

Catholic Candle

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Words to Live by – from Catholic Tradition

All that happens to us in this world against our will (whether due to men or to other causes) happens to us only by the will of God, by the disposal of Providence, by His orders and under His guidance; and if from the frailty of our understanding we cannot grasp the reason for some event, let us attribute it to Divine Providence, show Him respect by accepting it from His hand, believe firmly that He does not send it to us without cause.

Words of St. Augustine, quoted in *Trustful Surrender to Divine Providence – The Secret of Peace and Happiness*, Father Jean Baptiste Saint Jure, S.J., and St. Claude De La Colombiere, S.J., TAN Books and Publishers, Rockford, IL, 1983, pp. 17-18.



There is No Such Thing as Luck

Patience and Appreciating God's Providence During Adversity

Webster defines luck as “events or circumstances that operate for or against an individual.” The truth is that all events or circumstances – except sin – come from and are controlled by God for your happiness on earth and perfect happiness in eternity in heaven.

God provides the power for these circumstances and events. So, if you worry about anything, it means you don't trust God to do what is best for you.

It is hard to believe, but true, that you are just one among billions of people on earth, and God deals with you *one-on-one* in everything that concerns you. Keep in mind what God has already done for you: created you, suffered and died for you, and keeps you in existence. So, God's will is always the best and wisest. All things, including tribulations “work together unto the good, for those who love God”. *Romans*, 8:28.

You must realize that if at first something from God looks like a real problem for you: like losing your job, or your best friend marries your fiancée, *etc.*, you may over time eventually realize it was a blessing. God took this or that away from you because it was leading you toward your loss of salvation. God only does what is best for those who love Him.

Of course, you can ask God for what you think is best for you, and it might be, and you will get it if it is good for your happiness on earth and/or your future salvation. But if in reality it is not, you would not want Him to give it to you, would you? Even living in this time of great apostasy without an uncompromising priest and the Sacraments, is for our own good. In the future, it will be evident that God did what ensures the temporal and eternal happiness of His elect.

You must wait and let His providential plan play out, and then you will see His goodness and generosity. It can be hard, I know, to picture this, but be patient.



What We Hold

If you want to know what is your “god”, and what is most important to you, reflect on what you like most to talk about and to think about.



Mary’s School of Sanctity

Lesson #24 – The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius – SECOND WEEK – MEDITATION ON THE THREE CLASSES OF MEN

In this lesson we study St. Ignatius’s famous meditation called *the Three Classes of Men*. This meditation is a more subtle one and we must strive to understand the key message that St. Ignatius is giving us in this meditation.

His message harkens back to the proper use of creatures from our meditation on the *Principle and Foundation Part II* which was *Lesson #11*.¹ There we discussed how creatures are supposed to be used solely for the service of God and to help us save our

¹ Lesson #11 The Principle and Foundation – Part 2 can be found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2022/06/27/lesson-11-the-principle-and-foundation-part-ii/>

souls. When one discovers there is a creature that is not useful for his salvation and the service of God, then he must rid himself of it.

In this current meditation, St. Ignatius wants us to make a close examination of our own particular use of creatures. We, no doubt, have some attachment to a creature which is an obstacle to our perfect service of God and to our salvation. We must be convinced, like the third class of men (discussed below) that we must be completely detached from any obstacle which is between us and God. When we are actually doing this meditation, it is often the case that we see more directly to which creature we are inordinately attached and we fortify our resolve to give up that attachment because we want to love God completely.

This meditation helps us discover the demonic tricks which hinder us from ridding ourselves of inordinate attachments to creatures. In this meditation we will consider the various inordinate attachments men typically have. We will consider the consequences of delaying to get rid of bad attachments. We will then discuss what happens if we try to retain our bad attachments by rationalizing that our attachment is not a problem after all. Lastly, we will discuss the peace and harmony a person has within his soul when he truly renounces all inordinate attachments so he can serve God as He wills us to serve Him.

Before setting out our intended considerations, let us first see the material St. Ignatius gives for this meditation.

The *preparatory prayer* is the same as usual, *I ask God Our Lord the grace that all my intentions, actions, and works may be directed purely to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.*

The FIRST PRELUDE: is the history. Here it is to consider three classes of men. Each of them has acquired ten thousand ducats, but not purely, as they should have, for the love of God. These men all wish to save their souls and find peace in God Our Lord by freeing themselves of the serious impediment arising from their attachment to this acquired money.

The SECOND PRELUDE: is the mental representation of the place. Here I will behold myself standing in the presence of God Our Lord and all His saints, that I may desire and know what is most pleasing to His Divine Goodness.

The THIRD PRELUDE: I will ask for the grace that I desire. Here it will be to beg for the grace to choose what is for the greater glory of His Divine Majesty and the salvation of my soul.

The FIRST class: They would like free themselves of the attachment they have for the money they acquired, in order to find peace in God Our Lord, and to be able to save their souls, but up to the hour of death they do not take the means.

The SECOND class: They want to free themselves of the attachment, but they wish to do so in such a way as to retain what they have acquired. They want God to come to what they desire, and they do not resolve to give up the money in order to go to God, even though this would be the better state for them.

The THIRD class: They wish to free themselves of the attachment, but in such a way that their inclination will be neither to retain the thing acquired nor not to retain it, desiring to act only as God Our Lord shall inspire them and as it shall seem better to them for the service and praise of His Divine Majesty. Meanwhile they wish to consider that they have in their hearts broken all the attachments, striving not to desire that thing nor anything else, unless it be only the service of God Our Lord that prompts their action. Thus, the desire of being able to serve God Our Lord better will move them either to accept things or to give them up.

The COLLOQUY: we can make the same colloquies that were made in the previous contemplation or the Two Standards.

