

# LAYMEN MINISTRIES

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## A New Normal



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We live in unprecedented times. We have witnessed and experienced some of the most planet-altering events in modern history. With the new “Cancel Culture,” history is being rewritten. Indoctrination is coming from every direction: television sets, online media, and even the classroom. Concepts like the Critical Race Theory are setting out to further undermine America’s historical narrative. New words, never used before, are being introduced to society.

## The “Woke”

“Woke” is a term that refers to coming into an awareness of issues that concern social justice and racial justice. It is a street slang for waking up to things you never saw before. A person might say, “I am woke now!” It is sometimes used as an African-American vernacular English expression. “Woke” resurfaced in 2014, during the Black Lives Matter movement, as a label for vigilance and activism concerning racial inequalities.

People need to be “woke.” They need to understand what Communism is and what it leads to. They need to see that there are consequences to

law breaking. They need to see the mass brain-washing that is taking place. They need to see that reform starts from within and not through violent protest.

I remember being “woke” when I accepted Christ. I started to see things in a different way. The Apostle Paul, in the book of Romans, explains the Christian “woke” by first summarizing the Ten Commandments. He finishes by saying:

“And that, knowing the time, that **now it is high time to awake [woke] out of sleep**: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day;

not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying” (Romans 13:11-13).

Jesus put the questions to us: “Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not?” (Mark 8:18). The Christian “woke” causes us to see things differently after being awakened by the Holy Spirit. We see God’s hand working in events of life. We see the spiritual battles taking place around us. We see where we came from, why we are here, and where we are going. We see the hypocrisy of politicians, the manipulation of the media, the dividing of people by color, ethnicity, and income. But most of

all, we begin to exhibit clarity of thought in a time of misinformation and confusion. The Bible tells us, “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!” (Isaiah 5:20-21). With God we have hope in these times of darkness, we see things more clearly — we have hope for the future — and a purpose in life.

## The Pandemic Migration

Since the start of the COVID pandemic and then through the 2020 elections, our cities have become places of increased violence. People are being given

the message that we do not have to be held accountable for our actions. You can even break the law and not be arrested.

States here in the US are becoming more and more divided by political lines — red states and blue states. We have always had the red and blue, but things have taken on a new meaning. For instance, the political persuasion has made states so completely different that in some ways driving from one to another is like driving from one country to another. With this and the constantly changing COVID laws, people are leaving some states by the droves.

Here in North Idaho, along with Montana and Eastern Washington, real-estate prices have doubled due to the large influx of people from California, Oregon, Washington, Utah and even Texas. Some of these people are leaving the cities. They have had enough and cannot identify with what the

local and state governments are doing as crazy laws are being passed. So many people have moved in to our area that the county ran out of license plates for the newcomers' vehicles which they are getting registered.

Time will tell if these newcomers can handle the cold and snow of winters, and for those who have moved to the country, the inconvenience of no Walmart, Costco, Lowes, and other big chain stores located close by. But as I watch this COVID migration and watch the political maneuvering, it is easy to see that the pandemic was purposely blown out of proportion to test the world's response. Shut-downs happened all over. It was almost to the point of state-by-state border control. I have often said if something much bigger than this pandemic came along, the cities could be placed in a lockdown, not allowing people to freely come and go. People could

be trapped. Right now is a time for people to get their families out of the large cities. If you go to our website [www.lmn.org](http://www.lmn.org) and click on the "Feature Articles" link, you might want to download the article entitled "A Move to the Country," which shares some ideas how to make this move.

As Adventists, we have been telling people for years to leave these larger cities as lawlessness grows worse. This is now truer than ever before. Things might get a little better for a time, but the general trend is getting worse. I have always said that Satan works on the 3-steps-forward, 2-steps-back policy. Slowly people are being conditioned to accept the "new normal." Larger cities are not the place to raise kids, or in some cases, even to be safe. People are being conditioned, and when the next 3-steps-forward comes, it will be much larger than what we witnessed this time around.

Even with God, in His love and forbearance, there is a limit as to how much wickedness He will allow before He holds a person or groups of people accountable for their actions. Just like in the days of Noah, there came a time when enough was enough — and all was done in love and compassion by bringing an end to sin, suffering, and wickedness. While the opportunities are still here, we need to share with those stuck in these cities about Christ's soon coming. The film series, *The Days of Noah*, has been a wonderful tool in bringing the Three Angels' Messages to those who know little about Bible truth.

#### Numb Brain

We are bombarded with information. The simple way of life of the pre-1980s is gone forever. We no longer have news reporters like Walter Cronkite or David Brinkley, who simply share the news. Today we are bombarded with purposely-slanted news reporting. How do we know what is true and what is not? Many people, including myself, trust very little in the way of news. Scandal after scandal come and go. People are brain dead to it all. Too much information — we just can't process it. This, too, is part of the new normal.

Add to that mental stimulus of the brain. From Facebook to YouTube to online news channels, we


are hit with millions of bits of information every day — so much so that we just can't assimilate it. Many people, hiding behind a curtain of information, do as they want with no accountability. Seems like people can get away with anything, especially politicians. People's senses are dead and no longer shocked at the lies, fraud, name-calling, cursing, and killing that is so common in the news. After a time, people just start to tune it out. And that is exactly what Satan wants us to do so we do not see how close we are to serious world events.


Here is a quote from the early 1900's, which seems like it was written just last week:

"The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude. The agencies of evil are combining their forces, and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones" (*Christian Service*, p. 542).

Despite all these events happening in the world, we can have hope. This is something so many people need today — HOPE. We can know that when the storm comes, God will be there to give us the strength to endure. Then will come the time of final reward.

Jesus was on a small boat with some of His disciples when a mighty storm hit. He arose, calmly raised His hands, "and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, 'Peace, be still!' And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, 'Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?'" (Mark 4:39-40). Today, in the midst of a storm, He is there to give us peace. Jesus assures us, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you" (John 14:27-28).

And He *will* come again. 



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