

The Rise of Animalism

Tim Haile

The United States is becoming an increasingly dangerous place. Respect for human life and property rights has dramatically decreased over the past several years. While there has always been violent crime, an alarming demographic shift has occurred in which “hardened criminals” are no longer the only ones that must be feared. *Youth* violence is now a major concern. Gang membership is on the rise in this country, and many gang members, though quite dangerous, are quite young. More and more youth beatings are occurring, with videos even being made and circulated on the internet for the intimidation factor. So-called “flash-mobs” are happening across the country, and not the harmless ones in which several youths spontaneously break out in *song and dance*, but *violent* ones involving assault, vandalism and theft. Youth “bullying” incidents regularly make the headlines these days. Motivated by jealousy, resentment or simple meanness, young people cruelly attack others both verbally and physically. Some youths have been so tormented by bullying that they have been driven to commit suicide. Sports related mob violence is also on the rise. Strangely, much of this type of rioting develops out of celebrations by the fans of the *winning* sports team. While reasonable minds can understand sports fans assembling in the streets to celebrate a victory, it makes no sense for them to beat people, burn cars, and destroy other people’s property as a part of such “celebrations.” Responsible, conscientious people control their emotions. However, unbridled emotion becomes dangerous when it is experienced by those bereft of any moral restraint.

The Effects of Political, Social & Economic Unrest

Various places throughout the world are currently experiencing political and social unrest. Violent rioting is today occurring because of economic hardship. While peaceful protestations can be healthy, riots serve no useful purpose. At the time of this writing, Greece continues to experience violent uprisings due to government austerity measures. People are being injured and property is being destroyed. People allow themselves to become so dependent upon government support that they become violent when they find out that they may have to work a few more hours per week or retire a few years later than they would like. Thankfully, U.S. protestors have not been too violent, though given the degree of moral bankruptcy in our country that potential does exist.

The “Occupy Wall Street” Movement

Liberal movements are often difficult to codify. They tend to attract a wide variety of strange and perverse groups, from full-bore communists to sex

exhibitionists and hedonists. Some of them cannot be taken seriously: They are just looking for a good “party.” Others are quite disciplined in their focus and should be watched carefully. The real danger is that the disciplined of the movement (muslims, marxists, nazis, socialists) will mobilize the aimless and ill-informed into a more cohesive unit. The “Occupy Wall Street” movement is one such movement. It appears to be an amalgamation of loose nit fringe groups who are using the present economic situation to advance their common goal of greater income redistribution, or socialism. These people ignore the fact that our present graduated tax code has the top 1% of earners paying the top 40% of all federal taxes, the top 10% of earners paying 70% of all federal taxes, and the bottom 50% paying no or negative federal taxes. At some point a “tax” becomes theft. As I explain in my article on the role of civil government (<http://www.biblebanner.com/articles/general/ordained.pdf>), most governments assume a far greater role that God has ordained, thus placing excessive tax burdens on their citizens. Punitive levels of taxation dispirit responsible people. Eventually, Atlas will shrug! The danger, of course, is in the interim. We must hope and pray that the various sects of such movements do not coalesce into an organized and violent movement.

The Problem Is Animalism

The youth that beats up his classmate for his tennis shoes, and those who assault others and destroy their property in celebration of a sports victory are acting on the basis of raw, unbridled *animal instinct*. Like wild animals, such people behave impulsively and reactively. Many people have been brainwashed into believing that they are nothing more than the soulless products of millennia random evolutionary change, and they are now acting out their diabolical training.

“Animalism” is behavior that is characteristic of, or appropriate to animals. Such people do whatever they can get away with to satisfy their wants or needs. Their lack of moral and spiritual training causes them to act without moral calculations or considerations. Absent any understanding of the soul, final judgment or heaven and hell, there is no motivation for them to order their behavior according to eternal consequences. They do not pause for reflection, for they have no knowledge base of moral principles and experiences upon which to reflect. *“Their god is their belly, they glory in their shame, they mind earthly things”* (Philippians 3:19).

Causes of Animalism

There is an explanation for this increase in erratic and violent behavior among youths and others. Over recent decades we have witnessed a societal shift from biblical principles of conduct to humanistic philosophies. There was a time in this country when most people were familiar with “the

golden rule” and “the royal law.” The “golden rule” [***treat others as you would have them treat you, Matt. 7:12***] has been replaced with the egocentric concept that demands a certain type of treatment from others, but feels no obligation to reciprocate. The “royal law” [***love your neighbor as yourself, Jas. 2:8***] has been replaced with a narcissistic mentality that cares only for self, and has no concern for others. These two great rules have been replaced with two others: the *rule of the jungle* and the *survival of the fittest*. The results have not been good.