This meditation focuses on what to do when we discover that we have inordinate attachments to creatures. Let us realize that as humans it is a given fact that we all have some inordinate attachment to one or more creatures. This is a consequence of our fallen human nature.

What sort of things are we inordinately attached to? Some typical examples are given below.

What are we supposed to do with inordinate attachments? We get rid of them.

We all have things/creatures in our lives that are not good for our salvation. We must discover what they are and be completely determined to rid ourselves of them without compromise or reservation.

Not only does our salvation depend on our complete detachment from creatures, but the mystical union which Our Lord intends to have with each Catholic is hindered by the obstacles we place between ourselves and the Bridegroom of our souls.²

² The Mystical Doctor of the Church, St. John of the Cross, explains the importance of detachment this way:

It is well, then, for us to ***journey to Him by denying ourselves everything***. For otherwise, even if the soul be so wise, humble, and strong that the devil cannot deceive it by visions or cause it to fall into some sin of presumption, as he is wont to do, he will not allow it to make progress; for ***he sets obstacles in the way of spiritual detachment, poverty of spirit, and emptiness in faith, which are the essential conditions for union of the soul with God.***

Therefore, it is crucial that we be truly detached from creatures and only use them according to the will of God.

Yet, when we come to the point of getting rid of them, humans often do one of three things and these three things correspond to the three classes of men.

1. The first class men are those who delay giving up the inordinate attachment(s).
2. The second class men are those who try to rationalize that the inordinate attachment(s) is (are) somehow not really inordinate.
3. The third class men are those who when they realize that the inordinate attachment(s) is (are) a danger to their salvation, they simply rid themselves of it (them).

Let us firstly examine the typical attachments that we humans have and then analyze the way we humans commonly react to these types of attachments. In this way we will be considering the substance of St. Ignatius's meditation and then see how we can increase our desire to be truly like the third class of men and acquire ***holy indifference***.

Typical obstacles in our human condition:

False human respect:

We humans often worry too much about what others think of us and our actions. We do not want to stand out and look different. There are strong temptations to go along with the world in its fashions, and worldly activities.

We often worry that if we have Mary-like modesty or moral standards that please Our Lord and King, then we will be considered weird or prudish. We worry what our extended families or friends will think of us when we should really be concerned about what Our Lord and Our Lady will think about us.

What does Our Lord say about our being too concerned about what our relatives think about us? "*He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me.*" (St. Matthew's Gospel, 10:37).

St. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, Book III, ch.24, #9.

By emptiness of faith, he means that we must be willing to be detached even from spiritual consolations and sentimental comforts if God so wills to withdraw them from us. In other words, we completely abandon our wills to the dear Lord.

Our Lord does not want us to have inordinate attachments to people, especially if they are bad companions for us.

Further, when our worldly friends and acquaintances are hostile to us because we put Christ first, He consoles us in these words: “*If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.*” (St. John’s Gospel, 15:20).

If we are worried about people not liking our principled stand on Catholic Faith and Morals, we do well to remember these precious words of Our Lord and take courage and strength from them.

Some additional consoling words are: “*If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated Me before you.*” (St. John’s Gospel, 15:18). “*In the world you will have distress: but have confidence, I have overcome the world.*” (St. John’s Gospel, 16:33).

The *Book of Wisdom* teaches that worldlings despise the just. Therefore, we must expect reproach and scorn from those who are worldly. They will never agree with us and if we are trying to please Our Lord and Our Lady, we will necessarily be a thorn in the side of the worldly. Our Dear Lord and His Mother suffered greatly from the worldly of their time, so we must not be surprised if we are misunderstood and held in contempt if we are imitating Our Lord and His Mother.

Comforts:

Here we must examine how we view our comforts both physical and spiritual. Do we squawk when we encounter physical discomfort, *e.g.*, it’s too warm or it’s too cold? What do we do when we have some physical ailment or pain? What do we do when we don’t feel like delving into intellectual work? Are we prone to want to relax and take it easy? Am I attached to some favorite clothes, shoes, or accessories?

Gadgets:

Here we must examine our use of technology. Do we *have* to have the latest electronic equipment? How much time do we spent focused on our modern equipment?

Pleasures:

Here we examine what delights us. How do we spend our time? Do we occupy our time with things that are wholesome and pleasing to God? Are we attached to shallow and worldly amusements, travel, dining out, *etc.*? Are we attached to some particular food(s) or beverage(s)?

Conveniences:

Here we examine how we use the things which make our life easier. How do we handle circumstances when one of these useful things is not available to us at a given time? Do we get upset? Do we think the situation is a horrible cross? Do we tell ourselves that we cannot manage without this object? Now is a good time to examine how we handle circumstances, in general, that do not go favorably for us. Are we so attached to having our own way that we do not readily accept things that come to us? (Are we too attached to our selfish will?)

Property:

Here we examine how we view our property. Do we have the spirit of poverty when it comes to our belongings? If something were to happen to our property, what would our reaction be? Is there something we own that would be considered by Our Lord or Our Lady as a worldly luxury? Is there something we own which we use only to pamper ourselves?

People:

Here we examine our friendships and acquaintances. Do they help us save our souls? Do they help us increase in virtue? By contrast, do they “drag us down”?

A sign to help us identify inordinate attachments:

One clear indication that we have a dangerous attachment to a person, place, or thing is to ask ourselves if something were to happen to *[fill-in-the-blank]*, what would my reaction be? Our reaction should be, “Whatever God wants is what I want”.

Like Job, we should say:

The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away: as it hath pleased the Lord so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord.

Job, 1:21.

If this is not our reaction, then we have an inordinate attachment.

Having found an inordinate attachment, how do humans react?

The first class of men delays getting rid of the inordinate attachment.

Men who fall into the first class do want to save their souls and yet they do not actually **do** what they know they should in order to save their souls.

