a man to develop an ability to apply his own skills and resources and become one whom others materially depend upon, not one primarily dependent on others.

Of course, difficult times can come, and illness and injury beset us all (Ecclesiastes 9:10–11). But for men who have the capacity to work but *refuse* to do so, Paul is plain: "If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat" (2 Thessalonians 3:10)!

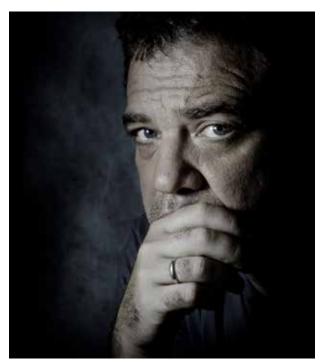
Men long to be able to be self-sufficient and to produce, of their own efforts, that which is needed for others to survive. That drive is part of a man's fundamental nature, and society diminishes that drive at its own peril.

What about a "lack of emotional sensitivity"? Actually, the men of the Bible were a passionate bunch—a characteristic on vibrant display in the psalms of King David of Israel. At the same time, the ability to emotionally detach oneself from the circumstance at hand in order to "get the job done" is a praiseworthy trait, allowing for clarity and achievement at times when emotions would be crippling.

We see this in King David, as well. At one of the lowest points of his life, his own son, Absalom, attempted a coup to take the throne of Israel from him. When David's soldiers killed Absalom, ending the conflict, David was inconsolable at the loss of his son. Yet, at the advice of his military leader, Joab, the king pulled himself together, suppressed his emotions, and appeared before his men in appreciation for their loyalty, support, and sacrifice. Sometimes, a stoic ability to remove feelings from the equation is a real necessity, and the ability to do so when the moment calls for it is a masculine ideal.

Consider, perhaps, some of the more controversial traits associated with "traditionally masculine ideology": assertiveness, aggressiveness, and a willing readiness to confront and be combative. Surely such characteristics are always negative. Aren't they?

No, not according to the Bible. The Apostle Paul boldly confronted the Apostle Peter "to his face" when the latter began behaving hypocritically toward the Gentile believers after Jewish leaders arrived among the congregation (Galatians 2:11–14). Jesus Himself overturned the tables of the money changers in the Temple—surely scattering their contents all over the ground—and then made a whip of cords and physically drove the merchants out (Matthew 21:12; John 2:14–16)! He acted in righteous indignation at their defilement of His Father's house!



But was Paul's confrontation with Peter—or Jesus' (dare we say it?) violent reaction to the descecration of the Temple—an example of toxic masculinity? No! There are times and places for confrontation and conflict, and possessing the capacity to stand up and personally confront evil is a worthy ideal of masculinity to which men should aspire!

Do we want to live in a world in which a husband and wife might be awakened in the dead of the night by the sound of breaking glass downstairs, only to have the man turn to his sweet wife and say, "Darling, I checked for burglars last time, and this time it's your turn to go downstairs while I stay safe up here"? Or can we agree that assertiveness and aggressiveness may have a healthy place within the halls of ideal masculinity?

The Bible paints a picture of manhood that involves *many* ideals. The men God provides as examples show boldness, strength, toughness, courage, stoic focus, and a willingness to confront without hesitation when confrontation is needed. They also show gentleness, compassion, and concern for others—demonstrating that traditionally masculine traits are not somehow inherently incompatible with other traits.

MASCULINITY CONTINUES ON PAGE 32

WHY GENDER CONFUSION?

Male and female He created them.

s gender really a matter of choice? God's teachings clearly tell us otherwise. Years ago, a commercial featured a little boy and girl having a conversation about taking photographs. A line in the ad was, "You can take pictures of the opposite sex." Innocently, the little girl asked the boy, "Am I the opposite sex or are you?" Today, however, some would incorrectly answer, "Neither."

Defying the Obvious

Some things are too obvious to rationally question. Is something up or down, black or white, hot or cold? Physical facts determine the answer. But in the mixed-up, confused times we live in, some people defy the obvious and embrace a disturbing and unreasonable view, based not on fact or truth, but on what they want reality to be.

Nowhere is this more clearly demonstrated than in modern social engineering, in which individuals deny the fundamental, biological connection between "gender" and "sex." One's gender is obvious and becomes apparent at birth! However, the courts of our

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time have declared denial of obvious facts as a civil right. Many government jurisdictions have taken up

the cause, attempting to alter regulations regarding which public toilet and bath facilities a person can use. In elementary schools, colleges, universities, and athletic facilities, this creates awkward and potentially dangerous situations for children, teens, and even adults. What could possibly go wrong in these unnatural situations? Plenty!

Certain municipalities, state governments, and church groups have pushed back against such foolish and ill-conceived policies, but on all levels, there is pressure to implement "non-discrimination" policies based on "gender identity." Why is a small minority forcing something so obviously wrong upon society? If you think about it from a biblical perspective, the answer becomes clear.

The book of Genesis states, "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created

him; male and female He created them" (1:27). Genesis 5:2 repeats this. Additionally, Jesus Christ, dealing with the hard-hearted Pharisees on the matter of divorce, said this: "But from the beginning of the creation, God 'made them male and female" (Mark 10:6).

A More Fundamental Denial

In light of this, it becomes obvious that to deny one's gender is to deny both creation and its Creator. Our Creator determined our genders when He created the

Denial of the Creator is the underlying reason for the almost universally accepted concept of macroevolution. human race. If people deny that God exists and that His word is truth, they deny His laws and purpose, which exist for our good. In fact, denial of the Creator is the underlying reason for the almost universally accepted concept of macroevolution. Darwinian evolution is only a hypothesis, easily disproved, since the "transitional forms" needed to validate it are totally missing.

Yet this world's education teaches it as an undeniable fact, while ridiculing the creation account found in the Bible—and it is even now doing the same thing by redefining "gender" and venerating worldly perceptions while deriding biblical truths.

This is not new. The Apostle Paul encountered it in his day, and wrote eloquently about it, saying, "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made... although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.... And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to *a debased mind*, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality.... [They are] haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things" (Romans 1:20-32).

-J. Davy Crockett







The clock ticks at an astonishing rate.

Numbers in the far right column change before they can even be read. Higher and higher they go. This is no ordinary clock. It is a "debt clock" that allows viewers to watch as Canada plunges further into the abyss

of debt. At the time of this writing, the clock reads \$690.8 billion and climbing.

Were Canada's debt divided evenly among its citizens, each person's share of the debt would be \$18,688. But that is only one person's share of the *national* debt. Readers in British Columbia would each need to add \$14,200 more to account for their share of the *provincial* debt. Those in New Brunswick or Ontario would need an additional \$18,206 and \$21,724, respectively. Other provinces are in a similar condition.

While you may not have been aware of the specific numbers, the fact that Canada and most other Western nations have put themselves in such an incredibly poor financial position is likely unsurprising. Many are quick to blame the government for the failed policies and dismal planning that have certainly contributed to the current situation. Less frequently discussed, however, is the looming crisis of dangerously high levels of *house-hold* debt.

Household Debt

Speaking at the Chamber of Commerce in Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories, Stephen Poloz, Governor of the Bank of Canada, stated succinctly, "For most Canadians debt is a fact of life, at least at some point" ("Canada's Economy and Household Debt: How Big Is the Problem?" *BankofCanada.ca*, May 1, 2018).

Canadian household debt has surpassed \$2 trillion. That's an *additional* \$54,000-plus per person.

Two trillion dollars can be difficult to fathom, so it is often broken down and described in terms easier to comprehend. Comparing debt to disposable income (how much income remains after taxes) can help paint a clearer picture. Canadians, on average, owe roughly \$1.70 for every dollar of disposable income. Poloz describes this figure as "a Canadian record, and up from about 100 per cent 20 years ago." A rise of 70 percent in 20 years should be enough to give everyone pause. Of course, there are some who are debt-free, and others who have their debt well under control. Consider that a mere 8 percent of Canadian households owe more than 20 percent of that \$2 trillion in household debt.

A recent *Global News* article highlights just how little financial wiggle room many Canadians have:

For 10 per cent of Canadians, the margin of error when it comes to household finances is even thinner, at \$100 or less. But those with anything at all left at the end of the month were in better shape than many: A whopping 31 per cent of respondents said they already don't make enough to meet all their financial obligations (Erica Alini, "Over half of Canadians are \$200 or less away from not being able to pay bills" *GlobalNews.ca*, May 8, 2017).

Changing the Way We Live

It is not surprising that the current economy is affecting the way Canadians live their day-to-day lives. Home ownership used to be a "life milestone," viewed as an

eventuality for most. One would expect to graduate, get a job, marry, and buy a home. In August 2017, *Maclean's* ran a headline that bluntly stated the new reality. "For many young Canadians, home won't be a house" (Kevin Carmichael, *Macleans.ca*, August 14, 2017).

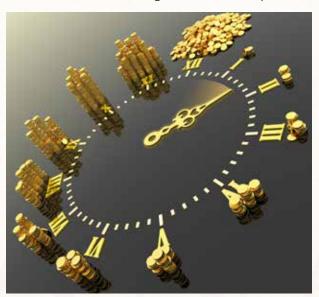
The article goes on to say,

There was a time when Canada built more single-family homes than multi-family units. The relationship has reversed, and the gap between apartment living and the prospect of backyard barbecues has never been wider in Canada's cities... A generation of Canadians that took space for granted is now discovering that their future will be measured in 900 square feet or less. That needn't be a big deal, except... it is a big deal for a lot of people.

