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Pharisee Watch

Kulchur Klash 2002: Part 1. The Church

By C. E. Carlson

INTRODUCTION:



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A church service or Sunday morning TV evangelist sermon is usually not complete without words to the effect that "our society is crumbling." I heard these exact words preached only last Sunday. One who mulls this over might ask the question, how can a Christian country like ours have a crumbling society...ought this not be an oxymoron?

Most other nations have long viewed America as one of the world's most Christian nations. This is probably correct in the sense that an overwhelming percentage of Americans classify ourselves as "Christians" in the census and public opinion polls, and if judging by the number of churches and church attendance. Politicians for major office with rare exception mirror this preference by making it known that they too like to be thought of as "Christians." Based on these measures of Christianity in America, we should be doing fine as a culture...or else Christianity must not be what it claims to be, a societal success by virtue of its acts.

A third possibility (the true one) is that our society appears to one of Christ followers but is not; the abundance of churches, the enormous TV Christian budgets, and even the attendance itself are signs not of holiness but of affluence and boredom. If this is true, then the pastor at the pulpit may be right, our society may indeed be crumbling.

A hallmark of Christ's teachings are a call to love all men, not simply those one agrees with, and to seek peace with that love even at a cost...even to place peace before affluence. Any who deny this deny most of what Christ said. That includes those who claim to follow Him from the lofty heights of federal government and the cockpits of war machines. Those who call themselves by Christ's name, yet doubt what you have just read, are invited to read the book of Matthew, especially the 5th chapter, before reading one more line of this essay. [The Bible, Genesis Network](#).

In spite of our leaders professions and oft-stated suggestions in word and innuendo, our government is now undeniably engaged in almost continuous aggressive violence which have lately become referred to as undeclared "wars." Few reasonable persons will deny that the result is and will be accelerating dollar costs (inflation) at home and death and destruction to others delicately referred to as "collateral damage." Nonetheless, dozens of statements from many popular Christian leaders indicate that they support, virtually without objection, the administration's stated plan to continue the Afghanistan war into dozens of other countries. To this end, Vice President Dick Cheney, has stated as many as 50 countries may be involved. Few pastors or TV evangelists have objected.

An observer from outer space might well ask, "If America is indeed a Christian nation, then doesn't this make Christianity a religion of crusades and wars?" If Christianity is not a religion of war, what are popular American Christians doing to prevent and ameliorate the serial wars damage to less fortunate persons who are clearly victims of the American unmatched and unlimited destructive power, and what about the psychological damage to those asked to push the buttons on mass assassination? The answer is, far from helping, most professing Christian leaders are throwing gas on the fire. We must first ask, who within the ranks of those who call themselves Christians are responsible for promoting war, and why do they do it?

The Biblical and secular accounts of Jesus arrest, persecution, trial and execution attest to the power of the Pharisee sect today now know as Judaism. It is noted here that Jerusalem was completely destroyed by war in 70 AD when Palestine, as the Romans called it, was under Pharisaic religious influence if not political control. This occurred less then 35 years after Christ predicted its destruction in the 19th Chapter of Luke. In this Part I. we examine, as Jesus Christ did, the historic religious leaders who called themselves "Pharisees." Jesus had much to say about this sect that virtually controlled spiritual and political life in Judea, collected tributes, and even

manipulated the leaders of the occupying Roman Legion.

PART I: ARE PHARISEES EXTINCT?

The Pharisees Jesus denounced have not gone away, but have established an even more formidable control mechanism in our society than ever existed in Christ's mortal lifetime. Some are Christian Pharisees and some are Jewish. First, let us define them. The noun "Pharisee" occurs, according to Strongs' Concordance, 78 times in the New Testament, much more frequently than "Satan." Yet usage of the word has been largely eliminated from teaching in many Bibles studies, the pulpits of America's churches, professing Christian media and even seminaries. Who were and who are the Pharisees, and is there a logical reason why we rarely hear about them today?

WEBSTER DEFINES PHARISEE: "One of the members of a school or party among the ancient Jews noted for the strict formal observance of the rites and validity of traditions of the elders." Further on: " Pharisee interpretation provided the standard of observation and belief for the great majority of the Jews from the 1st Century A.D."

Pharisaic: "Hypocritical, self righteous and censorious of others" -- Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language, 2nd Edition, 1950.

Webster's all but forgotten definition is an accurate one. Pharisees are in conflict with Jesus whenever they met. Followers of Christ confronted the Pharisees repeatedly. It was a "Jewish" sect that followed the "traditions of the elders" as Webster stated and as Jesus also said. These traditions are now know as the "Talmud." But what the 1950 dictionary did not recognize is that Pharisaism was even then no longer exclusive Jewish, as it once may have been, for Pharisaic influence long before the 1950s could probably have been found in every denomination in America, busily reshaping Christianity into the Pharisaic image. It was then and has become both a Judeo and a Christian sect.

