

THE FANTASY OF OUR TIMES

By

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It is our lot to live in an age where reality is taboo and fantasy is the standard. The most popular adjective in the vocabulary today is “fantastic,” implying that if something is really good it is in the world of fantasy. It also suggests that one would prefer fantasy to reality. This is borne out in the fact that millions of people are giving themselves over to drugs and alcohol for the express purpose of escaping reality.

To the religious guides of His day, Jesus said, “you leave the commandment of God and hold fast the traditions of men” (Mark 7:8). He also said that they would reject Him, the true Messiah, but would gladly accept those who came in their own name as false messiahs. It is significant that every people who claimed to be waiting for Messiah rejected Him when He came, because they had their own fantasy of what their messiah would be and would do.

THE FANTASY OF A FALSE AUTHORITY. The Lord demonstrated His authority over all creation by His miracles. He proved His authority over the animal world, plant life, the elements, over human life and even over the demons of the spirit world. Before He ascended to heaven He riveted these words into the minds of the apostles: “All authority is given to me in heaven and on earth” (Matt. 28:18).

His authority is ignored today and a false authority is being asserted in the world and accepted with enthusiasm. Everywhere, from the classroom to the public parks to television in the home, the fantasy of evolution is accepted as authority, in spite of the fact that science has produced no evidence of evolution, to say nothing of proof. Educational programs under the priests of humanism continue to claim that we are the products of evolution. Evolution created us. Nature is our god. The commandments revealed in the Bible are discarded as men are looking elsewhere for new authority.

Television has become a false authority. Nothing else in history has had such impact on the moral and spiritual fiber of the world. Where world rulers have failed to reverse standards of their people, television has succeeded. It has happened, which Isaiah warned against, that men “call evil good, and good evil” (Isa 5:20).

The French writer Simone Weil wrote, “Nothing is so beautiful, nothing is so continually fresh and surprising, so full of sweet and perpetual ecstasy as the good; no desert is so dreary and monotonous and boring as evil. But with fantasy it’s the other way around. Fictional good is boring and flat, while fictional evil is varied, intriguing and full of charm.” This is borne out by television which offers, not agape, the love that is pure, good and beautiful, but Eros which produces lust, sin and violence. The modern hero is not one who solves his problems by obedience to God and virtuous action, but one whose life is laced with sin, who manages to get his way by hook and by crook. Unfaithfulness, dishonesty and other forms of immorality are upheld as the means to the good life. That which is desired is success, popularity and sensual gratification, regardless of the consequences. These standards of television have become authority for life, both private and public.

Reality lies in the opposite of these fantasies. Christ is the Creator, not a fantastic unbelievable system of evolution. As Creator, He reveals that which is good and successful. Christ is the standard of that which is right. In the final day, man will be judged not by their fantasies but by the authority of Christ's word.

THE FANTASY OF FALSE POWER. Throughout the world, ominously permeating the minds of all people, there is a terrible element of fear. Men fear that some powerful weapon will be developed and used upon the masses. They fear war with foreign powers such as China and Russia. They also fear economic collapse which might destroy one's sense of security in the world. They view the world as under the control of great powers such as the United States and Russia. These powers, according to political science, are created by economic and political solidarity plus military might. But this is fantasy, a political fairy tale.

The reality is that God rules the nations. Nebuchadnezzar's experience with his dreams taught him that "the most high rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whom so ever he will, and sets up over it the lowest of men" (Dan. 4:17). If war should come, it would not be settled by the force of arms and men. The winner will be selected by God, as it is written in Psalms 62:11, "Power belongs unto God." Thus Jesus would say, "Be not afraid of what men can do to you." Everyday, in unheralded events over the world, decisions of courts are reversed, prisons are opened, homes are suddenly salvaged because Christians have called upon the power of God.

THE FANTASY OF FREEDOM. Controversial issues such as homosexuality, abortion and woman's freedom from husband's authority have all been raised in our generation because of the fantasy that the right to freedom means the right to do as one pleases. Millions of people are starting out in life under the illusion that freedom requires the negation of God's commands, that one must be free to sin. The result is that they become slaves to sin while boasting of freedom. Young people are systematically taught that they should expect life to give them success, money, and plenty of sex without restraint. This is their understanding of freedom. As soon as they come up against the reality of life, and all these fruits do not fall into their arms, they are ready to quit, to resort to alcohol, drugs, or illegal practices, to divorce husband or wife and to become rebels.