Research has verified what most already know to be true. Being in debt greatly affects how one makes important decisions in life. Those with significant debt are far more likely to put off marriage or having children (Shankar Vedantam, "How Student Debt Affects Personal Choices of Young People," NPR.org, June 8, 2016). It remains to be seen just how this continuously soaring debt will affect many aspects of life.

Finding Contentment

Debt is not a place in which most people would like to find themselves. Breaking free from debt requires



taking a close look at our activities, habits, and priorities. While not every personal debt is the result of poor decisions, much of the debt that burdens people is the result of wanting the latest piece of technology, the

Research has verified what most already know to be true. Being in debt greatly affects the important decisions in life.

bigger house, the faster car, or designer clothes.

King Solomon wrote about the folly of materialism: "He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; nor he who loves abundance, with increase" (Ecclesiastes 5:10). For many, enough is just never enough. If your priorities are material, ask yourself if those physical items really provide the key to a productive and

happy life. Debt and stress often go hand in hand. That momentary rush from a new purchase may quickly be replaced with anxiety, worry, and fear, if it results in greater debt.

One of the keys to escaping debt is learning to be content. Contentment does not mean we never strive to improve ourselves or our economic situation and circumstances. Rather, it means learning to find happiness that is not dependant on the material aspects of life. The Apostle Paul experienced many highs and lows throughout his life. He described to the church at Philippi the necessary quality of being content, something he learned through many trials and difficulties:

I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need (Philippians 4:11-12).

Contentment is not a function of how much one possesses, but rather of one's outlook on life, and one can learn to acquire that outlook. It follows from learning to truly value the more important things in life, such as friendship and the beauty of our everyday lives. And it can be built on a reputation for honour, diligence, and godly living. And it provides a means of escaping a destiny of debt.

-Michael Heykoop



Even while the Western nations are forgetting what marriage truly is, you can have the happy marriage God intended you to have. The truth about marriage isn't found in any nation's legislation; it is found in the sound principles for Christian marriage contained in your Bible! Use these principles to make your unhappy marriage happy, or your happy marriage even happier!

By Richard F. Ames

or many in today's society, marriage just isn't what it used to be! Couples in the United States and many other countries are marrying later in life than ever before... and these couples pursuing marriage now include male-male and female-female pairs. A few at the extremes are even exploring sologamy and polygamy—one-person and three-or-more-person "marriages." Most of us today roll our eyes and scoff at the idea that our nations might ever embrace such arrangements, but let's not forget that the idea of same-sex "marriage" seemed ridiculous—even unthinkable—to most people just a decade or two ago!

The Pew Foundation recently reported that the average age at which Americans first marry has reached an all-time high: age 30 for men, and age 28 for women ("8 Facts about love and marriage in America," Pew FacTank, February 13, 2019). Remarriage is also on the rise: In 2013, 23 percent of married people had been married at least once before, compared with just 13 percent in 1960 (ibid.). In the midst of all this, divorce has increased among older Americans. Since 1990, the divorce rate for people over 50 has roughly doubled—and has nearly tripled for people over 65 ("Led by Baby Boomers, divorce rates climb for America's 50+ population," Pew FacTank, March 9, 2017). Clearly, the trends and statistics are not encouraging for marriage.

The good news is that you are an individual, not a statistic. No matter what other people are doing, a happy marriage can be yours-if you follow the solid guidance of the Bible and resist the dangerous trends of modern society.

Marriage can be joyous, but it can also be challenging. I know this from decades of personal experience. In the more than 50 years that my wife and I have been married, we have sometimes faced difficulties because of our human nature. But the Bible gives us valuable strategies and secrets for a successful, godly marriage. These principles will be useful if both you and your spouse are Christian, but can even help if one of you is an unbeliever. If you apply these principles in your marriage, as my wife and I have done, you will not be disappointed by the results! You can turn an unhappy marriage into a happy one—or make a happy marriage even happier!

Communication Builds Bridges

Do you and your spouse find that your differences keep you apart, or can you bridge those differences to find greater understanding and appreciation? In my own life, I have learned that when we communicate in love, my wife and I are much happier as a couple. My wife was a music teacher and an accomplished violinist before I married her. I, on the other hand, was trained as an engineer. Some might assume that my analytical thinking would naturally complement her subjective way of looking at situations, but we found that we had to work hard at understanding each other.

Remember that communication also means effective, patient listening—not just effective speaking! How often do couples "tune each other out" in their conversations? We should listen for understanding-try to appreciate the other person's point of view. Try to understand your spouse's feelings and needs! Demonstrate respect by giving your full attention. I may never fully understand how my wife thinks, but I have learned to value the wisdom she gains from her perspective.

But how can we listen if we barely even talk to each other? Some studies have found that many couples spend less than 20 minutes a week in conversation! It would be ideal if we could change that, but in busy times and difficult economic circumstances,

this may be easier said than done. Happily, researchers have found a tool you can use to capitalize on the brief time you have together-the four-minute contact rule. In their book Contact: The First Four Minutes, Dr. Leonard Zunin and his wife Natalie Zunin explain: "The success or failure of a marriage... can depend on what happens between a husband and wife during just eight minutes of the day: four in the morning upon awakening, and four when you are reunited after the working day" (p. 133). Your language, attitude, or expression at the beginning of the day can affect the whole day's relationship. Learn to express a positive, loving attitude during the first four minutes you are together at the beginning of the day. Show that you care. Be respectful, affectionate, and patient. Remember: "Love suffers long and is kind" (1 Corinthians 13:4). Another translation puts it this way: "Love is patient, love is kind" (ibid., NIV).

The Apostle Paul gives us another fundamental principle in communicating effectively: "But, speaking the truth in love, [we] may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ" (Ephesians 4:15). Some people speak the truth in hate. But Christians who are maturing in Christ will be **concerned** about the effect of their words and message upon the listener.

Take care in your conversations to speak the truth in love! And be sure to listen in love. You may have more in common with your spouse than you know. I never trained as a musician, but I grew up in a household where my father played the violin. My wife's appreciation of beautiful music has enriched my life by continuing the influence to which I was exposed as a child. It has even encouraged me to "play at" playing the piano. I'm not trained, and I'm not very good, but a few minutes playing the piano as an amateur can bring me great calm—and my wife often communicates her appreciation of it, which brings us even closer together!

Romance Adds Joy

You have probably heard the expression, "It's the little things that count." Every kind word of appreciation makes a difference. Research has also shown that something as simple as a hug can reduce stress between husband and wife. Along with spontaneous hugs, my wife and I will often make a point of hugging when we part from each other to work on separate

projects at home. Years ago, I read an insurance report stating that husbands who kiss their wives before leaving for work have fewer car accidents and earn 30 percent more money than those who do *not* kiss their wives. Naturally, I then made it a regular habit to kiss my wife before leaving the house for work. One day, however, I did not kiss her—and I backed my car into a tree! Although there was very little damage, I learned my lesson. I now make sure to kiss my wife every morning!

Other loving and thoughtful deeds can help keep romance alive. A thoughtful and caring husband will often give his wife a bouquet of flowers on an anniversary, and will even do so at other unpredictable times as a total surprise. A creative and caring wife may surprise her husband with a special gift or meal. These small expressions can make a big difference. God also intended for husband and wife, becoming one flesh, to enjoy the physical pleasures of sex in marriage! Shortly after their creation, God told Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). The Bible is very clear: God created sex for

IS LOVE AN "OPTION"? NO! GOD COMMANDS ME, AS A HUSBAND, TO LOVE MY WIFE!

marriage and building a family. But remember, the Bible also reveals that marriage is only between a man and a woman. In the Bible—and in the **real** world of spiritual, divine law—there is no such thing as "same-sex marriage"! The Bible plainly reveals that any sexual relationship outside of marriage is sin! "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4).

God Commands Us to Love!

Is love an "option"? No! God commands me, as a husband, to love my wife! I must give account to God for my attitude, service, and commitment to her. Notice that God does **not** give all kinds of escape clauses. He does **not** say, "if your wife is perfect, **then** you love her." No! God **commands** you to **love** your wife. That is **your responsibility**! Loving your wife is a



requirement—not an option! Scripture exhorts us, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church" (Ephesians 5:25–29).

Wives also have a command from God: "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything" (Ephesians 5:22–24).

Notice that God does **not** say that you should submit only to a **perfect** husband. I do not know of any perfect husbands. Only Christ is perfect! But as each of us fulfills his or her own God-given responsibilities—sincerely and diligently, however imperfectly—God will bless the marriage even more! Notice, too, that in the previous verses, Paul writes that all Christians must maintain a thankful attitude. How? By "submitting to one another in the fear of God" (Ephesians 5:20–21). As husband and wife, you each have this responsibility toward your spouse.

MARRIAGE CONTINUES ON PAGE 26

RUSHING TO JUDGMENT

The modern world ignores ancient wisdom.

any people today are quick to condemn others when they hear or see an accusation, even if proof is lacking. Social media lights up like an electrical storm, filled with hateful and vitriolic comments and horrific threats—sometimes including bodily harm and death—toward the accused.

Even some professional journalists prejudge before getting all the facts. Verifying information appears to be less important than being the first to publish and take advantage of sensationalism.