We can truly consider how men in this class neglect to think about, let alone ponder, the ***Principle and Foundation***. They are considered by St. Ignatius to be procrastinators for they always tell themselves that they will take the means to save their souls ***later***. They put off until tomorrow what ought to be done today. They do not worry about the fact that man is created to praise, revere, and serve God and that he is to use creatures only insofar as they help him to obtain his end. They do not weigh all of their actions in light of eternity. Therefore, they do not have an eternal perspective.

If they are not fulfilling the principle and foundation, what are they doing? Fr. Hurter describes the focus of men who delay ridding themselves of their inordinate attachments:

The principles of the world rule and guide their judgment; they are not penetrated by the sentiments of Our Divine Savior. They strive for comfort, honors, dignities, prestige and praise, not for the greater honor of God and the salvation of souls. They have a passion for entertainments and amusements, but dread self-denial and mortification. Spiritual exercises not binding under pain of mortal sin they neglect. If, for some reason or other, they do attend spiritual exercises, they may indeed make some good resolutions, but without permanent results. There is no earnest endeavor to reduce them to practice, for old customs and long-established habits choke the sprouting seeds (or correct desire to be rid of inordinate attachments).³

These are sufficient considerations to warn us about the danger of falling into this class. Now let consider the second class of men.

The second class of men rationalizes and tries to make it look like the inordinate attachment is not a danger to salvation.

When a second-class man realizes that he has an inordinate attachment, he rationalizes so that he can keep the object to which he is inordinately attached. The devil seeks to trick people to keep their inordinate attachment under the appearance of good. The person tells himself that he could do so much good by keeping the thing he is inordinately attached to.

³ Considerations from *Sketches for the Exercises of An Eight Days' Retreat* by Hugo Hurter, S.J., Ph.D., D.D., Professor Emeritus of Theology in the Catholic University of Innsbruck, copyright 1918; third edition, 1926, St. Louis, MO and London, Page 192.

For example,

- “I should keep associating the those (bad) companions (that are still a danger to my soul) because I can be a good example for them.”
- “I should stay in that (compromise) group because I can influence them for the good from within.”
- “I should receive those (compromise) sacraments because I need to get my children in the habit of receiving the sacraments.”
- “I should keep my (worldly) media-streaming device because it will help me save my soul by watching (so-called) ‘holy’ movies.”
- “I should not do extra penance because it will ruin my good health.”

The devil also tempts us to think that we have a real need for something and that we cannot function without it. When we find an attachment and we suspect it is an inordinate one, if we find ourselves coming up with a string of apparent reasons why we need the object, this is a very **big** clue that we have an inordinate attachment to the object. Then it is important that we use Ignatian discernment to weigh whether at our deathbed we will have wished that we had rid ourselves of that object. If we can see that we would regret at our particular judgment that we kept the object in our life, then we **know** that we have an inordinate attachment to the object. We know what to do – detach ourselves from it!

God does not try to trick us. Our reason must be used to weigh how we use creatures. God expects us to use our reason to make a proper choice on how to use objects and which objects are dangerous to our salvation. In other words, God expects us to be able to figure out whether something is an obstacle to our salvation or not.

We, therefore, have to be on our guard to not rationalize about things that we desire. We must make our hearts docile to the Holy Ghost and to be willing to give up whatever diminishes our love of God. We must be willing to give ourselves unconditionally to God.

Now that we have probed the subtle snares of the devil which draw men to be in the second class, let us turn our thoughts to the third class of men.

The third class of men gets rid of the inordinate attachment because he loves God and does not want to perish for all eternity.

This class of men includes those who truly want to be friends of Christ and please Him in all things. The saints in heaven were in this class of men. These souls did **not** count the cost of their sacrifices to God. They gave Him all. They wanted to love God above all

things and would never want to offend Him in any way. They did not want to place any obstacles between God and themselves.

This leads us back to the Ignatian *holy indifference* which we discussed in detail in Lesson #11. We must be indifferent to our own wants and desires if these be opposed to God in any way. In other words, we must be detached from ourselves. With self-knowledge, we can easily detect if our own will is emerging and we are beginning to veer from trying to seek God's Will. We must pray hard to keep the will of God first and foremost in our minds. We must watch carefully to see the circumstances and discern what God's will actually is. One rule of thumb to remember is that if something is out of our control, then we know that it is God's will for us. Then we strive to lovingly accept it and persevere in doing God's will.

COLLOQUY:

[Addressing Our Lady as St. Ignatius advised us to do.] O, my mother Mary, help me to root out anything in me that is displeasing to Thy Son. Assist me to immediately cast out any inordinate attachment I have. Please do not let the folly of procrastination enter into my soul, for I will surely perish eternally if this spirit is in me. Help me, dear Mother, to want to focus entirely on thy Divine Son and never let any obstacle obscure my gaze on Him Who is most worthy of my love.

[Then St. Ignatius has us address Our Lord with a similar colloquy.] O my dearest Lord Jesus Christ, I love Thee and I need Thee. I beg Thee to help me to have no attachment to things of this earth. I want Thee to ever be my first priority in my life and for all eternity. The sly fox, the devil, will ever try to distract me from the love of Thee. He will tempt me with countless things to obscure my mind from thinking of my eternal end. I need Thee, O my Savior, to guide me and keep me faithful to thee. I never want anything to be an obstacle to my union with Thee.

[Then I will address the Father with a similar colloquy.] O most almighty Father, I beg Thine assistance to help me see the proper use of Thy creatures. Help me to not let any obstacle get in the way of the service and praise that I owe to Thee. I want Thee with my whole heart. Please grant me the grace to ever see if I am becoming attached to any creature. Please give me the fortitude to ruthlessly detach myself immediately from such a creature. Suffer me not to love any creature more than Thee and not to delay ridding myself from such a dangerous attachment. Let me give myself entirely to Thee without compromise or reservation. O be Thou King and Center of my poor heart forever in time and in eternity.

