

Are You Burdened For Revival?

By Steve Huston



“Imagine!” was the rally cry of Terry Slachter as he spoke of several different “Great Awakenings,” the moral conditions surrounding them, and reminding us that each of these “Awakenings” were founded and bathed in prayer. This is what was heard at the American Decency Association on Friday, January 16 as a group of like-minded individuals gathered together with a burden for God to be glorified and for the blessing of His Spirit to fall on us as individuals and as a nation once more.

Even recognizing the deplorable condition of degradation that this nation has been brought to morally, ethically, and even ecclesiastically, Dr. Slachter encouraged us to not lose faith because God has worked in similar conditions and, most importantly, nothing is impossible with God. **Remember, it is the power of God which changes the heart of man, thereby changing the society in which man lives.**

One vital point Dr. Slachter made was that it is not about man and man’s wickedness; rather it is about God and God’s goodness. God can still work in a godless society because God is sovereign. When God comes down and chooses to lift man above his own wickedness, transforming man into a “son of God,” that wickedness no longer has a hold on him, and man is free to walk in holiness, glorifying God, and evangelizing others.

Like a faithful desert guide, Dr. Slachter led this group through five stages of “Awakening,” starting in the vast wastelands of sin

and apathy until we finally reach the oasis of God’s refreshing, anointing, and renewal. This, by the grace of God, ultimately leads to reproduction and a glorious evangelism that goes throughout the world.

What happens to move a people out of the desert and into the oasis land of God’s refreshing, God’s visitation, a “Great Awakening?” A remnant of people who desire to see Jesus lifted up and God glorified are burdened with prayer. It transcends denominations and cultures. It’s not about people who look, act, or think alike; it’s about being burdened by God to call out to Him in prayer, pleading with Him to visit once more with His grace and powerful presence.

As this remnant that God has drawn to Himself pray, seek His face, and preach the gospel truth of the Scriptures, God responds with an anointing of His word and unction upon His people which brings forth the fruits of repentance. Once they saw themselves as rich, prosperous, and in need of nothing; now they see themselves as they really are, wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked! (Rev. 3:17-18) Their hearts are turned, and now that God has come, they cry out for salvation.

It was a time of spiritual battle in the ADA auditorium, each wrestled in their own way, fighting their own issues and battles. Following the talk was a time for discussion; after several questions Bill Johnson drew it to a close reminding us of the necessity for fervent prayer. Then he called upon several

to close in a season of prayer; afterward discussion continued as refreshments were served.

As I left the event I was left to struggle in my own mind; is God greater or is the wickedness of this nation greater? You and I both know the correct answer, but **our actions will betray the belief of our heart.** I need to be transformed by God daily if I want to be used by Him. Look at yourself honestly; what do your actions or lack thereof, say about you? I hope you will join me in prayer, seeking the face of God, giving Him glory and praise, asking Him to come down and visit His people.

Terry Slachter’s book, “The Next Great Awakening,” is a 41 day devotional focused on prayer and revival. We have also produced a DVD of Terry Slachter’s presentation as well as a DVD of an interview with Terry Slachter hosted by Bill Johnson.

“The Next Great Awakening” is available to you for \$5.00. Either one of these DVDs can also be yours for \$5 which includes shipping and handling; or buy both for \$10. If you are interested in a copy of any of these resources see the enclosed response card or call us at 231-924-4050.

Both the interview and the January 16 event are also available for streaming on our website. Visit us at americandecency.org and look for them under the “Video” section.



From the desk of Bill Johnson

Faithful Victory or Ignorant Bliss?

As a young man in my thirties, I remember a few times when our local church (at that time) asked for an older man or woman to talk about their lives as a Christian to share what God had shown them in their many years.

Because of the powerful expression of faith developed in and through very difficult times, the display of God's faithfulness in the lives of these senior saints was so encouraging.

I heard from these godly ones how they had learned that devotions - dedicating faithful time with God in His word, thought, and prayer - were very significant in their lives.

I heard that faith is the victory that overcomes the world from their accounts of standing on the promises of God through trials He clearly and tangibly saw them through. Their words and lives showed that they were strengthened by it and through it.

