Is Anything Wrong Anymore?

Summary

A generation raised on "situation ethics" still privately believes in right and wrong — this article traces exactly how that gap opened, and why it matters.

- The erosion of a shared sense of right and wrong from the 1930s to today.
- Darwin, Marx, and Freud as intellectual cover for rejecting Yahweh's moral law.
- Opinion-poll evidence of private dishonesty alongside professed belief in the Ten Commandments.
- A closing appeal (Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah) to national and personal repentance.

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Whatever happened to standards of right and wrong? Why do we need them?

A story in a major news magazine went like this: "Students were debating whether one student was right in returning $200 she'd found in the hallway to its owner. They concluded that she'd done a dumb thing, and asked the counsellor's opinion.

"He replied; `Well, I think she did the right thing. But I'm not going to push my idea of right and wrong on you. After all, I'm your counsellor'".

But what is a counsellor for, if not to steer people toward a right course of action? What good is a neutral stand like that? How can there even be a neutral position between right and wrong?

This counsellor, whoever he is, was correct not to want to push his ideas on his students - but what on earth made him think that his telling young people that it is wrong to steal, was his idea? And why was he prepared to concede for one second that the students might have a point, when they thought the finder was stupid to return the money?

Is stealing or not stealing just a "matter of opinion"? It's time we took a long hard look at what's been happening to our society's values of right and wrong over the last 100 years or so.

The world of the 1930's was a very different world from today. In some ways circumstances were much worse. During the years of the great depression many lived under conditions of great privation - lines of the unemployed stretched for blocks, and once proud bread-winners were forced to soup kitchens. People ate stale food, wore old clothing and struggled to survive. But in spite of that, there was still a popular understanding of the difference between right and wrong. People were not perfect, but there was no serious question that it was wrong to lie, cheat, steal, commit adultery, or to treat others rudely.

But our attitudes have changed dramatically since then. Now, it's quite acceptable - even fashionable, to cheat on taxes, to have an affair, to have sex before marriage, or to adopt what we euphemistically call "alternative lifestyles", just so long as it "doesn't hurt anyone else"! It seems that as long as we're consenting adults, anything goes and nothing could be considered wrong.

Now that might be so, if there were no moral law, absolute in nature, governing human conduct. Today, it seems old fashioned to think that there might be such a timeless law. But why should it be? Let's look at it objectively. We live in a law-abiding universe with laws of gravity, chemistry, physics, motion and others. We did not make these laws, but over the centuries, we've learned to define, accept, and respect them - to

understand them and to rely on them. Because we study the physical laws of the universe, and are willing to apply them, we are able to launch space probes from earth and have them rendezvous with distant planets years later. Because we accept the inevitability of physical laws, we can predict where planets will be - to the exact moment of time.

It would be arrogant and foolish to think we could ignore such laws. Rather, we spare no effort to get in step with them, and because we do, we succeed. So what makes us think we can disregard the laws governing morality - showing us the difference between what is right and wrong?

Every society has realized that it must have laws to live by. When laws are kept, society is stabilized. When they are broken, penalties are paid. If enough people break them often enough, then society collapses. In the western world, when we think of the highest law, we should think of the Ten Commandments. They have been the basis of human concepts of right and wrong for centuries. Great lawmakers, such as King Alfred the Great of England and the men who drafted the Constitution of the United States, or the many other collaborators of the various founding Agreements of most English speaking democracies in the world, all held Yahweh's Law in high esteem.

Even what we might consider as primitive societies govern themselves with very similar codes of ethics. The Pygmies of the Central African Ituri forest have a body of moral law and practice, predating the coming of the Europeans to their continent. The Efe Pygmies of Zaire have an enlightened philosophy and laws regulating their relationships to one another, to their environment, and to a God they recognize as the Creator and Sustainer. Their moral laws forbid wars, killing, adultery, lying, theft, blasphemy, pre-marital sex, devil worship and sorcery, disrespect toward elders and other forms of inconsiderate behaviour. It is interesting to notice how many of their laws coincide with the Ten Commandments.

It seems that deep down, all men realize the need for some type of law, against stealing, adultery, murder and other basic principles. Even many animals are not able to live without some basic behavioural and "moral" laws in their social structures.

The difference is, our Creator made these laws contained in the Ten Commandments, and GAVE them to us FREELY, in order to give us an advantage. He made them concerning our interaction as humans, just as surely as He made the laws that govern the physical universe. Yet our "natural", carnal minds, like "brute beasts that are meant to be destroyed", would have us reject and attack these laws! That is the very reason why we have situations like the high school counsellor being reluctant to teach what is right or wrong. It isn't his idea! "Thou shalt not steal", is our law, given to us by Yahweh! Why would there be any question about it? How quickly and "convenient" we forget the lessons of history. Biblical and secular history confirm unequivocally, the near total self-annihilation of many civilizations due solely to diseases resulting from their sexual promiscuity as an example, however, most people somehow believe that this "couldn't possibly still be the case"!

