

On Eagles' Wings Pt 38

by Don Courville

Don Courville's sermon calls for a revival in America to restore its foundational Christian values amidst the challenges of a pluralistic society.

Duration: 31:17

Scripture: Judges 17:6, Proverbs 14:34, Haggai 1:5, Haggai 1:7, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Radio Show"

Description

In this sermon, James Hitchcock discusses the state of America and the need for a religious revival. He emphasizes the importance of understanding what is happening in the news media and school systems. Hitchcock highlights the growing strength and militancy of Evangelical Protestants, which has caused panic among secularists. He also emphasizes the need for righteousness to exalt the nation and the importance of prayer and turning back to God for a revival in America.

Transcript

I'm glad to be with you today and share with you on the topic of a pluralistic society in relation to America's freedom. The Bible says in Proverbs 14, 34, that righteousness exalts the nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. And to those of us here today listening to this message that have experienced the fruit of sin in our lives, many of us have not received Christ until later on in life, and we've regretted all of the years of sin that we've reaped.

And we've sown, and now we're reaping the results of it. Righteousness exalts the nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. It is my firm conviction that if we're to see America raised back up to a high standard of holiness, that we need to see a revival in our land.

I have some material that I've been going over the last few days in relation to the pluralistic society. It's in a little booklet that I have, and a lot of it is a quote from Dr. James Hitchcock as he explains what this American Republic is supposed to be, what it was, and how we've gotten to the point to where we're at. And I thought it would be good to take a couple Sundays and share with you, and as this goes out over the broadcasts of On Eagle's Wings, I trust that God will use this to bring us to the point to know how to pray for a revival.

And so I'd like to share some things from this booklet. I'll be doing a lot of quoting and some reading from it, sharing a few verses of Scripture. I believe it's vitally important that we understand what is going on.

We see things happening in the news media, and I'll talk to you about that, and things in our school systems. And we wonder what is going on, and I'll talk to you about that, plus some of the other subjects too. I have a real burning desire in my heart in regard to the family and fathers.

And we took a little bit of time recently to share about fathers, but some years ago I stood in Philadelphia in Independence Hall where the Constitution of the United States and the Declaration of Independence were adopted, and I stood and I saw the place where those men actually laid down their lives on paper, willing to give themselves for our freedom. They signed the Declaration of Independence. They were willing to fight for freedom.

It had been about 400 years ago when some courageous Christian families fled their mother country and settled in the wilderness of North America. And I've been sharing just recently with my children about our roots, how they went through persecution, how many of them went over to Holland first. They left behind their friends, and many of them left behind their possessions in the hope that in the new world they would find the freedom to worship God, and the freedom to teach their children, and the freedom to teach the Word of God and the principles that they longed for.

And so, a little over 200 years ago, the descendants of those Christians met in Philadelphia to draft a document which gave birth to a nation anchored to the rock of biblical truth and morality. This nation was not to be a democracy governed by the whims and fancies of individuals, but this nation was to be a republic governed by biblical principles. I was reading in Judges 17.6 where it says, In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

I propose to you that this pluralistic society that is trying to take over has this idea of doing everything which is right in their own sight. Now, in his article, *Competing Ethical Systems*, Dr. James Hitchcock explains that this American republic has always been viewed as a Christian nation. Now, I know in the latter years I have said many times we are not a Christian nation, but we were founded on the principles of Christianity and the Bible, and we have gone so far from it that if someone was to step off of a plane into our country and walk our streets, they would not say that this was a Christian nation.

Hitchcock said that through much of its history, America has been assumed to be a religious nation, and indeed a good deal of the time a Christian nation. If much of this religiosity has been superficial and even sometimes hypocritical, it has nonetheless expressed the aspirations of probably the vast majority of Americans over the past two centuries. Now, what has happened in our country is that we have become a complacent society.

Christians have become complacent. And because of that, we are losing important social, moral, and political battles because we are fooled by the deceptions of democratic pluralism. This booklet that I am sharing from you says that for generations, Christians across America have pledged their allegiance to the flag and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God.

Now, what has happened to our republic during the last, oh, let's say, forty years? What forces have eroded and undermined the traditional Christian institutions of marriage? What about the family? And of course the churches. We know our churches are in trouble. We know our families are in trouble.

We know our government is in trouble. What has happened so that we no longer stand under God? I propose to you that it is democratic pluralism that has been one of the major forces which has undermined our society. Because it promotes the destruction of all absolute moral values and beliefs in order to ensure

the toleration of all religious and social viewpoints, it, I believe, is part of the root, if not maybe a main part of the root, of destroying us.

Now let me ask you a question. As proposed in this booklet, are we still one nation under God? In the 1950s, public opinion regarded religious beliefs and worship as beneficial to the moral fiber of the nation. Americans were exhorted to go to church on Sunday, and without much regard for which church or why, to be thought a non-believer or even a non-churchgoer could be damaging to a public figure's career.

