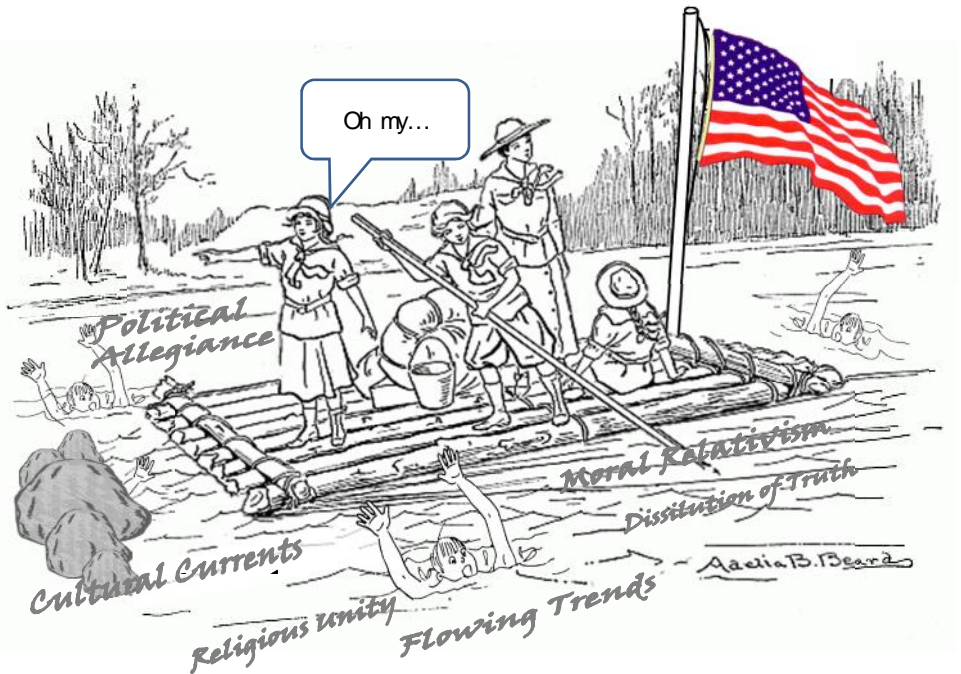


America Adrift:

A Culture in Crisis and the Challenges Before the Church

September-October 2014

[Rev. Jan2021]



Regaining God as our Source and Truth as our Standard

Christ E Free Church Pulpit Series
September-October 2014



*America Adrift:
Regaining God as our Source
and Truth as our Standard*

And I will punish her for the feast days of the Baals
when she burned offerings to them and adorned herself
with her ring and jewelry, and went after her lovers and
forgot me, declares the LORD . -Hosea 2:13

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INTRODUCTION

The church in America is suffering from a multitude of Crises. There is the crisis of Politics vs. Scripture; the crisis of wide spread Supernatural deception; the crisis of national destruction from the inside out and the top down. There is the crisis of politicians who promote their own demise; the crisis of failing to recognize and respond to the issues of our day, due to the attempt to be “a”political or party neutral. There is also the crisis of Christian superstars who have become fallen stars.

America is a nation adrift . And because we are a nation adrift, we are a culture in crisis. We have lost God as our Source and His holy Word as our Standard.

One of the greatest ills of our nation adrift is not knowing or remembering where it is we have drifted from. The second of greatest ills of our nation is not knowing or caring where we are drifting to. Whether ignorance or apathy, the end will be the same.

I believe the greatest danger, is the danger of the church drifting right along with the nation, unaware of the destruction that lies ahead and uncaring of the hope that is still available in Christ. There are always those who can look ahead, take note of the danger signs and attempt to warn others. Yet voices such as those, are often made the source and cause of a nation’s ills.

The challenges before the Church is what will we do? How will we address the direction our nation is flowing, as it is carried along by the cultural currents towards our eventual demise? Will the church be willing to be made a mockery of, as we attempt to become an anchor for a nation? Is this arrogance to think we could even tackle such a challenge?

Is there hope for America? If so, then how do we get there?

This is a booklet intended to cause us to read and pray as we go. It is not a feel-good read with a prophetic promise for hope, nor should this reflect a detest for America or a hope for destruction. On the contrary, it is an overarching invitation to the church to understand the times in which we live and a challenge to be willing to take the necessary steps to live and do what the church ought to do.



“Introduction: A Very Present Danger”

Text: Hebrews 2:1-3

September 7, 2014

Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, ***lest we drift*** away from it. --Hebrews 2:1-3

We sail within a vast sphere, ever drifting in uncertainty,
driven from end to end.

--Blaise Pascal

INTRODUCTION

“God bless America, Land that I love...”. Thankfully, we love and are concerned about our homeland! This is normal and right. And yet there are...concerns. And what about the church in America?

Mat. 16:18 (ESV) And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

What exactly is the promise of that text? What are we to expect?

What difference does disregarding the Bible as our source of Truth and practice, make in the lives of those who reject it? That is what we are dealing with in this series.

Heb. 2:1-3 Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, ***lest we drift*** away from it. (2) For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, (3) how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard,

“*It*” (v.1), is that which is set forth as foundational importance in the preceding chapter.

Study: *What is a Person to Believe?*

One of my favorite bumper stickers read: “*If you are not outraged, then you are not paying attention!*”

As Christians, perhaps if we are not profoundly personally concerned with the direction in which America is drifting, it might be that we are not truly aware of the times around us. And if that be so, we are most likely unaware of the very real danger of what might be just ahead.

Some issues of concern, over the life of our nation has been:

1) *Prayer and Bible removed* from School and other public assemblies. Are we entitled to those things? Maybe, maybe not. Have these things been historical freedoms enjoyed by this nation and viewed for a time, as part of the fabric of our nation? Basically yes.

2) *10 commandments removed* from courthouses. Oddly, the original source from which our nation’s moral laws were derived, are now being rejected and removed from public places and even courthouses. This is a clear indication of a nation adrift. And because it is adrift from these foundational principles, we are also a nation in crisis. And if you are not aware of this national crisis, *you are not paying attention!*

3) *There is a corrosion of the traditional Constitution.* Is our constitution necessary for the will of God to be accomplished in the lives of human beings? No. Is the Constitution the doctrinal foundation of a nation, whose beginning, was a beginning based on an agreed morality and common source for moral truth? Yes.

4) *Religious lives of our founding fathers* are not forgotten, but purposefully removed from history books. Why would this be advantageous for a nation? Would it be advantageous of Germany to forget about or erase the holocaust from their history books? If they did, it would not change history.

5) *Truth has been removed* from Scripture. Scripture or the Bible is discredited as the Word of God and given the level of moral literature of life lessons, but not Truth.

6) *The conscience is being removed* from a people. The inner sensitivity to truth, evil, goodness or moral correctness is dissipating.

7) Sin is removed from lifestyle preferences. Lusts, passions and personal preferences govern a nation's choices and direction.

8) Conviction is removed from many churches. This is a hard pill to swallow, but more and more churches are becoming more and more liberal in the view of Truth and the moral value of its guidance.

What do we expect will become of a nation
with no Biblical guidelines

With every year that goes by, we see more nails hammered into the coffin of a traditionally constitutional America. It seems America is being laid to rest, little by little, year after year, election after election. This is happening gradually, but not so subtly for those who are awake and paying attention.

