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Charles H. Roberson

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“SPIRITUAL DEPRESSION”

ADDRESS OVER KRBC, AUGUST 28, 1938,
CHARLES H. ROBERSON



Roger Babson has said: “When America’s Keenest Minds are Using the Newspapers, Magazines, Movies and Radio to Entice Youth to Drink Whiskey, Smoke Cigarettes, and Make Heroes of Criminals, These Youth Should Hear the Other Side of the Argument From Some One.”



“If my people who are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn away from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” — 2 Chron. 7:14

“The wicked shall be turned back unto Sheol. Even all the nations that forget God.” — P. 9:17

A great nation can survive a political collapse; it can survive a financial collapse; but it cannot survive a moral and spiritual collapse. There has as yet been no people who has ever outlived its religious beliefs, even though these beliefs were false. When a peoples’ morality begins to sag and mockery is made of sin, then decay begins, and unless checked, leads to utter ruin. Moral decay has so far in the history of men preceded political decay. There is no reason why any people or nation should think that it shall be the exception. There is no way to judge the future but by the past.

Men have talked about financial depression, and political depression. Your speaker has chosen the theme "Spiritual Depression", for this address. It is most obvious that a great spiritual depression has gripped the world, and there must be a great spiritual awakening before there can be any permanent relief, either socially, politically or financially. There is a spiritual bankruptcy because unrighteousness and wickedness hinder truth and righteousness.

Our Great Loving Heavenly Father is not to blame for this disturbing condition. He has done His part. The seasons have been favorable, the harvests bountiful. There is more cotton than we need to clothe the world; there is more wheat than the world can eat; there is more money than bankers ever witnessed before — and yet suffering, want and hunger stalks the world around. What an anomaly when the two major problems of even relatively small communities are **unemployment** and **parking space**! It is man and man alone that has reduced humanity to the terrifying condition in which it finds itself. But man has not the power nor the wisdom to put humanity aright. HIS SOLE HOPE IS IN ALMIGHTY GOD, AND AS HE HAS MADE HIMSELF KNOWN IN HIS HOLY SON, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The depravity of man is on exhibition. Hell is having a field day; it has overflowed and inundated the earth. Witness graft, rottenness, political corruption, divorce, immorality, racketeering, lawlessness, juvenile delinquency, and vice, all of which are rampant. There is industrial unrest and unemployment which has no precedent in its present proportions. There is found everywhere contempt of courts, riots, rackets, sit-down strikes, violence, hate. Add to all these the ravages of disease, collapse of ethical standards, the falling away of moral restraints, the prevalence of sexual vice and its inescapable penalties, the increase of moral perverts and degenerates which yields a condition such as a 20th century reporter might well record by the language which the Apostle Paul wrote to the Romans about nineteen centuries ago: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness; because that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse: because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God gave them up to the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves; for they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

For this cause God gave them up unto vile passions: for their women changed the natural use into that which is against nature; and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves

that recompense of their error which was due.

And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful; who knowing such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them that practice them." Romans 1: 18-32.

Less than a hundred years ago, our own United States of America was the most law-abiding of all the nations. Today it is the most lawless. Within three decades crime has increased 500 per centum. Nearly four and one-half million criminals are operating in our land. The Federal Bureau of Investigation reveals that in 1936, 1,333,526 major crimes were committed; a murder every forty-five minutes; a robbery every two minutes; a felony every twenty-four seconds! Such numbers astound. The annual cost of education in the United States is three billion dollars. The annual cost of crime is sixteen billion dollars. Crime is costing each individual in our Commonwealth \$10.00 every month.

There are more than 240,000 prisoners in our prisons and who knows the number who should be cut off from their fellows? Not likely is the number less than two million. It is known that criminals are increasing at the rate of 25,000 a year. More than 50,000 houses and other places are burglarized and one hundred thousand people assaulted annually. In 1936 there were 23,000 suicides in the United States, one for each 25 minutes. 12,000 persons are murdered annually, one for each forty-five minutes. It is said that there are more murderers roaming at large in our land than there are preachers of the gospel; more unpunished murderers than policemen. And how shocking it is that three-fourths of the criminals today are young people. O, my friends can you not bow in humble prayer for the fathers and mothers of these young criminals?

Since repeal of the 18th Amendment, the number of the places where liquor is sold openly exceeds five hundred thousand, and there is three times as much bootlegging as there was under prohibition. In the old days there were in the United States 177,800 saloons. Today, cafeterias, restaurants, hotels, department stores, gasoline stations and roadhouses are saloons.

