

The Kingdom vs. Patriotism

by Art Katz

The sermon highlights the conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of the world, and the need for Christians to take a clear stance against nationalism and militarism.

Duration: 54:48

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Romans 13:1, 2 Corinthians 10:3-4, Ephesians 6:12, Colossians 1:13, 1 Peter 2:17, Revelation 11:15

Topics: "American Patriotism"

Description

The video is a sermon transcript discussing the book written by John ML Young, a missionary in Japan. The speaker describes Young as an evangelical, fundamental Christian missionary who had a deep understanding of Christianity but may not have been familiar with the realm of the spirit. The speaker highlights Young's ability to critique and examine topics, noting that this is often lacking in spirit-filled individuals. The sermon emphasizes the conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of the world, particularly in the context of Japan's Shinto militarism and the rise of nationalism.

Transcript

Alpha and Omega of our faith again to give us a beginning, Lord, of what's on your heart for this week, how to commence, how to find our way through, my God, this complex, intricate subject where we've not been heretofore. So bless us, Lord, from the first word to the last, take over completely and grant us your great apostolic and prophetic heart of understanding. For we know, my God, that it is more than ourselves that is being addressed here now and that the implication and the consequence will affect many.

So your blessing, Lord, how to begin, where to begin. We thank and give you praise. Under your blood, by your spirit, Lord, have your way in Jesus' name.

This is the book that I bought back from Japan, written by a missionary who's probably now passed on because I think it was written in the early 50s and then again in the 80s and really a well-informed work. He gives the impression of being an evangelical, fundamental Christian missionary, very fine man of integrity, but I don't think that he knew or served in the spirit as we understand it. But nevertheless, it's rare to find the people in that spirit realm, the ability to critique and examine something and state it as well as he does.

Isn't that interesting that baptistic and denominational people often have a greater ability to communicate and to research and examine than the spirit-filled dimension? It will be a wonderful thing when the Church will have all of the faculties and aspects of God at its disposal. I'm sorry, his name is John M. L. Young, Y-O-U-N-G. He was the head of the Evangelical Christian Alliance in Japan for quite a number of years, and I believe even the head of their seminary.

He saw the conflict as a war between an empire of Christendom and the empire of Shinto militarism. That one insight is worth all and says all because it cuts right through the subterfuge of all of the many layered complexities of life and sees the essential conflict that's at the heart of all reality, the issue of the kingdom of God and the issue of the kingdoms of the world or of nations. In the case of Japan, Shinto militarism, the emperor being looked upon as deity himself.

And he personally observed this head-on conflict with the kingdom of Christ over the issue to whom a Christian owed his highest allegiance. He was to see some faithful Christians, his personal friends and neighbors, pass to a living death in prison. And so he was witness to this whole drama that began in the early 30s and the rise of this Japanese nationalism and militarism.

And affected the church. He defines Christianity as universal, crossing all national boundaries, while polytheism is national. Isn't that an interesting observation? Poly means many-sided, many.

Polytheism, not one God, but many gods. And the many gods view is in keeping with nationalistic ambition. That's not to say that you can't be nationalistic and also hold a kind of monotheistic view of God.

Maybe that was a description of Germany, at least externally. But when we see Nazism, it has degenerated into a paganism where, again, many deities are being acknowledged. And not the least of the deities is state itself.

The worship of state as being the object of the highest loyalty and devotion of men. And that, of course, was a profound aspect of Japan in that period of time. Interesting how Japan and Germany found each other.

Birds of a feather flock together. As dissimilar as they are in culture, language, western and eastern, they both represented spiritually exactly the same thing. Both nationalistic, imperialistic, militaristic entities that looked with contempt upon any other people and saw themselves as superior.

It was quite an astonishment for me to learn that the Japanese were racists. And though they themselves are oriental, they looked upon other orientals as being inferior. The Malaysians, Chinese, and so on.

