

The Moral Decline in America

John 3:19-21

Introduction: Morality in the United States has been noticeably in decline for quite some time. Solomon once said, “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people” (Prov. 14:34). We live in a time in which sin is as acceptable as food. We have people who want to remove all references to God from our society. We live among people who think killing an unborn child is appropriate. Many people think it is all right to drink alcohol, gamble and abuse drugs but don’t you dare promote religion in the workplace.

Our society reminds us of Isaiah’s admonition (Isa. 5:20-23).

I. How immoral is America?

A. We are going to look at graphs produced by the former U.S. Education Secretary under Ronald Reagan, William Bennett, which he calls the “Cultural Index.” He wrote his book, The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators; American Society at the End of the 20th Century in 1994. As we will see, when it comes to morality, the United States has been heading in the wrong direction for a long time.

B. God said He hates divorce (Mal. 2:16); yet, over half of all marriages in the U.S. end in divorce. Marriages should end in death (Rom. 7:1-3).

1. (“Divorce rate of the world (1998)” chart.) Per capita, the U.S. leads all other nations in divorce.

2. (“Marriage and Divorce Rate” chart.) It is so bad in America that the marriage rates are plummeting while divorce rates are rising. When over half of all marriages in the U.S. end in divorce, what does this trend mean to our future as a country?

3. (“Children Affected by Divorce” chart.) One of the consequences of this trend is the affect it has on children. Many children no longer live with both of their biological parents.

4. (“Living Arrangements of Children” chart.) Less than 60% of children live with both of their biological parents in 1990. That was 32 years ago! I’m sure it is worse now. I asked the kids on my school bus how many of them live with both of their biological parents. Only a few raised their hands.

5. (“Single Parent Families” chart.) Single parent families are on the rise. In just 30 years, that rate has risen from 10% to over 25%.

6. (“Birth to Unmarried Women” chart.) Illegitimate birth rates are rising even faster. Nearly 30% of all birth in 1990 was illegitimate.

C. The Lord also hates the shedding of innocent blood (Prov. 6:16-17; Deut. 27:25).

1. (“Total Abortions” chart.) Our nation sheds the blood of innocent unborn children at a rate over 1.5 million per year.

2. (“Child Abuse” chart.) If we are willing to kill our children as a nation, what do you think we are willing to do to our children in other ways? In just 15 years since Roe vs. Wade, child abuse had doubled.

D. How has these trends affected our children?

1. (“Teen Suicide Rates” chart.) Teen suicides have nearly tripled.

2. (“Juvenile Violent Crime Arrest Rates” chart.) Violent juvenile crimes have risen over 200%.

3. (“Number of Crimes Committed” chart.) As a result, crime rates in the U.S. have tripled while violent crimes have exceeded 500% since 1960.

E. Would it surprise you to know that...

1. (“Median Prison Sentence for All Serious Crimes” chart.) Prison terms are decreasing.

2. (“Number of Persons in Federal and State Prisons and Local Jails, 1985-96” chart.) Inmate populations in the U.S. have risen.

3. (“Trends in Drug-Related Emergency Room Mentions of Cocaine, Heroin, and Marijuana, 1988-95” chart.) Drug use is increasing.

4. (“SAT Scores” chart.) SAT scores for college entrance are down.

5. (“Daily Television Viewing” chart.) Television watching is up.

II. This information should scare us and help us to think soberly about sin.

A. Paul used this same approach to illustrate the need for the then present-day Christians not to be like the Israelites of old by making an example of their wickedness (1 Cor. 10:1-12).

B. Paul described the depravity of his day (Rom. 1:18-32).

C. Is history repeating itself? The Israelites and the Roman empire no longer exist. Do we honestly think America is any different?

Conclusion: Blessed is a nation that follows the Lord (Psm. 33:8-12). The nation He is referring to in verse 12 is His Church. This country will fall apart in its sin as all the nations before it. But God has prepared a nation of people who despite the world around us can still find a home with Him. Are you a member of His nation, His Church?