

Why nothing seems to have Changed! Part 2 (Manipulated Saints)

By Wayne Vasilenko

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Part 1 of this series primarily dealt with the fact that there should be some evidence of change in an individual person who claims to have become a Christian. While immediate change in fact **does** happen in some cases, it is **not** usually considered as being the “norm.” Most people experience gradual change as they explore the Bible and as a result grow closer to the Lord Jesus and His teachings over time. (More on this later) This once again implies that there has to be some actions on the part of individuals in order for changes to take place; for example, actions in the form of taking the time to **find, follow, and fulfill** the Lord’s will for one’s life. This can only take place through the study of His Word. As mentioned in Part 1, this requires a study of God’s Word on a regular basis; study - not just the reading of God’s Word! Many polls have been taken in recent years showing that a large percentage of people here in the U.S. claim to be “Christian,” which raises the question as to why morality seems to have taken a nosedive in our American society! If the majority of people claim to be Christian, how is it we as a nation seem to be drifting further and further from the truths and moral teachings we find in the Bible? Although there has been a recent decline, there are still many churches in America, probably more here than anywhere in the world! So how is this moral decline taking place at such a fast pace? It is obvious that a large number of people claiming to be Christian do not study God’s Word as other polls have also shown. These polls may explain moral decline to some degree, but is there also another dynamic at work here? By now most people have heard the term, “The Silent Majority,” describing the opposition to the small groups of people who seem to get all the attention in the news, and always seem to eventually “get their way” concerning political and moral issues. The beliefs of these groups seem to be more often than not, contrary to what the Bible teaches. These Anti-Bible, Anti-God groups go on seemingly unopposed as the majority of the population remains silent! Who are the people that comprise this group called, “The Silent Majority?” Unfortunately and embarrassingly, this Silent Majority is predominately the people of the Christian Church!

The question now is, “Why are the people who claim to have God’s moral code as a part of what they believe, silent when confronted with people with no moral code or at the very least, a perverted moral code?” A part of the reason is simply a lack of confidence, combined with a lack of faith! People who do not study the Bible are in most cases simply ignorant of its contents. They may hear and retain a verse or two in their memory if they attend church services on a regular basis, but that is no substitute for personal and consistent study of God’s word! Why do people study for tests? The answer is simple, “so that they can answer the questions on the test!” When someone’s moral code or religious belief system is challenged, many Christians, even Pastors, become fearful of ridicule or persecution. What do most people do when they are fearful? They become silent so as not to be confronted hoping the threat will ignore them and move on! It is just like hiding from a predator, it is best to be downwind, silent, and still. The problem we face as Christians however is that God has commissioned us **not** to be silent, but rather to confront people with the truth as we recall the last words Jesus spoke to His disciples before His ascension.

Matthew 28:19-20 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen.

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How can we teach people to observe all things as Jesus commanded if we are aware of, or not sure of what He commanded? We cannot proceed on the premise of “hearsay” (or second hand information) can we? After all, if we do not check what we hear from the pulpit against the Word of God (The Bible) are we not merely relaying second hand information? If you attend a church or religious group that discourages you from investigating and verifying what the leader or teacher is proclaiming from the pulpit or in their literature, **Beware** you may be receiving false or dangerously biased information and teachings! I have mentioned before that I have heard some Pastors say from the pulpit, “If you don’t like, or disagree with what our church is teaching... leave, there are plenty of churches down the road!” Many have been intimidated into going along with false teaching or unsound doctrine as a result. The Bible teaches us to beware of false prophets, however the only way to reveal a false prophet is by comparing what they say to the truth and continuity of the scriptures. Let us pause for a moment to reflect on what we have covered so far in Parts 1 & 2 of this series:

1. Many people claim to be Born Again Believers but show no evidence of change.
2. Many people are lead to believe that change requires no effort on their part.
3. Most people spend little time in God’s Word.
4. Many people equate the consequences of sin with rejection from God, but it is really simply “consequences” or results of sinful actions.
5. Many people do not stand up against evil because they lack confidence and faith in God’s Word.
6. Many people simply “parrot” or repeat things they have heard rather than being confident in their beliefs.

