



Prayergram



Challenging Christians to Pray — April/May, 2013

America, a Nation Hanging in the Balance

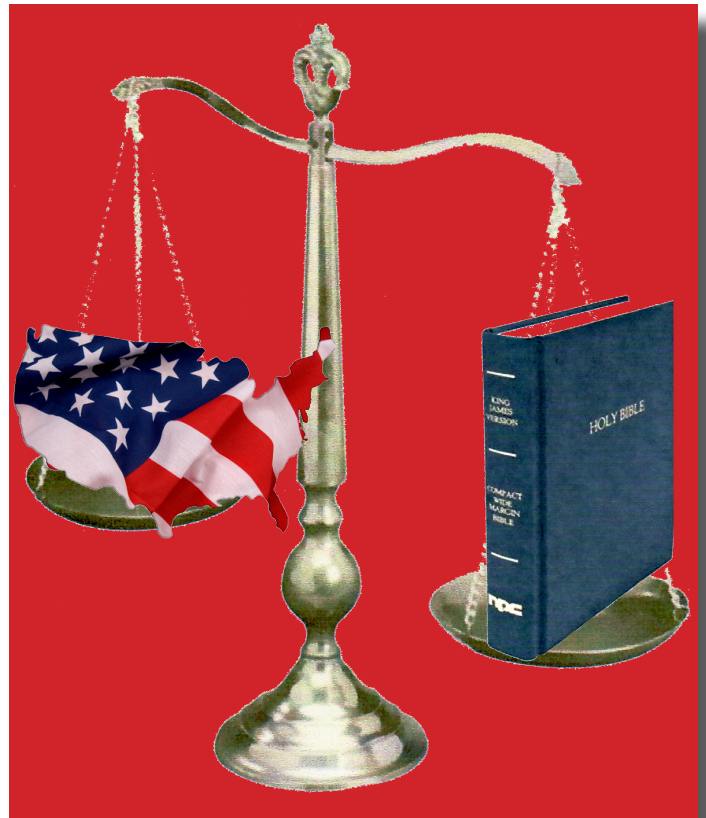
The hand writing is on the wall! The nation had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. What does it mean to you as a Christian? Does it seem at times that everything is squeezing in upon you? How do you react when you see the ongoing debacle of a great nation? What can you say and what can you do? Stop for a second, don't read any further, and let your mind wander through some of history's troubling periods. Take a deep breath and see where you are at this point in history. What images do you see? Are you being devoured by the ever-increasing cascade of pessimism on television night after night? It seems to me that we are moving from a phase of great moral outrage and spiritual fervor into a phase of deep cynicism and apathy.

After the last national election, it seems many are experiencing "election fatigue" and ready to throw in the towel. What role do we play as Christians in restoring America's spiritual heritage? America must place her faith in God, not in politicians no

matter how inventive, charismatic or proficient they may seem, not in technology or materialism, or fickle people; but the Light that never flickers. Ours is a faith that never surrenders, hope never dies, and joy never dissipates. The liberal media in our nation is eager and ready to celebrate the demise of God, not realizing that surrender is not in our Christian Creed. It's no exaggeration to say that the enemy is relentlessly attempting to "hood-wink" America's spiritual heritage. Sacred biblical principles are under attack and Christians are in a desperate fight for the souls of men, and Satan will stop at nothing. *Christ-a-phobia* is rampant in America and no wonder she is slipping into a moral abyss.

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America is no longer "One Nation under One God," it is many nations under many gods. Am I exaggerat-



ing? *Of Course not!* The Western world is doing everything in its power to repudiate its Judeo-Christian heritage. It is becoming increasingly hostile to Christ and His message. This is the most troubling situation of our time and it brings paganism into the forefront as the West is going through a "moral and spiritual identity crisis." Look at the nation of England and see what has happened to her. Someone has said that there is more professing atheists living in England now than any other time in her history. Let's never forget that it was England that once gave the world men like John and Charles Wesley, Whitefield, Hudson Taylor, William Carey, Oswald Chambers, Charles Spurgeon and many more. It seems that America is next in line for moral and spiritual collapse, and yet the Church in America is particularly oblivious to the changes that are taking place within her elaborate confinement.

