

Dennis Prager Sketches the Future of Western Civilization

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORmW68YmLM4&t=0s&index=39&list=PLo1Jq23H_s5XVxAseMKYJA4aH3cOI07si

0:00 I have a very deep connection to ISI and National Review that I'd like to tell you about and it would be unknown to any of you in the case of National Review, ISI is newer. But the first article that I ever had published was published by William Buckley in National Review. I bet you didn't know that ... [aside] You did know it? [Distant voice from audience; Prager responds] No, there's no way you could.

I was 21 years old, and I contacted William Buckley, and it gives you ... By the way, it's 100% to his credit that he published me. I was an unknown, completely unknown. But he so wanted to give young people a start. It was to his credit.

My article incidentally was awful. (Light laugh from the audience). No, no, no ... I'm not happy to say this, but I can prove it to you. Because this is what it was. My field of study ... I was at the time in Columbia and I was at the Russian and Middle-Eastern Institute at the School of International Affairs. So my chief area of
1:00 study was communist countries, communism, Russian and so on. So I was taking another trip to Eastern Europe and that's how I contacted him. I mean, how many conservatives are going to Poland, you know, East Germany, and Romania, and so on.

So he said, "Sure, you know, write it. What is it on?" So I said, "Well, I was in Poland and I'd like to write: "Will [Edward] Gierek Survive." Now, none of you probably remember Gierek, there's no reason why you would. He was the Polish communist leader for about ten years, even more than ten years.

This was 1970. And I wrote the article "Will Gierek Survive." He did. Another ten years. (Audience light laugh) So, in effect I was right 'cause I predicted his downfall. (Audience laughter) So that's why I really do believe that it's the most embarrassing piece that I ever wrote. And god bless William Buckley ... whom I
2:00 then had the chance, I brought him out to California, I was in my 20's, the head of an educational institute there. And I have to tell you, I ... I ... I measure more than anything else—this is very autobiographical—I could spend the whole talk on this, but it's not what you invited me to speak on. I ... since I was a child ... I have felt, and I am certain of this ... brains are wildly overrated in their significance. Wildly. And in fact, I don't even find brilliant people interesting unless they're good. There are people who find brilliant bad people interesting; I don't. Goodness interests me more than brains. And it was always the case ... obviously, everyone knows how brilliant Buckley was, but I picked up immediately what a decent, truly decent, man he was. And that's what fascinated me. I spent a day
3:00 with him, a day I will never forget. And the way he treated me, much younger than he, and you know no big deal. But it was something I'll never forget. He ... he was an extraordinary human being.

So I have very wonderful long ties and I've been now as well each week my column has been published among other places at National Review, and I love being published there because of the number of readers, the quality of the readers, and the beautiful work they put into every single piece. It's a real credit. The editing, thank god it's not too severe because I already go through Allen Estrin, who you've already met, and my wife, who do the severe editing in advance. But

4:00 also the beautiful art and photo work. It's just ... it's a terrific page. And so it's great to be affiliated, great to see you Jonah [waves to someone in the audience], and to be speaking in front of you, all of you who are here from National Review. And as regards ISI, well I've come to know you better and better, promoting ISI on my show, which was great for you, which made me very happy that you do such great work.

And I'll give you a little example of something that you do that is so good and that I had a little role in. And that was a book that was just published, *The Myth of the Andalusian Paradise*. Now, that's not best seller-dom oriented [light laugh], because Andalusian is not an everyday term for most people, even National Review readers. But of course Andalusia was the part of Spain from about the 5:00 9th to the 14th century governed by Muslims. And there is this huge myth that Islam is a truly tolerant religion. And it isn't, and it never was. And that's not anti Muslim, may I add? Christianity in the Middle Ages was not a tolerant religion either. It ... but ... but ...

I hate lies. I hate ... I have a visceral hatred for lying. And the [glances off stage] Yeah, I do, I really do. [Audience laughs] And I can't stand the lies that are perpetrated today, perpetuated, and one of them being, really, it's [Islam] is tolerant and something happened. It was never tolerant. It's Dar al-Harab and Dar al-Islam, the house of war and the house of Islam, and that's just the way it is.

