

Today's Christianity (Part Three): Southern Christianity's Impact On America

by Charles Whitaker

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"Then the king of the South shall become strong . . ."
— *Daniel 11:5*

Last month, we looked at the sizable migration of Southern Christians into America. The religious preferences of these immigrants from Latin America, Oceania, Asia, and Africa are more often than not some variant of Southern Christianity. In their multitude, these people have bloated the rolls of Catholic parishes and Pentecostal churches with pious, essentially fundamental and evangelical traditionalists. As a result, the face of American Christianity is gradually mutating from a doctrinally liberal White Anglo-Saxon Protestant institution of formal mainline denominationalism into a dynamic phenomenon of Pentecostal fervor often sponsored by small, unaffiliated sects.

Non-denominationalism has run amok! Conservatism has experienced an upsurge!

All this is a totally unforeseen result of the Immigration Reform Act of 1965. For the last three-and-a-half decades, liberals have watched with irritated consternation as their scheme to dilute Christianity to the point of statistical insignificance has yielded precisely the opposite result. If the truth be told, their plan to secularize American culture—and to diversify it—has sunk under the tide of Christian immigrants.

However, liberals are not willing to tell it the way it is. Although America is less religiously diverse than most Middle and Far Eastern nations, and although non-Christian groupings (for example, Jews, Buddhists, Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus) in aggregate constitute only about 5 percent of the American population, the liberal-controlled media unceasingly paints America as religiously diverse. It goes out of its way to run stories that suggest an inflated influence of non-Christian groups, while at the same time implying that Christianity is culturally irrelevant. In addition, it has been singularly successful in suppressing the facts, hiding them from the public. Indeed, the public, apparently lacking the ability to think beyond the next football game, seems all too eager to buy the media's outright—and absolutely outlandish—fabrications. Few people question what appears on their television sets or in their newspapers.

Whether the public perceives it or not, the fact remains though: In an amazing exhibition of His sovereignty, God has turned the tables on the Satan-inspired, godless social engineers. They actively sought to use immigration policy to secularize America and force Christianity outside the mainstream of her culture. Exactly the opposite has taken place. God used their scheme to modify immigration regulations to accomplish His own purposes.

Let us look at what those purposes might be.

Overthrowing Bedrock

First, Southern Christianity is certain to contribute to the gulf that is developing between America and Europe.

For years, the church of God has recognized that this separation, whatever its cause, would provide the motivation, the rationale, behind the Beast's attack on America. God's church understood that America and Europe would eventually develop deeply opposing interests. This divergence, together with widening cultural and religious gaps, would generate a gigantic crack in the long-standing "Atlantic Alliance" between North America and Europe. The rift would tear the Alliance apart, ultimately becoming so cavernous as to lead to outright war.

However, as long as Europe *needed* America, as it did in 1914 and in 1939, as it did while the Cold War was raging, Europe's and America's interests were too closely aligned for such a crack to form. The potential for divergence was certainly there, we all recognized, but, as long as America and Europe were facing a common enemy (say, an expansionist Germany in 1914, a vengeful one in 1939, or the Soviet Union later) that potential never materialized.

Then, the Cold War ended. America had weaponry all over Europe and no reason to use it; European countries no longer faced cultural and national annihilation from the East. Attendant to the retraction of the Soviet power in 1991, the interests of Europe and North America began to drift apart. The drift, overall, has been slow.

Wherein lies the resiliency of the alliance? *It lies in the partners' mutual commitment to liberal internationalism and multilateralism.*

Internationalism and multilateralism, treated as synonyms here, are ideas that deny the utility of the sovereign national state and seek to cast it into the dustbin of history. Internationalists believe that power politics are passé, the nation-state is the principal cause of war, and parochial national interests inevitably lead to conflict. To fix the situation, internationalists urge replacing national sovereignty with a number of international institutions and forums, such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Criminal Court (ICC), and a host of other, lesser-known bodies. Multilateralists believe that global peace and prosperity can be achieved only when all nations commit themselves to collaborate through this network of conflict-resolution institutions. Theirs is the world of diplomacy, treaties, trade agreements, conventions, concords—prosperity and peace on a piece-of paper. This way of thinking is often referred to as "one-worldism."

