

The Conscience Of A Nation

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[0:00] Today I am putting on my prophet's hat, and not in the sense of foretelling, trying to tell you what's going to happen in the future, but in the sense of foretelling.

This is where the prophets in the Old Testament and in the olden days would use the word of God to speak truth to power to the doors of governments, and it's something that is needed.

We are taking a break today, obviously, from our series in the Gospel of Luke, and speaking to something that from time to time we will address.

In the last 50 to 70 years, we have seen a great deterioration of our culture here in our country. And I know that some people will say, oh no, he's going to be speaking on politics today.

I would take issue with looking at it from that perspective. Yes, there is a sense where we're speaking about politics, but actually, I think from my perspective, I think from a biblical perspective, we're actually today going to be speaking on moral and biblical issues that people have turned into political issues.

[1:25] That 50 or 70 years ago, these would not have been considered political. These would have just been considered Bible issues, moral issues, not necessarily political issues.

And I know that there are some pastors who would say, well, I don't think that it's appropriate for the pastor to speak on politics.

And Satan gets that. And it's the reason why Satan has basically tried to turn every issue into a political issue so as to shut the preachers up.

And so I'm not going to fall into that category. I'm not going to take that bait. And where the issues are biblically addressed and moral issues, we will certainly speak to those issues, whether they seem to be political or not.

In our country, we don't seem to have civil discussions anymore. It's your one extreme or the other, and we're not allowed to converse back and forth between each other.

[2:35] What used to be simple disagreements where brothers could speak and disagree and still be brothers, that seems to have gone by the wayside.

And we have descended in our nation into a level of insanity. What we're doing today is I'm breaking today's message into two parts.

I'm going to address some of the levels of insanity that we have seen in recent years in our nation. And then we're going to take a look at where our national conscience comes from, what it is and what is the source of this conscience as a nation that we have.

And we certainly do have that. But to address this, and you have this on your notes, the current insanity among us has to do, one of the things has to do with Marxism.

Marxism is something that isn't new. It's been around for quite a while. And you have that sheet now in front of you, and now is the time to take that out.

[3:44] And in that sheet, you can see seven major conflicts between God's word and Marxism. On the far right-hand column are basic tenets of Marxism.

The middle column tells us what the biblical view is, and we're going to highlight a couple of these as we make our way through. And then on the far left is each particular item for discussion.

So, for instance, on the subject of identity, Marxism teaches that identity is primarily defined and rooted in certain traits, whether it's a person's gender, whether it's a person's color of their skin, or their sexual identity.

And, boy, is that a sad place to find our identity. Because for believers in Christ, our identity is not found in any of those things. Our identity is found in Christ.

Galatians 3.28, There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, nor male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. That is where our identity comes from.

[4:57] And if we're saying that, no, my identity is more based upon my gender or my color, it is a humanistic viewpoint that will really take you down a path that leads to destruction.

And so be careful with that. Human marriage and the family. Marxism teaches that marriage and the family are pillars of an oppressive social system and need to be redefined, manipulated, or completely abolished.

They want to tear down marriage and the family structure. They want to say that it is the state that gives us what marriage and the family in the past would have given us.

But again, Scripture teaches us very plainly. This is from Matthew 19, Jesus quoting from the book of Genesis. We're going to be referring to the book of Genesis throughout today.

The book of Genesis, if you've not read it, if you've not studied it, it is crucial for understanding a lot of what's happening in our world today.

[6:03] I know our Thursday night Bible study group led by Jeff McVanel, they're going through the book of Genesis now. And as you do, as you read through the book of Genesis, you'll discover that much of what ails us today is resolved way back in the book of Genesis.

Matthew, Jesus here quoting from the book of Genesis, have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female? That answers one of the questions that we have in our culture today.

And said, therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. It is interesting to me that there are some people who would say that Jesus never spoke to the issue of gay marriage, and I think he did right here.

That marriage, by definition, is between a man and a woman, as God has designed, created, and ordained from the beginning. Again, another issue dealing with guilt.

Guilt, again, from a Marxist perspective, is based on identity. People with oppressor identities, this goes into critical race theory, which we're going to discuss too in a moment.

[7:16] People with oppressor identities are automatically guilty. So if you're white and male and a Christian, you are a triple threat and oppressor.

You are guilty just by association, by being those three things. If you're any one of them, you're guilty as well, but even more so if you're all three.

So you're automatically guilty and you can't help but being evil is what Marxism would teach. And if you're not any of those things, then there you are.

You are oppressed. And we see in our culture today this oppressor versus oppressed kind of theology, if you will, that is being all throughout government, all throughout academic institutions, all throughout media.