I saw their testimony of love, dedication, service, commitment, discipline, and sacrifice and saw that there was a quality of life that was atypical. They were godly (though they would have been humbled to have been viewed that way).

I wondered then and now (and probably always will - this side of heaven) why the churches that I was a member of didn't make greater use of senior saints to encourage the younger body of Christ.

Why do I think it is important to hear the accounts of those tried and engaged in the faith? Certainly it isn't so they can "toot their own horn," but rather that God would be glorified.

That younger ones would hear how God answered prayer and saw them through as they followed God and didn't allow themselves to be conformed to this world; to see how choosing not to be unequally yoked kept them in His great care and freed them from the baggage that goes along with not being able to walk together as one in God's holy name.

At my age now of 68, I find myself as one of the very oldest in our young church. I now find myself a senior.

I'm thankful, though, that there are those who I can still look to that are older godly examples!

I have a precious friend of 93 who has recently overcome a broken femur and fought her way back to service who, after not being able to get out due to the recovery from her surgery and a lengthy time for healing, rehabilitation, and restoration, fights the fight of faith to get out to worship on Sunday.

It's an inspiration to see how vitally important worship is to her that she will go through all that she needs to do to get ready, walk carefully (and with remaining pain and weakness) get out of the house, and into the car with all that goes along with it - even in the Michigan cold, snow, and ice.

As another example, it is difficult not to think of my friend Carol who fought cancer for over ten years, never failing to come volunteer at our mailings through thick and thin - with her head covered (after months of again going through chemo), her voice box damaged by many long months of radiation, hardly able to talk or swallow, yet showing up to help when we thought we might never see her again at our mailings. Carol never complained (everyone said that about her, even at her funeral). Faith was her victory that overcame the world. Many were blessed and challenged to be like Carol, though knowing they couldn't without God's grace and a similar commitment to trust God through trials - yet seeing a fellow "traveler" doing it and knowing that it is possible.

In closing, I lament the fact that, in my humble opinion, the church largely does not allow itself to benefit from those who are godly examples and who are now well into their senior years.

Yet, that is the way it is with us humans, isn't it? We in our younger years are drawn to the new, the young, the dazzle, the video, the video game, the humorous, the trite, and the trivial. And, some seemingly never get beyond the foolishness of a regular diet of inanity.

Some - even many - like it that way. "Ignorance is bliss."

Yet, in all fairness to the younger, many of us can relate because we were younger once ourselves. Most of us engaged similarly.

But God's grace got us to put that all in perspective and to get rid of it. That, coupled with life itself.

God, I believe, gives us seasons of life for good reason. Oh how we enjoy the youth of our babies, toddlers, children, and, yes, teens and young adults.

We watch their growth and pray for their maturity and growth in Christ. We weep and pray harder as we see some of them falter, never to rise up as we had hoped we had shown and taught them throughout their lives.

There is also a season for the elderly. I submit that for us who are spiritually mature, it isn't a time to be silent but rather it's a time to serve, to be useful, to speak, and to seek ways to give godly counsel, encouragement and, yes, exhortation - as God leads.

Lastly, this I would say to the senior saints.

1. Pray! Meditate. Bolster your time with the Lord in His word.
2. Keep yourself unspotted from the world. Continue to pursue holiness without which no man shall see Lord.
3. Lead by example. Take the ground that God gives you. Don't slink back into an easy way of life just because it feels good. Serve. Find ways to serve, serve, serve.
4. Exercise truly does some good. Get yourself as fit as possible.
5. Pray for Revival for you, your family, those around you, and our nation.

At a CROSSroads

by Steve Huston



America has been at a crossroads for some time now. We have turned from the bold Christianity of our forefathers, and have turned to the non-offensive, don't cause waves Christianity of today. As we reject our spiritual heritage, we have found ourselves brought to a crossroads which has now begun the birth pangs of Christian persecution.

While we do not experience persecution at the level of many other Christians around the world, we must recognize that John Wesley's words are still true; ***“What one generation tolerates, the next generation will embrace.”*** Christians have tolerated the rescinding of their rights, the forsaking of their freedoms, and the loosening of their liberties. There are several organizations which struggle to keep our freedoms alive; but the nation, as a whole, has tolerated the seizing of their freedoms, which, if not checked, will result in the embracing of persecution.

