

The Inscrutable Question: Spiritual Autonomy: Disaster Testing: National Disaster: Clarence Manion's Anadiplosis

The decadence and demise in which we find ourselves as a nation were described most articulately by Dr. Clarence Manion, dean of the Notre Dame law school, in an anadiplosis he composed in the early 1950s. We find this account in:

Thieme, R. B., Jr. *In Whom Do You Trust? The True Hope of a Nation.* (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1993), 12:

Clarence Manion boarded a plane sometime during the early 1950s. One of the passengers recognized him and went over and sat down next to him. Dean Manion was doing some work but he had to put it all away as this man began asking questions. He told Professor Manion that he was one of the greatest thinkers in our country at that time. He wanted to talk with the professor about the unfortunate condition of our country. So Dean Manion listened patiently, conversed with him, and began making notes while the man was speaking.

As the plane landed he got up, shook hands with the man, who again told Dean Manion what a wonderful privilege it was to talk with a man of his caliber of mentality. Dean Manion smiled, thanked him, and handed him a slip of paper on which he had written these words:

Man begins his existence in *bondage*,
and rises from bondage through *spiritual faith*,
from spiritual faith to *courage*,
from courage to *liberty*,
from liberty to *abundance*,
from abundance to *selfishness*,
from selfishness to *complacency*,
from complacency to *apathy*,
from apathy to *dependency*,
from dependency back into *bondage*.

A loss of spiritual faith has led to a lack of courage which limits liberty by means of restrictive legislation motivated by fear. This eventually places restraints on the accumulated abundance which excites selfishness among those who do not want to live without the prosperity provided by others. Over-emphasis on material wealth during a time of pseudo prosperity leads to complacency and an apathetic attitude toward the laws of divine establishment. This apathy allows the ruling classes to impose more and more restrictive constraints upon the population under the rhetorical veil of safety and security. This develops a mental attitude of dependency upon government and eventually the people sell themselves back into bondage.

The Colonel writes a prescient paragraph on the subject of historical disaster in:

Thieme, R. B., Jr. *Christian Suffering.* 2d ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1997), 109:

When a nation declines, the evils of crime, terrorism, and drug abuse inflict terrible suffering upon the entire society. Arrogance, revenge, greed, inordinate ambition, and power lust pit group against group, nation against nation, ultimately unleashing the violence of war with all its attendant suffering.

During this historical downtrend, it becomes the task of the positive adult believer to stay the course and remain focused on the main objective of the Christian life with is his spiritual advance. Only the continued and uninterrupted advance by sophisticated believers can stem the historical tide of national disaster. The concept is found in:



2 Chronicles 20:9 - 'If disaster comes, whether the sword of judgment [**warfare: the Red Horse of Rev. 6:4**] or disease [**the Ashen Horse of Rev. 6:8**] or economic depression [**the Black Horse of Rev. 6:6**], we will stand in Your presence before the temple that bears Your name [**Church Age believers attend Bible class**] and will cry out [**prayer**] to You in our distress. Then You will both hear us and deliver us.'

The believer who functions under spiritual autonomy glorifies Jesus Christ by making Him "at home" in his stream of consciousness:

Ephesians 3:16 - That He would once and for all give you, on the basis of the riches of His glory [**the presence of the indwelling Shekinah Glory**], to become empowered with divine power by means of His Spirit in your inner person [**delegated power of the indwelling Holy Spirit**];

v. 17 - so that Christ may be at home in your stream of consciousness by means of faith [**the content of that which is believed, i.e., Bible doctrine resident in the soul**] when you have been firmly rooted [**founded in the basic doctrines**] and established in a secure place in reciprocal love [**when the Holy Spirit controls the life then Jesus Christ is at home in your soul**].

Once the adult believer passes momentum testing he has taken his spiritual growth experience to the final stage of the sophisticated spiritual life: