



Media Spotlight

A BIBLICAL ANALYSIS OF RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR MEDIA

SPECIAL REPORT

HOW DO WE PRAY FOR AMERICA?

SAFE SEX IS NOT MAGIC

by Albert James Dager

America has a new hero. It was not on the battlefield, fighting for liberty that he was born a hero. Nor was it in the halls of Congress, voicing contempt for governmental policies that are enriching the country's new aristocracy at the expense of the common people. He was not born a hero for his tireless and sacrificial labors for the cause of science or other lofty human endeavor.

No, he was born a hero in the arms of a promiscuous woman whose diseased body left upon him the marks a sinful life-style.

With the announcement that he had contracted the HIV virus, Earvin "Magic" Johnson became, in the eyes of the world, a hero of stature far above what he enjoyed as one of the nation's premier basketball stars. At last, the world could point to someone whose image bespoke that of the All-American Boy—clean-cut, winsome, humane and, most important, heterosexual. While prior to Johnson, all the famous people who had contracted AIDS were homosexuals, now the entire populace has a hero who can win the nation's kids over to the new ethic: safe sex.

For days after his announcement the media parroted the message that the homosexual community had used to justify continuing the propagation of its perversions: AIDS is not a homosexual disease—it belongs to everyone. And "if Magic Johnson can get it, anyone can get it."

Not quite.

Few people engage in sex with hundreds of different partners in a year's time, as did Magic Johnson—a role model to many youth; and his denial of homosexuality aside, the chances of contracting AIDS through normal heterosexual activity is almost nil. Having been found out, what has been Johnson's response?

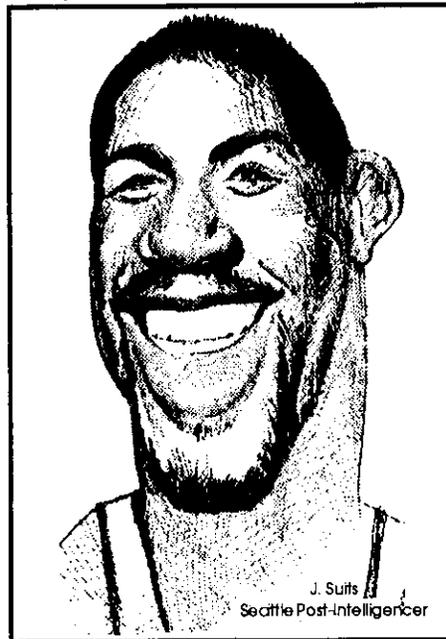
It was not a confession that he had done wrong in being promiscuous and engaging in sex outside of marriage. Rather, his mis-

take, he says, is that he didn't "protect" himself. He didn't practice "safe sex."

Johnson's later advocacy of abstinence came across as an afterthought in response to criticism. In essence, "No sex is the only really safe sex; but if you're going to do something, use a condom."

THE MESSAGE

The message of safe sex is the new rallying cry for freedom to live one's life the way one wants regardless of what God or anyone else has to say about it. It is the



Earvin "Magic" Johnson

cry of the sexually promiscuous, and particularly the homosexual community. The consequences of this message are barely considered.

The message for which Magic Johnson has now become the foremost spokesman, reflects what Scripture calls a "reprobate mind" (Romans 1:18-32).

A reprobate mind is not only a mind that seeks self-gratification, particularly in matters of sex. It is a mind that seeks self-gratification in spite of the knowledge that

that gratification might very well kill it. In other words, a reprobate mind is irrational; it refuses to consider truth. "And don't bother me with the facts."

The reprobate mind plays Russian Roulette with the future of humanity at stake; and then it wonders why it must pay the price for its own folly. As Johnson's new wife, Cookie, said, "I cried to God, 'Why? Why Earvin? Why do You want to take such a good man?'"

Did Jesus not say, "only God is good?" God's Word gives ample warning, if only those who profess belief in Him would follow it:

When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:

To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things;

Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness;

Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked;

Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths:

To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words;

Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God.

