



# CREATION CARE



**The World and all that is in it belong to the Lord, the Earth and all who live on it are His! –Ps 24:1**

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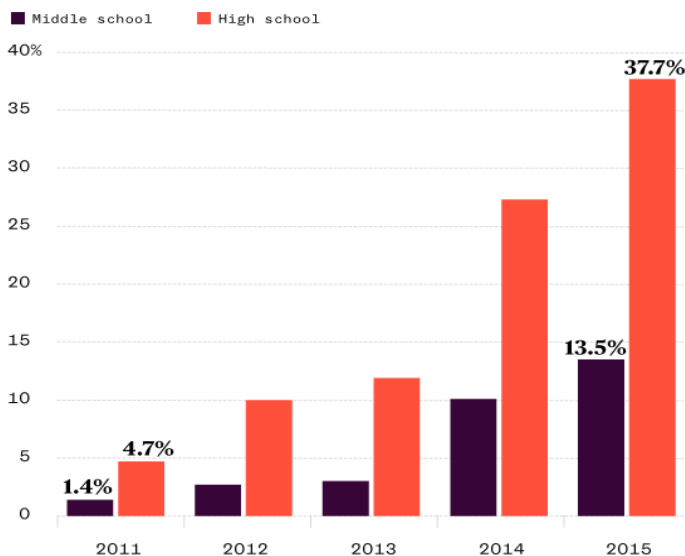


## **Maine's Shrimp Fishery Is Closed for Three more years!**

Maine's fishermen used to catch millions of pounds of shrimp every winter, but warming ocean temperatures have changed all that. Shrimp are especially sensitive to changes in water temperature and the warming ocean water has decimated the northern shrimp fishery and experts fear that it may never bounce back.

Summer is the time for shrimp population growth and winter the time for harvest. The shrimp survey is done in the summer to determine the size of the potential harvest. The declining numbers of shrimp mean that any uncalculated harvesting could wipe the species out altogether. The fishery has been shut down since 2013 in New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts. This fall's action will keep it shut down through 2021.⊕

## **E-Cigarettes and Cancer; Adolescents are Vaping and Juuling their way into future Health Problems**



There is a misconception among adolescents that E-Cigarettes (EC) are safe. According to the University of California (UCSF), San Francisco, they are not. Although their vapor may be less hazardous than leaf tobacco smoke, they contain many volatile organic compounds that are carcinogenic. At least five harmful toxicants have been found in the bodies of adolescents who use electronic cigarettes, according to Dr. Mark Rubinstein, an adolescent medicine physician and one of the researchers involved in the UCSF's study. Fruit flavored EC's are very popular among teens and their ingredients make them even more

dangerous. Nicotine, in large or small doses remains high on the list of habit-forming drugs.

The EC industry uses hashtag campaigns, music event sponsorship and ads to lure teens to start vaping. The Federal Drug Administration sent more than 1,300 warning letters and notifications of fines to retailers who illegally sold Juul and other e-cigarettes to minors over the summer. It is estimated that one in seven teens smoke EC's.

Like the leaf tobacco companies of yesteryear, the EC industry is aware of the health effects of its products, especially on the young, but apparently the dollar out-ranks the common good. The industry is also aware that its product will eventually face strict FDA regulations when sufficient data is gathered and litigation runs its course, but they will make a ton of money and create a new generation of addicts in the meantime.

We must also note that in our out-of-control drug crazy culture **U.S. life expectancy is in decline**. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that, in the last few years, life expectancy is decreasing, driven largely by deaths from drug overdoses and suicides. Ours has become an unhealthy society for many reasons. ⊕

## **Three overarching forces that affect If, Why, and How We Care -an Editorial**

### **Religion**

**The Judo-Christian faith reveals a God of Love and Justice.**

**The essence of love is Kindness.**

**Kindness is anchored in ethical and moral behavior.**

The main competitor of **Christianity** in the world is **Civil Religion**. Both Christianity and Civil religion seek the full devotion of their adherents in physical, intellectual, emotional, and financial support in order to establish and maintain their programs and promote their causes. Both have writings that engage the mind and both create symbols and pageantry to appeal to the emotions. Both are *political* in the way they govern themselves, have honored authoritative documents of one kind or another that validate their claims for client, loyalty and both require sacrifice even unto death when necessary.