And that explains the brutality towards those people as if they're dealing with some kind of inferior scum, which is the same way that Nazi Germany looked upon Jews, gypsies, Poles, and other ethnic groups. So Christianity is universal, crossing all national boundaries. That raises an interesting question that if you're a Christian in Japan, to whom do you owe your loyalty? If you cross national boundaries, could you be even looked upon with suspicion by the nation as lacking in a loyalty to the nation in which you reside? That has been the conundrum of Jews who are always the suspect of being disloyal or having some kind of international goal, a Zionist ambition for which they cannot be trusted as patriotic members of the nations in which they dwell.

And it's for that reason, before the Nazi time, that Jews in Germany wanted to persuade the German nation that they were loyal Germans, that they were Germans first and Jews second, and they had no

aspiration for any transnational identification that would in any way compromise their identity as loyal Germans. But that question is not so much exclusively a Jewish question, it's a question for us in the church. We're in America, but are we Americans in the sense that our first and highest loyalty is to this nation? What happens when a moral issue arises where the nation has taken a direction that is in opposition to God? And that's exactly the crisis that the church in Japan had to face and failed to meet.

So polytheism demands public participation in the state worship by all, regardless of private convictions or personal worship one might otherwise engage in. So I think we're going to come to a day, if we've not come to it already, where you're allowed to have your private and personal convictions so long as you also accede to the national requirement that patriotism makes upon you. But the question is, can a Christian really do that? This was the demand made upon the Japanese Christians.

Yes, you can go ahead with your Sunday services, you can have your own church schools, but like every other Japanese citizen, you need to pay deference to the government, which is the state, so to speak, the emperor. And when everyone else in Japan in the schools, his children are rising and bowing toward his palace, your children need to bow also. When others are bowing toward the Shinto shrine, you need to bow also.

It's only a nominal thing. We understand that you're not Japanese in that way and you have your other convictions and we're allowing you to have them, but just make this little minor concession. And that minor concession was the undoing of the validity of the church in Japan.

So we need to recognize where the subtle requirement for obeisance and worship comes, even though it may not be identified for us as clearly as it was for Japan. It's not going to be the issue in America of a Shinto shrine or an emperor, but it could be some other thing that would be considered appropriate to a patriotic response. And yet we would recognize it as being subtly a form of worship to the gods of this world.

So we need to have a discernment that's acute. More will be required of us for that reason than was required of the church in Japan. And maybe there are many ways in which we are already bowing instead of going to the world's movies or its culture events or pop rock concerts or allowing our kids to go.

I wrote a letter to the editor over Star Wars in which I took issue with the fact that six-foot cutouts were to be found in supermarkets over normal products that were endorsing Star Wars or Star Wars endorsing the product, and that we were haunted by these goblins of demonic forms coming into our privacy, and that our children were sleeping out overnight in front of the theater to be the first ones to get in on the first day that the film would be shown. And I provoked the Christian reader to say, where have your children ever camped out in front of the church doors to be the first to come in? And if you have allowed them this kind of subscription to that culture, little wonder that they are bored stiff in the Sunday school for that's not where their hearts are. You've allowed them a condescension to the world and its spirit, which is powerful and as meaningful spiritually as any Japanese Christian kid would have made in bowing to the emperor to the Shinto shrine.

This is not harmless and innocuous culture. This is shot through with powerful religious meanings, and we need to recognize them and restrain our kids. The thing is, how do you restrain them? And will they not be deprived? And if they can't see the video in your house, in what neighbor's house will they see it and find it all the more alluring because you forbid it? Can we keep our kids in subjection by a harness to keep them from the world and its spirit? Or the more difficult thing is that they would be so engaged with us and the

reality of God and understand these issues that it's not a matter of blind obedience, but that they themselves see the danger and would refrain from it because the peer pressure is to get them to conform to the culture, what are the mores of our time that they are able.

So we come out like fundamentalist fuddy-duddies who don't give our kids any breathing room and why can't they have their computers and see programs and turn on the TV and go to the movies or go with the kids to a concert? It's very much the essence of the same issue that was before the church in Japan, but for us much more subtle, much more powerful. What about Halloween? I mean, talk about something innocuous. Is there a kindergarten class or a primary school where they don't have pumpkins and witches and cutouts in the room and on the windows in keeping with the cultural occasion? But yet what is it in fact celebrating? The really tougher question is the believers that are in the land, what part do they play? A lot of them are native Israelis that have come to the faith, so do they endorse the policies of their nation or do they stand against them if they are morally objectionable? So far I don't hear a peep from any of the Messianic fellowships.