6:00 Anyway, ISI published this book by a professor of Portuguese and Spanish Studies at North Western. I got the book in the mail ... thank god ISI sent it to me, I would not have known about it as much as I try to know what is being published. And I knew this guy wrote a gutsy book. And I had him on for an hour, and I'm happy to tell you—I am as happy about ISI and the author as I am for my show. The book went ... we have, we took photos, Allen and I took photos of—Alan is also the producer of my show as well as the founder, and he says I'm co-founder but it's not true, he founded it, I said OK and that was it—anyway, we took photos of the amazon.com page of this book. Before he came on, the book was listed at 38,700, and after the show it was 787. So I felt great about the show.

7:00 But I felt great about my listeners that they would go buy such a book, and of course for ISI who published such a book, because it's so important.

So to be invited ... Well, I say something again autobiographical. I have found after 33 years of radio a very big lesson and one day I'd like to write *Lessons I have Learned* from doing radio for so long. The more people know about you the more they trust you. That's true in private life, and it's true in public life. The opaque are not trusted. So I took a very big gamble from the beginning and I just opened up to people. And it has paid off, because ... You know what people say to me the most when they meet me, like the TSA agent today in Phoenix?

8:00 For some reason TSA agents love my show; I have no idea why. What I say about government employees, I can't believe they listen! But my wife is a living witness. She is with me. TSA agents in every city. Oh! In fact ... wait, I don't want to lose my train ... but it was a great moment with the TSA agent and then I'll tell you about the autobiographical thing in a moment.

So, I ... this is a problem in being a public figure and you just must know this, especially if are respected for who you are and not just what you say. So the other day in Minnesota there was this ridiculously long line in the pre-check line.

That's the line you are supposed to have a short line in. And it was ridiculous; it wrapped around you know like a snake.

So I walked over to the head TSA guy and go: "Sir, why is there only one line here for pre-check?"

9:00 He goes, "Dennis Prager!" [Audience laughs] And I just remembered, I didn't curse. I wanted to make sure that while I was annoyed I didn't do anything that might ruin my image in this man's mind. It is a problem when you are ... you have to be very careful. You can't give dirty looks to drivers. No, no, there's a real different world.

Anyway, so the autobiographical statement is about ... this is proof about how much I admire ISI and National Review. It is exceedingly rare that I speak on a Friday night, because I am an observant Jew and Friday night and Saturday are sacred to me—otherwise, by the way, I would be in an insane asylum. If people ask me, "How do you stay happy and sane given all the terrible news you report every day?" And I answer, "The Sabbath." That is my answer. I don't listen to radio; I don't watch television; I don't even read the newspaper. I leave the world for 24 hours. And it is my sanity.

10:00 But on rare occasions I think something is so morally significant that I sort of break my sabbath, and I did in this case. So you know, that's the proof of how much I admire you and what you're doing. So I just wanted you to know that. [Applause from the audience]

So when they offered me earlier crab with BLT, I explained ... ah, it's not ... check Leviticus [laughter] 'cause we all know it's everybody's regular airplane reading, Leviticus. [Chuckle]

Anyway, you got to meet Allen Estrin today who represented Prager University. People came over and told me how good he was; I know how good he is, believe me. I think God sent him and my wife to me and I call them my two spouses. Allen has a spouse of the opposite sex as well, but ... that is how close we are, and he's a gift beyond description. So you had a chance to meet him and see what we are doing.

11:00 Now I was asked to speak ... I love these large topics. I was not asked to speak on the myth of Andalusian Islamic tolerance. I was asked to speak on the future of the Western world [laughter]. You know, and then they said, "Could you do that in about eight minutes?" [More laughter] No, not an issue; I'm used to speaking between commercial breaks. But they didn't say about the eight minutes, but that's fine with me. It's a very important topic. So let me answer you. I've thought about this my whole life, and let me give you some of my answers. There are two sections here.

