

What if Jesus Had Never Been Born?

Cover Story

On December 25, as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow described in his beautiful hymn, the belfries of all Christendom will roll along “the unbroken song of peace on earth, good will to men.” But few today truly understand the world-changing influence the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ has had across history.

What would the last two millennia have been like had Jesus not been born? That’s the intriguing question Jerry Newcombe and the late Dr. D. James Kennedy ask in their 1994 book *What If Jesus Had Never Been Born?*

Most skeptics grudgingly acknowledge that Jesus has had a positive effect on history, but the truth of the incarnation’s full impact is mind-boggling. The 19th century poet James Russell Lowell said:

“I challenge any skeptic to find a ten-square-mile spot on this planet where they can live their lives in peace and safety and decency, where womanhood is honored, where infancy and old age are revered, where they can educate their children, where the Gospel of Jesus Christ has not gone first to prepare the way. If they find such a place, then I would encourage them to emigrate thither and there proclaim their unbelief.”¹

Newcombe, who took over Truth in Action Ministries (known then as Coral Ridge Ministries) after Kennedy’s 2007 passing, told *The Journal* that he’s concerned that as Christ is being pushed out of public life,



people will forget the physical benefits of the Gospel in the here and now.

Take science, for example. Today, Christians in science struggle to earn legitimacy among peers biased against the biblical worldview. But the study of science owes its very existence to the Gospel. “Science could not have been born in today’s milieu,” Newcombe said. “The postmodern world could not ever give birth to science.”

The same applies even to the United States. Without the notions of freedom

— derived from Christianity — embedded in our country’s founding ideals, our nation may never have existed. “Without Jesus, you wouldn’t have these types of freedoms,” Newcombe said.

The Gospel of Christ touches the business world as well. As Theodore Roosevelt Malloch points out in *Doing Virtuous Business*, some of the most successful modern companies employ particular virtues based on Paul’s first letter to the Corinthian church: faith, hope, and charity.

The impact of Christ is at the very heart of what we love and appreciate about Western civilization. Yet today many anti-Christian groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union and the Freedom from Religion Foundation are obsessed with erasing any mention of Christ. The 20th century should be our guide; as R.J. Rummel noted, cultures that began with anti-Christ assumptions have wreaked havoc on an unimaginable scale. For example, the Lenin/Stalin regimes of the former Soviet Union and the Mao Tse-tung regime in China both killed more of their own people — about 84.5 million — than both world wars combined (24 million).²

So it behooves us to take a close look at but a few areas to see what difference it made that Jesus came into the world.

Christians Fight for Equality of the Sexes

Most cultures throughout history have not considered women to be of equal value to men. In ancient Greek and Roman civilization, women had virtually no rights.

from the president's desk

a word from dr. jeff myers

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

Years ago I explained to my children that Bethlehem was an insignificant town at the time of Jesus' birth. One of them replied indignantly, "They ought to take a big city and name it 'Bethlehem!'" I understand the sentiment. Jesus has had such an earth-shaking influence that it's easy to forget that he was born in a cave outside such an unsuitable, troublesome outpost of the Roman Empire.

The Apostle Paul said that Jesus "made of himself no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant" (Phil. 2:7). The sheer unimpressiveness of Jesus' entry into the world makes it all the more stunning because it reveals God's operating style: when He wants to do something big, He usually starts small. Have you noticed? One man and one woman in a garden tasked with filling the earth. One frightened shepherd (Moses) instructed to confront the mighty Pharaoh. God does not despise the day of small beginnings (Zechariah 4:10).

The world thinks *small* is synonymous with *irrelevant*, which is precisely why we need to be reminded that Christ's message of redemption, carried forth by ordinary people, has utterly changed the world.

In his book *What's So Great About Christianity*, Dinesh D'Souza brilliantly explains how Jesus changed the world. For example, Jesus healed the sick, ate with those of low status, and chose disciples from a distinctly blue-collar background, and thereby demonstrated that *all human beings, while fallible, have*



dignity as image-bearers of God. According to D'Souza, this simple doctrine is the basis of the nuclear family, the rule of law, and compassion for those who suffer. Let's look at each in turn.

Families: When we read "Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church" (Ephesians 5:25), it just seems right and normal. But it must have been stunning news in ancient Greece and Rome, cultures that were built — root and branch — on sexual perversion, especially homosexual pedophilia. Romantic love between a husband and wife was not valued. Only in Christianity, says D'Souza, did the family come to be viewed "for the first time as the central venue for the fulfillment of life's main satisfactions."

Human value: D'Souza points out that Greece and Rome were haughty, elite-driven cultures with no respect for ordinary people. Jesus turned this entirely upside down by teaching that the "last will be first and the first will be last" (Matthew 20:16, Mark 10:43, and Luke 22:27). In Christ's economy, the only way to succeed is to serve. This led to

dramatic change: *Followers became constituents and subjects became customers.*

Compassion: It was Christians who elevated the status of women, built hospitals and schools, and who instituted ministries to the poor. Perhaps most notable was Christianity's drive to abolish slavery. D'Souza says, "Throughout history people have opposed slavery for themselves but have been perfectly happy to enslave others.... What is remarkable is for a group to oppose slavery in principle." But that is exactly what Christians did — and what those of other worldviews fail to do — to this very day, throughout the world.

As you consider the question "What if Jesus had never been born?" keep in mind that the Good News isn't *true* because it *works*; it *works* because it's *true*. Jesus said, "If the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed." This speaks to freedom from spiritual bondage, to be sure, but also to the freedom to think, speak out, fix what's broken, and stand against those who oppress and prey on others. This is Christianity's heritage, and it all began with a humble birth in little Bethlehem. As songwriter Michael Card put it, "For a thousand years the dreamers dreamt and hoped to see his love. *But the promise showed their wildest dreams, had simply not been wild enough.*"

The year 2012 could well be a defining point in history. May generations hence honor us for bravely speaking and living the truth — with dignity and compassion — in all of life. That sums up why we at Summit are training rising generations, and we gather strength through your prayer and support. Blessings on you and yours in this season of celebration, and we look forward to walking together in the coming year.

With the both Greek social customs and the Roman institution of *patria postestas*, a woman was a man's property — either her husband's or her father's.³ In many cases, women weren't permitted to speak in public and were restricted as to when they could leave their homes. In Roman culture, men weren't expected to be faithful to their wives and openly obtained mistresses. In fact, men were permitted to have their wives or daughters executed under some circumstances. Even in the Jewish tradition the testimony of women was thought to be unreliable, and women whose husbands had died or divorced them were at the mercy of whatever evil intent the men in their communities could devise.

