

Supplement to Chapter I

Everything we see, everything we hear, everything we read, or say - basically everything we feed into our mind - goes into a memory bank to form our own, personal data-base. And just as a mechanical computer performs on the basis of what is fed into it, the data-base we have accumulated in our heart and mind predictably determines our attitude and actions.

Could it be that in order for us to survive the persistent surge of activity, the increasing wickedness and sensuous materialism, it is becoming ever more urgent for us to make room in our lives for such a place? Is our Lord running after you, longing for the moment when you will slow down long enough to meet with Him - in a "quiet place"? pg 19, par 2

In the first chapter of *The Sword* and in other places throughout the book reference is made to the subtle but aggressive advance of evil in our society and in our world. This lesson is designed to alert you to this evil agenda that is being thrust upon us and challenge you to take a stand against it.

In the United States, June, 1962 for the first time in the history of (that) country, Christian principles were separated from public education. With neither legal nor historical precedence, a high court decision made prayer illegal in Public Schools. This was followed in later years by the legal prohibition of Bible reading, religious instruction and even the display of the ten commandments on Public School properties.

Teachers, over the years, have been asked to identify the top problems in America's public schools. In 1940 they identified these as the top problems:

- talking out of turn
- making noise
- cutting in line
- litter
- chewing gum
- running in halls
- dress code infractions

When asked the same question in 1990, they identified:

- drug abuse
- pregnancy
- rape
- assault
- alcohol abuse
- suicide
- robbery

(From the *Index of leading Cultural Indicators* published by Heritage Foundation, March 1993.)

According to this same publication, the population increased 41 percent from 1960 to 1990. They state that during this same 30-year period:

- violent crime increased over 500 percent
- illegitimate births increased 400 percent
- divorces increased 400 percent
- children living in single-parent homes increased 300 percent
- teenage suicide increased 200 percent
- S.A.T. scores dropped almost 80 points - despite huge increases in support for

education

- (since 1976 child abuse increased 340 percent)

1. On the back of this page, list the negatives you have seen evolve in your culture during your lifetime. Go back as far as your memory will permit and document the decline you have observed.

These are some of the things that have eroded our culture during my 78 years here in the United States. I was amazed at how long my list became and it is by no means exhaustive.

Any reference to God or Jesus is being progressively eliminated from our American culture. As mentioned above prayer has become illegal *in Public Schools* along with Bible reading, religious instruction and even the display of the ten commandments.

The display of the ten commandments *on any public property* is aggressively contested. There are constant challenges on the use of "In God we trust" on our currency and "One nation under God" in our pledge of allegiance.

A concerted effort is being made to wipe *Christmas* completely off the map.

Displaying nativity scenes on public property is aggressively opposed.

It is now politically incorrect to say "Merry Christmas". "Happy Holidays" is being promoted as the accepted term. and "Winter Break" for "Christmas Vacation".

Even Santa Clause is under fire and the use of the color red.

Even the Easter Bunny is threatened because of its association with Easter.

Individuals in the judicial system (some very ungodly) have been given authority over our majority vote and elected officials.

Absolutes have been abandoned in favor of an "if it feels good do it" philosophy. Immorality, co-habitation, promiscuous life styles and perverted sex have made great strides toward universal acceptance.

Accepting terms for sin are being coined: gay, alternative life style, love child.

Drug and alcohol abuse, especially among young people, is destroying lives and families.

Increasing physical and sexual abuse of children is heartbreaking.

Abortion for all is being paid for by tax dollars, including for teenagers without parental knowledge.

Teenage pregnancies and unwed mothers raise no eyebrows.

The spread of sexually transmitted diseases is ever on the rise.

Euthanasia for the sick and elderly looms on the horizon.

Suicide is now the number one cause of death among young people

Satanic and occultic practices are widely practiced.

Heinous murders and unthinkable abuse of victims are constant items in the news.

Political corruption, unethical behavior and moral depravity are shaking, even threatening our whole democratic system.