12:00 First, is to understand, which is not taught today at all that our universities have deteriorated terribly, it's part of the reason of the pessimism over the west. Incidentally, I have a theory that there were two major sea-changes in American life that produced a sort of moral and intellectual deterioration or an enfeeblement of the American mind. And they both took place after World War II. One is television, which did profoundly enfeeble American culture; if there were no television we would be much better off.

People say, "Isn't there anything good on TV?" It's like when people will call my show and say, "You really attack the left a lot. Doesn't the left do anything

good?” And I honestly answer them, “There is nothing in history that has not done any good. It doesn’t exist; the question is meaningless.” It’s like asking, well you know, “This guy, it’s true he raped three girls and two boys, murdered four of the five, but there’s a good side to everybody.”

13:00 Well, it doesn’t mean anything. We all have moral bank-accounts and if they’re deeply in the red, they’re deeply in the red. The moral bank-account of television is bankruptcy.

And there was one other development: widespread college attendance. It has enfeebled the American mind just as much, but much more dangerously because people who watch TV don’t assume they are brilliant. But people who do get a PhD *do* [Prager’s emphasis] think their brilliant—and they’re *not*. In fact, I have an ongoing policy on my show: when someone calls and says something particularly stupid, I then say, “I’m just curious: what graduate school did you attend?” And then they will say ... people fall in, it’s like beautiful, I feel like a straight man, it works out beautifully ... and then they say, “How do you know I went to graduate school?” And I say, “Well, it’s not meant to insult you” because

14:00 I never insult callers or guests. “But you had to go to graduate school to say something that stupid.” [Light laughter]

I mean that, by the way. You have to have gone to college to believe that men and women are basically the same. My grandmother, who didn’t graduate elementary school, understood men and women better than most PhDs in women’s studies. I mean that literally; I do not mean that hyperbolically. They don’t understand anything. If you get a PhD in the liberal arts, I assume you’re foolish. There are exceptions. Of course there are, I’m not foolish. But they are exceptions. And it’s like getting a PhD in Howdy Doody, alright. But nobody who gets a PhD in Howdy Doody thinks they’re brilliant. But if you get one from college or university you do think that.

15:00 These two developments have been horrific, widespread college attendance, because I remember—I’ll never forget when I was about late teens, early twenties, so I guess I was already at college—I was having a meal at my parent’s house and there was another couple there with their child, something to that effect. Anyway, the child was yelling at the parents, and I don’t mean disrespectfully but was so to speak yelling at the parents, “Look, dad. You just don’t understand. You didn’t go to college.” The father was entirely right about what he was saying, but he was intimidated because his son went to college. And so his son, who had already been indoctrinated into the very opposite values of his father—never have so many people paid so much money to have children become alienated from their values. This has never occurred in the history of mankind until modern American society. I would say Western Europeans, but Western Europeans are not traditional so they don’t find, don’t feel that their kids are alienated from their values; they’re just being reinforced.

16:00 These two developments have been horrific. We truly do believe ... our intent, when we give reading material—and by the way, Jonah has done some work at Prager U as well; there’s a lot of symbiosis here—we intend to provide reading lists. And so eventually, in not in a far distant future, I will be able to say, under penalty of perjury, that you will learn more about life going to Prager University for free than going to Stanford University for fifty thousand dollars. And by the

way I only say Stanford because we just got a letter from a graduate of Stanford who said that to us: "I learned more at Prager University than four years at Stanford." That's if you care about wisdom. Obviously, you're not going to learn more math, physics, or botany at Prager University. I think you would learn more if you read National Review's web site then if you went to college. It's not just us. Why that's happened is a subject, part of the reason for the pessimism for the Western world.

I want to say a word about pessimism. I am pessimistic. I am also the happy pessimist you will ever meet. So how is it possible to be happy and pessimistic?