Scripture commends the son's of Issachar as being "*men who had an understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.*"

(1 Chron. 12:32)

What will happen to the church in America? Is God obligated to preserve the "American Church"? He has not preserved the 7 churches in Revelation, which was then, what is now modern Turkey. I've been to the church building in Thessalonica and it is little more than an old

relic of a building and a tourist site that tour bus drivers point to as they drive by.

AMERICA - A NATION ADRIFT

If we have eyes to see it, we will notice that America is a nation adrift and we are a culture in crisis. We must take great care *to pay much closer attention* to what we have heard, **lest we drift** away from it^[Heb.2:1-3].

What does it mean to drift?

“Drift” refers to moving slowly, aimlessly, gradually, almost obliviously and perhaps even unintentionally from a previous place of stability or security; to carelessly pass or to slip away;

So what’s the danger in a nation Adrift?

Referring to Truth, Paul writes:

1Tim. 1:19 holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting <i>this</i> , some have made <u>shipwreck</u> of their faith,

“This”, being, Truth. The danger in a nation adrift is that there is the danger of the church being adrift right along with the nation. The danger is often, “as the nation goes, so goes the church.” The subtle cultural currents that can carry away a nation, can also carry away a church from its moorings and its purpose ***and*** its intended influence.

There is the danger of our faith becoming shipwrecked. There is the danger of the spiritual state of our nation, heading for certain destruction. There is the danger of the “*American church*” sinking right along with the nation.

Drifting From What?

What is it we are drifting *from*?

Heb. 2:1-3 Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, <u>lest we drift</u> away from it.

What is the “*it*”, we are in danger of drifting away from? It is referring back to the teaching of ch.1: ¹⁾The Son of God, ²⁾the Word of God ³⁾The Message of creation ⁴⁾and the Supremacy and Lordship Christ over all creation, especially angels.

In other words, there is a very *real* danger that the early church was drifting and likewise, it is a *present* danger that the American church is drifting away from the original meaning of the original Truth given by God.

God and the Bible have been our Source and Standard or our reference Point and our North Star for finding our way. Drift away from our Source and Standard and we lose all reference points and ultimately risk getting lost in the current of hopelessness and destruction. And as a Nation, I believe we are adrift from our historical Source of God and Standard of Scripture. As a nation, we are drifting away from God!

Drifting *Toward* What?

What are we drifting *toward*? Simply put, we are drifting toward utter decline and hopeless destruction. There is danger of a great *conflagration* from God.

Psa 11:3 ESV if the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

AMERICA - A CULTURE IN CRISIS

Because America is a nation adrift we are also a Culture in Crisis.

What is a Crisis?

Crisis is:

^{1.} a time of intense difficulty, trouble, or danger.

Synonyms: emergency, disaster, catastrophe, calamity; as in "the current economic crisis";

^{2.} a time when a difficult or important decision must be made; as in "*a crisis point of history*"

A Crisis occurs when the circumstances of the present or expectations for the future, reach a critical point, whereby, the person or persons affected, arrive at the point of panic; realizing the reality of the situation and responding at a level which is appropriate with the level of concern.

In America we are experiencing an increasing paganism, decreasing morality, and traditional religious convictions. And what is the role of the church? To Fight the good fight of faith! To Shine our light. To proclaim the gospel. To win the lost and make disciples. It is our role and challenge to keep the main thing, the main thing.

How did We Get Here?

We Drifted! Gradually and subtly we have drifted into a culture which is facing crisis, whether the culture is paying attention to it and realizes it or not.

What do we expect will become of
a nation with no clear Biblical guidelines?

PRAYER REMOVED FROM SCHOOLS

from June 2, 2012

The Blaze.com

It's now been 52 years since the U.S. Supreme Court first ruled that government-endorsed prayer in public schools is unconstitutional. The landmark decision, which continues to lay at the center of the nation's debate over the separation of church and state, forever changed the way that faith and religion are handled in classrooms.

The ongoing contention started when Steven Engel, a Jewish New Yorker, came together with other parents in 1958 to sue New York State over state-endorsed prayer that was being recited in schools. The Supreme Court inevitably sided with Engel and the decision was issued on June 25, 1962 — a day that lives in infamy in the minds of many religious individuals and free-speech advocates. *[end of article]*

THE DECLINE OF A NATION

Kerby Anderson, Probe Ministries 1991: Nations most often fall from

within, and this fall is usually due to a decline in the moral and spiritual values in the family. As families go, so goes a nation.

IN HIS BOOK *Our Dance Has Turned to Death*, Carl Wilson tracks the common pattern of family decline in ancient Greece with that of the decline of the Roman Empire. There are many parallels.

CARL F. H. HENRY, in his book *Twilight of a Great Civilization*, says: There is a new barbarism. This barbarism has embraced a new pagan mentality . . . not simply rejecting the legacy of the West, but embracing a new pagan mentality where there *is no fixed truth*. Today we live in a world where biblical absolutes are ignored, and unless we return to these biblical truths, our nation will continue to decline.

KERBY ANDERSON goes on to document this progression through 5 men who influence the world from the grave.

THE FIRST person is Charles Darwin (1809-1882). In 1859 he published *The Origin of Species* and later published *The Descent of Man*. His writings blurred the distinction between humans and animals since he taught that we are merely part of an evolutionary progression from lower forms of life. Darwinism, as it came to be called, not only affected the field of biology, but became the foundation for the fields of anthropology, sociology, and psychology.

THE SECOND person is Karl Marx (1818-1883). He and Friedrich Engels published the *Communist Manifesto* around 1850, and Marx devoted his life to writing about the demise of capitalism and coming of communism. He understood the importance of ideas. Marx once wrote: "Give me twenty-six lead soldiers and I will conquer the world." The twenty-six lead soldiers are the keys on a typewriter. The pervasive influence of communism in the world today is testimony to the truthfulness of his statement.

THE THIRD person is Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918). Although he may not be as well-known as the other two men mentioned, his influence was just as profound. He was a German Bible scholar whose theory on the dating of the Pentateuch completely transformed Old

Testament studies.

Wellhausen argued that the early books of the Bible were not put together by Moses but were gathered together many centuries later by several different men called redactors who wove various strands together. He and his disciples established an anti-supernatural approach to the scriptures which is influential in most denominational seminaries today.

THE FOURTH person is Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). He merely took the logical implications of what Darwin was doing in biology and applied them to what today is known as psychology and psychiatry. Freud argued that humans are basically autonomous and therefore do not need to know God. Instead, we need to know and understand ourselves since our problems stem from those secret things that have evolved in our lives from our past.

A FIFTH person is John Dewey (1859-1952). He is the founder of modern education and published his first work, *The School and Society*, in 1899. John Dewey was also one of the co-signers of the *Humanist Manifesto* in 1933.

Dewey, like Darwin and Freud, believed that humans are autonomous. They don't need to have an authority above them but can evolve their own system of education. Thus the very foundation of modern education is anti-supernatural.

“If the Foundations are destroyed, what will the Righteous do?”
(Ps.11:3)

You see, as a nation once we turn our backs on God, there is nowhere else to turn and nothing else to expect, than imminent decline and ultimate destruction. We have no reason to doubt and no person to blame. We have only a reality to face and perhaps a Question to ask.

WHAT IS THE CHALLENGE BEFORE THE CHURCH?

I believe the correct and most important question of all is **NOT**: what will happen to America? But the question we must consider is *what will*

happen to **the church** in America?