For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. (Proverbs 2:11-18)

America has rejected God's Word and, as a result, suffers today from a reprobate mind. And it isn't just the homosexual community that displays such a mindset. Society in general has accepted the message that was first spawned in the unsanitary life-style of homosexuality. And now society in general is beginning to pay the same price that was once exacted primarily upon homosexuals.

No, AIDS is not a homosexual disease—not any longer. But the fact remains that it was homosexuality that introduced AIDS into America and caused it to become the epidemic that it is. AIDS has been spread into the heterosexual community through unsanitary bisexual activity, sharing of drug paraphernalia, and donation of contaminated blood from homosexuals. No matter how much the homosexuals wish to whitewash their role in the spread of this scourge upon humanity, primary blame must lie in their camp.

But it does little good to address homosexuality as if it is the only problem. Those who engage in heterosexual promiscuity are as much to blame for accepting the disease into their ranks. And now, even the innocent must suffer for the sins of the unrepentant sexmongers. AIDS is far easier to transmit than the proponents of safe sex wish us to know. Given the proper circumstances virgins are at risk.

But the reprobate mind doesn't want to discuss the obvious solution to the problem. It doesn't wish to return to what it considers the age of "repressed sexuality" and "prudishness." The reprobate mind thinks it is too enlightened to consider the fact that moral and spiritual strength is what separates the truly civilized from the fool who wishes to gratify his libidinous proclivities toward self-destruction.

A REFLECTION ON OUR CULTURE

The AIDS epidemic is indicative of the slide of humanity into the base nature of a truly reprobate mind. This is what 6,000 years of human development has come to:

Reprobate Art

We live in a culture where culture is disdained. A "culture" whose museums of fine art display the products of mangled brain cells—products valued by the "highly cultured" at hundreds of thousands of dollars. "Art" that can be called art only through a tortuous convolution of reason.

Humanity's art mirrors a reprobate mind that has forgotten the God of creation whose handiwork is one of beauty. Realism has given way to various forms of impressionism that "conveys the inner dynamic of the human soul." Anything one wishes to call "art" may be so classified as long as it reflects the fallen human nature rather than the reality of creation bestowed upon us by a loving but just God.

Reprobate Music

We live in a "culture" whose best-selling music is fraught with nervousness and a dissonant cacophony that passes for "melody," and the sound that takes humanity back to its primitive roots: "Rap."

For centuries music was considered among the finest means of praising God and extolling the highest ideals of human endeavor, particularly love. The erosion of man's dependence upon God is reflected in the erosion of musical accomplishment. The spirit of modern music is in direct confrontation with the fruit of the Spirit of

God. Lust has replaced love as the dominant theme—lust in all its expressions including rape, sexual abuse and sado-masochism.

Rather than instilling in the hearts of their listeners a sense of love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, the most popular music of today instills lust, anger, discontent, meanness, evil, pride and self-indulgence.

It isn't just the words that instill these attitudes; the sounds themselves are primitive in origin and pander to the basest of human emotions.

Reprobate Science

We live in a "culture" where the objective of science is no longer the betterment of the human condition, but the profits that can be realized from human suffering.

A "culture" that is polluting the planet through indiscriminate practices of major corporations. Such pollution is sanctioned by government as long as the polluters have a powerful enough lobby to get away with it.

Reprobate Medicine

We live in a "culture" that has developed the killing of innocent children into a sterile science. Abortion clinics and hospitals destroy children in the tens of millions each year in America alone while amassing billions of dollars in profits, much of it at the expense of the nation's taxpayers.

What makes this evil all the more heinous is the fact that the natural affection of a woman toward the life she carries in her womb has been perverted into affection for self-indulgence at the expense of that life. What can be said about a society whose women—the bulwark of compassion in any society—not only destroy their own children, but vehemently demand from government the right to do so?

(The reprobate mind is reflected in the reaction to anti-abortionists who sent literature opposing the passage of the pro-abortion Proposition 120 in Washington State. On their literature was the picture of an aborted baby. The reaction was angry denunciation of such a tactic, branding it "pornographic." In essence, what those offended by the piece were saying was, "It's alright to tear a baby apart in the womb, but how dare you take a picture of it!" The act of destruction is considered acceptable, but to show the results of the action is heinous.)

