

One Nation Without God No. 2

Mel Gibson's "*THE PASSION*" is phenomenal! It was a privately funded production about religion with no theater chain to promote it, yet it has set Hollywood back on its heels. It will be shown worldwide and for years to come.

From the first mention of the film months before its release, opposition was being bellowed out against it. It had all the signs of having been orchestrated opposition, which to their dismay, only advertised it. The media, Hollywood, and those so loudly opposed to conservative Christian President Bush have an agenda of making ours a godless society. This is not new, as you must be fully aware by now.

Because of the evident liberal bias of ABC, NBC, and CBS, I seldom watch their news programs any more. When I saw that ABC was to televise "*Jesus and Paul: The Word and the Witness*" with Peter Jennings, I determined not to watch it. If Peter Jennings could not report the news without bias, I was not ready to listen to his theology. But then I decided to watch before being so critical. After viewing it on April 6, I wrote this slightly revised letter below to ABC and to our Portland ABC station:

"All programs are produced with an agenda. What could have been the purpose of '*JESUS and PAUL: The Word and the Witness*' other than to undermine the very religion our nation was built upon? Why choose scholars who do not believe the Bible, who question the motives of Jesus, Paul, and other Biblical writers, who contradict them, who claim better insights than they had, and who discredit the scholarship of the centuries? Why ignore the plentiful number of well-qualified scholars who support mainline Christianity? Effort to conceal the destructive agenda under sophisticated scholarship makes it the more blatant. I am deeply distressed that you would betray your obligation to society by joining this effort to secularize our nation by trying to emasculate Judeo-Christian religion. You would dare not produce such a critical program against the Muslim religion whose announced intention is to destroy us. Neither would you have depended on showing it in theaters like '*The Passion*' for it would have been a box-office disaster. As it is, you let the advertisers and their customers pay for it! May we hope for better things from you?"

The showing of this three-hour onslaught so soon after Mel Gibson's successful film leaves us to suspect that its agenda was to counteract the truth he taught so forcefully.

Liberal politicians speak disdainfully of those who stand for moral principles as "the religious right" and align our president with it as though it were some sort of backward cult that wants to have a governmental takeover by religious zealots. The frightening thing is that they are selling that hysteria to many of our concerned citizens.

You who are reading this are believers in God and morality. Are you concerned that a "one nation without God" philosophy is being pushed? It is consoling to think that there

are so many believers in our country that the secularization of our society will never be allowed. But that is a dangerously deceptive feeling of security. I know that I am sounding like a senile pessimist getting off onto the field of partisan politics. Taking the risk of alienating you, let me apprise you that great changes have taken place during our watch while we were asleep at our post.

The elections in November are critical. It will be our last chance to change the direction on some issues. Our chance is in electing a conservative president, senators, and representatives. They may be able to halt or reverse the “without God” trend. It would enable the appointment of judges who are judges of the constitutionality of issues rather than making new laws. All nominations of such judges are currently being blocked.

There is little hope of outlawing all abortions, but this may be our last chance to place restrictions on it, thus diminishing the shame of our nation for killing **3,793 babies EACH DAY**. Calling them fetuses does not mean that they are not babies who experience the horrific, convulsive pain of the abortion procedure. It will be our last chance to decisively end the murderous partial birth abortion where the life is taken during the process of delivery of a healthy full-term infant.

Liberal politicians decry capital punishment for heinous crimes, the 700 casualties of our people in Iraq, and the Iraqi women and children who are “collateral damage.” But which politician decries the selfish, deliberate snuffing out of the life of 3,793 of our own kind each day? It is hypocrisy of the ugliest description.

Our hearts are touched by the loss of any of our military in the war. We honor them reverently. None of these persons, however, were in the military against their will. They volunteered knowing the purpose of an army and fully aware that they were not joining the Boy Scouts or Campfire Girls. They were risk-takers. Most of them are very patriotic. We owe them more than we can ever pay. But those infants in the womb with beating hearts, movement of bodies, and sensitivity to pain and comfort are not given choice. It is the mother’s choice to destroy her own child. Your vote in November will state which side you are on, and it may be your last chance to rescue thousands/millions of innocent children.

Yes, we would like to see the cost of life and money in Iraq relieved, but which politician promotes his plan to stop the **1,410** deaths PER MONTH in our country due to drunken driving? Think of the grief, broken families, and the billions of dollars cost to families, industry, and the taxpayer. Who cries out against that? Which politician offers to save 17,160 lives and billions of dollars per year in this area? It is much easier to make “Monday morning quarterbacking” about the war into an emotional issue. The loss of 800 lives per year to gun usage upstages 17,160 lives lost due to drunk driving. Again, this is “pure, unadulterated” hypocrisy! I know. You don’t like being confronted with such reality because it reveals inconsistency and misdirected, emotional priorities.

