Ordinary People Extraordinary Things

Bruce Ballast

Great Awakening1735-17412nd Great Awakening1799-1840'sGreat Revival1857-1858Post Civil War1865-1900'sPost World War II1950's

Factors contributing to Revivals

- Time of declension
- God's people feel called to pray
- Prayer leads church to confession and an outbreak of the Holy Spirit

- Revival produces leaders

Are we primed for another revival?

Are we primed for another revival? 1957 96% identify with religious tradition 1965 Beginning of decline

UM1965-1988– 11 to 9.2 millionPCUSA4 to 3 millionDofC2.1 to 1.1 millionEpiscopal3.4 to 2.5 millionLutheran5% declinePUS7.6% declineMergers, but continued decline

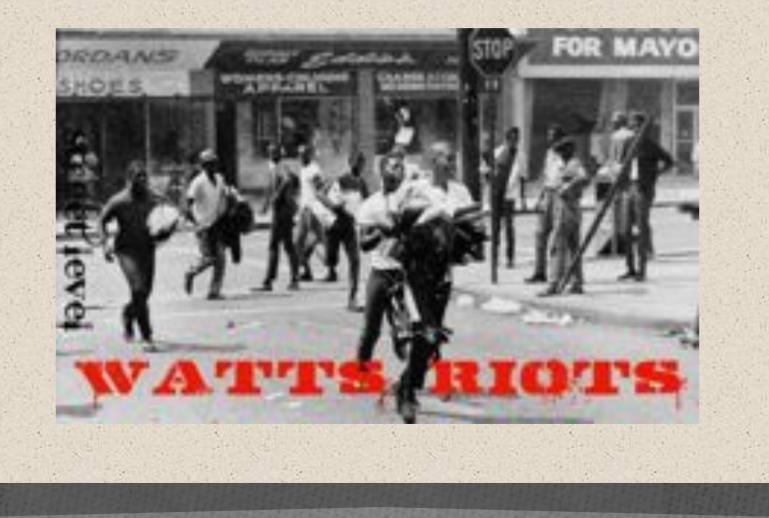
Early 2000's Post-Christian 2000 Census Increase of 11% Decline of 10%

Forces of Decline 60's – fabric of society challenged









Viet Nam War Living Room War

Death of God

October 22, 1965



Death of God Liberation Theology

Death of God Liberation Theology Supreme Court Decisions 1962 Prayer 1963 Bible reading and prayer unconstitutional 1968 Arkansas Law

The ACLU and the New York firm of Skadden Arps atttacked the Arkansas law with a powerful case. Their brief is so good that there is talk of publishing it. Their witnesses gave brilliant little summaries of several fields of science, history of sciences, history and religious philosophy.

...impassioned believers, rebellious educators and scientific oddities. All but one of the creation scientists came from obscure colleges or Bible schools. The one who didn't said he believed diseases dropped from space, that evolution caused Nazism, and that insects may be more intelligent than humans but are hiding their abilities.

Death of God Liberation Theology Supreme Court Decisions Erosion of Morality

If you want a bomb, the chemistry department will teach you how to make it; if you want a cathedral, the department of architecture will teach you how to build it; if you want a healthy body, the departments of physiology and medicine will teach you how to tend it.

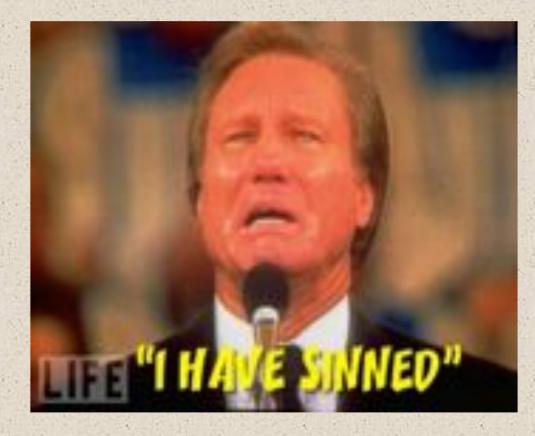
But when you ask whether and why you should want bombs or cathedrals or healthy bodies, the university is dumb and impotent. It can give help and guidance in all things subsidiary but not in the attainment of the one thing needful.

S. Barton Babbage.

Death of God Liberation Theology Supreme Court Decisions 1984 Tulsa case 1984 Creche display

Death of God Liberation Theology Supreme Court Decisions 1984 Tulsa case "I don't see what right the church has to tell people how to live."

Death of God Liberation Theology Supreme Court Decisions 1984 Tulsa case 1984 Creche display Christian Leader Failure





Death of God Liberation Theology Supreme Court Decisions Christian Leader Failure 7 million to 3 million (1986-1988)

Megatrends:

The last time the U.S. experienced such a deeply religious period was during the 19th century, when the country's economy changed from agriculture to industry.

...in this century we have watched the ideal of progress give way to the return of faith. The worship of science and the rational to a great extent has been thrown over for a religious revival that specifically values the emotional and nonrational.

Renewals, but not revival Neo-Pentacostalism The Third Wave Growth of Megachurches Promise Keepers 9-11



20% unaffiliated 33% of those under 30 Rise of the "nones" 20 – 30 Year olds ½ the rate 61% of churched high school graduates 78% to 88% in youth groups

What Will God Do?