Now, you may or may not know, I've devoted a great deal of time to the subject of happiness. I wrote a book that has sold very well, *Happiness Is a Serious Problem*. Touched a lot of lives, apparently. And my "happiness hour" on my radio show, that I have *never* [Prager's emphasis] canceled, the second hour on Friday. I broadcast my happiness hour the week of 9/11. That was a Tuesday, if I recall correctly. And on Friday I still did my happiness hour and I made a point. The whole point of a happiness hour is how you can be happy in light of how much suffering there is. To have canceled the happiness hour would have given in! Then I have nothing to say! The whole point of why I titled my book *Happiness Is a Serious Problem*. Harper-Collins hated the title; they said it was a downer. And I'll never forget my discussion with them. I said, "I just want to know, is it true?" "Yeah, of course, it's a serious problem!" "Thank you, that's the title." And that remained the title. But I had to fight for it because it was a downer.

But it's true. Anyway, it's true because the world is in a terrible shape; it's always been in terrible shape; except there was reason for optimism. And now there isn't much reason for optimism because the good guys are losing. We're losing the most important country for goodness ever invented: the United States of America. And Western Europe is essentially lost, but it's been lost essentially since World War I. It gave up on itself after World War I. America gave up on itself after college and the Viet Nam war, and we're just trailing Europe by about a generation. But most intellectuals think Western Europe is a great place.

So here is my argument.

Virtually everything good in the human species has come from Western civilization.

Incidentally, just for the record, I'm well aware of a lot of evil that has taken place in Western civilization. I wrote a book, which is now in its third edition with Simon and Schuster—coming out its third edition I think next week or last week, I don't recall—*Why the Jews? The Reason for Antisemitism*. I know how Jews have been treated in Western civilization; I wrote a book on it, as it happens. So I am not oblivious to the amount of evil that has taken place in the West.

However, evil is ubiquitous; evil is universal. The only question mature people, which disqualifies most professors—and I don't mean that as a throwaway line, it does disqualify them. They stay in that profession because colleges are Kindergartens. The only difference between kindergarten and college is the age of the kinder. That is the biggest single difference. So mature people don't ask, "Well" or say, "Look at all the evil!" They say, "Why is there any good?" Good is the outlier, not evil. Slavery was universal; child sacrifice was universal, human sacrifice generally was universal; poverty was universal. So the only mature

question is, Why did any place abolish human sacrifice? Why did any place abolish slavery? Why did any place create wealth? That's what you should ask. But
21:00 nobody asks that! It is a non-college asked question.

The evil is universal, so let's discount it. The question is, Why there is good, not why there is evil that is the norm? That is why I am convinced that the question I ask to find out if I'm speaking to a fool, even intelligent and kind—you can be intelligent, kind, and foolish, for the record—is that I ask them if they believe people are basically good. If they do, and some of you might and I don't mean to offend you, in that regard you are a fool. And why people *choose* [Prager's emphasis] to believe in something so patently absurd is beyond me.

I am very involved, among other things, in Jewish life—to the extent that Jews tolerate me being a conservative. But it's hard not to because I wrote a very very widely used introduction to Judaism and I've spoken at a thousand synagogues—
22:00 not that, eight hundred—so it's hard to ignore me in Jewish life. I'm a columnist for the Jewish Journal of Los Angeles, which has a big presence on the Internet. And I wrote a column when I started as a columnist, *Why do Jews Think People are Basically Good?* Which is part of the reason the Jews are on the left, because if you think people are basically good you tend to go leftward. And there are many answers to that.

But the amount of hate mail that that column received was fascinating. They hated me for writing that people were not basically good. This is a generation after Auschwitz. Jews still believe that people are basically good, as do liberals generally.

So, we're not. And that's why good needs to be studied and analyzed, not evil! For every book on evil there are ... Let's put it this way. For every thousand books
23:00 studying human evil there might be one, maybe one—I doubt it; I think the ratio is one to a thousand; it's probably one to fifty thousand, books on why people are good. I have read every book I know of on rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust. I am sure there are under twenty. There are thousand of books about Nazi evil. And there might be—might be— twenty books on analyzing the people who saved Jews. That to me is a much bigger riddle. I understand why people torture, murder, go with the herd. Why do people stand up to the herd is an infinitely more important question, it would strike me.