The matter of defining or redefining marriage will probably be determined by our votes in November. Even as belief in God was and is a determining factor in the greatness of

our nation, so marriage and the family have been the basis of all civilizations. For a few decades many have defied marriage by living together without it. Now there is movement to change the definition of marriage, thus destroying it. Claim is made that same-sex couples are being denied the right to marry and that the law should give them that right. In the first place, all are given the same right of one-man-one-woman, non-incestuous marriage. That is the only right there is. I may complain of being denied the right to become a goat, but there is no such right nor can a law give me such a right making it possible. Changing the definition of a goat would not alter the matter. A dog has five legs if you count his tail as a leg, but changing the definition of a tail does not make a leg of it. This is not homophobic, but a fact of life. It is not binding Biblical rules but recognition of the basic unit of all civilizations. Laws already exist, and others could be passed, allowing for various contractual agreements between people without regard to gender or kinship but those must never be confused with marriage.

Are you confident that an amendment defining marriage will pass easily? Don't be too sure. Our congressional leaders are not being bombarded by responses from you. Have you let them know how you stand? They want to know and need to know. The pro-active secularists let them know their stand in loud chorus.

There are many good people who are not religious and even more who are sincerely trying to serve God. But too many of us have been lulled into complacency. Religious people have given new emphasis to the grace of God and the security of the believer. The problem is that they have vied with each other as to who can make grace the most inclusive and the believer the most invulnerable. So we have rightly abandoned the negative approach of "hell-fire and damnation," guilt-producing emphasis of times past. But do we hear definitions and condemnation of sin from our pulpits any more?

While religious people have comfortably blurred the lines between good and evil, the enemy has had a field day. **OUR KIDS IN CHRISTIAN FAMILIES ARE INFLUENCED BY SOCIETY, THE MEDIA, TELEVISION, MOVIES, AND CONTEMPORARY MUSIC MORE THAN BY THEIR BIBLE TEACHING!** Am I completely insane? Wake up!!

Our younger generation, which includes the yuppies, does not share the same convictions we who are grandparents hold. "Living together" is the IN thing among the IN crowd. To them divorce and remarriage presents no moral problem. Sexual activity and births out of wedlock, both promoted by celebrities, bring more favorable attention than disgrace. Nudity is acceptable fun. Unnatural/perverted sexual practices – heterosexual or homosexual – whatever pleases you is nobody's business but yours. Vulgar, profane, sexually saturated speech, music, and drama are entertaining and harmless. Same-sex marriage is OK if that's your lifestyle. If you get caught, abortion is the solution. Pornography – what's wrong with that? Prostitution – some nice girls make money that way. Only religious nuts deny the fun allowed by liquor and drugs. Stretching and breaking the rules of moral society is the cool way to go.

I know, there are lots of spiritually minded young people. I do not want to be discouragingly rough on them by blanket indictments. They are not the bigger voting block, however.

Correction of course must begin at home. This requires positive teaching and training by parents and supervision of what is allowed to pour into the home through modern media. Our Christian assemblies have a great opportunity and responsibility. We can help to influence our public schools so that they help instead of hindering. We may feel helpless in reaching out further, but there are various means of influencing. We can voice our concerns to the media, to sponsors of programs, and to both state and national elected officials. A few critics or supporters may be ignored, but floods of communication from the voters definitely influence their decisions.

And then, we can vote, not just for the individual we like, but for the platform stating his or her aims. Our vote is a “yes” for their platforms. The big issues are not necessarily the ones touted so dramatically in election campaigns. They are not taxes, jobs, business, Social Security, medical care, gun control, the war, terrorism, or the UN. The greater issues are those that affect the basis of our society and the morality and spirituality of its people.

“Oh, but you cannot legislate morality!” we hear so often with condescending inflection. Do you mean we cannot legislate against rape, assault, murder, fraud, slander, drunkenness, wife-abuse, child molestation, dead-bead dads, incest, indecency, and many other such moral crimes? Legislation does not make people moral but it makes them accountable for immoral conduct. When political parties support different sides of a moral issue, our vote shows whether we approve or disapprove of the issue.

This is not involving the church in politics. It is involving the upright individual, whether believer or unbeliever, in using his/her influence to make a difference. When the issues are clear, it becomes a definite moral obligation. Whether by our votes or silence, let’s not vote to make ours “One Nation Without God.” []

(Cecil Hook: April 2004)