**Christianity** is a universal faith that favors no borders or nationalities and whose ultimate reality is not earthly. It's kingdom on earth focuses on people, creation, and the common good; it is a "whole world" movement that honors the past, lives in the present, and promises an eternity in paradise.

**Civil religion** is born out of Nationalism and is a mode of social organization that, as Carl Hayes puts it, seeks to mobilize a

“deep and compelling emotion” that is “essentially religious.” Anthony Smith writes: Nationalism is the “New Religion of the People.”

Civil religion usually appropriates various bits of theology from the dominate religious faith within its borders in order to concoct a recognizable and authoritative value system upon which it can demand allegiance and sacrifice. In the nations dominated by Christianity, nationalism asserts that its tenets are in harmony with Christian values no matter how out of sync they actually are with those values. Naive or under-informed followers often fall victim to such folly which weakens the Church and its message.

It is true that for a nation to succeed it must have a value system that inspires and provides services that sustain its clients in ways that promote loyalty and the willingness to sacrifice, but it must be clear about its secular nature and about the need for the separation of church and state. It must recognize that an allegiance to a religious faith is primary; a concept that is essential if both are to fulfill their destinies. We should always give to God what is God’s and to Caesar what is Caesar’s (in that order) and if the demands of Caesar are incompatible with those of God, God wins, hands-down!

The Core Religious Characteristics chart, below, compares the Christian and Civil religion’s fulfillment of those characteristics. It is easy to see why the two compete so fiercely with each other and how confusing it is for some of their followers, but Exodus 20:3 makes it clear that we can only have one primary allegiance: “You shall have no other gods before me.” Religious Nationalism often violates that command and when it does, it must be rejected. That being said, we must find ways to provide for the needs of both Church and State that do not impugn the integrity of either.

<b>CHURCH</b>	<b>CORE RELIGIOUS CHARACTERISTICS</b>	<b>CIVIL RELIGION</b>
SCRIPTURES	BELIEF	CONSTITUTION
DISCIPLES	COMMITMENT	PATRIOT
CROSS	SYMBOL	FLAG
TITHES	FINANCES	TAXES
MARTYR	SACRIFICE	HERO
SALVATION	DESTINY	PERPETUITY

Perhaps the most significant contrast between the two is found in the issue of destiny. Civil Religion and its Nation-States want perpetuity for themselves -- to be victorious over its competitors through-out the world. The Church and its Congregations want salvation for all people -- to live forever in harmony, equality, and fellowship with each other here and with the Creator in eternity! ⊕

### **Capitalism**

**Economic systems oversee the distribution of wealth.**

**There is a moral difference between earning and making money.**

**To be Just, economies must focus on The Common Good.**

In 1877 capitalism was defined as *an economic system characterized by private or corporate ownership of capital goods, by investments that are determined by private decision, and by*

*prices, production, and the distribution of goods that are determined mainly by competition in a free market.*

Throughout our nation’s history, however, the idea of a *free market* has been challenged by cycles of monopolization that seek, not a free market, but a controlled market. Corporate giants emerge whose *successful* business practices empower them to eliminate competition by labor manipulation, price fixing, quality/quantity re-adjustments, and buy-outs of competing businesses -- all in the name of “*improving*” and controlling market share. It masquerades as capitalism but it has an autocratic heart.



Americans developed two familiar means to respond to the negative effects of monopolization. They are the organization of unions, with the power of collective bargaining and the strike, and the careful crafting of a net-work of provisions, by the Congress, that regulated business practices, provided worker protection, consumer protection, and anti-trust laws that regulated business mergers and buy-outs by competitors.