Besides engaging in the wholesale slaughter of innocents, the medical profession has, to a large degree, distanced itself from the pain and suffering of the average person.

While it would be unfair to indict all health-care professionals, it can generally be conceded that, were it not for the sacrificial attitudes of those on the lower echelons of that field (nurses, aides, and such), hospitals would be literal death traps to many.

And if one doesn't have sufficient insurance to cover his medical expenses he stands in danger of losing all he has attained through his life's work.

Because our health-care professionals have forgotten God, they have forgotten what true compassion for the suffering is.

Reprobate Government

We live in a "culture" governed by thieves and boozers—a new aristocracy that serves special interests and a majority of whom bounce checks and stiff their mess hall with impunity. Leaders who put shady characters on an ethics panel to judge the moral fitness of a Supreme Court nominee.

Reprobate Society

We live in a "culture" whose children, as young as five years old, are at risk from drug dealers, pimps, pornographers and sexual abusers.

A "culture" whose heroes are self-serving, spoiled brats called "stars" of stage, screen, television, sports and the political arena. heroes who boast of their sexual promiscuity, as does former basketball great Wilt Chamberlain, who claims to have had over 20,000 sex partners since the age of fifteen.

A "culture" where youth gangs have better arsenals than law enforcement personnel—gangs run by protected scions of respectable society whose wealth is built upon illicit drug dealing.

Reprobate Churches

We may well recognize the problems in society that threaten the fabric of civilization. But when we look at the churches in America can we honestly say they are any less reprobate?

The mainline denominations are to a large degree devoid of any genuine faith in Jesus Christ. On paper their doctrines (some, not all) line up with biblical truth. But in their heart of hearts they have forgotten God.

“Evangelical” Christianity—that body of professed Christians who pride themselves on their biblically-based theology—are little better when analyzed from a truly biblical perspective.

Evangelicalism today has chosen to overlook much in the way of error as long as it isn't in conflict with the “major tenets” of the faith. The word we hear today is that we shouldn't be concerned about aberrant teachings that come in the name of Jesus Christ. Nor should we be concerned about psychology or other worldly disciplines entering into the churches; as long as someone maintains belief in the essential doctrines of the faith their teachings should be allowed.

But the church was established as more than a provider of fire insurance. It is the church's responsibility, no less than it was the apostle Paul's, to provide the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). It is not the Church's responsibility to ferret out from human wisdom what it perceives it can convert to the use of God. In the process of developing a compatible theology, it is inevitable that error will find itself in ascendance over truth. For this is the result of human effort.

If it is true that we need concern ourselves only with the major doctrines of the faith (the deity of Christ, the Trinity, the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection, etc.), then we can ignore 98% of Scripture.

The fact is that Scripture provides all we require in the way of instruction for our lives and how we relate to God and to men.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.
(II Timothy 3:16-17)

It isn't up to the Church to provide human wisdom or the blending of that wisdom (which is not wisdom, but foolishness) with God's Word in order to create a hybrid faith better than that of the apostles.

The same humanism that has perverted society is perverting the churches. The only difference is that those who call themselves Christians have been duped into thinking that their brand of humanism is somehow sanctioned by God.

And the same sins that plague society plague the churches; divorce, fornication, thievery, dishonest business practices, even homosexuality are rampant.

CONFUSED PRIORITIES

America and the America's churches have lost their sense of purpose and become a haven for self-seeking neurotics.

It's not all that bad, you say.

I'm sorry, but it is that bad. Far worse than most would care to admit. The fact is that the nation whose citizens for years have claimed that God blessed it with freedom has turned that freedom into license to sin. It has forgotten the transcendent God, who created the universe. The nation loves its sin more than it loves life itself.

And that is why it is going to die.

America has sold its posterity for a mess of pottage. And it will not recognize what it has done until it's too late. When the bill comes due and the diseases that it has brought upon itself rage through the ranks of its citizenship, it will still refuse to repent. It will curse God for bringing upon its head the fruit of its own folly.