The opposite of internationalism and multilateralism appears in two forms, both of which emphasize the continuing value of the sovereign state:

1. Historically, one of these opposite forms manifests itself as great-power politics. Strong nations develop alliances with weaker ones to balance each other. Then the strong nations draw lines in the sand to demarcate "spheres of influence." Woe to the power who attempts to step across those lines! Egypt and Babylon played this game in the ancient world, as did Rome and Parthia. In more modern history, Britain, France, Germany, and Spain all became adept at the game. Indeed, some historians believe that European nations invented power politics.
2. At the present time, we are living in a remarkably ahistorical period, an anomalous situation, where a single hegemon, the United States, unilaterally calls the shots. That

approach to world order is also the opposite of liberal internationalism. Unilateralism is inherently hostile to one-worldism.

It is extremely important to understand that the elite policy makers of Europe and America subscribe to the tenets of internationalism and multilateralism. To a good extent, this is also true of the rank-and-file in both continents. In this sense, America and Europe share a substratum of agreement, and it runs deep on both sides of the Atlantic.

Europe. Europe has been a leading exponent of liberal internationalism for years. This is a turn-around, historically, for Europeans have expertly practiced power politics for centuries. Now, Europeans claim, they have matured to a higher level of sophistication; they have grown to the point where they have learned to live together in peace. Further, they claim, they would like to share their secret with the world by applying the principles of the European Union, which is based on a French bureaucratic model, to the international community. So, one commentator asserts that "Europe is turning away from power; . . . It is moving beyond power into a self-contained world of laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation."¹

Actually, growth in sophistication has nothing to do with Europe's rejection of power politics in favor of international forums. The real reason is growth—that is for sure—but growth of an entirely different type. *Europe is growing weaker every day.* Europe is suffering badly from the "deadly wound" of weakness in every sphere—military, economic, cultural. Basically powerless, having spent it in the Second World War, European nations have turned to the "game of the weak," negotiation. "Europeans oppose unilateralism in part because they have no capacity for unilateralism."² In reality, internationalism is the game plan of nations too weak (or too weak-willed) to use force to impose their policies on other nations.

America. In spite of some recent unilateralist tendencies, the United States has a gigantic stake in multilateralism and internationalism. After all, from the very start, the impetus behind the International Money Fund (IMF), the WTO, and the UN has been the United States. The American foreign policy establishment views multilateralism pragmatically—as a way to ensure that weaker nations feel they have a part in making the big decisions. If they feel they have had a part in determining the "grand strategy" of major nations, the smaller nations are more likely to "buy into" the policies set forth by powerful states. Smaller nations will more readily fall into line behind the hegemon.³ So it is that "the idea of a new international community with self-governing institutions and self-enforcing norms . . . is the view of the Democratic Party in the United States and of a large part of the American foreign policy establishment."⁴ It should come as no surprise that the avowed mission of many of the liberals in America is to "Europeanize" American society and government. Of course, Europeans are more than willing to oblige.

What about America's rank-and-file? Well, not everyone agrees with Jesse Helms. "Polls consistently show that Americans support multilateral action in principle—they even support acting under the rubric of the United Nations."⁵ Another commentator is more blunt: "A large segment of American opinion doubts the legitimacy of unilateral American action but accepts quite readily actions undertaken by the 'world community' acting in concert."⁶ It appears that many Americans do not feel at home calling the shots internationally.

Admittedly, there are important dissenters on both sides of the ocean. In Austria, Germany, and even France, nationalism is experiencing a resurgence. In America, there are now significant voices calling

for unilateralism in the face of Europe's inability to make decisions. That having been said, the fact remains that today Europeans and Americans—rank-and-file as well as policy makers—continue to walk down the same road of "goo-goo one-worldism."⁷

So, the question naturally arises, "If both sides enjoy this substratum of agreement about the value of internationalism and the way it should be implemented, what will cause the breach in the transatlantic alliance which God's church understands must come?" What will cause Europe and America to go their separate ways?

Enter Southern Christianity. In time, it will be America's new fundamentalism that will generate the seismic forces capable of demolishing the substratum of agreement between America and Europe. The vast influx of Southern Christians into America has already made these immigrants' views politically significant. Well before 2020, they will be in a position to *reshape* American domestic and foreign policy dramatically. Could we expect any less, considering that, by 2050, there will be about 100 million Americans of Latino descent, mostly Catholics and Pentecostals of a conservative bent, along with millions of like-minded African and Asian immigrants?

This new and robust political power structure will reshape foreign and domestic policy in decidedly conservative and traditionalist directions—in the *opposite* direction of the European liberal leadership.

Southern Christianity already abhors the European establishment, which it sees as corrupt and godless. Once it becomes a muscular power block in this country, Southern Christianity will push America away from what it sees as the morally perverse "plain of irreligion" we call Europe. Far more than most commentators realize, Southern Christianity is poised to play a major role in bringing about the cleavage between the two continents.