The primary result of union development was wage and benefit growth which produced the largest middle-class in human history. However, union corruption and *right to work* arguments helped to reduce the union movement to a trickle today.

Government regulation frustrated many business leaders; rules for workers were one thing, but rules for conducting business were unacceptable. Regulation did, however, result in product improvement, better production, and worker loyalty.

In the mid-1970s both business and the major political parties came under the influence of what became known as the “*Chicago School*” of economics. They made the claim that economic concentration was not to be feared and that governmental regulation would lead to inefficiency and higher prices.

This philosophy led to the slow dismantling of the business regulations put in place following the *Great Depression* of the late 20s and early 30s. *Milton Friedman*, leader of the Chicago School of Economics at the University of Chicago and winner of the 1976 Nobel Prize in Economics, said that **the sole purpose of a firm is to make money for its shareholders**. Friedman wrote that business executives who pursued a goal other than making money were “*unwitting puppets of the intellectual forces that have been undermining the basis of a free society these past decades.*” “*Maximizing Profits*” became the mantra of the corporate world and “*profits before people*” became one of the practical outcomes of that teaching. (See *Creation Care* #23, Summer 2017, page 3).



“**The business of America is business!**” was attributed to President Calvin Coolidge in a speech he made to newspaper editors in 1925. Ronald Reagan made that slogan a part of his 1980 presidential campaign and Donald Trump referred to it in his presidential campaign in 2016. What Coolidge actually said was, “**the chief business of the American people is business.**” He went on to say “**Americans make no concealment of the fact that we want wealth, but there are many other things we**

want much more. *We want peace and honor, and charity which is so strong an element of all civilization. The chief ideal of the American people is idealism. I cannot repeat too often that America is a nation of idealists. That is the only motive to which they ever give any strong and lasting reaction. Of course, the accumulation of wealth cannot be justified as the chief end of existence. But we are compelled to recognize it as a means to well-nigh every desirable achievement. So long as wealth is made the means and not the end, we need not greatly fear it -- but it calls for additional effort to avoid even the appearance of the evil of selfishness.*" (Underlined emphasis is mine.)

As a follower of Christ Jesus, I am convinced that Friedman and his *Chicago School of Economics* turned us away from American Idealism to the selfishness of which Coolidge warned. Today we are living with the results of our embrace of that unfortunate philosophy. The middle class is shrinking as the distribution of wealth between the *haves* and the *have-nots* continues to widen. In 2015, the top 1 percent of families in the United States made more than 25 times what families in the bottom 99 percent did. In 1965 the typical CEO earned about 20 times as much as the average worker. In 2016, the ratio was 270 times! (*Economic Policy Institute*). Wealth has become the end and not the means. Coolidge must be turning over in his grave!



Today most corporations are international in scope and have little loyalty to any nation. Often their giant size enables them to dictate the terms upon which commerce can take place, even overriding national commercial laws. Their political power and media control are awesome. In the U.S.A. our current electoral process is money-driven and corporations spend lavishly to support the political campaigns of candidates that they believe to be in sympathy with their business interests and from whom they then expect favors. Monopoly power and political favoritism allows them to control wages, job diversity, and job security. This has created a shrinking middle class and the social anger and upheaval so apparent in our nation today.

Perhaps the strangest reality of all is that the pampering and favoritism evident in our economic life has weakened our business acumen and regard for the truth. Various businesses have spent millions on misinformation about everything from the effects of smoking cigarettes, *clean coal*, pipeline safety, and climate change in order to protect their short-term interests. The near collapse of our economy in 2008 with the explosion of the *housing bubble*, *exposure of worthless junk bonds*, and *key bankruptcies*, required the Federal Reserve to pump millions of bail-out dollars into the economy and the Congress to pass protective emergency legislation (much of which has recently been weakened or removed by this business-friendly administration) provides ample evidence and warning that our system needs drastic adjustments. The *Corporate Good must harmonize with the Common Good* or we will face social disruption and eventual collapse. That's what happened in the *Roaring Twenties* and will happen in these *Angry Teens* today if we don't change course.

