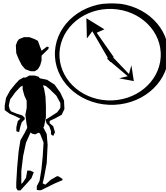


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Time of Assembly



Every other Sunday:

Bible Study 9:00 a.m.
Worship 10:00 a.m.

OR

Bible Study 4:00 p.m.
Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 p. m.

The Changing Morals in America

By Sewell Hall

There was a time when the leaders of our country unashamedly proclaimed their trust in God. George Washington said, "It is impossible to govern the world without God and the Bible. Of all the dispositions and habits that lead to political prosperity, our religion and morality are the indispensable supporters." Similar quotations from other founding fathers are too numerous to require repetition here. Granted, some of those statements may have been issued for political reasons, but if so it simply demonstrates that these were the sentiments of their constituents.

Romans, Chapter One, All Over Again

"Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God" ([Romans 1:21](#)). Little by little our leaders have spoken less and less of God. It is now insisted that a candidate's religious beliefs and morals should be given no consideration in judging his suitability for office. Under the concept of "separation of church and state" politicians are ridiculed and sometimes rejected if they allow their faith to affect their votes on vital issues. Great universities, established by religious people for the glory of God, have become completely secular and even atheistic. God's name is now so disrespected that it is constantly profaned to express every other human emotion.

"Nor were thankful" ([Romans 1:21](#)). In times of crisis, we may stand and sing "God Bless America," but when the crisis is past, God is forgotten. We hear about the American spirit and our resourcefulness and resilience; but how often do we hear thanks given to God? The day that has been set aside for this purpose in our calendar is now more often referred to as "Turkey Day" than as Thanksgiving, and the activities involve more sports and travel than expressions of gratitude.

"Professing to be wise, they became fools" ([Romans](#)

[1:22](#)). Using the scientific method we have created a marvelous standard of living. But we have been foolish enough to suppose that by human wisdom all truth can be discovered. The result has been an explanation for the existence of man that is neither scientific nor rational and complete ignorance of what lies beyond the grave.

"*And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man*" ([Romans 1:23](#)). The religion that presently dominates education and philosophy is secular humanism, a religion that makes man the measure of all things. We have "exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator."

"*Even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature*" ([Romans 1:26-27](#)). Homosexuality, once an unspeakable sin, has become not only acceptable and respectable but also honored and given special privilege. Even religious institutions have ordained men and women to their clergy; and "same-sex marriage" is being practiced in some states.

As was the case with the ancient Greeks, our nation may be characterized as "being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, et al ([Romans 1:29-31](#)). If anyone considers this an unfair indictment of our generation, just check the morning papers.

"But Look at Our Coins"

Yes, for the time being, our coins retain the motto: "In God We Trust." Mottos, however, do not always represent the true state of things. Whether a nation trusts in God is indicated more by their actions than by their mottos ([Psalms 78:36-37](#); [Isaiah 29:13](#)).

A Call to Self Examination

While we grieve over the decline of faith in our nation, we must remember that faith is a personal thing. The nation trusts in God only to the extent that its citizens trust in God. Those of us who are concerned about national trends need to ask ourselves, "Is my trust truly in God?"

Do I trust His power sufficiently to believe that He did all that Genesis 1 says He did? Do I trust His wisdom sufficiently to do whatever He asks whether I see the necessity of it or not, and to do it as He has directed even though I think some other way would be better? Do I trust His rule in the kingdoms of men sufficiently to accept without anxiety the election of a particular party or candidate? Do I trust His care sufficiently that I can sleep securely at night without a penny in the bank and without a piece of bread in the cupboard, simply because I am seeking "*first the kingdom of God and His righteousness*" ([Matthew 6:33](#))? Do I trust His providence sufficiently to believe that "*all things work together for good to those who love God*" ([Romans 8:28](#))? Do I trust His promises sufficiently to say with Paul "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" ([Philippians 1:21](#))?

Abounding Through Many Thanksgivings to God

By R. J. Evans

We are so fortunate to live in a country that realizes the need to set aside a special day of “Thanksgiving.” Our nation celebrates this holiday on the fourth Thursday in November. However, as Christians, every day should be a day of “thanksgiving” because we have innumerable blessings that come from God each day of our lives.

