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The Coop Report...

Freedom to Choose...Everything to Lose

Choices…that's what we had and that's *why* we are *where* we are today. I see a dangerous future for our young children and a terrifying future for later generations. As God's greatest petition for mankind, we (America) have fallen into the same pattern of worshipping other gods as did the Israelites thousands of years before us. As God sent His people (a complete nation) into captivity or placed them under the yoke of foreign rulers (more than once) as a punishment for their waywardness, are we also close to being on the receiving end of His wrath? In God's eyes, are we indeed a fallen nation, an embarrassment to His holiness?

The rest of the world that watches us has made this observation as well. Particularly, at a time when we are in the spotlight with the Muslim world, outtakes from our routine daily lifestyles make us look pretty ungodly. Just look at the sexually-oriented *television* commercials. From an outsider looking "in" and even an insider looking in the same direction, sex seems to be at or near the top of the list for Americans. What other impression could possibly be made from these provocative productions? (Don't forget, satellite television goes all around the globe.) Unfortunately, there's more….an ever-growing list of similar, but more damaging snapshots that paint even a more shady image of our society, much of which is specifically targeted to our impressionable youth:

- Hollywood's assembly line packaging of sex and violence
- Video games that flood our children's minds with sex , violence, rejection of authority
- Music with sexual, violent, and profane lyrics
- Music videos that make sex, drugs, violence, and profanity "cool"
- Profane and provocative stage acts during nationally televised sporting events (remember the super bowl half-time show a couple of years ago?)

At the same time, America has seen and *been* seen as a nation where:

- Parents are killing their children
- Children are killing their parents
- Children are killing children
- Children are being molested at alarming rate
- Husbands are killing wives
- Wives are killing husbands
- Kidnappings, rape, brutal attacks on girls and women are almost a daily occurrence
- Marriages are being allowed between people of the same sex
- Same sex couples are able to have and/or adopt children
- Violence is a regular occurrence in public schools
- Authority is something to be challenged

With all of the above in the forefront of broadcasts floating around in the mainstream of international airways, we should not be surprised when people in other lands or from other religions claim America to be the "great Satan." We appear to be what *they* can see. To a large degree, we *are* what they claim.

How did we get here? Again, choices….choices made by vocal, liberal, active members of our society who wanted to do as they pleased, regardless of the consequences to our society as a whole. Choices made by quiet, conservative members of our society to remain… *silent.*

Christian America was cooked in the same way you cook a frog. Using the easy no-hassle southern frog recipe, the liberal community put us in the pot and just kept turning up the heat very slowly – one degree at a time. With each additional degree, they managed to rally enough supporters and put enough pressure on their elected officials to win small victories that later emerged into larger ones before conservative America realized the influence they had gained in our legislative system.

At first, America's Christians just could not believe the liberal activists could possibly achieve their desires because no one in their right mind would take their ideas seriously…or that someone else would stop them in their tracks…but no one else did!. Soon, their accumulated victories had out trumped us…they had won enough decisions to establish a precedent for continuing their assault on the values upon which America was born and made into the greatest power on earth.

Challenged by the ACLU and other liberal organizations to protect the "rights" of individuals who did not like the

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restrictions society had placed on them, judges, lawmakers, and politicians began lifting each word in the First Amendment from its historical setting and context and sliced, diced, dissected, x-rayed, probed, and otherwise examined for its "true" significance and meaning. In so doing, the contextual, intentional desire of the authors of the First Amendment to protect the moral fabric of America has been torn apart, word by word, syllable by syllable. As a result, for the last 50 years or so, our Christian personality has been in this state of decay, resulting in a rapidly deteriorating moral climate.

The liberal position appears to stem from the relativism movement. This movement adheres to the false notion that "truth" is relative…that what is "true" for you may not be "true" for me. As such, many of our leaders and those in our legislative branches have granted *too many freedoms….too many* individual "rights" to provide the tolerance (e.g., a legally mandated acceptance) of a diverse set of lifestyles that are only desired by a small percentage of Americans and abhorrent to the vast majority.

There is much focus from our legislative branches on protecting these individual "rights" of the minority and we are quickly approaching the point where a common basis for our continued existence as a nation is in jeopardy. The individual threads of our nations' religious character, integrity, morality, and civil obedience have become so widely diverse that America has lost its identity as a united people.