It's everywhere around us. But the scriptures teach us that guilt is determined by our relationship with God. And again, the Bible clearly states this all over the place.

[8:19] I'm just picking just one here. Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins. Our guilt is because of our own sin, our actions to sin against a righteous and holy God.

Now, in New York City, the current frontrunner for the Democratic nomination for the position of mayor in New York City, the current leading candidate for that is a fellow by the name of Zohran Mamdani, who is an Indian national here in the United States and very much so a cultural and economic Marxist.

He has said things such as this. If we're all talking about the cancellation of student debt, if we're talking about Medicare for all, these are issues which have the groundswell of popular support across this country.

And I pause here for this statement. Some of the things that he's promising for the residents of New York City is a freeze on rent and government-owned grocery stores and, of course, the cancellation of all student debt.

These are the freebies. Medicare for all is another one. Freebies that he wants to just give away, never mind how it's paid for. But it goes on. It goes on from there.

[9:39] But then there are also other issues that we firmly believe in, whether it's BDS. And BDS has to do with boycotting, divesting, and sanctioning Israel as a nation.

This man is very anti-Israel and anti-Semitic, even to the point of agreeing with and restating phrases like, globalize the Intifada and from the river to the sea.

Now, if you don't know what those phrases mean, that's okay. I get that. You may not be familiar with that. But what they basically mean is that Israel and all the Jewish people living in the nation of Israel should be eliminated, put to death from the river to the sea, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, all of those Jews who are living in that part of the world should be destroyed. And globalize the Intifada basically means to bring this war against Jews to every land on the world, including to New York City, which amazes me because Jews, New York City is the second most populated city in the world for Jewish people.

And yet many Jews still would support a man like this. It blows the mind. Now, we'll see a reason for that shortly, but this is what he is proposing.

[11:16] Whether it's BDS or whether it is the end goal of seizing the means of production, and if you have learned anything, I don't know if in high school they teach you what communism or Marxism is all about, but that phrase, seizing the means of production, is about as communist as they come.

So this is where they're at, where we do not have the same level of support. He's admitting that we don't, right now, we don't have the same level of support on those two issues as we do on the first two that he mentioned there.

So here's another one. Racism is sin, which we accept this idea that racism is sin, but now beyond that comes critical race theory, which is very problematic.

Now, James chapter 2 deals with the issue of racism or partiality as it's called in James chapter 2. But if you show partiality, it could be based on nationality, it could be based on economic means, it could be based on skin color.

But if you show favoritism towards one group of people over another, they're just based on those kinds of characteristics. James says you are committing sin and you are convicted by the law as transgressors.

[12:35] It is wrong to show racism of any kind. It is just very clearly a sin. The Bible declares that. Now, critical race theory goes beyond that.

And from an article in Answers in Genesis, Answers in Genesis is a great organization that, again, refers to the book of Genesis as the source of answers for a lot of different issues.

Mostly their main focus is having to do with evolution versus creation. So racial definitions are problematic. Now, listen to the quote.

Because not only are they stigmatizing, they are historically wrong. Now, I want to tell you who they're quoting here in this article from Answers in Genesis. They're quoting this man.

This man is Ambrose Wonkum. Doctor. Several times over. Three times over. A doctor. He's from Cameroon, Africa. That ought to give you a clue.

[13:38] That he's not American. Because he's from Africa, he's not been poisoned by a lot of this critical race theory. So even though this man is not a Christian, and even though this man believes in, quote-unquote, evolutionary biology, in other words, he believes in evolution, listen to what he says about race.

Well, let me tell you a little bit more about him first. Director of the Department of Genetic Medicine at Johns Hopkins Medical Center. Professor of Medical Genetics at Johns Hopkins University. And President of the African Society of Human Genetics.

This is when they affectionately refer to someone as a brain on a stick. Okay? This guy is brilliant. Now, he's not a Christian. So from that perspective, biblically, from the book of Proverbs, he's a fool.

Okay? He is anti-God because he is not a Christian. But look at what he says. Because not only are they stigmatizing these definitions, they're historically wrong.

Race is often used as a proxy for genetic diversity. But race, quote, race cannot be used to capture diversity at all. This man, who is an evolutionist, would tell us that race doesn't exist.

[14:58] And if you know anything about the book of Genesis, you would agree with that statement, as the people in Answers in Genesis did. That's why they quoted him. There's only one race, and it's the human race.

Remember, we're all descendants of Adam and Eve. We all come from the same race. Whether your skin color is black or brown or yellow or white, or as my mom would sing the song, orange or purple, or that's how she said, whatever color you are.

It doesn't matter. We all belong to the human race. We all are family from that perspective. That's why we don't show racism because of that.