God teaches that freedom is obedience to His commands. Unnumbered blessings follow after the person who is willing to keep them. It is highly significant that in the past thirty years more has been said and written about freedom than in all of past history, and yet it has been during this time that once-free nations have come under the yoke of communistic bondage and millions of others have lost their individual freedom to grow into the image of God by their rejection of His authority, His power and His commandments. In pursuing the fantasy of freedom to design their own lives, they have made themselves slaves to the world, the flesh and the devil.

Jesus said, "If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). The Lord created us for His own purpose and it is only within the scope of that purpose that we may have any freedom of life. Within that purpose, we may grow to the very limit of God's design, but outside of that purpose all directions lead to a diminishing and corrupting of life.

When man makes obedience to God his goal, God gives him freedom. But when man makes freedom his goal, he will arrive at neither freedom nor God.

THE FANTASY OF NEUTRALITY. One of the greatest enemies of the church today is that vast congregation of people who think that they can be a part of Christ's church and yet remain neutral regarding the issues that arise. They would follow the example of Pontius Pilot who recognized the sinless character of Jesus and indicated that he was on His side; but he would not take issue with the enemies of Christ, and washed his hands of the quarrel, thus delivering Jesus over to be crucified by His enemies. While Pilot pretended to be neutral, as it turned out he acted in opposition to Christ. In this age, the all important thing is for one to retain his position, his security, the esteem of the world at any cost. He will not take a stand against Christ, in fact, he will profess Him as Lord; but neither will he take a stand against the evils and against the enemies of Christ who are doing their dead level best to destroy the Christian faith.

We are at war. It does not resound with the clash of arms, the beat of drums and marching feet, but nevertheless a war against true Christian faith is underway all over the world. The news media, the civil governments, the educational institutions are, for the most part, in the hands of humanists who have a vehement hatred of Christ and His commandments. Of course, most of them will deny that they are trying to destroy Christian faith. The Constitution guarantees freedom of religion and for this reason, the enemies of Christ will claim that they have no desire to destroy the church, or the home or to erect barriers to Christian faith. Meanwhile, they work in unison to replace Christian discipline with humanistic goals, to replace the Biblical doctrine of creation with humanistic evolution and to undermine Christian morals with the so-called new life-styles or alternative life-styles and present them as being equal to the Christian way of life.

Anyone who thinks that he can be neutral in this warfare is a believer in fantasy. To cooperate or compromise or even to keep silent on the subject is to give support or consent to those who would destroy the Christian faith. The apostle Paul wrote that our warfare is for the purpose of "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; and being in readiness to avenge all disobedience" (II Cor. 10:5, 6).

Jesus said that to be His disciple one must deny himself and follow Christ. It is sometimes painful, it is sometimes costly, but when one seeks to escape the pain and the cost by neutrality, he has ceased to be Christ's disciple and has taken his stand with the other side.

THE FANTASY OF A FALSE GOAL. Jesus was rejected by the bulk of the Hebrew people because they had concocted a fantasy of a thousand year Utopia. When Jesus said that His kingdom was not of this world, they killed Him. Men go on with the Utopian fantasy which is never to be attained in this world.

In millions of homes, that which is held up before the family as a goal is a newer car, a better house, a higher salary, more time for leisure, luxury, skiing in the winter, boating in the summer, maximum financial security and a minimum of responsibility. Instead of duty and obedience to God, the motto seems to be indulgence and fun at any price. In spite of all the evidence and experience to the contrary, modern man continues to follow the fantasy that to attain these goals will bring peace and joy and happiness.

When God created man, He also gave him a goal which is the only right and attainable goal possible. "Let us make man in our own image." This goal is reiterated

many times in the New Testament. Jesus is given as our example as He is the One Who is the express image of God. Peter said that we are to follow this example of Jesus. Paul wrote that by looking to Jesus we are transformed to His glory. And John wrote that those who have been faithful to Christ will someday be like Him — perfect, immortal, glorious.

The world has reduced the Christian faith to a storybook fairy tale. But God is no fantasy. Jesus lived on earth as a flesh and blood man. He died a genuine, human death then arose from the dead, returning to life in the flesh. In this, He proved the reality, not only of the person of God, but of all that God has revealed in His written word. He is coming again to judge the world, to give life — eternal and immortal life — to all His faithful ones. His commandments are real, down-to-earth and plain. The issue in each life is simply this, whether one will follow the fantasies of the world or accept the truth and reality of the Lord Jesus Christ and His word.

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