There seems to be a blanket endorsement for all that the nation does and a defense of it rather than a critique or a call for moral responsibility. If there's any voice that is questioning the policies of the nation, it doesn't come so much from the believers as from the green groups, from the, what do they call it, the earth conscious groups and the, you know, what are these groups called in Israel? Peace Now. I think maybe that's their name.

The environmentalists and those who want peace now and making condescensions to the Palestinians and recognizing the injustices that have been perpetrated against them. But the Messianic movement by and large I think has been essentially silent. I don't even know that they're even seeing it as an obligation where they should express themselves against the nation and against its policies because they want acceptance.

They want to be recognized as a valid religious phenomenon as much as orthodoxy or conservative Judaism. In fact, even long before the Messianic movement has been calling itself the fourth branch of Judaism, Messianic Judaism, and wants a recognition and a validity with the other branches, which implies that the other branches have a validity. And so I've always shunned this kind of mentality.

What we do in the United States toward Israel is similar kinds of question. How do we respond to what's going on? I've not recovered from some of the things that I've received on my email yesterday being sent from different parties about the racist attitudes of prominent Zionist and government leaders in the history of the state of Israel that are so abjectly racial, clearly contemptuous of Arabs as being some kind of inferior people, and they even are talking now about a massive relocation that the answer to the conflict is to get the Arabs out from within Israel itself and put them in Jordan and let Jordan become Palestine. It's a piece of social engineering as if after people have lived for generations in a family location that you can uproot them and move them at your behest because they are inconvenient as a presence, which is what we have done with the American Indians.

We've moved them out from places where we wanted their lands and we sent them to remote places that we thought had no value, like Minnesota, and then all of a sudden minerals are found or forestry and then they're further dispossessed. So this is nationalism and racialism goes right with it. A contempt for an inferior people that justifies you in pre-empting them from their own land.

And the question is, can the Israel that is God's intention to bless the families of the earth be established on that worldly basis? I wrote an answer to the brother who sent me. He said, what did you think of this, Art? I said, well, I'm hearing some of these things for the first time. I don't doubt that they might well be true.

After all, are Jews exempt from being men, that they should be free of prejudice, particularly when they've had already an unsavory history with Arabs that have been violent? But I said, Isaiah chapter four speaks of God purging Jerusalem with blood and with fire and purging it of its blood. So clearly there's a history there that is more than just something subject to question and that has elements of racism, violence, expulsion, injustice, misappropriate, not misappropriate, what's the word? Maybe it is a misappropriation of the lands of others, allowing them to be encouraged to flee, whether it was through their own instigation or even that of the invading armies in 1948 with the thought that once they're out, we will possess their lands and then possessed without compensation. And now what? Now, as you heard from Inger, even the mowing down of their olive orchards under the justification that military men can hide behind those trees and take potshots at Israelis.

So clear the field so that the tanks and the soldiers can have a clear view of any threat. But what have they done in the process? They've ruined century-old orchards that are not just a decoration, but the very foundation of the economy of these people. It's tragic.

And that's the kind of consequence that issues when men seek to appropriate and establish that which only God can give. And yet they have got to go through it. The problem for our young Palestinian brother from Bethlehem is what will be his attitude toward these Israelis? Will he share the consensus of Palestinian and Arab hate for them, for which he probably has much justification? Or will he stand representing another attitude that understands that Israel must necessarily go through these throes, T-H-R-O-E-S, you know that word? Through these last shakings that a man goes through who comes to the end of himself to become a candidate for God's salvation.

The nation is coming to an end of itself. And in that frenzy of preserving itself against hostile forces is required every day to act in the way that it is. So for an Arab Christian to understand that and bear that with magnanimity and grace rather than with hostility and vexation is a remarkable spiritual statement.

So this young man, if he could take hold of this and bring that back to Bethlehem, will make him an object of opposition by other Palestinians and maybe within his own family. So ironically that people who have been the object of discrimination have themselves been required to discriminate. And that's what we have to see in order to be broken before the Lord and be candidates for his righteousness.