Society today is unhinged and highly polarized—politically, religiously, racially, and in other ways. Emotions erupt like dynamite, set off by the slightest provocation. A social media storm explodes before any sources are vetted or corroborated. Often, when facts come to light debunking the charges as false, a half-hearted retraction may be made. But all too often, the trolls simply slip away under their bridges until the next scandal.

Why is a "rush to judgment" becoming the norm? Why is everyone so quick to condemn based only on accusations with unsubstantiated evidence? The stir in the United States over the report by Special Counsel Robert Mueller—a report many in the media long assumed would show collusion between U.S. President Donald Trump and Russia but did not—is only a recent example.

Wise admonitions against being quick to judge are expressed in the Bible, where we are urged to



"let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1:19). Can you imagine how quiet so-

cial media might become if everyone practiced that wisdom?

Proverbs offers considerations for those hasty to spout words of condemnation. For instance, "A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back," and "Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him" (Proverbs 29:11, 20). Another wise consideration is stated in Proverbs 17:27: "He who has knowledge

spares his words, and a man of understanding is of a calm spirit."

Too many are ready to condemn those on the opposing side of their favorite argument, whether their bias is political, religious, racial, etc. We are told to "do no injustice in judgment" whether showing partiality to the poor or the mighty (Leviticus 19:15).

Those who are quick to express opinions on

Too many are ready to condemn those on the opposing side of their favorite argument, whether their bias is political, religious, racial, etc.

social media might want to consider God's instructions. We are told that God hates "a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil... and one who sows discord among brethren" (Proverbs 6:16–19). Social media participants are quick to join in and pile on before facts are presented, and to express either their defense or condemnation, depending on their partiality and partisanship, adding to the discord.

God wants those who judge to be appointed and to judge with discernment, not perverting justice or showing partiality

(or favoritism) but following what is altogether just (Deuteronomy 16:18–20). Too many in social and news media set themselves up as judges, and sometimes show extreme prejudice.

Proverbs also warns us to "not go hastily to court; for what will you do in the end, when your neighbor has put you to shame? Debate your case with your neighbor himself, and do not disclose the secret to another; lest he who hears it expose your shame, and your reputation be ruined" (Proverbs 25:8–10). One who does so loses credibility, and indeed, professional reputations have been ruined by rash litigation and accusations alike.

We can't control what others say or do, but we can control *ourselves*. For more information, watch "The Dangers of Social Media" and read "Tame the Social Media Monster" on *TomorrowsWorld.org*.

-Roger Meyer

ELondon CALLING

Brexit: Britain's Nightmare Divorce



here is a well-known saying in the context of relationships and divorce: "Breaking up is hard to do." And so it has proved with the United Kingdom's divorce from the European Union. The British exit from the EU ("Brexit") has turned into nothing short of a national nightmare, an epic mess, and an existential crisis for the world's fifth largest economy. It appears impossible for the UK to fully extricate itself from the EU's embrace. How did the UK arrive at this unforeseen, disastrous impasse?

Battling with the EU was to be expected, but Parliament also connived with the Civil Service to undermine Brexit and subvert the democratic will of the people. By early April, the UK had not left the EU and showed few signs of being able to do so.

The fact is, the EU does not want any of its constituent parts to leave. What it wants is "ever closer union" in a journey destined in its eyes to end in a federal super-state—a *United States of Europe*.

Until December 2009 and the Lisbon Treaty, there was no provision for a member state to leave the EU, so Article 50 was added. However, no one ever imagined that a major player like the UK would want to "up sticks" and leave.

Britain joined the European Common Market in 1973, but the relationship was strained from the beginning. The UK electorate was assured that joining with the other nations was an economic matter, not political, but the truth went unspoken. European and successive UK leaders knew full well that the entire project was political to its core, involving considerable loss of sovereignty. As time went on, the question of Europe became Britain's "forever" political problem.

The Majority Want Out

In May 2015, after David Cameron was re-elected Prime Minister, he responded decisively to the electorate's growing concerns about the EU. Over the following months, his efforts to renegotiate Britain's EU membership failed. Then, on 23 June 2016, he held a national referendum on whether the country wanted to leave the EU or stay in it. Never did he think the country would opt to leave, but this was the shock result. Fifty-two per cent of the UK electorate said they wanted out (17.4 million people).

Cameron immediately resigned and Theresa May was appointed Prime Minister. On 29 March 2017, she invoked Article 50, formally announcing the UK's intention to leave the EU. The country embarked on a two-year countdown to leave at the end of March 2019. But in the meantime, Mrs May had lost her slim majority altogether in a "hung" parliament, which severely weakened her capacity to achieve a successful Brexit.

The EU insisted on producing a "divorce" document that would essentially give the EU everything it wanted. Only after the UK had signed up to this document would its desires be even considered. At every stage in the Brexit process, "negotiation" actually meant capitulating to EU demands. The UK ended up being corralled into a "blind alley" that made Brexit all but impossible.

Can Britain escape this fate? It is hard to see how. Parliament rejected the Withdrawal Agreement on several occasions, and it rejected a "no-deal" or "hard" exit—the legal default option if the divorce deal failed. Mrs May repeatedly asked the EU for more time to

consider. Various other ideas swirled around, including revisions to the Withdrawal document, holding a second referendum, and calling an early General Election to displace Mrs May. Highly controversial cross-party alliances were even sought in the desperate quest for answers to an impossible situation.

Let us briefly look at three main options. The thinking behind the so-called "no-deal" or "hard" exit was that there would be initial disruption, but that Britain would quickly recover as she acted to forge new trade relationships in global markets. But such was the barrage of propaganda against this move, seemingly from every direction, that this option was formally rejected by Parliament, and then by the EU for being too damaging to the rest of the union.

The second option, requesting more time, may have its merits but

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have its merits but cedes decision-making to the EU. Why should the Europe allow more time when they don't

intend to change their minds and the outcome would therefore remain the same? That said, we need to understand that the EU would be delighted if the UK had a longer period for reconsideration, knowing full well that Brexit would become ever more likely to be called off altogether.

Finally, if Parliament, against all the odds, managed to vote in favour of the Withdrawal Agreement (perhaps revised), the UK might formally leave the EU, but with major strings still attached. Ironically, any vote in favour of the Withdrawal Agreement would likely defeat the very purpose of Brexit—to free the UK from the EU's reach. And then there would still be a two-year



period to hammer out a probably one-sided EU trade relationship, with a chronically weakened Britain unable to defend its interests.

The stark reality is that Mrs May never was in control of the Brexit process; she lost control of her cabinet and government, and with that the confidence and trust of the electorate. Decision-making and control over Brexit rests firmly with the EU, which means ultimately with Germany—the EU's most powerful nation. If Brexit fails, Parliament will "take the rap" for failing to fulfil the electorate's will. Surely, turbulent times and a day of reckoning lie ahead for UK's politics.

The Way to Deliverance

In retrospect, things could have been very different. But

Was it ever really viable or realistic to offer the country a clean break from the EU after 45 years spent integrating together across all areas of life?

the EU, and Britain's own lack of vision, courage, and national will, effectively conspired to prevent a successful divorce.

All this raises a vital question: Was it ever really viable or realistic to offer the country a clean break from the EU, after 45 years spent integrating together across all areas of life? For all the reasons discussed above, the answer must firmly be in the negative. The UK is facing a fundamental crisis of identity about its place in the world that is likely

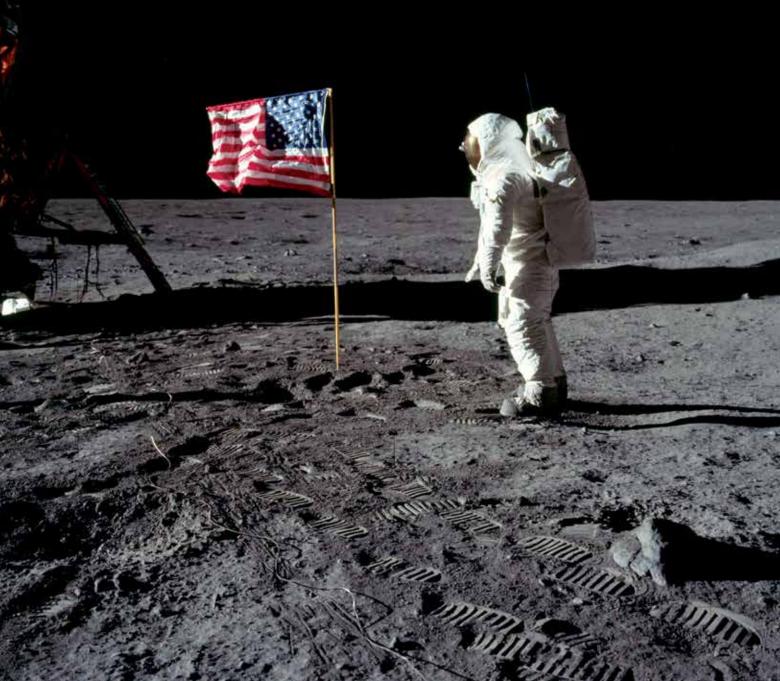
to rumble on for a very long time to come.

What should all this teach us spiritually? That God is supreme. He is the one who removes kings (rulers) and raises up kings (Daniel 2:21). He rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He will (Daniel 4:17). God is our supreme deliverer (2 Samuel 22:2-4; Psalm 18:2-3).

