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America's Low View of God

By Freddy Davis

Over the last several years, some very shocking statistics have come out about the state of religion in America. From its very founding, Christian beliefs and values have formed the foundation of every aspect of American society. That has seemingly come to an end.

Understanding this phenomenon can be a bit tricky, however, because the nation still gives lip service to our founding values. That said, the interpretation and application of those values are now mostly run through a naturalistic worldview lens rather than a Christian one. The basis for all of the traditional moral values in the country are based on the teachings of the Bible. In modern times, lip service is given to the Christian values, but they are not expressed in society based on biblical worldview beliefs.

Here are some examples of how this is playing out:

- Many churches now affirm God as a God of love, but reject His righteousness and justice.
- Abortion is accepted by a over 60% of the American public.
- An entire political party supports illegal immigration.
- A significant percentage of judges make rulings based on their political preferences rather than on the law itself.

And we could go on listing issues in other areas where relativistic morality is the basis for decisions made in society. It is now ubiquitous.

Christian pollster George Barna, in his 2025 polling of religious beliefs in American society, gives us a more concrete sense of what is happening based on peoples religious beliefs.

Out of the *total American population*:

- Only 40% of Americans believe that the God of the Bible exists and influences human lives.

- Only 16% say God is the most important element in their lives.
- Just 9% claim to have an intimate, interactive relationship with God.

And among *Americans who actually claim to be Christians*:

- Only 20% claim to have an intimate, interactive relationship with God.
- Nearly 1/3 don't believe God is actively involved in their lives.
- Over 2/3 say they don't allow God to have total influence over their lives and decisions.

Barna has also drilled down and given us a sense of how *self-identified American Christians* think about God specifically.

- 53% believe in the God of the Bible.
- 78% believe in Jesus Christ.
- 30% believe in the Holy Spirit
- 16% believe in the Trinity.

These percentages are, of course, higher among specific groups of Christians who have a higher commitment to Christ. But the more committed to Christ they are, the smaller percentage of Christians they represent.

In some ways, these statistics tell you all you need to know about why American society is in the sad shape it is in these days. It would be bad enough if people were just ignoring God, but that's not what is happening. What we see portrayed here is a majority in society whose understanding of God is so skewed that it is questionable whether or not the God they believe in is actually the God of the Bible – particularly when it comes to the subject of the Trinity.

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To be fair, understanding the biblical concept of Trinity is quite a challenge, and it is not really surprising that so few people understand it. But the reason for that is not that explanations are not available. It is that most people have bought into a naturalistic worldview that doesn't even allow for the existence of a personal God who can propositionally reveal Himself to mankind, much less one who exists in a form that is impossible based on the laws of the natural universe. A trinitarian God as revealed in the Bible can only exist in an eternal realm that is not subject to the laws of the natural universe. Simply put, there is no equivalent analogy in material reality for the idea that one being could exist as three persons.

Perhaps the closest we can imagine in human experience concerning the idea of Trinity is a person who has multiple personalities (in this example three). In using that illustration, though, we immediately recognize that a person who has multiple personalities actually has a mental disorder. But beyond that, there is another problem with this kind of illustration. A person with multiple personality disorder does not actually represent three persons in one being. Rather, it is one person with three personalities.

But God, as a Trinity, is not a single person with multiple personalities. He is, literally, one being who exists as three separate and distinct persons (a being who has three separate centers of consciousness). As such, He is a completely unique expression of unity and diversity. In spite of the fact that it is difficult for us to grasp, the concept of Trinity is prominently found in the Bible and is absolutely critical to a Christian understanding of God.

As a Trinity, God expresses His personhood in three specific attributes of His essence – Father, Son (Christ), and Holy Spirit. As Father, He demonstrates His creative power and fatherly love toward His creation. As Son, He serves as the Savior of mankind. As Holy Spirit, He provides for personal interaction between Himself and mankind. While these are not complete

descriptions of the Trinity and the way each of the persons expresses Himself, they do define the parameters of His personhood as He relates to mankind.

It should not distress us that God exists as a person who is so far beyond us that we cannot fully comprehend His personhood. He is, after all, God. Rather, we should be grateful that He has seen fit to reveal Himself as completely as He has, and do all we can to fully express our devotion to Him.

The problem Naturalists have in grasping this concept is that they believe the natural universe, operating by natural laws, is all that exists. That is the lens they view reality through, so the idea that there is a part of reality that transcends the natural universe doesn't even register. If a person claims to believe in God, that person's belief is dismissed out of hand because it does not correspond to the naturalistic worldview beliefs the person does accept.

But the question must be asked, "Why do so many people who claim to be Christians use a naturalistic filter to evaluate their Christian faith?" It is, obviously, not a Christian filter.

In earlier times in America, a biblical worldview did dominate society. However, over the last several generations, Naturalism has come to dominate virtually every institution in American society. It dominates in the news media, education, arts and entertainment, government, business, the family, and even many churches. These beliefs surround us so comprehensively, that it has become the generally accepted (practically default) worldview environment. It is so ubiquitous that most people don't even see it anymore, they just accept it. And in accepting it, they incorporate it into their own worldview beliefs without evaluating it, or even realizing it.

In truth, churches should be recognizing what is going on and fighting back. And when I say "fighting back," I don't mean simply railing against it. I mean actively training their people how to stand strong against these false beliefs. And make no mistake, they are false beliefs.

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Let's revisit some of the statistics from the beginning of this article.

- Only 40% of Americans believe that the God of the Bible exists and influences human lives.
- Just 9% of the population claims to have an intimate, interactive relationship with God.
- Only 20% of self-identified Christians claim to have an intimate, interactive relationship with God.
- Nearly 1/3 of those who claim to be Christians don't believe God is actively involved in their lives.
- Over 2/3 of self-identified Christians say they don't allow God to have total influence over their lives and decisions.

And regarding self-identified American Christians' view of God ...

- 43% don't believe in the God of the Bible.
- 22% don't believe in Jesus Christ.
- 70% don't believe in the Holy Spirit
- 84 % don't believe in the Trinity.

How is it possible that the country has drifted so far from God?

How is it possible that so few people who call themselves Christians don't believe what the Bible teaches about God?

It has happened because churches have neglected the teaching of Ephesians 4:11-13. It reads:

11 And He gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith,

and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

These verses share a very profound principle – that the work of church leaders is to “*equip the saints for the work of ministry.*” The only way the masses in society are going to be reached is for all believers to:

- recognize their place in God's plan,
- become equipped to take the gospel into the world,
- and then to actually do it.

Church leaders by themselves simply don't have that reach.

This approach is, without a doubt, the most difficult thing to pull off effectively in a local church. It requires more effort on the part of both the leaders and church members than virtually anything else the church does – which is why it is the most neglected part of church ministry.

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But all you have to do is look once more at the statistics above to concretely see the results of the neglect. God is the only hope for our nation, and the only way things will ever get turned around is if churches start getting serious about equipping the saints for the work of ministry. It is way past time to put on a full court press to start turning things around.