

First Assembly Of God Gulfport



Find us on
Facebook



"The Cross, The Light, The Rock, The Anchor"

2600 - 22nd Avenue, Gulfport, Ms. 39501

Telephone# 228-863-6205

Website: www.firstassemblygulfport.org

Rev. Norwood Seymour, Pastor

Highlights and Announcements

Sunday School 9:30 AM, Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 AM

Sunday Evening BIBLE STUDY 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall **DON'T FORGET** ✓

Tuesday Morning Coffee, Prayer & Bible Study 10:00 AM in the Fellowship Hall

Wednesday Evening BIBLE STUDY 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall **DON'T FORGET** ✓

Pray for our Nation as
we enjoy Freedom.

This Week of: July 1, 2018

AMERICA: LAND OF DESIRE



We live in an age of lust; lust for possessions, lust for experiences, lust for pleasure and lust for entertainment. How did American culture go from simplicity and moderation to frenzied activity? And how did it come about that the American Church bought into a carnal and world-loving mindset?

For the better part of 6000 years, people lived unhurried and uncomplicated lives. Even in the U.S., the pace of life remained fairly relaxed well into the 19th Century. Most Americans lived on farms and spent the majority of their waking hours working in the fields. When they did make a trip into town for supplies, it was done with their horse and wagon. In those days, a person's value came from the quality of his character, his happiness was found in contentment, and he turned to God to find meaning in life.

But change was in the air. The Industrial Revolution opened the door for serious advancement in industry. Tycoons such as Rockefeller, Carnegie, Ford and Morgan led America into a new and exciting era. Inventors like Edison, Bell and the Wright Bros. opened the door into amazing new technologies. By the end of the century the U.S. was on the cusp of tremendous change.

Those innovations provided aspiring businessmen the ability to manufacture products in mass quantities. Their only dilemma then was how they could induce ordinary citizens to buy their merchandise.

In the past, if a merchant wanted to market his product, he'd take out an ad in the newspaper. These ads proved to be largely fruitless however. Hundreds of them crammed together in the back of the paper in small print. But as the country approached the 20th Century, savvy businessmen began finding ways to present ads in pictures conveying a sense that their goods would bring happiness to people's lives.

Gone were the days of simple living with all its tedium. America was undergoing a complete transformation. The U.S. became the 1st in the world to develop an economy built on mass production and consumption.

Shrewd retailers learned early on, the key to success was in their ability to market their goods. It was the aggressive promoters who moved merchandise. They began presenting a new alternative to traditional lifestyle. Astute businessmen quickly learned how to stir up desire for goods that promised comfort and pleasure.

Religion, moral values and contented living were being replaced by a new, exciting lifestyle found in places like department stores, theaters, dance halls and amusement parks. From our view now, these places seem like tame fare, but in that day, this was a giant leap into a life of pleasure. Sadly, interest in church began to wane, and little more than an obligatory intrusion into their increasingly busy lives.

As America entered the 20th Century, marketing experts were in demand by retailers, wanting to draw people into their stores. Beautiful displays began appearing in large, bright showcase windows. Ads, filled with pictures showing the good life ran in the papers. American housewives were told they needed to keep up with the latest fashions and if not, felt like old maids, out of touch with the 'in crowd'.

American culture was rapidly coming into a lifestyle built on coveting lust. A new way

JULY Cookout TODAY!



Burgers &
Hot Dogs

Immediately after
this morning's service
In the Fellowship Hall

GOD COMMANDS HIS
CHILDREN TO BE HOLY
New Bible Study
Begins Next Sunday night
Fellowship Hall at 6pm
'The Pursuit of Holiness'

1 Peter 1:15-16

of thinking was taking hold of people's minds; gone forever the days of simple contentment. In their place was constant, unrelenting striving for more and more and more. The pursuit of pleasure and possessions fostered restlessness and stress and, when left unsatisfied, frustration and resentment.

And, as went the culture, so went the Church. Christians were not immune from the constant appeal to their lower nature. A subtle change began to occur in the American Church. Of course, the lives of those who were truly committed to pleasing the Lord remained relatively unchanged. They weren't opposed to buying new products that made life a little easier and more enjoyable. But the desire for these new things didn't dominate their minds, either. Their level of contentment remained unaffected by all the changes in society. However, increasing numbers of churchgoers were deeply affected by these changes. They continued attending church, but their hearts were increasingly being enticed into selfish living.

It was the beginning of the Great Apostasy---a time foretold in Scripture where professing Christians began serving self rather than serving God. It is very much what the apostle Paul was talking about in 2 Tim. 3:1-5 when he wrote that in the last days men would be lovers of self, money and pleasures rather than lovers of God, holding a form of godliness but deny its power. Avoid these men. This is describing a large portion of the church culture we live in. Peter said in 2 Pet. 2:1-3 there would be false teachers among us, secretly introducing destructive heresies, even denying the source of the Master who bought them and bring destruction upon themselves. Many will follow their sensuality and the truth will be rejected. In their greed they will exploit the sheep with their false teachings.

The Church of Jesus Christ has gone through many difficult times in her history--times of persecution, times of deadness, times when the Word of God has been attacked---but none of it compares to the spiritual and eternal danger we face in OUR present day.

For us in America, much of this corporate sliding away began when we as nation became a LAND OF DESIRE. ■