This meditation nicely complements the next lesson which is an explanation of *the Three Modes of Humility*. This next lesson will also help us probe ourselves to find out how willing we truly are to suffer for Christ.



Catholic Candle note: Below is the second and final part of an article which debunks the claim of the climate alarmists who assert that hurricanes are becoming more numerous and more severe because of man-made (anthropogenic) “climate change”. The first part of this article is here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2023/04/28/the-false-claim-that-global-warming-causes-hurricanes-to-be-more-severe/>

The False Claim that Man-Made Global Warming Causes Hurricanes to be More Numerous and Severe

Part 2

In part one of this article, we saw that weather and climate go in cycles and that this applies to hurricanes, too. We saw that N.O.A.A. (U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and various studies conclude that, after adjusting for the pre-1972 hurricane under-count (before the use of weather satellites), there is **no upward trend** in the number or in the severity of hurricanes.

We saw that there was a deep trough in the hurricane cycle – in approximately 1980 – which would allow a dishonest manipulation of the data by deceptively cutting the data to begin there in order to give a false appearance of an alarming hurricane increase, as the climate alarmists falsely claim.

Now, in the second and final part of this article, we look at the mainstream media making these false claims based on deceptively cutting the data and answer an objection concerning the increasing cost of hurricane damage.

False media claims of hurricanes increasing in number and intensity because of human-caused climate change.

Before we look at where the mainstream media cut the data, let us look at a few examples of what the mainstream media claims – *viz.*, about **major** hurricanes supposedly becoming more common:

- ❖ *The New York Times* claimed, “strong storms are becoming more common in the Atlantic Ocean.”⁴

⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/29/briefing/hurricane-ian-storm-climate-change.html>

- ❖ A *Washington Post* headline warned, “climate change is rapidly fueling super hurricanes”, adding in the body of the article that “storms rated Category 4 or stronger ... have increased in number in recent decades”.⁵
- ❖ ABC News declared, “Here’s how climate change intensifies hurricanes.”⁶

As we saw in part one of this article, N.O.A.A. and (the science journal) *Nature* studies conclude the opposite of what these mainstream media are telling people. Further, we saw that the media “buried” those studies in silence. But that media makes a show of using (but *really* abusing) the N.O.A.A. data. *See, for example:*

- The *New York Times* saying that it is relying upon the same NOAA report that we showed in part 1, which concludes the opposite of what the media claims: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/29/briefing/hurricane-ian-storm-climate-change.html>

And similarly:

- ABC News claiming to rely on this NOAA report here: <https://abc7.com/heres-how-climate-change-intensifies-hurricanes/12277318/>

But before we look at where the media cut the data, let us also look at an example of what the mainstream media says about the frequency of ***all*** hurricanes:

- *The Financial Times* claimed in an alarmist headline: “hurricane frequency is on the rise.”⁷

Again, N.O.A.A. and the (science journal) *Nature* studies conclude the opposite of these media claims, “burying” those studies in silence and yet making a show of using (but *really* abusing) N.O.A.A. data.

⁵ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/09/29/ian-hurricane-rapid-intensification-climate/>

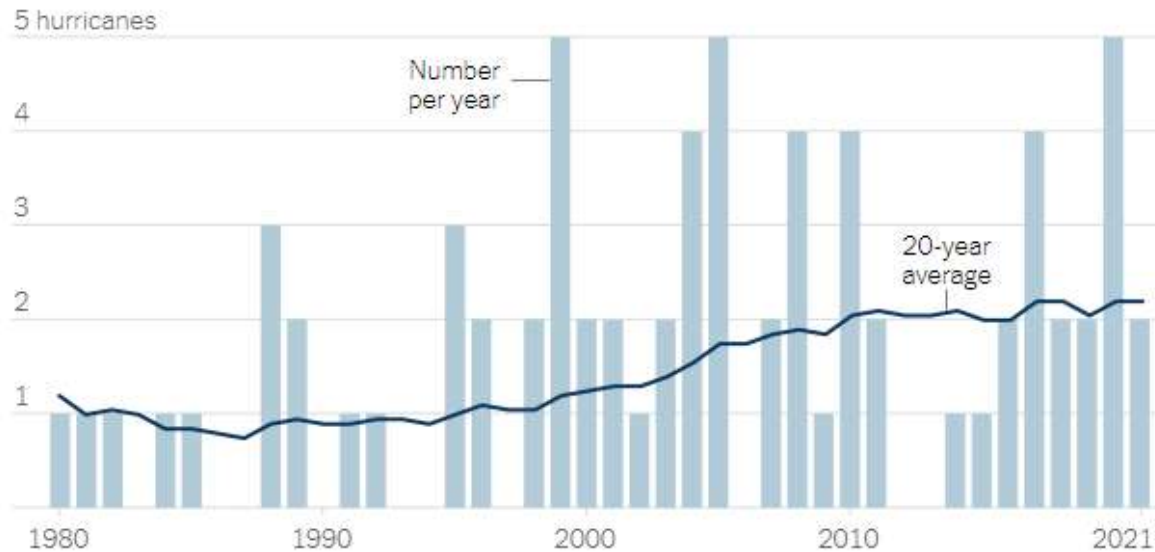
⁶ <https://abc7.com/heres-how-climate-change-intensifies-hurricanes/12277318/>

⁷ <https://www.ft.com/content/938e7b54-0174-4984-8e94-34dbd1bb012a>

The Leftists Deceptively Cut the Data at 1980.

Now let us look at where the *New York Times*⁸ article cut the data.