The Church must stand in Christ and witness to the world, not the other way around. The Church has a unique message; a message of hope and love, faith and

purity, a message that changes human hearts and the moral temperament of society. The world has turned her back on Christ and His message. The Church must not compromise with the world;

America is increasingly becoming a secular nation; secularism leads to paganism, and pagans do not believe in morals. If you don't believe me, just turn on the television set and see what's being promoted. Our puritan forefathers built a strong nation with faith, tears and prayers, but now that nation is collapsing before our very eyes. Christians need to be very careful and should not fall into the secularist diatribe.

the Church must not fashion herself according to the ways of the world; she must stand alone if needs be. She has a powerful constitution unlike any other constitution; she must speak about sin's consequences, salvation and judgment. The historian and theologian, Harnack said, "The Church influenced the world when it was most unlike the world." The words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer come to mind, "The Church must leave the end to God as well as the possibility that history will continue." America is increasingly becoming a secular nation; secularism leads to paganism, and pagans do not believe in morals. If you don't believe me, just turn on the television set and see what's being promoted. Our puritan fore-

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Most Christians are not interested in reclaiming America's tattered spiritual tapestry. The world does its best to wear us down and hope at some point we'll throw up our hands and quit, and that's the strategy the enemy applies and let's not be fooled. Our nation was founded by men who believed in, and practiced the power of prayer. We owe a debt of gratitude to our godly forefathers who placed everything on the line in the building of a great nation. No one is truly conversant in the historical affairs of man can deny what happens when Christians unite themselves in prayer! When Christians pray together, work together, and cooperate together in the Spirit of Christ's love everything becomes possible. For years, we've placed our trust in the ability of man to save us, but man's plans have utterly failed. Now it's time for us to place ourselves once again in the hands of God, and say, "In God we trust."

It's no exaggeration to say that television has done more to destroy the moral and spiritual fabric of this nation than anything else. The so-called journalists of our day are always talking about Christians with disdain and contempt, and yet so many Christians watch them religiously and give them the benefit of the rating. I would say to you my brothers and sisters turn it off and do not be a participant in the ongoing saga of bashing Christians and Christianity. We are losing our moral compass as a nation; we are evolving into European socialism; our leaders are not visionaries or humble men and women of God, but race-baiters, rabble rousers, political cultists, narcissists, aristocrats, and looters of the treasury.

It's understandable that a person who lives outside of Christ does not see His holiness, sovereignty, his power and glory...but His children see it, honor it, and worship Him. The unbeliever will not see Jesus in that light because they have rejected the *Light*. But what bothers me is that those who claim to be Christians are behaving carelessly, callously without respect or reverence for His name, His Word, and His sovereignty. Many in this supposedly Christian nation are set on rebellion and mischief, forgetting the God of their fathers. As the prophet Jeremiah said, "Thy bruise is incurable, and thy word is grievous. There is none to plead thy cause, that thou mayest be bound up: thou hast no healing medicines... Why criest thou for thine affliction? Thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity: because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee" (Jeremiah 30:12-15).

It seems that carnal Christians are fascinated with cultural pollution; they shamelessly lift their eyes in delighted inquisitiveness. Sin attracts them but does not bother them; it raises their curiosity but does not offend them. Many have grown increasingly tolerant of accepting the pernicious views of the world when it comes to morality and biblical standards and salvation through the redemptive work of Christ on the Cross. For example, one preacher in the South was recently fired because he insisted that Christ alone was the way to salvation. This offended those in his church that wanted him to "leave room for other systems." In this sad juncture of moral and social collapse, America needs more than "snack-bar-sermons" hatched out of the brains of men who put polls above the Word of God. We do not follow a culture or system; we follow a Savior who bled and died on a cruel cross. Stand up, servants of God, let our message be that grand old message of the cross, not health-and-wealth, touch everything and cover nothing, New Age lectures.

According to a recent poll conducted by Lifeway research states: "23% of Baptists who believe eternal life found in religions other than Christianity and 8% of Baptists who believe that Jesus sinned." **Really?**

No wonder the pews are empty! May God help us! The forces of whitewashing within the church, however, are more subtle, and therefore, often more dangerous. As Christians, we should refuse to accept actions and words that harm society morally and socially. In the midst of a growing anti Christian sentiment, God's people must be courageous and willing to stand firm and remain rooted in a moral and spiritual permanence.

Tenacious spiritual quality is the result of inward strength and stamina. Where is the soul-passion of yester-years, the broken heart, the sleepless nights, the

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anguish and agony, the sobs and tears? My heart aches when I write these words as I witness the moral depravity of America and the coldness of God's people who only pay lip service to the power of "prevailing prayer."

What America needs at the moment is a "National Day of Repentance and Brokenness" because we've broken the heart of Jehovah God who never breaks our heart. Western civilization is crumbling morally and spiritually because it's blatant disregard to the Word of God. History tells us how a small group of believers with a vision of the risen Lord were able to topple hate; how they had the tenacity and courage to tear down the tides of evil that have plummeted multitudes into eternal separation from God, shake off the inertia of the past and usher in a better future—a future built upon love, faith and biblical morality.

I firmly believe that with the fervent and united prayers of God's people, we can reclaim and revitalize our tattered spiritual heritage. I salute the Christians who remain faithful to the idea that one day God will visit his people in mighty power that their posterity would sing His praises. Such a day can visit America again—a day when God's praying people stand unbowed and unmoved, proud of their Christian heritage, earnest in their sacred beliefs, empowered by the Holy Spirit that we can and must remain as God's positive people in a negative world. To go along with every wave of secularism would deny us our proper niche to forge ahead with the Christian ideals we so honor and cherish. May I remind you that those who hold pure biblical values are not antiquated or archaic thinkers—but they are reasonable and committed men and women who know how to walk in the power of the Spirit of God. Our Christian values are the bedrock of our nation.