In the depths of World War II in 1940, when all seemed lost as Nazi military forces were massing to invade, King George VI led the nation in a day of prayer for deliverance. Who would deny that God heard that urgent prayer when Britain most needed Him? Oh, that the UK could drop to its knees, confess its sins before God, and humbly ask for deliverance and national direction. God just might be merciful and surprise us all with the outcome.

—John Meakin





Why Are We in Space?

With so many problems at home, what are we hoping to achieve?
Are the rewards of space travel worth the risks, or are we missing something?

By Gerald Weston

t was June of 1969, and a pilot was taking a strange-looking contraption on a practice flight—an awkward machine, not practical for traveling at all. It was dangerous and difficult to operate. Inside was a primitive computer that was supposed to control the flight, but it didn't work very well, and when the computer failed, the pilot took over. No matter. It was going to crash. This pilot had cheated death more than once and had a reputation for staying with his plane until the very last moment—only an instant before it was too late to eject.

Only a month later, this same pilot would fly a similar contraption on one of the most daring adventures in the history of man, and there would be no room for error. On July 16, 1969, our daring pilot and two other brave men sat atop the equivalent of a huge firecracker, waiting to be blasted from the face of the earth. If successful, this 6-million-pound, 36-story Roman candle would take three men safely to their destination a quarter of a million miles away—the Moon.

Four days after launch, our pilot was once again at the controls of one of these funny flying machines, but this time there was no ejecting and no going back. They were on a trajectory taking them to the first Moon landing and a place in the history books.

After circling the Moon a number of times, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin bade farewell to fellow astronaut Mike Collins, separated their lunar lander module from the Apollo 11 spacecraft, and began their descent. From twelve miles up, Armstrong and Aldrin flew over the face of the Moon and began falling

toward its surface. Everything went smoothly, by the book, but around 2,000 feet from the surface, alarms sounded. The computer could not handle the data and failed. Armstrong took over the controls.

Remarkable Daring

In that situation, procedures called for the mission to be aborted, but Armstrong continued, and no one was going to try to stop him. Landing a lunar module has been described as attempting to land a Boeing 747 from the passenger cabin. However, this was not the only problem. The landing site was strewn with large boulders, and with fuel running precariously low, an alternate site had to be found. Still, eventually there came those comforting words to a listening world that had been sitting on the edge of its seat: "The Eagle has landed."

No one knows for sure, but according to a CBS news source, our brave astronauts may have had as little as seven seconds of fuel remaining, certainly no more than a minute, before they would have been unable to abort the landing and rejoin Mike Collins in the command module orbiting the Moon. There could have been no rescue. Death would have been a certainty.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission, and the immortal words Neil Armstrong uttered on July 20, 1969: "That's one small step for man and one giant leap for mankind." He spoke these words as he became the first human being to set foot on the Moon. Over the next three and a half years, fellow astronaut Buzz Aldrin and ten other men followed in his footsteps, but he was the first to walk on the Moon, and no one has done so since December 1972.

Conspiracy buffs deny the manned moon-landings even happened, and probably nothing will persuade them otherwise. Virtually all of their objections have been shot down, and numerous independent confirmations from around the world attest to the fact of the six landings. One of the strongest confirmations comes from the former Soviet Union. To this day, Russia has never disputed these landings, even though they were major public relations achievements for the United States in the middle of the Cold War. If anyone would have known the landings to be fraudulent, the Soviets would have, through their own technologies and surveillance systems.

Japan, India, and China are all considering manned missions to the Moon after the 47-year intermission, and one may wonder why it is taking humanity so long to continue this great adventure. At

I HAVE NO INTEREST IN DISCOURAGING MAN'S QUEST FOR ADVENTURE AND DESIRE TO EXPLORE THE UNKNOWN. HOWEVER, THE QUESTION MUST BE ASKED, "GO TO THE MOON—WHAT ON EARTH FOR?"

the time of the first landings, there was a widespread feeling that this was the beginning of man's exploration of the universe. After all, did not Neil Armstrong suggest that, as he stepped onto the Moon with the words, "one giant leap for mankind"?

In many respects, it appears that the "giant leap" was put on hold.

A Passion to Return... But at a Price

However, we are now seeing a resurging interest "to boldly go where no one has gone before." Other nations are getting in on the act. Private companies are building rockets and offering opportunities for space tourism. There is even talk about going to Mars.

In 2013, Mars One, a private Dutch company, began advertising a one-way trip to the red planet to begin a colony. They claimed as many as 200,000 eager volunteers from around the world, and pared

their list down to 100, planning to embark on the journey as early as 2023.

Skeptics believe the whole enterprise to be a scam, as the necessary technology simply does not exist at this time. According to *The Verge* network, Mars One filed for bankruptcy on January 15, 2019, giving credence to the skeptics' claims. Whether the problem is outright fraud or the result of overly optimistic ambitions remains to be seen. What this failed venture does highlight is that space travel is not as easy as many think. It is costly and complicated, and this helps to explain the 47-year hiatus.

Space travel has captured man's imagination for well over a century. Jules Verne's 1865 novel *From the Earth to the Moon* tells the story of three men shot from a cannon to the Moon. Well, at least Verne had the destination and number of men correct, but space

travel has proven to be a daunting task, even when traveling to our nearest neighbor.

The consensus that developed shortly after the first manned lunar landings was that the cost and effort makes space travel impractical. One Apollo moon mission was scrubbed as unnecessary, and three others were cancelled due to cost. Over time, the public also learned the lesson that traveling beyond our

planet can be dangerous. Both Russia and the U.S. have suffered multiple deaths in attempts to explore regions beyond Earth's atmosphere, and Israel's Ilan Ramon was one of the astronauts on the Space Shuttle *Columbia* when it broke apart on reentry. Numerous "near misses" attest to the dangers of these adventures.

We live on a beautiful home that we call Earth. We have everything we need to live abundant and happy lives. We have, nevertheless, an innate desire to explore, and the "final frontier" seems to beckon us onward. But as we have learned from experience, the universe beyond our atmosphere is a hostile environment. It may appear exciting, but the reality is very different. There is a sense of realism in astronaut Scott Kelly's description of his yearlong adventure aboard the International Space Station. We see pictures of men and women floating in zero-gravity inside the

station, but hear little about the problem of carbon-dioxide buildup that causes headaches and dullness of mind. We see movie scenes of astronauts floating about, like George Clooney and Sandra Bullock did in the movie "Gravity," but that glorified fiction is far from the reality. Sitting in a cramped position for hours while wearing a terribly uncomfortable suit, waiting in preparation for a space walk, is simply not something that can be conveyed well in a 90-minute movie—nor is the reality of wearing "space diapers," needed due to the inability to remove one's suit during the hours of waiting, launch time, and work in space. Bottom line: Space travel is not as glamorous as it appears on television and in the movies.

Riding atop tons of volatile solid and liquid fuel in massive rockets is dangerous. This is something I viewed firsthand in the 1960s while living on Vandenberg Air Force Base on the coast of California. When a missile was launched, we all scrambled to get outside and watch, whether at home or school. The combination of sounds, sights, and a rumble you can feel as a rocket takes off is something to behold. And as teenagers, we were never disappointed when one blew up or had to be destroyed if it went off course. At that stage of life, we did not pay the taxes that funded the missile, and the explosions beat all other fireworks displays. While all the launches from the West Coast were unmanned, those missiles used the same volatile fuel source as did the manned flights, and these powerful launches illustrated to my young mind the dangers involved. A lot can and does go wrong.



A Question Worth Asking

I have no interest in discouraging man's quest for adventure and desire to explore the unknown. However, the question must be asked, "Go to the Moon-what on earth for?"

Each of us takes everyday risks, whether we think of it that way or not. This is true in hundreds of ways, but most obviously when we get into a car, bus, train, or plane. There is always a risk that something will go wrong. You take a risk when the doctor operates on you, and as television advertisements make clear, you take risks anytime you take the latest medicine. After the first part of an ad for a wonder medicinecomplete with smiling people playing Frisbee with a happy dog-come the warnings. And the next ad is from a law office suing the pharmaceutical companies for their mistakes. Even taking in food carries with it a slight risk-remember the Heimlich Maneuver?

When it comes to venturing into space, most of us would prefer to keep our feet solidly on the ground. Space travel calls for a special kind of risk-taker. The adrenaline rush that comes from living on the edge is why many astronauts are former test pilots. It cannot be easy for family members to live with such individuals, always wondering what new way their relative has found to kill himself. When things go wrong, parents, spouses, and children are left behind, no doubt appreciating the fame that comes with being associated with someone so adventurous, but one has to wonder what children think as they grow up without the parent who chased after his or her dream. Surely many are proud of their family member, now gone, but how many of them would trade anything to have their loved one back in their lives, safe and sound?

In the end, we must again ask, "What on earth for?" To be sure, many inventions we enjoy resulted from the space program. Much progress in computer miniaturization is a direct result. New materials have been developed and applied in mundane ways to enhance everyday life. We know more about the universe around us, though much of that knowledge is neither necessary nor requires humans to leave Earth to discover it. We can thank space exploration for communication satellites, and one might suggest that they have made life better—but have they really? Have we forgotten that we lived quite nicely prior to smart phones and satellite navigation? Nice... but necessary?



