

"But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people."

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (ESV)

THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD

World Population hit 1 billion in 1804, 2b in 1927, 3b in 1959, 4b in 1974, 5b in 1987, 6b in 1999 & 7b in 2011

The KJV Scofield Reference Bible (1909)

- Fundamentalist
- Pre-Millennial Dispensationalist

World War I (1914-1918)

An estimated 16.5 million deaths (9.7 million military, 6.8 million civilian)
116,516 American military members died (1917-1918)

Flu Epidemic (1918-1919)

An estimated 50-100 million deaths (American deaths estimated at 650,000¹)

League of Nations (1919)

"In order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war, by the prescription of open, just and honourable relations between nations, by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments, and by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organised peoples with one another, Agree to this Covenant of the League of Nations."

The Russian Civil War (1918-1923) gave rise to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic

An estimated 4.6 million died due to combat, political purges, famine & disease.

The Chinese Civil War (1927-1949) will eventually give rise to "Red" China & Taiwan (ROC)

The communism of the nearby U.S.S.R. "fed" this war.

The British Mandate of Palestine was confirmed by the League of Nations (1923-1948)

"Whereas the Principal Allied Powers have also agreed that the Mandatory should be responsible for putting into effect the declaration originally made on November 2nd, 1917, by the Government of His Britannic Majesty, and adopted by the said Powers, in favour of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, it being clearly understood that nothing should be done which might prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

The Great Depression (1929-1940's) & The Dust Bowl Years (1930-1936)

2.5 million Americans migrated from the central plains to elsewhere in the U.S.

U.S. unemployment peaked at 25% in 1933, but was still at 14% shortly before America's entry into WWII.

FDR's "New Deal" transformed America into a nation which looked much more to government for assistance.

World War II (1939-1945)

An estimated 60 million deaths (20 million military, 40 million civilian)

405,399 American military members died (1941-1945)

¹ Our modern American average is about 37,000 per year.

United Nations (1945-Present)

"We the peoples of the United Nations determined: to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, And for these ends: to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples, Have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims: Accordingly, our respective Governments, through representatives assembled in the city of San Francisco, who have exhibited their full powers found to be in good and due form, have agreed to the present Charter of the United Nations and do hereby establish an international organization to be known as the United Nations."

League of Nations Dissolved (1946)

"Let us boldly state that aggression wherever it occurs and however it may be defended, is an international crime, that it is the duty of every peace-loving state to resent it and employ whatever force is necessary to crush it, that the machinery of the Charter, no less than the machinery of the Covenant, is sufficient for this purpose if properly used, and that every well-disposed citizen of every state should be ready to undergo any sacrifice in order to maintain peace ... I venture to impress upon my hearers that the great work of peace is resting not only on the narrow interests of our own nations, but even more on those great principles of right and wrong which nations, like individuals, depend.

"The League is dead. Long live the United Nations."

1948 Israeli-Arab War

The 1947 U.N. plan to partition Palestine into separate Israeli & Arab states was completely rejected by the surrounding Arab (Muslim) governments, which attacked Israel on the very night the British Mandate expired & the nation of Israel came into existence. The Muslims stated that "the only solution of the Palestine problem is the establishment of a unitary Palestinian State, in accordance with democratic principles, whereby its inhabitants will enjoy complete equality before the law, [and whereby] minorities will be assured of all the guarantees recognised in democratic constitutional countries"

U.N. Resolution 194 (1948) which came near the end of the war consisted of 15 articles, the most quoted of which are:

- Article 7: protection and free access to the Holy Places
- Article 8: demilitarization and UN control over Jerusalem
- Article 9: free access to Jerusalem
- Article 11: calls for the return of refugees

The 1949 Armistice Agreement resulted in the "Green Line," which is synonymous with the "pre-1967" borders often mentioned by politicians.

Mao Zedong Proclaimed the People's Republic of China (1949)

Chiang Kai-shek established the anti-communist Republic of China on Formosa (Taiwan)

Korean War (1950-1953)

An estimated 2.9 million deaths (900,000 military, 2 million civilian)
53,686 American military members died



“THE AMERICAN WAY”

The push to add “...under God...” to the Pledge of Allegiance took place during 1948 - 1954. Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address was the source of the concept – “that this nation, **under God**, shall have a new birth of freedom” – and his birthday the occasion commonly used to promote the idea. The victorious climax to the campaign came via a sermon entitled “A New Birth of Freedom,” delivered by George McPherson Docherty at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in D.C. on 7 February 1954, with President Eisenhower in attendance, seated in the “Lincoln Pew.” In speaking of the pledge, Docherty said, “there was something missing in the pledge, and that which was missing was the characteristic and definitive factor in the American way of life” – something which distinguished the United States from other nations and which President Lincoln had so clearly identified in his Gettysburg Address.