Anywhere in history, regardless of the state of the culture, the upheavals on the earth, the war in men's hearts or the atrocities against humanity - I believe the most relevant and consistent issue has been, "Are the people of God, doing the things that are required by God?" Are we living the lives He has called us to live? Is the Church of Jesus Christ doing what we are called to do and are we ready to lose the things that we as the American church hold dear, in order to stand strong in the faith, when the rest of the world is falling away.

Is The World Coming Apart?

From Franklin Graham's News Letter / Sept. 2014

Dear Friend, As you watch the news, do you feel as I do—that it seems the world is coming apart at the seams? There appears to be no end to the bad news. The killing of Christians by Muslims from Indonesia to Bangladesh to Pakistan. China tearing down church buildings. Christians tortured, beheaded, and crucified in Iraq, with villages burned and churches destroyed, and much the same in Syria.

As I read the news, I can't help but wonder if we are in the last hours before our Lord Jesus Christ returns to rescue His church and God pours out His wrath on the world for the rejection of His Son. I don't know if we have hours, days, months, or years—but as Christians, God calls us to take the truth of the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Our job is to warn sinners of the consequences of sin and show them that God is loving and gracious, willing to forgive if we come to Him in repentance and faith. We have to accept God's provision for our sins—the shedding of Christ's blood on the cross. [end of article]

Good Question: *Is the world coming apart?* I believe it certainly is. The world is coming apart, because it is not simply drifting away, it is falling away. The world and today America especially, is coming apart and is headed toward the decline of which the rest of the world is sliding into – A Timeless, Truthless, Christless and Hopeless end,

filling up with violence and storing up judgment for the end times to come.^[Rom.2:5]

Is there a way out? There is always a way out! The way out, however, is not always the path taken or most desired.

Get Back to the Basics

These are Foundations of the faith and ways that the Church can stand firm, while the rest of the world is falling away.

Rom 12:9-21 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. (10) Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. (11) Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. (12) Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. (13) Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. (14) Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. (15) Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. (16) Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. (17) Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. (18) If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. (19) Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." (20) To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." (21) Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Do what is right in God's eyes

Jdg 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

There was no Source or Standard as their reference point. I personally believe, that no matter what we do or how good the result may seem to us, if we are not doing what God wants us to do, in the manner in which He wants us to do it, then He is under no obligation to bless anyone, even His church.

1Chron. 12:32 ESV Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, 200 chiefs, and all their kinsmen under their command.

The sons of Issachar are commended for their insightful attention on their understanding of the times and the state of Israel and also on what Israel ought to do. These were men of wisdom, with a Source and Standard to which they could unashamedly direct their nation and therefore, avert disaster.

WHAT'S THE CHURCH TO DO?

Two words that come to my mind are Purity and Perseverance.

PURITY

The world must not be allowed to rule the heart of the church.

James 1:27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

The Church must not drift along with the culture!

PERSEVERANCE

Heb 10:23-27 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. (24) And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (26) For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, (27) but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.

We must persevere and not give up.

- 1) We must keep our assurance in our perspective
- 2) We must keep our diligence in our ministries.

As the nation and the world grows darker, the Church must shine brighter, with a clear and distinct proclaiming of the gospel and living a life of purity,

THIS LITTLE CHILD, Text and Music: Scott Wesley Brown

Who would have thought That long ago, so very far away
A little child would be born And in a manger laid

And who would have thought This little child
Was born the King of Kings The son of just a carpenter
But for whom the angels sing

And who would have thought That as He grew
And with other children played This child with whom they laughed
and sang Would die for them someday

And who would have thought This little child
Could make a blind man see Feed the hungry, made rich the poor,
And set the prisoner free

Oh who would have thought This little child
Was who the prophets said Would take away the sins of man
And rise up from the dead

Oh I believe, and I will always sing This little child, is the King
Oh I believe, and I will always sing This little child, He is the King of
kings!

Many years have come and gone Yet this world remains the same;
Empires have been built and fallen Only time has made a change

Nation against nation Brother against brother
Men so filled with hatred Still killing one another

And over half the world is starving
While our banner of decency is torn Debating over disarmament
Killing children before they're born

And fools who march to win the right To justify their sin

Every nation that has fallen Has fallen from within

Yet in the midst of this darkness There is a hope, a light that burns;
This little child, the King of Kings Someday will return

And who would have thought this little child Is who the prophets
said Will return to judge this world The living and dead

Oh can't you see That long ago, so very far away
This little child, our only hope was born a king that day
©1981 Sparrow Mucis/ASCAP

Q: How do you view our nation and the culture?

Q: How will we live for Christ and influence the Nation and culture around us?

This will be our focus of this Series.

<p>Luk 21:28 Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."</p>



Where has America drifted from?

(taken from “*Evidence of God In Country*”)

The Washington Monument

From the tallest structure in Washington a message of ‘Praise be to God’ goes forth. Engraved upon the aluminum capstone on the top of this 555 foot monument is *Laus Deo*. Inside the structure are carved tribute blocks with many Godly messages: **“Holiness to the Lord,” “Search the Scriptures,” “The memory of the just is blessed,”** and others.



The Capitol Building

All of the eight large paintings in the Rotunda present aspects of our Christian history including The Baptism of Pocahontas and Departure of the Pilgrims from Holland which depicts the Pilgrims observing a day of prayer and fasting.

“In God We Trust,” our national motto, is inscribed in letters of gold behind the speaker’s rostrum in the House Chamber. Also in this chamber, above the central Gallery door, is a marble relief of Moses, the greatest of 23 noted law-givers.



“The Crisis of Truth and Responsibility”

Text: 2 Timothy 4:1-4

September 14, 21, 2014

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

--2Timothy 4:3-4

You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.

--Abraham Lincoln

INTRODUCTION

America is a nation Adrift and because we are a nation adrift, we are a culture in crisis. As a nation, we have gradually lost our reference point.

But, the future of the Church is still hope-filled! Not because we are the *church in America*, but because we are the church and body of our Lord Jesus Christ!!

If we perceive this series as hopeless and discouraging, it may be due to having an inaccurate view of the Church. Church is not about the beauty of the building or the charisma of its leaders, nor of the comfort and appeal of the environment.

Church is all about fellowship in the Holy Spirit; Growing and maturing in the faith. It's about being purified and tested through

various trials and fighting the good fight of faith as we engage in spiritual warfare.

Its about being a difference making influence in our nation. That is always what the church has been about!

2Ti m.4:1-4 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: (2) preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. (3) For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, (4) and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

ILLUSTRATION

We have heard it countless times in the news. The Story of a young man getting into a fight, robbing a store or strung out on drugs and he kills another person. The young man is arrested. And family members and friends give their perspective on camera. “He’s innocent, my son would never do such a thing – He’s a good boy.” – only to learn later that the young man was indeed guilty of the crime. How does that happen?

But he’s a good boy! He would never
do something like that!”

At times like that, people respond by memory. “He’s a good boy – he would never do anything like that.” What they mean is, He *was* a good boy. *Earlier in his life*, he would never have done anything like that.

They describe a **memory** of a young man who was cute, kind and lovable as a youth. They respond by describing a young man that they **used** to know. They somehow, ignore the warning signs and all the evidence that points to the fact that the young man is not the same as he

once was. They simply don't want to accept the grievous facts or face the obvious truth.

I believe, we can also look at America like that. We often find ourselves pledging allegiance to a **memory**. We sing with tears in our eyes about a Country which was at one point we believe, blessed by God, because it was a nation based on God, in its earlier life.