Jihad and Crusade

Second, Southern Christianity has the potential to amplify the conflict between Christianity and Islam.

Through Southern Christianity, God may choose to do a lot more than simply reorient America to a more conservative position in international affairs, returning her to a stance where she advocates national sovereignty, to the upset of European policy-makers. God may be doing all that (and more) in a way that is sure to create nothing less than a nuclear explosion—figuratively and literally.

To understand the flash point the two continents will reach, consider this: The majority of the current immigrants to America are overwhelmingly *Christian*; the majority of current immigrants to Europe are just as overwhelmingly *Muslim*. The Gentile folk infiltrating the two halves of the Western world, Europe and North America, are coming out of two different—and opposing—religious traditions. Sparks will surely fly.

In contrast to America's largely Christian immigrants, present European immigration is defined by her historical patterns of colonization.⁸ Migrants into Europe are mainly Muslims from the Middle East, North Africa, and Pakistan.

How will Southern Christians react to these people? Probably, in the early stages of their power, they will advocate a policy of isolationism toward Europe. It will be their self-righteous better-than-thouism which will lead them in this direction. This isolationism will be in reaction to the liberals'

long love affair with internationalism and secular humanism. Southern Christians will simply want to cut America off from the secularizing influence of Europe.

However, isolationist policy is sure to give way eventually to a more proactive international stance. Given the military capabilities of America, the Southern Christian will not long be able to resist turning America into the church militant! For example, if Islam becomes a real threat to the (Southern) Christian Philippines, America's Southern Christian power block would not be reluctant to intervene. Further, we should appreciate—and never under-estimate—the missionary zeal that makes up such a big part of the Southern Christian's psyche. That zeal will not allow him to forego using America's economic clout to evangelize Europe's "great plain of irreligion" in the hopes of returning it to the fold of Christianity. Europe will, of course, not tolerate what she will surely consider a threatening and patronizing American incursion on her secular way of life.

Overall, the coming cleavage between America and Europe will take place at two fault lines.

» One will be the liberal-conservative dichotomy. It will express itself in the moral and economic terms of traditional values *versus* the postmodern values of relativism and pragmatism.

» The second will be the Christian-Islam one. It will express itself in religious terms: Which Prophet is *the* Prophet—Christ or Mohammad? Fundamentalists on both sides will carry the rhetoric all the way to jihad and crusade.

Southern Christianity and God's Church

The advent of Southern Christianity as an influential force in American culture has another implication, one that will seriously affect God's people. *Southern Christianity could well provide the impetus for the eventual expulsion of God's church (and perhaps other minorities) from America.*

Southern Christianity is, as we all recognize, a false religion, a religion of this world. As such, it will come to persecute the church of God. One way to understand this truism is to realize the nature of Herbert W. Armstrong's frequent run-ins with Pentecostals in the early days of his ministry.

Mr. Armstrong, of course, did not experience the phenomenon of Southern Christianity in the 1930s. But, he surely encountered its precursor movement in this country, Pentecostalism. Moreover, he well understood the incompatibility of that movement with the doctrines of God. In his *Autobiography*, he writes,

In Portland I had gained some little experience with "Pentecostal people." . . . I had noticed that most of these people refused to obey God's commandments; almost none had any real sound understanding of the Bible; they customarily had a wide knowledge of certain scattered texts—verses or partial verses—which they usually misapplied, entirely out of context, putting only a meaning of pseudo-spirituality on them. They spoke in what was supposed to be spiritual-sounding language. They loved to show off—to brag, especially about their own spirituality which usually consisted of sentimentality and emotion.⁹

Mr. Armstrong understood the lack of common ground between God's way of life and Pentecostalism. There was no meeting of the minds at all! He found nothing but frustration in his

dealings with Pentecostals. They habitually attended his evangelistic meetings in Oregon, but were highly disruptive, driving away anyone who may have been serious about hearing the true gospel. In those days, his approach was to preach in a rural community, establish a group of interested individuals there, and then move on to another area. Once he left a community, Pentecostal ministers, like hawks sensing an easy kill, would inevitably swoop down on the immature congregation, with the intent of leading God's people astray. Pentecostals are missionaries through and through. In their evangelical efforts, they were all too often successful. As a result of this "invasion" of Pentecostal folk, God's people in these small congregations would either become deceived into accepting Pentecostalism or would simply drift away entirely. When Mr. Armstrong's circuit took him back to the community again, he would find the group he had founded there either completely gone or badly corrupted by Pentecostalism. It was disheartening. In fact, this repeated experience contributed to his decision, later, to found a college. He learned by painful experience about the necessity of a ministry trained in the truth and loyal to God, who would protect the flock from predators.

