

## A Changed Morality In America By Kent Heaton

The face of America has changed so dramatically that without hindsight it is difficult to notice how subtle the changes have been. Images splash across the television with common abandon that describe the levels of depravity being accepted by society. Men kissing men and women kissing women is now a common theme on television. How many commercials hawk the cry of the old medicine man and his traveling side show with new drugs for male impotence, sexual fulfillment, depression, heart disease and some drugs I am not sure what they are for. Violence is presented in CSI investigations, made for television crime series, criminal stores with multitudes of heinous violent deaths, and all the end-of-the-world scenarios filled with chaos. Reality shows exploit the bachelor and bachelorette in sexually provocative series and endless dribbles of other reality shows where people show their supposed real life. Talk shows bring mindless victims to their stage to humiliate themselves to find out who the father of the seven children really is and why your daughter is a prostitute and marriage counseling before millions of people. And then there are those ungodly cartoons that use foul language and sexual immorality to make stupid people laugh. Welcome to American television.

The wise man Solomon said, "Is there a thing of which it may be said, See, this is new? It has already been in days of old, which were before us" (Ecc. 1:10). Immorality is not a new dish that man has dined on the past few years. The challenge to morality has been going on since the Garden of Eden when Satan said to Eve, "Has God indeed said?" (Gen. 3:1). As a society America has moved away from being "One nation under God" to "One nation under Man." God is slowly being eroded away from the moral conscience of the people of the land. The minority has begun to rule the majority. The days of Isaiah have returned: "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil; who put darkness for light and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those wise in their own eyes, and bright in their own sight" (Isa. 5:20-21).

As people of God it is important to "discern the weather" and be prepared for the coming storm. On the horizon clouds of immorality, worldliness, persecution and the godless armies of the devil are gathered. They sweep across the land even now but a greater conflagration is looming in the years to come. Opposing homosexuality, adultery, divorce, religious division and the hosts of schemes of the wicked one will bring the church of Christ into full battle. Tolerance will be intolerable for those who stand for truth. The words of Jesus will echo throughout the land: "Do you suppose that I have come to give peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division. For from now on, there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law" (Luke 12:51-53).

The message of the Revelation will become a dear book for the saints of God. John the apostle portrays the struggle of the people of God with the hosts of enemies like government, immorality, worldliness and the battle of good and evil. For the saints of God who cry out, "How long" (Rev. 6:9) the answer will come from the "King of Kings

and Lord of Lords” (Rev. 19:11-16). The battle will be long and the hardships difficult but the victory is assured to those who are not defiled with the changing morality in America. The country may fall victim to snares of the devil but the people of God must rise above the tide of destruction to live for the King. Citizens of the Kingdom must stand for truth and righteousness on every hand. There may come a day when we must follow the example of those in Ephesus: “Many of those practicing the curious arts, bringing together the books, burned them before all. And they counted the prices of them and found it to be fifty thousand pieces of silver” (Acts 19:19). Standing for the Lord may require standing alone – but stand we must (Eph. 6:13-18).

## Lincoln and Stanton

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). The contest between Stanton and Lincoln for the office of president began with Stanton treating Lincoln with contempt. He called Lincoln "a low cunning clown" and nicknamed him "the original gorilla." A person was a fool, Stanton claimed, to wander about in Africa trying to capture a gorilla when he could find one so easily in Springfield, Illinois. However, Lincoln did not respond in kind. And, when Lincoln was elected president, he appointed Stanton as his war minister because he was the best man for the job. He treated Stanton with every courtesy. On the night when the assassin's bullet murdered Lincoln in the theater, in a little room where the President's body lies, there stood Stanton, looking down on the silent face of Lincoln in all its ruggedness. Stanton spoke through his tears, "There lies the greatest ruler of men the world has ever seen." "...Not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing" (1Peter 3:9).

## Christ's Birth and Death

A study of the birth and death of Jesus reveals some interesting parallels. Consider the following:

At both, He was rejected of men (Luke 2:7; Mark 15:1-5).

At both, He was cast "outside" (Luke 2:7; Heb. 13:12).

At both, Mary was there (Luke 2:7; John 19:26).

At both, myrrh was present for use upon Him (Matt. 2:11; John 19:39).

At both, there was darkness (Matt. 2:10, 14; 27:45).

At both, His body was wrapped in cloth (Luke 2:7, 12; Mark 15:46).

At both, a Herod becomes curiously involved (Matt. 2:7-8; Luke 23:7-12).

At both, wise men recognized His deity (Matt. 2:1-2; Mark 15:39; Luke 23:41).

At both, Jews and Gentiles were there.

At both, there was worship, the first genuine, the second mocking (Matt. 2:11; Luke 2:13-14; Mark 15:19).

At both, He was hailed as King, one in earnest, the other in jest (Matt. 2:2; Mark 15:26, 32).

At both, there was an honorable man named Joseph (Matt. 1:19; Luke 2:16; Mark 15:43).

At both, the chief priests and scribes were involved (Matt. 2:4-6; 27:41; Luke 23:10).

And both have changed the world and altered the impact of eternity. (Neal Pollard, Denver, CO)

#### A Moments Wisdom

Too many people are thinking of security instead of opportunity. They seem more afraid of life than death.

Glory built on selfish principles is shame and guilt.

You can't build a reputation on what you are going to do.

In taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but in passing it over, he is superior.