So there's only the one human race. Now, another issue, and I've already kind of alluded to this before, is the idea of supporting Israel versus supporting Hamas and what's happening right now in the Gaza Strip and among the Palestinians.

By the way, a lot of times that land is referred to as Palestine, which is a recent naming of that area.

[16:11] It is the Romans, the Roman government, who began to call that land Palestine. Before the Roman government came along, it was always just known as Israel.

That's who God had given that land to. So the idea that this land has always been Palestinian is a mistaken identity to begin with. So who do we support there, Israel versus Hamas?

And why is it that we do this? And it does go back to breaking down and understanding some religious perspective here. Now, this is just a map.

It's kind of blurry, I know, but as we pull out, it'll get less blurry. But I wanted to show you this map. All the dark green that you see, and I'm colorblind, so I'm hoping that's green.

Is it green? All that dark green is land that is basically controlled by Muslim governments. These are majority Muslim population.

[17:11] You can see how much of this area of the world, northern Africa into Saudi Arabia, into western parts of Asia, Iran, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkey.

This is all part of the old Ottoman Empire. This goes back to World War I when the Ottoman Empire was defeated during World War I.

This Muslim expansion that was happening up until World War I. That little tiny sliver that I just drew a circle around, a yellow circle, you can barely see it from back there, I'm sure.

It's actually smaller than the circle. That's Israel. All this other land is dominated by Muslim countries through domination by armies and conquering and slaughtering people.

That's how they became Muslim-dominated nations, through that kind of confrontation. And it's quite extensive.

[18:24] You can see that most of northern Africa is completely Muslim, all up into the area, and then down into the Asia-Pacific area, Indonesia and Malaysia, into the Philippines.

The population of these Muslims is growing and expanding, and they are immigrating for a reason. And we should understand why this is happening.

You won't hear this in the media or in academia. Look at what's happening in Europe. You can see over in the far left where France is becoming more and more Muslim.

Spain, England, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Austria, over into, look how much of Russia is becoming populated by Muslim immigrants who are moving there.

Parts of China and India, India quite a bit being populated by what's happening there. Let me show you North America. In Canada, all across the populated provinces in Canada, Muslims are making inroads in all of those provinces.

[19:42] Here in the United States, California, Texas, which is kind of surprising to me, Texas and Florida are becoming Muslim strongholds, particularly in Texas where they have whole community developments that are given over to Muslims only, allowed to live in those communities where they're trying to enforce Sharia law in those communities.

in the state of Texas. Now, Texas is starting to fight this, but it's something that we already see here in Michigan. In Dearborn, Michigan, that part of Michigan, you see communities that are wholly given over.

Regular police don't go into those communities because they police themselves through Sharia law in those communities in and around Dearborn, Michigan. And you can see some of the Midwest is starting to be affected by that as well.

Here's the whole world map of this. Now, what's interesting about this much immigration that's happening and why it is happening, I've got a couple of articles here for the reason why it's happening.

One is unchecked Muslim immigration and how it's transforming Europe intentionally. And it talks about Birmingham, England. Birmingham, England is England's second most populated city after London.

[21:05] And the population, the Muslim population in Birmingham is so large, Birmingham was named the English Mecca because there's so many Muslims there.

Jews are only 0.1% of the population in Birmingham, but listen to how much it has grown. In 2014, there were 40,000 Muslims. In 2015, there were 70,000 Muslims.

In 2016, 90,000 Muslims. 2017, 100,000. And today, or actually in 2021, 140,000 Muslims in Birmingham.

And they have come to basically dominate the city in terms of the culture and what's happening in Birmingham, in England.

There was just in the news yesterday, a Muslim cleric in England teaching teenagers that sex slaves were good and appropriate.

[22:13] I promise you, in our youth group, that's not what we're teaching. I promise you that. Okay? Now, how Islam, here's another article written by a missionary, how Islam progressively takes over countries.

And this man has broken this down. And I know this is kind of tedious, but I really felt like this was appropriate for us to understand what's happening in the world. When the Muslim population in any nation remains under 2%, like right now in the United States of America, we're at 0.6%.

Other nations, that remains under 2%. Muslims will be seen primarily as a peace-loving minority and not as a threat to other citizens at all.

So the prevailing mindset in the United States, well, Muslims, they're just peace-loving people. It's intentional. That's what they want you to think. As the Muslim population reaches somewhere between 2% and 5%, they begin to recruit from ethnic minorities and disaffected groups within prisons, within street gangs.

We already see effects of that happening here in the United States. But in Denmark and Germany and the United Kingdom, these things are very much so happening. From 5% on, in other words, above 5%, Muslims exercise an inordinate influence in proportion to their percentage of the population.

