

# Society and Religion

It is well that war is so terrible, otherwise we should grow too fond of it  
-General Robert E. Lee

This article deals with a fundamental concept that is necessary to understand the role of religion in society. Religion can have numerous meanings, but we must never confuse it with merely believing in the supernatural. There are many Hegelian based ideologies that deny the existence of God, yet use Christian terms to describe their belief system (which I will not address in this paper). Also, many people do believe in one or more gods, yet do not participate in organized worship. Finally, most skeptics (at least in the Western world) treat others in a manner consistent with Christian-based morality. Merriam-Webster defines religion as:

- 1 a personal set or institutionalized system of religious attitudes, beliefs, and practices
- 2a(1) the service and worship of God or the supernatural
- (2) commitment or devotion to religious faith or observance
- 2b the state of a religious (a nun in her 20th year of religion)
- 3a cause, principle, or system of beliefs held to with ardor and faith
- 4 (archaic) scrupulous conformity

Note that only one of the definitions above explicitly calls for a deity; all the others imply a behavior or set of beliefs. One does not need to believe in the supernatural to be religious, nor does a religion need to have a god.

While religion can be an individual experience, it really doesn't amount to much in the sense I will write about here. It is only when religion is shared with others that any real meaning of religion can be found. But for such a sharing to happen, there needs to be a society in which the religion can exist. Society, as I will soon explain, can only exist if there is a common belief that certain behaviors are acceptable while other behaviors are not. Society needs religion to hold it together. Organized religion, however, has special needs that require outside assistance. Religion needs society for protection and support. I don't know if society predates [meaningful] religion, or *vice versa*. I believe the existence of one necessitates the existence of the other, just like one cannot be a lover without at the same time having a beloved. Perhaps, like love, one or the other initiated this dualism, but nonetheless they must come into existence simultaneously.

Next, I want to point out that the terms "rights" and "entitlements" do not exist in nature. In nature, it is kill or be killed. One only has what one has made, killed, captured or stolen. Hunter becomes hunted in the blink of an eye, and second chances are rare at best. It is society that provides the security necessary to go beyond merely surviving. The ability to sleep with a sense of security, to not have to hide or guard one's possessions, to have assistance when ill, etc., all require some type of society, and this society needs to have some type of common moral code to govern ethical behavior. And, looking at definition 3 above, we see that it is religion that provides the motivation to obey this code even when it is not desirable to do so. The only alternative is to return to the kill or be killed reality of non-society.

In order to benefit from the advantages of society, one must give up some freedom and recognize some type of privilege to those who do the providing. If one does not want to worry about one's food being stolen while one is away, then one must not only give up the right to steal other's food,

but to provide for others (such as taxes for a police force) so they can protect one's food. And if others in the society have skills or knowledge that one does not have, but wants to benefit from these skills (such as medical aid), then the providers deserve some compensation for giving this service. After all, the time they spend helping one is time they cannot spend to meet their own needs.

But humans will behave as if they are human, and the power that comes from this privilege is very corrupting. To check this power, society needs some form of government that is "agreed" upon by all parties, even if such agreement is only implied from living within the society's jurisdiction. The primary purpose of this is government to protect the weak from the strong. Yes, the privileged deserve certain advantages the majority do not get in exchange for the special services they provide, but such advantages should not exceed the benefits they bring to the society at large. So a government must have a constitution (either written or implied) that identifies how much protection the common people have against the advantages of the elite. Some societies may do a horrible job in performing this duty, but their corruption does not discredit the concept of government itself. Abuses do not mean that the institution of government needs to be abandoned; it means the particular government needs better standards and/or those administering the government need to be replaced.

Besides government, there are two dynamics within a society that must happen. The first dynamic is that the more services the privileged provide, the more freedoms must be given up by the common person. The second dynamic is that, in case of emergency, freedoms normally enjoyed in a society must be *temporarily* given up to ensure the survival of the society. These dynamics are absolute reality; there is no getting around them. Any apparent success in defying these dynamics is an illusion, and a very toxic illusion at that.

