

## Causes of Unbelief

*Romans 14:7, "For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself."*

Introduction: In the book of Exodus we read of Moses and Aaron, God's spokesmen, arriving at Pharaoh's court and telling Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'Let My people go...' (Exodus 5:1). Pharaoh's famous answer, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go" (Exodus 5:2). At this point, Pharaoh knew (or refused to know) of little evidence of the Lord. Yet, ten plagues later, a dead child, a drowned army and a mass exodus of slaves Pharaoh had a much better idea of the power of "the Lord God of Israel."

As we look at Pharaoh, we may wonder what caused his unbelief? Upbringing, pride, lack of evidence, rebellion, greed? Whatever the reason, his mind must have been changed, if only so slightly... Yet, it is obvious there were certain beliefs (or lack thereof) which affected his rebellious actions. Today, we want to think about those, like Pharaoh, who have no inclination to believe the Lord and understand the causes for this unbelief...

### I. Bias Against God

- A. Some have a stubborn "prejudice of unbelief" (Sayers, Stanley. Optimism in an Age of Peril, p. 43).
- B. The Scriptures are clear in speaking as they refer to some who just have a bias against God (Romans 1:21-22,28; 5:10; Psalm 14:1; 111:10; Hebrews 3:12).

### II. Parental Influence

- A. Families have the power to influence for good (Romans 14:7; Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 29:15; 1 Peter 3:1-2).
- B. Yet, do families not also have the ability to lead children into unbelief? For every Lois and Eunice guiding Timothy to faith, there is a Jezebel leading people away from the Lord!
- C. Christians are encouraged to follow the evidence for Jesus Christ where it leads, regardless of their parent's point-of-view (Matthew 10:35-37)!

### III. Educational Upbringing

- A. It would be foolish to think our public educational system has not affected unbelief-- ancient Babylonia had an agenda and so do some in America (Daniel 1:4).
- B. Many educators teach evolution as a fact and will not even consider the thought of God as a rational question (Exodus 23:2).
- C. John Dewey (as in the Dewey Decimal System), has had a profound effect upon American education.

1. Dewey was the engine behind the "progressive education movement."

2. Humanistic philosopher Will Durant wrote, “there is hardly a school in America that has not felt his influence” (p. 360).
3. Dewey was one of the founders of the American Humanist Association in 1933.
4. So, what kind of influence do you think he exerted upon public education?
5. “An absolute faith in science became the driving force behind the progressives... The most important idea that would influence the educators was that of evolution—the notion that man, through a process of natural selection, had evolved to his present state from a common animal ancestry. Evolution was as sharp a break with the Biblical view of creation as anyone could make, and it was quickly picked up by those anxious to disprove the validity of orthodox religion” (NEA: Trojan Horse in American Education, p. 43).

D. Now there is a very strong push from many in our American educational system to force the teachings of Critical Race Theory into the school systems. I’m not going to delve into the nuances of Critical Race Theory. Yet, I do think we ought to be very aware of a name who is often tied to CRT and that name is Karl Marx. Many groups with Marxist leanings are pushing for this and that alone should cause us to be extremely cautious of it. Why?

1. Karl Marx was an atheist who encouraged violent and destructive means to try and force atheism upon the masses.
2. He viewed “religion” as a problem and referred to “religion” as “the opium of the people.”
3. In his Communist Manifesto, Marx knew it would require a takeover of the educational system to use his philosophies to influence the masses.
  - i. He states, “The education of all children, from the moment that they can get along without a mother’s care will be in state institutions at state expense.”
  - ii. To some, the idea of the state paying for our education is a gift.
  - iii. Yet, why do you think Marx, an atheist, would want the state to educate your child from the moment they are weaned?
  - iv. It’s simple...it’s the best way to brainwash and change a society. It is the best way to fight Christianity... let the state raise the child.
  - v. This type of activism is also seen in another Karl Marx quotation, “Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways. The point, however, is to change it.”
  - vi. Marx did not just want to argue and debate philosophical points. He wanted to activate change—a change that destroyed traditional thinking and embraced atheistic thinking untainted by God or religion. Taking over the educational system was his means to do so.

4. So, yes, friends, we ought to be vigilant about Marxism in our state schools as it is just another step towards making our schools atheistic institutions of learning. Like it or not, this is what is happening in America today and it will lead to more unbelief.

D. Numerous examples of men and women in education who left their faith after high school or college can be provided. That is no coincidence. We must be counteracting any negative influence at home. Let's "beware" of these philosophers and their philosophy students as Colossians 2:8 teaches...

#### **IV. Pride**

A. German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, who once pronounced "God is dead" once asked, "If there were gods, how could I endure it to be no god?"

B. Pride affects everyone from the prideful professor to the gang-banging street thug (John 5:44; 1 John 2:16; Proverbs 16:18-19).

#### **V. Immorality**

A. Another reason for unbelief may just be because some people enjoy their immorality and hate the idea of God exposing it and they often hate those who do expose it!

B. Jesus who "knew no sin" was hated by his peers.

C. Those who enjoy darkness will hate those who live in the light (John 3:19-21; Romans 3:10-11; Psalm 14:1).

D. Simply put—some refuse to believe because they know they'd have to change some aspect of their life they have no desire to change.

#### **VI. Intellectual Intimidation**

A. Peer pressure is not just a kid problem!

B. There is pressure placed upon believers in various forums and some do not like feeling like the minority (Matthew 7:13-14; 1 Corinthians 1:19-21; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4).

Conclusion: The real danger of allowing all of those causes to shut our eyes and ears and hearts to the truth is that "faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). We cannot win the unbelieving to belief if we allow these reasons to speak more loudly in our ears than the voice of God through His Word.