[23:38] They start requesting and then demanding halal, which is their form of food that is kosher for them. I know it's kind of a mixture of Jewish and Muslim thing.

For them, they wouldn't say kosher. They would say halal. And then they would begin to threaten communities that don't provide those demands for halal.

And then in their own communities, they start to press for Sharia law within those communities. When Muslims approach 10% of the population, they tend to increase lawlessness as a means of complaint about their conditions.

The violence increases when the Muslim population reaches 20%. You'll see rioting. You'll see jihad militia formations, sporadic killings in the burnings of Christian churches and Jewish synagogues.

At 40%, nations experience wide-pred massacres, chronic terror attacks, ongoing militia warfare. From 60% on, persecution of non-believing infidels rises significantly.

[24:49] After 80%, they would expect daily intimidation and violent jihad. We see this in Egypt. We see it in Bangladesh and in Gaza, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, many of the so-called Muslim-majority nations.

And at 100% Muslim, society will theoretically usher in their version of peace. So they won't be satisfied until everybody is Muslim.

This is their agenda. We need to be aware of that agenda. Now, where does this come from? Where does this mindset come from of Muslim intimidation and hatred for Israel and all things Jewish?

This anti-Semitism, where does it come from? It goes all the way back again into the book of Genesis, Genesis chapter 16, where Abram, as we later come to know as Abraham, was given a promise by God.

And he decided to go around that promise and had a child not from his wife Sarah, but from her handmaiden, Hagar. And when Hagar became pregnant with Abraham's child, she fled after mistreatment from Sarah, went into the desert where an angel comforted her and gave her this promise.

[26:20] I will surely multiply your offspring. That has certainly happened among the Arab nations and their religion, so that they cannot be numbered for multitude.

Behold, you are pregnant and shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael. So this was the beginning of this. And his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him.

This conflict between this Arab, Muslim-dominated society and culture throughout history has been against each other throughout history.

It's not going to stop until Jesus comes again. So this is why we see what is happening in here.

Now, even before this, here's the original promise that God had given to Abraham.

I will make of you a great nation, nation of Israel, of Jacob. And I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you.

[27:26] So this goes to the idea of why do we today still support Israel? Why do we stand up for Israel? Why do we, in a sense, support them in the way that we do?

And it goes back all the way here to Genesis 12.3. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse. I believe that part of the reason why the United States of America has been so blessed is because of our staunch support of Israel.

Okay? And in you, all the families of the earth will be blessed. We see the fruition of that, the completion of that through Jesus. Jesus came out of Israel, Jewish, and so we've been blessed as a result of that.

Now, here is the land that was promised to Israel. Basically, the defined borders of greater Israel, as it's called here, are given in Judges 1.

We see the boundaries kind of defined here, greater Israel. Now, it's interesting. I got this map, not from a Jewish website or a Christian website.

[28:39] I got this map from a Muslim website. They know. They understand. Muslims understand what God had promised to Israel.

And that is why they are so fiercely against. Even though Israel is just a tiny little sliver currently of this promised land, they know that God promised to Israel a much greater portion of this land, going into Egypt, going into Saudi Arabia, into Iraq, into Syria.

This is what God had promised to them. And it is why they are so against the nation of Israel. Now, what's interesting is that we have today a group of Christians who would now say they are proponents of covenant theology and the idea that God is basically finished with Israel.

Let me ask you a question. If God is finished with the nation of Israel, if, as they would declare, as they teach, that Jesus is the new Israel, and I get that statement, but is God done with the nation of Israel?

Let me ask you a question. Have you seen in the last 2,000 years since Jesus has been crucified, risen, and ascended into heaven, has there been any angst towards any people wanting to slaughter, kill, destroy, anything to do with Jews or Israel?

[30:08] Has that happened in our history in the last? And you can go all throughout history in every century and see where people have been against Jews and Israel and blamed them for the plague, blamed them for all kinds of things, the Holocaust, to what we see today.

Let me ask you a question. If God were done with Israel, why is Satan so clearly interested in destroying Israel today?

If God is done with Israel, the nation, the people of Israel. Far from it.

So covenant theology basically teaches that the Old Testament, God was dealing with the nation of Israel, and now here in the New Testament, he's dealing with the church. And the promises that God gave to Israel, the church has now kind of taken those promises over, and the church is, in a sense, the new Israel, the new blessed people of God and receivers of the promises of God that God has done with Israel.

And I have a real issue with this. Not based on Genesis chapter 12, although that's important, but again, these people would say, well, that's Old Testament.

[31:34] Of course God did that. But look at Romans chapter 11. Paul says, I ask then, has God rejected his people? Now he's speaking explicitly about Israel.

Has God rejected his people? What was his answer? His answer was this thing that he does throughout the book of Romans, this triple negative in the Greek.

