

The Five Biggest Threats To Christianity

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By *Dr. Henderson Ward*



Sometimes we wonder if Christianity, as we dearly love and know it, will be with us until the end of the world. This is not a frivolous, mental perambulation, but a serious concern because one of the principal failures of humanity is the tendency to take things for granted, to assume that what is, will always be, except for a little fine tuning here and there.

In case anyone thinks that this concern is without foundation, and we are merely speculating about the possibilities, let me bring to the table the most poignant reminder of such a probability. It comes from Jesus, and here is what he said, "...Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8).

What we do know, with 100% certainty, is that faith and Christianity are inseparable; where there is no faith, then it inevitably follows that there is no Christianity.

Jesus, in Luke 18:8, was not prophesying what will take place in the last days, for if He was prophesying, then He would have affirmed that there would, or would not, be faith on his Second Advent.

Luke 18:8, with respect to faith on earth, can be understood in various ways, and there is no harm in people having different views on this. But it seems fairly clear that Jesus was foreseeing a DECLINE of faith prior to his Second Advent. This fits well with the theme of this

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chapter, which is about persistence in prayer, i.e., the parable of the unjust judge. And if in the last days there will be a decline in faith, then it follows that there will be a decline in Christianity.

A decline in matters of spirituality doesn't just happen, there are specific, identifiable causes; and we are aware that Christianity, has for centuries, been the prime target of satanic hordes orchestrating for its destruction.

There has not been a generation, since the birth of Christianity, when vicious forces haven't tried to destroy Christianity, or elements of its foundation. They have failed in their destructive designs because God has given us this unassailable assurance, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18)

This divine assurance guarantees that the church will be here in the last days, but it does not prescribe the efficaciousness of its doctrine or the vitality of its standing. These things depend on the membership of the universal church, yes us, and we are encouraged to become active and do battle, "... it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 1:3) There are many serious threats to Christianity, some from within the church and others external to the church. And here, not in any particular order, are five of the biggest.

1. Disregard for marriage and fidelity

God had many options when he made Adam and Eve. He could have made several other women and instructed Adam to populate the world through them because He had already given Adam the capacity to do so. He could have made Adam and Eve without moral checks and balances, so that they would be like rabbits or dogs. But He did not.

God created the first family, blessed them with marriage and all through the Bible praised and honoured the practice of fidelity.

The West, that was built on Christian principles and upheld Christian values, no longer respects the family, does not care about marriage and regards fidelity as an outmoded concept.

In truth the West is the devil's best friend and tool, and through its hapless leaders and institutions family life is being decimated. One only has to look at Hollywood and its poisonous offering of adultery, fornication, pornography, underage sex, bed-hopping and everything detrimental to family life to get a sense of the trajectory of our times.

When society systematically destroys family life on the one hand and forcefully peddles same-sex marriage, co-habiting (unmarried couple living together) and promiscuous sex on the other hand, then the efforts of the church to uplift society are seriously hampered. As a consequence Christianity recedes and the forces of evil are emboldened.

2. Rampant consumerism

There was a time when people were happy and contented if they acquired sufficient for their

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basic needs. Most people understood the need to pray and trust God for tomorrow, or next week, and what little they had they loved sharing with each other.

All of that is a thing of the past.

People today are over-dosing on consumerism and their levels of contentment are near zero. Many Christians are doing the same and convincing the world that there is no difference between the world and Christians.

This is not the only factor, but in lots of ways, both subtle and blatant, peoples of faith seem to be driven by the world's agenda.

If Christians see little need to trust God for the future, and depend on him to "...supply all your need according to his riches in glory" (Philippians 4:19), then it follows that the consumer-driven hordes will find diminishing interest in Christianity.

3. A corrupt and evil priesthood

The church always had, and always will have, dedicated leaders of the first order. These devoted men and women are the finest examples of selfless service to humanity and are without equal in any other profession or calling.

But these are not the ones grabbing the headlines and are not the ones being quoted or referred to on a daily basis.

The Vatican recently announced that 3,000 priests have been defrocked over the past few years. 16,000 more priests are being investigated or have been sanctioned in one way or another. Millions of dollars have been paid out to victims of sex abuse by priests, and the list goes on.

Churches, other than Roman Catholics, have this kind of problem too. We have leaders who are not called, misfits and unsuitable for ministry, are incompetent to teach and preach and are of bad character but often are very charming.

Paul foresaw this as a serious problem, "Be careful for yourselves and for all the people God has given you. The Holy Spirit gave you the work of caring for this flock. You must be shepherds to the church of God, the people he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, some men will come into your group. They will be like wild wolves and will try to destroy the flock." (Acts 20:28-29 Easy to Read Version)

If the leaders of the church are rotten, and shown to be so in word and deed, then Christianity can go only one way and that is down.

4. Weak Christians living like the world

For good reasons Jesus again and again referred to ordinary believers as "his witnesses". The

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early believers when they were persecuted and spread abroad, everywhere they went they failed not to witness; and the gospel of Jesus Christ mushroomed.

Today, weak Christians are afraid to witness, to take a stand, they are intimidated and refuse to be different. These believers want the applause of the world, desire its approval and embracement, wear its demeaning fashions, engage in its shameful way of life and take its fallacious teaching (like naturalism and pragmatism), as if it is holy writ.

If the world sees no difference, between itself and Christians, there is then no challenge for change, no motivation for considering Christianity; and its decline becomes inevitable.

5. Biblical ignorance and apathy

It is not necessary for every Christian to be a Bible scholar, but it is essential that each believer knows the Bible well, and is familiar with its principal doctrines so that he is "...ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (1 Peter 3:15)

A lack of biblical knowledge leads to apathy, and an apathetic church lead to declining membership; and that in turn adds to the overall decline of Christianity

It is amazing how good, well-meaning Christians stand on the sidelines and watch something they truly treasure, something of inestimable value, slowly decline into oblivion as if they are powerless to give a helping hand. Quite amazing really.

Enough said.

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