The Apostle Paul gave much encouragement to the Corinthians concerning the matter of their giving to the needy saints in Jerusalem. He used the churches of Macedonia as an example of some who gave with joy, liberality, willingness, and beyond their ability — despite the fact they were in deep poverty ([II Corinthians 8:1-7](#)). After instructing them to give purposefully and cheerfully ([II Corinthians 9:7](#)), he went on to assure them that “*For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God*” ([II Corinthians 9:12](#)). Take note of the last phrase of this text where he said, “*abounding through many thanksgivings to God.*”

In order to truly receive God’s bountiful blessings, we must be thankful to God. The matter of giving thanks unto God should come first and foremost in everything we receive. The Apostle Paul told the Thessalonians “*in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ for you*” ([I Thessalonians 5:18](#)).

Paul instructed the Philippians to “*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God*” ([Philippians 4:6](#)). The more we are thankful, the greater the abundance of the blessings that will be received.

The parable of the prodigal (wasteful) son demonstrates an attitude of ingratitude. He desired to get all that was his, get as far away from his family as he could, and then go out and enjoy himself in “prodigal living.” However, it became his road to disaster. Finally, while in the pigpen, when he came to himself, he became thankful and appreciative for what he had back home, and determined with all his heart to go back with the intention of simply becoming one of his father’s hired servants. We know the joyous ending of this return to his loving father ([Luke 15:11-24](#)). This story is a good illustration of how prosperity and wastefulness can produce ingratitude — a failure to be thankful and recognize God as the source of all blessings. See the warnings against this kind of failure in [Deuteronomy 6:10-12](#) and [I Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19](#).

Thankfulness was an attribute of Jesus while here on earth. When He prayed to His Father, He would thank Him for a number of blessings. Before He fed the multitudes, He gave thanks for the food. “*Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on*

the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes” ([Matthew 14:19](#)); “And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitude” (15:36).

When he raised Lazarus from the dead, He thanked His Father for hearing His prayer: “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me” ([John 11:41-42](#)).

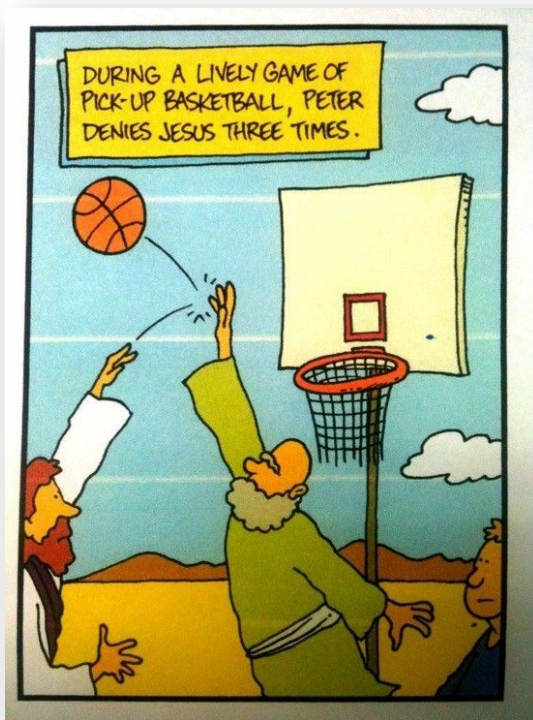
Before He gave His disciples the bread and the cup in the memorial of His death (the Lord’s Supper), He gave thanks for the bread and for the cup ([Matthew 26:26](#); [Mark 14:22](#); [Luke 22:19-20](#); [I Corinthians 11:24-25](#)).

Being thankful is not an option in the life of a Christian if he wants to be spiritually strong — it is a must! David expressed it this way: “Surely the righteous shall give thanks in Your name; The upright shall dwell in Your presence” ([Psalms 40:13](#)).

The Apostle Paul said: “speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” ([Ephesians 5:19-20](#)).

The giving of thanks is the will of God in our lives. We will enjoy even greater blessings by being thankful for those we have already received. It must be so heart-breaking to God when we are ungrateful for the things that He has provided for us. This is very evident when Jesus healed the ten lepers, but only one of them came back to give thanks for what He had done for him. Jesus responded by asking — “Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?” ([Luke 17:11-19](#)). We can just sense the sadness on His part when He asked these questions.

Let us genuinely practice being thankful; it will truly enrich our lives. “I will praise the name of God with a song, and magnify Him with thanksgiving” ([Psalms 69:30](#)).