So that in that millennial time Israel will say, God, our righteousness. We have none of our own. And our history has proved it.

This brother says, Christianity is aggressive, holding that the old religions are positively false and pernicious. They must be assailed and not tolerated. This would make Luther's seminary stand on its head because what they're teaching now is cultural pluralism.

There's another word, I can't think of it, that the proper Christian attitude toward other religions is a respect as being the expression of cultures as valid as our own. With this man who was an older voice long before this contemporary theology is saying no. Proper Christianity sees other religions as being false and pernicious.

It's not just that they are idly false, but there's consequence because of their falsity. It robs people of truth, reality, and life and makes the nations that are governed by false religions to be candidates for militarism and aggression and death. So it's not for us to give them a respect but to contend against them.

But that perspective, you know what I heard in the seminary? That's called Christofascism. And where do you come off in your arrogance to say that your religion is the religion and all these others are false? They have ancient and venerable traditions. They have their holy books and their rich Buddhism talks about selflessness and beauty and they were ethereal.

Well, look what's happened in America. Zen Buddhists, Jews becoming Buddhists because it appears to them as a superior spirituality either toward Judaism or Christianity. So we are put in, what's the word, an unwelcomed predicament of how to relate to other religions and the apostolic view would be to condemn them.

I don't know about assailing them. We can make ourselves obnoxious, you know, how to relate. How about Judaism itself? Where did I read an article where all of the false faiths were listed? Mormonism and this ism and that ism, but the one ism that was not cited was Judaism.

Is Judaism a valid biblical spiritual alternative to Christianity or is it a false rabbinically dominated religious entity that has even been hostile to Christ and to the apostolic church and to this very day? Why should it not also be included among false religions and why should we not make our view of that known instead of either in our silence or in our condescension giving a kind of sanctity and approval to Judaism as if it represents something valid. You know that my experience in the seminary was remarkable. I took my first class was on Christianity and Judaism and the teacher was devoid of any masculinity.

He had been, what's the word, defrocked and denuded. How come? Because in an earlier time he was involved in evangelism to the Jew, but since World War II and the holocaust, the Lutheran church reflecting German Lutheranism felt that how could we aggressively bring the gospel to the Jew seeing that the holocaust issued out of a Lutheran Germany. So they moved from evangelism to ecumenical dialogue around the table and that this was to be the new form of relationship to the Jewish community.

You don't aggressively call them to the gospel that they need to be saved and receive Jesus, but you dialogue with them on the basis of that their Judaism has a validity equal to our own. In fact, the Jewish community will not sit in on these dialogical sessions unless that acknowledgement is made. They don't want to be the object of our evangelistic thrust subtly being expressed in dialogue, but the recognition that Judaism is as valid as Christianity and that we Christians have as much to learn from them as they from us, but they represent an equally valid religious position.

What would you say to that? Because if we miss it there, we miss it everywhere. And in fact, we have missed it. The door has been open to pluralism and to the validity of all faiths, because once you acknowledge the validity of Judaism, then by what ground will you take Islam, Buddhism, Shintoism, or any other ism as being invalid.

The door has been opened, but would Paul have allowed that? Would Paul have subscribed to that? Paul was adamant and even says, I would wish myself a curse for my brethren's sake that they might know Christ. Why would he be willing to forfeit his own salvation if their Judaism is as equally valid an alternative to his Christianity? What we lack is that kind of Pauline and apostolic absoluteness. And we have condescended to the spirit of the age, which is pluralistic, accommodating, culturally relativistic, polite.

We don't want to be seen as being aggressive, insistent, absolute. In fact, the word absolute itself is an offense in our generation. Everything has become relative rather than absolute.

That's called being dogmatic, as if that's the ultimate offense. And what is the antithesis of dogmatic? Liberal, tolerant. There are some things of which we should not be tolerant.

