

Mightier Than The Sword (Part Twenty-One)

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As I proceed through these brief overviews of the philosophers who have very strongly impacted on the conduct of the average person in the Western world, it becomes evident that, considering the birth years of the philosophers, Satan's labors are intensifying.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (an American), Karl Marx (a German), and Charles Darwin (an Englishman) were all born in one decade after the 19th century began. Emerson had a lasting negative impact on American religion; Karl Marx on economics and government; and Charles Darwin on science and theology.

I also want to remind you that every one of the men I have given brief overviews of was born into a family practicing some form of the Christian religion. In several cases, the philosopher's father was the pastor of a congregation.

I was going to give an overview of another American philosopher who had a powerful influence on American higher education. That is, John Dewey. But I set him aside for another week in order to briefly acquaint you with a truly radical German philosopher who was clinically insane in the final eleven years of his life.

His name was Friedrich Nietzsche. He was born in October 1844, the son of a Lutheran pastor. So, he fits this pattern too, but even more so because both of his grandparents and an uncle were also Lutheran pastors.

There is nothing notable about his childhood, but his autobiography notes that at age 17 he read a treatise titled, "The Essence of Christianity," authored by another German named Ludwig Feuerbach. That writing, Nietzsche claimed, paved the way for his break from early religious training.

On Easter Sunday in 1865 (he was 19 years old), he refused communion at the Lutheran Church, and by 1870 he openly declared himself in the growing number who, in his own words, “had completely forgotten Christianity.”

His ideas were extremely toxic and he had unusually strong influence, especially in Germany. One author titled him as “the most dangerous philosopher of the millennium.” If you evaluate the dates of lives and writings of Nietzsche and Darwin, you might expose one of the reasons why Darwin’s writings so effectively turned people to atheism. It was because Nietzsche’s philosophy supported Darwin’s.

Nietzsche possessed a very high intellectual level, but in addition to that, another philosopher critic of his stated he also had unmitigated arrogance and a demonic hatred of Christ. Nietzsche identified himself as the Antichrist in a book he published in 1888. It is interesting that it was just a few months after making this declaration that he literally lost his mind. He never produced another thing in his life. He called himself “stupid” after that for what he had done.

Despite his insanity, his ideas were instrumental in the development of modern psychology. In his autobiography, Nietzsche called himself the first psychologist, which certainly was not true. That was simply yet another expression of his hubris.

Isn’t it ironic that the self-proclaimed founder of modern psychology was certifiably insane in the last eleven years of his life? But it is indeed true that it was he who gave rise to what is called today, “existentialism.” He is not its founder, but he gave strong support to its growth.

“Existentialism” is a philosophy that emphasizes the uniqueness and isolationism of the individual in a hostile or indifferent universe, and regards experience as unexplainable. *Why do these things happen? I don't know.* What this means in practical fact to these people is that there is no creator God who is working out any sort of purpose on earth. Thus, all of life is lived, but it is going nowhere. You would be surprised at the famous people who are existentialists. This is where he had his impact, and he was a *nut*.

Nietzsche's primary philosophy was what is termed, "the will to power." What that means in plain language is that might makes right. If you have the power, regardless, you are the one who is right. Hitler was very influenced by this man, and look at the damage he wreaked on earth in Europe.

Nietzsche claimed that, "Higher culture developed when men of prey, who were still in possession of their unbroken strength of will and lust for power, hurled themselves upon the weaker, more civilized, more peaceful folk." He claimed the noble class of society was always the barbarians.

You can see in his thoughts here a "survival of the fittest" theme that folds right into Charles Darwin's theories regarding nature. Who survived? Those who were most fit. The strongest survived. What he was promoting was the unbroken strength of will which Adolf Hitler especially found attractive and inspiring, along with Mao Tse Tung (who mentioned him as one who motivated him), Joseph Stalin (who mentioned him as one who motivated him), and other human predators, like Vladimir Lenin.

Nietzsche stated in his book titled, "Beyond Good and Evil," "The time for petty politics is over: the very next century [the 20th century] will bring the fight for the dominion of the earth—the compulsion to large scale politics."

Though he was long dead, Nietzsche's work was a driving force in something that was pretty modern, and even the Worldwide Church of God got involved in this to some degree: the Human Potential movement that swept this nation a number of years ago (in the '60s, '70s, '80s, and '90s) by giving philosophic support to men such as Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, and Rollo May.

His works—and here is where he, in a sense, really made his mark—heavily influenced novelists and playwrights, such as George Bernard Shaw, Eugene O'Neill, Ernest Hemingway, Mark Twain, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and others, *ad infinitum*. In that manner, his hate-filled, angry, violent existentialism got into the masses by means of novels and the entertainment industry.