

## Has America Gone Crazy? (Part Two)

John W. Ritenbaugh

Given 26-Jan-19; Sermon #1471c

The title of this commentary follows the one that I gave three weeks ago. It is, "Has America Gone Crazy? (Part Two)." The previous commentary earned that title from me because of the widespread distribution of news that we are hearing from radio and TV stations of the outlandish beliefs and behaviors that Americans are adopting and living including such a one as we find that we humans now come in some thirty or so distinct "genders," rather than the two that have existed for the past six thousand years.

Changes of this nature do not clarify; they only confuse. The term "gender" began its present assignment having a truth firmly anchored in the word "genus." "Genus" indicates a kind or a class. Humanly, the one born was quickly labelled as either male or female, based upon easily observable exterior characteristics. But those two, just in the past few years, by means of adding psychological attributes to the assigning process when they began to appear, have been subdivided further into about thirty different "genders." And then these peculiarities are adopted by others as an advancement by which they believe they have something personally to gain.

The "gender reassigning" bandwagon grew in numbers quickly, and of course, we in the public hear about them because the broadcast news sources we hear them through are in the business of making money through the sale of news. Besides that, politicians too are unfortunately of the same profit-pursuing mindset, therefore, they are looking for personal gains.

It's not that this [profit or gain] is inherently evil, but politicians see this "gender expansion" as a means of keeping their name in the public and thus getting elected to office. Thus, they pander to these newsmakers to get their and other support through the vote. The media hears of this, takes note, and reports on it as though it is something everybody wants to know.

For a little while here, I want at this point for you to consider the word "crazy." Has America gone crazy? Do you know what the roots of the word "crazy" are? "Crazy" originally meant, "full of cracks." The synonyms for that word used then were "flawed," "unsound," "impractical," but over time, "crazy" became applied to human psychological conditions, and the synonyms changed, too, and became—instead of "full of cracks"—"mad," "insane," "unusual." It describes an exaggerated and often transient enthusiasm, as in a mania or obsessed, indicating (to those who understand), "Don't

Has America Gone Crazy? (Part Two) by John W. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>)

trust this person. Handle with care." In our time, that's basically what crazy meant "Handle with care; don't trust this person."

If "crazy" doesn't describe America's and Britain's social and political scene in these days, I do not know what the term is that might replace it and be used to better describe people doing these things might be. The reality may be that the "gender" craze is merely one more attention-getting bandwagon and nothing more.

Three weeks ago, in my previous commentary, I mentioned to you that during the 1970s, while pastoring the Norwalk congregation of the Worldwide Church of God, read a short book aptly titled, "The True Believer." Is that not what we are to be in relation to Jesus Christ? Well, the title caught my attention and pretty much riveted me to the book.

Jesus, though, is not merely just another bandwagon, and people are not jumping on to support Him. Right now, there is no bandwagon effect that is attached to Him in any way, shape or form. People were trying to beat it up, but it's not really happening. Now the short book was written by Eric Hoffer., and you may not be familiar with his name Mr. Hoffer has since died. Believe it or not, he was a highly intelligence longshoreman working on the docks in San Francisco. He was not your typical author.

I am sure that he had the intelligence to matriculate at any university in the USA, but he chose not to fulfill his educational interests in the normal manner by attending a university. He chose to pursue his higher education as he saw fit without the strictures that he perceived in the normal, higher educational institutions, and then write what he perceived of the American life from what was solely his thinking and his conclusions.

He observed people's conversational behavior rather acutely and was considered by many to have reached the philosopher status, despite not having any university degree He wrote plainly and bluntly, with a minimum of words combined with a common sense approach. He was easy to read because he was not trying to impress the reader with how many other author's works he read. So, his writings were not peppered with footnotes that one had to constantly refer to.

'The True Believer' was *not*, I repeat, *not* an expose of religion or evangelism, although some amount of searching into that area of American life is made by him. Rather, the book is a searching analysis of the general mindset and behavioral patterns of those who join and support expansions of mass social movements, which was beginning to parallel what Joe was speaking on ["Preempting God"].

Has America Gone Crazy? (Part Two) by John W. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>)

At times in past history, religion has been at the center of social revolution, and that is why he touched on it on a few occasions. Hoffer did not impress me as being a religious person. He seemed to steer clear of it because he realized that there is some persuasion involved in religious movements that he did not grasp. I think what he did not grasp is that one had to be really called.

But there is a mass movement underway in America right at this very moment, and it has been moving along now for many decades of time and continues to pick up adherents. Nothing is going to stop its growth except the return of Jesus Christ, or an out-and-out civil war, because this mass movement offers the carnality and much—very much—that is appealing to our inborn carnality that must be avoided. Interestingly, at the same time in history, the most advanced media is in place to advertise this mass movement's advantages.

This movement claims to be progressive. You know it by its public name. That name might be to one person called "humanism." It might, to another, be "secularism." Both are more or less religious aspects of it, but the most commonly used name is much broader because the movement encompasses very many aspects of life. It is most commonly known as "liberalism." That term is very deceptive. The term "liberalism," standing alone, does not indicate evil. Whether or not it implies either good or evil depends upon the context in which "liberalism" is used.

The first being to be pointedly shown as being liberal in thinking is Satan, in Ezekiel 28. What he did was deviate from a broad standard of behavior established by God. I believe the standard had within it plenty of latitude to allow righteous behavior as an expression of one's personality. But there was also a boundary beyond which was sin and death. What was it that lured Satan to act beyond the boundary? I do not know exactly. It was, despite his intelligence and all other powers God created in him, and despite all the experiences that God afforded him, it was self-centeredness. That is what carnality is, too. Liberalism has been designed by the mind of Satan the Devil.