To be tolerant of a Judaism that's false is to allow men to die in ignorance and separation from God and face an eternal godlessness. Can you be tolerant for that and still be a believer? And yet, how do you express this antagonism to what's false and identify it without offending? And can you offend? Can you be a believer and not offend? And is not the gospel itself intrinsically the ultimate offense? And we have flinched from the recognition of that and the expression of that, and therefore Jews have languished in their false faith right alongside the church without any consciousness and even a sense of spiritual superiority. And we have been silent.

The only theologian of note that has anguished over this that I know is my favorite, Karl Barth. He said the very existence of the synagogue alongside the church is an affront to God and a statement of our failure. That we have allowed its existence, which allowed is not the word, that we have given ourselves to a non-apostolic mentality that allows a synagogue phenomenon to exist and be plausible is a statement of the church's failure to be as absolute about the faith as was Paul.

And ironically, it's only this absoluteness that will save Jews. It may offend them, but in the last analysis, it will save them. I was offended when the Lord confronted me.

My mother was offended for 37 years, but it finally saved her. The question is, are we willing to bear being an offense in order to save men who will oppose us in their ignorance? And not understand that we have their eternal and best interest at heart. And yet of necessity, it will not be understood as that.

It will be seen as a threat to their Jewishness, as a conspiracy to rob their heritage from them, to make them Gentiles. It'll be the greatest affront, particularly a Jewish community that's under attack and is losing its members through assimilation. Half of all Jewish marriages are to Gentiles and they never continue in Judaism, rarely if ever.

And so there's a Jewish community that's aware that it's losing its numbers and its strength. Are they therefore going to be tolerant to our attempt yet to convert them out from Judaism into core Christianity? And the truth of the matter is that the Christianity that is Christianity is the ultimate and definitive Judaism of God. Even a greater offense in the age of ecumenicism, when the great religious bodies are now forming alliances in hope of a world faith of respect and mutuality, the Pope is visiting Buddhist monks and vice versa and so on.

For there to be in that world, people who will not go along with that and stand in opposition to that and call it false is to make ourselves and mock people who are prohibiting the very progress of mankind. And that this is the very issue of peace and that all the world has long waited for. And you in your fundamentalist, dogmatic, absolute mentality are an obstruction to this program where your presence therefore cannot be tolerated.

So I think that will be the foundation for they will kill us and claim they are doing God a service. So I'm saying all that to stand for what Paul stood for in our generation, perhaps as much, maybe even more than his, is to put our head on the block. The Japanese church could not do that, did not have the courage to do

that.

And it condescended and made its compromises. And when the war was over and Japan was broken and susceptible to hearing the message of the gospel, there was not a church that could vigorously and with conviction and authority proclaim it. They had paid the price of their compromise.

And that's what we want to be instructed. Nothing offends the Jewish community more than Messianic Jews or Jews for Jesus, who may accuse of utilizing Jewish symbols and terms to deceive because they're not really Jews. Once they have become Christians, they have forfeited their Jewishness and therefore for them to employ references to being Jewish and observing the feast days is but a device to deceive unwary Jews and suck them into the Christian trap.

So you can't win. That offends them more than anything. And especially if you're wearing a yarmulke and a talis, talit, then you feed salt into the wound because you're playing at being a Jew to deceive.

What will they receive then by receiving the gospel, receiving Christ? Some little icing on the cake, a little addition to the Judaistic understanding. The issue of hell is the issue. That there's eternal consequence for this rejection.

And to refrain from bringing that is to have their blood on your hands. There's a flight from hell, even in the church, to the acknowledgment or the consideration of it, as against an earlier generation of Finney and evangelists of that kind who majored on that thing. In fact, I think it's Finney who said that the day that the church loses its persuasion about hell, it will have lost its value and its identity as the church.

We might well say that that day has come already. And what the Messianic believers are expressing is already the accepted mode in the church at large, because it's this issue that makes us absolute and is the great grounds for offense. And we're flinching.

We don't have a conviction about hell as to save brands from the fire. That was true of earlier generations. We've lost it because it has become diffused in this age of generalities, pluralisms, and we don't want to fix on these absolute alternatives.

We don't know heaven and we've lost the incentive for overcoming for ourselves and we've lost the ground of fear by which men might be persuaded. Paul said, knowing the terror of God, I persuade men. He meant Jewish men, knowing the terror.

