

Liberty Commentary July 20, 2009

This week marks the 40th anniversary of the Apollo 11 Lunar landing on the moon that achieved the first manned landing in human history. This landing and space walk of Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin marked one of the greatest human and scientific achievements in the history of mankind.

One of the challenges to putting men on the moon would be the threat of the hostile environment that would need to be overcome. Both the spacecraft and humans would face the threat of the extreme cold temperatures on one hand and the extreme hot temperatures on the other hand. There was also the threat of radiation destroying the spacecraft and its navigation systems. Needless to say, there was great threat to Armstrong and Aldrin as they stepped outside the relatively stable environment inside the Lunar module to stand on the moon's surface and plant the American flag.

2000 years ago a single man accomplished a far greater feat when He stepped out of the splendor and security of Heaven and came to this hostile earth to provide the means whereby humans may be reconciled to God. We could entitle Christ's mission as "earth walk."

Jesus had to overcome the hostile environment of being born in a non sterile environment of a stable. Jesus had to survive the hostilities of Herod who wanted to kill Him. As Jesus began His public ministry at the age of 30 the Jews wanted to kill Him because He claimed to be the Son of God, equal with God. The Bible says in John 8:59, "took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself..." Jesus was betrayed by one of the members of his most trusted inner circle. Jesus was threatened and bound by the chief priests and Pharisees who brought Him before Pilate to be

tried for insurrection against the Roman government. Jesus was then taken by the Roman soldiers and crucified between two thieves.

Why would Jesus set aside His fellowship with the Father and come to this hostile environment where He was not wanted and where He would eventually be crucified. Jesus knew the fate that awaited Him, but he willingly came to lay down His life for the sins of the world. The Bible tells us in John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Jesus tells us in John 10:10, “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. Jesus willingly set aside His glory and came to this world to provide spiritual life to all who will receive Him into their lives as their Savior. The Jews were looking for a mighty king that would come to lead them to victory against their enemies. They did not want a humble suffering savior that required of them repentance of their sins. Jesus was ultimately victorious over His enemies as He arose from the grave on the third day.

Even though it has been 2000 years since Jesus walked the earth, there continues to be hostilities toward His message and his messengers. Not many in His day or today considered Jesus a hero for His “earth walk” as we do for the two astronauts who are being celebrated and idolized for their willingness to leave the security of earth to go to the hostile environment of the moon.

Jesus warned us in John chapter 16, “the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things they will do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.”

While we celebrate and idolize the astronauts for their “moon

walk”, we in the United States are removing God from nearly every vestige of public discourse. The United States has less than half the number of churches per capita today than it did at the beginning of the 20th century. The continent of North America is the only continent in the world where Christianity is not growing. On average seventy four churches close their doors each week in the United States. There has been no county in the United States that has seen an increase in overall church attendance in the past decade. Forty to fifty percent of the U.S. population is unchurched.

As great as the accomplishments of the astronauts are, it is no comparison to what Christ accomplished for mankind during his “earth walk.” We have relegated Christ and His accomplishments to the far recesses of our priorities while elevating the temporal and finite accomplishments of men and their machines.

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