Contrary to the denial of the sodomites and their lackeys in the media and government, AIDS *is* a judgment from God. This doesn't mean that everyone who contracts AIDS is guilty of a specific AIDS-related sin. The sad thing is that even the innocent suffer when God's judgment begins to fall. Only God knows why even some godly people suffer from this disease through no fault of their own.

But AIDS has a special touch that other diseases don't have. It is 100% fatal. There is no cure for it apart from a miracle of God. Unlike previous scourges such as polio, the end result for some won't be having to live life crippled. There is no hope for life, crippled or otherwise.

True, science is looking for a cure and hopes to find one soon. And the sodomites don't care what it costs the taxpayers, as long as the government does its part in finding a way to make sure that they can continue in their sin with impunity. “We don't want to control ourselves through abstinence; give us free condoms!”

Even if a cure is found for AIDS the filthiness of the homosexual lifestyle will result in another disease even worse—one that kills faster and results in even more horrifying suffering.

I have often wondered how Revelation 9:21 could be a reality. How is it that, in spite of the great plagues that mark the destruction of mankind before the Lord establishes His Kingdom on the earth, men will refuse to repent of their sins. How is it

that they can continue to flaunt their sins in the face of God's judgment? But when I see the nation's reaction to AIDS, I better understand the reprobate mind.

This mind is not only angry about having to pay the price for a filthy lifestyle; it also insists that children as young as eight years of age be given information on how to practice safe sex as well as the means to do so.

In response to the wide publicity Johnson gave to the “safe sex” message, Schmid Laboratories, makers of Ramses condoms, announced the production of a condom packaged and designed for use by 14-year-olds. Play Safe Condoms will be sold six to a package with a key chain attached to a plastic condom holder that can be refilled.

This insanity is based on the acquiescence of educators, politicians, social workers and even some parents to the maxim, “They're going to do it anyway, so we'd better make sure they don't suffer for it.” The problem is that, from a pragmatic standpoint, they're right. And every argument against this reasoning is futile.

The only answer is God's answer. And only those whose hearts are inclined toward God, or who have sufficient moral fortitude, will receive and act on that answer. As a whole, however, the world will wallow in its reprobate mindset and will only grudgingly acknowledge that abstinence until marriage and faithfulness in marriage is *one* solution to the problem. And they will harbor hatred against those who attempt to bring God's light to bear on the matter.

A case in point is the situation of a Jim Johnson of Long Beach, California, a former homosexual who came to Christ. In 1986 Johnson founded Providence House to provide shelter and hospice care for AIDS victims. In the process of his physical care he ministered God's love and truth to the men, leading some to repentance and salvation. Within three years, Providence House had cared for hundreds of AIDS victims. When the homosexuals in his community learned of his faith in Jesus and his ministry to the dying AIDS patients in his care, they leaked phony allegations of unsanitary conditions at Providence House, resulting in the loss of funding. Johnson had to close Providence House and those who had received his care were put on the streets.* And yet the great cry of the sodomites is “love.”

Their love is only for those who hate God and love their sins. They speak of compassion for those suffering from AIDS, then turn against those who display that compassion in the name of Christ.

Through its powerful political lobby, the homosexual community has hindered the implementation of public health practices normally used to protect citizens from epidemics. Worse, some vocal leaders for homosexual rights have threatened to contaminate the nation's blood supply if necessary in order to get their way:

If research money for AIDS is not coming at a certain level by a certain date, all gay males should give blood. Whatever action is required to get national attention is valid. If that includes blood terrorism, so be it.*

By all means, Christians should have compassion for those suffering from AIDS, regardless of how they contracted it. A child of God cannot but feel for those who suffer so greatly. But this does not negate the reality of defiance against God and reason by homosexuals in general.

WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

For The Unbeliever

For those who do not have a living relationship with Jesus Christ, it is imperative that they recognize their need for salvation from their sins. The modern gospel of easy-believism (no need for repentance; just believe) is a damnable lie. Salvation comes only through surrender of one's life to Jesus Christ alone as Lord and Savior.