We love America. We want to believe the best about our homeland. I pray for America, as you do. I fast for America as you do. I long for God to break through and bring Revival to our nation just as you do.

I have no doubt, we are all on the same page. But I also believe we must not ignore the obvious – that America is a Nation adrift and not the pure and cute little child it used to be. America is a Culture in crisis and we as the church, must be aware of it, just as the early church was aware of its own culture which was in constant crisis. And likewise just as the early church was given challenge after challenge, we must consider the challenges before the Church in America.

<p>1Chron. 12:32 ESV Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do,...</p>

We have to love America enough to acknowledge the reality of the direction she is drifting. And we must love her and the church IN America enough to understand our times; that is, the state of our culture, and face the situation before us, knowing what we ought to do. *This is the Challenge Before The Church.*

THE CRISIS OF TRUTH

As a culture in crisis, we are facing the crisis of truth or the dissolution of Truth. In America, as a nation, there is no Source of Absolute Truth and as a result, there is likewise no stable, consistent Standard of belief for action, or behavior.

What is the church to Do? What is to be our purpose in these times of crisis? What should be our position? What is it we should be proclaiming and promoting? --*Truth!*

Unfortunately, not only is there a crisis of Truth in our nation, there is a crisis of Truth in the Church.

CHRISTIAN POST CONTRIBUTOR July 16, 2011

Quoting Josh McDowell.

The percent of evangelical Christians who did not believe in absolute truth in 1994, was 62%. In 1999, it jumped to 78 percent. “You know what it is now?” (2011) asked McDowell. “One of the most staggering statistics in history of the church... **91 percent** said there is no absolute truth apart from myself.”

Natural Truth

Mankind has never been lacking for Truth from God. God has revealed natural truth or general revelation.

Rom. 1:18-21 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. (19) For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. (20) For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. (21) For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Romans 1 does not teach that if you believe there is a god being, who made the stars, that you are saved. It does however teach that a person can look at creation and have a sense or notion that there is a God, with power, and certain perceivable attributes and learn something of what He is like. This is referred to as *General or Natural Revelation*. As a result of this we will be held accountable to the Truth that is revealed to

us and what we did with that Truth.

Biblical Truth

God has also revealed Biblical Truth or specific revelation. In a word, Truth is intended to bring *Conviction*. Conviction, will in turn bring about 1 of 2 things. It will either bring a conversion from one way of thinking and living to another. Or it will bring about an “aversion”, which is an avoidance of any change, by ignoring or denying the Truth *and its conviction*.

God’s purpose is for Truth to bring about a conversion.

Psa 19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

But today more people find their “truth” on the internet, than in the Scriptures.

Jdg 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

The Bible is the historical written Truth of God in His Holy Word the Bible.

2Tim. 3:16-17 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, (17) that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

The Bible is inspired, infallible, and absolute Truth.

In America as a whole, and I include the Church of America in this, because this is what we are discovering from data coming from the churches in America. But in America as a whole, there is no longer a Source of absolute Truth and authority. As a result there is likewise no stable, consistent Standard of belief or action for behavior.

God’s Truth is all around us. It is inescapable!

This is why, when we dialogue with unbelievers, who disguise themselves as Christian - having taken on the label of “Christian”, but have rejected the Christian Source and Standard we must be alert. When we dialogue with these people about sinful lifestyle, they simply respond, “**Oh that’s just your interpretation.**” This is merely an unbeliever in Christian disguise. This is also an **AVERSION** to the Truth heard.

Or people may say, “**Well God didn’t mean that.**” That is often from those who may be genuine believers, yet prove themselves to be grossly ignorant of Biblical Truth, and hopelessly mired in their own personal sin. Therefore, they excuse their own sinful behavior by declaring, “God didn’t mean that”.

“**That was just the culture in Bible times**”. These are the reasons often given by Churches, who are already adrift from Biblical Truth. They have no other way of explaining their position or excusing their teachings than to discount Holy Scripture as cultural and adopting the philosophy that “we’ve now grown beyond that in our intellectual and spiritual depth”.

Those who hold these positions are personally experiencing the Crisis of Truth and Responsibility.

The Truth of God will bring about conviction, confession and repentance. This is the response of **Conversion**. Or it will bring about statements like: ¹⁾ “Oh that’s just your interpretation.” Or ²⁾ “Well God didn’t mean that.” Or ³⁾ “That was just the culture in Bible times.” - This is the response of **Aversion**., an outright denial or rejection of the Truth of God.

The Truth of God will bring about either a **conversion** or an **aversion**.
So we have Natural Truth, Biblical Truth and we also have...

National Truth

National Truth is a formal or remnant of Biblical Truth, not yet recognized as such or purged from our history or present practice. We

hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

– The Unanimous Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776

National Truth is in reference to a Nation or a People who have derived their laws of Government from Biblical Truth, and while not referencing it as such, reflect the morals, teachings and convictions of the Natural and Biblical Truth of God.

In some cases, as is the case in America, -- while the Source and Standard of Truth is rejected and discounted, nevertheless the residual moral values linger, and still reflect the Biblical Basis and Faith Foundation upon which they were originally decreed.

I believe we will see, the farther our Nation drifts, the greater the Crisis our culture will experience. The farther from the Source and Standard we drift, the more the traditional, residual, moral values will begin to dissipate, like an early morning mist on a fall day.

This is the Crisis of Truth.

THE CRISIS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Because of the Crisis of Truth, there is also the crisis of responsibility. Many believe there is no responsibility for their influence or choices, therefore there is no personal accountability to anyone for what they do.

Rejection of Source and Standard

Rejection and denial of Truth, provide a fertile field for excuses and abnegation of personal responsibility. With a crisis of Truth, we can't expect anything different!

1) **“Oh that’s just your interpretation.”** 2) **“Well God didn’t mean that.”** 3) **“That was just the culture in Bible times”**.

Once there is no truth, then it is reasonable to follow that there is no personal responsibility. Once Personal responsibility is out of the way,

conviction and personal conscience is totally removed. Once that occurs, there is no longer the nagging, inner voice telling us that something's just not right with our behavior.

A Non-Sensical Disregard

Without the Source and Standard, there is a non-sensical disregard even for personal well-being

Rom 1:21-32 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. (22) Claiming to be wise, they became fools, (23) and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. (24) Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, (25) because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. (26) For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; (27) and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. (28) And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. (29) They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, (30) slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, (31) foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. (32) **Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.**

This reflects a non-sensical disregard for personal well-being. Consider v.32) Like a man strung out of PCP, thinking he can walk out into speeding traffic and play “bumper cars” with a speeding 18 wheeler. The best you can hope for is total destruction. This is what is taking

place in the minds of those who disregard God, reject His Truth and do what is right in their own eyes.

This is not simply a drifting away from Truth, it is the falling away from truth or perhaps a running away and a purposeful rejection of historical and traditional truth.

This is a non-sensical disregard for their own personal well-being. And yet it is the effect of a person who rejects God as our Source and His truth as our Standard and pursues their sinful life, long enough.

When a person is no longer driven by self-preservation, then something is internally wrong?

In order to escape truth with its accompanying standards, and to negate personal responsibility with its accompanying personal accountability-there has to be a system developed, that allows for a perceived loophole or escape from the logical progression of traditional Truth and Consequences.

