**HOW CLOSE IS CHRIST’S RETURN?**

Since Jesus told us what to look for as the signs of His return many have been aware that most of those signs are already present. This article will point out another sign, that, even though it is often mentioned, it is not adequately recognized. This sign, which is very prevalent today, seems to be getting no attention at all for what it is.

Matthew 24:37 – *But as the days of Noe* (Noah) *were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*

 Look at what is recorded in Genesis about the days of Noah that provoked God to respond with the destructive flood.

Genesis 6:5-7 – *Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the Lord said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.”*

What was it in the days of Noah that Jesus warned would be a sign just before His return?

Genesis 6:11-13 – *The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.*

 Here we see that it was the character and behavior of mankind that was so prevalent in Noah’s time that forced God to take action to put an end to. The sign of the last days and the return of Christ is here identified as **CORRUPTION** and **VIOLENCE!**

What is CORRUPTION according to the dictionary? 1) Change from a sound state to a putrid state; 2) Change from a state of uprightness, correctness and truth to a bad state that is depraved and evil; a change from good to bad. VIOLENCE is the employment of physical force usually resulting in cruelty, injustice, oppression, or unlawful action.

 What is it that is reported almost daily by the news media – CORRUPTION and VIOLENCE! What is it that so many view on TV, in the movies, or by video games – corruption and violence.

 I have often wondered about the kind of minds of those who write the stories for TV shows, motion pictures, video games and the entertainment industry. What comes out of their minds appears to fit in with what God said about mankind in the time of Noah: “*and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”,* (Genesis 6:5b).

 Simply put, when God is removed from any institution of man, it becomes CORRUPT; it becomes void of uprightness, correctness and truth! When reverence, worship, obedience, remembrance, dependence, and acknowledgement of God is removed from mans awareness, then man becomes corrupt. Why? Because man replaces God with something else; usually with himself or something of his own making. Man takes the place of a god in his own mind. This was the very temptation that the devil used on Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 3:4 – *Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened,* ***and you will be like God****,*

 Consider what has become corrupt by removing God as a result of the kind of laws legislated in America in the past fifty years: education; the media, (news and entertainment); sports, and even some religions – all now filled with corruption and violence. Even consider our own American government which today could not be recognized by our Founding Fathers. Nor does our present government have any resemblance of our original Constitution, Bill of Rights, Declaration Independence and the Representative form of government originally called “The Republic”; now totally corrupt.

 Our national leaders have removed God from public education, knowledge and awareness, and replaced Him with the religion of man (Humanism) which is the basis of godless Liberalism, Progressivism, Socialism, occultism, Eastern mysticism and other forms of worship, (including the idolatry of personalities); and false religions, Islam in particular.

 We can easily see the results of this corruption and moral decline. Consider what the Bible describes of what we are now experiencing as a nation, and for that matter, the entire world.

Psalm 94:20 – *Shall the throne of iniquity, which devises evil by law, Have fellowship*

*with You?*

Psalm 119:126 – *It is* time for *You* to act, O Lord, *For* they have regarded Your law as void.

Proverbs 14:34 – *Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people.*

Proverbs 29:2 – *When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a*

*wicked man rules, the people groan* (morn)*.*

Proverbs 29:12 *– If a ruler pays attention to lies, All his servants become wicked.*

Proverbs 28:13 – *He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and*

*forsakes them will have mercy.*

Isaiah 5:20 – *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!*

Isaiah 10:1 – *“Woe to those who decree unrighteous decrees* (laws)*, Who write*

*misfortune, Which they have prescribed* (legislated)*.*

It is easy to chart on a graph the increase in violence and corruption that has greatly increased in America since the 1963 when prayer and the Bible were removed from public education. Shortly afterward the media followed suit by eliminating the “Television Seal of Good Practice” that self-regulated the TV industry with morals, values and ethics. Then our courts and congress proceeded to remove God and His laws from the public trust with the help of the ACLU and other godless liberal enterprises aimed at destroying righteousness in this nation.

John 10:10 – *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

Clearly the enemy of God is at work and much of human government is cooperating with Satan to help him succeed. This is what Jesus foretold and He is about to return to put an end to it and judge the ungodly who refuse to repent and accept the divine life that God provided through Jesus Christ.

What manner of people ought we Christians to be as we see the day of His appearing approaching? It is time to put off the things of the flesh (the carnal selfish nature) and repent and prepare to meet Him as the elect representatives of His Kingdom.

Romans 13:11-14 – *And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*

 Since corruption and violence is so pronounced in these days surely there is little time left before the return of Christ. It is thus incumbent on true Christians to commit themselves to Christ-likeness and be prepared for that day that we are all looking for. Our Heavenly Father is also looking forward to that day of harvest: in fact, so is all of creation.

Romans 8:19 – *For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing* (manifestation) *of the sons of God.*

 We know that there is no corruption and violence in the Kingdom of God which we are commissioned to represent here on earth through Jesus Christ. So we need to have a greater regard for the will and purpose of God in our daily lives and allow the light of Christ to shine in and through us because our Heavenly Father has already promised to cover everything else that we need in this life.

Matthew 6:33 – *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

It won’t be long now before we hear that final trumpet blow! Are you ready? It would be appropriate also to read all of 2 Peter Chapter 3 at this time and set your priorities in order.