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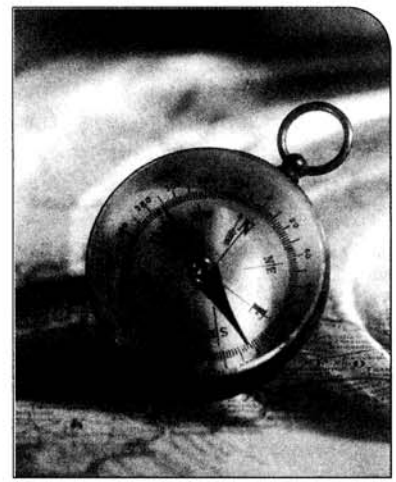
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IT IS WRITTEN TELEVISION PRESENTS:

SEARCH FOR Certainty

GQ

What's Behind Rising Crime, Violence, and Immorality?
A Standard for 21st-century Living



What's behind the dramatic upsurge in violent crime in our society? A major U.S. magazine described our nation as "America the Violent." Another article tragically stated that 23,700 people were murdered in our country in a recent year. The average 18-year-old has witnessed 200,000 violent acts on television, including 40,000 murders.

Murder, robbery, rape, school violence, drugs, terrorism—what's gone wrong? Why is the moral fabric of society disintegrating? Is there an answer? Our society appears to be drifting on an uncharted sea without a moral compass. We seem to be wandering in confusion, desperately looking for some "North Star" to guide us. In our lesson today we will discover the truth about what's gone wrong with our society and God's solution to crime and violence in the twenty-first century.

Why is the moral fabric of society disintegrating? Is there an answer?

1. What urgent call does God give to a society living on the verge of social collapse and moral decay? Revelation 14:7

The Bible answer: _____

_____

To "fear God" means to respect or reverence God. It is a call to obedience. God's call to judgment implies accountability and moral choices. It is a call to a higher standard—a standard outside of ourselves.

2. Is our own heart or mind an adequate judge of what is right or wrong? Jeremiah 17:9

The Bible answer: _____

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Since our natures are fallen, our hearts deceive us at times. It is easy to justify our behavior based on our own personal desires. We need a higher standard outside of ourselves.

3. How does the Bible describe those who trust in their own minds to guide them in making moral decisions? Proverbs 28:26

The Bible answer: _____

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4. In Revelation, the Bible's last book, what did John see up in heaven? Revelation 11:19

The Bible answer: _____

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15. In Revelation's final call to a planet rapidly disintegrating into lawlessness, how does God describe His people? Revelation 14:12.

The Bible answer: _____

_____

A genuine commitment to God leads to loving obedience. At end-time God will have a group of people who reveal to the whole universe the joy of living obediently. They have been saved by grace. They love God so much that they enthusiastically obey Him. They accept His standards of conduct. They are convinced His way is best.

MY DECISION

❒ *Since I love Jesus with all my heart, I choose to obey Him joyfully. I gladly accept the principle of His law as the guide of my life.*

MY PLEDGE

I love Jesus and desire to obey Him. I recognize His law was given for my best good. I accept God's law as the standard of right and joyfully choose by God's grace to live a life of obedience.

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When God commanded the Israelites in the Old Testament to build a sanctuary, He commanded them to make the ark of the covenant to contain the tables of stone or the ten-commandment law. The temple in heaven containing the ark of the covenant contains God's law, the foundation of His character. Revelation's answer to lawlessness is found in heaven at God's throne in His eternal standard of righteousness—His law. The law of God is a transcript of His character, a description of His will. Without the law there is no sin. The apostle Paul states, "For where there is no law there is no transgression" (Romans 4:15, NKJV).*

5. What is the function of God's law? Romans 3:20

The Bible answer: _____

_____

6. What is the eternal, unchangeable standard of God's government? Psalm 111:7, 8; 89:34

The Bible answer: _____

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God's law is the basis of His government. It was established to ensure the peace, order, harmony, and unity of the universe. A broken law brings sorrow, suffering, bondage, and death (Proverbs 5:22; Romans 6:16, 23).

7. To what does the Bible compare God's law? James 1:23-25

The Bible answer: _____

_____

The law is a mirror that enables us to see ourselves and recognize our need of saving grace. The law reveals what sin is. It provides a moral standard outside of ourselves.

8. What is the role of grace? Ephesians 2:8

The Bible answer: _____

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Grace is God's unmerited favor to bring us back into harmony with Him. The sole basis of our salvation is grace. Grace has always existed. It means pardon, mercy, love, and kindness (Genesis 6:8; Romans 4:1-4; Ephesians 2:4-8). Grace frees us from the condemnation of the law. By grace we pass from death to life (Romans 5:8-10; 8:1, 2). By faith we accept the grace of God (Romans 3:28).

9. How are we justified or made right with God? Does keeping the law form the basis of our salvation? Romans 3:28

The Bible answer: _____

_____

10. Does faith give us freedom to break God's law? Romans 3:31; Romans 6:15

The Bible answer: _____

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11. What is the converted person's relationship to God's law? Romans 7:22

The Bible answer: _____

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Billy Graham:

"Question: Some religious people I know tell me that the Ten Commandments are part of the 'law' and do not apply to us today. They say that as Christians we are 'free from the law.' Is that right?

"Answer: No, it is not right, and I hope you will not be misled by these false opinions. It is very important to understand what the New Testament means when it says that Christians are 'free from the law.' It certainly does not mean that they are free from the obligations of the moral law of God and are at liberty to sin."

Conversion always leads us to "delight" to do God's will. When Christ changes our hearts or converts us, we have one supreme desire—to obey Him. He has done so much for us that we gladly serve Him. Obedience is not a legalistic requirement. It is part of a loving heart's response to God.

12. What did Jesus teach His disciples about keeping His law? John 14:15

The Bible answer: _____

_____

13. Did Jesus teach that His law was done away with at the cross? Matthew 5:17, 18.

The Bible answer: _____

_____

14. What is the genuine test of knowing God? 1 John 2:3-5.

The Bible answer: _____

_____

The evidence of the internal change called conversion is a changed life. Grace always leads to obedience. The more we love God, the more we desire to obey Him.