Paul wrote to the early Israelites in Colosse, saying; "Beware lest anyone cheat *[or deceive]* you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to the Messiah". Today, the influence of many of these philosophers has many people questioning our basic laws of morality.

There are several ideas that have dominated our time. They come directly or indirectly from the minds of men like Charles Darwin, Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud - three "great" minds of our recent times.

Darwin was one of the first proponents of the theory of evolution; Marx was the originator of the system known as atheistic communism; and Freud fathered modern psychiatry. These men's ideas have been greatly modified - and in some cases even discarded - by some of their most devoted disciples. Yet the notions of these men have come together with an incredible impact on our society. It is as if the effects of their thinking over 100 years ago, have finally reached critical mass.

A common starting point for each of these men was their mis-conception that the Bible, BECAUSE OF FALSE TEACHINGS OF TRADITIONAL RELIGION, does not provide the answer to life's fundamental questions.

Darwin gave expression to the notion that mankind is the outcome of a natural progression from lower life forms - originating from an unknown source. That idea is not new - Aristotle wondered about it as well. But Darwin brought together several isolated threads of human reasoning and produced his version of the origin of species, casting doubt on the belief that mankind is a special creation in the universe. In his autobiography he wrote this: "I gradually came to disbelieve in Christianity as a divine revelation..." But he also came to doubt the validity of his own theories: "I am conscious that I am in an utterly hopeless muddle. I cannot think that the world as we see it, is the result of chance".

Even with Darwin's own recanting, his theory has done massive damage on the 20th century and its thinking about Yahweh's authority.

Marx was also opposed to traditional religion. He dismissed it as "the opium of the people", and wrote: "The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of men, is a demand for their real happiness". Marx developed his ideas in the early days of the Industrial Revolution - a time of great social upheaval in Europe. He rightly identified the abuses suffered by the working classes and campaigned against their exploitation. Persecuted on a charge of trying to overthrow the German government, he gave a speech in his own defence that shows his view of the law: "Society is not based on the law. That is legal fiction. Rather, law must be based on society. It must be the expression of society's common interests and needs...any attempted assertion of the eternal validity of laws clashes with present needs". For Marx the idea of absolute moral law was a fiction of man's imagination. He has changed the way many societies think. Whether we agree with him or not, Marx has played a major part in shaping our ideas about society.

Like Marx, Freud was of Jewish background, and he too was desirous of denying the religion of his forefathers. From case histories of his patients, he devised an elaborate road map of man's mental structure - purporting to explain the dark stirrings of the human heart, and of the unconscious mind with its attendant fantasies. The idea of the unconscious mind determining what we do was an invention of Freud's own mind - somehow he seemed to overlook what "un"conscious really means!

His ideas allowed modern man to believe that he can "free himself from the guilt and responsibility of his actions". Blame and guilt have become irrelevant and meaningless! But are we really just victims of our unconscious minds with all of their bizarre sexual conflicts? If that is true, we certainly can't be responsible for our actions in any meaningful way. Freud himself was quite prudish about sex, although his theories and speculations have been construed by many as justification for disregarding standards and ethics in their own sexual behaviour!

So instead of hearing about right and wrong, we hear about right and "oppressed *(or repressed)*", or right and not "mentally healthy", or right and "liberated". What used to be self-indulgence is now "self-fulfillment". What we used to call living in sin is now a "meaningful" relationship. What was once discipline is now "repression". Our "advanced" behaviour allows us to accept the platitude that we are "sexual beings". Frankly, we find this instant regression to mere animal status, a sad comment on society's view of itself!

Like it or not, thinkers like Darwin, Marx and Freud have had a massive effect on modern man's view of Yahweh. We react strongly against someone imposing his or her ideas of right and wrong on others. But that is exactly what these three men have done; and what we continue to do when we support them! We have set up our own structures of morality on the shakiest of all foundations; human reasoning! All of us have to some extent, been influenced by these and other philosophers that, "knew better" than Yahweh.

Yahweh, time and again warned us of this: "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" (Isaiah 5:20,21). He explained the reason for this moral confusion in verse 24: "Because they have rejected the law of Yahweh the Lord of Hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel".