What possible knowledge will we discover that will make any eternal difference to our lives here below? Have we learned to get along better as a result of space exploration? One could point to the International Space Station and note that astronauts from former enemy nations work together in harmony, and that is true. Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko and American astronaut Scott Kelly spent a year together on the Space Station and no doubt deeply respect and trust one another, but what about their two countries?

And let us come closer to home. How has space exploration improved the relationships between husbands and wives, parents and children, and neighbors? The answer is obvious: not at all.

One could even counter that space exploration has made our world more dangerous. From the very beginning, military interests have been intertwined with exploring our surroundings. Sputnik was cute, but far from the whole story of what satellites were about. The public was enamored with moonwalks and micro-gravity, but behind it all were military experiments and missions. Vandenberg AFB launched satellites to spy on Russia, and we are naïve if we think Russia did not spy on America, as well. Our gov-

ernments tested multiple missile reentry systems, by which a single rocket could deliver multiple nuclear warheads. Satellites orbit overhead to guide drones and target smart bombs. That is why a future war could start in space, as each nation tries to destroy the other's command-and-control satellites.

Some decry any use of space for warfare, pleading, "Don't militarize space!" But space was militarized from the beginning. That is what the "space race" was about in the 1950s and 60s. Going to the Moon captured the attention of the public, but gaining the strategic high ground was the game being played between the Soviet Union and the United States. Now we have a call for a new branch of the American military—a Space Force. What we fundamentally see in space exploration is an extension of humanity's differences playing out on a new frontier, as each power strives to gain and maintain the upper hand.

Outside each gateway into Vandenberg Air Force Base were billboards reading, "Strategic Air Command—Peace is Our Profession." (SAC was decommissioned in 1992, and replaced by the United States Strategic Command.) The message was understandable: When you are stronger than your enemy,

or at the very least able to ensure "Mutually Assured Destruction," there will be an absence of nuclear war—or at least a deterrent. Of course, that is only if there is no technical glitch or miscalculation on one side or the other.

Imagination Meets Reality

Space exploration captures our imagination. Children see images that encourage them to go where few have gone before. Television news and motion pictures glamorize space walks and floating gravity-free. Anywhere you can see Earth from space has to be the ultimate vacation hot spot. Who doesn't want to float in micro-gravity, but what about the nausea and vomiting that usually accompany the adjustment? "The Martian" is entertaining as far as movies go, but far from reality. Men and women capture our imagination in fictional films when they appear to walk about on faraway planets—without wearing diapers (or "nappies"),

OUR PROBLEMS AND OUR CHALLENGES ARE HERE ON EARTH. GOING ELSEWHERE TO START ALL OVER AGAIN WILL SOLVE NONE OF OUR FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES.

awkward and restrictive protective suits, or bulky oxygen tanks, and without sitting in uncomfortable positions for hours. But reality fails the fun test. Ultimately, the greatest truth about space exploration is found in the title of the *Star Wars* saga.

I am not knocking exploration. The human race needs risk-takers. But one does have to wonder about the sanity of anyone who really thinks a one-way ticket to Mars is a good idea.

Our problems and our challenges are here on Earth. Going elsewhere to start all over again will solve none of our fundamental issues. Human nature—selfish desire, pride, hurt feelings, hatred, and the resulting violence—will be our travel compan-

ions. Nearly 2,000 years ago, an ancient prophet described the nature of man: "Their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands. Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. **The way of peace they have not known**, and there is no justice in their ways; they have made themselves crooked paths; whoever takes that way shall not know peace" (Isaiah 59:6–8).

Many find it impossible to believe, but peace will eventually come, though not in the way humanity expects. Another prophet appeared more than 700 years after Isaiah and predicted what we now know is possible: the destruction of all life from the face of the earth (Matthew 24:21–22). In the face of such a prospect, we might think it necessary to begin colonies elsewhere, but that is not the solution.

The solution is the coming of the One who made that prediction, because He is more than a prophet.

Isaiah predicted the time when that Savior will return to rescue mankind from its destructive ways: "Many people shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many

people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" (Isaiah 2:3–4).

Space exploration fascinates us. Going to the Moon and returning safely shows the spirit and daring of mankind, but in the end, we must again ask regarding the enterprise, "What on earth for?" It surely has not brought harmony here below, nor will it ever do so. Peace *will* come, but not from man's scientific discoveries, whether in space or here on terra firma. Earth is man's home, and Earth is where peace will finally be established!

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God's Commandments: Curse or Blessing?

f you are an older teen or young adult, you may have come to understand that you need a guide—someone or something helping you to avoid the pitfalls that life will throw your way. The Bible can be that guide, and the Ten Commandments—and other commands God gives in His word—have provided thousands the sort of guidance you are seeking.

However, there are many who would warn you away from these time-honored laws. Some who consider themselves Christian try to say that God's commandments don't need to be kept anymore, because Jesus Christ kept them for us. "Those old commandments were nailed to the cross!" they say. In fact, they often use the Bible itself to claim that the Ten Commandments and other elements of God's law are actually a *curse*.

Don't be deceived! These are some of the greatest lies ever devised, and the claim that God's laws are a "curse" has been perpetrated by none other than Satan himself, the father of lies (John 8:44). Don't believe it, not even for a second. The Devil does not want you to benefit from the blessings that come from living according to the commands and laws of the Bible.

Is there, in fact, a "curse of the law"? If so, how did Christ redeem us from it? Let's look at the evidence together.

A Bible Passage Twisted

The key passage of the Bible around which this entire question revolves is Galatians 3:13, which begins, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us...." The Apostle Paul wrote this, but just what did he mean when he wrote it?

First, notice that this verse does *not* say that we do not need to keep the spiritual laws of God. Paul also wrote the Book of Romans, which states that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good" (Romans 7:12). Paul was also inspired to write that "not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified" (Romans 2:13). Paul did not contradict himself, but many people twist what he wrote and what he said (1 Peter 3:14-16).

Secondly, this verse does *not* say that we will be put under a curse if we seek to obey God's commands. In fact, the Scripture shows just the opposite to be true—that keeping God's laws can bring *blessings* (see Leviticus 26:1–13; and Deuteronomy 28:1–14)! Keeping God's spiritual laws will result in a happy, interesting, and fulfilling life. *Breaking* God's laws brings curses, not *keeping* them!

The Consequence of Lawlessness

So what is the "curse of the law" that Paul refers to in Galatians 3? Put simply, it is the death penalty for disobedience.

Romans 6:23 clearly tells us, "the wages of sin is death." James wrote that each of us "is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death" (James 1:14–15). Sin is lawlessness, disobedience to God's spiritual law (1 John 3:4). Over and over, the Bible tells us to repent of sinning—which means turning away from breaking God's commandments and beginning to keep them. This is one of the first steps to receiving God's forgiveness and salvation (Acts 2:38). If we hope to

have a close relationship with God, we must obey Him. Breaking His commandments—sinning—comes between us and God and prevents us from having a relationship with Him (Isaiah 59:2). Changing and turning away from our sins, seeking to begin keeping the laws we've been breaking, is an important step in seeking His presence and guidance in our lives.

God's commandments define right and wrong for us. The reason humankind is plagued with war, violence, envy, hatred, and injustice is simply that we have taken it upon *ourselves* to determine what is right and wrong. In fact, people "call evil good, and good evil" and they "put darkness for light, and light for darkness" (Isaiah 5:20). You don't have to repeat their mistake!

A wise king once said, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6). This same wise king, Solomon of Israel, summarized life very simply: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all" (Ecclesiastes 12:13)

The Blessings of Obedience

The clear meaning of Galatians 3:13 is that Christ allowed the curse of disobedient humanity to fall upon Him instead of us (Isaiah 53:6). We see this reflected in the latter half of the verse: "for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'...." Paul is referring to God's statement in the Old Testament that anyone who was executed in Israel and hanged on a tree "is accursed"



of God" (Deuteronomy 21:22–23). By allowing sinful humanity to crucify Him, the sinless Jesus Christ took upon

Himself the "curse of the law": the death penalty we earn for disobeying God and breaking His commandments. He paid that penalty for us, in our stead! The Apostle Peter, speaking of Christ, wrote, "who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness" (1 Peter 2:24).

Our adversary, the Devil, does not want you or your family to receive the precious and abundant blessings that come from obeying God's commandments! Ancient King David loved God's law (Psalm 119:97) and said, "More to be desired are they [God's judgments]

than gold... and in keeping them there is great reward" (Psalm 19:10–11). Obeying God results not only in physical blessings, but also in spiritual blessings. As Psalm 111:10 points out, "a good understanding have all those who do His commandments." If we desire to understand more, we must be commandment keepers. Also, "Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble" (Psalm 119:165). The person who keeps the Ten Commandments has a clear conscience and is at peace. Don't we all want a clear conscience and peace of mind?

God has set before us a choice between "life and death, blessing and cursing" and tells us to "choose life" (Deuteronomy 30:19). Ultimately, God will give eternal life to those who demonstrate a dedication to keeping His commandments and who accept Christ's sacrifice as the payment for their sins. While eternal life is clearly a gift from God and not something you can earn (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8–9), neither will anyone be granted eternal life as a rebellious sinner (1 John 3:4–9). God will not give immortality to anyone who insists on living Satan's way!

God's Law is Love-Not a Curse!

