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The New American Morality

Morality has always featured heavily in America's history. But the morals being promoted and preached today are unlike any the nation has ever seen.

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You can't put morality in a box. Our morals affect every aspect of our lives: our families, our education, our charities, our religions, our commerce and business, our economics, our laws, our policing and justice, our governments, our social policies, our strategic planning, our foreign policies—even when, where and how we wage war.

Since its earliest days, American morality was rooted in the Bible. Americans practiced and enforced their understanding of biblical moral prescriptions with remarkable zeal.

In recent years, however, that morality has been replaced by an entirely different, very unbiblical Moral code.

The New Moralists expect compliance on sexual norms, gender roles and definitions, racism, multiculturalism and many more aspects of our lives. Remarkably, though it is irreligious, the New American Morality is increasingly enforced with just as much religious fervor as the old morality once was.

The dictates of this new Moral code are stringent and unforgiving, with intolerant condemnations of all conceivable forms of intolerance, even those practiced by God Himself.

Early America

This new Moral Awakening is far different from America's previous Great Awakenings.

In colonial times, Puritans, Catholics, Quakers and others fled religious persecution in England and came to America for a refuge to worship as they chose. Early settlers established strongly religious colonies, some of which drew many of their laws directly from the Old Testament. Many of their colonial covenants mirrored the 1620 Mayflower Compact, whose signers said they were undertaking their project "for the glory of God and advancement of the Christian faith." The Massachusetts Bay Colony, among others, literally cited biblical chapter and verse in establishing the laws of the land.

When settlers encountered periods of difficulty and trial, governors responded by stiffening laws commanding prayer and religious worship, and increasing the severity of punishment against those convicted of adultery, sodomy, rape and other immoral acts. When William Penn established the "holy experiment" of Pennsylvania, he outlawed "all such offenses against God as swearing, cursing, lying ... incest, sodomy, rapes, whoredom, fornication and other uncleanness (not to be repeated) ..." because "the wildness and looseness of the people provoke the indignation of God against a country."

In this climate, there spread a uniquely American religious tolerance: People could worship as they pleased—as long as they were Christian, with faith in Jesus Christ. In the 1700s, often referred to as the Age of Reason or the Enlightenment, America experienced a series of religious revivals. Preachers calling for repentance and conversion enjoyed tremendous popularity and attracted large crowds. Most of America's most prestigious universities—including Harvard, Yale, Princeton,

Columbia, Dartmouth—were founded at this time as denominational colleges and seminaries to train clergy. Education, everyone understood, was firstly a *moral* endeavor.

When the nation entered the tribulation of the Revolutionary War, the Continental Congress proclaimed several days of fasting, for “the exercise of repentance and reformation.” It viewed the war as “just punishment of our manifold transgressions,” and adjured civil and military officers to more strictly observe the Articles of War that forbade “profane swearing and all immorality.”

The nation’s founding lawmakers guaranteed legal protection for religion in the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights, which prohibits any laws restricting the freedom of religious practice. This separation of church and state protected religion from interference by the government and secured its importance in public life.

When French political scientist Alexis de Tocqueville visited America in 1831, the country was undergoing another outburst of religious fervor, called the Second Great Awakening. “[T]here is no country in the world where the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men,” Tocqueville noted in *Democracy in America*. “Liberty regards religion as its companion in all its battles and its triumphs It considers religion as the safeguard of morality, and morality as the best security of law and the surest pledge of the duration of freedom”

Nobody argues that the United States implemented the Bible’s moral code perfectly. No nation in history has—not even Israel, the nation to which God gave it originally. To take perhaps the most notable example in American history, despite codifying in the Declaration of Independence the belief “that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights,” the young nation took nearly nine decades to finally abolish immoral and unbiblical slavery practices by constitutional law.

Nevertheless, as society broadly sought to practice biblical morality as they understood it, America grew to become the greatest single nation in world history. People widely and correctly credited God’s blessing as the reason for this success. (Read the little-known truth about how God brought this about in our free book [The United States and Britain in Prophecy](#), by Herbert W. Armstrong.)

