Volume 7 August 2015 Issue 003

The Coop Report...

As Nations do to themselves…(about the LGBT Stuff)

Christians and Christianity in general have been taking a lot of heat lately the LGBT communities who classify God's position on their sexual choices as being an infringement on their individual rights.

From the LGBT response to Franklin Graham's stated position on their lifestyle; the ruling of our not so "Supreme Court" to impose its legal view on the definition of a marriage throughout America; and the August 2nd decisions by the owners of Bank of America Stadium, BB&T Ballpark and Charlotte Motor Speedway to "allow transgender men and women to use the restroom of their gender identity," it appears our once Christian nation has all but lost its moral compass.

From the editorial comments I have read in the Observer that support the LBGT agenda, ignorance of the Christian faith abounds, even by many who say they *are* Christians.

If you already know the fundamentals of the Christian faith, great...perhaps you can use this article to help bring others who don't to a better understanding of who we are as *disciples* of Jesus Christ.

If you get this passed along to you from a caring friend and find the following to be new territory to your understanding of what real disciples of Christ believe, I hope this will enlighten your knowledge and increase your curiosity to the point that you will press on to learn more. Ask a Christian friend, relative, or neighbor if you can accompany them to their church or begin by listening to Charles Stanley or David Jeremiah's sermons on Sunday TV. These pastors teach straight from the Word of God and many others some don't.

Holy, Righteous Jehovah God

Being the holy and righteous God that He is, He holds us to living by His standards. Those who do not, will be rightly judged. His standards include honor and respect for all of His creation ***as He*** designed it; our acknowledgment that He is the creator and benefactor of all things; and our recognition that He appeared as a man (Jesus) on earth to demonstrate His love for mankind (to seek out those who are lost, in despair, and without any hope); died for our sins and was resurrected to life; and warn us about the consequences of our neglecting and rejection of this historical fact.

Origin of Sin & Its Affect on the World

Initially, planet earth and all of its features and creatures were in complete harmony with one another. The jealous rebellion of Lucifer in Heaven and His being cast down to earth introduced a tempter and deceiver with a mission to continue his rebellion against God in this world. He began his evil intent by tempting and deceiving Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. When she succumbed to this seemingly innocuous temptation, "sin" was introduced and disrupted the order of God's creation.

From this point forward, Satan has continued his quest to disrupt the order of God's creation. The ensuing turmoil has worsened with each generation and will eventually result in God's elimination of Satan and the reordering of His creation.

Any sin we commit is a contribution to Satan's efforts and displeases God. Both the Bible and reliable history books have recorded a recurring pattern in the lives and death of nations that involve (in secular terms):

- Prominence
- Pride
- Greed
- Materialism
- Corruption, sensationalism
- Sexual perversion
- Economic collapse
- Destruction

Mankind's Achilles Heel & Satan's Focus (The Sensual Bodily)

From the beginning of the aforementioned cycle through *destruction*, one common denominator surfaced and ultimately flourished...sexual perversion. Sexual perversion includes any sexual act that is in direct conflict with God's intended purpose.

Those who engage in behavior abhorrent to God (such as homosexuality or any other kind of sexual perversion or any other sin for that matter) and establishes (i.e., allows and/or encourages) an environment that helps sustain the act of sin are rebelling against God.

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The misuse of God's design and purpose of the two sexes (male & female) is an abomination to God...one of the worst things a person can do to demonstrate his/her rebellion against our creator.

The LGBT lifestyle *is* condemned by God. A few references to this effect are: Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Timothy 1:8-10. It's spread and tolerance in a nation will culminate in the ushering in of God's wrath upon that nation.

Now, the Fundamentals

Before we continue, here is a short list of the fundamentals of the Christian faith:

1) Christians believe in the existence of only one Supreme Being, who is God *Almighty* (i.e., Jehovah, Yahweh), the creator and benefactor of all things;

2) God is revealed to mankind as three distinct persons -- Father, Son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit. This Holy Trinity (God the father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit) have existed since before the creation of the world;

3) Since all of the Old & New Testament books (which comprise the entire Christian Bible) were inspired by the Holy Spirit (an affirmation of this is clearly stated in 2 Timothy 3:16-17), all scripture represents the final Word of God and must be used *collectively* to discern God's position on all aspects of our lives;