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

Salvation requires repentance from sin with the recognition that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). It requires a desire on the part of those who would come to Christ that His will take precedence over their own will in life regardless of the consequences.

Jesus tells us to count the cost before making a decision to follow Him (Luke 14:26-35). Only those willing to suffer the rejection of those they love and persecution from the world that hates Jesus are worthy to be called Christians.

For the Believer

If we wish to call ourselves Christians in the true sense of the word, we must separate ourselves from the evils of this present world (I Corinthians 5:7-13).

God's people must begin to make distinctions within our own ranks. We have been quick to judge non-believers for their sins while tolerating sin within the Church. And it isn't only physical fornication that we must purge from our midst; it is spiritual fornication that has opened the door for destructive heresies and toleration of all sorts of evils in the name of Christ.

We, no less than the unbelievers, must examine our hearts and recognize that we have taken too cavalier an attitude towards our own sins. We, no less than the unbelievers, must repent. And we must count the cost that we failed to count when we made our profession of faith.

How can we hope to impact others for Christ if we are not willing to make the necessary sacrifices?

HOW DO WE PRAY FOR AMERICA?

I confess that, as I see the nation's attitude toward its sins, I find it difficult to pray for God to spare the nation from judgment. How can I pray, "Father, spare this nation so that it can continue to flaunt its sins in your face; so it can continue to propagate its sexual perversions; so it can gorge itself on the filth of prime-time television and other forms of entertainment; so it can continue in its denial of your existence or, for those who believe in your existence (in whatever form their minds devise), shake their fists at you and dare you to do anything about it?"

How can I pray, "Father, continue to bless America, land that I love, in spite of its witchcraft and sorceries—its self-willed, manipulative lifestyle?"

How can I pray, "Father, bless those who do not sin openly, but who tolerate and even defend the evil in their midst?"

How can I pray, "Father, bless the churches whose leaders love their self-serving oratory more than the pure milk of your Word; whose majority of members possess little more desire for the rule of your Word in their lives than blatant unbelievers—whose relatively few godly members move from one church group to another, seeking even a modicum of truth, love and honesty from those who have commissioned themselves as keepers of your flock?"

No, I cannot pray for America or for America's churches in these ways. To pray for God's continued blessings upon America would betray a selfish desire to keep the status-quo for my personal temporal benefit—a desire that I not have to suffer as a consequence of the nation's sins.

But I can pray that God's will be done. I can pray, "even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly," recognizing that, for that to happen, evil must abound all the more in the world as He prophesied. And His judgment must fall in ever-increasing magnitude and frequency.

Contrary to popular belief, nowhere does Scripture tell us to pray for our nation. It tells us to pray for all men, and specifically for those in authority in order that we might live a godly life at peace, able to minister the Gospel unhampered (I Timothy 2:1-4). But with all our freedom, the Church has, for the most part, either not ministered the Gospel, or has preached a different Gospel than that with which we were commissioned by the Lord.

I can pray for individuals, that they will come to a true understanding of just what God requires in their lives: a genuine conversion of their hearts through faith in the atoning work of Jesus on the cross for their sins. God, in his love for mankind, would have all men be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth.

Sadly, I can pray that God's judgment come upon the nation for the sake of those who will be won to Christ through that judgment. But I am not so naive to think that judgment will have no effect on my own personal life. When the judgment comes it will mean the loss of many comforts and conveniences for those who love God greatly. But love for God compels us to pray that His will be done regardless of its personal cost to us.

It's time that we who call ourselves Christians be divested of our own love for the things of the world. We may rightly point the finger at the sodomites and others who love their sins more than God, but we have all been guilty of that to some degree.

Before we settle comfortably into the mode of self-righteousness, it's time that we recognize that judgment must begin at the house of God. ■

NOTES

* *AIDS: What You Haven't Been Told*, Video Tape (Hemet, California: Jeremiah Films, Inc., 1989) Available from Sword Books, P.O. Box 2947, Redmond, WA 98073 - \$20 including postage.



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