Jdg 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

When there is no absolute truth, only personal, subjective truth is left. Where there is a Source of known truth, there are also known Standards to abide by. Where there is a standard, there are recognized responsibilities to accompany that standard. Where there are recognized responsibilities, there must also be an accountability whereby that responsibility to the standard is adhered to and enforced for all who are under it.

So if a person, can eliminate the source of truth, they may also eliminate any identifiable standards associated with that truth. If they can eliminate identifiable standards, they also eliminate any perceived responsibilities which those standards would impose. And once the perceived responsibilities are removed, any accountable behavior

associated with such responsibilities are likewise removed. And everyone does what is right in their own eyes.^[Judges21:25]

It has been said that “a drunken man can live with his liquor; a beaten woman and live with her abuser; and a convicted felon can live with his sentence; but no man can live long with a guilty conscience.”

The guilty conscience is the battle between the image of God and the sin nature of man. It is the inner-most voice, that wields the utter-most power that will drive a person to change their ways or seek to destroy the Truth itself.

There is no escaping the human conscience. Conviction of sin will bring about a conversion or an aversion to the revealed Source and Standard.

THE CHALLENGES BEFORE THE CHURCH

What if we lost our “American Church” façade? Would we still choose to be the “Church”? How do we rate our church experience? What is it that causes us to choose one church over the other? How much will people take, before they go church hopping for something more attractive, more pleasing, more in line with what they would rather experience?

3 Assumptions we cannot afford to make

#1) We can no longer assume the “American Church” will always remain, the American Church.

Matthew 16:18 refers to the true believers in Christ and not the cultural format and not necessarily the cultural freedoms. The American Church presently enjoys freedom, affluence, social acceptance and even special tax free status.

We are allowed buildings and cultural influence. We have the perception of big with the appearance of successful. We like our Facilities, our comfortable seats and our heating and air conditioning.

We enhance our worship with power points presentations, sound systems, beautiful music and moving and motivating speakers.

But how many of these things would have to disappear, before we went looking elsewhere for another congregation? And what if all the congregations lost these amenities, then what would become of the local church?

My point is, the Church as referred to in Scripture is not necessarily synonymous with the American Church we experience today. What if the “*American Church*” as we see it, is already not necessarily the true Church of our Lord Jesus? And what if the wheels are already in motion to test the True church to determine what really is important to those who are on the inside and call themselves *the church*?

Rev 1:20 As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Rev 2:5 [Ephesus] Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand* from its place, unless you repent.

Or, “I will remove your *lampstand** or church.”

#2) We can no longer assume, ease and comfort are blessings from God, nor that intense life and death struggles are evidence of the lack of God’s blessings.

What if we began losing those things? What if we lost our Religious Rights? What if it became the cultural norm to experience Christian Discrimination? What if it were common practice for the Government to search and seize Christian property? What if the American Church was targeted for imprisonment? What if this was the “norm” in America? What if we were like the other 70% of Christians in the world? How long would the American church last or how would it change?

Rev 2:8-11 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: 'The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life. (9) "I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. (10) Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. (11) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.'

When referring to the Apostle Paul, the resurrected Christ said...

Act 9:16 For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."

I believe the church in America, has to begin to evaluate what it is that makes us the Church. And what if we began to lose the luxuries, and amenities that draw so many to the Church in America? If those things were stripped away, would we still be interested in what was left?

3) We can no longer assume a struggling church is a non-viable church. We must no longer view a large and seemingly thriving church as one which is necessarily blessed by God.

It is my belief that Satan does not go far out of his way to cause trouble, if he doesn't have to. The Devil's purpose is to oppose what God proposes.

Several years ago, *Experiencing God* books and seminars were popular in America. Henry Blackaby's philosophy and instruction to Christians was to look for places where God was at work, and go join it.

But that leaves struggling places and ministries out of our target. But if we can see Satan at work, as the result of God at work, then perhaps True Christians won't be so quick to hop from one church to another, leaving the struggling churches to go where spiritual life seems more easy and pleasant and attractive.

These are assumptions we can't afford to make.

Confronting the Crisis and Taking up the Challenge

The Church is in a spiritual battle. And sometimes Satan at work is more evident than God at work. But If Satan is at work, then it must be because God is at work.

Joh 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Satan wants to steal away, all that God wants to give. He wants to kill, that which God wants to bring life. He wants to destroy, all God wants to build up.

So when we see the devil at work, I believe it is because God is at work or preparing to work. Perhaps instead of looking for a good time to be had, more Christians should look for a good fight of faith to begin fighting against the prevailing darkness of Satan's tactics.

STEPS THE CHURCH MUST TAKE

How can the true Church in America stand firm, while the rest of the nation is falling away?

#1) Keep God's Truth as our own Truth. The Bible – the inspired, inerrant Word of God must remain our Standard. Keep the Church's source as our own personal Source, that is Jesus Christ, our Soul's source and joy.

Remember: 70% of the world lives under religious restrictions. America is drifting in that direction. And 91% of Evangelical America does not believe in Absolute Truth. Our Culture is in a state of crisis! *God's Truth must remain, the church's Truth!*

#2) Be Faithful to Christ and to His Church, even if we lose that which is safe and preferable and comfortable to us.

Rev.2:10-11 (10) Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. **Be faithful** unto

death, and I will give you the crown of life. (11) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **The one who conquers** will not be hurt by the second death.'

This is not merely a warning to the church of Smyrna, but I believe, to the Global Church in General.

#3) Do not lose our hope in Christ or our influence on our Culture.

Heb. 10:23-25 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. (24) And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near

“Hold on” – meaning don’t drift away from it; not sliding away or drifting down stream by cultural currents. Once we lose our Christian influence on our culture, we lose the reason we exist.

And an equally important influence we have on others is inside the church. We are to be “*encouraging one another*”. That implies, coming along side one another for support and encouragement and direction. We need one another to help each stay on course.

#4) Consider the Reality of being true followers of Jesus Christ.

2Cor. 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. (4) For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. (5) We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,

The Christian experience is a nasty battle. It always has been. It always will be. If people are only looking for a pleasant experience in the American Church, then they are looking for a false religion. What will we do when there are fewer “pleasant experiences” and fewer religious rights? What will we do when the Church in America begins to take on characteristics of the Church in China, South Sudan, Iraq, North Korea, Myanmar, and Laos?

In 70% of the world, the Christian experience is a nasty battle. The church in America, must resolve to stand firm in our faith, even while the rest of the world is falling away.

Eph. 6:10-13 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. (11) Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. (12) For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (13) Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done everything **to stand firm, (14) then stand firm....!**



Where has America drifted from? – *Evidence of God In Country—*

The White House

An inscription by the first president to inhabit the White House, John Adams, is cut into the marble facing of the State Dining Room fireplace.

It reads: “***I pray Heaven to Bestow the Best of Blessings on THIS HOUSE and on All that shall hereafter Inhabit it. May none but Honest and***

Wise Men ever rule under this Roof.”



National Archives

The Heritage of the Past of the Seed that Brings Forth the Harvest of the Future.” These words reflect the purpose of the Nation Archives – to hold in trust the permanently valuable records of the Federal government for the use of citizens and scholars alike.



*"This building holds in trust the records of our national life and symbolizes our **faith in the permanence of our national institutions.**"*

--Inscription on the east side of the National Archives Building in Washington, DC

“The Crisis of Morality and Conscience”

Text: Romans 12:15

September 28, 2014

They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts,
while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting
thoughts accuse or even excuse them.