If we read Scripture honestly, we find that Jesus Christ did not come to do away with God's law (Matthew 5:17-19). Rather, He kept God's commandments (John 15:10) and He commanded others to keep them (Matthew 19:16-19; 28:19-20). That includes you, at the beginning of your journey to find your way through this life!

Jesus showed that the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1–17) teach us how to live and how to truly express love. The law that James called "the perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25)—is truly a law of love and epitomizes the essence of God's very nature and character. "God is love" (1 John 4:16), and a fundamental part of becoming more like God is our willingness and effort to keep His perfect law.

As a young person just starting off in life, you have an opportunity to start it off *right*. The spiritual law of God, summed up by the Ten Commandments, is permanent and steadfast. Don't be deceived into thinking God's law is a curse, or that you are cursed if you keep it. Be thankful that your Creator has given you laws to live by—laws that, if followed, produce the richest of blessings!

-Sheldon Monson

Never Disrespect Your Spouse!

If we are honest with ourselves, we must admit that we have human weaknesses and sometimes act on our carnal human nature. Husbands and wives will upset each other, and sometimes argue. Even after 50 years of marriage, my wife and I have occasional disagreements. How can we do our best to resolve them? The answer is found in a vital principle from Scripture: "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself" (Philippians 2:3).

has the potential to be born into the divine family of God as one of His glorified, immortal children. Paul wrote, "I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty" (2 Corinthians 6:18). Always be conscious of your spouse's awesome potential.

Forgiveness Heals Relationships

How often do you have arguments with your spouse? We all need to exercise self-control, courtesy, honor, and respect. Sometimes, the best strategy in an argument is to remember: "A soft answer turns

away wrath" (Proverbs 15:1). Sometimes, we need to admit our own responsibility. Perhaps we have personally contributed to the problem. I know it can be very difficult when our pride gets in the way. I have experienced that myself. But simply saying "I'm sorry" can go a

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in the image of God? The Bible instructs each of us to **esteem** others better than ourselves. You must want the very best for your spouse, and you must be willing to do all you can to support his or her growth. Look for your spouse's growth and do what you can to encourage it with your own acts of patience and support, and with your loving example. And—this is very important—there is no justification for abusing your spouse, **physically or verbally**. If you are doing this, you need to repent! You must value your spouse more than yourself, not use him or her as a doormat or punching bag. Sometimes an argument may get out of hand, and we may say words we later regret. If this happens, humble yourself before God and ask for His forgiveness, and be sure also to apol-

How much do you value your spouse? Do you

really respect your spouse as a human being made

a relationship!

Keep in mind that you and your spouse are "heirs together of the grace of life" (1 Peter 3:7). It is vital to **understand** how God values **every** human being—and that includes your spouse, regardless of your opinion of him or her. Every human being on earth

ogize to your spouse. I know, personally, that it is

sometimes difficult to say, "I'm sorry." But it is worth

doing and can go a long way in healing and restoring

long way in solving a conflict. And we certainly need to forgive one another. Remember the awesome instruction in your Bible: "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, **forgiving** one another, even as God in Christ **forgave** you" (Ephesians 4:32).

Another passage also emphasizes that point: "Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and **forgiving** one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection" (Colossians 3:12–14).

Prayer Brings Couples Together!

Many of you reading this article are married to unbelievers. Longtime readers of *Tomorrow's World* understand that you cannot talk someone into faith in Christ. But you can pray to God for His intervention, and for the success of your marriage. Furthermore, you have a powerful tool available—a tool more powerful than your words. We read, "Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives" (1 Peter 3:1). Your loving, giving, Christian



example can go a long way toward positively influencing your spouse.

And if you and your spouse are both believers, try praying aloud together. I have been amazed to discover how many intimate and personal thoughts come out in our prayers as we share with one another and with God.

Give 100 Percent!

You may have heard the old saying, "Marriage is a 50-50 proposition." That saying is **totally wrong!** Do you see what is wrong with it? Marriage is a total commitment, but the 50-50 approach amounts to reserving a personal escape route in the event that your spouse's 50 percent isn't enough. Remember what Paul wrote: "And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:35). Or, as the Moffatt translation states, "It is happier to give than to get." True love is giving without expecting anything in return. When husband and wife **both** give 100 percent, you have a strong bond—a strong overlap with each other that is going to provide flexibility and the ability to cope with crisis and difficulty. When one spouse is going through a tough spot, the other will be there fully to help. By contrast, the 50-50 approach ensures that you will lose your spouse's support when you need it the most!

With this in mind, do not neglect to give the gift of your **time**! Some years ago, when I was very active in

sports, I tended to shortchange my wife when it came to spending time together. I still remember one instance when I determined to give my time to her in some special activity that would please her. She wanted to go canoeing—which was certainly not my favorite activity. But we went canoeing on a Sunday afternoon across the surface of an East Texas lake surrounded by pine trees, blue skies, waterfowl, and peace! What I considered a sacrifice of my time led to a strengthened relationship—my wife enjoyed the activity and appreciated my effort. Make a commitment to **give** more than you have in the past. Be determined to find ways to give to your spouse. As you do so, your frustrations will lessen, and God will bless you in your relationship. Again, as Jesus stated, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

As you work to improve the quality of your marriage, you may experience another benefit: a longer life! An article in the November 2018 issue of *Health Psychology* reports that, after controlling for other factors such as age and pre-existing disease, individuals who reported that their marriage was "very happy or pretty happy" had longer lifespans on average than individuals who described their marriage as "not too happy" ("Marital satisfaction and mortality in the United States," *Health Psychology*, November 2018, pp. 1041–1044). No, a happy marriage won't let you live forever, but even science suggests that it may lead to a longer life!

Dear readers, you can have a happy marriage, and you can make it even happier! You do not need to wait for your spouse to change—indeed, you cannot force your spouse to change, but you can change yourself, and your example of love and service can have a very positive influence on your spouse. But you cannot do it on your own. You need the help of your Savior! As Paul wrote, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

We live in a world of confusion, where fewer and fewer people understand what marriage is supposed to be. But you don't need to be a victim of that confusion. Follow these principles, and you can live happily as husband and wife, taking advantage of the very best marriage counsel available—the counsel of God and His word!

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There's a Hole in the Bucket

n the amazing catalogue of living things that fill the earth, one discovers a myriad of examples of incredible intricacy that demonstrate just how complex life-forms and their cycles can be.

Flowers, the reproductive organs of flowering plants (angiosperms), are a case in point. We can easily marvel at the delicacy of a cherry blossom, a rose, or a lily. One type of flower, however, is particularly captivating, both in its design and in the manner in which it conscripts an unsuspecting assistant to ensure the survival of its species.

Of Buckets and Bees

Coryanthes speciosa and Stanhopea grandiflora, the two species of "bucket orchids," are native to the tropical areas of Mexico, Central and South America, and Trinidad. These members of the orchid family produce a flower that is uniquely beautiful in the plant kingdom. They also have a very sophisticated means of reproduction that requires the services of specific species of "orchid bees." There are about 250 species of orchid bee, which are some of the most ostentatious of the bee kind, noted for their jewel-like appearance (Stephen Buchmann, "Orchid Bees," U.S. Dept. of Agriculture). Two subspecies of orchid bee, Euglossa meriana and Euglossa cordata, are just the right size, weight, and shape to be of assistance to the bucket orchid (Geoff Chapman, "Orchids... a witness to the Creator," Creation magazine, September 1996).

The males of a particular subspecies of these bees will only visit one subspecies of bucket orchid, ensuring that no cross-pollination of this delicate flower will occur. Each subspecies of bucket orchid secretes a

scented, oily perfume, which is produced in the upper hood of the flower. Because each bucket orchid species produces a unique scent, useful in attracting its own species of orchid bee, and because of the highly specialized process involved, cross pollination is prohibited by design. The scent the males seek will only attract a female of his species, maintaining the integrity of the system for both plant and pollinator. The male bees fill special pouches on their hind legs with it, using the perfume to attract lady friends, and they will endure any hardship to smell their best.

The Trap Is Sprung!

The upper part of the flower, in which the plant produces its oily perfume, has a waxy surface, made more slippery by the perfume itself. As the bees go about collecting their treasure, they usually slip and fall into the lower part of the flower—the "bucket" that gives the flower its name. Above the bucket is a gland that drips a watery fluid through a spigot, keeping the bucket partially filled. This species of orchid bee is just the right size and weight for the remarkable process that takes place during its visit to this fascinating flower. The bee, having fallen into the bottom of the bucket, would perish there in the liquid, unable to escape, were it not for a small "step" on the edge of the bucket. This step is just the right size and shape to enable the bee to pull itself out of the pool.

Alas, however, our bee would remain trapped in the flower were it not for a small tunnel located beyond the step. The tunnel, or tube, is just large enough for our species of orchid bee to pass through, and so he begins his escape. But just as he is about to exit to

freedom, his escape tube contracts, holding the bee tightly in place. The contraction of this tube causes the secretion of a small amount of glue onto the bee's back, but only upon a tiny, targeted area so as not to inhibit the bee's ability to fly. Then two orange-coloured sacs containing pollen (when the flower is in its "male phase") are pressed onto the glue. It takes around 45 minutes to an hour for the glue to set, after which the escape tube relaxes and the bee flies free, now carrying the only pollen sacs that flower will produce.

Not Done Yet...