All mention of the Pharisaism occurs in the New Testament where its formed the center of conflict around Jesus, His disciples, and His followers. As Jesus predicted many were stalked, scourged and killed by the Pharisees. In addition to the 78 verses in which Pharisee are mentioned by name, pronouns including "you" point to Pharisees in many additional verses. The Pharisees are the object of Jesus' debate and denunciation in entire chapters in Matthew, Luke and John as well as the writings of Paul who claimed he once

had been a Pharisee, having killed Christians. These many references provide an undeniable accounts of the ongoing conflict and plot against Jesus' life for all who read. The noun Pharisee occurs about three times more often than the infamous name of Judas, 30 times more than Satan and 50 more times than the name of Pontius Pilot. It is, without a doubt, the most denounced noun in the New Testament. It is the only name that Jesus constantly associated with the Satan.

Jesus followers feared the political power of the Pharisees more than the Romans. Yet the word Pharisee is pointedly ignored by most Christian leaders and all but forgotten in modern evangelical Christendom and the ranks of the celebrity media broadcasters. "Pharisee" may also be the most avoided word found in the Bible. Some pastors and most televangelists are capable of preaching the year through without ever mentioning Pharisee, except in passing by on the way to some other point. Pharisees are wrongly treated as an extinct and irrelevant species.

Organized Bible study courses rarely mention whom the Pharisees were, why Jesus pronounced upon them so harshly and never treat the Pharisee as an anti-Christ type to watch out for in our day. Celebrity Christians on national TV never suggest that the Pharisee's war on Jesus has anything at all to do with His followers, or that the sect may have survived to this day.

CENSORSHIP IN THE CHURCH

The word Pharisee has not yet been removed from any Bibles we know of, but most Bible commentaries and concordances avoid any serious treatment of how they operate to control civil government, and who their successors are today. For instance, the concordance in the new Thompson Study Bible, a very popular one that is supposedly designed to help readers understand the scriptures, has all but eliminated any mention of this sect. Amazingly, Thompson new edition concordance lists only one of the 78 sites, yet its previous 1962 edition listed four. Pray tell, what happened to the other three verses it previously recognized, not to mention 74 never cited at all, The four references cited are atypically favorable having to do with Paul's own Pharisaic history. It appears the publisher is whitewashing the word and deleting "Pharisee" from its readers' vocabularies. This is unthinkable because Jesus denounced the Pharisees, the most powerful and destructive faction of anti-Christianity calling them a "generation of vipers" and "sons of Satan." But most study Bibles and Bible courses omit all but casual mention of Pharisees. Curiously, the much-maligned paraphrase Living Bible Concordance contains the key sites found in Strongs,

and is well worth reading.

TODAYS PHARISEES

Let us examine what has become of the Pharisees in our modern society and how they continue to attempt to control our lives. The New Testament tells us they controlled Judea at the time of Jesus' mission. Pharisees, both Christian professing and Jewish, control Palestine again today with unimaginable brutality. Needless to say, we do not think Pharisees have gone away; else they would not be tampering with our beliefs. Nor did Webster think they had gone away, as he says in his 1950 definition that Pharisaism became modern Judaism.

The venerable traditionally Christian Webster is not the only one to say this? Proper definitions are taken from correct and proper usage of that less censored age. Many Rabbis have proudly provided the rabbinical sources for Webster's definition. The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, 1943, state: "The Jewish Religion as it is today traces it descent without a break from the Pharisees- their ideas and methods are found in the Talmud." And Rabbi Louise Finklestein, head of the Jewish Theological Seminary, stated in his book "History of the Jews" 1949, "Pharisaism became talmudist...the spirit of the ancient Pharisees survived unaltered ...therefore any discourse regarding the Jewish religion must be based on Talmudism." Jewish leaders were in the 1950s obviously were proud of their claim to be Pharisees.

This is not to suggest that this all Jews to be Pharisees any more than all Pharisees are Jews. But Pharisees dominated religious thinking in Jesus time and have far too much to say about what the leaders of our government do. Much worse they have established influencing over what Christians think. Pharisaic Judaism attempted but failed to censor Christian thought in the first century; today they are succeeding. This is indeed a sad reflection on popular Christian leadership.

THE PHARISEE BIBLE

The Pharisees of today have moved heaven and earth to discourage thousands of pastors and televangelists from teaching what Jesus said so clearly. The godfather of the Biblical censors is the powerfully promoted Scofield study Bible, first printed in England in 1908, but sold in America. Scofield's Study Bible is a traditional, difficult to read, King James version, doctored with hundred of easy to read added notes and inserted descriptive chapter and verse headings. Most of the notes are about the "rapture" the "end times" and the return of the ancient tribe of Israelites to the Holy land. But

there are no meaningful notes about Pharisaism.