The money spent on liquor jumped from 350 million dollars in 1933 to five billion dollars in 1936. The old saloon was satisfied with boys, now our daughters are demanded also. In America there are 444,000 college women; One million, three hundred and fifty thousand girls are selling liquor — one in college and three selling "bottled lightning". Restaurants are converting waitresses into barmaids — young women serving liquor in an organized effort to make drinking respectable. It is estimated that forty per centum of the crimes are caused by drink. **THE DRINK-CRIME BILL COSTS THE UNITED STATE** six billion dollars every year.

The let-down of womanhood is alarming. Women are imitating all the vices of men and few of their virtues. We are living in an age of painted-faced, cigarette-smoking, cocktail-drinking women. We are witnessing the tragic, disgusting sight of drunken women, with cigarettes dripping from their lips,

reeling, swaggering into drunkards' graves. It is a fact of history that the fall of nations has always been preceded by flagrant immorality. When a nation exchanges morality for lust and immorality, it is hastening to its doom. Each year sixty-five thousand girls are swept into the RED LIGHT district. There are registered yearly fifty thousand unmarried mothers, and who can say how many unregistered ones there are? It is estimated that fifteen per centum of the population of our nation are infected with venereal diseases—acute, chronic or latent. Think of it my friends, eighteen million people, one for every 6 2-3 individuals in our land so afflicted.

Let us ask the question, "What is the cause of all this?" It seems to your speaker that not much research is needed to find the answer.

One of the most sickening, disgusting evils of today is the evil of divorce. A judge in an American city made a record by granting twelve divorces a day for nine months. The disintegration of homes continues in alarming ratio to marriage. In 1870 there was one divorce for 33 marriages; in 1900, one in twelve; in 1928, one in six; in 1935, one in five. One has said that the granting of divorce has been reduced to such a science and speed that one can change mates quicker than a chauffeur can change a tire on an automobile.

Another cause is the use of narcotics. Drugs, alcohol, and tobacco are a trio of the greatest scourges that ever afflicted humanity. The use of these is cruel, treacherous, dangerous. Narcotics exact a staggering toll of crime. In one year cigarette smokers spend one and one-half billion dollars for cigarettes. The cigarette is the most pernicious form in which tobacco is used. Smoking is much more injurious to women than to men. Women smoke nervously. They cannot smoke moderately. Their nervous condition develops anemia and other ills to which the sex is susceptible. Among growing girls the habit is exceedingly dangerous both mentally and physically. Said the cigarette, "I am not much of a mathematician, but I can add to a man's nervous trouble, I can subtract from his physical energy. I can multiply his aches, I can divide his mental powers, I can take interest from his work, and discount his chances of success."

Statistics reveal that 95 per centum of youthful criminals are cigarette smokers and ninety per centum cigarette fiends. Drink and tobacco are inseparably connected. Horace Greely said, "Show me a drunkard that does not smoke and I will show you a white blackbird." The young woman cocktail drinker is first a cigarette smoker. The cigarette trade depends upon deception. Nearly everyone knows that tobacco is a narcotic and a poison. Cigarettes should come under the Pure Food and Drug Act, and each package should carry a skull and crossbones and be labeled "Poison". This will curb the reckless statements that manufacturers are making.

One of the greatest producers of criminals and destroyers of morals is moving pictures. The themes portrayed on the screen give prominence to attempted rape, vice, prostitution, murder, adultery, seduction, lust, divorce and every conceivable form of criminality. Virtue and sacred things are ridiculed. An analysis of 250 American films revealed 97 murders, 51 cases of adultery, 19 seductions, 22 abductions, 45 suicides. Of the characters in these films there were 176 thieves, 25 prostitutes, 35 drunkards. Al-

most every village in our land is afflicted with a "movie." Seventy million men and women and twenty million children attend the movies each week.

If the moving picture industry is giving, as it says it is, the type of pictures the public demands, the fact that seventy million presumably morally respectable men and women are paying weekly to see the present day movies, is most disconcerting.

Another evil is the "Fool's Fever," GAMBLING. The devastating effect of gambling is far reaching. It wrecks legitimate business, cripples social and moral progress, incites crime. Gambling is robbery of the trickiest sort because for every winner there are thousands of losers. It is a sin against others and against ourselves. It is financially foolish and fundamentally wrong.