So Western civilization had evils like every other civilization, every other! But it had unique good. Human rights. Western concept, universal human rights, Western, uniquely Western. These are not just Western, they are uniquely.
24:00 Human equality: all people are equal; Western. Democracy: Western. Abolition of slavery: Western. The greatest music, the greatest art, the greatest architecture: Western.

Now people will say, "Oh, please, that is so dismissive of other music, art, or architecture." But it isn't! It's a statement that *those* [Prager's emphasis] people believe. Ask Japanese, "What is the greatest music ever written?" And they'll say, "Bach." I'm very involved in classical music, so that is the art I will use. I conduct orchestras in southern California; it's a very serious pursuit of mine in my life. So I will tell you the greatest edition of the Bach cantatas—the greatest, the greatest generally universally acknowledged—was done by a man named Suzuki and he just finished like his three hundredth CD just the last year. Suzuki, and they're all

25:00 Japanese singers. The greatest interpreters of Bach.

I'll never forget when I was in Tokyo in my 20's, I went to hear Beethoven's Ninth, Tokyo Symphony Orchestra. And I was there. I was traveling alone, which was the way I traveled prior to getting married. That's a great way to travel; you really are forced to interact with people. Anyway, I went to the guy, and obviously I don't speak Japanese and he spoke a little English. Said, "Any tickets for ...?" "How many?" I said, "One." He looks at me, "We have wone; you are very wuckie." And I'll never forget that, how wuckie I was to get the last seat for Beethoven's Ninth. And the people went crazy! They're crazy about Beethoven.

None of them argued that Japanese classical music is as good as Western classical music. It's no insult. Would I argue that Jewish music is as good as Western music? I'd have to be deaf [audience chuckle] to make such an argument.

26:00 But you can't say this in any university. There is no better! There is no better!

Wealth. Only the West has produced wealth.

Modern science came from the West.

A universal God. Came from the West.

Basically, everything good came from the West.

There were horrible people in the West; there were beautiful people in the East and in the South. But that's a fact!

And we are dismissing Western culture despite everything that I have listed, all the good stuff. It comes from the West.

Now, here is where I am sort of lonely. And it was the subject of my last column, which got good play in National Review and elsewhere. I'm always

27:00 curious to see how many shares and how many comments; it's all very interesting.

I wrote an open letter as it were to my fellow conservatives who are secular. And I said, "I don't care if you're secular or religious. But I do care if you dismiss the indispensable significance of God and Judeo-Christian religion to America's possible survival."

There are many secular conservative and they are terrific. I remember—I won't say his name; the only thing you will know about him is that it is a he. This happened many years ... about twenty-five years ago at a plush apartment in Manhattan. I had dinner with this people, who had one of the leading ... he's a name every one of you will know. Don't try to guess; it's a silly game. But, it's just a very very important person. I'm sure you really wouldn't care; he's now deceased. I'm sure he wouldn't care if I said it, because I'm saying anything bad. But I'm very ... very, ah ... serious about people's dignity. So it's not important. But he's huge. He made a great impact, morally great impact on the country.

28:00 But I was a little stunned when we had a debate ... I don't know how it happened. Maybe he said, "What do you talk about, write about," I don't remember how it happened. And we got into a debate about whether or not you could have objective good or evil if there was no god. And every atheist ... I've debated this at Oxford, and the atheists I'd debated, the first thing he said was, "Mr. Prager is right. If there is no God, there is no objective good or evil. It's all subjective." And I remember—it's in print this debate—and I said, "I just want to say, it's just such a joy and honor to debate an intellectually honest person with whom I differ." And I meant this sincerely.

29:00 Virtually every atheist philosopher acknowledges if there is no God that ethics

are subjective. What you think is good is good for you; what I think is good is good for me. But he didn't admit that. "You don't need God to have objective good and evil." And I thought, "This is one of the most important conservatives in America and he's arguing that?"

That was my first realization that a lot of secular conservatives don't understand how significant the God issue is. I don't care if they believe. I care if they understand how important God is. I don't care if you're an atheist; that's your business. I care if you understand that the founders were not idiots and understood that America cannot survive godlessness.

