

A CHRISTIAN IN “1984”

By

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According to George Orwell’s book “1984), this is the year we were to see a society of automatons, completely managed and controlled by a self-appointed elite known as “Big Brother.” The book set a mood of despair and fear, which daily becomes more intense as our legal/political system continues to impose ever-more-stringent controls on the citizens.

A recent study listed 134 conditions which Orwell predicted for the world of “1984”, and identified over a hundred of them already finalized.

Many are the efforts over the past half century to bring to a halt the process by which the powers of the elite (government, the legal system, banking, education, the media) move on toward Orwell’s nightmare society. All to little avail.

Like Herod of old, the elite jealously guard their power, always pressing hard against the purposes and claims of Jesus: seeking homosexual “rights,” eliminating Christian teaching in schools, legalizing abortion, enslaving people through usury and taxation and exalting the idolatry of humanism.

Sensing this ongoing process, many people live in a state of apprehension, under a foreboding cloud of fear. This is the sure way to defeat.

Jesus said, “Be not afraid of them that kill the body and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn you whom you shall fear: Fear him, who after he has killed, has power to cast into Gehenna” (Luke 12:4-5). It is God who has ultimate authority over life, and it is He alone that we are to fear. To live in fear of man, whether the elitist of our own nation or of another, is to abandon God. This is what has been taking place in the Western nations for several years. The one thing conspicuously absent in Orwell’s “1984” is a commitment to God on the part of any of his characters. The same omission was conspicuous in the recent TV event, “The Day After.” The citizens were as people with no ultimate destiny, no basis or purpose apart from this life and this earth, in fact, this city!

This is the way of people in the world without Gods. But we are NOT of the world and we are not without God. Christians are to be “the salt of the earth,” but when the salt loses its savor it simply becomes the world; it has the same fears that the world has and can offer only worldly solutions to the problems.

John the Baptist was a startling contrast to the elite of Herod’s court, and got his head cut off. Jesus was a striking contrast to the religious elite, and was crucified by them. He warned his disciples to expect the same treatment for the same way of life.

But Christians have come a long way since John. Now we must build a safe nest; we must not deny ourselves, but rather deny risk; we must have security of the world and not challenge the state but seek its protection and support its power.

This is to deny the power and Lordship of Christ, the very foundation of our faith. He is the highest power in heaven and earth. All the power of the greatest nation is nothing to Him. It is He who gives freedom (John 8:32) and apart from Him man’s

greatest efforts to preserve freedom will fail; but in His power nothing can keep man from accomplishing His purpose.

Christian faith overcomes fear. The apostle Paul wrote, “For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, of love and self-control (discipline)” (II Tim. 1:7).

It is true that Paul knew nothing about nuclear warheads and radioactive fallout and there was no U.S.S.R. But there was the Roman Empire, and Nero, and the lions in the amphitheater. To be mauled to death by a lion might be a much worse death than to disappear in a nuclear blast!

So what did Paul suggest? He said, “Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 1:1). We cannot change the world by joining it. The Christian should strike such a contrast with the world and its modern standards that he is seen as a “stranger and sojourner” in the world. His aims and stated purposes should be such as to create curiosity, as Peter expected when he commanded, “Sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asks you a reason concerning the hope that is in you...” (I Peter 3:15).

Behavior is to be supported vocally. Paul said that we are at way, but not according to the flesh (not with guns and bombs) “for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds; casting down imaginations and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God (the whole elitist system of the antichrist) and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (II Cor. 10:3–4).

The leaders of a society, and this includes the elite in all categories, must rise from the society. None are “self-made.” The elite are products of parents, teachers, churches, the media and the arts. Even if you removed all of them, those who took their places would come from the same general background.

To change a society of people one must begin with the people. Christ did not introduce His kingdom in the halls of the Emperor, nor even in the palace of Herod, but to the common people in the Sermon on the Mount. It was not directed to men as kings or rulers and contained nothing to regulate or increase government bureaus and establish state controls. Rather, Jesus began with the individual and his basic motives. “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” This automatically rules out all the elitists. “Blessed are they that mourn...blessed are the meek. The power-seekers need read no further. “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness.” A consensus of opinion won’t do! “Blessed are the merciful...blessed are the pure in heart.” There it is: the condition of the **heart**. This is where Jesus began to build His kingdom, not from the emperor down, but from the heart of the humble individual.

The power is in the gospel (Rom. 1:16), which must be believed personally. We are to make disciples, baptizing them and teaching them to observe Christ’s commandments (Matt. 28:18–20). Baptism is individualistic. It is a rising again to new life, with responsibility to keep the commandments (Rom. 6:1–11).

Modern Christianity has attempted to make disciples without a commitment to faith, baptism and the keeping of the commandments. The success of the church is measured by its size, with the mistaken idea that the mere size of this “Christian” organization might force a change upon society. But what if the church is only growing more members like the society in which they live? Then the problem is only multiplied

and those gathered in have a false sense of security which fails when confronted with antichrist tyranny.

Christ calls disciples to die to the world, with “no confidence in the flesh” and no ambition but that of pleasing God and being conformed to His image. Discipleship is becoming a slave to the Master, Jesus.

The Christian must be seen as a contrast to the world. We are to be seen as lights in a world of darkness (Phil. 2:5). This will mean opposition, from without and within — especially from within. Luther was not opposed by the non-professing world, but by those who ran the religious show. If we are to turn people toward God we must first take a stand against the false faith clichéd from pulpits and paraded in the pew.

All tyranny is anti-Christ. The way to defeat it is to bring people to the service of Christ through genuine faith and obedience. The place to begin is with ourselves.

When one takes Christ seriously and pursues the holiness He prescribes he will find peace, satisfaction and ultimately the resurrection to immortality. Life is then worth living, whatever trials he must face in opposing the course of the world.

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