

## Everywhere But Up

**Our World's Sad Response to the Crises of the Day**

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I'm sure that most of you, upon hearing my introduction, are anticipating another commentary on the coronavirus. But, no. You see, I figured that we needed to hear something a little different today, because by now, we have become all-too-familiar and all-too-weary with the maddening attack upon our way of life with the onset of COVID-19.

Regardless of anyone's opinions or beliefs in the origin of, or the actual health hazards presented by, the novel coronavirus, we are all-to-aware that its existence has been extremely hazardous to the global status quo, and especially so among the peoples of the United States.

Our entire way of life has been impacted. The media has created a distressed, herd mentality with its gloomy anecdotes, somber statistics, and despondent droning of the latest lies with no apparent solutions in sight. Everything, including fun, has been canceled. And regardless of which box or subset one might fit into, no one—at least no one that I know—feels very good right now about what the virus has done to us. Even the smiley-face emoji has been laid off indefinitely.

But this is not about the coronavirus.

And it is also not about the racial strife that recently joined the virus in a daily competition for headlines. It has become very difficult now to determine which story is more troubling and more damaging to our way of life.

But, like I just mentioned, this is not about the racial strife.

Nor is it about our economy, which has taken a precipitous dive. We just learned from the federal government that our Gross Domestic Product took a 33% hit in the second quarter of this year—an all-time record. Unemployment and bankruptcies—soon to be followed by foreclosures and evictions—are piling up.

But, forgive me, but this is not about the economy.

No, this commentary is no about the virus, racial strife, or the economy, or the fact that all these troubles are taking place in the midst of the most stressful and crucial presidential race ever, between a 74-year-old with orange skin and really bad hair, and a 78-year-old with hair plugs who has a hard time keeping his hands off the ladies, or remembering his own name.

It is not about any of that. Instead, it is about our response to it all.

In a recent poll conducted in the US by the Associated Press and the National Opinion Research Center, 63% of the adults that identified as believing in God said they think the pandemic is a sign from God. Those are pretty strong numbers. Anytime you can get 63% of the world's "believers" to agree on something is pretty good.

Of course, with such a number, one would think that everyone's favorite pandemic, along with everything else, might actually inspire a greater desire among our citizenry for humble self-reflection and a return of sorts to our Judeo-Christian roots that might actually draw many Americans closer to their Creator in a spirit of repentance, in order to make sense of it all. But various polls and surveys have shown that many Americans are, instead, turning to drugs, alcohol, and television to get through these difficult days.

Another survey revealed that Bible reading in the US dropped sharply between January and June. The American Bible Society concurred, claiming that individuals who are considered "scripturally engaged" fell from 28% in January to just under 23% in June. And a growing number of governments are discouraging, severely restricting, or outright banning church services.

Essentially, with our nation circling the toilet bowl, Americans are closing their bibles, grabbing another beer, and turning on Netflix. Oh, and cigarette sales are increasing for the first time in years.

But let us look even closer at our collective response to the smelly armpit we call 2020. On June 15, our Supreme Court ruled that homosexual and transgender employees could not be disciplined, fired, or refused employment based on their sexual orientation, equating their perversion with the *sex, race, color, or creed* language of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. What is worse, the lead opinion was written by President Trump's first Supreme Court nominee, the supposedly conservative Neil Gorsuch.

Following that, the court ruled *against* several states' attempts to enact a few restrictions on abortion during the COVID-19 hospital crisis, and at a time when conservative legislators thought the timing was right with five so-called conservatives sitting on the Supreme Court bench. And just a couple months ago, a Utah Republican introduced a bill in the state legislature to decriminalize polygamy, but at least that bill has not yet been passed into law. However, the City Council of Somerville, Massachusetts, just voted to grant "polyamorous groups the rights held by spouses in marriage." *Polygamy has finally found a legal foothold in the US in 2020.*

So, in a manner of a few weeks, in the face of what many consider to be the greatest threat to its existence since the Civil War, America doubled down on the murder of children and the promotion of ever more sexual perversity.

In addition to the daily violence caused by the racial strife in the streets of cities like Portland, Oregon, violent crime is surging throughout the U.S. Rape, murder, and assault are all on a horrific rise. The City of New York just revealed that since May, over 300 police vehicles have been damaged or destroyed in those "peaceful" protests in their city streets. Good thing we want to defund our police, huh?

The vitriol being tossed about on social and traditional media mirrors the acrimony between our elected representatives in Washington DC and every hall of government in this nation. The gloves have come off. No one is even pretending to be dignified anymore, and it is all feeding the out-of-control cancel culture that is ripping the fabric of our society in pieces. *Psychology Today* reports that the US is experiencing a collective depression that will likely exact a far greater human toll than the virus.

In the midst of all of this, the U.S. is being derided, mocked, and ridiculed by the world for our inability to manage or control not only the virus, but the economic and social strife that has ensued.

How ironic that “they” call it being “woke,” when we have fallen asleep at the wheel—and we are heading for the bottom of the cliff and do not really seem to notice or even to care.

But what’s the bottom line on all of this?

**Jeremiah 17:5** Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the LORD.

As a society, we are looking in the wrong direction for help. Instead of looking to God, mankind seeks its answers, comfort, protection, and solace, from mankind—from science and medicine, from technology, from human philosophy, from *under the sun*. Man is looking anywhere, everywhere, but up—everywhere but to God above. So how could they respond any other way?

From our point of view—as the elect of God—the future does not bode well for this chaotic and confused world. Little wonder that God spends so much time encouraging us to look and to listen to Him and to walk away from Babylon.

But lest we become too hasty in our judgment, let us not forget that God saved Nineveh in spite of Jonah’s lousy attitude—because they repented. Our Creator was willing to forego the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, at least for a little while, for the sake of a handful of righteous persons.

Perhaps, then, we should be spending more time in humble self-reflection, looking upward, repenting of our lousy attitudes, and praying that God would forgive us as well as a world that knows not what it is doing.