Category 4 and 5 Atlantic hurricanes since 1980



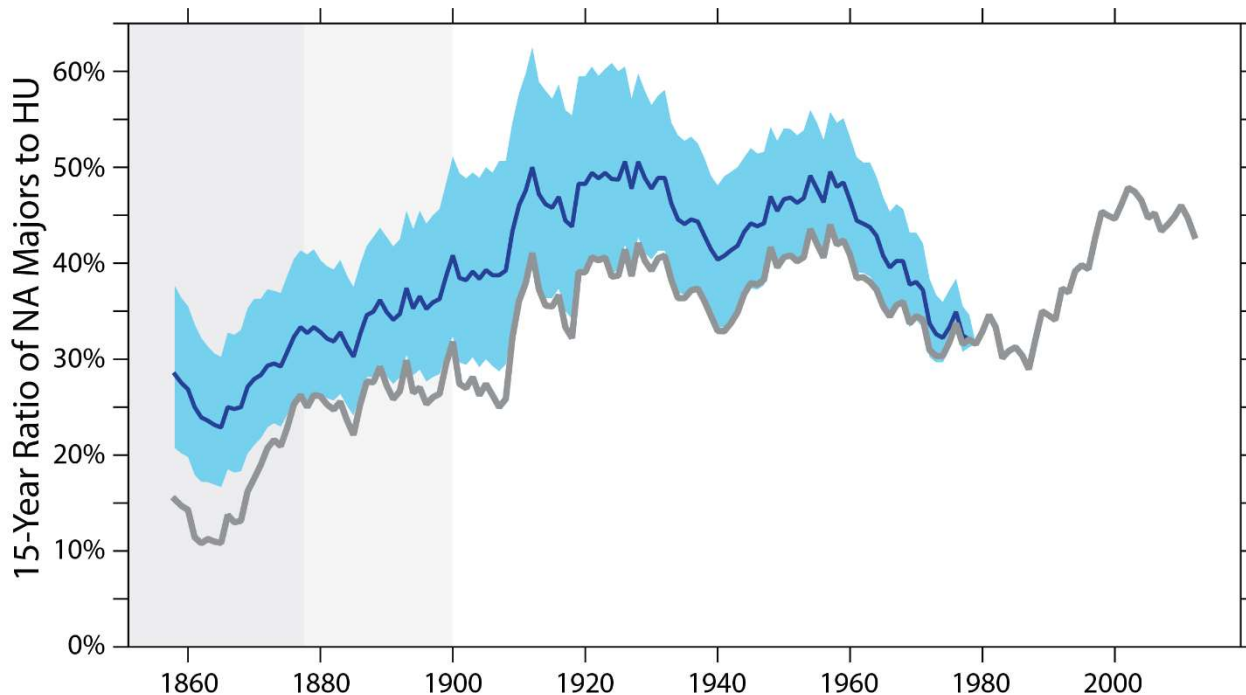
Source: NOAA • By The New York Times

Notice the above graph begins in 1980. Why didn't the media use the longer data set that is readily available? Because it would have shown the falsity of their claims.

Here (below), *e.g.*, is a N.O.A.A. graph⁹ showing the larger data set that the *New York Times* **could have used** (but did not use), going back 120 years further, to 1860:

⁸ Reproduced from *The New York Times* article entitled *Ian Moves North*, found here: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/29/briefing/hurricane-ian-storm-climate-change.html>

⁹ This graph beginning in 1860, is taken from the report by the *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory*, found here: <https://www.gfdl.noaa.gov/global-warming-and-hurricanes/> at figure 4, *ratio of Atlantic major hurricanes (Cat 3-5) to all hurricanes (Cat 1-5)*. The gray curve is prior to adjustment; blue curves include an adjustment for estimated missing storms. This graph and data were originally published in [Vecchi et al. 2021](#).



How different the data looks when we see it in context – when it is not cut deceptively, as the *New York Times* does! Reviewing the entire data set, we see it would be absurd to worry about the hurricane cycle upswing beginning in 1980.

As shown in the *Catholic Candle* articles which are linked to the introduction of part 1 of this present article, when the temperature cycle was on a significant cooling trend, the climate alarmists tried to scare the public about the cooling being permanent and that we were entering a permanent “new ice age”. Then, when the inevitable warming cycle began after that, they switched their scare tactics to “global warming” – all to promote increased government intrusion in people’s lives, a globalist power grab.

But notice that the current scare about “stronger and more frequent hurricanes” did not have a predecessor scare when the hurricane cycle was going in the opposite direction. The reason is obvious: people would not be afraid (in the years preceding roughly 1980) that climate change is causing a *reduction* in hurricanes. So, the leftists had to wait to use hurricanes as a scare tactic until hurricanes began to rise out of the 1980’s era “deep minimum”.

Conclusion of this Section about Mainstream Media Reporting

The mainstream media ignore the key hurricane data in order to falsely claim that hurricanes are increasing in number and severity because of human-caused climate change.

Climate change alarmism based on the increased number and severity of hurricanes is deceptive and false and is aimed at a globalist power grab because of the supposed need for the government to regulate everything to “save us” from disaster.

This is a further reminder that the mainstream media lie to us. They are not misguided bumblers who don’t succeed in their attempt to publish the truth. Rather they are leftist liars who use every opportunity to indoctrinate us to promote the false globalist narrative and ongoing power grab.¹⁰

The Increasing Cost of Hurricanes

Q. Is it true that hurricanes are becoming more expensive?

A. Yes, but not because of climate change.

There has been a dramatic increase of persons and property in “harm’s way” in hurricane-prone coastal areas because the great increase in property development of the Gulf and Atlantic coasts (as well as because of inflation) – all these circumstances are used by the leftists to make hurricanes appear worse than 100 years ago.