Though liberal and secular humanist activists have hijacked the debate over women's rights, the cause of recognizing the dignity of women was originally taken up by followers of Christ in the centuries after his birth. Jesus interacted with women in a dignifying way and the early Christians carried his example forth, as women were educated the same as men in Christian education institutions.⁴ The spread of the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire correlated with a drop in infanticide practiced on baby girls.⁵ Eventually Romans gave women more rights, including property rights, which came from the influence of Christianity, and marriage came to be viewed as monogamous.⁶

The Good News of Jesus Leads to More Education

Though formalized institutes of education had existed since ancient Greece, it was Christians who extended the life-changing value of education to boys and girls of all socio-economic backgrounds. Prior to the Protestant Reformation,

Christian schools taught Scripture, but they also delved into literature, math, and medicine.⁷

Many people don't know that part of the reformation Martin Luther sought from the Catholic Church was to ensure that ordinary people — not just priests — had access to education.⁸ Christians founded the first universities, schools for the blind, and schools for the deaf.⁹

Christ's Care for the Sick Prompts Charitable Hospitals

Jesus' work heals his people spiritually, but he also tended to their physical needs by healing their diseases and deformities. Looking back, it's hard to imagine now how radical this was. In the culture of the Romans — and even the Jews of Israel — the sick were cast aside and treated as inferior. The Greco-Roman world did have medical treatment, but only for the elite classes of men or soldiers. No institutions existed to take care of all sick, regardless of social status. Until Christians started them, that is.¹⁰

Care for all those with physical ailments was a uniquely Christian idea, based on the fact that all people have value as image-bearers of God. It gradually spread throughout the Roman Empire. In 325, the Council of Nicaea proclaimed that every city with a cathedral should also have a hospital, which also served as shelters for the poor.¹¹ The culture of caring for the sick grew as Christians continued the work through the Crusades, the Middle Ages, and even to the New World. Today we have institutions like the International Red Cross, begun and proliferated by Christians.¹²

The model of charitable hospitals, though largely different today, spread to other cultures throughout history. But the idea sprouted from Jesus' care for the sick.

Christ's Influence Is Inescapable

It may well be impossible to calculate the influence of Christ and his followers in the world, but there is no denying that it is massive. In addition to the topics covered above, Christ's life has changed our justice system; it pushed abolitionists to free slaves throughout several cultures and time periods; it has provided inspiration for centuries of Western art and literature; Christ's life even changed our calendars and the words in our vocabulary. Above all, though, Jesus completely reshaped our understanding of the value of each human life. As Chuck Colson puts it, the idea that we all bear the image of God, and because of that have inherent value, is perhaps the most radical idea the world has ever known. Jesus embodied the depths of God's love for creation, showing that God so loved the world that he would send his only son, that whoever believes in him would not perish, but would have eternal life.

Merry Christmas from Summit Ministries.

Notes

1. D. James Kennedy and Jerry Newcombe, *What If Jesus Had Never Been Born?* (Thomas Nelson, 1994), 238.
2. "War Isn't This Century's Biggest Killer," R. J. Rummel, accessed November 19, 2011, <http://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/WSJ.ART.HTM>.
3. Alvin J. Schmidt, *How Christianity Changed the World* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan: 2001), 111.
4. *Ibid*, 172.
5. *Ibid*, 99-100.
6. *Ibid*, 111.
7. See note 4.
8. *Ibid*, 177.
9. *Ibid*, 182, 183, 187.
10. *Ibid*, 153-54.
11. *Ibid*, 155.
12. *Ibid*, 165.

breakdown

a deeper look at Christ's influence on world history

American Christians and the Abolition of Slavery

- » Franz Pastorius — Issued first anti-slavery proclamation in America in Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1688
- » Elijah Lovejoy — Clergyman who published writings opposing slavery; was shot and killed in the office of his publishing business in Alton, Illinois, in 1837
- » Harriet Beecher Stowe — Wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1852, a novel meant to rouse Americans against slavery
- » Charles T. Torrey — Clergyman known as the "Father of the Underground Railroad"
- » J.D. Paxton — Clergyman and author of *Letters on Slavery*, calling for the abolition of slavery; had to flee the southern United States after its publication
- » John Hersey — Clergyman and author of *Appeal to Christians on the Subject of Slavery*; had to leave his home state of Virginia after the third edition was published in 1843
- » Julia Ward Howe — Social activist and author of "Battle Hymn of the Republic" in 1862
- » William Garrison — Publisher of *The Liberator*, an abolitionist newspaper; burned a copy of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850

*Adapted from Alvin Schmidt's *How Christianity Changed the World*

Christians & the Sciences

Christian scientists and the studies they founded

- » Francis Bacon: Father of modern science, the scientific method
- » Louis Pasteur: Bacteriology
- » Johannes Kepler: Celestial mechanics
- » Charles Babbage: Computer science
- » Lord Joseph Lister: Antiseptic surgery
- » Robert Boyle: Chemistry
- » James Simpson: Anesthesiology
- » Matthew Fontaine Maury: Oceanography
- » Samuel Morse: Telegraphy
- » Sir Isaac Newton: Calculus, Dynamics

Suggested Reading

- » *What if Jesus Had Never Been Born?* by D. James Kennedy and Jerry Newcombe*
- » *How Christianity Changed the World* by Alvin J. Schmidt*
- » *Doing Virtuous Business* by Theodore Roosevelt Malloch
- » *What's So Great About Christianity* by Dinesh D'Souza*
- » *For the Glory of God* by Rodney Stark*
- » *The Victory of Reason* by Rodney Stark*
- » *Who Really Cares?* by Arthur C. Brooks*

*Available in the Summit bookstore at www.summit.org/store/

a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel

Editor's Note: "A Look at Our World" features news clips and musings from founder and President Emeritus Dr. David Noebel.

Biblical Christianity

The Birth of Jesus Christ

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

The Shepherds and the Angels

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping

watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.

¹⁰And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

— Luke 2

No woman ever conceived a child, no mare a foal, without Him. But once, and for a special purpose, He dispensed with that long line which is His instrument: once His life-giving finger touched a woman without passing through the ages of interlocked events. Once the great glove of Nature was taken off His hand. His naked hand touched her. There was of course a unique reason for it. That time He was creating not simply a man but the Man who was to be Himself: was creating Man anew: was beginning, at this divine and human point, the New Creation of all things. The whole soiled and weary universe quivered at this direct injection of essential life — direct, uncontaminated, not drained through all the crowded history of Nature.

— C.S. Lewis

Miracles, Chapter 15

In such an investigation, the natural starting-point may be found in the

great Christian writers of the close of the second century. At that time, when extant Christian literature (outside of the New Testament) first became abundant, the virgin birth may easily be shown to have had as firm a place in the belief of the Church as it had at any subsequent time. The doctrine was indeed denied by isolated sects — and such denials, with their roots in the preceding decades, will be considered at some length in the discussion that follows — but those sects that denied the virgin birth were at any rate altogether excluded from the main body of the Church. Irenæus (who lived in his youth in Asia Minor and listened there to the teaching of the aged Polycarp), Clement of Alexandria in Egypt, and Tertullian in North Africa, all not merely attest their own belief in the virgin birth, but treat it as one of the essential facts about Christ which had a firm place in even the briefest of summaries of the Christian faith.

There can be no doubt, then, that at the close of the second century the virgin birth of Christ was regarded as an absolutely essential part of Christian belief by the Christian Church in all parts of the known world. So much is admitted by everyone.

— J. Gresham Machen
The Virgin Birth of Christ

Economics

North Dakota boasts the largest deposits of lignite coal in the world, and plentiful Bakken shale deposits. Scientists estimate up to 4.3 billion barrels of oil can be pumped from the shale, and North Dakota encourages exploration and development. It's a strategy

continued on page 6



a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel, continued from page 5

[Governor Jack] Dalrymple continued when he became governor in 2010 after [former Governor John] Hoeven was elected to the U.S. Senate.

In the past three years, North Dakota has more than doubled its oil production — and the impact has been profound. Dalrymple was in the enviable position of recently signing a law that reduces corporate income taxes by 19.5 percent and cuts taxes for financial institutions by 7 percent. Homeowners and businesses will see their property taxes drop \$342 million over the next two years. . . .

That contrast between North Dakota's economic oasis and the dismal state of the rest of the U.S. economy has grown so glaring that Dalrymple finds himself appearing on cable talk shows to explain that keeping taxes low and government small while helping the business community really

does bolster the economy.

