

Godless Liberty

Just 10 days after Americans celebrate their revolution, the French celebrate theirs on Bastille Day, July 14.

The two revolutions could not have been more different. The Americans honored God in their Declaration of Independence. The French, on the other hand, adopted the atheistic, anti-Christian values of the French Enlightenment and set out to eradicate God from public life. Churches were closed, priests were persecuted and the calendar was remade without any Christian holidays. To replace the Virgin Mary, the revolutionary leaders invented the atheistic "Goddess of Liberty," which became the emblem of godless liberty.

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The fruit of the revolutions was also very different. America became a beacon of hope for the world as it worked to make its dream of equality and God-given rights become a reality. In France, the godless foundation of the revolution meant that all moral restraint on power evaporated, and the infamous Reign of Terror began. Neither life nor liberty were safe, and even the revolutionary leaders were carried off one by one by the terror. Finally, order was restored but all hope of liberty vanished under the iron-fisted rule of Napoleon Bonaparte. It turns out that godless liberty is no liberty at all.

Sad to say, the lesson of the French Revolution has been repeated over and over since then. The Communist revolutions in Russia, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Cuba and elsewhere produced massive death and eliminated freedom. The same holds true for the Nazis in Germany and the fascists in Italy who, like Napoleon, led the whole world into war. The post-colonial socialists in Africa grabbed power after elections, giving

rise to the famous statement of "One man, one vote, one time." The same process has also occurred in countries like Venezuela, Argentina and Nicaragua where authoritarians have used the promise of godless liberty to subvert democratic intuitions.

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Even in America our God-given liberties have been eroded by the proponents of godless liberty. Beginning in the 1960's, the government has banned God from our public schools, allowed the murder of the unborn, worked against Christian morality and mandated same sex "marriage." At the same time, Big Government has increasingly limited the rights of Americans to exercise freedoms of religion, speech and property. The fruit of the godless liberty in America has been fatherlessness, poverty, crime and a government which grows larger while the people grow poorer and smaller.

The inroads of godless liberty have come about because of a failure by the church to preach the Gospel of love and truth. Some misguided pastors confuse love with sexual exploitation to condone sexual sin, even gay marriage, when they should be setting people free in the name of Christ. Churches have substituted failed social programs for the life changing gospel of Christ. And the love of Christ is often hidden behind condemnation, political agendas and church division. The church must remain true to its calling if it is to avoid the fate of the French church during the French Revolution.

Let us pray that the church will repent of its sins and return to the lifesaving work of spreading the Gospel and the love of

Christ. We must humble ourselves, come together and repent if our land is to be healed.

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Let us also pray that the precious gift of godly liberty, and especially religious liberty, can overcome the evil of godless liberty.

Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free," (John 8:31-32).

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