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Learn the New Rules

Tocqueville said that religion secures morality, and morality secures freedom. But in recent decades, American religion has concerned itself less and less with morality. By ceding its moral footing, it has grown weaker. And its enemies have grown bolder and more numerous. They have managed to transform the concept of separation of church and state to enforce the *secularization* of public life—not as a *protection* of religion but as a legal weapon against it.

This process has set the stage for a new Great Awakening—to a New Morality.

The old, biblically based morality was unchanging and absolute. It emphasized the inviolability of marriage, and the responsibility of parents to teach and train their children. It stressed the sanctity of sex between husband and wife. It instilled respect for authority and duty to country. It encouraged personal virtues like temperance, moderation, sobriety, modesty and thrift.

The New Morality changes with time: What was once unacceptable may now be encouraged, and what was once tolerated may now be utterly intolerable. It is inconsistent and self-contradictory. It emphasizes the preeminence of the individual, and the importance of personal fulfillment over duty to spouse or offspring. It encourages unrestrained sexual license—*except*, in a recent abrupt shift, when it involves men coercing women sexually. Depending on who is in authority, the New Morality either seeks more-authoritarian control or an overthrow of the entire system; and it considers patriotism akin to tribalism. There are no *absolute* virtues: Depending on the individual and the circumstances, excess, indulgence, intoxication, arrogance and greed may all be praised as Moral or condemned as Immoral.

Despite its contradictions and volatility, however, it is still enforced with unforgiving conviction and authority.

The New American Morality says that all men are rapists and potential rapists, and should be feared and contained. At the same time, it says that if one of these men believes he is a woman, that is truth, and Moral. We all must play along. We should allow this man into women's bathrooms, and anyone who is uncomfortable with this is a bigot. Bigotry is Immoral.

It is now Moral to allow children to choose their gender from their earliest years. It is Immoral to encourage them to conform to sex stereotypes, such as instilling in boys a duty to protect girls.

For a man to prey on a woman is clearly Immoral. Yet if he is married, for him to avoid being alone with a woman, to avoid temptation and/or the appearance of evil is Immoral. Why? Because it could hold back the careers of women who must meet with him alone. When a woman acts sexually in exchange for receiving professional advancement, this is Immoral for the man, yet Moral for the woman. In the much-celebrated words of Oprah Winfrey at the Golden Globes, she did this because she "had children to feed and bills to pay and dreams to pursue." Moral.

Fornication and out-of-wedlock birth: Moral—and woe to anyone who would try to stop it. Pornography, so ubiquitous that it is readily, regularly viewed even by children: Moral. Same-sex marriage: Moral. Heterosexual marriage: Depends on whether the man leads his family. If he does, that is oppression: Immoral.

Efforts to protect the lives of the unborn: Immoral. Exposing clinics and doctors who sell aborted fetal body parts: Immoral.

Religion: generally accepted as Moral. Eastern religions are Moral. African tribal religious practices are Moral. Native American spirituality is Moral. Islam, including mandatory full-body coverings, forced marriage, genital mutilation, and occasional throwing homosexuals off of buildings: Moral. The New Moralists mustn't be intolerant bigots about such practices.

The notable *exception* is religion rooted in the Bible: Immoral. Christians whose conscience will not permit them to bake a wedding cake for a homosexual couple: Immoral.

Don't expect consistency in the New Morality. Just try to keep up—and be sure to comply.

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The New Morality in Action

New generations growing up under the New American Morality are learning it well. They are scrupulously measuring society by it: tolerating and even encouraging others for beliefs and acts that would have been considered immoral in less enlightened times—and diligently using their exacting Moral measure to condemn those who fall afoul of the new rules.

One real-world example occurred after a June 2015 church shooting in Charleston, South Carolina, by a white supremacist. In response, a movement to remove public monuments and memorials of the Confederate States of America began.