And so people routinely referred to the Judeo-Christian ethic as a foundation on which belief and behavior could be based. Hitchcock said, to cite one particularly sensitive example, the nation was overwhelmingly family-oriented. Hence there was general agreement about the undesirability of divorce, unmarried cohabitation, homosexuality, and other practices.

However, common they may have been in actuality, there was little inclination to defend them in theory. Agencies of public expression like the schools and the mass media tended overwhelmingly to honor the moral consensus. Now what has happened in our country to cause us to flip-flop from defending the family, defending the position of patriotic Americanism, to the point to where moral foundations of our nation have been shattered, and it's been swift in the last 40 or 50 years.

Things have happened quickly, leaving behind us a society without concern for fundamental moral values. Now, what makes pluralism so dangerous? Well, many Americans, this booklet shared, viewed the abolition of absolute values and moral restraints as desirable. Hitchcock said, in a democracy, no set of values may be imposed on anyone.

All values are entitled to expression, and the aim of the public policy is to maximize the freedom of expression enjoyed by each particular point of view. Not that he agrees with this statement, but this statement came from him. Now the supporters of this present democratic pluralism may seem as harmless, and it may seem rationally right that no one put their moral beliefs on somebody else.

But if we hold to that view, we need to understand what's going to happen. And what we are experiencing is the result of this view. Now its supporters present democratic pluralism as harmless and as a positive thing in which the state remains scrupulously neutral and all movements enjoy an equality of expression and a multiplicity of values interacting with one another.

Demands by any particular group or idea for a favored treatment constitute a violation of democratic courtesy, and the fragmentation of values is viewed positively as simply bringing about greater variety and multiplicity in the world. Now just how has this kind of thinking undermined American values? Well let me share a little bit from the English historian E.R. Norman. He's observed that pluralism is a word which society employs during the transition from one religion or set of values to another.

Practically speaking, it is nearly impossible to maintain a balanced equality among prevailing points of view in any society. The values of a society cannot remain permanently fragmented as the pluralist proposes. He says public policies of various kinds require decisions which inevitably reflect values.

Hence value judgments must be made whether or not this fact is publicly acknowledged. And going on to read a quote, each time such a judgment is made, one set of values is preferred over another set. Someone's beliefs are favored at the expense of someone else's.

And so I propose to you that those who call for pluralism view it as a demand for tolerance or a desire to make room for newer points of view. But in reality, unless a society maintains an authoritative value system, it finds itself powerless to maintain a truly tolerant environment. And so that's what's happening.

We are on a roller coaster downhill. We are heading to the bottom. At the bottom we crash and we are destroyed unless we see a revival in our land, a revival among fathers to lead their families, a revival among churches to pray and seek God's face and turn back from traditionalism, back to the Word of God, building their churches and their worship on the Word of God and not just cold, dead traditions, many of whom may be good, but there's no power.

And to see a revival among our politicians and our leaders, back to the values of our Constitution, you say, why are we trying to burn our flag? Why are we trying to change our Constitution? I say to you, this is why. We are moving away from the values upon which our land was based. Why do we see so much turmoil among our youth? Why is there so much rebellion? It's because the value system that we was established on is being destroyed and it was that value system that gave us the stability that we had for almost the first 200 years of our nation.

Sure, we had our problems, we had our ups and downs, but as we moved from our values and we allowed forces from without to move and settle within, we began to experience the destructive elements that we see about us. Dr. Hitchcock observes that this necessary authoritative value system is attacked most often and most obviously by the mass media. If you sit day after day watching the news, soaking in the news, you will begin to think, even as a Christian, as a pluralist, one of the destructive elements in our country is humanism in our churches.

We think humanistically and not biblically. And many believers are beginning to have an uncomfortable experience in their churches because of this, and if they come up with biblical ideas and the principles of living by faith, they are thought of as strange. Hitchcock said, here the reigning pieties of 20 years ago, religion, capitalism, patriotism, the family, find themselves subject to relentless attack by the news.

The news coverage emphasizes obsessively the problems associated with all these traditional institutions. They jump, I might say, at an opportunity to destroy the values. He goes on to say they are habitually represented as dying, and as dying because they are rigid, with their only hopes for survival based on their ability to change beyond all recognition.

Thus the family will survive, we are told, but only if we understand it as any group of people living in the same dwelling. We have to make room for homosexuals, they say. Homosexuals, the Bible calls them sodomites, are those that will destroy the American family and will destroy the American nation as they have destroyed any nation that they have become dominant in.

In those areas, he went on to say, of the media, which purport to merely entertain people, the powerful weapon of ridicule is constantly directed at traditional values and those who espouse themselves, if you watch family shows that are portrayed on TV. The father is almost unanimously ridiculed and made fun of. He's the joke of the family.