— David A. Patten

Newsmax

November 2011, p. 17

Global Warming

Ivar Giaver, a recipient of the 1973 Nobel Prize in physics, left the 48,000-member American Physical Society (APS) in protest of its position that global warming is “incontrovertible” and caused by human activity. The Norwegian-born physicist, an 82-year-old former professor at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York, expressed frustration in a letter to the society: “In the APS it is OK to discuss whether the mass of the proton changes over time and how a multi-universe behaves, but the evidence of global warming is incontrovertible?”

— *WORLD Magazine*

October 8, 2011, p. 10

Marxism

Nothing is easier than to give Christian asceticism [a person who renounces the comforts of society as an act of religious devotion] a Socialist tinge. Has not Christianity declaimed against private property, against marriage, against the State? Has it not preached in the place of these charity and poverty, celibacy and mortification of the flesh, monastic life and Mother Church? Christian Socialism is but the holy water with which the priest consecrates the heart-burnings of the aristocrat.

— Karl Marx

The Communist Manifesto

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the point

a worldview commentary from john stonestreet

Editor's Note: Every day, Summit speaker and author John Stonestreet offers “The Point,” a daily worldview commentary. You can listen to “The Point” on over 725 radio outlets across the country or at www.summit.org

November 8

What can fix this economy? Here's an idea.

We often talk about why divorce is bad, but not why marriage is actually

good. A new study from the National Marriage Project shows just that. In fact, marriage, stable families, and involved parents could be the building blocks to economic recovery.

According to the study, men with a wife and children typically work harder and contribute more to society than non-married men; families help prop up important consumer markets; and societies that produce stable, hard-working

young adults tend to have better chances at maintaining social safety nets.

For the Christian, this is not new information. We know from Scripture marriage and family are good, consecrated institutions, and this just goes to show why the family and traditional, monogamous marriages are worth preserving.

Now let me be clear — I'm not suggesting that everyone should be married, or that being single is non-productive or wrong. But I am saying that a culture that values marriage has a better shot at success than one that doesn't.

To receive “The Point with John Stonestreet” daily by email, visit www.thepointradio.org.

Summit offered Roeber a new philosophy



Summit alumnus Blake Roeber with his wife, Ruth, and children, Loerah and Isaiah

Jesus' birth changed everything: science, education, family life, and even medical care. But another realm in which the world is different because of Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection, is philosophy.

Blake Roeber certainly knows that, having studied at Summit for two summers and then spending four summers on Summit staff. The 34-year-old husband and father of two is now earning his Ph.D. in philosophy at Rutgers University in New Jersey, which is consistently ranked one of the top philosophy programs in the country. Roeber also earned a Harvey Fellowship, a prestigious award presented to select Christian graduate students.

"I went [to Summit] the first time to appease my parents," Roeber recalls. "I had spent the year away at college and, I would be living with them for the summer. They

asked me to go, and I said yes just to start the summer off on the right foot."

While studying in Manitou Springs, Colorado, Roeber had his first encounters with living philosophers, which lit a fire that burns brightly to this day.

"My first conversations with philosophically-minded Christians were at Summit," he said. "Before attending Summit, I didn't think it was possible to be both thoughtful and a Christian.

"I literally had no idea that there were living philosophers before I attended Summit, much less living Christian philosophers. When I found out you could make a living doing philosophy (as a professor, like many of Summit's speakers), I knew that is what I wanted to do. I wanted to be a philosophy professor. I asked Doc for philosophy recommendations and he told me about

[Alvin] Plantinga and [William] Alston. I read a little Alston and a lot of Plantinga, got interested in their God, and started reading the Bible. Before long I knew I wanted to be a Christian philosopher. I've had that goal in view ever since."

The Summit experience forever changed Roeber's life and not just intellectually. He says he became a Christian the fall after that first summer at Summit. From there he nurtured his growing love of philosophy and even transferred to Wheaton College near Chicago, to major in philosophy.

After graduation Roeber spent time in Colorado Springs and teaching English in Thailand before re-entering academia. "I will finish my Ph.D. next year or the year after and (I pray) teach philosophy full time after that," he said.

Without his Summit experience, Roeber says his life would have taken a very different direction.

"I doubt I would have studied philosophy, I doubt I would have become a Christian, and I doubt I would be doing anything valuable with my life," he said.

When asked how the world and the discipline of philosophy would be different if Jesus had never been born, Roeber recalled the rich tradition of Christian philosophers who have had far-reaching influence. "Augustine, Boethius, Anselm, Aquinas, Scotus, Ockham, Bacon, Descartes, Pascal, Malebranche, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley and others wouldn't have been Christian philosophers. Would they still have been philosophers? And would they have had about the same influence? It seems doubtful to me that the answer to both questions is 'yes.'"



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a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel

History

The settling of America was, of course, a result of economic and other motives, as well as religious ones. Yet religion was still central. Although less important in New York and the Carolinas, religion was a predominant motive in the creation of the other colonies. Virginia, as John Butler says, had “religious origins.” Quakers and Methodists settled in Pennsylvania. Catholics established a beachhead Maryland. Religious intensity was undoubtedly greatest among the Puritans, especially in Massachusetts. They took the lead in defining their settlement based on a “Covenant with God” to create “a city on a hill.” In the 17th and 18th centuries, Americans defined their mission in the New World in biblical terms. They were a “chosen people,” on an “errand in the wilderness,” creating “the new Israel” or the “new Jerusalem” in what was clearly the “promised land.” America was the site of a “new Heaven and a new earth, the home of justice,” God’s country.

American Protestantism differs from European Protestantism, particularly those denominations, Anglican or Lutheran, that have involved established churches. This difference was noted by Edmund Burke, who contrasted the fear, awe, duty, and reverence Englishmen felt toward political and religious authorities with the “fierce spirit of liberty” among Americans. This spirit, he argued, was rooted in the distinctively American brand of Protestantism. The Americans “are Protestants, and of that kind which is the most averse to all implicit submission of mind and opinion. All Protestantism, even the most cold and passive, is a sort of dissent. But the religion most

prevalent in our northern colonies is a refinement on the principle of resistance: it is the dissidence of dissent, and the protestantism of the Protestant religion.”

This dissidence was manifest from the first with the settlements of the Pilgrims and the Puritans of New England. The Puritan message, style, and assumptions, if not doctrines, spread throughout the colonies and became absorbed into the beliefs and outlooks of other Protestant groups. In some measure, as Tocqueville said, “the entire destiny of America” was shaped by the Puritans. The “religious zeal and the religious conscience” of New England, James Bryce agreed, in “large measure passed into the whole nation.” Qualified, modified, diffused, the Puritan legacy became the American essence. While “England had a Puritan Revolution without creating a Puritan society, America created a Puritan society without enduring a Puritan revolution.”

— Samuel P. Huntington
The American Conservative
April 12, 2004, p. 8f

As American families sit down to their traditional Thanksgiving feasts, they will naturally recall the familiar story of the Pilgrim and, in the process, distort the true character of the nation’s religious heritage.

Most children learn that the Mayflower settlers came to the New World to escape persecution and to establish religious freedom. But the early colonists actually pursued purity, not tolerance, and sought to build fervent, faith-based utopias, not secular regimes that that consigned religion to a secondary role. The distinctive circumstances that al-

lowed these fiery believers of the varied denominations to cooperate in the founding of a new nation help to explain America’s contradictory religious traditions — as simultaneously the most devoutly Christian society in the Western world, and the country most accommodating to every shade of exotic belief and practice.