But if we don't know the terror, how shall we persuade? If hell has lost its heat and is not so fearful an eternal fate, then how do we persuade? And in fact, our ability to persuade has diminished in proportion to the lack of that knowledge. Paul had it. Where did he get it that it's absent to us? Ironically, you get it in proportion to the knowledge of heaven.

You can't despise fear hell unless you equally have come to an appreciation for what heaven represents. For if hell is nothing more than the forfeiture of heaven, isn't that hell enough? So how did Paul attain heaven? Well, he had a citizenship there. Remember, I have my citizenship in heaven.

I think the King James says my conversation, what it means, my essential being is not on this plateau called earth. I'm living on it. I'm not in it.

My essential being has its formation and auspices for all that issues for my life from above. I'm already there. I draw my life, my inspiration, my mode of being from heaven.

I'm a citizen of heaven. I see the invisible weight of glory. I see the things that are eternal and invisible, and it makes my present suffering both momentary and light.

He had so vivid a grasp of that dimension and equally, therefore, a grasp of hell. We lack both, and it shows in the church. We need to be conscious that we have lost something and seek an endeavor to find it.

I'm often singing the song, Heaven, More Heaven. I'm playing on some popular song. What is an apostle and a prophet? What is the foundation of the church? Trailing clouds of glory as they come in and stand before people and bring this sense to them, because this lies too deep for words.

You can't articulate probably either heaven or hell, but you can communicate the sense of it to the degree that you have it. What an apostle and a prophet is that they have it to a substantial degree because they dwell in that realm. A people who, though they are living on terra firma, they are in reality in a heavenly dimension, whereas others occupying the same planet dwell on the earth, whose hearts fail them for fear when they see those things that are coming upon the earth.

They are earthlings. So, which are we? A conventional and anonymous Christian is an earthling, though he subscribes to a correct credo. To dwell in heaven while you're on earth is the faith.

And when Jesus said to Nicodemus, No man can ascend to heaven who has not first come down, even the son of man who is in heaven. Here he's having a conversation with an inquiring Jew in the earth, in Jerusalem, and yet he's saying to that man, I who am conversing with you have my actual existence in heaven right now. That's where I dwell.

And that's why my conversation with you is so effectual, because if I were on the same plane of earth with you, I would answer your earthly questions in an earthly way. Instead, I'm answering your questions in a way that is going to perplex you. Except you're born again by the spirit, you cannot see the kingdom of God.

How is that an answer to a man's valid question? What must I do to obtain it? Or however he phrased it. He's not answering him in the same way in which he was asked. He's not on that plane.

He's answering from the heavenly perspective. And though it at first perplexes, it will in the end save. How do we answer that? From what plane do we live and move and have our being? Where was the church of Japan that was so easily disposed to conform to what was required of it in order to preserve its existence? Why was it not a heavenly witness? Why did it not exhibit an alternative reality to Shintoism and emperor worship? Why was it not able to suggest a kingdom that eclipses Japanese imperial ambition? As we're going to see, Daniel was able to do with the very king of Babylon.

What did Daniel have that gave him that ability that the church of Japan lacked and that we presently lack are the questions that we're going to be considering. And he spends the first chapter talking about the earliest evangelistic activity in Japan, which was Catholic and Xavier, the Jesuit, and the degree of their success and their failure that these priests travel far and wide, readily baptizing anyone who would consent regardless of their knowledge was the result that they soon could claim many converts. There's a way in which the faith can be promulgated to gain many converts without people being converted because

they wanted to adopt a superior Western culture or one that would give them some advantage or benefit without essentially having to forfeit their Shinto and Japanese cultural identification.

This is the characteristic of Catholicism to this day, which is syncretistic and eclectic. It will acknowledge pagan things and incorporate their feast days and their observances into their Christian practice. And as I mentioned the other day, that's what Easter presently is.

Ishtar is a goddess so prevalent in that generation that in order to win those pagans to this Roman, Holy Roman Catholic Church, they took them in with their pagan identifications and assimilated and adopted it. That is syncretism. That's still a character of Catholicism today.