Yahweh places the blame on false teachers, ministers, and philosophers who set themselves up as authorities to decide what is right and wrong. Those are positions of trust, and Yahweh does not take it lightly when that trust is abused. Yahweh, through Jeremiah's prophesy for our time, says about them: "And I have seen the folly of the prophets of Samaria: they have prophesied by Baal and caused my people to err. Also I have seen a horrible thing in the prophets of Jerusalem: they commit adultery and walk in lies; they also strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that no one turns back from his wickedness...Do not listen to the words of the prophets...they make you worthless; they speak a vision of their own heart, not from the mouth of Yahweh".

Can't we realize that this is not some ancient Biblical epic? This *(our current social crisis)* is always what happens when people drift away from the moral laws of Yahweh, and decide for themselves what is right and wrong. Yahweh says: "We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes; we stumble at noonday as at twilight; we are as dead men in desolate places" *(Isaiah 59:10)*. And that's what we are like today. We want to be tolerant but we're at the point of tolerating things that society cannot put up with and stay healthy. We shy away from judging others, to the point of believing that all judgements are wrong - we're lost at sea without a compass.

Many of our young people are not being taught the difference between right and wrong. They're not immoral anymore - they're amoral - they don't even know the law, never mind the difference - confusion reigns!

We have the knowledge Yahweh gave us, but like the old adage says: "we don't have the sense Yahweh gave us" to use that knowledge! Never before has the Bible been so readily available, but read so little. There are more copies in the world than can be counted.

The Ten Commandments *(and others)* are listed in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5.

But knowledge demands responsibility, and responsibility in turn, demands accountability. Like it or not, and despite Freud's theories, we are responsible for our actions. Times change - but the universal laws of Yahweh - and their universality, never change. The benefits of obeying them and the penalties for breaking them are as sure today as they were thousands of years ago - and will be thousands of years from now. They truly are timeless laws - just like gravity!

We see ourselves as religious, even Yahweh-fearing people. North Americans "say" they are strong believers in the Ten Commandments - and think they are more so than other western countries. Yet the judgement of Yahweh is hanging over our nations. Why?

A Gallup survey found that we, in overwhelming percentages, said the Ten Commandments "applied fully" to ourselves. Here is a sample:

You shall not kill - 93 percent said it applied personally;

You shall not steal - 93 percent said it applied to them;

Honour your parents - 90 percent think it applies;

You shall not bear false witness *(lie)* - 89 percent say, applies;

You shall not covet your neighbour’s wife - 89 percent;

You shall not covet your neighbour’s goods - 88 percent;

You shall not commit adultery - 87 percent said it applied.

You shall remember the Sabbath - 57 percent said it applied, although most *(93%)* did not know when it was.

Studies show 90 to 95 percent of Americans professed a belief in a God. 65 percent believe our God is a personal deity. 70 percent say they are church members and 60 percent claim they attend worship service at least once a month. 69 percent feel their important life decisions have been specifically guided by our God.

Chief executives of leading corporations claim even greater degrees of religious commitment. Forbes magazine found that most executives "called religion an important influence in their lives". College students say religion is very important *(50 percent)* or fairly important *(33 percent)* to them. American presidents Carter, Reagan, Bush, Clinton, and others claim to be strong believers in Bible, our God and morality!

So how can someone presume to say that Yahweh's judgement for national sin, evil and immorality, is hanging over our nations? We stand behind a commitment for human rights, fair laws, justice and equality for all. Bringing these principles to other nations has been a major, if not overriding objective of our nations' foreign policies.

Here is what former U.S. President Carter said: "In this outward and physical ceremony we attest once again to the inner and spiritual strength of our nation...here before me is the Bible used in the inauguration of our first President in 1789...opened to a timeless admonition from the ancient prophet Micah: `He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Yahweh require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God'" *(Micah 6:8)*. He continued: "Our commitment to human rights must be absolute...there can be no nobler nor more ambitious task for America to undertake on this day of a new beginning than to help shape a just and peaceful world that is truly humane".

With such noble national aims, how can our nations be suffering a crisis in morality? Even when excluding Yahweh and religion from ethical questions, secularists often come down hard on the side of morality. Let's look at the question of adultery. In the survey, respondents were asked whether they thought extramarital sex was wrong. 72 percent said it was always wrong, while 16 percent said it was almost always wrong. Only 2 percent said it was not wrong at all. *(65 percent of the same husbands admitted "cheating", while 68 percent of wives admit it!)*

In a recent issue, Time magazine published a short article distilling 46,000 letters it had received the year before. Here is how that magazine summarized its reader's thinking: "The temper of the TIME reader was gloomy and out of sorts...moral lapses, abuse of power, greed and hypocrisy were the themes that had readers indignant, anxious, furious and despairing...The letters often reflected a sense of moral backsliding, a kind of national falling from grace. Readers mourned a lack of direction".