Our bee, despite his harrowing adventure, still has his lady friends in mind, and is in no way deterred from visiting another bucket orchid of the same species to top up his cologne supply. Alas, during the gathering of more scent oil, he again finds himself plunged into the bucket of another bucket orchid. Doggedly, he climbs out of the pool using the convenient step and goes through the now-familiar tunnel to freedom. This time, if the orchid flower has entered its "female phase," instead of pollen sacs awaiting him at the end of the tunnel, there is a small hook-like structure. This removes the pollen sacs from the bee's back and causes them to open and pollinate the flower's pistil, or female reproductive organ, beginning the process leading to the development of orchid seeds, and thus ensuring another generation of this incredible plant.



Natural Selection Insufficient

Interestingly, even Charles Darwin recognized that there was no indication in the fossil record of the "evolution" of flowers, as he noted in an 1881 letter to botanist Sir Joseph Hooker. Darwin never did offer an explanation as to how a process like "natural selection" was sufficient to create a complex symbiotic (that is, mutually beneficial) relationship such as we see in this instance. In fact, the bucket orchid's mechanism of pollination seems quite contrary to the norms of Darwinian theory. Processes that make survival more difficult and more prone to failure are supposed by Darwinism to be eliminated through natural selection, yet in the case of the bucket orchid, a complex mechanism that requires a partnership with a single sub-species of bee-making survival even chancier-has flourished for millennia. Add to this the need of a simultaneous development of the highly specialized characteristics in the flower and pollinator, and a random process, such as described by Darwinian evolution, is totally improbable mathematically, without intelligent direction..

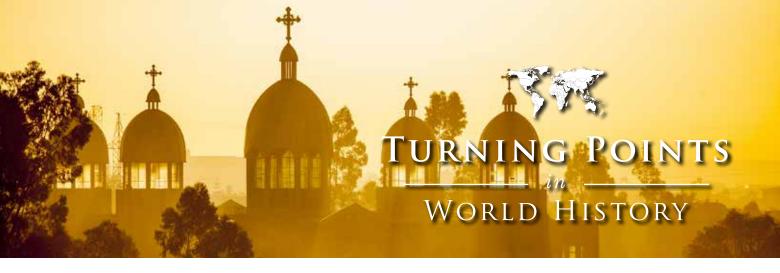
This unique process prevents significant cross-pollination with other orchid species, helping to preserve the genetics of these plants in a relatively unchanged state from generation to generation. Bucket orchids still flourish today, inspiring wonder and joy in those who study them. This complex symbiotic relationship between a specific bee and a remarkable flower can only be the product of deliberate design. Any unbiased mind would have no choice but to agree.

The proclivity of man to deny that this world and the life within it are the products of a Great Designer is not new. Long ago, the great Jewish scholar we know as Paul wrote in frustration of those who find all sorts of ways to try to explain away the obvious:

[W]hat may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse (Romans 1:19–20).

There are few examples that point any more clearly to the creative genius of that Great Designer than that of the little bucket orchid and the tenacious orchid bee.

—Stuart Wachowicz



The "Global South" vs. the Liberal West

any are familiar with the tremendous impact of professing Christian evangelism in spreading the Bible and Judeo-Christian values around the globe. Such efforts have influenced developing cultures for over four centuries. Many missionaries and other religious workers even died bringing their message to non-Western societies. However, today's evangelists and missionaries from developing countries now rebuke and express disappointment in the Western "mother countries" that are drifting ever further from the Bible. What has produced this dramatic turning point in history, and how does it fit with Bible prophecies?

Once "Christian" Nations Reject the Bible

In *The New Faces of Christianity*, scholar Philip Jenkins wrote of a growing sense of confrontation that should concern professing Christians everywhere:

In recent years [Anglican Communions] have been contentious events. On one occasion, two bishops were participating in a Bible study, one an African Anglican, the other a U.S. Episcopalian. As the hours went by, tempers frayed as the African expressed his confidence in the clear words of scripture, while the American stressed the need to interpret the Bible in light of modern scholarship and contemporary mores. Eventually, the African bishop asked in exasperation, "If you don't believe the scripture, why did you bring it to us in the first place?" (p. 1, emphasis added).

This rift is unsurprising.

According to a May 15, 2017 Gallup report, only 24 percent of Americans believe the Bible is the literal word of God, though 47 percent believe it was inspired but "should not be taken literally" (Lydia Saad, "Record Few Americans Believe Bible Is Literal Word of God"). This reflects a declining belief that the Bible is "sacred literature, is sufficient as a guide for meaningful living and is reliably accurate"—especially among younger generations (Barna Group, "The Bible in America: 6-Year Trends," *Barna.com*, June 15, 2016). Statistics from other Western nations show similar views, even among the clergy:

Only 29% of religiously committed people in Canada view evangelism positively....
Among clergy in churches that are shrinking in Southern Ontario, all (100%) disagreed with this statement: "The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally." Of the same group of clergy, more than 50% agreed that "The Bible is the product of human thinking about God, so some of its teachings are wrong or misguided" (Wyatt Graham, "Ten Things You Should Know about Religion in Canada," *TheGospelCoalition.org*, June 6, 2018).

Elsewhere, Jenkins has described the level of religious belief in European countries as remarkably low.

The West produced a culture that once boldly stated, "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, is the religion of Protestants." Are four centuries of evangelism coming back to indict the West's increasingly liberal theology?

For decades, a divide has also grown between the liberal Western moral teachings and the convictions of those from "the global South"—professing Christians in Africa, South America, and Asia—and its effects are visible today.

Rejecting "Progressive" Morals

The United Methodist Church recently felt the influence of proselyte countries when the controversial "One Church Plan" was rejected earlier this year. Dr. Jerry P. Kulah, a prominent Liberian minister, rebuked the radical changes at the United Methodist Church General Conference:

[And] please hear me when I say as graciously as I can: we Africans are **not children in need of western enlightenment** when it comes to the church's sexual ethics. We do not need to hear a progressive U.S. bishop lecture us about our need to "grow up"... **We stand with the global church, not a culturally liberal, church elite, in the U.S.** (Jonathon Van Maren, "How faith-filled Africans saved the United Methodist Church from accepting gay 'marriage," *LifeSiteNews. com*, March 1, 2019, emphasis added).

Kulah's fiery—though compassionate—speech against recent trends within the Methodist church echoes the feelings of many in the "global South." When one prominent Anglican bishop stated, "Just simply to say that it goes against tradition and the teaching of the church and Scripture does not necessarily make it wrong," the response was telling:

Such a liberal interpretation appalled many church leaders in the global South, who reasserted a strict obedience to scriptural authority. According to Nigerian primate Peter Akinola, the most visible critic of Northern liberals, "I didn't write the Bible. It's part of our Christian heritage. It tells us what to do. If the word of God says homosexuality is an abomination, then so be it" (Jenkins p. 3).

These are not the voices of a small number. The overwhelmingly fundamentalist "global South" is vast, yet Western cultural bias often overlooks it. In 2015, Latin America and Africa accounted for over one billion professing Christians, with an additional 350 million living

in Asia—and those numbers are rising (Wes Granberg-Michaelson, "Think Christianity is dying? No, Christianity is shifting dramatically," *The Washington Post*, May 20, 2015).

If Westerners believe that their nations still represent the majority of professing Christianity—or set the standard for it—they are greatly mistaken.

Will a True "Revival" Come?

This should remind us of Jesus' rebuke of the faithless people of His day (Matthew 11:20–24). When religious leaders were skeptical of His message, He said, "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it.... The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it" (Matthew 12:41–42). Christ spoke of Gentiles one day judging the unbelief of Israelites who had rejected the truth!

What we are witnessing today is the global South's *cultural reaction* against the West's unbiblical morals and theology.

However, ancient prophecies foretold such events. Moses warned the Israelites, "For I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you. And evil will befall you in the latter days, because you will do evil in the sight of the Lord" (Deuteronomy 31:29). The prophet Jeremiah warned the Israelite religious leaders, "those who handle the law did not know Me" and "the children of Israel... have perverted their way; they have forgotten the Lord their God" (Jeremiah 2:8; 3:21). God warned through the prophet Hosea, "I have written for him [Israel] the great things of My law, but they were considered a strange thing" and as a result, "I will punish them for their ways, and reward them for their deeds... because they have ceased obeying the Lord" (Hosea 8:12; 4:9–10).

Much of humankind has benefited from Judeo-Christian values spread through Western evangelism. Now, however, the very nations that God used to spread such knowledge worldwide are going to face serious consequences for despising God's word, themselves. The rejection of Western liberal theology by a "global South" determined to follow fundamental truths of Scripture marks a significant turning point in history.

Yet, the positive news is that Jesus Christ will soon return to restore true godly worship—for the West, the "global South," and the rest of mankind. Pray for His Kingdom to come!

—William Williams

Understanding Problems Rightly

Of course, every characteristic, masculine or feminine, can be expressed in abusive ways. Just as the assertiveness of men can become bullying, the gentle and nurturing side of women can turn into coddling.

One of the remarkable features of the Bible is the willingness of its Divine Author to record not only the highs of its heroes' lives, but their lows as well—not merely their successes but their failures, no matter how severe. In many cases, we see the flip side of their natures and the consequences of allowing natural inclinations to go unguided and unregulated by greater ideals.

In addition to David's manly actions and adventures, the Bible also records his instance of adultery and the murder he committed in a failed attempt to hide it (2 Samuel 11–12). God chronicles not only the valor and boldness of Jephthah the Gileadite, but also the tragic consequences of his rashness in victory (Judges 11).