-- Romans 12:15

All tyranny needs to gain a foothold is for people
of good conscience to remain silent.

--Edmund Burke

INTRODUCTION

America is a Nation Adrift. And because we are a Nation Adrift, we are a culture in Crisis.

Rom. 2:12-15 For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. (13) For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. (14) For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. (15) They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them

Imagine all GPS systems shutting down. Imagine all Google Maps, suddenly being disabled. Imagine radar and sonar, suddenly of no use.

Imagine thick fog covering the oceans so that no mariners could see the stars to navigate. Imagine all compasses becoming magnetized so as to give no reliable reading for which direction was North. Imagine all military guidance systems failing. Imagine every navigational system on the planet suddenly being rendered inoperable.

Imagine the sailors who would be lost at sea. Imagine the catastrophic confusion of flight plans, and airline safety.

Morally speaking, when our culture attempts to remove God's Truth, then all moral and spiritual navigational systems are shut down. When truth is removed, morality is removed. And when morality is removed, then moral conscience begins to fade away.

Phil Robertson: We're trying to infuse a little good into the American culture. Love God, love your neighbor, hunt ducks. Raise your kids, make them behave, love them. I don't see the down side to that.

And America certainly needs a little good infused into our culture!

THE CRISIS OF CONSCIENCE

“Conscience is an inner feeling or voice; a sense or impression, viewed as acting as a guide to the rightness or wrongness of one's behavior.”

When there is no Source of Truth and no Standard of belief or action, there will be no conviction of conscience. Conscience is *the Law of God upon the hearts of men*.

Without God, there is no Source and without our Source, there can be no Standard of Truth. What are we to do?

What do we know about The Conscience?

Conscience is an inner feeling, or sense or impression, acting as a guide to the rightness or wrongness of one's behavior. With no conscience, men do what is right in their own eyes. ^[Judg.21:25]

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE) defines conscience like this. *Conscience is the faculty of the mind, or inborn sense of right and wrong, by which we judge of the moral character of human conduct.*

1Tim. 1:18-19 This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, (19) holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith,

This inner sense of moral direction is crucial for maintaining a stable faith.

“A clear conscience is the sure sign of a bad memory.”

Mark Twain

A bad conscience has a very good memory. - *Author Unknown*

Conscience is what hurts when everything else feels so good.

-- *Author Unknown*

The Christian conscience is the result of the knowledge of God’s Truth and the Indwelling Holy Spirit. Conscience is common to all men. Like all our other faculties, it has been perverted by the Fall ^{[Jn.16:2], [Act 26:9; Rom 2:15]}. It is spoken of as “defiled”^[Tit 1:15], and “seared”^[1Ti 4:2].

When functioning properly, the conscience is somewhat *judicial* in nature. No sooner is a decision formed than there ensues a judgment favorable or adverse, a sentence of guilty or not guilty. Conscience has often been compared to a court of law, in which there are culprit, judge, witnesses and jury; but these are all in the subject's own mind or heart and is within a person.

The conscience is also *punitive*. In the individual's own breast are not only the figures of justice already mentioned, but the executioner as well; for, on the back of a sentence of condemnation or acquittal, there immediately follows the pain of a wounded or the satisfaction of an approving conscience; and of all human miseries or blisses, this is the most poignant. (ISBE)

It has been said that a drunken man can live with his liquor; a beaten woman and live with her abuser; and a convicted felon can live with his sentence; but no man can live long with a guilty conscience.

The guilty conscience is the battle between the image of God and the sin nature of man. It is the inner-most voice, that wields the utter-most power that will drive a person to change their ways or seek to erase the Truth itself.

Conviction is evidence of the
existence of a functioning conscience.

There is no escaping the human conscience. Conviction of sin will bring about a conversion or an aversion to the revealed Source of God and the Standard of His Holy, Eternal, Inerrant, indestructible Holy Word of Truth.

Issues of the Heart and Conscience

Consider these issues of the heart and a sensitive conscience:

Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden – Gen 3:8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. This was due to a guilty conscience.

Pharaoh, when he took Abraham's wife for a concubine -

<p>Gen 12:17-18 (17) But the LORD afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. (18) So Pharaoh called Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife?"</p>

This was the result of a sensitive conscience. What a shameful testimony it is, when the conscience of a pagan is more sensitive than that of a child of God.

Jacob, as he served Laban for 20 yrs , resisting the temptation to cheat him; even when he would never have known ([Gen. 31:39](#)). He had a

clean conscience toward Laban.

Joseph, when Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him-

Gen 39:7-9 And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me." (8) But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. (9) He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"

Daniel, in refusing to eat of the King's meat and wine ([Dan 1:8](#))

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who refused to bow down to the golden image, even if it meant being burned alive. (Dan.3:7-8) These men had clear, clean and sensitive consciences before God.

Hard and Calloused

Over time, however, hearts can become hardened and consciences can become calloused. A Culture can lose its conscience, if it loses its Standard.

A cultural conscience must have a cultural Standard. It is wrong to state that non-Christians or non-religious people cannot have a conscience or cannot live a moral life or evidence compassion.

They are certainly not saved and their moral goodness cannot save them, as it does not save us. But to imply that unbelievers cannot do "good" things is a gross misunderstanding of who we are as human beings.

The image of God though marred as it is, is still stamped upon every soul of every human being. The grace of God provides rain and harvest for the pagan farmer as well as for the Christian farmer. Earlier Christians referred to that as "prevenient" grace of God's *common* grace.

A nation is made up of the whole of its population. As the conscience of the masses go, so follows the conscience of the nation itself. But the farther away we drift from Truth, the more desensitized the conscience becomes.

Foolish hearts were darkened

Rom 1:21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

“The key to acquiring a calloused heart is repetition.”

– Author Unknown

These rejected God’s standard of Truth repeatedly. Rejection after rejection and sin upon sin. As a result, hearts were hardened and consciences faded. Their conscience was de-sensitized and numbed. This is what happens when our Source of God is rejected and the Standard of His word is discounted, ignored or attempted to be re-written.

Pharoah’s heart was hardened

Exo 8:19 Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

Repeatedly came plague, after plague, yet repeatedly Pharaoh refused to acknowledge the God of Creation – the God of Moses.

He rejected the word of God. His heart was hardened and His conscience faded. Ultimately the hardness of the human heart can only be repaired by the grace of God. (Walter A. Elwell)

This is the Crisis of Conscience.

THE CRISIS OF MORALITY

Sin and conscience have a cause and effect relationship. Ultimately the crisis of conscience or the inner sense of right and wrong leads to *The Crisis of Morality*

Crisis of Morality: Right from Wrong -- *Who's to Say?* Absolute Truth vs Moral Relativism – each man doing what is right in his own eyes and using Holy Scripture to substantiate their actions.^[Rom.1]

As the conscience fades, so fades the inner boundaries to our actions or the acting on lusts, desires, impulses and evil intent of the heart.

It was Mahatma Ghandi who once described the 7 Deadly Sins as:
“Wealth without work; Science without humanity; Knowledge without character; Politics without principle; Commerce without morality; Worship without sacrifice; Pleasure without *conscience*.”

Mahatma Gandhi

Though these were not stated as the traditional “7 deadly sins”, nevertheless, they were, as it was believed, those sins which overtake the human soul, from which all other sins originate.

Immorality on the loose

Lack of conscience opens the door to immorality on the loose! This may be so, because without Truth, there is no responsibility. Without responsibility there is no accountability. And without those three, there will be no conscience to violate or conviction to motivate.