It's no, never not. And it's translated in different translations as God forbid, or by no means, or may it never be. But it's just this very strong emphatic of no.

God has not rejected or cast out, another translation, Israel, his people. And Paul says this, I don't want you to be unaware of this mystery.

I want you to learn this. And we need to know this as well in our New Testament age concerning what's happening, current events, because of what's going on with Israel, and all of this anti-Semitism that's happening in protests and people complaining.

[32:46] And even Christians now are starting to reject. You see it in podcasts. You see it in radio programs. You see it in print on the internet. People everywhere, Christians, people that you might even look up to and respect from their Christian perspective are now starting to say, well, wait a minute.

If covenant theology is true, and that's where they're at theologically, then why do we have to support Israel? That doesn't make sense. If God is done with Israel, then why support it?

Why be behind it? Paul says, I don't want you to be ignorant. I don't want you to be unaware of this mystery. When Paul talks about this mystery, it's not something that's like shrouded in smoke.

Mystery was talking about something that was not revealed in the Old Testament, but now through Christ in the New Testament, it's been revealed. So it's not a mystery any longer. So for us, these promises of God that were given to Israel, we now get to Romans 9, 10, 11 as Gentile believers, and that's, I'm guessing, everybody in the room, we get to be participants in the promises given to Abraham, given to Israel.

We've been grafted in. But does that mean that God is now done with Israel? Israel, may it never be. No, it's not. Now, a partial hardening has come upon Israel.

[34:09] Have we seen that? Absolutely. Jews, by and large, reject the idea of Christ as their Messiah. So they're lost. These individual Jews who reject Christ as Messiah, as their Christ, are lost.

Now, those who trust Him as Savior, there are believing Jews. They're known as Messianic Jews. Jews who are believers in Jesus Christ. But they are a small minority of the Jews.

So partial hardening has come upon them until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. Now, what in the world does that mean? That's talking about us.

That's talking about the completion of the church. That's talking about all the Gentiles who are coming to faith in Jesus Christ. That's where the focus is today. That's where we're at today. It's not so much evangelism among Jews, but evangelism across the world. It's happening. It's happening. It's happening. And in this way, all Israel will be saved.

[35:11] Now, don't let that confuse you. He's not talking about individual, individuals. All Jews will be saved. But Israel as a nation will be saved.

And when Jesus comes back, before He comes, during the tribulation, when you read the book of Revelation, Jews will be coming to faith in Christ by the millions.

They will. And this is the completion, brings to the completion God's promise. Romans 11, 29. He concludes this whole argument by saying, For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. You can't do away with them. What God promised to Israel, don't you know, He doesn't take them back. He can't do that. Well, okay, Israel was disobedient.

They rejected their Messiah. It was because of Him that He's been crucified. So all His promises are made. Just kidding. That's basically what covenant theology teaches. Now, they would argue with the way that I portrayed that, and, you know, it was flippant for me to say it that way, but that's basically it gets at the core of what they're teaching.

[36:28] And so we need to be aware of that and be a people who are supporters of Jews, against anti-Semitism. Not everything that the nation of Israel stands for or does, just like in our country.

Our country does some stupid things and some immoral things. Israel is the same way. But in a general way, we support the nation of Israel and its people.

Now, let me give you some good news about all of this, because that seems like a whole lot of bad news. Look what's happening in Iran. Iran, right?

Iran has just been in the news recently, right? Get a load of this. The country in the world today where Christianity is growing the most, Iran.

Iran has experienced remarkable growth, particularly among Muslim-backed believers, despite intense persecution and legal restrictions that make conversion from Islam punishable by death.

[37:33] Estimates suggest the Christian population has surged from a few hundred, pre-1979, when the Shah of Iran was deposed, to potentially half a million to a million believers in the country of Iran today.

It's probably over that by now, over a million. Driven by widespread disillusionment with the Islamic regime, divine encounters like dreams of Jesus, so these miraculous things that happen where the foundation of the church has not yet been laid to be expected.

The rise of underground house churches, facilitated by satellite TV, internet evangelism, personal outreach. It's the fastest growing globally at a 19.6 annual evangelical rate in Iran.

Instigated by Chinese missionaries. Christianity has grown so much in China that they're sending missionaries to places like Iran where Americans would never be able to get in and do this kind of work.

You don't hear about this anywhere. Why not? Because there's an agenda and we have to be aware of what's happening in the world.

[39:08] These last two I'm going to show you quickly work our way to tolerance versus cancel culture. Thankfully, cancel culture seemingly is starting to die down.

And then partisan science is a huge thing still today. Science that says stuff like this, that men competing in women's sports is perfectly okay.