Last August, this movement exploded after competing protests fixated on a statue of Robert E. Lee in Charlottesville, Virginia. Suddenly, memorials across the country were now monuments to white nationalism, rank racism and everything Immoral about America's slave-owning past. The tide of Moral scorn beat against Jefferson Davis, Stonewall Jackson, Roger Taney and other Confederates. But it didn't stop there: It even swallowed up giants like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln: guilty of slavery and racism. Immoral. And to the inflexible New Morality, unpardonable.

It was a stark example of how volatile, passionate, zealous and fanatical the New Morality can be. It does not give reasoned judgment regarding, say, which aspects of history to preserve and which to topple, jackhammer, sandblast and raze. It reflexively brands all opposition as bigoted and racist. Contrary evidence is noise. The only Morally correct action is to destroy.

These high-minded critics can look at a man like President Washington and view themselves as his Moral superior. This was a man universally admired for his unimpeachable character—a man without whose leadership the United States of America

may well have been a failed historical footnote. For returning to private life and thus refusing to turn the American presidency into a monarchy, King George iii reportedly called Washington “the greatest man in the world.” Yet he does not meet the stringent New Moral measure.

These people look at President Jefferson and see nothing but a wicked slaveholder. They are unable to recognize in him the author of the creeds that have helped grant greater freedom to more people than in any other nation in human history. The entire arc of America’s past has been an arduous but remarkably successful struggle to live up to the high ideals of universal rights and liberties that Jefferson articulated at its birth. Yet no less a paragon of virtue than Al Sharpton has demanded that the Jefferson Memorial be stripped of public funding in order to punish his memory.

President Lincoln lacked the racial and cultural awareness of today’s Moralizers. Nevertheless, he did manage the staggering feat of single-handedly restoring a divided country, preventing it from being permanently rent in two—while eradicating slavery permanently by constitutional amendment. Yet these achievements were not enough to shield him from the reproach of at least one crusader in his home state who vandalized and set on fire a bust of Lincoln in Chicago’s South Side.

Today’s Moralists are excellent at pointing out sins. Historical figures are particularly easy targets, because nobody in human history has lived according to the strictures of America’s New Morality. So educators can easily demonstrate how they are the Moral superiors of everyone who came before them in Western civilization. They can show how every hero of Western history was actually a villain. But they have no interest in *learning anything* from them. What could a slave owner like Thomas Jefferson possibly teach us? What could we gain from studying a racist like Abraham Lincoln? They feel no *gratitude* for what those people built, and from which they benefit. They feel only self-righteous indignation and disdain.

The New Moralists have largely come to hate the country that gave them all their freedoms and prosperity, for all its Immorality—its intolerance, bigotry, slavery, systemic racism, cultural appropriation, capitalist greed, exploitation, class oppression, sexism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, imperialism, war crimes, and the list goes on. Living in the most prosperous, free, inclusive nation in human history, the New American Moralists view it as possibly the most exploitative, racist, oppressive, Immoral nation in history.

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How to Morally Measure a Man

“Make America great again” is President Donald Trump’s slogan. When, then, was America last “great”? This question was posed to Alabama Senate candidate Roy Moore at a campaign rally last September. He pointed back to around the time Tocqueville had visited, before the Civil War: “I think it was great at the time when families were united—even though we had slavery—they cared for one another Our families were strong; our country had a direction.”

The response that appeared broadly across media and political platforms was, *Roy Moore believes slavery made America stronger! Roy Moore supports slavery!*

In truth, Moore’s response unambiguously acknowledged that slavery was wrong; he said that, setting that evil aside, there was something great about the nation when families were strong and the country was moving forward. Historians might even consider this objectively true regarding early America. But such distinctions are impossible in today’s America—where people would rather view Jefferson as a barbaric slave owner than as the author of the language that would later set slaves free.

Moore was already widely considered a sex offender for trying to date girls half his age as a young man. Now, according to the crude Moral judgment of enlightened America, anyone who voted for Moore is not just an enthusiastic supporter of child molestation and sexual predation, but also a racist who longs to reintroduce slavery. Thankfully he lost his election, so the Senate won’t be corrupted by his Immoral influence—or so the thinking goes.