There was so much interest in the moral condition of the nation that Time inaugurated its new "Ethics" section! And even "God" has a private column in the magazine under "Religion". Responding to their cover story "Whatever Happened to Ethics", they continued: "...seemed to mirror the feeling of many readers that the nation needed an ethical corrective. In writing about America's diminished commitment to moral standards, one of the more than 700 correspondents noted, `You have started a debate that is good for the nation'".

Our American neighbours seem to be a nation, like ours, concerned with values - with a commitment to good triumphing over evil. Even the non-religious, who think in terms of morality and ethics rather than sin and righteousness, speak out for higher moral standards!

Our concern for things ethical is merely a veil hiding an underlying spiritual problem. Imagine yourself reading this chapter while at lunch in a restaurant. You watch the waiters scurry back and forth taking orders, chatting to customers and each other. People of various ages, race and size are eating, laughing and talking about the normal things. You say to yourself, these are just ordinary folks like myself. Hard working, decent, concerned with their families and friends, facing many of life's problems.

Then you reflect on this chapter and conclude: Yet this chapter is speaking of Yahweh's impending judgement hanging over these people - their nations - the world - because of the way they live their lives! Is this fair, you wonder? Humanly speaking, these people are wrestling with the same concerns as people the world over. Trying to make ends meet. Worrying about health. Feeling pangs of tension about the latest rounds of fighting in Europe and the Middle East. They, like people everywhere, know the world is a jungle, full of problems that could potentially lead to another world war.

They reflect nations of people ostensibly concerned with bringing a better life and human rights to the whole world. And like all humans, they are against fundamental injustices like poison gas, apartheid, terrorism, financial enslavement, and starving people. So what is this about some impending divine wrath to fall on these nice folks?

Sadly, there is another side to the face of our nations. It is not a pretty profile from Yahweh's point of view. That's the side that has Yahweh concerned and grieving - a side, in part, exposed to various national and international scandals. And in a greater part, the side that has adopted a spiritual indifference toward Yahweh's Way and Yahweh Himself.

What does Yahweh see? He sees people who strongly endorse the Ten Commandments - even use them as guidelines for judging their leaders. But they tend to be situation ethics! One Gallup survey found that 60 percent of us think there "can never be clear absolute guidelines about what is good and evil"! One writer commented: "We are a people strong on religion but weak on morality". The paradox is clear: Religious concerns are up; morality is down. George Gallup Jr. has said: "Religion is growing in importance among our people, but morality is losing ground". He should know - his organization has conducted numerous polls on morality over the years.

One poll found that over 65 percent of our population feel it is not wrong to have sexual relations outside of a committed relationship - marriage. It is considered a normal rite of passage. Yahweh is not pleased with that statistic or that horrendously stupid, and self-destructive attitude. That same poll found that out of every 100 parties:

24 admit to cheating on their tax returns;

20 admit to lying once in a while to boss and colleagues;

22 admit to lying often to members of their family;

33 admit calling in sick when they are not;

18 admit to padding expense accounts;

22 feel justified in stealing from their employer.

These might be considered insignificant lapses of personal morality by some, but Yahweh is not pleased. And He certainly is very disturbed by our high incidences of murder, child abuse, illicit sex, graft, corporate and bank fraud, and injustice. But these offences are being ADMITTED to by the same people that claim to believe in the Ten Commandments!

Our nations consume about 65 percent of the world's illegal drugs. Some 95 percent of our teenage females report having sex before marriage. Each year about 2.5 million babies are born out of wedlock - resulting in about 900,000 abortions (murders), with most of the remaining children raised in single mother homes - leading to unsupervised children, to gangs, to violence, to drugs, to crime, to aimlessness - and immense public expense.

Not everyone is committing adultery but millions are - not everyone indulges in pre-marital sex but millions do - not everyone is divorcing but millions do - not everyone is a thief, a murderer, a rapist or a child abuser but millions are - not everyone cheats on income tax or in business deals - not everyone aspires to business deals based on greed but millions do.

Above all failings, our nations worship our God as they see fit - or they don't worship Him at all! Many so-called "New Age" thinkers, have regressed so far back in their beliefs, that they have deluded themselves into renewing many ancient pagan myths under the guise of "New Age Faith", such as the "Universal Force", "Universal Knowledge", or "Universal Power". These are simply euphemisms for pagan faiths that have existed for centuries; excuses for people that do not want to acknowledge Yahweh's Word!