### **Warfare - Security State**

The security of life, limb, and property is a central responsibility of any state, but the military/industrial complex has a vested interest in a constant eruption of violence since its continued existence depends upon the sale and use of its products.

Ron Paul, Republican/Libertarian, physician, author, retired politician, who served numerous terms in the U.S. House from Texas, three-time presidential primary candidate, the *Godfather of the Tea Party* movement, and founder of the conservative *Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity*, pointed out that the United States has failed to heed former General/President Dwight D. Eisenhower's warning about the dangers of the unfettered development of the "*Military Industrial Complex*" in the United States. Paul wrote that we have become a "**Warfare State**" with a permanent war economy that has allowed our infrastructure to lapse into disrepair and our social contract with the people to wither. This misplaced emphasis has added to our national chaos, anger, violence, huge national indebtedness, and economic disparity.

In 2019 our security/defense (Homeland Security, CIA, Pentagon, etc.) budget will top one trillion dollars! The Trump administration announced that we are still not "safe" enough even though we spend more on defense than any nation in the world and will plan to add even more money in 2020. Pentagon spending and defense contractors are well known for their inefficiency, waste, and cost overruns. The Pentagon regularly *cooks its books* which remain un-auditable. Over 21 trillion dollars cannot be accounted for! (Skidmore research team, Michigan State University). You will also notice, that in the Congress, *defense spending* is the only spending in which the issue of how it is to be paid for is not raised while anything that has to do with *social spending* is scrutinized with an Ebenezer Scrooge mentality. Even the social contract with those who have served in the military, whom we gratefully refer to as our "*heroes*," have received shabby treatment over the years in the inefficiencies and inattention of the Veterans Administration and the Congress.

Our society will fail unless we do something to overcome our "*fears*" and drastically reduce our security/defense waste!

### **Finnis**

Social progress is so slow because each new generation begins from ground zero and must be taught how to live and share in a world of stress created by differences in needs and opinions.

The bad news is that, in my opinion, our society has lost its moral compass, top down and bottom up. We have become a *money dominated, drug saturated, lie tolerating, violence accepting, fear mongering, race baiting, tribal in-fighting, immigrant shunning, conspiracy crazy, and demagoguery tolerating* society that has lost its way and teeters on the brink of destruction by its own hands.



Our *rugged individualism* has fallen prey to a *self-centeredness* that breaks down our sense of community and treats our institutions with shabby unforgiving and illogical suspicion. As a result, our search for the truth often ends the moment we find something that agrees with our current personal opinions or the opinions of our political/economic tribe. At other times we back-off when the personal price tag for standing up for the truth becomes too costly. Another tactic that we now use is to devalue the truth by the use of heresies like "*fake news*" and "*alternative facts*" to confuse, confound, and create doubt so that attempts at honest dialogue and commentary fail, with the result that we



make a mockery of honest truth-seeking, with the companion result that we suppress justice and crucify honor.

Resistance to finding the truth is an old story. In John 18:37, 38, "Jesus stood before Pilate, and Pilate said, 'Then You are a king!' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king.' Then Jesus continued, 'For this reason I was born and have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to My voice.' <sup>38</sup>**What is truth?** Pilate asked."

Like so many people Pilate wasn't really interested in finding the truth. All he wanted was to hold on to the comforts and powers of his position and lifestyle. He did not want to face the reality of what was going on with Jesus, the outsider, he simply chose to shelter himself from the truth! Today, we are no different.

Many Christians, in league with that old evil "*the ends justify the means*," and what I call the "*King David Principle*" (God uses people who abuse their power to eventually produce some good result), have traded their long-held ideals of moral purity and family values for the promise of positive political action on issues dear to their hearts, and so sit silent in the midst of a constant bombardment of vulgarity, lying, and political abuse. Many of our churches have pigeon-holed the earth-shaking social implications of the Gospel of Christ and the "*weightier matters of the law*," and turned their churches into little other-worldly monasteries that hammer away at personal perfection, in the name of salvation, under the ruse of "*winning the world, one person at a time*." For goodness sake, do the math!