Concerning the Pilgrims who celebrated the First Thanksgiving in 1621, they didn’t travel directly from their English homes to the “hideous and desolate wilderness” of Massachusetts. They sailed the Atlantic Ocean only after living for 12 years in flourishing communities in Holland, the most tolerant and religiously diverse nation in Europe. They left the Netherlands not because that nation imposed too many religious restrictions but because the Dutch honored too few.

The like-minded Puritans who followed them (and whose much larger settlement of Massachusetts Bay annexed the Pilgrims’ Plymouth in 1691) showed similar determination to build a model of single-minded religious rigor. The leaders of this idealistic venture were in no sense the victims of oppression back home, but rather counted as wealthy and influential gentlemen who wielded considerable political influence. Even after their fellow Puritans won total power (and executed a king in 1649), the Massachusetts colonists chose to remain in their “city upon a hill” in the New World than to return to the compromises and complications with England’s fractious politics.

The Pilgrims and their spiritual descendants never had to retreat from religious fervor or biblical demands to join the new Republic, thanks to the

a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel, continued from page 9

continued existence of more or less autonomous religious enclaves. No one can suggest that our Founders embraced secularism or relativism, but they did come to accept the notion of separate faith communities following their own rules, while managing to cooperate where absolutely necessary.

Thanksgiving in that sense doesn't celebrate religious freedom, but rather coexistence. We remain a nation of impassioned, fiercely committed, openly competing believers who have nonetheless established a long tradition of letting other faith communities go their own way. We can be pious and uncompromising at our own Thanksgiving tables, without menacing, or even questioning, the very different proceedings, in the home next door. The limitless boundaries and vast empty land of the fresh continent, plus the challenges of a long Revolutionary struggle, gave the faith-filled fanatics of the founding the chance for a freedom more profound than mere religious tolerance: the right, in their own communities, to be left alone.

— Michael Medved
USA TODAY
November 23, 2009, p. 17A

Origins

The more I study science, the more I am impressed with the thought that this world and universe have a definite design — and a design suggests a designer. It may be possible to have design without a designer, picture without an artist, but my mind is unable to conceive of such a situation. Evidences of design are everywhere about us . . . The greatest aspect of design visible to us in the ordered

movement of the stars and planets in this solar system and in other solar systems extending on and on through space — a design almost incomprehensibly large. At the other extreme we find all matter composed of invisible atoms, each of which in turn is a solar system almost inconceivably small, with electrons swinging in orbits around the atomic nuclei somewhat as planets circle about the sun. And everywhere in between these extremes we find evidence of design . . . And so it goes — everywhere there is design. Everything is conforming to definite forces acting upon it, is obeying natural laws applicable to its particular state. Whence come these natural laws? There we find the Creator.

— Paul Amos Moody
Introduction to Evolution
P, 497-98

Physicists have stumbled upon signs that the cosmos is custom-made for life and consciousness. It turns out that if the constants of nature — unchanging numbers like the strength of gravity, the charge of an electron and the mass of a protein — were the tiniest bit different, then atoms would not hold together, stars would not burn and life would never have made an appearance. “When you realize that the laws of nature must be incredibly finely tuned to produce the universe we see,” says John Polkinghorne, who had a distinguished career as a physicist at Cambridge University before becoming an Anglican priest in 1982, “that conspires to plant the idea that the universe did not just happen, but that there must be a purpose behind it.” Charles Townes, who shared the 1964 Nobel Prize in Physics for discovering

the principles of the laser, goes further: “Many have a feeling that somehow intelligence must have been involved in the laws of the universe.”

— *Newsweek*
July 20, 1998, p. 48-49

The Mideast's latest archaeological sensation is all about Edom.

The Bible says Edom's kings interacted with ancient Israel, but some scholars have confidently declared that no Edomite state could have existed that early.

The latest archaeological work indicates the Bible got it right, those experts got it wrong and some write-ups need rewriting. The findings also could buttress disputed biblical reports about kings David and Solomon.

Edom was a rugged land south and east of the Dead Sea in present-day southern Jordan. The Bible reports that Edom had kings before Israel (Genesis 36:31, 1 Chronicles 1:43) and that they barred Moses' throng after the Exodus (Numbers 20:14-21) and later warred with David (2Samuel 8:13-14, 1 Kings 11:15-16).

Traditional dating puts David's rule from 1012 B.C. to 972 B.C., followed by Solomon through 932 B.C. By looser reckoning, their monarchy emerged around 1000 B.C. (the exodus came long before).

The doubters figured the Bible erred because the earliest discovered remains from Edom and non-biblical references dated back only to the eighth century B.C. Such thinking ignored the old archaeological warning that “absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.”

— Richard N. Ostling

a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel, continued from page 10

South Bend Tribune
February 17, 2005

Sociology

As the states go deeper and deeper into debt, liberals keep finding new ways to go deeper and deeper into our pocket books to teach people things they can easily learn by themselves. There is no better example than the recent spate of universities that have decided to help lost and helpless homosexuals find themselves spiritually. This sudden revival of interest in religion in our secular universities is a queer one, indeed.

A document titled, "Religious Identity, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity & Gender Expression," housed on the UNC website and produced with state funded research says the following:

"Many LGBTQ identified people struggle with their religious or spiritual beliefs at some point in the coming out process. This section will give you some resources with which you can educate yourself about various religious and spiritual communities' beliefs regarding faith and LGBTQ-identified persons."

Sounds either great or grate depending on your politics. But what does the state have to say about LGBTQ-LM-NOPersons and Christianity? Where should they go to learn about Christian stances on these issues? The government agents of inclusion provide six sources. One can only marvel at the diversity of the following choices:

1. The Institute for Welcoming Resources <http://www.welcomingresources.org> The purpose of this ecumenical group is to provide the resources to facilitate a paradigm shift in multiple denominations whereby churches become welcoming and affirming of all

congregants regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. (A paradigm shift sounds pretty costly at first, but, upon further reflection, a paradigm is only twenty cents).

2. Gay Christians www.gaychristians.org. Information and chat network of friends affirming God's acceptance and love of all people regardless of their sexual or affectional orientation. (This may have been where Kip met LaFawnduh. I always thought she was really a he! Soul mate? More like soul brother!)

3. Inspiritus www.inspiritus.myweb.nl. Inspirational page with focus on those who are seeking to reconcile Christian faith and homosexuality; also includes excellent coming out stories from Christian LGBTQ individuals. (Shouldn't they call this Out-spirit-us? Just saying.).

4. Soulforce www.soulforce.org. The purpose of Soulforce is freedom for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people from religious and political oppression through the practice of relentless nonviolent resistance. (How many of you knew that gays were still enslaved in 21st Century America? And I just hired a new interior decorator for no reason!).

5. The Bible and the Homosexual <http://www.postfun.com/pfp/homosexual.html>. Addresses the sections in the Bible that are most used to condemn LGBTQ persons. (This can generally be accomplished by defining words like "sin" and "abomination" as hate speech. Hence, it is no longer a *** or an ***** to engage in sodomy).

6. Steps to Recovery from Bible Abuse <http://www.truluck.com/index.html>. This site has a link to a page that addresses the sections in the Bible that

are most used to condemn LGBTQ persons. (Bible abuse includes but is not limited to those who have actually been thumped by a Bible on one or more occasions).