The teaching of infidelity in our schools and colleges is the most serious cause of the distressing condition which confronts society at the present time. It is taught in high schools, colleges and universities that man came from an ape, that the Bible is a collection of Jewish fables, that Jesus Christ was merely a peasant carpenter and only a man, that prayer is for the superstitious, that hell is a bed-time story, and as a result of such atheistic teaching in schools and colleges supported by taxpayers' money, our nation is reaping the result of its sowing. Righteousness is being winked at, law defied, immorality flourishing, corruption multiplying, and the faith of our boys and girls in God and the Bible is being destroyed. Whoever destroys man's faith in God and the word of God and substitutes a philosophy which robs God of personality and power and leaves men without the fear of God and no sense responsible to Him, is not only an enemy of the souls of men and the church of the Lord, but is also of society itself. When men lose the respect of God they lose respect for themselves and respect for others. It is estimated there are seven hundred thousand young people in the United States living criminal lives. Warden Lawes of Sing Sing says the contributions of vicious criminals from high schools is constantly increasing, and they are more brazen, more vicious, more desperate than ever before. It is estimated there are thirty million young people in our land who are receiving no religious instruction; that there are sixteen million young people and children who have never been inside a church house. The immorality of high school students is frightful.

The best crime-prevention agency is in that environment where the Bible is taught. If the young people of today were all enrolled in Bible study there would be fewer criminals.

Our United States rest upon four corner-stones: the Bible; the English language; the common law; and the traditions of liberty. The Bible has made our nation, and without the Bible it could never have achieved, and when it turns from its guidance and wisdom, it will no longer be. If there is a land in all the earth that should never hesitate when the Bible knocks at the school door for entrance, surely that land is the United States of America. The Bible should be read and studied as the final authority in all matters pertaining to life and conduct, for the result will be a purging of our educational system of its immoral and irreligious influences. Bible instruction is the best crime preventative known because it puts youth in vital touch with God. The instruction therein will surpass all that

fines, jails, reformatories, and G-men can do to bring back higher standards of moral living. The Bible has been taught in the high schools of Boston for nearly three and a half score years. The rate of burglary insurance is \$12. It has been taught in New York for about a score and a half years; the rate there is \$20. It has been banished in Chicago for two score years; the rate there is \$27. Does this tell you anything?

Sometime ago a questionnaire was sent to 18,000 high school students. Returns showed that 16,000 could not name three prophets of the Old Covenant; 12,000 could not name the four Gospels; 10,000 could not name three of the Apostles. Think of this; high school students! Young people today know more about Charlie Chaplin, Clark Gable and Mae West than they do about Abraham and Sarah or Isaac and Rebekah.

Wm. Lyon Phelps has said that a knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without a knowledge of the Bible. Every one who has a knowledge of the Bible may be truly educated; and no other learning or culture, no matter how expensive or elegant, can form a proper substitute.

My friends, the disappearance of the family altar the more than thirty million young people in our land without spiritual training, the increasing juvenile delinquency, the alarming increase of sex crimes, the almost unrestricted sale of salacious literature, the common and ever-increasing nudism of popular bathing beaches and pools and beauty contests, the increasing army of narcotic addicts, the several thousand atheistic Sunday Schools, the army of atheistic agents working for atheism, and most of all, the worldliness, coldness, deadness and impotency of professing Christians, should stir to the depths of soul all thinking men, and particularly all sincere followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

To what have we come when the President of the Federal Council of Churches can say that "the tendency to deify Jesus is more heathen than Christian!" And another of the same Council commending a book to parents and preachers and young men everywhere, which declares:

"Science has shattered the dogma of an infallible Bible into a thousand pieces;

"Science has made the dogma that Jesus is very God appear increasingly impossible;

"Science has demonstrated the vast majority of miracles of the Old and the New Testament to be fictitious."

Many are the panaceas offered to bring our people out of this sick and decaying condition. Your speaker without any reservation declares that if our land is to be healed, there must be a return to the Word of God, for therein is recorded the sole way that can bring deliverance. The cause of all the woes of humanity is sin. There is one way for individuals and nations to avoid judgement and escape punishment. There is no substitute for **Alliance** with God and **Reliance** upon Him. Days of all kind have been set apart. I plead for the day of Faith, Repentance, Confession, Baptism, the day of **Complete Obedience** out of which men shall walk in all righteousness and truth. This is the sole hope of man. Unless there is a moral and spiritual awakening, judgement impends, and some future historian will write "The United States of America committed suicide."