A Significant Book:

Protestant-Catholic-Jew: An Essay on American Religious Sociology by Will Herberg (1955)

Excerpt from the Introduction...

“In the five years from 1949 to 1953 the distribution of Scripture in the United States increased 140%, reaching an alltime high of 9,726, 391 volumes a year. People were apparently buying and distributing the Bible at an unprecedented rate. Furthermore, over four-fifths of adult Americans said they believed the Bible to be the “revealed word of God,” rather than merely a “great piece of literature.” Yet when these same Americans were asked to give the “names of the first four books of the New Testament of the Bible, that is, the first four gospels,” 53% could not name even one. The Bible can hardly be said to enter into the life and thought of Americans quite as much as their views on its divine inspiration and their eagerness to buy and distribute it might suggest.

“This is at least part of the picture presented by religion in contemporary America: Christians flocking to church, yet forgetting about Christ....

“The religion which actually prevails among Americans today has lost much of its authentic Christian (or Jewish) content. Even when they are thinking, feeling, or acting religiously, their thinking, feeling, and acting do not bear an unequivocal relation to the faiths they profess. Americans think, feel, and act in terms quite obviously secularist at the very same time that they exhibit every sign of a widespread religious revival. It is this secularism of a religious people, this religiousness in a secularist framework, that constitutes the problem posed by the contemporary religious situation in America.”

Excerpt from Chapter...

V. The Religion of Americans and American Religion

What do Americans believe? Most emphatically, they “believe in God”: 97% according to one survey, 96% according to another, 95% according to a third. About 75% of them, as we have seen, regard themselves as members of churches, and a sizable proportion attend divine services with some frequency and regularity. They believe in prayer: about 80% say they pray on various occasions. They believe in life after death, even in heaven and hell. They think well of the church and of ministers. They hold the Bible to be an inspired book, the “word of God.” By a large majority, they think children should be given religious instruction and raised as church members. By a large majority, too, they hold religion to be of very great importance. In all of these respects their attitudes are as religious as those of any people today, or, for that matter, as those of any Western people in recent history.

Yet these indications are after all relatively superficial; they tell us what Americans say (and no doubt believe about themselves and their religious views; they do not tell us what in actuality these religious views are. Nowhere are surface appearances more deceptive, nowhere is it more necessary to try to penetrate beyond mere assertions of belief than in such ultimate matters as religion.

We do penetrate a little deeper, it would seem, when we take note of certain curious discrepancies the surveys reveal in the responses people make to questions about their religion. Thus, according to one trustworthy source, 73% said they believed in an afterlife, with God as judge, but “only 5% [had] any fear, or to say expectation, of going [to hell].” Indeed, about 80%, according to another source, admitted that what they were “most serious about” was not the life after death in which they said they believed, but in trying to live as comfortably in this life as possible. And in their opinion they were not doing so badly even from the point of view of the divine judgment: 91% felt that they could honestly say that they were trying to lead a good life, and 78% felt no hesitation in saying that they more than half measured up to their own standards of goodness, over 50% asserting that they were in fact following the rule of loving one’s neighbor as oneself “all the way”! This amazingly high valuation that most Americans appear to place on their own virtue would seem to offer a better in-sight into the basic religion of the American people than any figures as to their formal beliefs can provide, however important in themselves these figures may be.

But perhaps the most significant discrepancy in the assertions Americans make about their religious views is to be found in another area. When asked, “Would you say your religious beliefs have any effect on your ideas of politics and business?”, a majority of the same Americans who had testified that they regarded religion as something “very important” answered that their religious beliefs had no real effect on their ideas or conduct in these decisive areas of everyday life; specifically, 54% said no, 39% said yes, and 7% refused to reply or didn’t know. This disconcerting confession of the irrelevance of religion to business and politics was attributed by those who appraised the results of the survey as pointing to a calamitous divorce between the “private” and the “public” realms in the religious thinking of Americans. There is certainly a great deal of truth in this opinion, and we shall have occasion to explore it in a different context, but in the present connection it would seem that another aspect of the matter is more immediately pertinent. Some ideas and standards undeniably govern the conduct of Americans in their affairs of business and politics; if they are not ideas and standards associated with the teachings of religion, what are they? It will not do to say that people just act “selfishly” without reference to moral standards of any kind. All people act “selfishly,” of course; but it is no less true of all people, Americans included, that their “selfishness” is controlled, mitigated, or, at worst, justified by some sort of moral commitment, by some sort of belief in a system of values beyond immediate self-interest. The fact that more than half the people openly admit that their religious beliefs have no effect on their ideas of politics and business would seem to indicate very strongly that, over and above conventional religion, there is to be found among Americans some sort of faith or belief or set of convictions, not generally designated as religion but definitely operative as such in their lives in the sense of providing them with some fundamental context of normativity and meaning. What this unacknowledged “religion” of the American people is, and how it manages to coexist with their formal religious affirmations and affiliations, it is now our task to investigate...