Just in case the above entanglement between church and state is not quite enough for the enlightened liberal intellectual, there is more. The UNC website directs you to more state-recommended websites that get into specific denominational stances:

1. Axios www.eskimo.com/~nickz/axios.html provides Eastern Orthodox Gay and Lesbian Christians, resources and links. (This makes sense. Some people are only attracted to the Eastern Orthodox Church because of the hats. Gay people like hats, too – especially Red Sox hats. I can see a connection).

2. Rainbow Baptists www.rainbowbaptists.org. Rainbow Baptists is a website providing support, information and advocacy for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer identified Baptists, their family and friends. (It makes sense that the homosexuals have hijacked the rainbow. They think Noah's son really enjoyed seeing his father naked. And that's why they are always trying to force the Boys Scouts to follow them on weekend excursion into the woods to pitch tents).

3. Catholic www.dignityusa.org. DignityUSA works for respect and justice for all gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons in the Catholic Church and the world through education, advocacy and support. (This one is way too easy. Pass).

4. Disciples of Christ www.gladalliance.org. The Gay, Lesbian, and Affirm-

a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel, continued from page 11

ing Disciples Alliance is an organization of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and affirming members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). They call for the full inclusion of LGBT persons in the Church. They provide educational resources to the Church on issues important to LGBT Christians. (I could see Chaz Bono as a Baptist preacher despite the sex change. But do they have to accept his dancing, too?).

5. More Light Presbyterians <http://www.mlp.org>. A network of people seeking the full participation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people of faith in the life, ministry and witness of the Presbyterian Church. (I think we need more Presbyterians who are light in the loafers. It helps them tip-toe through the TULIP without getting stuck on “total depravity”).

At first glance, it would appear that Jewish homosexuals and Islamic homosexuals are excluded from the UNC effort to be inclusive. Nothing could be further from the truth. UNC is proud to recommend a couple of Jewish faith websites:

1. Jewish Gay and Lesbian Group <http://www.jglg.org.uk/>. The purpose of this organization is to provide an atmosphere of friendship and support for Jewish gays, lesbians, bisexuals and their partners. Organize social, religious and informative events for our members and their guests. To act as ambassadors between the gay world and the Jewish world, trying to dispel ignorance and prejudice. (Making peace between the gay world and the Jewish world could take a Lot of patience. But I think it's all about hospitality not Sodomy!).

2. The World Congress of Gay,

Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Jews: Keshet Ga'avah <http://www.glbtejews.org/>. The organization consists of around 50 member organizations (did they really say “member organizations”?) all over the world. The World Congress wishes: to be the worldwide voice of LGBT Jews; to support, inspire, and strengthen local groups; to foster a sense of community among diverse individuals and organizations; to achieve equality and security for LGBT Jews worldwide.

Islamic homosexuals can really celebrate the inclusion of the Muslim Faith Websites like Queer Jihad www.queerjihad.org. (I guess a queer jihad is better than a straight one. Queer jihad-ists probably clean up nicely after they're done killing the infidels. But, seriously, at least UNC has finally recognized the existence of the term jihad).

It is strange for many to sit back and watch these UNC system spending habits in a year where they are faced with a 15.8% budget cut. They could easily cut back on their commitment to sexual diversity. Instead, they cut a year off their nursing program. No word yet on whether they are contemplating taking a year off of campaigning for same-sex marriage and trying to grow the homosexual church in America.

— Mike Adams,
Townhall.com
Sept. 26, 2011

Divorce has been declining since the 1980s, which is good news for children — but only for those children whose parents bother to marry in the first place. A new study by the Institute for American Values and the National Marriage Project at the University of Virginia

shows that a growing threat to marriage and children's well-being is cohabitation, which has increased 14-fold since 1970, with 40 percent of American children experiencing it by age twelve. W. Bradford Wilcox, one of the authors of the report, explains that “children in cohabitating relationships are more likely to do poorly in school, to use drugs, to have emotional problems, and to be abused, compared with children in intact, married families.” What makes the trend particularly worrisome is its adoption by the working and lower-middle classes, even as marriage seems to have strengthened as a norm among members of the college-educated upper-middle class. It's a tale of two Americas you aren't likely to hear about on the campaign trail.

— *National Review*
Sept. 19, 2011, p. 10

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a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel, continued from page 12

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— *National Review*
Sept. 19, 2011, p. 10

A North Carolina bill to allow voters a chance to define marriage in their state constitution goes to the state Senate on Tuesday, after passing the state House.

The 75-42 vote followed a lengthy debate, dominated by opponents of the amendment.

If it passes, it will go on the May 2012 ballot.

North Carolina is the only Southeastern state without voter-approved language in the state constitution that defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

House Majority Leader Paul Stam, a Republican and lead sponsor of the bill, led off Monday's debate by noting that one of the first laws in the state was that marriage was between a man and a woman.

This amendment needs to go before the voters because they need to decide what is marriage, not judges in courts, said Mr. Stam. Iowa, he added, once had a law like North Carolina's that said marriage was only between a man and a woman, but the Iowa Supreme Court struck it down and allowed gay marriage. "Folks, we are in the same situation," he said.

"People want to vote" on this definition of marriage, said Speaker Pro Tempore Dale R. Folwell, another Republican supporter.

But for most of three hours, Demo-

cratic members decried the amendment, calling it "unconscionable," "extreme" and reminiscent of the state's discrimination against blacks.

This "contemptible" bill "takes our state backwards" in terms of respecting people, said state Rep. Deborah K. Ross. This bill "is not God, not even close," said openly gay Rep. Marcus Brandon.

The amendment now goes to the state Senate, where three-fifths of that chamber must pass it if it is to go to voters. The governor cannot veto the bill.

The amendment, which was passed by a House committee earlier on Monday, says that marriage between one man and one woman "is the only domestic legal union that shall be valid or recognized in this state." It clarifies that it does not prohibit private parties from entering into contracts.

The amendment called for a vote in May 2012, when primary elections are held, rather than the general election in November 2012. This was done to "remove politics" from the issue, House Speaker Thom Tillis told a news conference.

Republicans took control of both chambers in 2010 for the first time since 1896, freeing them to take action on a "defense of marriage" amendment.

Equality North Carolina, which supports gay marriage, brought nearly 50,000 postcards opposing the amendment to lawmakers Monday.

At a press conference last week, a group of black pastors, including the Rev. Johnny Hunter of Fayetteville, said that marriage was a divine relationship between a man and a woman, and that gay-rights groups had hijacked the civil rights movement for their own "im-

moral" purposes.

— Cheryl Wetzstein,
The Washington Times
Sept. 19, 2011, p. 20

Education

If you were the devil, what would be your most important mission, other than inventing false religions?

It would be to corrupt innocent children.

I'd start by kicking God out of the public schools and excising from textbooks the truth about America's deeply Christian heritage. I'd get rid of glaringly obvious ties between Christianity and the Founders' vision of unalienable rights and limited government. Children would be indoctrinated to think of themselves as cosmic accidents of random mutation and survival of the fittest, not precious beings with eternal souls created in the image of God. The result would be an effectively atheistic system of moral relativism.

Next, I'd cloak sexual promiscuity in terms of self-fulfillment, mix it up with junk science, and lobby the teachers unions to openly promote the Kinsey sex education model of children as "sexual beings" whose "orientation" has no moral relevance.

Finally, I'd expose the kids to outright propaganda through clever websites designed to promote deviance and to brand anyone with any qualms (such as parents) as hate-filled bigots and bullies.

If any school districts resist, I'd slap them with legal threats. And that's where the devil's law firm comes in.