How God Draws People

By Dennis Abernathy

"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught by God. Therefore, everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me." (Jn.6:44-45). God's three-part process of drawing people to Him involves: (1) Hearing; (2) Learning; and (3) Coming. There is nothing mystical about it. The Father teaches, people listen, learn, and believe what they have been taught, and they come. It is just that simple!

God does not draw people to Himself by overpowering their own free will i. e., God does not irresistibly draw men to Himself. Thus, Calvinism's doctrine of "irresistible grace," that overwhelms or supersedes the individual's volition is false. One does not come to God by a "direct operation of the Holy Spirit" that intrudes into the human heart.

The Bible clearly teaches that man plays a part in his own salvation. By this it is meant, God has given man free will; a person can choose whether he will or will not come to God. Jesus invites all to come to Him (Matt. 11:28), and those who do come to Him are those who "willingly", respond to the call of the gospel (2 Thess. 2:14). Thus, the Father draws people by His loving appeal through the gospel message which is embodied in Jesus Christ.

That is why the gospel of Christ is said to be the "power of God unto salvation." (Rom. 1:16). That is why we are to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mk. 16:15). Those who hear, learn and believe will obey the gospel (Mk. 16:16). But all who will not believe, will not come to Jesus in obedience, that they might have life (Jn. 5:40). What about you my friend? Think on these things.

A Young Soul Winner

By Jefferson David Tant

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." ([Matthew 28:19](#))

Nancy Harber was only 14 (well, almost 15), and at this young age had already experienced one of the greatest joys of life — something that many members of the church will not experience in a lifetime. Let me tell you about it.

Many years ago I was with the Hazelwood church in St. Louis holding a gospel meeting. On Monday evening Nancy Harber invited one of her school friends over to have dinner and attend services with us. Candy had never attended services before, but she knew something about the church because Nancy had been talking to her at school.

We had a pleasant visit at dinner (Bob and Brooksie Harber were my hosts for the week). After church Candy expressed an interest in returning the next evening. Also at the service, Monday night was Robyn, another school friend of Nancy's. Robyn had been attending services for the past few months—also at Nancy's invitation. After services Tuesday night, Candy had some questions for me concerning differences between the Lord's church and the denomination of which she was a member. We talked for a good while. In the meantime, I was also becoming acquainted with Robyn, as we provided transportation for her almost every night.

Candy could not return until Friday night, but Robyn came each night. After giving careful thought to the lesson Friday night, Candy told Nancy during the invitation song that she wanted to be baptized but wanted to wait until next week. Nancy replied, "There may not be a next week." She then turned to the song, "Why Not Tonight," and asked Candy to read the words. Candy then came forward to request baptism. There was much rejoicing, both on Candy's part and on the part of the disciples there. Many tears of joy were evident.

Then we returned to the home of the Harbers to engage in a late-evening Bible study with Candy and Robyn. We had barely gotten started when Robyn expressed her desire to be baptized also. We went back to the church building to assist her in her obedience to the gospel of Christ. More rejoicing. Then back to the house for more Bible study.

You know what Nancy's great joy was, don't you? If you have never won a soul to Christ, let me tell you that it is truly one of the greatest joys you can possibly experience. There is no way to describe it adequately.

Nancy Harber was a lovely girl. Not just because she had lovely red hair and a radiant smile, but because she was a soul winner for Jesus Christ. She knew what it was to "*remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth*" ([Ecclesiastes 12:1](#)). She was not ashamed to stand up for Jesus and let others know she was a Christian. She was not afraid to talk to her friends about the Bible. She did not let school activities or social life interfere with seeking first the kingdom of God. Therefore, her example was consistent with her teaching. Thanks to this, two 15-year-old girls were cleansed from their sins by the precious blood of Christ.

Thanks, Nancy, for the encouragement you have given me, and for the example, you set before all who may read this. I hope this publicity will not embarrass you too much. And I am thankful for Nancy's parents, for the example and training they have given to their children. May their tribe increase. Nancy is now Nancy Picogna, the wife of Greg. They are the faithful parents of four. Bob and Brooksie have gone to their reward, but their legacy is still living.

Young readers, truly "the fields are white unto harvest," even among your schoolmates. Are you taking advantage of the wonderful opportunity?