Pentecostalism is false religion, pure and simple. Once it becomes a strong political power in America, it will become an irritation to God's people by virtue of its missionary emphasis. In the course of time, it will probably become an outright persecutor of God's people as well.

In the growing phenomenon of Southern Christianity, God could well be developing the machinery that will produce the expulsion of God's people from America. In Isaiah 16:3-4, God warns the peoples of Moab to be circumspect, not betraying His "outcasts."

Take counsel, execute judgment; make your shadow like the night in the middle of the day; hide the outcasts, do not betray him who escapes. Let My outcasts dwell with you, O Moab; be a shelter to them from the face of the spoiler.

God's Word here reveals that there will be some outcasts—we would call them refugees today—whom God claims specifically as His Own: "My outcasts." His use of the term suggests that at that time there will be other outcasts, other refugees, who are not under His direct protection. These various refugee groups may be peoples cast out of America (and other Israelite nations as well) by Southern Christians in a misguided attempt to cleanse the land of what it considers false religions. It would be difficult to imagine such purging taking place at the hand of today's liberals, who trumpet diversity, the coexistence of different cultures and religions. However, under the hand of conservative Southern Christians turned bigots, such a forced ejection of God's people (along with Jews and others) is quite within the realm of possibility.

An Ongoing Struggle

The choice of Daniel 11:5 as a preamble to this article is not meant to suggest that America's liberal left is the biblical King of the North or that Southern Christianity will develop into a power structure led by the King of the South. One should not wrestle with God's Word.

Yet, Daniel 11 is relevant to the comments above in that it emphasizes the ongoing state of *struggle* between two antagonists. Therein lies Daniel's lesson for us today. Let none think that America's effete and pampered liberals, hypocrites at heart, will surrender their leadership role gracefully or willingly. Those silk stockings will viciously resist losing power to Southern Christians. Their struggle, generally exhibiting itself in legislation and jurisprudence (and, of course, in the press), may erupt occasionally into the violence of outright persecution.

Of this we can be sure: The tension between Southern Christians and agnostic secularists will be the defining fault line in American politics in the years to come, often behind the scenes, sometimes not. Their struggle will leave Americans—most of whom do not even know what a Southern Christian is—bewildered, at a loss to explain the disarray in their civil society and the failure of domestic policy. In addition, their struggle will leave America weakened by vacillating and therefore ineffective foreign policies.

As the Southern Christians increasingly press conservatism into the service of their innate self-righteousness, and traditionalism into the service of their indefatigable missionary zeal, Europeans will increasingly perceive America as aggressive, arrogant, and a threat to their way of life. Domestically, social fragmentation will give way to outright flight, as large numbers of people flee America for safety from religious persecution.

Southern Christianity will play a big role in the decline and fall of America.

Endnotes

1 Kagan, Robert, "Power and Weakness," *Policy Review*, June/July, 2002, p. 3. Mr. Kagan is a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He is currently based in Brussels.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 12. For a contrarian viewpoint, see Kupchan, Charles A., *The End of the American Era: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Geopolitics of the Twenty-first Century*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2002. Mr. Kupchan, a Georgetown University professor of international relations and a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, argues that America will be increasingly isolated in the world community due to her unilateralism. Interestingly, he picks the European Union as the rival power block that will bring about American decline. His reasons are unique, to say the least, in that he sees a similarity between the current European/American struggle and the division of the Roman Empire into Western and Eastern parts, headed respectively by Rome and Constantinople. These two power centers soon came into collision: "Rome's fate does not augur well for a unitary West that is in the midst of separating into distinct North American and European power centers." For an important, though somewhat technical, web site on transatlantic issues, visit www.europeanaffairs.org.

3 Nye, Joseph S., "Seven Tests: Between Concert and Unilateralism," *The National Interest*, Winter, 2001/2002, p. 5.

4 Krauthammer, Charles, "The Unipolar Moment Revisited," *The National Interest*, Winter 2002/2003, p. 13. Mr. Krauthammer is a syndicated columnist for the *Washington Post* and an essayist for *Time*.

5 Kagan, p. 12.

6 Krauthammer, Charles, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs: American and the World*, 1990/91.

7 *Ibid.* p. 13.

8 Jenkins, Philip, "A New Religious America," *First Things*, August/September, 2002, p. 28. Mr. Jenkins is Distinguished Professor of History and Religious Studies at Pennsylvania State University.

9 Armstrong, Herbert W., *Autobiography*, p. 431.