The **good news** is that hundreds of our citizens are returning to the *American Idealism* that has been lost in the pompous clutter of the last several decades of *American Elitism* and international interference. Hundreds of our citizens are now using their voices, feet, and vote to participate in our political, economic, and social systems. The idea that we are a nation of laws is gaining renewed momentum in the judicial system, where it counts, even in the midst of the continuing attempts to politicize and prejudice the judiciary.

The *American Church* continues to shrink, which is to be expected, until it proclaims both the personal and social Gospel with equal vigor:

Isaiah 42:6, 7 "I, the Lord, have called you and given you the power to see that justice is done on earth. Through you I will make a covenant with all peoples; through you I will bring light to the nations. You will open the eyes of the blind and set free those who sit in dark prisons."

Micah 6:8 "...the Lord has told us what is good. What he requires of us is this: to do what is just, to show constant love, and to live in humble fellowship with our God."

Matthew 23:23 "Imposters! You give God one tenth even of the seasoning herbs, such as mint, dill, and cumin, but you neglect to obey the really important teachings of the Law, such as **justice and mercy and honesty**. These you should practice, without neglecting the others."

Because of a failed modern evangelicalism and its complicity with an evil social and political culture, droves of believers are seeking a more relevant and faithful expression of Christ's teaching and mission. **The stage is being set for the rebuilding**

of a confessing church that is not afraid to confront both the personal and social evils of our day. God's new wine is ready! All we have to do is to open our minds and provide the new wine-skins needed to receive it! ☩

## The Truth about Coal



It is understandable that the regions in our nation where coal-mining has been a way-of-life and the foundation of their local economy, have been anxious, depressed, and angry over the environmental push to phase it out because of its polluting effects. The industry made many attempts to make coal environmentally acceptable to the public with talk of "*clean coal*," scrubbing, and carbon capture techniques. There have been recent political efforts to garner votes by raising false hopes of a revival of the use of coal. Generally, industry executives have been moving away from coal and expanding the use of renewables for years.

After I arrived to pastor the Mansfield congregation in 1966, I was invited to join a state commission to explore how Ohio's "*Coal Country*" could develop industries not related to coal. Even then the handwriting was on the wall for coal. The state was anxious to find ways to create a revolution in economic re-design. The commission was made up of members of all the major professions, laborers, trades, politicians, unions, and, most of all, coalminers. It was one of the most interesting experiences of my life. We labored hard and long, working our way through a myriad of issues. I'm not sure how much of what we did had any long-term value, but we did try very hard to open new windows of opportunity.

The *Union of Concerned Scientists* has a new video "*Everything to Know about Coal*" (only 3 minutes in length) which offers a quick, accurate, and accessible explanation of why coal has been on the way out for years and is unlikely to stage a comeback. Watch it at [www.ucsusa.org/Coal/Video](http://www.ucsusa.org/Coal/Video). The printed text with illustrations and pictures is also top notch. ☩

**"The initial step for a soul to come to knowledge of God is contemplation of nature" --Irenaeus**



Irenaeus (130-202) a Greek pastor, theologian, and evangelist served in the south of France. He is known for his work to establish an orthodoxy (standards by which the scriptures can be properly interpreted).

He fought against the Gnostic view that the material world (all matter including our flesh) is evil and must be shunned because it was created by the demiurge; the Platonic idea of a subordinate deity. Gnostics taught that only the spiritual world is good and each person must reject the physical world and uncover the spiritual "*divine spark*" that lies deep within them.

Irenaeus accepted the Genesis understanding that the one God created the whole world and pronounced that it was good. As the Psalmist penned, "*the heavens declare the glory of God*" and so does the rest of creation! If you want to know God, look also to his handywork; doing so will deepen your inspiration to embrace the salvation found in his son, Christ Jesus. ☩

**There is nothing in life that does not require the questions and insights of Spiritual practice!**