

# Chuck Colson Prophecies From Beyond the Grave

Charles W. “Chuck” Colson went from being a Nixon aide and Watergate felon, to becoming one of the most eloquent and influential evangelical Christian leaders of our time; a leading voice on all Christian worldview matters up until his death in 2012 at the age of 80.

Colson, the former Nixon White House operative, famous for saying he’d be willing to run over his grandmother for the president, was the first in a line of Nixon’s aides convicted in connection to the June 17, 1972, break-in to Democratic National Committee offices in Washington’s Watergate complex.

He did prison time for obstruction of justice, and then became “born-again Christian,” which he chronicled in his autobiography *Born Again*. The book was later made into a Hollywood movie, and Norma and I in 1978 actually attended some of the filming of the White House scenes at Warner Brothers studios in Burbank, California. (Colson was played by Dean Jones in the film.)

Colson then started Prison Fellowship, which became the largest prison ministry in the world. He was portrayed in the media as a “public thinker,” “author” and “frequent gadfly” who, to his credit, aimed to appeal to the brains of skeptics and believers—and not just their hearts—in his articles, books and the Wilberforce Forum. But as several commentators have said, since he died, “Colson’s most memorable legacy may be his life, a picture of redemption.”

In the capstone to his later distinguished publishing career, *My Final Word: Holding Tight to the Issues that Matter Most* (Zondervan, Aug. 4, 2015), Colson issues a clarion call for Christians to think critically about today’s most pressing

issues.

“What we’re witnessing in our culture today is but the tip of the iceberg,” said Colson, moments before suffering the stroke that would lead to his death three weeks later. “It’s the latest visible manifestation of growing hostility to Christianity ... This is the moment where the church has to learn how to defend itself against this sort of thing, and do it in a way that is constructive.”

According to a Zondervan news release, longtime Colson co-author Anne Morse has selected and arranged pieces written mostly during the last decade of Colson’s life, spotlighting what he saw as key topics of ongoing importance for Christian cultural engagement. Colson covers many issues torn from today’s headlines, a true testament to his wisdom and understanding of how these issues would continue to influence the world, even after his passing.

Some of the issues in the book include:

- Islam
- Religious freedom
- The persecution of Christians

Here are some excerpts from the book:

### **The Rise of Islam/War Against ISIS (Islamic State):**

“The problem here is at root Islam is a theocracy, so they basically have to penetrate our country and build a revolution. It’s illogical to think that they would want to do anything else. This is clearly what Islam is about. This is not ranting on our part; this is fact. The only issue is whether Islamists carry out their beliefs. If they want to deny their own beliefs, then they’re benign; but if they exercise them, they’re not.”

“We are not going to win in a toe-to-toe, head-to-head

confrontation with radical Islam. All you can do is undermine it from within. In other words, offer an alternative that is so attractive that the masses of Muslims begin to demand it and moderate governments begin to embrace it. It's going to be a long, bloody clash, however."

"One thing we in the West should not do is equate all Muslims with the Islamists ... It's also counterproductive if we label the entire Muslim world with the Islamist stigma, because what that will do is produce the very clash of civilizations which the Islamists want, because they want to be at war with the West."

"I really do realize what Bush and others are trying to do, which is to avoid a confrontation with Islam. So I think it's incumbent on religious leaders to not make inflammatory statements. We need to be honest and forthright about our beliefs, but this is not the time to ignite passions."

### **Religious Freedom:**

"The First Amendment doesn't give us any rights. The First Amendment protects rights that are already God-given. And of course they can't be denied ... if we believe all human beings are made in the image of God, we must care about the religious liberties of everyone."

"Tolerance is a wonderful thing when it is properly understood."

"On the subject of religious freedom and being forced to hire people who don't share our faith or don't agree to abide by our moral convictions—this issue is going to have a huge impact on the general public, because most AIDS shelters in America are maintained by Catholic charities, and most homeless shelters by the Salvation Army. So they're really playing with fire here, because if you start closing those down (or if they close themselves down rather than violate the teachings of their faith), you're eliminating absolutely vital

public services. There's got to be an exception on the hiring question ... I don't think people understand this is coming. But now that the eroding of religious liberties has started, they could be unraveled very quickly."

### **Persecution of Christians:**

"I believe we are headed for a new Dark Ages, with persecution coming to the church soon. It's going to happen as a result of conflicts over sex. This is where modern human beings do not want to be in any way restrained. They will accept the law that governs them in just about every area of their lives except sexual passions."

"We've taken a lot of heat over the years—we get called bigots and extremists and even accused of being homophobic and therefore responsible for the death of Matthew Shepard. So we're not strangers to this kind of stuff; it's been going on a long time. But there's a whole new wave coming, in my opinion, and it's going to be the most vicious ever—and also the most dangerous, because the form the attacks will take appeals to basic American instincts of fair play, and now particularly the American obsession for tolerance."

"The conclusions of the secularist are laughably preposterous, but this isn't going to stop them from making them, and this is the wave of the future persecution of Christians. But we need to be able to defend ourselves. The answer is to look at what the religions themselves say, the basic documents of the Bible, the Torah, and the Koran. Right there, you have three contradictory systems, all making truth claims ... I think Christians have to make this case very intelligently to people, and if we do, we'll be able to nip this thing in the bud."

"We must also reflect on how we defend religious liberty. We don't want to defend it by claiming our opponents are bigots. Instead, we have to show why, if we allow the government to

take away freedom of conscience, we're going to lose all other liberties. That's the kind of approach that is going to have to be made to get a majority of the people with us. It might not help in the courts, but at least we can begin to win some public support."

Co-author Anne Morse, writes in the introduction, "While Chuck's big focus was teaching worldview, he never tired of finding new ways to explain the faith that had changed the life of this Watergate felon forever." What follows are his thoughts, previously unpublished, on some of the subjects that concerned him most. Rereading them, I was struck by how prophetic his insights proved to be."

Eric Metaxas, an American author, speaker and radio host, says of the book: "There is gold in these pages. Avail yourself to it."

Note: Charles W. "Chuck" Colson, a man I was privileged to interview on many occasion, was never one to pull his punches and his story is one of how God could rescue a felon who went to prison for his involvement with Nixon's Watergate scandal. He then went on to become a popular and widely known author, speaker and radio commentator. He wrote several books that have shaped Christian thinking on a variety of subjects, including *Born Again*, *Loving God*, *How Now Shall We Live?*, *The Good Life* and *The Faith*.

Besides Prison Fellowship, he also founded The Chuck Colson Center for Christian Worldview, and donated all of his royalties, awards and speaking fees to these ministries.