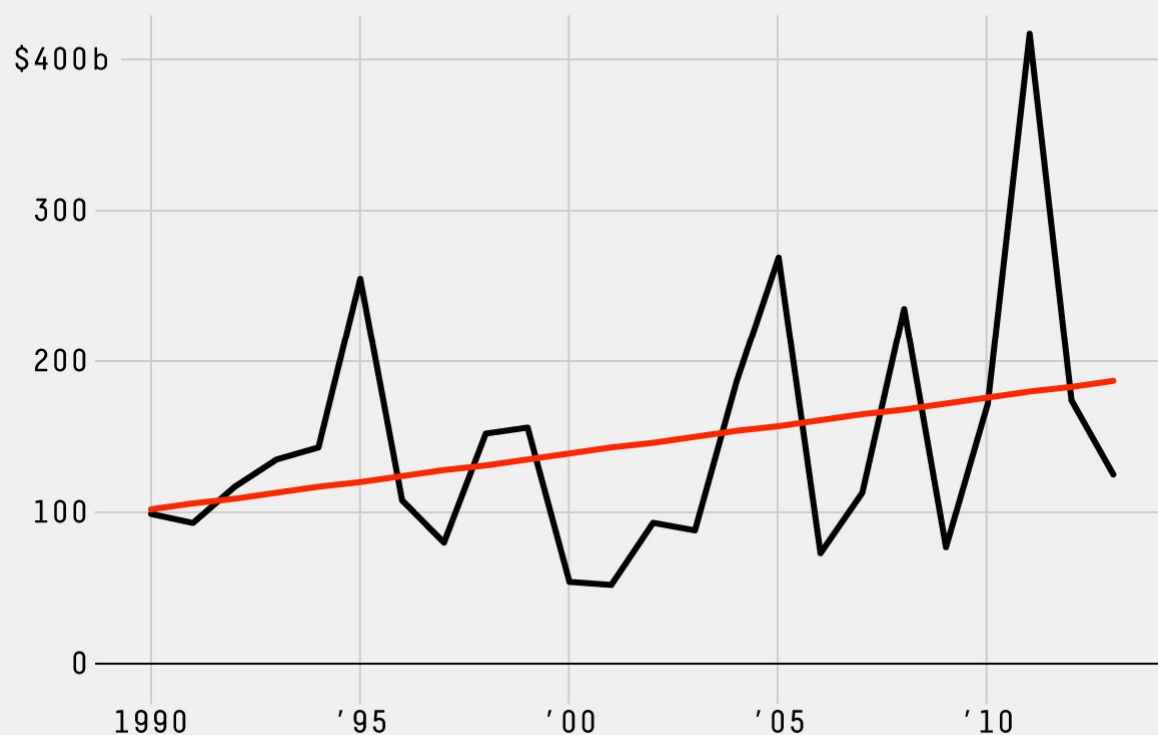
This is one more way for the climate scare-mongers to alarm people and promote their globalist power-grab agenda. They declare that the increasing cost of hurricanes – both the number and severity – show that climate crisis is a “fact”.

It is true that the cost of hurricanes is increasing, even when adjusted for inflation. See, *e.g.*, a graph (below) courtesy of Munich Re, a very large global property insurer with a huge loss database used for this graph.

¹⁰ For a further analysis of how the mainstream media and other leftists deceive us through data manipulation, read this article: *“Big Data” – A New Version of an Old Danger of Manipulation and Deception* found here: <https://catholiccandle.org/2021/12/11/h/>

Global Disaster Losses

In 2013 dollars



FIVETHIRTYEIGHT

SOURCE: MUNICH RE

This graph is available courtesy of Roger Pielke, Jr., in his article entitled: *Disasters Cost More Than Ever — But Not Because of Climate Change*, available here:

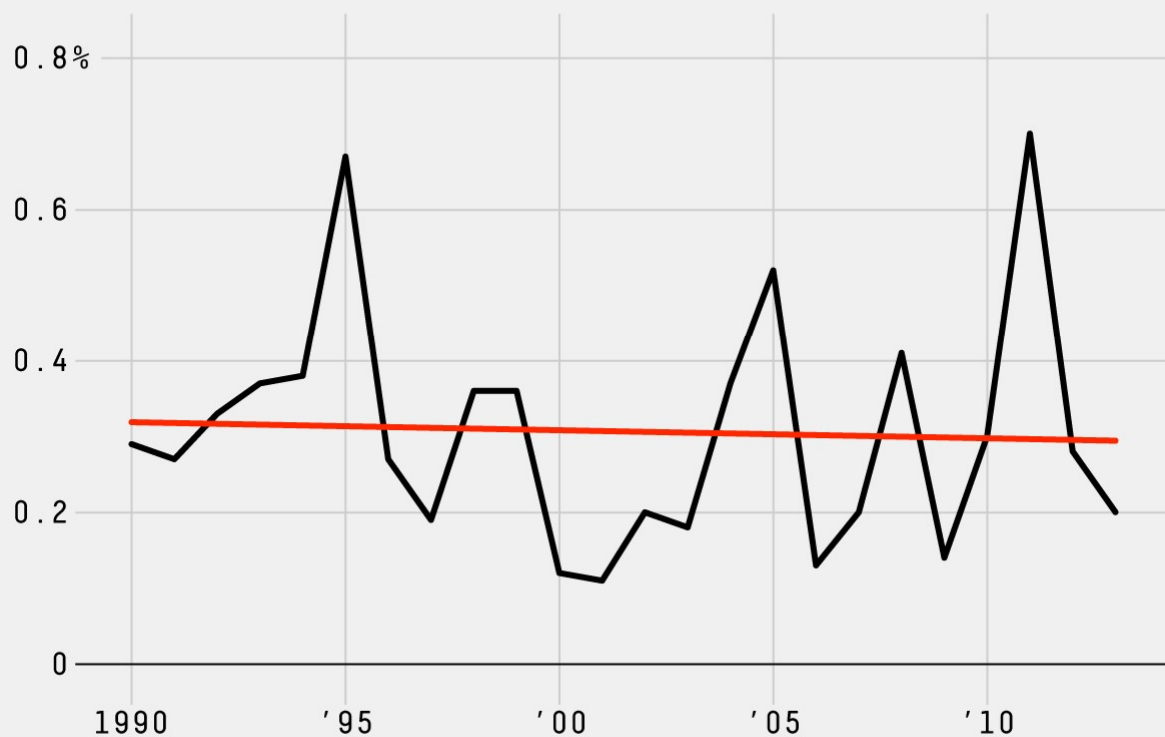
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/disasters-cost-more-than-ever-but-not-because-of-climate-change/>