The cross seems to always be in the crosshairs of those who reject Christ and at the crossroads of those who must decide which way to turn.

Recently I read from the Voice of the Martyrs report of January 9, 2015: *“At least 231 churches in one city in China withstood attacks by government officials last year. The authorities carried out a long-term campaign in which both unregistered churches and the state-approved Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) churches were targeted in Wenzhou, China. Some church buildings were required to remove exterior crosses (some by force), other buildings were seized by government officials and still others were completely demolished. ...*

“The governor ordered churches

whose crosses were visible from highways or other major roadways to remove them ... If churches refused to comply, crosses would be forcibly removed by authorities.”

Then I read of how a city in North Carolina removed a sculpture of a soldier kneeling in prayer before a cross. An Army veteran in King, North Carolina had sued the town with help from the Americans United for Separation of Church and State, claiming his constitutional rights were being violated because the memorial promoted Christianity.

Even though this sculpture was on public property, it had been paid for with private funds. Despite this fact, city officials voted to remove the sculpture in order to avoid mounting legal costs. Fox News Insider reported, “As part of the agreement, the King City Council also said it would stop flying the Christian flag over the memorial and would pay \$500,000 to Americans United for Separation of Church and State for the legal costs the group incurred bringing the lawsuit on behalf of local Afghanistan War veteran Steven Hewett.”

What about the huge cross atop Mt. Soledad in San Diego? This is a case which has been going on for many years, since the ACLU sued the federal government because this religious symbol is at the center of a veteran's memorial on federal land.

Christianity is under attack while our nation ignores the way of the cross. The Apostle Paul would not have us be surprised by this, though. He reminds us in 1 Cor. 1:18, ***“For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”***

Is Arlington Cemetery next? Will churches with crosses atop their steeples also come under fire? How about when you want to place a cross on your own personal property? The slippery slope slides way too fast and the rights of Christians are getting crushed under the flood of political correctness, atheistic activism, and extreme Islamism.

These battles are not only fought elsewhere; right here in West Michigan the cross

has taken insult, attack, and “defeat.” In Grand Haven, the 48 foot cross which has traditionally been raised for 50 years during religious festivals will no longer be erected due to threat of a lawsuit by the Americans United for Separation of Church and State. Fox 17 News reports, ***“Along with the cross not being raised anymore, except as an anchor for the Coast Guard Festival, the nativity scene will be taken down.”***

A sign from an Ottawa County park which has stood for 50 years has been removed because of the words it displayed: ***“The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. - Psalm 19:1”*** The sign came down at the request of Mitch Kahle of The Michigan Association of Civil Rights Activists. It sounds as if he simply requested its removal and the park officials quickly complied.

Should we complain that wherever there are no religious symbols present it's a promotion of the religion of atheism? Of course not! Yet, when others are allowed to remove the cross, or when Scripture is removed from the emblems of our national heritage, one form of religion is being promoted over another. As Christians are forced to act against their consciences a form of persecution is being pushed onto us. When believers are fired from their jobs because of their beliefs, Christian persecution is present. The list goes on; and if things do not change, the persecution will only get more extreme.

Make no mistake, persecution has come and is coming to our nation and we are at a CROSSroads. What will we do and where will we turn?

That is something each of us must consider and answer for ourselves; however I would point you to the prayers of our persecuted brothers and sisters around the world and then to the words of a puritan writer for a start. The prayer of the persecuted church is that they would remain faithful regardless what comes. And William Gurnall suggests, ***“We fear men so much, because we fear God so little. One fear cures another. When man's terror scares you, turn your thoughts to the wrath of God.”***

Wal-Mart's Shades of Grey

by Lisa Van Houten



On page 7 of this newsletter you'll find our article *Shining Light on "Fifty Shades of Grey."* (You may find it helpful to read that article first before reading this.) As we report on page 7, Meijer Supermarkets has taken the commendable position of not stocking the pornographic book series "Fifty Shades of Grey." Just as we were completing this newsletter, we discovered that unlike Meijer, Wal-Mart stores are not only selling these books in their stores, but have an extensive line of "Fifty Shades of Grey" merchandise on their website!