4) The Christian Bible, written by men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit is inerrant (i.e., there are no contradictions) in this record of God's Word. This is proven by exhaustive manuscript comparisons. Those who have claimed contradictions have failed to study *the entire* Bible which and have thus misinterpreted what they have examined;

5) God did come to earth in the flesh (that is in the person of Jesus) to save the lost (i.e., sinners) and ministered to them in hopes of turning them away from their sinful lives. Reference the account of the adulterous woman who was about to be stoned to death (John 8: 1-11) when Jesus intervened, asking for those who had condemned her who had no sin of their own to throw the first stone. When no one in the crowd was found able to meet that condition, Jesus responded to the woman, *"I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more."*

What the Bible Says About Marriage

Some say that since Jesus (God in human flesh) did not say anything about the homosexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender lifestyles that they must be OK...that really is *not* an abomination. Not so! The words of Jesus alone do not represent the entire Word of God. As stated above, the *entire* Bible represents God's position *on everything*.

He does not use a balance sheet of "good" and "bad" deeds as the basis for entry into heaven. Nor does He allow everyone to have eternal fellowship with Him.

> *16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. 17 "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him."*
>
> John 3:16-21 (NASB)

So, you just have to "believe" and you will be saved? As the whole of scripture tells us, "believing" means we not only confess Jesus' deity, death on the cross, and resurrection, but also make Him *Lord* of our life. This means we commit to being a disciple (a pupil/student/follower) of Jesus and through the Holy Spirit allow ourselves to continual sanctification. That is, daily, we must strive to change the way we currently live to conform to His ways. We must confess our sins to Him and repent from our wicked ways (our sins). What does "repentance" mean? It means that we pledge to remove ourselves from whatever is it was or is that led us into committing a sinful act. It means we will set our focus on living according to God's way of living...not ours.

Christianity is the ONLY religion that provides a guaranteed way to heaven. This is called, "salvation" and it is a **free** *gift* from God:

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> *8 God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. 9 Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.*
>
> Ephesians 2:8-9 (NLT)

Are Christians Sinners?

Are Christians sinners? Christians are indeed sinners, because man is born with a sinful nature and God has given everyone the freedom of choice.

> *23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*
>
> Romans 3:23 (NASB)

As followers of Jesus Christ, we know what pleases God and what does not, but our sinful nature often overpowers us and we wind up sinning when we make the wrong choices. We also know the consequences of our sins:

> *23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
>
> Romans 6:23 (NASB)

As we fall short of perfection (we always will) we recognize our failures. We then confess our sins, repent, ask for and receive forgiveness from our loving God.

> *9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;*
>
> Romans 10:9 (NASB)

We then try to prevent repeating our sinful behavior by earnestly trying to remove ourselves from the environment (or the part of our environment) that promoted (encourages, provides for) the sin.

Why are Christians Concerned ?

So, are we Christians meddling unnecessarily in the lives of those who wish to indulge in LGBT behavior? No, we are not. We know from reading and understanding God's Word that He despises all types of sins, some of which He *especially* detests (reference the aforementioned scripture references which includes the LGBT lifestyle).

We also know, through Jesus' example, that Christians are commissioned by God to seek out those who do not know His Word and the work that Jesus Christ did on the cross for *all* of us. (Jesus took all of our sins and payed the price for them by the shedding of His blood at Calvary.)

> *19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*
>
> Matthew 28:19-20 (NASB)

He wants us to reach out to those who are on the pathway to eternal destruction (i.e., Hell). We are to compassionately warn them of their sin and tell them about the availability of eternal salvation and how they can receive this free gift from God through His magnificent grace.

We also understand from reading God's Word that He judges both nations and individuals. (It is individuals who comprise, that is, make-up nations.) If a nation's people (i.e., government) choose to condone behavior that is abhorrent to God, then God will judge them accordingly (i.e., as a whole nation). Each individual who is part of the nation will be included in whatever judgment God brings upon a nation.

Consequently, we do have a vested interest in how God sees our nation's heart. Many nations of antiquity who no longer exist today fell into a spiritual and moral pit that caused their demise. Two of the most well-known were Sodom and Gomorrah. By its recent decisions, America has entered this highway to its destruction.

We are together in Christ,

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