To label such mistakes—and the many others recorded by the Bible's inspired writers—as examples of "toxic masculinity" is to misunderstand how that pair of words has become a tool of propaganda, wielded by those seeking to dismantle biblical concepts of family structure and gender roles. Toxic masculinity and toxic femininity are simply manifestations of toxic humanity: expressions of our carnal natures, corrupted by sin, which are not naturally subject to the law of God (Romans 8:7).

But the solution to the problems caused by such corruption is not to throw the baby (boy or girl) out with the bathwater. Masculinity and femininity are not the problem, and the APA's approach of treating traditional masculinity as a toxic brew of problems waiting to happen is simply wrong and dangerously misguided.

The Bible's explanation is far more helpful and more in line with reality: *Sin* is the problem. And if sin is the problem, then *addressing* sin is the solution. Sin affects us all, and any one of us, regardless of gender, can misapply the inclinations of our design. The solution isn't to ignore reality, fantasizing that we can

reshape the sexes to be whatever we desire them to be. Rather, the answer is to embrace the differences in the sexes while seeking their healthiest expression, seeking the wisdom of the God who designed the sexes in the first place.

In his article "Grown Men Are the Solution, Not the Problem" on *NationalReview.org*, columnist David French highlights the upside-down nature of the approach pressed on us by our self-appointed minders:

We do our sons no favors when we tell them that they don't have to answer that voice inside them that tells them to be strong, to be brave, and to lead. We do them no favors when we let them abandon the quest to become a grown man when that quest gets hard.... [T] raditional masculinity isn't the problem; it can be part of the cure.

Who Will Stand in the Gap?

Sadly, society seems to be attempting to define men out of existence at the very moment in history when we may need them most. The God of the Bible speaks of terrible times ahead—an overdue rendezvous with the consequences of our rejection of Him, His laws, His design, and His guidance. The period to come in human history will be like no other has ever been, and no period afterward will ever match its ferocity and horrors (Matthew 24:21; Jeremiah 30:7).

Yet the Eternal reveals plainly what He is looking for to forestall such days—and what He fails to find: "So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one" (Ezekiel 22:30).

Assertively—even aggressively—fighting against the crowd to do what is right, standing up on one's own two feet when the rest of the world is crawling on its knees, and being strong enough to bear the intense weight of society's pressure to conform to corrupt standards without deviating from what is true... All of those sound like the sorts of tasks for which men are made. Let us hope there are some left. The

MAY WE SUGGEST? **Successful Parenting: God's Way** Mankind has forgotten how to rear children, including the individual roles mother and father play. Request this **free** printed booklet from the Regional Office nearest you, or order at **TomorrowsWorld.org**. PDF, ePub, and Kindle are also available.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The Difficult Way and the Light Burden

Question: If the gate is narrow and the way difficult, as Jesus Christ stated in Matthew 7:13–14, then how could His yoke be easy and His burden light (Matthew 11:30)? Please explain this apparent contradiction.

Answer: At first glance, this may appear to be a contradiction, but in fact, it is not. To answer your question, we need to understand each passage, beginning with Matthew 7:13–14.

There, Jesus contrasted two ways of life. He said: "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." The word "narrow" in the *New King James Version* is translated from a Greek word that signifies being "pressed" or hemmed in by large rocks within a gorge. The Greek word rendered as "difficult" carries the meaning of "narrow" or "confined" (*An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*).

God's way is not the natural way that sinning humanity would choose or find most comfortable.

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Human nature seeks, and remains in, its own selfish comfort zone. It subtly resents and rebels against God's

way and His laws—the Ten Commandments (Romans 8:7). So deceitful is the heart of man (Jeremiah 17:9) that many think that they can believe in Christ and continue in a sinful lifestyle. Jesus therefore admonished all of His followers, "*Strive* to enter through the narrow gate" (Luke 13:24).

Human nature is naturally inclined toward selfishness and disobedience to God's holy and righteous laws. Without a deep, heartfelt repentance of sin and a fight against one's human nature, many simply will not be able to find the door into God's Kingdom! The *struggle* for every true Christian is to repent of past sins and become God-willed instead of self-willed! The vast majority of humanity does not want to go down that *straight* and *narrow* path—choosing rather the easy and broad way. Some will

prophesy in Christ's name, cast out demons and do many wonders, yet to no avail (Matthew 7:21–23). Why? Because they continue to "practice lawlessness" (v. 23). However, for those who do choose to repent and forsake lawlessness, Jesus will help them enter the narrow path.

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that sinning
humanity
would choose
or find most
comfortable.
Human nature
seeks, and
remains in, its
own selfish
comfort zone

Now, notice the second scripture in question. Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). The Apostle John elaborates: "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3).

God's way is indeed a blessed way of freedom from sin

and its consequences, which end in death (Romans 6:23). As Christians, we are to repent and "lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us"—having faith in Jesus Christ to help us through all our problems and trials—"casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you" (Hebrews 12:1-4; 1 Peter 5:7). It is the weight of sin that ensnares and loads us down! Through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, we can be forgiven and released from sin's vise-like grip. Jesus was speaking of two ways of lifeslavery to sin, shackled by guilt leading to eternal death, versus joyful obedience to God's way and the receiving of abundant blessings leading to eternal life. The two scriptures in question are thus clearly not contradictory but are sequential in nature. One scripture encourages an action—the choice of obedience to God's law. The other scripture describes the results of that choice—an easy yoke and light burden. Truly, anyone who has already made that choice realizes the blessings it affords. 🖽

LETTERS TO TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

I first saw your literature at a doctor's office, started reading it, and was so impressed by it that I asked the lady at the desk if I could take it with me. Then I received a magazine from a friend who picked it up and gave it to me because he knew I liked reading that type of magazine. So I decided to send for it. It has helped me understand what I read in the Bible and what we discuss at Bible study at church. Thank you so much for your free literature and for the encouragement I receive through reading your magazine.

-Subscriber in Florida

I just want to say thank you for the magazines and other literature that I read and pass on to people who need them, depending on the theme of the magazine for that month. I especially enjoyed the September-October 2018 edition of Tomorrow's World. The AIDS epidemic of our times continues to unfold right in front of our eyes every day, claiming a lot of victims, but as yet with no cure or a drop in new infections each year. If only our leaders were to turn to biblical solutions, things would definitely improve. God bless you.

-Subscriber in Zambia

Hi there, I was on the hunt for some decent resources or blogs that discuss drug addiction and detoxification and (thankfully!) caught your online post, Marijuana: What They Aren't Telling You—and I'm so glad I did. I've bookmarked Tomorrow's World for good!

-Online Reader in New York

Gentlemen: Peace be with you! Please be informed that your articles are not only enjoyable to read but also greatly enlightening and life-changing. Especially the truth from the Holy Bible. More power and blessings to your spiritual mission.

-Reader in the Philippines

[Referring to one of our Tomorrow's World Viewpoint videos: I really love this type of historical background. I never liked history in school, and now I'm so sorry for that because, as I have now learned, the Bible and history go hand in hand. The Bible makes history make sense, now it has become an enjoyment. I hope you will continue to share more things like this.

-Online Reader in Ohio

Editor's Note: Our Tomorrow's World Viewpoint videos are brief videos (around five minutes) that discuss a wide variety of topics and do not shy away from controversy. As of this writing, our video discussing the question of whether schools discriminate against boys has garnered more than 616,000 views and almost 10,000 comments. They can be found on their own YouTube channel by searching for "Tomorrow's World Viewpoint."

I have watched your Sunday morning TV programs for some time. I would like to accept your offer of free information, The Middle East in Prophecy. As a Christian of many years, I am interested in the truth as revealed by God's word in the Bible. In a world where compromise is accepted (unfortunately, even in so many "Christian" churches), it is comforting to know God's word is still being preached in its truth and purity. May the presence of the Holy Spirit keep your program strong in sharing the Father's word of His Son's redemption of our fallen world.

-Viewer in Australia

Thank you so much for your literature. If ever there was a time when truth was needed now would be that time, and if ever there was a place that revealed that truth, Tomorrow's World would be that place. Thank you for bringing truth to the world. May God bless vou all!

-Subscriber in Canada

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TELEVISION LOG

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	Charleston	WQCW	SU 7:00 a.m.
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WGN	SU 6:00 a.m.	
WORD Network	SU 7:30 p.m. FR 7:00 p.m.	

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Presque Isle	WBPQ

Adelphia	FR 10:00 a.m.
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Comcast	SU 7:30 a.m.
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KPLR	MO 6:30 a.m.
WXXV	SU 7:00 a.m.



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Sunset for Britain and America

Prophecy is clear: The end is coming for British and American power!

May 16-22

Five Steps to Truly Know God

Is it possible to truly know God! Yes, it is! Taking these five steps will change your life. May 23-29

The Real Armageddon

The ultimate battle between good and evil is coming. You need to be ready!

May 30-June 5

Can America Be "Great Again"?

Is it possible to make America truly great again? Prophecy holds the answer.

June 6-I2

Unlock Bible Prophecy!

Many find prophecy hard to understand, but a few simple tools can make it plain!

June 13–19

Who Changed the Sabbath to Sunday?

The Bible speaks of a seventh-day Sabbath, but many worship on Sunday. Why?

June 20–26

Schedule subject to change

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