One person even reported seeing a Wal-Mart display where, with the purchase of the book, buyers would receive discounted movie tickets to see the explicit "Fifty Shades of Grey" movie.

Yes, Wal-Mart, who has positioned itself as a corporation that caters to American families and promotes family values, is peddling pornographic materials to the families they serve. Somehow this doesn't mesh with this quote prominently displayed on the Wal-Mart corporate website: ***"Personal and moral corporate integrity is one of our basic fundamentals and it has to start with each of us."*** - Sam Walton

On Wal-Mart's website they are selling a Fifty Shades of Grey Gourmet Gift Basket that, along with specialty chocolates, includes chrome-plated metal handcuffs and rope. Wal-Mart's lengthy "Fifty Shades" product list also includes a so-called "adult" Fifty Shades of Grey Party Game and a disturbing book entitled "Fifty Shades in Alice in Wonderland - a fairy tale for adults." Imagine children coming across a book with Alice in Wonderland in the title, only to find an explicit description of bondage and sex. While Wal-Mart labels these items for "adults," what is to prevent minors from purchasing them?

However, an even greater question is, why in the world is a family supermarket stocking the type of merchandise typically found in seedy sex shops?

That is a question Wal-Mart will have to answer. Please help us hold Wal-Mart accountable. Call Wal-Mart today at 479-273-4000. Let them know we expect better from a trusted family marketplace and urge them to immediately remove all "Fifty Shades of Grey" merchandise from their stores and website.

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
Doug McMillon - President & CEO
702 SW 8th Street
Bentonville AR 72716-6209
(479) 273-4000
(800) 966-6546
Doug.McMillon@wal-mart.com
Greg.Foran@wal-mart.com

Summer Snow February 6, 2015



The American Decency Association will be showing the movie *Summer Snow* on **February 6, 2015 at 7:00 pm.** Come join us at 203 E. Main St. in Fremont, MI for this wonderful family friendly film which was produced by the American Family Association.

Summer Snow is a story that moves the viewer through the varied emotions that accompany the loss of a loved one, the humor of a father who is trying to get things right, the fear and difficulties of an unplanned pregnancy, and the reminders to love and hold on to your faith from a mother who is no longer around.

Come enjoy *Summer Snow* with us; bring your family, friends, and neighbors. Laugh a lot, cry a little, and have a very delightful family friendly evening.



Save the date and plan to join us June 5-6 for what promises to be a powerful weekend of fellowship and spiritual challenge! The plans are being made for our second annual weekend retreat at The Shack Country Inn, located near ADA in Fremont, Michigan.

Last year's conference at The Shack, entitled "A Light in the Wilderness" was a truly blessed time with friends of this ministry. We trust that God will again anoint our time together this year. Below are just a few comments from those who attended last year.

- My husband and I attended "Light in the Wilderness" June 6th - 8th. It was more than what we expected and have shared much of what we have learned. The weekend was a good experience. We met many wonderful people and people of like-mind. ...

- The weekend was wonderful and such a beautiful place, we enjoyed it very much. The speakers were great and very informative. ...

Watch for more information in our March newsletter and join us for our weekend conference June 5-6 at The Shack Country Inn. Reserve your room today by calling The Shack at 231-924-6683 and mention that you are attending the ADA conference.

American Decency Frontline
Vol. XXIV, Issue II
Published monthly by
American Decency Association

Bill Johnson, President and Founder
bjohnson@americandecency.org

Lisa VanHouten, Executive Assistant
Kimberly Cargill, Administrative Asst.
Chris Johnson, Technical and Web
Development

P.O. Box 202
Fremont MI 49412-0202
Phone: 231-924-4050
Fax: 231-924-1966
www.americandecency.org



A Vacuum for Evil or Good

by Steve Huston



Darkness may best be defined as an absence of light; cold may best be defined as an absence of heat; and perhaps the decline of a nation may best be defined as the absence, or withdrawal, of God. Nature cannot tolerate a vacuum and neither will societies; as a void is created, something will fill it. As a nation drifts further from its spiritual moorings and away from the One True God, it leaves a vacuum that humanism, secularism, and any other host of man-made “-isms” rush in to fill. The hand of Providence pulls back, leaving only the evils which fill the heart of man; which then man fashions into a god of his own image and making.

