

## NIHILISM

As a probable consequence to the “shutting in” under which the LORD has placed me, there has been an increasing awareness of the behavior of the current younger generation. Its expression has been seen many times within the past few years, and freshened yesterday. As I was driving in the left turn lane, a young female came from the other direction into the same turn lane, nearly causing a collision. Her attention was obviously on her cell phone conversation, and as she darted into the lane to my left, I motioned to her about her cell phone. Up came the finger immediately to give me the Bird.

Now this is repeated on nearly a daily basis, each incident in and of itself, no biggie. As I commented to my son-in-law, the finger has become a part of the staple diet of this breakdown. Also included are, “What difference does it make,” the pervasive use of drugs, and to some extent, the ubiquitous tattoos. In large measure these are in-your-face counter-acts against me or anyone else as an older person. They are no different than driving with one’s car seat all the way back so you can barely see or be seen, wearing your pants down below your crotch, or parking purposely across two parking places. However, my gut feeling is that the finger flipped at anybody and everybody speaks of something much deeper and more profound. “I really do not care about anything” is fraught with desolation and ruin.

If one is mentally occupied with the daily grind and responsibility of a family and job, these individual acts evoke only minor irritations, but cumulatively they are the hallmarks of a deteriorating society. Nihilism is the word that encapsulates the range of anti-everything behavior.

Webster defines *nihilism* in several ways:

1. the total rejection of established laws and institutions.
2. the extreme skepticism with regard to value statements and judgments.
3. anarchy, terrorism or other revolutionary activity.
4. **the total and absolute destructiveness toward the world and oneself.**

The Latin term *ex nihilo* means “out of nothing”, often applied to the creation of the universe. So *nihilo* basically signifies “nothingness.”

Roget’s Thesaurus lists several synonyms:

1. skepticism, apathy, indifference, agnosticism, atheism, materialism, infidelity.  
Nihilism is included under “Affections and Religion.” In other words, nihilism has a spiritual basis.

It would follow nihilism is the antithesis of fullness. When one thinks of fullness, the Creator and the Image of Christ Himself becoming a man, comes to mind. Additionally, the vastness of the universe itself would deny nihilism. So these definitions and synonyms dealing with emptiness, destructiveness, and materialism point to a willful attitude. One has to choose to be nihilistic.

There is an old song with a line in it that says,

“Troublesome times are here, filling men’s hearts with fear,  
Freedom we all hold dear, now is at stake.”

It would seem what is upon us currently has happened many times in the past. There is a nagging emptiness as to what happened afterwards. Do you remember?

What succeeds moral and spiritual breakdown of a culture?  
What follows the leaves falling off a tree?  
Is there a relationship between accurate historical analyses, such as Toynbee, and those recorded in the Old Testament prophets?

One of my sons responded to a paper I had written regarding the Fourth Watch, which dealt with the hidden dangers of the times between 3:00 A.M. and 6:00 A.M. As I write this about nihilism, it rings hollow; indeed, the Fourth Watch represents an enormous time of spiritual activity from both sides.

“How do you tell someone that the enemy is coming to kill them, when they themselves have never been fired at? The old generals are gone; no one is here to speak of the battle and the enemy first hand. Alas, we have been duped; we do not believe there is a war at all. And the 4th watch is upon us, when we convince ourselves the enemy will not come today or he would have come by now, and we have fallen asleep. The alarm will never sound, only the sounds of the dying will awaken us to the realization that we are at war after all.”

March, 2007

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