They acknowledge a "Universal Creative Force", or "Power", sometimes even calling it "God", but they refuse to accept that this same "God-Force", *(that they admit created the entire Universe)* could have, or would have caused a "Bible" to have been written which explains "ALL KNOWLEDGE" needed for man! The Bible *(which most of these people have obviously pre-judged, without having ever read)* clearly predicts

this regressive thinking as just one more example of Satan's manipulations. Sadly, traditional Christianity has distorted the truth of Yahweh's Word, the Bible, to such a degree that they *(Christians)* have actually been the catalyst for much of this backward thinking!

Worse, these traditional Christians unwittingly WORSHIP Satan when they celebrate all of our national pagan "holi"days such as Easter, Christmas, Halloween, New Year's etc., even if they think they are worshipping the True God! *(See our articlse on Pagan Holidays for details.)*

"These people draw near Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men" *(Isaiah 29:13).*

Even in the name of religion, our nations commonly condone that which Yahweh hates! Yahweh says "Learn not the way of the heathen...For the customs of the people are vain..." *(Jer. 10:2,3)*. "From the least of them even to the greatest of them, everyone is given to covetousness" (Jer. 6:13).

Can we believe that these prophecies were meant for us! "Alas, sinful nation, people laden with iniquity, a brood of evildoers, children who are corrupters! They have forsaken Yahweh" *(Isaiah 1:4)*.

"Will you steal and murder, commit adultery and perjury...follow other gods...and say, `We are safe' - safe to do all these detestable things?" *(Jer. 7:9,10).* And the prophet Isaiah was certainly addressing our North American Nations when he wrote: "...who swear by the name of Yahweh, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth or righteousness" *(48:1)*. Today, our nations, above all others, universally swear by the name of Yahweh and talk of God - but without any substance to the talk.

The prophet Ezekiel sums up the current state of our nations rather eloquently: "In you they have made light of father and mother; in your midst they have oppressed the stranger ...mistreated the fatherless and the widow. You have despised My Holy things and profaned My Sabbaths *[substituting false holidays]*...In you are men who slander to cause bloodshed; in you ...one commits abominations with his neighbour's wife; another lewdly defiles his daughter-in-law; and another in you violates his sister, his father's daughter...they take bribes to shed blood; you take usury and increase; you have made profit from your neighbours by extortion, and have forgotten Me,...Behold, therefore, I beat My fists at the dishonest profit which you have made, and at the bloodshed which has been in your midst" *(Ezekiel 22:7-13).*

Yahweh is perfect justice, perfect righteousness, perfect character - Yahweh is perfect Love - all written out for us in very straight-forward, simple English - all we have to do is read His Word! Will anyone out there actually READ it? The answers to our seemingly insurmountable social problems are ever so obvious - and right before our very eyes! And "planted in our hearts" - have you never wondered how you "just know" what is right or wrong or good or bad - the answer is contained in your conscience that Yahweh has so graciously given you - for Yahweh's sake use it!

Yahweh further says about us through Ezekiel, that if we continue to do evil our days are numbered. "Son of man, when a land sins against Me by persistent unfaithfulness, I will stretch out My hand against it..."

(14:13). And if that nation turns from its evil, Yahweh will relent His punishment. "If that nation of whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it" *(Jer. 18:8).*

Yahweh's words of extended mercy given by Ezekiel are for our nations to HEAR TODAY: "As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die?" *(33:11).*

Yahweh is not eager to punish us - He is interested in a deep and lasting spiritual-ethical change in our moral landscape. Someone has to deliver the message about the choices Yahweh has given us.

Through the prophet Isaiah, Yahweh wrote: "Cry aloud, spare not; lift up your voice like a trumpet; tell My people their transgression" *(58:1).*

What about it, you people of America and the British Commonwealth - and you others around the world? Are you ready to start practicing what you preach? Are you willing to make serious, yet simple and enjoyable changes in your lives? The kind that will result in your actions bringing harmony, peace and HOPE to all around you - as humble examples of Yahweh's Laws to the world?

Are you who live in modern spiritual Israel ready and willing to assume responsibility for helping to save our great nations from certain destruction - or the responsibility of not helping?

Make a start. Get out your Bible and read it with a NEW MIND! It is a wonderful, masterful work of literature - fascinating in its simple complexities. Most of all, it is THE MOST PRACTICAL BOOK YOU WILL EVER READ! GUARANTEED! Begin applying Yahweh's Law in your life, in your thinking and in your actions, and you will PROVE to yourself that it is a set of LIVING LAWS THAT WORK - just like gravity!

The Bible - Yahweh's Word, truly is man's only HOPE!

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