The ACLU is running around the country, shaking their fists at school districts and demanding that kids **be**

a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel, continued from page 13

exposed to whatever the gay movement deems appropriate. In Prince William County, Virginia, after an ACLU threat, school officials removed the filter blocking homosexual websites. The Alliance Defense Fund, a Christian legal group, has sent letters to eight school districts, including Prince William, advising them that they have every right to keep the filters. But Prince William has caved, at least for now.

In Missouri, the ACLU sued the Camdenton School District on August 15 in U.S. District Court because it refused to remove its general “sexuality” filter. The district had responded in a May letter to the ACLU from Superintendent Tim Hadfield, who wrote that the district “does not explicitly block” LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) categories, but that some were blocked because of the “sexuality” filter. He said the filter settings were “acceptable for our general audience within our network of Pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students,” according to Fox News. The district later unblocked some sites dealing with bullying, but the ACLU is complaining that the filter still blocks “hundreds” of LGBT sites.

A question. Why, if the LGBT agenda is just about civil rights and tolerance, is the “sexuality” filter blocking all those sites? Could it be that the LGBT “community,” whose pride parades are the only public marches that regularly feature nudity and obscene and sacrilegious signs, has an abundance of sites that parents would rather their children not visit?

The ACLU has also launched the Don’t Filter Me! campaign, which pressures software companies that sell

filters to schools to remove any filter that blocks “gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender websites.” So far, the ACLU claims that it has pressured at least one software company, Lightspeed Systems, to remove a school filter that flagged “LGBT-supportive content.”

In a tight economy, the ACLU is counting on companies doing almost anything to avoid controversy. And they are hoping that strapped school districts will quickly surrender rather than spend money on lawyers’ fees. Their claim: “This viewpoint discrimination violates students’ First Amendment rights to free speech and the Equal Access Act. Simply put: It’s illegal.”

No, it’s not. Schools, like public libraries, do not have to provide any and all materials just because someone wants them to do so. In 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA) in *United States vs. American Library Association, Inc.* CIPA bars federal funds to public libraries that do not install software “to block images that constitute obscenity or child pornography, and to prevent minors from obtaining access to material that is harmful to them.”

Having lost the library fight, the ACLU is concentrating on schoolchildren.

— Robert Knight
The Washington Times
September 19, 2011, p. 29

An honors student in Fort Worth, TX, was sent to the principal’s office and punished for telling a classmate that he believes homosexuality is wrong.

Holly Pope said she was “absolutely stunned” when she received a telephone

call from an assistant principal at Western Hills High School informing her that her son, Dakota Ary, had been sent to in-school suspension.

“Dakota is a very well-grounded 14-year-old,” she told Fox News Radio noting that her son is an honors student, plays on the football team and is active in his church youth group. “He’s been in church his whole life and he’s been taught to stand up for what he believes.”

And that’s what got him in trouble.

Dakota was in a German class at the high school when the conversation shifted to religion and homosexuality in Germany. At some point during the conversation, he turned to a friend and said that he was a Christian and “being a homosexual is wrong.”

“It wasn’t directed to anyone except my friend who was sitting behind me,” Dakota told Fox. “I guess [the teacher] heard me. He started yelling. He told me he was going to write me an infraction and send me to the office.”

Dakota was sentenced to one day in-school suspension – and two days of full suspension. His mother was flabbergasted, noting that her son had a spotless record, was an honor student, volunteered at his church and played on the school football team.

Officials at the high school did not return calls for comment. However, the Fort Worth Independent School District issued a statement that read:

“As a matter of course, Fort Worth ISD does not comment on specific employee or student-related issues. Suffice it to say that we are following district policy in our review of the circumstances and any resolution will likewise be in accordance with district policy.”

a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel, continued from page 14

After a meeting with Pope and her attorney, the school rescinded the two-day suspension so Dakota would be allowed to play in an upcoming football game.

"They've righted all the wrongs," said Matt Krause, an attorney with the Liberty Counsel. "This should have no lasting effect on his academic or personal record going forward."

Pope contacted the Liberty Counsel immediately after her son was punished.

"I told the school that he should never have been suspended for exercising his Constitutional rights," Krause told Fox News Radio. "The principal is sincere in trying to do the right thing and hopefully they will tell the teacher, 'Do not do that anymore.' He won't be pushing his agenda."

Krause called the incident "mind blowing" and said the teacher had frequently brought homosexuality into ninth grade classroom discussions.

"There has been a history with this teacher in the class regarding homosexual topics," Krause said. "The teacher had posted a picture of two men kissing on a wall that offended some of the students."

Krause said the picture was posted on the teacher's "world wall."

"He told the students this is happening all over the world and you need to accept the fact that homosexuality is just part of our culture now," Krause said.

The school district would not comment on why a teacher was discussing homosexuality in a ninth grade German class.

"In German class there should be no talk of being pro-Gay or homosexual topics," Krause said.

Dakota's mother said she believes

the teacher should apologize.

"He should never have been punished," Pope said. "He didn't disrupt the class. He wasn't threatening. He wasn't hostile. He made a comment to his friend and the teacher overheard it."

"My son knows people that are homosexual," she said. "He's not saying, 'I don't like you.' He's saying, 'I'm a Christian and I believe that being that way is wrong.'"

Krause said school leaders told Dakota that in the future he should be careful when and where he talks about his opposition to homosexuality – suggesting that he talk about such matters in the hallway instead of the classroom.

He said Liberty Counsel will monitor the situation to make sure there is no future retaliation. Meantime, Pope said her son will return to the teacher's classroom.

"I've told him to treat this teacher with respect," she said. "He is your elder. He is your teacher. What his beliefs are or what they are not – outside the school is none of our business."

— Todd Starnes

Fox News

September 22, 2011

Islam

In attempting to understand 9/11, the first question asked by the world's elites -- as exemplified by leading media and academics -- was, "What did America do to provoke such hatred?"

Ten years later, the same people are still asking the same question. And it is as morally repulsive now as it was then. It was always on par with "What did the Jews do to antagonize the Germans?"

or "What did blacks do to enrage lynch mobs?"

As long as people keep asking what America did to incite such hate, nothing will have been learned from 9/11.

The Sept. 11 terrorist attacks occurred because of a law of human life that has been true since Cain killed Abel: The worst hate the best (and the second best and the third best and so on). Evil hates good.

The United States of America is a flawed society. As it comprises human beings, it must be flawed. But in terms of the goodness achieved inside its borders and spread elsewhere in the world, it has been the finest country that ever existed. If you were to measure the moral gulf between America and those who despise it, the divide would have to be calculated in light-years.

If the academic and opinion elites of the world had moral courage, they would have asked the most obvious question provoked by 9/11: Were the mass murderers who flew those airplanes into American buildings an aberration or a product of their culture?

As far as those elites are concerned, only the first explanation exists. The 19 monsters of 9/11 were, for all intents and purposes, freaks. They were exceptions, no more representative of the Arab or Islamic worlds than serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer was of America. According to the elites, the hijackers happened to be Muslim -- only in name, we have been constantly reassured -- but were not produced by anything within Arab or Islamic society. Even to ask whether anything in those worlds produced the 9/11 terrorists -- or Britain's 7/7 terrorists, or Madrid's March 2004 terrorists, or Pales-

a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel, continued from page 15

tinian terrorists, or the Taliban, or Hamas -- is to be a bigot, or an "Islamophobe," the ingenious post-9/11 label to describe anyone who merely asks such questions.