Just as Western Europe cannot survive godlessness. It is a dead place; it is soulless. I have been to ... how many are there? Forty, fifty, European countries? I've been to everyone except four, and I'm visiting those four this year.

30:00 By the way, this is my one brag. The only time I ever brag. I've been to 115 countries. I just had to say that. It is irrelevant to any point that I'm about to make, but I'm so proud of it that I just have to get it into every speech. That's it; that's the end of that subject.

And yes I did ... by the way, people say, because there was this Prager ... in the bio it says lectured on seven continents. "You lectured in Antarctica?" Well, I did. But I have to say for the record, I was on a ship in which I lectured right off Antarctica. But in order to say "on Antarctica" I did go out. And there's a picture on my website of me speaking to about 150 penguins. [Light laugh] And it's one of the great moments. I spoke to them about ethical monotheism, and I ... [laugh] and they were as attentive as some of my other audiences have been, actually now that I think about it.

31:00 So ... I don't care, again, if you're atheist. But the founders knew. Let me just review one perfect example: John Adams. OK, John Adams.

Because we have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passion unbridled by morality and religion ...

By the way, you see they understood people were not basically good. That's the point. Human passions unbridled. They were afraid of human passion. Something has to control human passion. Either the government will, or what will? Answer: religion.

... our constitution was made only ...

Only!

... for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.

A secular conservative who does not understand that differs with the founders, every one of whom—every single one of whom—spoke of the critical nature of God, and religion, and bible.

32:00 Not all were orthodox Christians. That is true. Not all believed in the Trinity. All believed, however, in this God. Even Jefferson. Jefferson and Franklin designed, or had designed—had someone design—the Great Seal of the United States. Do you know what it was? The Jews leaving Egypt. Two guys who were considered—quote unquote—deists.

Incidentally, reading Franklin's autobiography I realized—and I remember when I read this to my wife—Franklin and I have identical theologies. Identical.

And to call him a deist is an absurdity. He believed that God judges every human being. That's not a deist. A deist is God created the world and then checked out. Not one of the founders believed that.

33:00 As a result of the rejection of the Judeo-Christian religions that made the West what they are—this is the West that is uniquely good, or produced unique amounts of goodness. What happened when Judeo-Christian religions died, specifically Christianity in Europe? You got Nazism and Communism. People don't stop believing in religions when God-based religions die, they just develop other religions. We have more religions in the United States that are secular then we have that are religious. Feminism. Environmentalism. Egalitarianism. Humanism . . . I mean, it just. You know, the isms are there . . . because people, as Chesterton said, "When people stop believing in God they don't believe in nothing; they believe in anything."

That is exactly what has happened.

34:00 What are some of the consequences of this godlessness, religion free secular America and West? The demise of marriage. The end of the will to fight evil. Moral confusion. No personal borders, I'll explain all these in a moment. People don't even have children. The will to survive as dead.

Every time I get a call from a young person who mentions that they have children, I say, "I assume that you are religious. Is that correct?" "Oh, yeah!" "What are you?" One of four things: Catholic, Mormon, Evangelical, Orthodox Jew. They're the ones who are having children, and they are the ones who are getting married earlier. And that's it. To me, a secular twenty-eighty year old, or thirty-five year old, with five children . . . I have never, I have not met one. I'm sure such a person exists. But . . . and I'm sure a few are mistakes. But deliberately, to have five or more children? If you're a secular, I don't know any such human being. Religious people believe it is worth preserving society and having more children.

35:00 So, demise of marriage. You have to understand something: marriage and children are values. We don't realize that. There was a song, which many of you know because of a latter adaptation of the song for a television series: "Love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage." That's what people believed in the nineteen fifties, forties, thirties, twenties, nineteenth century, eighteenth century, seventeenth century, sixteenth century, and as long as there were horses and carriages.

But it's not true. Love and marriage go together if you affirm a religious outlook. Not if you're secular. They don't go together at all. It's all a matter of values. And if you don't have those values there's no case to be made. There is no secular case for anything.

36:00 Here's an example. What is the secular case against public nudity? It's not a riddle. There is none. [long pause; looks over the audience] I assume all of you oppose public nudity, I mean in the streets. I don't care . . . I'm not talking about a private beach. Right? You don't have a single secular argument.

