

Theological Musings from Dave's Laptop

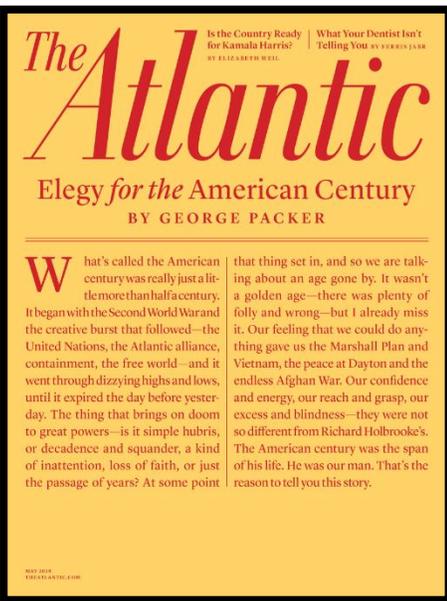
April 30, 2019

To revel in understatement, we live in challenging times. Not only are these “United States” now the dis-united states, but populism and nativism are gaining ground all over the planet.

The cover article of the current issue of *The Atlantic* is “Elegy for the American Century.” The article focuses on the good things that have happened in the world during the decades when America exerted a measure of moral leadership abroad, and suggests that this leadership is now in the past. The author



argues that this decline of moral leadership began some thirty years ago, but it is accelerating with our current environment of populism, white nationalism, and protectionism. That set me to thinking.



These are also troubling times in which to be “a white person,” but not for the reasons you hear on the news. Those who are keeping track now report that Mr. Trump has publicly stated well over 10,000 things that simply aren’t true; but one of the things he’s said that is true is a response he made to a question about the misbehavior of other nations: “**And you think our hands are so clean?**” He said more than he intended to say, I think.

My reading of history may be flawed, but it seems to me that an enormous percentage of the misery in the world today has its root in the behavior and decisions of persons who are “white people.” Not simply slavery, but colonialism in all its facets and repeated post-war divisions of spoils have—perhaps without intending to do so—set in motion destructive powers

that haunt every corner of the globe.

The white nationalist backlash that is so poisonous in today’s America is simply the latest effort of people who consider themselves “white” to position themselves above persons of any other hue, and this sad effort has contaminated our common life from our very first moments on these shores. I commend to you a film that you can watch online and that chronicles “The Long Shadow” of white racism in these United States. The film will cost you about \$4 to watch and will take 90 minutes or so, but it’s worth your time.

We can do better. We have to do better. God will help us, if we ask.

Dave



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BhvhR_eua34