That's science? No, that's an agenda. That is partisan science. That is science with an agenda. It's true with climate change, that issue.

Partisan science, evolutionary science is partisan science. All of these things. Taking precious little ones like this, born male and female, and butchering them for the cause of gender-affirming health care.

It's an oxymoron. It's not affirming at all. It's craziness. It is insanity that stuff like this happens.

[40:24] I've got to show you this one. This is a little tape. This is of a church. Allendale United Methodist Church in St. Petersburg. This is Katie Von Sparkle at the church, United Methodist Church in Florida, giving the call to worship.

Get some good volume on this. Good morning. My name is Katie Von Sparkle, a.k.a.

Christopher. My pronouns are he, she, and they. Please join me responsibly in a call to worship.

Source of life, in the beginning, you made us and called us to love.

When we forget how to love, you remind us to do what we love. When the powers of the world

Okay, we've seen enough. We can move on.

This is a quote-unquote serious thing. Now, when I see something like this, my first tendency is to laugh. I don't know if that's kind of your... But make no mistake, this is an abomination that is being promoted by a so-called Christian church.

[41:38] A mainline denominational Christian United Methodist Church. How can this be? They sing hymns at this church.

But they change the lyrics basically to promote their agenda. The hymn, the music, is the same as what you'd be familiar with, but the lyrics are all different, all changed, basically to promote their agenda.

This is happening. There is a purposeful intention for them to get into conservative churches to try to begin to sway pastors and church leaders into accepting this kind of ideology.

And we have to be aware of it. If you've ever heard of anything called the after party, this is so-called, again, Christian conservative curriculum that is being given free of charge.

It's being fully funded by all the names that you would probably recognize as being the most liberal and Marxist and so on to try to find its way into churches like ours and Christian colleges to promote the idea that, oh, no, wait a minute.

[43:04] LGBTQ plus whatever. Let's all just get along and just accept one another and let people be people.

Whatever gender they are or believe they are, just allow it. All of these kinds of ideas now are starting to be promoted. Let me tell you as a congregation, Crossroads Church, if you ever start to see anything like that being promoted from the pulpit or from the leadership or in Bible studies, if Jeff is going to start teaching after party curriculum in his Bible studies, get rid of us.

Don't wait. Just run us out on a rail as quickly as you possibly can because that is an abomination before God.

Now, all of that being said, where does this conscience that we have about right and wrong come from?

Let's move on to the next slide. Takes a while to get out of this. There we go. Understanding our conscience. On a basic level, and you have this on your notes, our conscience is the thing, that thing inside of us that it forms our oughts and our ought nots.

[44:33] Right? We have, within all of us, no matter how you were brought up, you have a sense of what ought to happen and what ought not to happen. Let me give you a for instance. If you've got an overflowing bag of trash or can full of trash that's overflowing in your kitchen, you have a sense of ought or ought not as to whether or not you're going to take that bag of trash out.

Is that correct? Some of you parents are highly sensitive to the ought, that bag of trash ought to go out right now. And sometimes, husbands or maybe teenagers might look at that bag of trash and say, I can shove it down some more or I can do it later.

And we all have this sense of oughts and oughts not, even over silly stuff like that. And it's an internal moral code that is built within us.

And we can make the way that we believe, we can become callous to that conscience, to that moral code within us. We can teach it to become hardened to what's already there.

But when we violate our conscience, we begin to feel guilty. Where does that come from? Let's talk about this. Where there is a strong collective conscience as a nation, consensus about oughts and ought nots, there doesn't have to be a bunch of rules and laws.

[46:08] Our founding fathers were brilliant in this because they understood this concept. They understood that when you have a strong collective conscience, you don't need a bunch of laws because that strong collective conscience about what is right and what is wrong informs how we behave toward each other.

Therefore, you don't need a bunch of laws. Guess how many laws we have today? I don't even know the number. It seems like it's infinite. I mean, it's just a ton. Every time you turn around, they've got to come up with a new law.

There's a reason why that's true. John Adams said this, we have no government armed with the power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion.

Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other. Founding fathers were brilliant and were godly and they understood this concept and they wove it in our documents, our founding documents.

Secondly, nations share a collective conscience. As a nation, we have a conscience over what is right and what is wrong and sometimes we have great battles over this because not everybody is part of the consensus.

[47:28] So in our nation's history, for instance, we've battled over is slavery, good or bad, right? And we've come to an outcome as a result of that, civil rights.

Today, the issue of abortion. Whether children can get married at 11 years of age, can a man, can a 40-year-old man marry an 11-year-old girl?

Happens all the time in some parts of the world, perfectly acceptable. Why do we feel differently about that here in our country? Child pornography, becoming more and more accepted.

