

Editor's Note

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For some time I have thought it possible to construct modern America's functional theology from a study of bumper stickers. How different the theology is from Biblical doctrine! The east coast's main north - south traffic artery, I-95, runs close by here. Who knows how many tons of illicit drugs travel up it daily to become an instrument of destruction in the lives of people? However destructive may be the concealed marijuana, cocaine and other chemicals, bumper stickers openly advertise ideas which may be much more destructive. Ideas have consequences.

A sticker sometimes seen on the back of expensive Florida-bound motor homes driven by gray-haired couples states: "We're spending our children's inheritance." (Cf. II Cor. 12:14) In the individual cases, one suspects that the couples are being facetious. Nonetheless, the almost universal participation of Christians in an unbiblical debt-based monetary system appears now to be coming to fruition with the impending loss of the children's material (and spiritual) inheritance. Medical expenses incurred through government-mandated entitlement programs have played a considerable part in the monetary crisis facing the nation.

Another sticker demonstrates our fascination with material possessions: "I love my" "Love" is indicated by a large red heart, and almost any thing may follow, from a breed of animals to a beer. Only a small percentage indicate a proper object of love, such as, "I [heart] my wife."

As bumper stickers have served outdoors for years, T-shirts now catechise modern American religion indoors. Reflecting our mercantile genius is a predominance of advertising. Millions of young people offer themselves to merchants as living billboards, not only free, but paying for the privilege of doing so. As a special case of advertising, sexual innuendo has a large following. If I

were to judge from her T-shirt, the woman of Proverbs 6 and 7 was in our office recently. Emblazoned shamelessly on her T-shirt were crude invitations. Her life apparently is following her T-shirt script. Not yet married at 24, she has three children, none of whom has the same father. As is described in Phil. 3:19, we glory in what should be our shame, and our belly has become our god. How pitiful is a medical care pitted against such beliefs, if that care is limited to physical ministrations only. We dare not use carnal weapons to cast down the arguments flaunted against God from our patients' mouths, their bumper stickers, and their T-shirts.

Neither may we use weapons which partake of another Spirit than God's. A young woman, much of her youth junked in the drug subculture, wore on the Psychiatric ward a T-shirt which proclaimed: "God made me, and God don't make no junk." Doubtless, it was an expression of an attempt to reconstruct her self-esteem, but sadly at variance with Scripture and a faulty stone to lay at the foundation of a new, drug-free beginning. (Cf., for example, Rom. 9.) If Paul had worn his theology on his shirt, it might have said, "Chief of sinners." If Solomon had put a message on the back of his conveyance, it might have said, "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, But the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous." (Prov. 13:22)