San Francisco had this debate. City council actually debated whether or not to drop bans on public nudity. This happened two years ago. And, ah . . . they lost . . . the dropping of the bans lost by one vote. I think it was eight to seven. San Francisco city council. So in other words within a year or two they will drop the

ban and public nudity will be allowed in San Francisco.

37:00 You know what the argument was? Because I was shocked. Eight people voted to keep laws against public nudity in San Francisco? The quintessentially secular place? And the argument they gave was, "It isn't sanitary." That's it. That was the argument, it's not sanitary. So of course there's a response: naked people will have to carry a towel and when they sit on a park bench they will have to sit on a towel. And I think that ends the problem of the sanitary argument.

The only argument ... the only argument against public nudity is that human beings are created in God's image and have sanctity. Animals are naked; humans are clothed. The first thing God does in Genesis. The first thing God does for humanity after humanity leaves the garden of Eden, or begins to leave by eating the of the Tree of Knowledge, is to make them clothing.

38:00 But it's a book nobody reads anymore. Nobody reads the Bible ... except for a handful of religious Americans. The most widely read book in American history. I believe—I truly do believe, and I intend by the way to prove this, I'm going to some of these colleges. I was just at Stanford, but I didn't have a chance to ask this. But I intend to spend a few days at some prestigious colleges—and I don't give a damn if the college is prestigious; it's nothing to me. But it will more to the people to find this out. For example, what if more than half of Harvard seniors cannot identify Cain and Able correctly? And I would bet that more than half cannot. That's Cain and Able folks! This is not difficult stuff! This was ... every third grader in America knew this a hundred years ago, who Cain and Able were. The ignorance is profound. Guatemalan lesbian poets are well known at Harvard. But Genesis? Zilch.

So, it's all ... The consequences of secularism are ... is the most important subject of all and very few people are addressing it.

39:00 The end of the will to fight evil. Look at Europe. They demonstrated ... remember how much they demonstrated against Pershings [missiles] in Europe when Ronald Regan wanted to put them in? Do you remember how Ronald Regan was excoriated by the secular left with regard to calling the Soviet Union an evil empire? The will to fight evil dies in the Western world when God dies. Another one. Marriage dies. Children die. Having children dies.

40:00 Moral confusion? Moral confusion. This I knew from when I first started speaking in my early twenties, and it has not changed. Example? Most American students ... David Brookes wrote about this in the New York Times. I was very happen that he did write about it. And he quoted a secular professor, I believe at Notre Dame. And he was quite upset, the professor, that there is no moral literacy among young Americans. They all believe that morality is what you think, what you feel. We live in an age of feelings. How do you feel about it.

You know that Jewish kids I have talked to at Jewish schools, not orthodox schools, but non-orthodox schools—and I'm not orthodox, or I wouldn't be doing this. But I'm a serious Jew, but not orthodox. But anyway, speaking at non-orthodox schools, I would say, "So, do you think the Nazis, what the Nazis did to the Jews was wrong?" And of course they all think it's wrong. So then I said, "Wait a minute. I know that you think it is wrong, but they thought it was right. So are you still prepared to say they are wrong or only that you *think* [Prager's emphasis] they are wrong?" And almost all the *Jewish* [Prager's emphasis], *Jewish*

students—it would certainly hold true for non-Jews, but I want to make the point more strongly, say, “It’s a matter of opinion. The Nazis thought they were right; we thought they were wrong; but who’s to say.”

That is almost universally now accepted among Americans of the last generation and certainly the latest generation.

There is nothing, almost nothing that they value that we valued. Seventy percent, according to Pew, of millennials do not believe in free speech. Or as they constantly say, “Oh, we believe in free speech, just not hate speech,” which of course is an absurdity because they determine what’s hate speech and then it’s not free speech.