Sir Alex Fraser Tyler, a Scottish jurist and historian, describes this vacuum in stages which are so subtle that one hardly recognizes the pull on their society until they are so “sucked in” that it would almost seem hopeless, in his writing of *The Cycle of Nations*.

**“From bondage to spiritual faith.
From spiritual faith to great courage.
From courage to liberty.
From liberty to abundance.
From abundance to selfishness.
From selfishness to complacency.
From complacency to apathy.
From apathy to dependency.
From dependency back again into
bondage.”**

As the American people during the American Revolution embraced God and His divine Hand of Providence, so the French devoted themselves to secularism. The results of those revolutions and the societies which followed were vastly different. As America has left her spiritual moorings and has been

embracing humanism and secularism, the destinations we seem to be heading for, if we are not careful, will be one in the same. America has refused to heed the warning of William Penn and is finding the truth of his words to be shackles around our liberties of today, including our religious liberties: “A people who will not be ruled by God are destined to be ruled by tyrants.”

We have been warning you that this is a battle of theologies; that it’s a battle between the violent, irrational, murderous commands of Allah against the unbelieving “infidel” and the “theology” of rational thought in Western civilization which says, “live and let live.” The problem is that secularism is no match for an assertive theology like Islam. The greater force will fill the vacuum’s void and Islam seems currently to be that greater force found around the world.

There was a time when “Christian” nations were a force which held these evils at bay. “Christian” nations would join in the fight for human rights, to strive for freedom, and to spread the gospel to every land. American Christianity, since before the birth of our nation, was an assertive theology. It did not force its beliefs upon others but neither would it allow other forces to infringe upon the religious rights of those individuals found to be under her protection. American Christianity was assertive for the good of the whole, but not violently abusive to those who were in opposition to it.

These were not times of mere religious observance; but rather they were times of religious experience with a vital relationship with Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. There was observance and obedience but it stemmed from a people whose hearts desired holiness. They were not the mere outward trappings of holiness; it was a holiness which stemmed from the heart experience of meeting with God.

As a people move from experience to mere observance there is a vacuum that is created and an even greater danger of what will fill that space. Mere observance results from a people who are close to God with their

lips, but their heart is far from Him. It only takes a generation to quickly move from observance to non-observance.

All across Europe and England there’s an ever increasing number of churches which are becoming unoccupied or being used for something other than the ecclesiastical purposes for which they were built. The fact that these churches are there shows us that Christianity was vital and that it had done its part to hold various evils at bay for some time, while encouraging a growing and personal relationship with Jesus. The fact that they are empty speaks to the massive effect that secularism and humanism has had on that community and country. It’s also says to their shame that these churches did not promote an aggressive theology which encouraged its people to “look unto Jesus” and He alone.

An alarming shift is happening in America and around the world; not only are churches closing, but there’s a rise in the number of mosques that are opening. It’s important to recognize that a mosque is not just another church; it’s a training center for jihad (holy war against all that is not in compliance with Islam). WND reports,

“Frank Gaffney, a former Pentagon official who runs the Center for Security Policy, ... confirmed that “the vast majority” are inciting insurrection and jihad through sermons by Saudi-trained imams and anti-Western literature, videos and textbooks.”

Also citing, *“The project, headed by David Yerushalmi, a lawyer and expert on sharia law, has finished collecting data from the first cohort of 102 mosques and schools. Preliminary findings indicate that almost 80 percent of the group exhibit a high level of sharia-compliance and jihadi threat...”*

Currently in America we see churches closing and churches opening; we see people moving from one church to another. The question to ask is: Which is the bigger impact, the church on society or society on the church? Which is more aggressive in our nation: secularism, Christianity or Islam?

