

"Great civilisations are not murdered. Instead, they take their own lives."

So concluded the historian Arnold Toynbee in his 12-volume magnum opus *A Study of History*. It was an exploration of the rise and fall of 28 different civilisations.

- Ancient Egypt, Old Kingdom [505]
- Roman Empire [525]
- Carthage [667]
- Classical Greek [265]
- Hellenistic [177]
- Han Dynasty (Western Period) [197]
- Byzantine [350]

What is the cause of their demise?

1. Pride
2. Greed
3. Lust

Note here that these are not intellectual shortcomings.

These are religious failings.

When we open the Bible we see example after example of God's warning against these sins.

1. Sodom and Gomora, lost in their own desires.
2. The sons and grandsons of great kings, have silver spoons that cause them to forget how their ancestors got where they were.
3. The Hebrew people quickly forgot the God who freed them from slavery as they walked across the desert.
4. Even the Pharisees, pious believers of the faith, elevated their own control over the Messiah himself.

When we set models other than God for ourselves kingdoms topple.

Even the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah fall [298]
the descendants forgot God.

2 Samuel 23:1-7 (NRSV) *The Last Words of David*

23² The spirit of the LORD speaks through me,

his word is upon my tongue.

- ³ The God of Israel has spoken,
the Rock of Israel has said to me:
One who rules over people justly,
ruling in the fear of God,

Our society doesn't revere God in any way. In fact, it blatantly seeks to eradicate God.

We are told to be "politically correct," by not speaking our personal faith, especially faith in Jesus Christ. It may hurt someone's feelings, and lord knows someone's feelings are more important than eternity in hell.

1. In just a few weeks, you will have the words "Happy Holidays" shoved down your throat, but do not forget, this is CHRISTMAS. The birth of the son of God.
2. We have removed prayer from schools
3. Removed the Ten Commandments from courtrooms.
4. Our leaders who are "godless" follow their own agenda rather than setting bar on Christ.

Are we not begging God to end us?

AskMen.com, surveyed over 2,000 men and asked them: "Who do you consider your role model?"

- 8 percent of men said they look to actors or entertainers as their role model.
- 24 percent of men try to emulate athletes.
- 31 percent of men said "I'm my own role model."
- 35 percent of men looked to entrepreneurs as role models.

⁶ But the godless are all like thorns that are thrown away;
for they cannot be picked up with the hand;
⁷ to touch them one uses an iron bar
or the shaft of a spear.
And they are entirely consumed in fire on the spot.

It is time that Christ is once more king of our lives.

Christ once more needs to be our priority and guide.

G. K. Chesterton, the famous philosopher/theologian, was once asked, "What do you think of civilization?"

Chesterton said, "I think it's a great idea. Why doesn't somebody start one."

Later on, after seeing a series of articles on "What's Wrong with the World?" Chesterton sent a short letter to the editor.

"Dear Sir: Regarding your article 'What's Wrong with the World?' I am. Yours truly, G. K. Chesterton."

We can point fingers all we want at the lack of other people's faith, but it boils down to the crucial question.

Is Christ king of YOUR life?

When you wake in the morning, is your first thought, "What am I going to do today?" or do you ask

- "Lord, how can I follow you today?"
- How can I better serve you and your children?
- How can I live my day bringing YOU glory rather than myself?"

The power of today's text is the confession of King David's personal faith. These are his last words.

² The spirit of the LORD speaks through me,
his word is upon my tongue.

⁵ Is not my house like this with God?

For he has made with me an everlasting covenant,
ordered in all things and secure.

Will he not cause to prosper
all my help and my desire?