

## **A CRISIS IN THE AMERICAN HOME**

### **Gary McDade**

America is facing a crisis that is shaking the very foundation of its existence. The recent recognition of “same sex” marriages in Massachusetts is beyond shameful. Although pronounced legal and now licensed, it is no more glamorous than the nauseating sodomy that condemned ancient Sodom and Gomorrah (cf. Gen. 18-19). Read this true account inspired by the One who brought about its destruction, “Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground” (Gen. 19:24-25). These verses are God’s truth no matter how many retched homosexuals deny their existence right on up to the new “bishop” of the Anglican Church who said on camera, “If the man upstairs doesn’t condemn it, then neither should we.” Moses wrote, “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” (Num. 23:19). The truth spoken by the apostle Paul is revisited today when he observed concerning those who tamper with God’s word, “For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written” (Rom. 2:24). The Judas-like betrayal of the truth by many among God’s people today who insist upon and support the silencing of the truth in regard to the horrendous spiritual and moral evils enveloping society lies at the very basis of incentive for people like contemporary sodomites to spew their reproach for the living God out onto mankind. In its fundamental essence the crisis in the American home today is constituted by this kind of rebellion against the word of the living God whether manifested by voracious hypocrites or timid adherents to some of the Christian ideals.

### **A Crisis of Divorce**

A reflection on the divorce rate will establish the proof of the claim. For decades the divorce rate has been fifty percent nationally. The actual numbers compared over this time have been relatively consistent, about one million marriages and about half a million divorces annually. God’s word still says, “And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the Lord of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously”

(Mal. 2:15-16). The Son of God said, “And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery” (Matt. 19:9). Many prefer to ignore what Paul wrote in Romans 7:2-3, “For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.” There are many adulteresses and adulterers in America today, and many of them are very, very young, making it hard for young people to find a qualified mate. Jesus said, “And whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”

### **A Crisis of Discipline**

A consideration of the heightened violence in public schools perennially appearing in the news points to languishingly low levels of personal and parental discipline evident in society. Christian homes are needed where the principle of godly discipline seriously is taken, an example of which is found in Ephesians 6:1-4, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” America is reaping the rich reward of a generation raised by the raunchy writers of the television industry.

### **A Crisis of Devotion**

A crisis of devotion may be examined statistically by reading the church bulletins that post their attendance figures, which show a dramatic disparity between Sunday morning worship attendance figures and any other worship service. Even in congregations where special auxiliary activities are provided apparently to entice greater interest in worship, like youth functions following the evening service and dinner plans for the older folks, there is still a drop in attendance on Sunday night and Wednesday night for the worship of God. Some congregations seem to have allowed these ancillary activities to become the leading emphasis on Sunday evening, sending their families with young people to area wide gatherings instead of remaining with the assembled congregation of which they are members to worship God. Hebrews 10:23-25 is still in the Bible, “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let

us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” When someone argues, as many do, that it is good for our young people to get out of the assembly to join in an assembly with other young people for their social and spiritual enhancement, an understanding of why so many are always absent on Sunday and Wednesday nights is gained because that is precisely the position of those who want to stay home with their family for some “quality time” instead of venturing out. They reason, “We are always so busy we just don’t seem to have time together as a family, and Sunday night is about the only time we actually have together.” Such decisions among inherently good choices require wisdom and good judgment to be exercised to see the surpassing responsibility to the Lord’s church locally. Elders do not have the authority to countermand God’s law regarding the assembly of the saints. Their role is to set up and supervise such assemblies, not to fragment and dismiss them. Somebody needs to love them enough to remind them of their duty because most of them will bow to the political pressures of people. To illustrate the point, parents may within their responsibilities as parents set a curfew or time of arrival for their children to be in at night. Most children want to be in later than the curfew. That is interesting, is it not? It seems to be universally true. If the parents say to be in at ten o’clock the children argue that time is too early and ask why they cannot be in by eleven. Try asking them to be in at eleven and watch the reply to seek to move the curfew to twelve and so on. The point is the parents have the responsibility to set the curfew. The elders have the responsibility to set the times of the assembly. Neither the parents nor the elders have the authority to dispense the expectations for the home and the church. Note: Parents have a scripture authorizing them to place their children as their charges under tutors and governors, that is, allowing them to spend time away from the home visiting with other trusted friends and family members [“governors”], but elders do not (Gal. 4:2). And, note further, decisions on the part of Christians to be absent from the local assembly for reasons like sitting with a sick person or to go out of town visiting or on vacation or to participate in worship with another congregation are decisions made by that person and family, not decisions the Lord granted the elders to make for them. The elders of some congregations are guaranteeing from five to twelve Sunday nights a year will see a drop in attendance equal to the number of their young people and their families who go away to visit other congregations, and in some cases the numbers involved exceed 100 of their members. How edifying for the Christians at the home congregation, usually older members who have born the burden of beginning and sustaining the local congregation and need the encouragement of those more youthful, who stay and keep the home fires burning?

## **A Crisis of Destiny**

A reminder of the weight of these observations appears in Ecclesiastes 11:9 where the wise man who said, “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.” Apathy about destiny is apparent in today’s society, and that not only means unconcern about everlasting punishment in a Devil’s hell, but it also means disinterest in God’s heaven. “Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon” (Isa. 55:6-7).