Although in this graph (above) we see the increasing cost of natural disasters, ***that is only half of the picture***. In fact, the upward trend in the cost of natural disasters is because we are getting richer and have more goods and property which can be destroyed in a disaster. In other words, even adjusting for inflation, there is an ***increasing value of the property*** that is “in harm’s way”.

Look at the graph below, also courtesy of Munich Re. It shows that natural disasters do destroy a higher value of property now but that value is proportional to our increase in wealth. Owning more things means people have more things “in harm’s way” and available to be damaged.

Global Disaster Losses

Proportion of global GDP



FIVETHIRTYEIGHT

SOURCE: MUNICH RE, UNITED NATIONS

This graph is available courtesy of Roger Pielke, Jr., in his article entitled: *Disasters Cost More Than Ever — But Not Because of Climate Change*, available here:

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/disasters-cost-more-than-ever-but-not-because-of-climate-change/>

Taking greater wealth into account, the same level of storm frequency and severity does more harm. You can see this is common sense. If a person 100 years ago owned a dingy (row boat) docked on the Gulf Coast, he would be exposed to much less property damage potential than his grandson who keeps a large yacht in the same location during an equivalent storm.

It is especially striking how more people are moving into places which expose them to adverse natural occurrences (hurricanes, mudslides, *etc.*).

Consider how much more developed Miami Beach is today compared to a century ago. See below.

Miami Beach, Then and Now



Source: Roger Pielke, Jr., *The Climate Fix: What Scientists and Politicians Won't Tell You About Global Warming*, 171.

For this reason, if equal storms hit Miami Beach, Florida in 1925 and in 2017, the damage from the 2017 storm would be much greater because there are so many more people and so much more property “in harm’s way”.

Similarly, look at the Houston, Texas skyline in 1927 (below) and today (further below).



The George Fuermann Texas and Houston Collection / University of Houston

Circa 1927: A view of the downtown Houston skyline looking northeast from a point near Louisiana Street and Lamar Avenue. The Esperson Building is the tallest building seen in the photograph.

<https://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/houston/slideshow/Old-Houston-photos-159668.php>

Current picture of the Houston skyline:



Central Downtown Houston skyscrapers

<https://www.skylinescenes.com/products/downtown-houston-texas-v50010>

Because people are richer now than 100 years ago and because they (perhaps imprudently) place more valuable property at risk in attractive but hazardous locations, it is no wonder that a storm now would cause much more damage than an equal storm 100 years ago.

Leaving aside the upward trend (“correction”) from the “deep minimum” in the hurricane cycle which occurred in about the 1980s, there is no increase in the number and the severity of hurricanes; yet the same severity and number of hurricanes now often do more damage because there is more property “in harm’s way”.

In fact, the coastal urban areas are actually safer than ever, when computed as the number of persons killed by hurricanes, as a percentage of persons who are located in those hurricane-prone areas. Here is how one recent study explained this:

Abstract: ... Here, [*i.e.*, in this study] we report on impacts of global coastal storm surge events since the year 1900, based on a compilation of events and data on loss of life. We find that over the past, more than eight thousand people are killed and

1.5 million people are affected annually by storm surges [throughout the world]. The occurrence of very substantial loss of life (>10 000 persons) from single events has, however, decreased over time. Moreover, ***there is a consistent decrease in event mortality, measured by the fraction of exposed people that are killed, for all global regions, except South East Asia.*** Average mortality for storm surges is slightly higher than for river floods, but lower than for flash floods. We also find that for the same coastal surge water level, mortality has decreased over time. This indicates that risk reduction efforts have been successful, but need to be continued with projected climate change, increased rates of sea-level rise and urbanisation in coastal zones.¹¹

For example, Miami Beach had a population of 28,012 in 1940¹² and has a population of 80,671¹³ now. Because the city of Miami Beach has about three times as many people as it did 60 years ago, there are so many more people “in harm’s way” even though each person who is there is safer than he would have been in earlier decades.

Further, just as hurricane fatalities are not increasing as a percentage of the people who are living “in harm’s way”, likewise, the studies show that the amount of damage that hurricanes cause is not increasing when we take into account that people are bringing greater wealth into hurricane zones. Here is how one study explained this fact:

In recent years claims have been made in venues including the authoritative reports of the *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* and in testimony before the US Congress that economic losses from weather events have been increasing beyond that which can be explained by societal change, based on loss data from the reinsurance industry and aggregated since 1980 at the global level. Such claims

¹¹ *Global mortality from storm surges is decreasing*, by Laurens M Bouwer and Sebastian N Jonkman, Published 5 January 2018 • © 2018 The Author(s). Published by IOP Publishing Ltd. [Environmental Research Letters](https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/aa98a3), Volume 13, Number 1 Citation, Laurens M Bouwer and Sebastiaan N Jonkman, 2018 *Environ. Res. Lett.* 13 014008 DOI 10.1088/1748-9326/aa98a3. (Emphasis added and bracketed words added to show the context.) This study is available here:

➤ <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/aa98a3>

&

➤ <https://wattsupwiththat.com/2018/11/02/good-news-global-mortality-from-hurricane-storm-surges-is-decreasing/>

¹² Population data found here: *Webster’s 6th Collegiate Dictionary*, ©1940 in the *Pronouncing Gazetteer*, page 1118.