It seems to me that a realistic appraisal of the values, ideas, and behavior of the American people leads to the conclusion that Americans, by and large, do have their “common religion” and that that “religion” is the system familiarly known as the American Way of Life. It is the American Way of Life that supplies American society with an “overarching sense of unity” amid conflict. It is the American Way of Life about which Americans are admittedly and unashamedly “intolerant.” It is the American Way of Life. That provides the framework in terms of which the crucial values of American existence are couched. By every realistic criterion the American Way of Life is the operative faith of the American people....

If the American Way of Life had to be defined in one word, “democracy” would undoubtedly be the word, but democracy in a peculiarly American sense. On its political side it means the Constitution; on its economic side, “free enterprise”; on its social side, an equalitarianism which is not only compatible with but indeed actually implies vigorous economic competition and high mobility. Spiritually, the American Way of Life is best expressed in a certain kind of “idealism” which has come to be recognized as characteristically American. It is a faith that has its symbols and its rituals, its holidays and its liturgy, its saints and its sancta; and it is a faith that every American, to the degree that he is an American, knows and understands.

The American Way of Life is individualistic, dynamic, pragmatic. It affirms the supreme value and dignity of the individual; it stresses incessant activity on his part, for he is never to rest but is always to be striving to “get ahead”; it defines an ethic of self-reliance, merit, and character, and judges by achievement: “deeds, not creeds” are what count. The American Way of Life is humanitarian, “forward looking,” optimistic. Americans are easily the most generous and philanthropic people in the world, in terms of their ready and unstinting response to suffering anywhere on the globe. The American believes in progress, in self-improvement, and quite fanatically in education. But above all, the American is idealistic. Americans cannot go on making money or achieving worldly success simply on its own merits; such “materialistic” things must, in the American mind, be justified in “higher” terms, in terms of “service” or “stewardship” or “general welfare.” Because Americans are so idealistic, they tend to confuse espousing an ideal with fulfilling it and are always tempted to regard themselves as good as the ideals they entertain: hence the amazingly high valuation most Americans quite sincerely place on their own virtue. And because they are so idealistic, Americans tend to be moralistic: they are inclined to see all issues as plain and simple, black and white, issues of morality. Every struggle in which they are seriously engaged becomes a “crusade.” To Mr. Eisenhower, who in many ways exemplifies American religion in a particularly representative way, the second world war was a “crusade” (as was the first to Woodrow Wilson); so was his campaign for the presidency (“I am engaged in a crusade...to substitute good government for what we most earnestly believe has been bad government”); and so is his administration—a “battle for the republic” against “godless Communism” abroad and against “corruption and materialism” at home. It was Woodrow Wilson who once said, “Sometimes people call me an idealist. Well, that is the way I know I’m an American: America is the most idealistic nation in the world”; Eisenhower was but saying the same thing when he solemnly affirmed: “The things that make us proud to be Americans are of the soul and of the spirit.”...

Americans believe in religion in a way that perhaps no other people do. It may indeed be said that the primary religious affirmation of the American people, in harmony with the American Way of Life, is that religion is a “good thing,” a supremely “good thing,” for the individual and the community. And “religion” here means not so much any particular religion, but religion as such, religion-in-general. “Our government makes no sense,” President Eisenhower recently declared, “unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith—and *I don’t care what it is*” (emphasis added). In saying this, the President was saying some-thing that almost any American could understand and approve, but which must seem like a deplorable heresy to the European churchman. Every American could understand, first, that Mr. Eisenhower’s apparent indifferentism (“and I don’t care what it is”) was not indifferentism at all, but the expression of the conviction that at bottom the “three great faiths” were really “saying the same thing” in affirming the “spiritual ideals” and “moral values” of the American Way of Life. Every American, moreover, could understand that what Mr. Eisenhower was emphasizing so vehemently was the indispensability of religion as the foundation of society. This is one aspect of what Americans mean when they say that they “believe in religion.” The object of devotion of this kind of religion, however, is “not God but ‘religion.’ . . . The faith is not in God but in faith; we worship not God but our own worshiping.” When Americans think of themselves as a profoundly religious people, whose “first allegiance” is “reserved...to the kingdom of the spirit,” this is, by and large, what they mean, and not any commitment to the doctrines or traditions of the historic faiths.