A comparison of what the 55 authors of the Bill of Rights had in mind when they completed the First Amendment in 1791 and the new meaning as determined by our judicial system and legislative branches of our government during the last 50 years are reflected below. How do you interpret the First Amendment?

- Freedom of speech <u>to criticize our government</u> without fear of reprisal, as our forefathers envisioned it…***or***
- Freedom of speech as our 20th century judges and legislators define it to protect the "rights" of those who: want to tell national secrets that can place our troops and nation in jeopardy; publish pornography; broadcast sexually explicit shows on our nations' airways; sell video games to our children that have violent themes and show complete disrespect for law enforcement officers; and sell video games that have realistic, graphic scenes of murder and torture (just to name a few).

- Establishing a law that precludes the Federal Government from establishing one Christian denomination as the one and only CHRISTIAN DENOMINATION to be followed in America… ***or***
- A "wall of separation" between church and state, as defined by our Supreme Court Justices to all but prevent the mention of Christianity in our public schools…the Biblical account of creationism and the worship of the Sovereign God of the universe, in order to protect the "rights" of atheists to religiously practice self-reliance.

America's spiritual, moral, and civil decay continues to accelerate as our senators, representatives, lawmakers, and countless local government officials have lost their desire (or ability) to use common sense and sound logic for the good of the whole.

Regardless of the reason(s), the ever widening bandwidth of tolerance in our society has resulted in several generations having been reared without a firm grasp of the critical importance of having a relationship with Christ. Their ability to discern the differences between right and wrong, good and evil, integrity and deceitfulness, and ethical and immoral behavior has become clouded by the promotion of a sea of diversity and tolerance. We have traded our Christian theology for the intellectual pursuit of "truth."

As the Israelites of antiquity, we have receded into analyzing every word, every letter of our laws in efforts to ensure their proper interpretation and enforcement. We have placed more stock in the intellectual challenges offered by the analysis of every word and grouping of words that make up our laws than in the historical basis for their original intent. In do doing, America has lost its grip on use of logic and common sense.

Attainment of worldly successes and ignorance of God's plan for our salvation has outpaced the reality of our pending death and an eternal life thereafter. As someone said, we will be "dead" a lot longer than we

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will be alive on this earth. Since a reality of life is the certainty of death, you would think that people who have had the opportunity to hear the word of God would have a desire to be as active in monitoring their spiritual health as they frequently review their personal finances.

In Closing…

The lifestyle *"we the people"* have allowed our nation to become is in direct conflict with God's commandments and laws. I believe we are on the verge of being the recipient of his wrath.

A land indeed, flowing of milk and honey…a nation built on the vestiges of countless individuals who sought religious freedom to worship God according to their personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Through our sin of omission, we have made *choices.*

Although we will be accountable for our past mistakes, through God's great and expansive mercy, we still *can* reverse the trends of America today…perhaps in time to restore our nation to its Christian roots. By restoring our spiritual focus in the Almighty God, we can begin to reverse the malignant growth of immorality, hopefully, in time to prevent the civil decay of America.

The time to respond to this dilemma is now. Prayerfully, we must get ask for the wisdom and courage to get the attention of our representatives and senators to tackle the roots of our problems, rather then continue to expand the bandwidth of tolerance that has gotten us here in the first place. Sometimes you have to severely cut back a wildly growing shrub in order for it to be reshaped and nurtured back to fullness. Usually, such care will make the shrub even stronger and healthier than it was before…

Perhaps the exercise included with this edition will relight the lost art of reason...

Seasoning for the Season…101

This exercise is for anyone, but is really intended for those who believe that the First Amendment was conceived to provide everyone a right to freely express himself/herself in America, through any media or method they choose. It is also for those who believe that the First Amendment also was conceived to remove the influence of Christianity ("religion") from the business of running our government.

The exercise is divided into two tables (one is on page 4 and the other on page 5) that require you to match a "cause" and "effect" column by entering your match criteria in the middle column. You may have multiple "matches" (answers) for each "cause" and "effect."

As simple as this exercise sounds it hopefully will help someone see how tinkering around with the First Amendment (by taking it out of context with the historical circumstances surrounding its writing) has been the catalyst that has put America into a tailspin of spiritual and moral decay. It should also show the simplicity of the solution to many problems we face in America.