The end of borders in personal conduct. There is now a movement in the liberal party in Sweden, the *Independent* and other places in England just reported this. A movement by young Swedes in the liberal party to legalize incest. Brothers and sisters over fifteen who wish to have intercourse should be allow to; it is none of the country’s business whether they do so or not. And they’re right. The only argument there too is religious ... and please don’t give me the health argument that incest produces mental retardation; it doesn’t except after many many generations. OK? So there is no scientific argument against it. Anyway, with amniocentesis and abortion that problem is certainly obviated.

There is only a religious argument against incest. When the Hebrew Bible was written, it decided to completely de-sexualize God and completely de-sexualize the family, both of which had been thoroughly sexualized and still are in nearly all of the non-Western world. Or the non ... really Anglo-West world or Western European world that isn’t Anglo. But in South America, sex with relatives is extremely common ... as in many other places in the world. The de-sexualization of the family was a Western construct emanating from the Hebrew Bible. Nowhere else did ... nowhere else. Ancient Egypt glorified incest.

So, that’s the story.

Now you know why I’m pessimistic. If there is no ... If there is no revival of the American Trinity. I have coined this term, but it is not my content. It is only my term. Christianity has a Trinity, and America has a trinity. The American trinity is on every coin and every bank note: *e pluribus unum*, *liberty*, *in God we trust*. That’s it. That’s our triad. That’s our tripod. You knock out one of the legs, it’s over. We have knocked out *In God We Trust*. The left has knocked that out; they want a godless secular place. It has knocked out *e pluribus unum* in favor of multiculturalism. We’re not one. We’re Africian-American, Hispanic-American, and black, and white, and ... etc., etc. And *liberty* has been expunged in favor of material equality. So the left is the antitheses of the American Revolution. And this is what conservatives need to understand: we need to fight for all three.

So let me answer my question from the beginning and then open up to you for questions or comments. I’m one of those few speakers that I know that welcome comments. They have to be brief, but I do welcome comments. If you don’t want to ask a question but only make a statement, that’s fine.

But I want to answer the questions, “How do you stay non-depressed? How do you stay off anti-depressants if you have this bleak view of what is happening?”

So here is what I tell my listeners all the time, because they hear me speak

45:00 about what is happening bad all the time. Happily, I stay funny, because otherwise I'd go nuts. And so there's a lot of laughter on my show. That helps. I have an happiness hour [on the show]. But here is the biggest answer that I give, and I give it to myself. Because people say, "You know, Dennis, I feel despair. I don't think it's worth fighting." So I tell them, and it's the God's honest truth. You know what stops me from not fighting? Forgetting even religion; forgetting my values; you know what stops me? Normandy.

If you visit Normandy Beach ... I've found that one of the handful of times in my life that I felt overwhelmed philosophically, not just emotionally. The guys who stormed Omaha Beach, Normandy Beach generally. I don't think they were very optimistic. They ran onto the beach seeing their best friends torn in half by 46:00 Nazi bullets. But they went on anyway.

The idea that you'll fight only when you'll win ... is a little silly. You don't have to fight if you think you'll win. Then you win. The time to fight is exactly when you don't think you'll win. Then your fighting is most necessary. To me it's a non sequitur. "Oh, I'm pessimistic so I'm not going to fight!" I don't even understand ... it's ... aside it's somewhat narcissistic: "I'll only fight if I'm optimistic." Sorry. Sorry. A lot of people gave up their lives for this country. I'm not asking anybody to give up their lives. I'm saying ... dedicate your life, don't give it up. Continue to have great times, but fight.

47:00 And that's my answer to the whole question of, "Well, you know, it looks bad." Yes, it looks bad. It does look bad. What, am I going to lie to you? Do you want to go to a pathologist who says, "It looks great, Mr. Brown. Let me tell you something here. What do we care about third stage cancer here at the Happy Institute. It doesn't mean a thing. You'll do great!" You'll drop dead. You want somebody who says, "This is what you have, and this is what you have to do!" That's the difference.

There's a corrosive disease; it's call leftism. Part of it, by the way, is aggressive secularism. But it's not all there is. And we have to fight it. And I don't want to ... I want on my tombstone, "Here lies Dennis Prager. He fought evil, not carbon emissions." [Laughter]

Thank you very much.