For the first dynamic, suppose one fears being physically attacked. The government can provide protection by arresting and jailing known violent people. One must pay some taxes to support this effort, and some laws will be inconvenient, yet a large degree of freedom exists, as fear no longer affects one's choices. Hiring a bodyguard will provide even more protection, but his very presence will mean less privacy, and his insistence on avoiding contact with some people or in not going to certain locations will impact the freedom of the one being guarded. And the ultimate form of security would mean one being locked up in a special room with cameras and other equipment constantly monitoring one against all threats (as is commonly employed in China these last few years). Assuming those who are protecting us have our best interests in mind, we are at our safest when we have neither privacy nor freedom. The problem with this is that one is now completely helpless against those in charge who do not have our best interests in mind. Naturally, there are infinite degrees of security between the extremes presented here, and some solutions will seem more agreeable than others. But security will always be inverse to privacy and freedom.

The second dynamic is simply the reality that the unexpected can, and often does, happen. Many times, societal norms are flexible enough to take the unexpected in stride, but not always. There will inevitably come a time when either a few must give up their rights or all will give up their rights. If the few do not, or cannot, give up their rights, then the society will fail. Without society, no rights or entitlements exist. No doubt some new society will take its place, but this is rarely a good thing. At best, the new order will have to discipline the survivors so they will assimilate themselves into the new normal. At worst (and also the most common), the new order will simply enslave the survivors. And such enslavement need not come from without. If a subculture can destroy the larger society, then they have a chance to create a new society as they see fit. And the easiest way for a subculture to enslave the greater society is to create an emergency where the resources of the society are consumed faster than can be replaced. If allowed to happen long enough, eventually the society will collapse under its

own weight. This, I think, is the meaning behind the words of General Lee (quoted at the beginning of this article) a century and a half ago.

Although he spoke of war in particular, the same warning can be applied to any emergency. If we make this substitution, we get "It is well that the emergency is so horrible, lest we grow too fond of it." From here, I don't think it takes too much imagination or explanation. Why is it wrong to grow fond of the emergency? Because fondness encourages society to accept or even desire the emergency to continue. Why is it wrong to keep the emergency going? Because it will eventually destroy society like a cancer. We saw this during the Covid panic. People were paid to stay at home. Things we once considered obligatory but distracting, such as church, were prohibited and therefore gave us a feeling of liberation. Yes, we had to wear annoying things on our faces, but we could promote our favorite sports team or make a fashion statement by accessorizing our masks while doing so. And we were told we were all heroes for not visiting lonely neighbors or sick relatives.

Our society grew way too fond of Covid. Today, we are missing untold numbers of businesses that will never come back. Surviving businesses are struggling with a cultural mindset that showing up to work is optional. With the loss of the work force, prices are soaring because fewer products are being manufactured, and the quality of what is being produced has suffered. Children are now deficient in social skills. Young adults are showing a spike in suicides. Untold numbers of people have died because routine medical attention was deferred or even canceled. A poor quality of life for those suffering in great pain is also the result of deferred and canceled medical procedures. Abortions, however, were allowed to continue with little or no problems as they were considered "essential." Killing unborn children was more important than giving timely medical attention to someone with chest pains or excruciating hernias, and anyone who dared to point this out was often censored from public forums. There was no public outrage -- the public was too comfortable getting paid for doing nothing. This is what "being stronger together by staying apart" looks like. Society as we once knew it has been severely crippled.

This is a serious problem for Christians. The United States was founded on Christian morals (contrary to popular opinion, 51 of the 55 delegates who framed the Constitution were declared Christians, and this was an age when one usually had to take a vow to follow church tenets to be a member of the church). If this society is destroyed, then a new society will take its place. And there is no indication whatsoever that those who will frame it have any desire to be tolerant to Christians. Indeed, many of the most likely would-be candidates openly declare Christianity as a great sin to mankind. Ever since the 1960's, those who sought to destroy the U.S. have appealed to a corrupted version of the Christian virtues charity and justice (to win Christians over) while at the same time declaring Christianity as the last great holdout of oppression. They know that to destroy the U.S. means to destroy [authentic] Christianity, and *vice versa*. There can no longer be a lover when the beloved is gone, and *vice versa*.

The most effective tool these usurpers have comes from having the Supreme Court (in 1962) ruling that the 1st Amendment call for separation of church and state means Christian teachings are not allowed in public schools. This allowed the presumed "secular" and "enlightened" socialism to take its place. And the society that is a classroom is no different than a nation, there must be a religion. And socialism *is* a religion. Some may say it is a godless religion, but if a god is an idealized being to whom any and all sacrifices must be suffered for, then socialism does have a god -- man perfected. This religion now permeates not only all levels of education, but it has a death grip on government and even our churches. It is not possible to maintain a society without a religion, and socialism, if successful, will be the religion that shapes the new society.