We are reminded of certain societal conditions of the past. According to the book of Genesis, by the time of Noah the earth had become “*filled with violence*” (Genesis 6:11, 13). Men’s thoughts and imaginations “*were only evil all of the time*” (Gen. 6:5). God responded by flooding the earth, which destroyed all humans except for Noah and seven of his family members. A similar moral condition later developed among the Jews: “*In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes*” (Judg. 21:25; 17:6). Each man became his own standard. We now call this *subjectivism*. The concept is flawed, for it assumes that all people are equally willing and able to create and follow moral guidelines that are mutually acceptable and beneficial to *all* people. While this *self-rule* claim of subjectivists may sound noble, the reality is that subjectivism quickly degenerates into plain old *anarchy*. Anarchists reject all external moral codes, not for noble purposes, but for selfish ones. They want to feel free to do as they please. They cast off the shackles of moral restraint, whether biblical principles or moral traditions, and they proceed to *take and do* whatever is necessary to make themselves happy. This philosophy makes them dangerous both to themselves and to society.

The United States has allowed itself to be influenced and perhaps even controlled by a secularist worldview and agenda. Secularist judges and legislators have ordered the removal of the Ten Commandments from schools and other public properties. The new “stone tablets” are those containing the principles of *humanism*, with its major tenets of *atheism* and *evolution*. Given that the basic operating principle of evolution is *the survival of the strongest*, it should be no surprise that many youths in our country have become quite treacherous. A growing number of them have little or no respect for the rights, properties and lives of other people. They are the products of their godless and evolutionary upbringing, and it is reflected in their behavior. Having been persuaded that they are mere animals, they behave like animals. Having been convinced that they possess no eternal soul or consciousness, they live as though all that matters is the “here and now.” Their primary concern and goal is pleasure and self-satisfaction. As demonstrated by so many tyrants and dictators of the past, the control of others is a great euphoria. People take great

pleasure in controlling the beliefs, words and behavior of others. The rejection of traditional values is producing a crop of would-be Stalins and Hitlers. Having rejected any spiritual component to life, they operate with little or no concern for the consequences of their actions.

Violent behavior results from a lack of self-control. It is important that we understand exactly what is happening to the psyche of many people as a result of these philosophical changes. *All people* are capable of violence, even of the most atrocious sorts. However [and thankfully], most people have been trained to *control* their emotions and behavior. Bible students are familiar with the word “temperance,” which means *self-control*.

Religious people have a special reason for practicing self-control; they know that it is essential for salvation (2 Peter 1:6, 11; 1 Cor. 9:27). They know that they jeopardize their soul’s security if they engage in sinful behavior (Rom. 6:23). They are God-conscious (1 Peter 2:19), and this God-consciousness serves as a constant constraint against harming others.

Other people learn certain behavioral principles as a result of them being handed down from grandparents or parents as “tradition” or “family values.” These children may not be Bible students or churchgoers, but they have at least been taught that things like murder, theft and adultery are wrong, and that self-control and personal responsibility are right. Others learn self-control from non-Christian religions, though it is important to note that the moral codes of many religions can be traced back to the pre-Mosaic *patriarchy* of the Old Testament. The problem today is that too few youths and others have learned these moral values. As a result, there is a growing cultural and moral decay, which if unchecked will eventually collapse this nation (Prov. 14:34).

Humans As Animals

The apostle Peter likened certain false teachers of his day to “*irrational animals*” and “*creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed...*” (2 Peter 2:12). We learn two things from this verse:

1) Humans are capable of behaving like unreasoning animals. This condition results from either a *lack* of moral training, or from a *rejection* of moral training. Like animals, such people do not respond to reasoned arguments of right and wrong or cause and effect. Their behavior is not altered or impeded by logical arguments. They cannot be “talked out of” their ignoble intentions. Those with “seared” consciences (1 Tim. 4:2) feel no guilt for behaving anyway they please. This condition makes them as dangerous as wild animals, for they are guided not by reason and intellect, but by instinct. They think only of self-pleasure and self-preservation.

2) Humans that behave like animals must also be treated like animals. I suspect that some people are surprised by the strong language of 2 Peter 2:12, but it is nonetheless *Scripture*. The implications are clear: As dangerous animals must be *caged* in order to protect humans, even so must dangerous humans be caged when they harm or endanger the lives of others. As dangerous animals must sometimes be *killed* for killing humans (Exodus 21:28), dangerous humans must sometimes be killed for killing other humans (Gen. 9:6; Exodus 21:12; Acts 25:11). Romans 13:4 teaches that civil government has been entrusted by God with the right to execute such evildoers. Of course, the Christian's first impulse and duty is to try appeal to others upon the basis of "soft answers" (Prov. 15:1) and reasonable arguments. Sadly though, some people have so hardened their consciences that they are "past feeling" (Eph. 4:19) and cannot be approached rationally. We must protect ourselves, our families and other innocent people from those who behave as "beasts." There is no honor in allowing such people to work mayhem in a community. It is God's will that we be able to "*live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty*" (1 Tim. 2:2). Those who refuse to restrain themselves must be restrained by society.

Conclusion

After telling Christians to avoid dangerous and godless behavior and the people who engage in it, Paul said, "*Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil*" (Eph. 5:15). He also said that evil men and impostors would go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived (2 Tim. 3:13). Conditions are not getting better, but worse. We see it every day here in America. It behooves us to be "as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16). Let us work to educate our churches, families and neighbors in an effort to reverse this godless and dangerous trend.

Tim Haile