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Tower of Strength

**“The name of the Lord is a strong tower
The righteous runs into it and is safe.”**

—Proverbs 18:10

Why America Does Not Want the Bible

Many of us who try to reach the hearts of the lost with the good news of the gospel are often surprised that there is such a lack of interest. A country where the majority of the population is educated and affluent and full of ambition should also be interested in eternal things.

At least, that's what one might expect. America should be full of people striving for God! However, the opposite is much more the case. Ever wonder why?

Let me propose a few ideas as to what causes such a lack of interest in God and His word, and allows eternal truth to be so easily rejected. It's good to know our audience, to draw on memories of what it was like to live in the world, the same world we are trying to convert. As the Scriptures say, “Such were some of you...” (1 Cor. 6:11). I have studied the scriptures and have become convinced that there is no greater purpose in life than devoting ourselves to God, and striving toward the perfection beyond this life.

The Economy. Being the largest economy in the world has been America's pride and joy for decades. Ironically though, America's success is one of the main reasons for our spiritual decline. Our country has become too distracted, and too self-satisfied. There is no need to ask God for our daily bread, and no need to be thankful when we receive it.

God warned the children of Israel that the blessings of the land of milk and honey contained a hidden danger—it would be very tempting to get comfy and forget God. For, “when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have build good houses and lived in them, and when your herds and flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply” then it will be very easy to become proud and “forget the Lord your God who brought you out from the house of slavery” (Deut. 8).

In fact, America has a large economy built around things that are contrary to godly behavior. Pornography, drugs, and alcohol make a lot of powerful people very wealthy. One could write books on the negative impacts these industries have on society, from human suffering to the loss of the soul.

Part of preaching the gospel will be reminding people that all the success and riches in the world cannot buy the true joy and fulfillment of salvation. A bigger house and a nicer car and all the requisite status symbols of phone and clothing will not provide fellowship with God. “Not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions” (Luke 12:15). “What does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?” (Mark 8:36).

The Family. In God's plan, the family is the heart of society. Marriage is the most ancient of God's institutions, older than both government and the church. Social scientists are only now catching on that trends of crime and poverty and sickness are directly linked to the disintegration of the traditional family, but the evidence is becoming clear at a time in our progressive atmosphere that it is impolite to point it out.

God has always shown the true shelter and strength that is found in a loving and dedicated family. America has made it too easy to have the fun of the bedroom without the responsibility of the living room and kitchen. We have, in fact, even incentivized illegitimacy.

Part of preaching the gospel will be pointing out the virtues of a devoted marriage, and the sinfulness of shacking up or homosexual unions. The Bible may go out of fashion, but its truth is not diminished.

Selfishness. All manner of misbehavior is justified by our “me first” world. Lying, cheating, stealing, political spin, gossip, backbiting, clawing to the top, breaking contracts, have all been reinterpreted as “business as usual” and just another way to get a leg up on the competition on the way to personal gain. But it is here that the American way falls out of line with the way of Christ.

The quality of entertainment is a symptom of America’s selfishness. Our thirst for violence and immorality on screen has grown to a level where we have become desensitized to the outcome upon our own psyche and upon our children.

Part of preaching the gospel will be preaching Jesus’ greatest commandment, which is love. Not just emotional infatuation, but unselfish service and undeserved goodwill. “I say to you, do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also ... love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you” (Matt. 5).

William James said, “The greatest use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.” William Jennings Bryan said, “Destiny is no matter of chance. It is a matter of choice.” Peter Marshall said, “Unless we stand for something, we will fall for anything. America has a lot of reasons not to listen to the Bible. But, if we will continue to reach out to find good and honest hearts, they will respond and find the salvation of their soul.

—Charles Gaines

Quotations on Self-Control

“You have power over your mind, not over outside events. Realize this, and you will find your strength.”
—*Marcus Aurelius*

“The best fighter is never angry.”
—*Lao Tzu*

“I am very happy, not because I have conquered the world, but because I have conquered myself.”
—*Sri Chinmoy*

“Teach your children to have self-control, to form the habit of holding passion and prejudice and evil tendencies subject to an upright and reasoning will, and you will have done much to abolish misery from their future, and crimes from society.”
—*Benjamin Franklin*

“Self-control is the chief element in self-respect, and self-respect is the chief element in courage.”
—*Thucydides*

“I cannot trust a man to control others who cannot control himself.”
—*Robert E. Lee*

“The church is often called a killjoy for protesting against sexual license. But the real killing of joy comes with the grabbing of pleasure. As with credit card usage, the price tag is hidden at the start, but the physical and emotional debt incurred will take a long time to pay off.”
—*N. T. Wright*

“Excuses fall silent behind self-control, focus, and direction.”
—*Lori Myers*

“Don’t feel guilty for saying no to your children. It is important for them to develop a sense of self-control.”
—*Auliq Ice*

“Self-discipline is often disguised as short-term pains, but short-term pains lead to long-term gains!”
—*Charles Glassman*