

LESSONS FROM THE FLOOD (1): MOST ARE LOST

David Halbrook

Genesis 6-7 tells us of a time when there was more worldwide wickedness, even then there is today. God was longsuffering, but His patience came to an end when He flooded the entire world. God killed a huge number of people because of their stubborn rebellion.

This historical event is recorded as a reminder that MOST people will be lost at the end of time. Do you believe that? Jesus said, *wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it* (Matthew 7:13-14). If Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Wicca, etc. are “good religions too,” then Jesus’ words would be false.

Jesus also said that “many” people who called Him “Lord” will be lost (Matthew 7:21-23). Thinking that they did many things in His name, they were actually spiritually blind, not doing the Father’s will. Do you know the Father’s will on matters such as marriage, lying, the Lord’s Supper, and baptism? Open your Bible and be among the few who “find it”!

-- *Editor’s Note:*

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

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ON WEARING HUMANLY DEvised RELIGIOUS NAMES

Clarence R Johnson (<http://susquehannachurchofchrist.org/>)

Luke tells us that Christ’s disciples “were called Christians first at Antioch” nearly 2,000 years ago. The apostle Peter makes known to us that it is by wearing that name that we are to glorify God, 1 Pet. 4:16. Since the days of the inspired writers, many Bible scholars have recognized the importance of wearing this God-given name rather than wearing names of human origin in religion.

Martin Luther, whose efforts at religious reform resulted in the Lutheran Church, said, “I pray you to leave my name alone, and call not yourselves ‘Lutherans’ but ‘Christians.’ Who is Luther? My doctrine is not mine. I have not been crucified for anyone. St. Paul would not permit that any should call themselves of Paul, nor of Peter, but of Christ. How, then, does it befit me, a miserable bag of dust and ashes, to give my name to the children of Christ? Cease, my dear friends, to cling to party names and distinctions; away with them all; let us call ourselves only ‘Christians’ after Him from Whom our doctrine comes.” (Stork: Life of Martin Luther, page 289).

John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church is quoted: “Would to God that all party names and unscriptural phrases and forms which have divided the Christian world were forgotten; and that we might all agree to sit down together as humble loving disciples at the feet of a common Master to hear His word, imbibe His Spirit, and transcribe His life into our own.” (Wesley’s Notes on the New Testament, page 7).

Charles H. Spurgeon, one of the most powerful Baptist preachers who ever lived, was of like sentiments: “I look forward with pleasure to the day when there will not be a Baptist living. I hope they will soon be gone. I hope the ‘Baptist’ name will soon perish, but let Christ’s last forever.” (Spurgeon’s Memorial Library, Vol. 1, page 168).

Such quotations show that great students of God’s word in numerous times and places have recognized the value of calling ourselves after Christ who was crucified for us, and in whose name we have been baptized.

THAT SUDDENLY UNCOMFORTABLE CHEERLEADING UNIFORM

trainup???

Parents in Southern California are understandably disturbed that videos of their teenage daughters cavorting about in sexually tantalizing clothing have been showing up for sale on the Internet Auction Site e-Bay. That's not exactly how the news media begin their reports on the story, but still it is a pretty fair assessment of the situation.

Some lecherous entrepreneur carries his camcorder to high school football games, blending in among the band parents and middle-aged dads reliving their own gridiron glory vicariously through their sons on the field. Lecherous Entrepreneur, however, is not taping the trombonist or right tackle; surreptitiously, his lens is zoomed in on the young girls in miniskirts and belly-bearing tops as they perform gymnastic and dance routines which expose more and more of their desirable flesh. Immoral? Yes. Unjustified? Of course. Exploitative? Obviously. Criminal? Apparently not.

Prosecutors in Southern California would just love to go after this guy, even more forcefully than the investigative reporters who track him down through his Post Office box. The trouble is that there is nothing illegal about videotaping people in public places. He was not peeping through their bathroom windows or hanging out around the locker room. Every detail captured on his camcorder was performed in public before thousands of people.

One family sat down with their cheerleader daughter, and an intrepid reporter, with a copy of the \$70 videotape. "You can feel the discomfort in the room and see it on their faces because for the first time they're seeing their child through the eyes of someone else," reports Ana Garcia. Lecherous Entrepreneur has trained his trusty lens "on their mouths, breasts and crotches, freezing shots under their skirts, during kicks and splits."

But there is a short-circuit in everybody's indignation. Lecherous Entrepreneur did not manipulate the video to make it appear these girls were doing things they were not. He did not digitally place their pure heads upon the borrowed bodies of Vegas Showgirls. These young girls performed every suggestive motion and exposed every inch of flesh caught on tape. Mom says, "I don't want that out on the Internet. This is really upsetting to me." Granted the video brings the viewer up close and more personal with her daughter than a spectator would ordinarily get at the football stadium, but, again, the sights that sicken her are on display every Friday night for

any pervert with binoculars or a front row seat. And if \$70 a pop can be made, apparently legally, on this kind of smut, rest assured that Lecherous Entrepreneur will have company this fall...at a football field near you.

The moral issue with cheerleading is not the leading of cheers, and in its infancy, cheerleading was a rather wholesome celebration of school spirit and youthful beauty. It has evolved through the incorporation of gymnastics and racy costumes to something that is the epitome of lewdness. The uniform skirt has steadily crept up the leg to the point that it affords little coverage to begin with and practically none when the cheerleader moves even slightly, let alone when she performs flips, splits and tosses. The uniform top has likewise shrunk to the point that it exposes the belly and accentuates the chest, much to the delight of Lecherous Entrepreneur and his satisfied customers. Cheerleading has become something of a misnomer. Few spectators are actually willing to be led in cheers by the young women who spend most of their time performing dangerous gymnastics or often racy dance routines.

In spite of its roots in school spirit and extracurricular participation, modern cheerleading traffics in immodesty and lewdness which cannot be sustained under the New Testament. The Holy Spirit's desire is that women "adorn themselves in modest apparel...which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works," having long ago warned that a "lovely woman who lacks discretion" is like a swine with a gold ring in its snout (1 Tim. 2:8-10; Prov. 11:22). She should be defined instead by the hidden person of her heart, having the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit (1 Pet. 3: 4).

The indecent bodily movements of the modern cheerleader suggest sexual invitation to the young, weak or perverted heart (Gal. 5:19-21). The private and more alluring parts of her anatomy are exposed, emphasized and animated in an enticing fashion which only a fool would deny.

After seeing herself on the e-Bay video, one cheerleader complained, "I won't feel comfortable going out on the football field in my uniform again. You have no clue who is watching you and for what reason." True -- but that is the case with or without a camcorder in the hands of Lecherous Entrepreneur. Is this what it takes to get through to the people -- many of them Christians -- who condone or encourage cheer leading today?