[Continued on page 6]

A Vacuum for Evil or Good



[Continued from page 5]

More and more we see secularism being aggressive, intimidating, and irrational. Islam, by its own admission, is aggressive, theological, and violent. The church is called to be aggressive but not violent; it is called to stand firm and courageous in order to walk in obedience to God, regardless the circumstance (Joshua 1:7-9). It is called to live out its highest love for others by showing the deadliness of sin, the need and provision of a Savior, and the fact that Jesus is coming again to judge this world.

We are at a crucial crossroads in our history. Will the church slip away into the night leaving nothing more than religious observance until even that is gone and the buildings alone are the remembrance of a holy day gone by; or will she be revived and renewed with a vital, aggressive faith that even the gates of hell shall not prevail against?

There IS a vacuum; will it be filled by the aggressive theology of violent Islam or with the love of Christ?

What will successfully fill the vacuum that the departure of aggressiveness in the church has left? The prophet Zechariah gives us good direction; we must call upon God for only the LORD and His favor will bring His church to the effectiveness which He intends us to have. "... **'Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD and to seek the LORD of hosts; I myself am going.'**"

God Himself calls His people to humble prayer, seeking His face in repentance so that He might hear their prayers, forgive their sin, and heal their land (2 Chron. 7:14).

Identify Yourself

by Chris Johnson

Hello
my name is

"Our society may place a great emphasis upon a sexual identity, but Scripture does not. As a matter of fact, our identity should not be placed in anything (such as our sexuality, gender, or race) other than Jesus Christ."

That's Christopher Yuan, well known Christian speaker and author who struggles with same-sex attraction, yet affirms the sinfulness of homosexuality. Yuan's powerful testimony not only covers his exodus from the homosexual lifestyle, but also his recovery from drug addiction and discovery that he is HIV positive.

That's a hard standard for all of us to live up to, but one outstanding example is making waves thanks to NPR's Weekend Edition.

"Allan Edwards is the pastor of Kiski Valley Presbyterian Church in western Pennsylvania, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America. He's attracted to men, but he considers acting on that attraction a sin. Accordingly, Edwards has chosen not to act on it.

"I think we all have part of our desires that we choose not to act on, right?" he says. "So for me, it's not just that the religion was important to me, but communion with a God who loves me, who accepts me right where I am."

Where he is now is married. He and his wife, Leeanne Edwards, are joyfully expecting a baby in July."

Despite Allan's attractions, he doesn't call himself 'gay.' *"I think I made conscious choices along the way to say this is something I experience, but this isn't the thing that defines who I am personally."*

When Allan married his wife Leeanne she was well aware of his sexual struggles, but, according to Leeanne, the way they see it it's not that different from any other marriage, *"There's always going to be situations where a partner is sexually attracted to someone else and isn't necessarily dealing with sexual attraction with their partner."*

In fact, in spite of their unique circumstance, the Edwards should be an example to Christians everywhere, not only of being loving and understanding of each other's struggles, but of picking up our crosses and following Christ.

In a day where Christians are accused of reading their 'bigotry' into the Holy Scriptures, Allan wrestled with what God had to say about his attraction to men, looking for affirmation.

Edwards says he *"studied different methods of reading the Scripture and it all came down to this: Jesus accepts the rest of the Scripture as divined from God. So if Jesus is who he says he is, then we kind of have to believe what he believes."*

Christopher Yuan says he went through a similar process. *"I was looking for biblical justification and wanted to prove that the Bible blesses gay relationships... Eventually, I realized that I was wrong—that same-sex romantic relationships are a sin. My years of biblical language study in Bible college and seminary, and doctoral research in sexuality, only strengthened this conclusion. No matter how hard I tried to find biblical justification and no matter whether my same-sex temptations went away or not, God's Word did not change."*

In an interview with the Christian Post, Yuan clarifies the calling of Christians, regardless of who they are attracted to.

"Holiness is our standard and we all are called to be holy whether we have heterosexual or homosexual feelings. Holiness with reference to our sexuality means one of two things. If you are married, complete faithfulness to your spouse of the opposite sex. Or if you are single, complete faithfulness through abstinence."

Shining Light on “Fifty Shades of Grey”

by Lisa Van Houten



“Love and marriage, love and marriage, go together like a horse and carriage.” So goes the old song. Except many today see marriage as obsolete as the horse and carriage.