Perhaps some of the allegations were true and Moore didn’t deserve office. Yet many current members of Congress openly

practice behavior as bad or worse, judging by *biblical* morality—and still, from the New Moralists they enjoy praise rather than condemnation. Moore, however, was guilty of the sin of upholding the Bible and the Ten Commandments, and in so doing painted the target on his own chest.

The Moral mainstream media, the Democrats and even the Republican establishment treated Moore like a convicted pedophile because of allegations from 40 years ago, some of which were proved false. Meanwhile many New Moralists are increasingly normalizing *actual pedophilia*. It is depicted sympathetically in certain Hollywood movies and mainstream news sources. Psychologists and activists are pushing it along the same path toward societal acceptance that they did with homosexuality and transsexuality. And you dare not condemn people for these irrepressible inclinations. That would be Immoral.

Two Forms of Righteousness

The contrast between this New Morality and biblical morality is stark.

The Bible's moral code is strict, consistent and inflexible—its standard is absolute moral *purity* and *perfection* (e.g. Genesis 17:1; Matthew 5:48; Philippians 3:14-15). It recognizes a whole range of sins beyond those of prejudice and bigotry. In fact, its Author says unequivocally that “*all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23)—even the New Moralizers.

Yet our being sinners does not make us irredeemable. Though God is perfect and morally superior to others, He is also full of mercy, compassion and patience (e.g. Exodus 34:5-7; Matthew 18:21-22; Luke 6:36-37). In meting out judgment, God examines the heart, intent, attitude, environment and knowledge of the law. He allows for repentance from sin; that is His aim for all people.

The New American Morality is much more selective in its strictness, but against those it considers transgressors, it is merciless.

This approach is akin to *another* biblical example, that of the devil. Called “the accuser,” he criticizes, ridicules and scorns people “day and night” (Revelation 12:10). He is negative, cynical and self-righteous. He has a moral standard of his own devising, and uses it as a blunt weapon. Guilty as he is of lying, lust, bigotry and murder, he sees in others only weakness, stupidity, hypocrisy and flaws.

The devil can look at God Himself and see a hypocrite and a failure. Meanwhile, God can look at a sinner and see the makings of a perfect heart.

The Moralizers have ordained themselves as judge, jury and executioner of America's new Moral law. It is plain to see to whom they look for their inspiration.

The New Morality, with all its inconsistencies, cannot be viewed as a comprehensive, consistent moral code. In practice it operates more as a weapon aimed at one thing: to destroy what is left of biblical morality in America.

Back in 1964, educator Herbert W. Armstrong began decrying the rise of a “new morality” in America. It was a movement “throwing off the restraints ... against prudery, repression and ignorance,” he wrote in a booklet titled *God Speaks Out on 'The New Morality.'* In many ways, this more recent development magnifies that movement by adding secular sanctimony. Wherever we turn, we are hearing lectures from today's Moral pharisees.

The Author of biblical morality has strong words for those who establish their own Moral standards.

Through the Prophet Isaiah He says, “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!” (Isaiah 5:20-21).

This is a prophecy for the end-time nations of Israel, and the New Morality in America today fulfills it perfectly. All around we see the inversion of the Bible's definitions of good and evil. Everywhere we see people justifying the wicked and condemning the just—a practice God labels an abomination (Proverbs 17:15). We see people filled with self-righteous indignation. God says woe will come on the nation so wholehearted in adhering to a perverse Moral standard.

“And judgement is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey ...” (Isaiah 59:14-15). The margin of the King James Version says he that departs from evil “is accounted mad.” Yes, if you want to depart from evil, to live by biblical standards and distance yourself from immorality, expect to be branded and condemned.

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul warned against those who, like the New Moralizers, “being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to *establish their own righteousness*, have not *submitted themselves* unto the righteousness of God” (Romans 10:3).

This is really what is happening in this most recent Great Moral Awakening: People are working to establish their *own* righteousness, and are failing to submit themselves to the righteousness of God—who is the one and only true

Lawgiver, who alone determines right from wrong. The more zealous and fanatical they become in this irreligious pursuit, the more unhinged this New Morality will become, and the more society will suffer under its influence. ■

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