We change the definition. It's not pedophilia anymore. I forget what they call it. Whether it's acceptable to have three wives or six or a hundred, right?

We have feelings about that. Whether drugs should be legalized, whether gay marriage should be legalized. We have battles over these based on our collective conscience. Again, George Washington, our founders, were brilliant.

[48:30] Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. we need that in order to be successful.

He taught, he believed, he promoted in his farewell address. Number three, a conscience has to be informed. While even though we are born with a sense of right and wrong, a conscience, that conscience must be trained and fine-tuned as to what is from a biblical perspective right and wrong and then ingrained in us.

And we get this from Romans chapter 12. All who sin apart from the law, in other words, all the people in the world who never had Moses' Ten Commandments, never were taught the Old Testament law at all, did not have any form of religious law other than their own pagan identities. All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law. In other words, they'll be judged because they violate their own conscience. people who are without the law determine what is right and wrong and then they violate that anyway.

That's just how we are. And all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.

[49:52] He's going to go on and say, no one is righteous because no one can obey the law. But he's setting that up here in Romans chapter 2. Indeed, when Gentiles who do not have the law do by nature things required by the law because don't you know it's in our conscience not to murder someone.

Right? We get that. To lie to someone. To mistreat someone. They become a law for themselves even though they do not have the law. They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts.

They have a conscience. They've never been taught the law at all. never been exposed to it. But they have this law of God written on their hearts. It is in their conscience.

Their conscience is also bearing witness and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times defending them. We have a conscience that dictates that tells us whether we're right or we're wrong.

And then finally the earlier we are taught the more deep-seated our beliefs are held within us. it is part of the reason why Solomon tells us in Proverbs 22 start children off in the way that they should go and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

[51:13] So the question then becomes what then has informed our national conscience? What is it that here in the United States of America has informed our national conscience?

why is it that in the United States of America we don't stone a young single woman who's gotten pregnant? Why don't we do that? Why here in the United States do we not shun poor people? Why don't we do that? In other nations those things happen. Why don't we do that here? What has informed our conscience to make us different than in some other nations?

well it's the answer a general sense of individual and collective accountability to God our creator. We have this accountability in our national conscience to creator God.

Now where do we see this? Well when the guys got together to write the Declaration of Independence this is how kind of at the beginning what they said.

[52:22] We hold these truths to be self-evident. The highlighted portion there self-evident. In other words we don't need a big lesson on this because it's obvious. It's like duh.

That's what self-evident means. It's duh. Okay. I don't know if you see that when you look it up in the dictionary but it's like it's so stinking obvious anyone sees this.

That all men are created equal. Now this is interesting because when they wrote this slavery was still legal. But they were geniuses for putting this in the declaration because they knew this would unwind what was beneath the whole idea of slavery.

They knew it was common. And so they built this into the constitution. They understood that no one person is any better than anyone else. We get that.

And that they are endowed by their who? Creator. We have a creator. We have a creator and that creator has endowed us, has given us certain things.

[53:29] Certain, not just things. Unalienable, unalienable rights. I struggle with saying that word.

It's a fun word. When's the last time you used unalienable in a conversation? It means it is so much your right, unalienable, you cannot be alienated from it.

It cannot be taken away, these rights. That's what unalienable means. Cannot be taken away. And among these rights, in other words, these aren't the only ones, but among them are life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Our founding fathers got this. Here's one from the previous century, 1900s. Pledge of Allegiance, adopted officially in 1942, and it's an act of Congress, 1942.

Can anybody tell me what's missing from this? I don't know if you guys, under God was missing from our original Pledge of Allegiance. That's interesting.

[54:41] Because, again, by act of Congress in 1954, was kind of spearheaded by Dwight Eisenhower after he attended a church service where a preacher talked about how, isn't this obvious?

And Eisenhower heard that sermon, sat on Abraham's Lincoln's pew, heard this sermon, and was like, yeah, duh, under God.

We are under God. Absolutely. You guys know the national motto? Anybody? National motto. In God, we trust.

So much so, we put it on our money. Just to remind us, we don't take out dollar bills much anymore, but every time we take out a dollar bill, it says right on there, in our coins, in God we trust.

To remind us, don't trust in this stupid dollar bill. Don't trust this. Trust God. And what is another way of saying, in God we trust, there's just something more when we say we trust God.

[55:57] To me, it means more. It eliminates the preposition in God we trust. It's just we trust God. United States of America, we trust God.

Does that sound silly for me to say that? Given our current circumstances, the idea of anybody standing up in front of anyone in like Congress or President, whatever, we trust God.

We're so offended by that. Some people are. Why? This is part of our history. It's who we are as a nation.