The latest, much changed edition of Scofield Study Bible was printed in 1962 and boldly elevated "anti-Semitism" to the status of a "sin" a sort of 11th Commandment it would seem. Each of the four successive editions, beginning in 1908, have further advanced the claims of the self-proclaimed Jews to the real estate known today as the State of Israel, a nation which did not even exist when its first three editions were published. The latest, 1962 Edition goes so far as to contain a note stating that "FOR A NATION TO COMMIT THE SIN OF ANTI-SEMITISM BRINGS INEVITABLE JUDGMENT" (page 20) But it contains hardly a note interpreting any of the hundreds of verses Jesus spoke in his daily conflict with the Pharisees and their plot for his death. Scofield ignores all were giving the reader the impression these are of little consequence, and since the King James version is slow reading at best, readers tend to rely on the notes. Most study Bibles we have seen, including the Thompson, follow Scofield's Pharisee friendly example. These footnotes of men are a corrupt the Bible of God, as it stated in its last book.

The first of the 78 mentions of Pharisees occurs in Matthew 3:7-8 when they appear in numbers at the Jordan River where John the Baptist was proclaiming the coming of the Messiah. John's firm and condemnatory words spoken to them were: "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." John the Baptist went on to rebuke their claim to holiness, refuting their claim of being chosen people by descent from Abraham stating: "and think not to say within yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father;' for I say unto you that God is able to raise up from these stones children unto Abraham." So much for the chosen people. (King James Version)

One early exchange between Christ and the Pharisees occurred in Matthew 12 where Jesus called them: "An evil and adulterous generation" in a powerful exchange that fills most of the chapter 12, and most of the long chapter of Matthew 23 is Jesus' condemnation of the Pharisees, a small part of which states: "Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city." (Mt. 23:31-34)

PROMOTERS OF ISRAELI PHARISAISM

Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, Jack Van Empe and dozens more like them have made careers by promoting Israel as a political state and a chosen race. Thousands of local church leaders are following this example. Many of these self-professed Christian leaders are the Pharisees of today, achieving fame and influence by pleasing the media secular Zionist media powers.

Pharisees were once exclusively Judean, "Jews" in the vernacular of our day. Many contend that Israeli Patriots assert more control over America's political parties, news media and the banking system than is healthy for a Christian society. This should be obvious to anyone who will look at the media; then read the Bible references to Pharisaism. But it is largely from within that the vitality of Christianity in being diluted, not from outside. The control of media may be a "Jewish" problem, but the perversion of Christianity is not. Many professing Christians at all levels of leadership have abandon their Bible given responsibility in exchange for the footnotes written by men. These are the Pharisees of today. Part II will deal with how Christian leaders have allowed themselves to become Pharisees, supporting untold government brutality, cruelty, and waste while claiming Christ's name. -End

Suggested background reading:

["The Body Snatchers' Report On Planet Earth"](#) our cultural problem, as viewed by and intelligent visitor from space.

["SHERRY'S WAR"](#) Why many professing Christians support war against Islam, political repression and torture by Israel without considering that these are unchristian acts. Hard copy 20 pages, reference, available free to all contributors, bulk copies 10 for \$30.00 delivered in USA, for overseas rates or larger quantities please inquire.

[The Bible, Genesis Network](#): We suggest every skeptical reader look up and read each of the 78 references to Pharisee.

WHTT ACT-TANK RECOMMENDATION: If you agree with us, help us give every follower an opportunity to read this **Pharisee Watch**, and ask your own pastor to preach and teach on what Jesus said about Pharisees.

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"[One Nation Under Israel](#)" may be the first historically documented expose of the hijacking of the American Congress. It is a popular lament that, "Congress is out of control," but nothing could be further from the truth. For as Author Andrew Hurley clearly explains, Congress is not under the control of its constituents but of a foreign power.

This Month's Features ...

Rewarding reading: [JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM](#) - Grace Halsell trekked through the Holy Land, from the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Israel, the home of Islam, Christianity and Judaism. A rare balanced view from inside Jewish, Christian and Muslim families who share the small area of land. Conflicts are presented artfully from intimate interviews with family members of all groups.

Video for all audiences: [THE PEOPLE AND THE LAND](#) by award winning photographer Tom Hayes - Public Broadcasting Corporation paid for this film, then refused to air it. Filmed at great risk to film crew and civilian population, filmed in Gaza, West Bank and Haifa. For those who are seeking the truth about the war of rocks against rifles, 1 hour, professional quality. Learn why many professing Christians support war, repression and torture.