And as marriage is being replaced by a warped caricature of God’s design, so is our culture replacing the gift of intimacy between a husband and a wife with a twisted view of love and sex. This is epitomized by the millions caught up in the “Fifty Shades of Grey” phenomena where the only thing remaining from the above mentioned song is the horse whip.

“Fifty Shades of Grey” is a wildly popular book series rightly referred to as “mommy porn” which makes the steamy Harlequin romances of old look downright Victorian. The book, centered on graphic sexual themes of BDSM (Bondage, Discipline/ Dominance, Submission/Sadism and Masochism), has somehow convinced women that nothing says love and romance like bondage and torture.

Who is reading “Fifty Shades of Grey,” making it one of the best-selling books of all time? Women. And not just secular women. As we reported in our October newsletter, a Barna Group study revealed that ***“there is no difference between the percentage of Christians who have read Fifty Shades of Grey and the percentage of all Americans who have read the book.”***

Now “Fifty Shades of Grey” has been made into a movie which will hit the theaters on Valentine’s Day of all days. And as the movie is marketed as the entertainment of choice for Valentine date nights, numbers of hotels are also hoping for a piece of the “50 Shades” pie.

Across the country, hotels are offering “50 Shades of Grey” weekend packages for couples. Two New York City hotels will give couples all the paraphernalia to recreate the pornographic scenes from “Fifty Shades” – including a bondage kit, paddle, and spanking powder. For an extra \$150, a hotel in San Francisco will stock rooms with a black box of “unmentionables” – including a fringe whip. Oh, but to assuage the conscience for promoting the sexual abuse of women, the hotel will make a \$10 donation to the Breast Cancer Emergency Fund for every BDSM package sold. A Seattle hotel will give couples the Kama Sutra sex book at check-in, as well as aphrodisiac appetizers. The trend has also jumped the pond to Scotland where a hotel will distribute a box of items including handcuffs to couples.

It is startling how our culture has so easily and openly embraced the perverse themes of “Fifty Shades of Grey.” Yet the assimilation is not fully complete.

The Meijer supermarket chain has pledged not to carry the book in any of their 198 stores due to its sadomasochistic themes. A Meijer spokesman stated: *“... Our assortment is chosen to provide a convenient shopping option for our primary customer base, which is families.”*

And in West Michigan there is a commendable effort to urge local movie theaters not to show “Fifty Shades of Grey.” **[See page 8 for information on signing this petition and other action steps.]**

The petition states in part: *... We are citizens of West Michigan, we enjoy movies, and we appreciate the entertainment services that Celebration Cinema provides. However, we also DO NOT want this film shown in our communities. ...*

There are times when we all need to rally together and make our voices heard. Please sign this petition and tell Celebration Cinema that we sincerely and respectfully ask them to cancel all showings of this film at all of their locations. This is not about censorship, it’s about serving customers and the wider community honorably and responsibly.

While we join in asking these cinemas to act “honorably and responsibly,” how much greater is that call to we Christians! The report that Christian women (and men) have embraced this degradation speaks to the condition of Christianity in America.

As God’s word tells us, *“Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,”* - Galatians 5:19

What an apt description of the Fifty Shades of Grey phony version of “love” and such a contrast to the true definition. As Matt Walsh reminds readers in his article [To the women of America: 4 reasons to hate 50 Shades of Grey:](#)

... But most importantly, we have to remember that sex is an act of love, an act of giving. And love has never been described better than this:

“Love is patient, love is kind... it is not self-seeking... Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.” – I Corinthians 13:4

The problem with the sex portrayed in this movie, or in any trashy romance novel you find at the airport, or in many other films and TV shows, or in many actual relationships, is that it’s always self-seeking, never honest, never truthful, never trusting, and never protecting. There is no hope in it, no kindness, no sacrifice. It’s selfish and removed, which makes it stale, which is why people tire of it so quickly and become so bored with it all, which is why they consume so much porn and bounce between so many different one night stands.

Christians might wrestle with these temptations, but they shouldn’t try to make excuses or pretend that it’s OK ... That’s nonsense, a cop out, and they know better.