Acceptance of lewd and suggestive dress boggles the mind (and stings the eyes!).

Music, becomes ever more demonic, blasphemous and evil with deafening sound and sensuous gyrations and contortions

Blasphemous and evil works of so called "art" are being funded with tax dollars.

Pornography, some specifically targeted for children is rampant on the web, on television and is even a commodity on the New York Stock Market.

Breakdown of the home and rampant divorce fray the fibers of family life.

An exclusive "one man-one woman" marriage is under siege.

Children's lives are being torn apart in domestic turmoil and divorce.

Movies are becoming ever more sexually explicit, violent, perverted, occultic and profanity, with blasphemy being readily accepted.

An ever increasing tempo of life and activities both secular and religious is gripping society

Schools and universities, aside from the religious aspects mentioned above, are being eroded by:

lowered standards of teaching staff: both moral, scholastic and political.

decline in standards of learning for students.

broad exposure to the homosexual lifestyle even in the lower grades.

lack of discipline.

drugs, shootings, sexual attacks in the schools of both students and faculty.

classes actually promoting blasphemy, promiscuity, and occultic activities.

And this doesn't even touch on the changes in dress code.

2. Contemplating what you have written above, what conclusion must you draw?

We have an enemy who is systematically walking our world down a steady path of spiritually, moral and political decline. His aim is to eliminate any sensitivity toward evil and is aimed at dragging God's people along with him.

3. Is it possible for us to escape these influences in our life?

We would have to become a complete hermit to exclude them, entirely.

We probably could shield ourselves from some of them although others would be impossible to avoid.

We can't escape the attacks but by being aware of them we can resist them and take steps toward arming ourselves against them as outlined in this book.

4. How do you see the deterioration of the secular culture around us affecting the Christian church?

The church is becoming ever more tolerant and even accepting of practices that would have horrified us a few years ago. e.g. unwed mothers, co-habitation before marriage (some so called "evangelical" churches are even embracing homosexuality.)

Statistics indicate that divorce in the church, unheard of a few years ago, has equaled if not exceeded that of the world.

Haven't some of the movies that Christians considered so sinful a few years back become a welcomed relief compared to some of the garbage being promoted today?

How has the music of today influenced the Christian scene? (A controversial subject, for better or for worse but not something we can ignore.)

Devote pastors of smaller congregations are being forced out of the pastorate in favor of "mega" churches

We cannot deny that our church services, our rallies and our whole presentation of the gospel and Christianity has been grossly affected.

5. As you have listed the decline you have seen in your lifetime in #1, try to evaluate how this has influenced your thinking, your values and your acceptance of questionable practices. Sometimes the erosion is so subtle it is not easily defined, unless you go

back 10 or 20 years and measure from there. Be as objective as you can using your first memories until now.

6. As well as the intrusion of evil on your daily existence, do you see a stressed agenda as an added negative to keep you marking time or losing ground spiritually? Are you aware of the planned strategy that is being executed against you in this area? Explain. Some missionaries coming home to the United States from the field are so overwhelmed by the pace of life they are eager to return to the field.

A calculated and well planned assault is being launched against us constantly, and from every angle. It is becoming increasingly more evident that it is vital for us to likewise have a planned strategy to combat the erosion of our values, our way of life and our commitment to the Lord in order for us to hold our ground and make progress, spiritually.

7. Addressing the time aspect, how effective has the enemy been in monopolizing your time? What percentage of your time are you occupied with contemplating the words and truths of Scripture versus the time you spend focused on this world's agenda? Looking at your data base, what do you think the ratio might be between the two as you evaluate this past year?

8. Contemplate for a moment: Solomon said: *Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.* (Proverbs 4:23). Do you see a need for a strong antidote to counter the constant bombardment of negative and evil that is being launched against you? Would not the introduction of pure, clean, unadulterated truth into your life be a "refreshing breeze" in contrast to the stench that surrounds us. Where does such help lie???