If we're to leave a legacy of spiritual passion and godly heritage to our posterity, each of us must do our part. If we want a hope filled world, we are the force that can implement such hope in a negative world. People who experience the power of God daily aren't deterred by opposition or trials but are optimized and energized by it. When we do His will and walk in the power of the spirit, the mouths of critics, the legions of demons—for they will attack—will not prevail. This is the hour to blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a fast, and proclaim a day of humiliation and repentance. Do not falter. Do not be bamboozled by the world. "And let us not be weary in

well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9). The Word of God says, "If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small" (Proverbs 24:10).

The immortal words of Dr. William Barclay, the famous British theologian, are worth remembering: "Look for opportunities in every difficulty rather than difficulties in every opportunity. Don't look to the bigness of your need; look to the bigness of your God." It's well worth remembering the words of our 16th President of the United States, Lincoln who said, "My great concern is not whether God is on our side, my great concern is to be on God's side." **Are we on God's side?** If not, we've no hope as a nation. Our vision of the future is nurtured by a deep-seated faith in God that is bigger than any present political/social quagmire.

When we are infatuated with multi-culturalism and secularized thinking, we become invocators and social engineers, attacking everything that is sacred and wholesome.

Biblical precepts are no longer valued as a necessary law of meaningful spiritual existence. They are merely looked upon as an abstract and outmoded idea that existed in the minds of early Christians. May we stand true to God and to the highest and best! The early Christians discarded comfort in favor of faith. Remember, the God of truth, justice and mercy who guided Moses, Abraham, David, and Joseph, the prophets, the apostles and the saints of all ages will not forsake us. He is with us.

Contemporary changes are never reliable, and the nation that builds its foundation on the passing trends and fads is headed for disaster and disappointments for there are always new changes on the horizon. Evil carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction.

Unrighteousness and rebellion will wreck a nation. Evil will topple any people. The Word of God will prevail in this world no matter how powerful evil may seem at the moment. God's people do not crumble at the presence of evil. Christians are not cultist; we do not worship a President, Monarch or an Emperor; we worship the living God who holds infinity in the palm of His hand. Furthermore, we're loved by Him, irreplaceable in His sight and unique among His majestic creation.

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We are in the midst of a culture that dabbles in public paganism, organized atheism and hatred for Christianity. But be encouraged that "The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet" (Nahum 1:3).

There's a German proverb and it goes like this, "The main point is keeping the main point main." What's the main point for us Christians? It's the Cross of Christ, our Savior and Lord. There is no need for anyone to redefine Christianity. Christianity is what it is and it will stand the test of time! Christianity does not fluctuate like politics, economy, and societal evolution. I feel sorry for those who attempt to interpret the Bible to accommodate the changing time.

Today many in our society are offended at the mere mentioning of the name of Jesus, the Savior of the world. The name of Christ alienates the world, because the world prefers to be alienated from God. As followers of Christ we must take the offense of the Cross in stride. It should never frighten or weaken our faith, but it should rouse us to overcome whatever life may throw at us. The very presence of Christ pierces our heart, convicts our soul, exposes our motives, reveals our character, analyzes our hidden agenda, and brings us up against a brick wall where we have to make a decision either to follow Him, or not follow Him. Chances are, people who oppose Christianity are ridden with guilt, and it is the very reason why Christ came to free us from guilt and shame. The immortal words of Dr. Charles Malik are worth remembering, "Only the cross which shocked and condemned the world can reconcile it." The offense of the Cross continues and so our love and devotion for the Cross must continue. It is unthinkable, but true, that supposedly in Christian America, when we invoke the name of Christ, many are quiescent and squeamish. But on the other hand, we can speak about the great spirit, the mystical universe,



The Offense of the Cross

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pervading all things, a unified and unknown force of which we are all part of a conglomeration, a pool of generalized pantheistic spirituality to which we can all flow into a higher consciousness of 'nirvana,' then you'll command great admiration and respect. For example, I am an East Indian by birth and very familiar with Hinduism. I can gather a bunch of misguided and passive people and talk to them about the glory of Eastern religions, I am absolutely certain that I will be caricatured as a well-informed and open-minded individual who has a keen and perceptive understanding of the world in which I live.

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As C. S. Lewis put it succinctly, "The popular 'religion' excludes miracles because it excludes the 'living God' of Christianity and believes in a 'pantheistic god' who is removed and remote."

Christians don't have an option when it comes to the Cross of Christ that towers above every symbol on earth. Let's exalt and worship Him for He is our Savior, Lord and coming King!



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