The other tool against Christianity and the United States is the misconception that one does not have to inconvenience oneself for society because God has everything taken care of. In the sense that the Kingdom of Heaven will exist when the Earth no longer does, this is correct (the Theological Virtues of faith and hope). But failure to sacrifice oneself for the good of an Earthly society means abandoning the four Cardinal Virtues (prudence, temperance, justice and, perhaps most obviously, fortitude). Faith and hope in God's plan is no excuse for cowardice. Jesus never once told His disciples to hide and wait for the best to come. He sent them out "like sheep in the midst of wolves" (Matthew 10:16). He warned us several times that those who sought Him would suffer for doing the right thing several times (such as in Matthew 16:17-18). Those who put no effort towards doing what is right will be "[bound hand and foot] and cast into the darkness outside where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth," (taken from the end of the parable of the Wedding Feast, Matthew 22:13). But I think Anthony Bouscaren and Daniel Lyons said it best. The following quote is taken from pages 208-209 of their book *Left of Liberal*. While they spoke specifically of events in the 1960's, all one has to do is substitute BLM, Antifa, NWO, LBGTQ+, wokism, abortionists, extreme environmentalists, or any other socialist group in the place of "draft dodgers" to see the message remains essentially the same.

Those [draft dodgers] who are "sowing the seeds of treason" are not only abdicating their duties as citizens, they are utterly alien to the Christian tradition, since they hold our Judeo-Christian civilization in such low esteem that they prefer not to fight for its survival. Christian pacifism, which disguises itself in the external trappings of Christian charity and Christian love, is the very antithesis of that kind of love because it chooses ... to be completely selfish, to live off our particular kind of advanced civilization and culture and to the benefit for so doing, while at the same time refusing to discharge the inherent responsibilities required for its preservation and perpetuation.

... So-called Christian pacifism is not only irresponsible, it is heretical and even barbaric. To the extent that it weakens our collective will to resist the modern barbarians, to the extent it increases the enemies' capability and will to root out and destroy our entire civilization and culture. It is, in fact, an utterly ignoble heresy, a heinous sin on par with suicide.

Furthermore, we have Pope Pius XII, who made similar claims: "The genuine Christian will for peace means strength, not weakness or weary resignation. ... Every war of aggression against the goods which the Divine plan for peace obliges men unconditionally to respect and guarantee and, accordingly, to protect and defend, is a sin, a crime, an outrage against the majesty of God and ordainer of the world. Consequently, a people threatened with unjust aggression, or already its victim, may not remain passively indifferent if it would think and act as befits Christians." (also quoted in *Left of Liberal*)

We cannot pretend that all that is happening in the United States is not terrible, because we will become too fond of it. Socialism, like the virus its contemporary proponents (such as Kimberle Crenshaw) freely admit it is, will destroy the host. This is what they want. But most of those promoting the socialist religion are blind to the fact that socialism will die with the host. We won't be the only ones to suffer for our lack of action; our progeny will. It took Rome 300 years to accept Christianity. When Rome fell, it took almost an entire millennium before new societies came into existence that were worth living in. And only once in human history has anything like the United States come along. Imperfect as it is, nothing else ever compared to what it provided its citizens. No

other country was successfully founded on the idea that all humans have God-given rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Those who seek to destroy the United States want to bring mankind to a state even worse than paganism. They want to make man an unfettered god in his own right (the god of socialism I mentioned earlier).

God will be triumphant in the end, and many martyrs will be made in the process. But there is nothing charitable or just in knowingly bequeathing our progeny the Tribulation. Jesus specifically tells us to pray against it ("do not subject us to the final test" Matthew 6:13 and Luke 11:4), and promises a horrid fate for those who would allow it to happen ("whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were put around his neck and he were thrown into the sea," Mark 9:42, and a parallel passage in Matthew 18:6). The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 11:4) tells us that inaction is a mortal sin. Society exists for our benefit, and therefore we are sometimes called to sacrifice ourselves for it. Society is inseparable from religion, and our society and religion tell us *we* are to be the sacrifice, not our children. Jesus Himself set the example for us, giving all for the perfect society of His kingdom.

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