So much so in the First Amendment, first, like, first important thing in the Constitution, Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of peace of assembly, redress grievances, but this first one, this freedom of religion, respecting an establishment, make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

Now, Thomas Jefferson and some people who are anti-God in public platforms love Thomas Jefferson.

[57:32] They championed Thomas Jefferson because he was the one who came up with the phrase, wall of separation between church and state.

So, how do we feel about the separation of church and state? I have seen a groundswell among Christians recently to say, we don't need the separation of, it's not in the Constitution, and it's not in

the Constitution.

But I'm here to tell you, and I am a Baptist, and one of the Baptist distinctives is we believe in the separation of church and state.

let me tell you why. This is Thomas Jefferson writing a letter to a group of Baptists in the state of Connecticut, the Danbury Baptists in the state of Connecticut, and in this letter, dated January 1st, 1802, he said this, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should, quote, make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, end quote, thus building a wall of separation between church and state.

This is the origination of the phrase separation of church and state, and it's something that I hold dear.

[58:57] Well, why, Rich? Why would you say that the church shouldn't be involved with the state? I didn't say that. As Christians, absolutely, we can run for Congress, we can run for president, we can hold public office, we can speak up at parent-teacher conferences, at school board meetings, we can, all of that, bring our faith into the public square at every turn.

That's not separation of church and state. But here's why it's so important. Now, this next quote is from yours truly, not because it's so brilliant, but just because I wanted to write it out to make sure I said it right.

Because I've struggled in recent past articulating why I hold so dear the separation of church and state. Here's why. If the separation of church and state were taken away, if it were abolished, the state could then, by opening the door for the church to walk in and influence the state, you're opening the same door for the state to walk in and influence the church.

That's what you're doing. If the separation of church and state were taken away, the state could then dictate to the church, aha, potentially forcing pastors to alter sermons, avoid certain biblical teachings, for instance, on the subject of marriage or the sanctity of life, or submit to policies contradictory to scripture, shackling the church's ability to proclaim the gospel freely.

We shall not. Now, even if it were overturned and they came and arrested me, I will proclaim the gospel and the truths of the gospel and the ramifications of the gospel freely or they'll put me in jail and I'll preach from jail.

[60:58] But until then, we have this thing called the separation of church and state which protects the church from the state.

so I will hold that dear and I will not argue in favor of doing away with the separation of church and state because it does not mean that we can have no influence on our national body politic or on congress or on any other thing.

Matter of fact, Thomas Jefferson, when he was president of the United States, he was also, get a load of this, president of the school board in the District of Columbia.

I guess he didn't have enough on his plate. So he was president of the school board in the District of Columbia and you know what his first act as president of the school board of the District of Columbia was?

to order and pay for Bibles so their students could learn what our nation's foundation was all about.

[62:14] Separation of church and state. Don't let it be what the current world says separation of church and state is. That's a lie. Are you surprised that it's a lie how they define separation of church and state?

They lie about everything else. Why would we be shocked that their definition of separation of church and state is not also a lie? Brothers and sisters, our nation was founded in a way that honored God and recognized God.

And we would do well to do the same. Our foundation is the word of God itself. Our founding documents were built on the foundation of the word of God itself.

And we would do well to remember that. And it's the reason why in the last 50 to 70 years when that foundation has been chipped at by evolution, by no prayer in school, and getting God out of everything, what would you expect to happen?

and it's happened. We need to return to that foundation. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much for your word and how it is our source book for everything in life, including how we do politics and government and, Lord, you are sovereign over all of it.

[63:56] And so, Lord, as pastors and as churches, we should be free to preach into these subjects because they belong to you like everything else.

So, Lord, give us wisdom and give us discernment. Lord, give us grace that we may view the people that we would have a tendency to view as enemies, people that we would view as against God or against our country or against everything that we believe in.

Help us instead to view them as victims, victims of the evil one who has blinded their eyes to the truth.

And may we in grace, with great grace, seasoned with the salt truth, be willing to speak your love and your grace into their lives, that they too might hear the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We see people in our country who lived one way, but because of your grace and your goodness have trusted you as savior and now live in a way that is completely different.

[65:39] We see that happening around the world. So Lord, I pray that we would, as your people, respond in such a way, not as to condemn, that's not our role, but to come alongside and to be salt and light and to speak truth with grace so that people could respond, so they have the opportunity to respond and come to faith in Jesus Christ.

That's the answer. The answer is not found in any election or in any politician. The answer is we as we have sung today.

Lord, it's not in any politician's promise, but it is in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you for that grace.

Without your grace, Lord, I would be so lost, all of us. We need you. Let us represent you well in the communities that you've called us to be a part of.

We love you and we praise you. We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. God.