And that's what they brought to Japan. The true faith would have them to destroy their idols. Remember in Thessalonians, Paul said, I praise God that when you heard the word of God for me, you received it for what it was, not the word of man, but the word of God, which performs a work in them that believe.

What was the work? They gave up their idols to serve the living God. His apostolic proclamation of the gospel confronted their idols and required them to forsake them if they were going to receive Jesus. They gave up their idols in order to serve the living God and to wait for his son who comes from heaven and will save them from the day of his wrath.

What a gospel that is. What a power in which it was proclaimed and what a freedom it brought to these Thessalonian saints, because Paul in the very first chapter acknowledges that they're already being persecuted for their faith. This was not the message that the Catholic missionaries brought.

Xavier hated idolatry and immorality of which all kinds were on display everywhere in Japan. He did not hesitate to stand on the streets and denounce idolatry, sodomy and abortion as the three greatest sins of the people of Japan. Somebody might want to make a note of it, that what is the significance of these three sins, idolatry, sodomy and abortion, as the great sins of an idolatrous Japan, worshiping emperor and Shinto idols, and yet in their practices and in their morality, degenerating to the space level.

I guess that will always be the evidence of something false, that the result of it is immorality. And the evidence of that which is true is an elevated moral life. So these are the three sins of our generation, idolatry, sodomy, which is homosexuality and abortion.

Abortion, why? Because the practice of your, the gratification of your lust has resulted in unwelcomed pregnancy and therefore you can be rid of it, that you might continue in your lust. So it was evidently an idolatrous civilization, but at its root and particularly in the ruling classes were these prevalent sins. And these things, Xavier, the Catholic Jesuit missionary denounced and won converts by that denunciation by a people who wanted to elevate their moral life, but would not radically as separated from the idols as the Thessalonians through the message of Paul.

Not only the message of Paul, the example of Paul, who says in that same chapter, you know what manner of man I was among you. Why did they receive the word of God from him as being the word of God and not of man? Because of the character of the man who proclaimed it. So the missionaries early success can only be, can also be partly attributed to the fact that a long period of civil warfare had left the people poverty stricken, crushed in spirit, desperate for any change, which signified hope.

And the native faiths proved themselves to the people to be destitute of help in the spiritual crisis that followed. And that's why God is going to bring world jewelry to a spiritual crisis. Proved themselves to the

people to be destitute of help in the spiritual crisis that followed.

And that's why God is going to bring world jewelry to a spiritual crisis, that they will be destitute of hope because with that destitution you know what avails and what does not avail and what's it what is acceptable now in your synagogue sent life and Jewish centers and observance of cultural Jewish feast days and your kids go to Hebrew school etc will not avail in the day of crisis in the day of crisis only that which is ultimately true will stand but in the day of relative prosperity affluence and peace virtually anything goes that serves the interest of men and that's why God will bring crisis or it will issue out of the idolatry of men and their forsaking of God what's the definition of idolatry use the word now a dozen times or this morning what's any substitute for God that

celebrates man essentially as God and it could be a little figure an idol or an idolatrous thing would we say that sports today professional sports in America has become idolatrous entertainment is an industry of idols culture heroes celebrated personalities are idolatrous figures of not only admiration but worship does everybody know that in Great Britain today there is a Diana cult and that she is worshipped and that there are assemblages of people who meet to celebrate Diana in the land of Whitfield Wesley and the great saints of all there is a Diana cult well when she died in that accident we were having a convocation here and a brother from England interrupted it because he had received a long distance phone call from his wife that Princess Diana had died and interrupted our

proceedings to announce this fateful event and rushed home left the school to rush home that he could participate in the funeral and sign his name in the guestbook it took six weeks to remove the tons and tons of flowers that were deposited outside the gate of her residence and if anyone watched that funeral I have not yet myself recovered I had no intention of watching it but Inga was up through the night because she loves royalty pomp ceremony and all those kinds of things and though I had vowed not to get up to see it four o'clock in the morning what had me up there it was Inga was watching and I saw the carriages the dignitaries the marching of people with solemnity the royal house the flag at half-mast and the head of the Anglican Church the great primate speaking in such tones as if