Table 1

For each "Condition" listed in column one, select one or more "Causes" from column three that are (in your opinion) likely causes of the "Condition" and enter the number of the "Cause" in the "Match Column." (You may have several "matches" for each combination, separated by comas.)

Table 2

Now, using tables with identical content as before (except for their numbers), match the "Condition" in column four with an item(s) listed in column six that you believe could result in reversing the "Condition" listed in column 4. (Enter your answers in the "Match Column" as before.)

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#	"Condition" (Column 1)
A	Disrespect for authority
B	Pregnancy out of wedlock
C	Sexual promiscuity
D	Sloppy attire (intentionally sloppy)
E	Kidnapping, Rape, Torture
F	Child pornography
G	Child molestations
H	Lust for power, money, sex
I	Rampart use of foul language
J	Lying, cheating
K	Children killing their parents
L	Parents killing their children
M	People killing other people
N	Stealing
O	Homosexual practices
P	Acceptance of homosexual lifestyle
Q	School shootings (e.g., Columbine)
R	Underage drinking
S	Illicit drug use
T	Abortion
U	Increased tolerance of immoral, dangerous, and/or unjust behavior
V	Blaming drugs, alcohol, guns, for acts of violence
W	A Muslim world that believes America is the "great Satan"
X	Addiction to video games
Y	Aggressive drivers on the highways
Z	Fraud in corporate America

"Match Column" (Column 2")

#	"Cause" (Column 3)
1	Being a Cub or Boy Scout
2	Pornography – internet, magazines, movies
3	Violent movies, TV
4	Public display of the Ten Commandments and/or the Nativity Scene during Christmas
5	Regular church attendance (Christian)
6	Learning about Jesus Christ
7	Teaching evolution in our schools; avoiding creationism
8	Violent video games
9	Being an active member of a Christian Church
10	Studying Creationism and the Holy Bible
11	Being a Brownie or Girl Scout
12	Misinterpretation of the 1st Amendment (relationship between church and state)
13	An Invocation (a Christian prayer) before a ball game
14	Hard Rock Music
15	Reference to "God" on U.S. currency
16	Having school aged children and young men and women recite the Pledge of Allegiance, using the word, "God."
17	Boys being reared without fathers
18	Divorce
19	Sexually provocative clothing
20	Regular family outings, vacations
21	Single parent families (divorced or separated)
22	An Invocation (Christian prayer) before Congress or the Senate
23	Giving children everything they want
24	Parents that both work outside of the home
25	Emphasis on the importance of sex in our society
26	Misinterpretation of the 1st Amendment ("free speech") and "relationship between church and state").

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#	"Condition" (Column 4)
A	Disrespect for authority
B	Pregnancy out of wedlock
C	Sexual promiscuity
D	Sloppy attire (intentionally sloppy)
E	Kidnapping, Rape, Torture
F	Child pornography
G	Child molestations
H	Lust for power, money, sex
I	Rampart use of foul language
J	Lying, cheating
K	Children killing their parents
L	Parents killing their children
M	People killing other people
N	Stealing
O	Homosexual practices
P	Acceptance of homosexual lifestyle
Q	School shootings (e.g., Columbine)
R	Underage drinking
S	Illicit drug use
T	Abortion
U	Increased tolerance of immoral, dangerous, and/or unjust behavior
V	Blaming drugs, alcohol, guns, for acts of violence
W	A Muslim world that believes America is the "great Satan"
X	Addiction to video games
Y	Aggressive drivers on the highways
Z	Fraud in corporate America

"Match Column" (Column 5")

#	"Cause" (Column 6)
1	Being a Cub or Boy Scout
2	Pornography – internet, magazines, movies
3	Violent movies, TV
4	Public display of the Ten Commandments and/or the Nativity Scene during Christmas
5	Regular church attendance (Christian)
6	Learning about Jesus Christ
7	Teaching evolution in our schools; avoiding creationism
8	Violent video games
9	Being an active member of a Christian Church
10	Studying Creationism and the Holy Bible
11	Being a Brownie or Girl Scout
12	Misinterpretation of the 1st Amendment (relationship between church and state)
13	An Invocation (a Christian prayer) before a ball game
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5 "I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. 16 So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. 17 For you say, 'I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.' "

Revelation 3: 15-17 NRSV

Brian A. Cooper & Associates, Inc.
9502 Benton Place
Charlotte, NC 28277

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