¹³ Population data found here: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/miamibeachcityflorida/POP060210>

imply a contradiction with a large set of peer-reviewed studies focused on regional losses, typically over a much longer time period, which concludes that loss trends are explained entirely by societal change. To address this implied mismatch, we disaggregate global losses from a widely utilized reinsurance dataset into regional components and compare this disaggregation directly to the findings from the literature at the regional scale, most of which reach back much further in time. We find that global losses increased at a rate of \$3.1 billion/year (2008 USD) from 1980–2008 and losses from North American, Asian, European, and Australian storms and floods account for 97% of the increase. In particular, North American storms, of which U.S. hurricane losses compose the bulk, account for 57% of global economic losses. Longer-term loss trends in these regions can be explained entirely by socioeconomic factors in each region such as increasing wealth, population growth, and increasing development in vulnerable areas. The remaining 3% of the global increase 1980 to 2008 is the result of losses for which regionally based studies have not yet been completed. ***On climate time scales, societal change is sufficient to explain the increasing costs of disasters at the global level and claims to the contrary are not supported by aggregate loss data from the reinsurance industry.***¹⁴

Here is the summary of a study where the researchers examined 106 years of hurricane data to compare the cost of hurricane losses, ***after adjusting them for inflation and for the amount of property “in harm’s way”***:

Abstract: After more than two decades of relatively little Atlantic hurricane activity, the past decade saw heightened hurricane activity and more than \$150 billion in damage in 2004 and 2005. This paper normalizes mainland U.S. hurricane damage from 1900–2005 to 2005 values using two methodologies. A normalization provides an estimate of the damage that would occur if storms from the past made landfall under another year’s societal conditions. Our methods use changes in inflation and wealth at the national level and changes in population and housing units at the coastal county level. Across both normalization methods, ***there is no remaining trend of increasing absolute damage in the data set***, which follows the lack of trends in landfall frequency or intensity observed over the twentieth century. The 1970s and 1980s were notable because of the extremely low amounts of damage compared to other decades. The decade 1996–2005 has the second most damage among the past 11 decades, with only the decade 1926–1935 surpassing its costs. Over the 106 years of record, the average annual normalized damage in the continental United States is about \$10 billion under both methods. The most damaging single storm is the 1926 Great Miami storm, with \$140–157 billion of normalized damage: the most damaging years are 1926 and 2005. Of the

¹⁴ Quoted from: *Reconciliation of Trends in Global and Regional Economic Losses from Weather Events: 1980–2008*, Shalini Mohleji and Roger Pielke, Jr., available here: <https://ascelibrary.org/doi/10.1061/%28ASCE%29NH.1527-6996.0000141>

total damage, about 85% is accounted for by the intense hurricanes Saffir-Simpson Categories 3, 4, and 5, yet these have comprised only 24% of the U.S. landfalling tropical cyclones.¹⁵

This last study predicts that hurricane damage will continue to trend upward because more and more people and property are moving into the hurricane-prone areas. Here is how the study concludes this:

Unless action is taken to address the growing concentration of people and properties in coastal areas where hurricanes strike, damage will increase, and by a great deal, as more and wealthier people increasingly inhabit these coastal locations.¹⁶

Conclusion of the Entire Article

We see that:

- The climate goes in cycles of various sizes from daily cycles to centuries-long cycles, with other cycles in between.
- Hurricanes go in cycles too – annual cycles and decades-long cycles. Perhaps hurricanes also follow multi-year cycles and multi-century cycles but we will leave those inquiries aside for now.
- NOAA and its studies ***conclude that there is no trend toward increasing numbers or severity of hurricanes***, although these conclusions are buried and not publicized.
- In about the 1980s, there was a “deep minimum” of hurricane activity, which the leftists use as the beginning of their data set to make the hurricane cycle’s returning to normalcy falsely appear (to the gullible) as an alarming upward trend.
- The leftist media and climate alarmists in the popular press falsely promote a supposed climate emergency to worry people and attempt to grab power and take

¹⁵ Quoted from: *Normalized Hurricane Damage in the United States: 1900–2005*, Roger A. Pielke, Jr.; Joel Gratz; Christopher W. Landsea; Douglas Collins; Mark A. Saunders; and Rade Musulin, DOI: 10.1061/ASCE1527-698820089:129. This study can be found here: http://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/admin/publication_files/resource-2476-2008.02.pdf

¹⁶ Quoted from: *Normalized Hurricane Damage in the United States: 1900–2005*, Roger A. Pielke, Jr.; Joel Gratz; Christopher W. Landsea; Douglas Collins; Mark A. Saunders; and Rade Musulin, DOI: 10.1061/ASCE1527-698820089:129. This study can be found here: http://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/admin/publication_files/resource-2476-2008.02.pdf

the people's freedom because this is "necessary" in order for mankind to survive.

- During the last hundred years, there has been a dramatic increase in people and property being located in hurricane-prone coastal areas. If we adjust for the large increase in people in "harm's way", these coastal areas have become much safer and there has been a dramatic decrease in the percentage of people killed in the areas where hurricanes strike. Likewise, if we adjust for inflation and for the increase in the value of property that people choose to bring into those areas, hurricanes destroy a decreasing percentage of the property which is exposed to storm hazards.
- Don't be deceived by the claim that man-caused climate change is causing an increase in the number and severity of hurricanes.

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