this constituted a Christian funeral when she was really a jet-setting pagan and what that communicated to all the world is unbelievable and a real pain to the Lord still scratching my head I don't know what she had that would command the idolatrous devotion of millions that if anyone in England in that day had dared oppose this cut this attention that was being given to her they would have been killed on the spot because the whole nation was running after it and what does she represent she performed some altruistic acts and philanthropies she was a beauty she had affairs she was defied the crown how that makes a woman of an idolatrous object I don't know maybe that's how she would say this where was there in England a measure of devotion of intensity of a comparable kind for Christ as

was expressed for her in that funeral in fact it was the absence of that kind of identification with the Lord and devotion that made the whole nation run to that funeral and to palpitate over it if they had if the Lord had a place in their heart their affection and their esteem they could not have given themselves to it so what is that what does that say about the condition of British Christianity and I receive a journal every month from Great Britain called prophecy today I couldn't wait to get the next issue to see how they would blast that funeral and speak up for God as a prophetic statement against what had taken place and there was nothing I'm looking I'm turning to not a word about that funeral except some kind of obsequious acknowledgment that had taken place with respect well

maybe the next issue the next issue again nothing the next nothing they completely allowed that thing to pass without comment which will condemn the church and nullify any kind of prophetic qualification because of its silence so if you want to read my response to silence it's on the website prophetic response to the funeral of Princess Diana is on our website it's not a masterpiece but better than nothing we could not afford to be silent and allow that idolatrous event to pass worldwide as being Christian and not say something let's spend a moment then what what the prophetic responsibility is to sound a warning but how is it a warning unless it identifies what is represented in that thing we're gonna say warning doesn't really do it what was it what was expressed that needs to be

brought to the awareness of the church where it what it was the condition of the church that has avidly participated in that idolatrous celebration as the unbelieving those are the questions that should have been raised for the prophetic function is not only to warn but to interpret that is to say to see the secular event as God sees it and to make it known that's what the church and the prophetic aspect of the Church of Great Britain failed to do and if you fail to do it is it just that you have missed it once next time you'll catch up next time you'll be on your toes or having missed it then what condition will you be for next time if you've allowed compromise over this how will you be alert for the next challenge that comes so propheticness requires a vigilance of a day-by-day

attention to these things that you don't lose your sensitivity or else you'll be dulled and the true prophet can become false and it will not be long before the prophet that should have spoken in divine indignation to this false religious thing will in the end not only be silent about it but be part in it he'll be invited to the court and receive honors and knighthood which is already happening now and go along and become one of the boys and become the in-house prophetic voice applauding and confirming that establishment if you don't oppose it you'll find yourself in the end being part in it these are great lessons since so we want to benefit from them we're not talking about the prophetic man as some isolated virtue also agent but the prophetic man as being related to a body to the

church to receiving the prayer the counsel the input of the body and being the mouthpiece and the voice but if the church itself is defunct and doesn't witness and see and be anguished in its soul over what takes place how shall it provide the environment out of which the prophet of self is to speak so in the last analysis the issue is not the failure of a single man the issue is the first failure of the church per se at large in its own prophetic responsibility okay let's have a little prayer and a break so precious God we feel like we're getting our feet wet and you're being very gentle we're just lifting our skirt and we're coming in tippy-toe but before you're finished Lord we're going to be swept away by a flood and be brought into the waters too deep to pass over and so we thank you

for that and invite you to continue my god to deepen the waters to come into a realm of inquiry that I don't know the church has ever considered and needs profoundly to consider for as you tell us in Ecclesiastes that which is past is now and the fact that the church in Japan failed or in Germany is not something that we can forget the effect of that failure reverberates still we're suffering the consequence of an unexamined failure which will set us up for our own if we do not take the benefit of the past and understand and internalize what we should receive from it so what we ask you to continue to help us in this inquiry of the issue of church nations and the palace for surely this will be the ultimate question of the last days and it's already upon us so we bless you and thank you

Lord for your love that has sought us out and if we have not made the inquiry you're stirring us to make it and we bless you for that Lord and welcome you to continue giving us the full bore the whole measure in

Jesus name

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