It only takes One sin to be deadly.

Once conscience is seared, hardened and calloused by sin, a person's actions are not a problem with them. They may treat others unlovingly, and anger, pride and hatred is allowed to rule and reign and grow.

- Divorce – Sexual immorality
- Christians living together
- stealing and cheating
- demanding wages without working
- homosexual agenda,
- allowing gossiping, slander and hatred to rule in the same heart

God's Spirit of Holiness desires to dwell in.

Immorality is the symptom of the greater problem; that being, a conscience problem.

The Conscience has to Change

Whether of a person or a nation, a conscience has to change.

Its Source must become God. Its Standard must become the Truth from God. The conscience must become sensitized and the heart must be truly converted. Consider the need expressed in Psalm 19.

Psa 19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

And David realized this need in his own personal life.

Psa 51:6-10 Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. (7) Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. (8) Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. (9) Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. (10) Create in *me* a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

In essence he was praying for a sensitized conscience and a changed heart, both of which only God can accomplish.

THE CHALLENGE BEFORE THE CHURCH

1) We must Become Encouragers of the Brethren

Heb 10:23-27 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. (24) And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (26) For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, (27) but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.

Every Christian must become an encourager of the Brethren. People who say, “they don’t need the church”, think they evidence superiority and stability, while in reality they reveal their own ignorance and immaturity of spiritual matters. Every Christian needs the church! Every Christian must become an encourager of the Brethren. As

Christians, we can help those with a sensitive conscience to choose the right.

2) We must be Nurturing our own Pure Heart and Sensitive Conscience before God

Each of us need an understanding of sin. We need a Realistic understanding of the tendency of our own heart. We need to be confessing and repenting from sin regularly.^[1Jn.19]

We need to be submitting and surrendering to God; not something you may have done 30 yrs ago, but something you do every morning, while you are alone with God, before you are confronted with challenges, conflicts, temptations and trials of the day.

We must nurture a pure heart and sensitive conscience before God. It will take work, but it will offer eternal benefits.

3) We must Live as examples of purity before others

When the world has no Source or Standard; it is the church and every believer whose life of faith and morality and whose Truth of our Testimony must become a conscience that our culture and our nation can look to – and if they don't know – can see our lifestyle and beliefs and treatment of others and find that to be something they can look to, and perhaps follow and get back on course and going in the right direction.

The Church can be an influence and a beacon of light and hope and moral influence. We can become an anchor to keep others from drifting to their destruction.

The church of Jesus Christ must become people who understand the times and direction we are drifting and who know what we ought to do. We should know what we ought to do as a church, as well as what we ought to do as a nation.

But we cannot complain against the darkness of our nation, if we are not fully involved in addressing our nation's deepest need. Most of

what we are seeing are symptoms. What we see in the news, read in the papers, hear from our politicians are symptoms and not the cure.

The only cure is a converted heart and a transformed life. The only way a person can truly be changed from the inside out, is to hear the gospel of Christ, believe and be saved and receive a renewed conscience and heart.

Rev. Franklin Graham in the July-August edition of Decision magazine, the head of Samaritan's Purse and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, declared that "Heaven is not for cowards!" "Christians cannot ignore parts of God's Word because they are unpopular or cause division. Our commission is to proclaim Christ and all He stands for," wrote Graham.

"This is what the church's presence in the world is all about. We cannot sincerely proclaim the truth of God's love while ignoring what He hates, and God hates sin." Graham also stressed the need for "godly courage" and for Christians to speak out against abortion and homosexuality.

"We are soldiers in God's army, and we cannot stand down on biblical issues, out of fear of being labeled a homophobe or judge," wrote Graham. "We have a responsibility to speak on the moral issues, such as abortion and homosexuality. these are moral issues. This is a free country, you can do what you want to do, but I want you to know it's a sin against God," Graham asserted.

"Could we get our heads chopped off? We could, maybe one day. So what? Chop it off!"

What's the Church to do? Application:

* The church as a nation's conscience.

<p>1Jn 2:4-6 Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, (5) but whoever</p>

keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: (6) whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

Jesus was a Rock and an Anchor. He caused turbulence in the cultural currents. He provided a Standard of stability for those who were drifting.

The Church must do what we can and be what we are to prevent our nation from drifting.

1) The Church has to be like rocks in the water. Rocks tend to cause unsettling rapids in the currents. These rapids tend to make others feel unstable or unsure about their own journey. Rocks disrupt the drifting pattern of those not paying attention.

Things that float and drift don't present challenges to those who are drifting. But things that are stable and stationary in the path of things or people who are drifting – they present challenges that cannot be ignored by the culture.

The church needs to be like rocks in the cultural current to disrupt those drifting toward destruction.

2) The Church has to be an anchor in the flowing trends. I don't think it arrogant to say that *we* must be the conscience of a people. We are to display the Standard. We are to be the stabilizing influence in our communities and in our nation.

The Status Quo is no good. To drift along with the rest of the nation is not acceptable. The church must do all it can do, to stand firm, while the rest of the nation is falling away.

The church must be an anchor for a nation drifting toward destruction.

3) We are living Epistles

2Cor. 3:2-3 ESV You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all. (3) And you show

that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

The world should be able to look at us – our lifestyles and our behavior and our treatment and our practices – and see the Source of God in Christ, and the Standard of God’s Truth written in our hearts, and demonstrated in our daily living.

1Jn 5:19 We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

Our nation needs a conscience!

4) The Church Must be messengers.

The church must be messengers of the eternal gospel. It is the gospel and faith in Jesus Christ that can convert a heart, even the heart of a nation. I can happen. We must believe that!! And if the church is not the conscience of a nation adrift, then we are contributing to the cause of the crisis.

Question to consider: What influence am I, in this nation adrift and in this culture in crisis? Am I drifting along with everyone else or am I a source of hope for others?



Where has America drifted from? – *Evidence of God In Country—*

The Supreme Court

The ***Biblical foundation*** of American law is evidenced throughout this building. On the outside East Pediment is a marble relief of ***Moses*** holding tablets containing the ***Ten Commandments***. Engraved on the oak doors at the entrance of the Court Chamber are the Roman numerals I through X, and above the heads of the justices is a carved marble relief with a large stone table containing I through X (each set of numerals represents ancient law, that is the ***Ten Commandments***.)



Jefferson Memorial

The Thomas Jefferson Memorial, modeled after the Pantheon of Rome, is America's foremost memorial to our third president. Jefferson's famous words adorn the interior walls of his memorial.

On the panel of the northwest interior wall is an excerpt from "***A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom,***

1777", except for the last sentence which is taken from a letter on August 28, 1789, to James Madison.



“The Crisis of Religion and Unity”

Text: John 17:11, 21-22

October 5, 2014

Theme: Religion and Unity – Ecumenism- ecumenicalism

And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world,
and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name,
which you have given me, that ***they*** may be one,
even as we are one
—John 17:11

Associations are like mushrooms. Choose them wisely and they are a welcome topper on an otherwise bland dish. Choose them carelessly and their poison may be your undoing.

-Wisdom

INTRODUCTION

The Crisis of Religion and Unity; Why would religion and unity present a crisis? Shouldn't all that name the name of Christ be unified? Wouldn't *dis*-unity be the greater crisis?

America is a Nation Adrift. Because we are a Nation Adrift, we are a culture in Crisis. The Church must resist the drift, swim against the currents and remain anchored to Biblical Truth, specifically the truth of the gospel.