And such people, he went on to say, are routinely depicted as insecure. They're stupid, neurotic, ridiculous. In television fiction, for example, religion is often shown as a deforming influence, rarely as a positive and supportive element in people's lives.

Religious believers are either hypocrites or fanatics. This, my friend, is an attack on our value system in America. And we're letting it go on, we're supporting it.

We support the sponsors. We buy their products that put on this type of stuff. They know what they're doing, but we don't know what they're doing.

And they're gaining control. We wonder why our churches are dying out. We wonder why our kids don't care about God.

Speaking about our children, what about public schools? Are they really neutral? Apparently the media does not hold a monopoly on prejudice against the values and beliefs of Christianity. We have quotes from religious leaders stating very clearly and precisely what their intentions are in our educational system. The media and the school system are just two.

There's others. There's other powerful social agencies, especially those controlled by the government, that share a contempt for biblical morality. I won't get into those now.

But let's consider, for example, the public schools. It goes on, officially neutral as to values, these schools increasingly are based on secular humanistic assumptions which are actively opposed to religious values. The courts and school bureaucracies are obsessively vigilant against the least sign of secretarian influence in the schools.

Not so much as the whisper of a prayer, reading from scripture, or a reverential mention of God is permitted. And am I to interject here? Unless you want to have a transcendental meditation class, then it's okay. Or teach some cult or have a meeting on some kind of political activist group that wants to speak out against our country, then you can meet and you can talk about it, but not God.

Recent decisions have even forbidden students to use school property for private religious meetings. Other groups can meet, it's okay, but not to have a Bible study. Meanwhile, however, the concept of academic freedom is simultaneously expanded to permit, even in some cases, to require the expression of all kinds of controversial political and social opinions, some of which are profoundly inimical to the parents of students in the schools.

And I've experienced this myself, seen it in the material, read it, and as I once taught school, saw it right there in black and white. He went on to say, this model of neutral state schools soon becomes an acknowledged model for various private institutions which are not required by law to exclude religion. They easily fall into the habit of thinking that religion is merely private and divisive.

And he closes up, thus recently, one large business corporation, having actively promoted transcendental meditation among its employees, refused to distribute an evangelical Christian magazine which those same employees were offered free on the grounds that to do so would be to offend those who were not practicing Christians. It goes on in the schools, it goes on in business. Now, let me ask you this question.

This question was thrown out in this booklet, and it said, how does pluralism put God out of the minds of students? The traditional values of our nation's early educational system have been abandoned. Curriculum that once revolved around the word of God now focuses on the social relevance of secular humanism. What's going on? Well, the pluralist argues that the home and the church should teach religion, not the school.

Therefore, all religion must be excluded from public schools. This is their statements, but it doesn't happen in practicality, unless it happens to be Christianity. Then it's got to be excluded.

He goes on to say, this misses the point, because that in modern American society, virtually everything which is deemed worth learning, from patriotism to first aid, sooner or later finds its way into the school curriculum. When something is definitely excluded from the school, impressionable children and young people have difficulty not assuming that it is either false or unimportant. Religious liberty is severely curtailed in that religion is defined as something one is free to practice strictly in private, but which has no legitimate public expression.

If you can remember back in the 1980 election, the cry was raised that religion is meddling in politics. And there's even been court cases supported by established organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union, which would invalidate any legislation shown to have been enacted under secretarian influence. Actually in theory, the governmental agencies in a political society are to remain scrupulously neutral, but in reality, the state aggressively attacks the concept of moral absolutes.

Hitchcock went on to say, government agencies of all kinds profess a new, similar neutrality about religion, which in practice often turns out to be hostility. The principle of separation of church and state is dogmatically, even fanatically, applied that religious believers are in effect excluded from full rights of citizenship. He went on to say, this becomes especially critical as these government agencies move toward usurping more and more of the authority traditionally vested in the family, and to do so in accord with frankly secular and sometimes overtly anti-religious values.

Well pluralism versus Christianity, it's a complex conflict. And I had rather be just preaching the word of God to you this morning, sharing a passage of scripture. But I think it's important, especially as we concentrate on July the 4th and the celebration of our independence, that we understand how we're losing our freedom, and that we understand the vast importance of prayer and turning back to God so that we might see our great nation turned back to him.

Hitchcock went on to say, if the situation now existing in America were simply one of militant secularism on the one hand, confronting an equally aggressive organized religion on the other, there would be little cause for concern. The religious instincts of the American people are probably still so strong that in such a contest secularism would lose. And I agree with that.

He went on to say, however, religion now finds itself on the defensive but does not defend itself. Victories go to its enemies frequently by default. Many Christians are tremendously complacent and locked into the kind of privatism which secularity seeks to promote.

