

## My How Times Have Changed!

Scandals Abound! Even the Christmas season can not escape. The news papers and TV screens were recently filled with a weeping Miss USA, Tara Conner, and the “kind” and “gracious benefactor” boss, Donald Trump, extending another chance to the reigning beauty queen. This was after Conner had been caught drinking in bars across New York City. The under-aged drinking party girl admitted being “caught up” in the world of party goers, yet vowed to get help so she could continue to carry out her duties as Miss USA. With tears she thanked Trump for his “gracious” act and promised to never do it again.

Back up a little over forty years. It is 1964. Do you remember Bert Parks? Parks is the emcee for the Miss America pageant. On national television, Parks was interviewing Miss Arizona, Vonda Kay Van Dyke. Parks asked the question, “Do you carry a Bible as a good luck charm?” The young beauty responded, “It’s not a charm, but the most important Book I own.” Then she added, “I wouldn’t classify my relationship to Jesus Christ as a religion, but rather as faith. I trust in Him completely.”

My, how times have changed! Have we not come a long way in just a relatively short period of time? Perhaps some would express doubt as to how any beauty pageant could serve as a good example for role models, and an attempt to do so here is not the purpose of this writing. However, it is a good example of how the moral values in America have greatly changed.

As far back in the Bible as one can go people will be found who have the power of choice making poor decisions. It appears to be that with any period of time in any economy, there is a drift away from serving God to the serving of one’s self. How long did the world exist before God had to destroy it by water? Then after the flood did the world appear to be going in the same direction once again when they built the tower of Babel? Did not God recognize, “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them,” Genesis 11:6. The path of destruction was being set, so God confused the languages and the people dispersed to different parts of the world.

It is the way of every culture. Solomon said, “Truly, this only I have found: that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes,” Ecclesiastes 7:29. The sad thing is that when men get on this track leading to destruction, they do it without the presence and involvement of God. Three times in Romans chapter one the apostle expresses that God gives man up to his own destructive ways. In other words, God will not go there with man! If he wants to destroy himself, he will do it alone. God will not be a part of it.

The same can be said of a nation. If a nation leaves God for their own pursuits, God will not follow it into apostasy either. It has always been the case. If the nation becomes self-serving, God will not hold it together. He is a loving, kind and gracious God, but He is not a fool. It was in the day of Jeremiah the prophet that the word of the Lord spoke saying, “But if any nation will not listen, then I will utterly pluck it up and destroy it, declares the Lord,” Jeremiah 12:17. Thankfully, in another place the Lord also proclaimed, “if my people who are called by my

name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14.

It has often been said that we are one generation away from apostasy. This is true for the church as well as a nation, hence the necessity to be aware of where we are, and what we are about. Our nation is still redeemable, but the call of God is for everyone to be committed to conformity to Christ. Start with yourself, and then your family. Because another saying is also true, “As goes the home, so goes the nation.”

—Scott