Do we know better? Will we conform or be transformed?

The box office results after February 14 will help answer that question.

Action points for Shining Light on “Fifty Shades of Grey”

Sign the petition to Celebration Cinema at: <https://www.change.org/p/cancel-fifty-shades-of-grey-at-all-celebration-cinema-locations>.

The website also makes these suggestions:

- **Call** Celebration Cinema’s corporate office at (616) 447-4200 and express your concern to Steve VanWagoner.
- **Post** a status update on Facebook/ Twitter to say you signed this petition.
- **Email** a link to this petition to 3 other friends.
- If you attend a local church, **notify** your pastor about this petition.

Three Ways to Pray After Terror Strikes Paris

by Steve Huston



In the wake of the Muslim terrorist attack in Paris against the satirical “Charlie Hebdo” or “Charlie Weekly,” we are brought again to the chilling truth that this world is in a religious war. Islamists considered the pen-drawn political cartoon to be an attack of blasphemy against their prophet Mohammed; so, they counter-attacked with murder and mayhem shouting, “Allahu Akbar!”

The idea of a religious war should be no surprise; from the beginning of time this world has been in a religious war. It started

in the Garden, with the denial of God’s word and the destruction of humanity. Since then Satan has continued to attack God and man in this religious war by whatever means or men made available to him.

Our government often denies that this is a religious war by their silence; however, in USA Today an extremist Muslim Cleric by the name of Anjem Choudary reaffirms this fact. “Contrary to popular misconception, Islam does not mean peace but rather means submission to the commands of Allah alone.” He defends violent responses saying that those who insult “the Prophet” should know better. “In an increasingly unstable and insecure world, the potential consequences of insulting the Messenger Muhammad are known to Muslims and non-Muslims alike.”

This Muslim cleric defended the massacre in Paris, setting the bounds for this religious war stating, “Muslims consider the honor of the Prophet Muhammad to be dearer to them than that of their parents or even themselves. To defend it is considered to be an obligation upon them. The strict punishment if found guilty of this crime under sharia (Islamic law) is capital punishment implementable by an Islamic State. This is because the Messenger Muhammad said, ‘Whoever insults a Prophet kill him.’”

Now, Charlie Hebdo has satirically “attacked” all religions in the past, including Orthodox Judaism and Christianity without fear of a violent terrorist attack against them. All three major religions have laws against blasphemy; so, what is so different between Christianity and Islam? Why must the world worry about violence from the Muslim community, yet not fear violence from the Christian?

Our worldviews and ideologies are so very different. As Christians we need to truly understand our worldview and know why we believe as we do. We must learn how to live the worldview we espouse and defend it by our only authority, God’s holy Word, the Bible.

Here are just a few differences to look at:

First, we are not called to kill the enemies of Jesus, but rather we are to love them. You read Imam Choudary’s exhortation of how to deal with enemies; now look at Jesus’ exhortation:

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour; and hate thine enemy.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” (Matthew 5:43-44)

We are called to endure scorn and mockery, to be forgiving and kind; we are to love our enemies and bring them to a saving knowledge of Jesus. This cannot be done through insults and disrespect; we must be sure to speak with words that redeem, and not with words that ridicule.

Our government may stand with some of the Islamic jihadist agendas, but “We the People” must not. At the same time, we are not called to hate or ridicule either; so, what should our position be?

Our position starts on our knees; we must pray! It’s pretty late in the war - 6,000 plus years - but it’s not too late; so, we pray.

We pray, first of all, for our enemies, that God would send conviction upon them and they would see their need for the Savior, Jesus Christ.

We must also pray for ourselves, that no root of bitterness would enter in and that we would live holy lives that God might be glorified and our enemies would see Jesus in us.

Pray also for strength that we, like Paul, would speak as we ought to speak. Had Adam stood on the Word of God and spoke truth, we’d not be in this position today. When the second Adam, Jesus, walked in obedience speaking the truth He defeated the enemy, and so will we as we follow His example. Pray that you and other believers will stand firm, for attacks from Satan must be defended by faith and countered with TRUTH!