So long as their immediate world is not disturbed, they can continue to attend their church services or their prayer meetings. They pay little attention to what is going on in the larger world. We call this apathy.

Apathy. We don't care. As long as we can go do our thing and you don't bother me and I won't bother you, they're bothering you.

But you're not paying attention. He went on to say, many are emotionally unprepared to admit that they are in a diminishing minority so far as public expression of values is concerned. They seem constitutionally incapable of accepting the role of being on the defensive.

They hope that somehow their problems will be solved for them. My friend, I propose to you that somehow your problems will not just be solved. We need to take the aggressive.

And the aggressive position is on our knees and on our faces before God, humbling ourselves. As God told the Hebrew people, if my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face, and then while I will heal their land. Oh, my friend, hey, what about our churches? How are our churches abiding the cause of pluralism? Are our churches going along with this? Hitchcock went on to say, the so-called mainline churches in fact aid and abet the process of secularization rather than oppose it.

Many of their clergy, and I'm afraid this is true since I work with pastors a lot, my burden is for pastors, but many of the pastors, their national leaders, their prominent lay people appear themselves to be highly secular in outlook. Their religiosity either a hangover from the past or else a mere facade for promoting secular causes. Many churches are nothing more than socialistic institutions under the disguise of a church.

And they do not function as a church. Souls are not saved in that church. If your church does not see souls saved, people are not coming to find Jesus Christ as their Savior, and they're not standing up and rejoicing before everybody that they are saved, that they've trusted Christ, and they're excited about the Word of God.

Your church is not promoting Jesus Christ, it's promoting something else. And chances are, it's promoting pluralism. Hitchcock went on to say, internal confusion is rife within the churches.

Doctrine, whether concerning traditional beliefs like the divinity of Christ or concerning moral behavior, is treated as unimportant. And in some churches, theologians have worked for years to undermine whatever certainty exists on doctrinal matters. This confusion extends now to many of the people in the pews who may vaguely feel that there is something wrong in a society, but who cannot really judge what it is because they lack the educated faith to do so.

I would say educated faith, you would mean that they have Bible thinking in their mind. If you go to a church where people don't bother to take their Bible to church, then I'd say you don't have Bible thinking going on there. If you go to a church where prayer is not a prime concern in that church, then they've learned that they can operate without much prayer.

We can give a nod to God here and there, fifteen minutes of prayer, Wednesday night, or ten. We can give a nod to God and go on and do our programs and our functions. My friends, it doesn't work like that.

This is why many pastors can join together with other pastors that don't have doctrinal beliefs the same as them and work together with them in religious areas, is because they are beginning to think as a pluralist. Now why do Christians misunderstand the motives of pluralism, the booklet went on to say? The democratic pluralistic system is a system of conflict. Christians however seem to suffer from the belief that it is a system which seeks ultimately to reconcile all differences concerning absolute values and thus allow the forces of secular thought to win victory after victory.

This is the danger of it. Christians think, well this sounds okay, this looks okay, but it's not. It's not based on the values of our government and it's not based on the values of scripture.

Hitchcock said, although they speak reverentially about pluralism, they persist in misunderstanding its nature. Rather than a system in which diverse groups mute their differences in the interest of mutual harmony, pluralism is a system in which diverse groups push their own interests strongly and persistently. He said, in a pluralistic society no group is taken seriously until it proves its ability to command social power.

But social power is something many Christians seem to regard as inerrantly evil. Now our time is about gone today. It's been good to be with you and visit with you and share these things.

Maybe some of these things are heavy. You say, what in the world are you talking about? Well, even if I just stir up your imagination to see that there is a root, and if we're going to see fruit, spiritual fruit in our land, we must deal with the root. How can Christians win the battle against pluralism? The booklet asks this question, and I'm glad to see this quote by Hitchcock, a religious revival, he said, is taking place, the strength and scope of which remains is yet uncertain.

In America, the most significant form of this revival is among the evangelical Protestants who show a new coherency, a new militancy, and in some cases a new sophistication. Quite predictably, this newly generated evangelical aggressiveness has stirred anger and panic in those who had assumed that secularism had the public arena all to itself. Haggai said, consider your ways.

He said it twice. Haggai 1, verse 5, consider your ways, and verse 7, consider your ways. Well, I've enjoyed being here with you today.

This message will go out back down where I live on the program called On Eagle's Wings. And let me encourage you, if you've been with us today or you've been listening, to receive Christ as your Savior. If you have problems in your life, you receive Christ as your Savior, you're still going to have problems, but you're going to have a problem solver to lead you through life.

He died for you. He was buried and he rose again the third day. Jesus Christ is the answer to your personal need, and he's the answer to our national need.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/20/SID20126.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/don-courville/on-eagles-wings-pt-38/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net