It can be said, therefore, that not only has the world learned nothing from 9/11; it has been prohibited from learning anything.

The Muslim regime of Iran violently represses its people and (along with the Muslims of Hamas and of Hezbollah) vows to exterminate the nation of Israel. Muslim mobs murdered innocent people because of cartoons in Denmark. The Muslims of the Taliban throw acid in the faces of girls who attend school. Muslim mobs kill Christians and burn churches in Iraq, Egypt, Nigeria and elsewhere. And we are told that the mere mention of these facts is an act of bigotry.

After 9/11, the normal and decent question that normal and decent people -- people who fully and happily recognize the existence of vast numbers of normal and decent Muslims in the world -- would have posed is this: What has happened in the Arab world and parts of the Muslim world?

But as this, the most obvious question that 9/11 prompted, has not been allowed to be asked, what lessons can possibly be learned?

The answer is, of course, none.

But that has not stopped our media and academic elites from drawing lessons.

And what are those lessons? One is that America -- not the Islamic world -- must engage in moral introspection. The other is that we must oppose all expressions of religious extremism -- Jewish and Christian as well as Muslim, since, according to the Left, America's conservative Christians are as much a threat to human-

ity as are extremist Muslims.

Perhaps the best-known exponent of these non-lessons has been Karen Armstrong, the widely read religious thinker and former nun. She was invited to give a presentation on compassion at the nation's religious memorial service this past Sunday. And what was her message?

"9/11 was a revelation of the dangerous polarization of our world; it revealed the deep suspicion, frustration and rage that existed in some quarters of the Muslim world and also the ignorance and prejudice about Islam and Middle Eastern affairs that existed in some quarters of the West ..."

There you have it: Muslims have rage and deep suspicion; the West has ignorance and prejudice.

If that's what the world learns from 9/11, those who died that day died in vain.

— Dennis Prager,
The Washington Times
Sept. 19, 2011, p. 31

What, after all, is al-Qaeda's end game? They want the West to live under Islamic law. Hey, take a number and get in line. So does Imam Rauf, the ground Zero Mosque guy, who was in Scotland the other day at a "Festival of Spirituality and Peace" arguing that sharia should be incorporated into U.K. and U.S. law. He's such a "moderate Muslim" that he's subsidized with your tax dollars: The State Department bought thousands of copies of his unreadable book to distribute at U.S.-embassy events throughout the Middle East, and they paid for his book tour, which they've never offered to do for me. Flying Imam Rauf to the United Arab Emirates to talk to other imams ap-

parently comes under State's "multifaith outreach" program. Wait a minute: He's an imam, they're imams. Where's the multi-faith? If we have to have taxpayer-funded outreach, why can't we send 'em Jackie Mason, or that gay bishop the Episcopalians are hot for?

But don't worry, he's "moderate." Nanny Bloomberg went to the Statute of Liberty to tell the ghastly plebs he has the misfortune to rule to shut up about Imam Rauf's mosque. "To cave to popular sentiment," he thundered, "would be to hand a victory to the terrorists." If we don't build a mosque at Ground Zero, then the terrorists will have won!

In Edinburgh, Imam Rauf was at pains to reassure the crowd that his plans for sharia-compliant common law wouldn't involve any stoning and what-not. On the other hand, on page 58 of his 2000 book *Islam: A Sacred Law*, he says that with sharia you can't pick and choose: It's the set menu, or else. So Imam Rauf largely shares al-Qaeda's goal. But why hold that against him? So does the Archbishop of Canterbury, who's argued for the incorporation of sharia into British law. And so does Piet Hein Donner, the Dutch cabinet minister who said he would have no problem with sharia if a majority of people voted for it. And, even if they don't, the French de facto acceptance of polygamy is les banlieues, and the British Department of Pension's de jure recognition of polygamy for the purpose of widows' benefits, and the American Academy of Pediatrics' proposal that its members meet female genital mutilation halfway by offering to perform a "ritual nick" on Muslim girls, all suggest that, as long as you mothball your Semtex belt and don't rush the cockpit, the Western world will

a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel, continued from page 16

concede almost anything in order to demonstrate its multiculti bona fides.

A few months ago I walked at sunset from downtown Malmö to Rosengård. The gaps between Nordic blondes grew longer and the gaps between fiercely bearded young men grew shorter, and finally I was in the heart of Islamic Sweden. No blondes in sight. All the women were covered, including those who'd never been so back in their native lands: That's to say, they adopted, perforce, the veil only when they moved to Sweden. Sweden! Land of the arthouse erotica: *I Am Curious (Yellow)*. These days, they're yellow, and not so curious. Like the Israelis in Gaza, they're trading land for peace, and unlikely to retain much of either.

No one flew a plane into any buildings in Rosengård. No one had to. Islam's good cop provided cannier than its bad: The losers holed up in the caves want to nuke us. The shrewder Islamic imperialists want to own us. Ten years on, stealth jihad is proving a better fit.

— Mark Steyn
National Review
Sept. 19, 2011

Politics

In a relatively free society, leftists are called liberals; in a society of lesser freedoms, leftists are called socialists; in a society of even lesser freedoms, leftists are called fascists; in a society of even lesser freedoms, leftists are called communists.

This underlying principle is one that the lefty desperately does not want to be understood — namely that there is scarcely a difference between a liberal, a socialist, a fascist, a communist, or

a dictator. Either one graduates to the next level or on enables those headed leftward. The difference that remains between the monikers is that it is only the acquisition of power that distinguishes a liberal, a socialist, a fascist, a communist, and a dictator. That is to say, a socialist is only a liberal who has obtained more power; a fascist is only a socialist who has obtained more power; a communist is only a fascist who has obtained more power; and a dictator is only a communist who has consolidated power. In summation, the ultimate leftist is the ultimate dictator; is the ultimate communist; is the ultimate fascist; is the ultimate socialist; is the ultimate liberal.

— J.W.

Lefty's Playbook, p. 9

President Barack Obama's rhetoric shows that politically liberal Christians differ from politically conservative ones not only in policy proposals but in the understanding of human nature that leads to those proposals.

Let's think the best of our president. Let's suggest that his frequent vilification of corporate presidents flying around on private jets—he attacked them six times in a June 29 press conference—is more than a political appeal to class envy.

Let's say he thinks private jet tax breaks are unfair because he is philosophically committed to equality. Since President Obama has emphasized that “creating jobs” is Job No. 1 for him, let's think the best of him and assume he believes that taking away special treatment for corporate presidents will help the unemployed get back to work.

If those assumptions are correct, we should treat the White House occupant

not with paranoia but with pity. He's showing a lack of both business experience and biblical understanding. He and other liberals are showing that they don't understand original sin.

People without business experience might think entrepreneurship is easy. President Obama should at least scan, “I, Pencil: My Family Tree,” an essay written by Leonard Read in 1958. Read explains what it takes to make even a simple writing tool: Its components include cedar, lacquer, graphite, ferrule, pumice, wax, and glue — and huge numbers of people must be at work before the final product emerges.

The reality of social entropy is that enterprise doesn't just happen, since without consistent effort, things fall apart. Time is money: If “creating jobs” is really Job. No. 1 for President Obama, he should want business leaders to have as much time as possible to make more money, because they'll do that by expanding production, and that normally means employing more people.

Job-creating business leaders are public servants, and if a corporate jet saves them time, not only the company but the United States will benefit. I should also point out that thoughtful Christians in business work long hours primarily because they know God wants them to use the talents He gave them to create an environment in which employees can use their talents.