As you can see, we have uncovered a few “Shortcomings” of some of the people who proclaim to be Christian, and so far, we have only dealt with the “Personal Responsibility” part of it. However, could it be that there are other reasons for the shortcomings uncovered so far? A big part of the problem with the Christian church we observe in current times is described in one word, ignorance! I do not use this word in a demeaning way towards individuals but rather I am saying, “Some people simply just don’t know any better!” Either they have not taken the time to learn for themselves as we have already seen, or perhaps some people were never informed or instructed properly, by either the church or their spiritual leaders! Some Christians may have been intentionally misled! Yes, it is possible they were intentionally being taught a False Doctrine! This is the fault of both the Clergy and the religious doctrine of some churches or denominations. Many churches these days are using “Redacted Bibles,” meaning that parts of the bible are being either edited, or eliminated for the sake of, a convoluted doctrine, or “Political Correctness.” Surely, you may have seen government documents with large portions of the text blacked out concealing certain information. The same thing is taking place in many churches! Some editing is being done so as not to be “offensive” to non-believers. The Word of God is being picked apart so as not cause harsh reactions from the media! In many cases, the Bible is being equated with “Hate Speech” by our modern society so many passages of scripture are being watered down to be less offensive. This makes many churches and pastors nervous about preaching the Word as written for fear of losing followers however, I myself would be more nervous concerning the warning in the last book of the bible as stated below:

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Revelation 22:18-19 (NKJV)

¹⁸ For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; ¹⁹ and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

In the shadow of this passage, it is a serious problem when churches and pastors refrain from teaching the Word as written or manipulate it to suit their doctrine! I personally observed a good example of bias such as this, as I browsed in a Church Book Store at a local church. I noticed books concerning just about every aspect of Christian living; I even saw a Christian “fiction” section. However, I also noticed that there were no books concerning Bible Prophecy! I asked the attendant about it and she informed me that they carried no books on the subject! Considering that upwards of 27% of the Bible concerns prophesy, it is a bit strange that there are no books found there on the subject of prophesy at all! Not even books refuting any of the teachings on prophesy. Additionally, there were no books concerning the Holy Spirit, referring to either the “Gifts of the Spirit,” or “the Baptism in the Spirit,” again subjects of much misunderstanding and controversy. There are many bible verses concerning all of these subjects, and regardless of any one opinion concerning these subjects, these subjects should never be ignored, or treated as less important than any other passages of scripture! These subjects are in the bible and no person or denomination has the authority to censure them. So now we have another possible reason that “nothing seems to have changed” in people’s lives and in the church as a whole! We will use the term “Manipulation.” We live in a world in which we are constantly being manipulated through media and advertising. This is not a new concept, however manipulation is not only easier in modern times, but also it has been honed into an art form utilizing Social Media and an Anti-Christian News Media. If you pay any attention to Left Wing News Media outlets, you will see that their message is in lock step. Key phrases are repeated over, and over by various so-called “independent” sources to the point of being so obvious, it is almost funny! However, really is not funny, in fact it is a very serious matter. The scary thing in all of this is the fact that the church and various religions are just as guilty when it comes to manipulation as the secular world. As long as there are, “Lazy Christians” that cannot seem to find the time to read the bible for themselves, churches and religions will continue to get away with it. The end-result is powerless Christians and in many cases people who are not Christians at all. Perhaps that is the real reason Nothing Seems to Have Changed! I suggest that you read my series, “One Accord or Discord – Time to Choose” to get a deeper understanding of how we are being manipulated and the results of manipulation. If we truly want to see the Church grow again and have power and a positive effect on our society, perhaps Pastors and Church Leaders should consider the following:

Matthew 12:22-26 (NKJV)

²² Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. ²³ And all the multitudes were amazed and said, "Could this be the Son of David?" ²⁴ Now when the Pharisees heard *it* they said, "This *fellow* does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." ²⁵ But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. ²⁶ If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?"