You may think this talk of public-servant executives and altruistic Christians is all kerfuffle. You may think corporate jets are just perks for fat cats. If you are thinking that, and if you're right, I have two words for you: So what?

Here is where original sin comes

a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel, continued from page 17

in. If men were angels, remuneration wouldn't matter as long as an executive's family simply had a roof over its head and enough to eat. But the impact of original sin is that money talks. Dollars, and maybe private planes, keep executives at the plow when they'd rather be golfing. It's a small price to pay for those who would build businesses that create jobs.

Why are we in a renewed recession? Liberals seem surprised when they reduce incentives and see reduced entrepreneurship. Those who study the Bible aren't surprised: Might as well face it, we are naturally selfish. Economist Adam Smith knew from the Bible and his own observation that we should not rely on the public-spiritedness of bakers to give us fresh bread every day: They will supply our needs only if we pay them.

Liberals who don't acknowledge this are patsies for socialist appeals that claim tax increases won't affect productivity. But listen to this internet wail from one executive: "I already had to lay off 8 percent of my workforce when they passed Obamacare. My accountant could not solve the problem any other way. A tax hike only means laying off more people."

Hmm. Liberals might say this businessman should joyfully accept a reduced income, and so should other highly compensated people. Maybe they should — but most won't. Instead of demonizing potential heroes of industry, Washington should get out of the way and let more people get rich while making some others not so poor. Do corporations receive a special tax break for private planes? Who cares? Unemployed Americans need jobs, and President Obama isn't going to produce them by

giving speeches — but he can discourage those who can otherwise create jobs. Are many executives selfish? So what? Let's drop the rhetoric and focus on jobs. Employment trumps envy.

— Marvin Olasky,
WORLD Magazine
Sept. 24, 2011, p. 76

Is the earth currently in a warming phase? If so, is that a bad thing? And if it's a bad thing, what should we do about it? Former vice president Al Gore says yes, the earth is warming; it's a terribly, unprecedentedly bad thing ("the very existence of our civilization is threatened"); and massive government action is called for, something akin to war socialism. When speaking of those holding contrary opinions, Gore can barely contain himself. At an Aspen conference in early August he dismissed them with a string of expletives. At the other end of the month he went at climate-change doubters again, this time eschewing the cuss words but linking climate denial to what, for an imaginative liberal, are the darkest depths of moral turpitude. One day, Gore promised viewers of a webcasting service, doubters will be looked on like racists. What, are the doubters burning crosses on climatologists lawns? No, no; what the ex-veep means is, this is an opinion good citizens should not have. One day, we hope, we will look back on this shabby use of the civil-rights struggle with embarrassment.

— *National Review*
Sept. 19, 2011, p. 12

Marxism

Nazism and fascism were built on atrocities in action; no intellectual today

ignores their inherent brutality. Marxism gets a pass from the theoreticians, even though it's a theory that could be understood for what it really is by any moderately bright child. "It's taking other people's stuff," writes Mr. Kors. The abolition of economic liberty begets the abolition of social liberty.

In spite of the consistent record of Marxist dictatorships, many Western intellectuals prefer to attack the culture that guarantees their freedom, free markets and individual rights. They compare the world of a capitalist democracy, with its freely conceded imperfections, to the perfect abstraction of a socialist utopia. The abstraction wins. With historical hindsight, the hero worship of Mao and Che Guevara in the 1960s was as wrongheaded as it would have been to worship Hitler and Goebbels in the 1940s, yet today, Mao and Che are still not always regarded with the contempt they deserve.

When does the unredeemed utopian ideal expire? In 1949, several famous international intellectuals, including George Orwell, Andre Gide, Ignazio Silone and Arthur Koestler, published essays in an enduring book called *The God That Failed*. They describe their love affair with communism and their eventual disillusionment with it. But their disillusionment did not dim their expectation that socialism still held promise: The problem lay with Stalin, not in his ideology. Arthur Koestler describes his communist cell meetings in Berlin as "intellectual self-castration," where the rank and file participants had no influence over any policy decision. He blamed the time and place.

In his novel *Darkness at Noon*, Mr.

a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel, continued from page 18

Koestler is brutally honest in exposing the immorality of the communist logic. But, he still couldn't abandon his faith in the utopian idea that centralized control of economic planning (and theft) could be fused with a universal empathy for human life.

— Suzanne Fields
The Washington Times
May 5, 2003, p. 17

Why is it that when people want to describe particularly evil individuals or regimes, they use the terms “Nazi” or “Fascist” but almost never “Communist?”

Given the amount of human suffering the Communists have caused — 70 million killed in China, 20-30 million in the former Soviet Union, and almost one-third of all Cambodians; the decimation of Tibetan and Chinese culture; totalitarian enslavement of North Koreans, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Russians; a generation deprived of human rights in Cuba; and much more — why is “Communist” so much less a term of revulsion than “Nazi?”

There are Mao Restaurants in major cities in the Western world. Can one imagine Hitler Restaurants? Che Guevara T-shirts are ubiquitous, yet there are no Heinrich Himmler T-shirts.

This question is of vital significance. First, without moral clarity, humanity has little chance of avoiding a dark future. Second, the reasons for this moral imbalance tell us a great deal about ourselves today.

Communists murdered their own people; the Nazis murdered others. Under Mao about 70 million people died — nearly all in peacetime! — virtually

all of them Chinese. Likewise, the approximately 30 million people that Stalin killed were nearly all Russians, and those who were not Russian, Ukrainians for example, were members of other Soviet nationalities.

The Nazis, on the other hand, killed very few fellow Germans. Their victims were Jews, Slavs and members of other “non-Aryan” and “inferior” groups.

“World opinion” — that vapid amoral concept — deems the murder of members of one's group far less noteworthy than the murder of outsiders. That is one reason why blacks killing millions of fellow blacks in the Congo right now elicits no attention from “world opinion.” But if an Israeli soldier is charged with having killed a Gaza woman and two children, it makes the front page of world newspapers.

Communism is based on lovely sounding theories; Nazism is based on heinous sounding theories.

Intellectuals, among whom are the people who write history, are seduced by words — so much so that deeds are deemed considerably less significant. Communism's words are far more intellectually and morally appealing than the moronic and vile racism of Nazism. The monstrous evils of communists have not been focused on nearly as much as the monstrous deeds of the Nazis. The former have been regularly dismissed as perversions of a beautiful doctrine (though Christians who committed evil in the name of Christianity are never regarded by these same people as having perverted a beautiful doctrine), whereas Nazi atrocities have been perceived (correctly) as the logical and inevitable results of Nazi ideology.

This seduction by words while ignoring deeds has been a major factor in the ongoing appeal of the left to intellectuals. How else explain the appeal of a Che Guevara or Fidel Castro to so many left-wing intellectuals, other than they care more about beautiful words than about vile deeds?

Germans have thoroughly exposed the evils of Nazism, have taken responsibility for them, and attempted to atone for them. Russians have not done anything similar regarding Lenin's or Stalin's horrors. Indeed, an ex-KGB man runs Russia, Lenin is still widely revered, and, in the words of University of London Russian historian Donald Rayfield, “people still deny by assertion or implication, Stalin's holocaust.”

Nor has China in any way exposed the greatest mass murderer and enslaver of them all, Mao Zedong. Mao remains revered in China.

Until Russia and China acknowledge the evil their states have done under communism, communism's evils will remain less acknowledged by the world than the evils of the German state under Hitler.

— Dennis Prager
Jewish World Review
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