Ecumenicalism invites us to compromise
our most treasured convictions for the sake of unity.

Not long ago, a Christian minister said to me: “*We all need to put aside our differences and work together as brothers for the cause of Christ.*” I am always tempted to say to people like that, “*OK, just lay aside your deepest convictions and come over to my side of the theological fence.*” But I haven’t yet, because what they are suggesting is for everyone who disagrees with them, to lay aside their basic, core convictions and join them on their side of the issues.

Unity demands openness, acceptance and inclusion of those who hold different or lesser convictions than you do. Unity also requires compromise from one side or the other. When Christians are urged to join the ecumenical movement, be assured it is the Conservative Evangelical Church that is invited to lay their most important doctrines aside for the sake of unity and not the other way around.

THE CRISIS OF RELIGION AND UNITY

The crisis of unity sounds good, but threatens the message of the gospel and the ministry of the church. The call to “unity” invites us to join others in the drifting away from God as our Source and His Truth as our Standard.

Unity is Costly. Someone always sacrifices something for the sake of unity. Those who refuse to sacrifice are often viewed as divisive and the very cause of disunity within Christendom.

Jn. 17:11 And I am no longer in the world, but they **are** in the world, and I am coming to **you**. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which **you** have given me, that they may be **one**, even as we **are one**.

Jn. 17:21 that they may all be **one**, just as **you**, Father, **are** in me, and I in **you**, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that **you** have sent me.

Was Jesus *ecumenical*?

The word “one” used above means in Jesus’ context: 1) to be inseparable from one another in relationship with one another in Christ and in purpose. And 2) to be inseparable in our relationship with the Father, through Christ the Son.

The key question here is who is “they” that is referred to in these verses? Jesus is not referring to all religious people or all who label themselves “Christians” or even Evangelicals for that matter.

“They” are those who the Father had given to Jesus ^[Jn.17:11] and are 1) true believers in Jesus Christ and 2) devoted followers of Jesus Christ. These are Christians apart from works salvation or rituals which make effective the free gift of God’s grace.

Gal 1:6-9 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: (7) Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. (8) But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. (9) As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

If the Ecumenical people are correct, then Paul is a great big disappointment to Jesus. Because some who name the name of Christ and preach a revised version of the gospel, are to be dis-associated from fellowship and from Christian unity.

The Ecumenical Movement

As we take a look at the ecumenical movement, we see it is more like a push toward religious unity, at the cost of theological truth, accuracy and doctrine.

1) Unitarianism and **Universalism** – are lacking in theology but full of openness and tolerance, and acceptance of liberal ideas and beliefs.

2) CHRISLAM - ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

What is *Chrislam*? by Matt Slick [carm]

Chrislam is the attempt to combine the teachings and practices of Christianity and Islam. As a movement, it began in Nigeria in the 1980s with Shamsuddin Sada, a religious leader who was born a Muslim but became a Christian. He sought to teach the common themes between the two religions. Unfortunately, the movement has been spreading. In *Chrislam*, both the Bible and the Quran are recognized as inspired holy texts, and during worship services readings from both books are given. One of the premises of *Chrislam* is the God of Christianity and the God of Islam are the same with different manifestations.

Chrislam is a dangerous theological blending of both Christianity and Islam. There is no reconciling the differences between Christianity and Islam. Though it's possible for both groups to live in peace (peace which is taught by Christianity), Islam unfortunately is not a religion of peace but of dominance. Since it openly denies the essentials of the Christian faith, and since it also declares that it is the one true religion that must dominate the planet, we as Christians must be very wary of any combination of Christianity and Islam. This type of movement toward “unity” is unfortunately, another deception, and evidence that our culture is in a state of crisis.

3) World Council of Churches - The World Council of

Churches (WCC) is an inter-church organization founded in 1948. Its members today include most mainstream Protestant Christian churches. The largest Christian body, the Catholic Church, is not a member of the WCC, but has worked closely with the Council for more than three decades and sends observers to all major WCC conferences as well as to its Central Committee meetings and the Assemblies

"The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the scriptures, and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit." (World Council of Churches, “*about us*”)

That statement of faith sounds good doesn't it?

WCC, POSITION PAPER ON "BAPTISM, EUCHARIST AND MINISTRY"

BAPTISM

Baptism is the sign of new life through Jesus Christ. [Water baptism] unites the one baptized with Christ and with his people. Baptism is participation in Christ's death and resurrection; a washing away of sin; a new birth; an enlightenment by Christ; a re-clothing in Christ; a renewal by the Spirit; the experience of salvation from the flood; an exodus from bondage and a liberation into a new humanity in which barriers of division whether of sex or race or social status are transcended.

By baptism, Christians are immersed in the liberating death of Christ where their sins are buried, where the "old Adam" is crucified with Christ, and where the power of sin is broken. Thus those baptized are no longer slaves to sin, but free.

The New Testament underlines the ethical implications of baptism by representing it as an ablution which washes the body with pure water, a cleansing of the heart of all sin, and an act of justification. Thus those baptized are pardoned, cleansed and sanctified by Christ, and are given as part of their baptismal experience a new ethical orientation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

God bestows upon all baptized persons, the anointing and the promise of the Holy Spirit, marks them with a seal and implants in their hearts the first installment of their inheritance as sons and daughters of God. The Holy Spirit nurtures the life of faith in their hearts until the final deliverance when they will enter into its full possession, to the praise of the glory of God.

EUCCHARIST

The eucharist is essentially the sacrament of the gift which God makes to us in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Every Christian

receives this gift of salvation through communion in the body and blood of Christ. In accordance with Christ's promise, each baptized member of the body of Christ receives in the eucharist the assurance of the forgiveness of sins and the pledge of eternal life. [End of Position paper]

In other words, the WCC and all churches and organizations associated with the WCC, sign themselves over to what basically amounts to "sacramental" salvation, reflecting Roman Catholic theology and doctrine. This is hardly a place for any self-respecting protestant, conservative Christian or evangelical.

The Pressure

There is pressure from other typically conservative organizations (well-meaning I hope) which invite others like them to lay down their most cherished conviction on the altar of becoming unequally yoked. I believe that as Ecumenicalism grows in our culture, it is a sign that we are drifting and being carried away by cultural currents which will one day, if it hasn't already – will one day erase altogether – both the purpose of the church and the existence of the *local* church which upholds that perspective.

And what may one day happen? Other churches who have become liberal in their theology and ecumenical in their purpose, may one day begin to oppose and even persecute the "non-Ecumenical" churches as closed minded, proponents of *dis*-unity and are themselves, part of the problem of our society's ills.

Eventually those conservative Christians who do not join in the Ecumenical movement, will be perceived as the problem and that we are the source of *dis*-unity and the cause of religious divisions. The church Persecuting the Church. Doesn't seem possible, but it may come to that. In short, this is the Crisis of Religion and Unity in America and evidence that America and many of the "church" in America are drifting right along with the secular culture.

THE CRISIS OF BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING AND CONVICTION

Conviction cannot take place unless there is a Source and Standard from which that conviction flows. The crisis of conviction stems from a growing crisis of Biblical understanding, even among once, conservative, Bible-believing, gospel-proclaiming, sin-denouncing main-stream churches.

<p>2Timothy 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.</p>

Tolerance and Acceptance

Many mainline “Christian” Denominations – feel unity is more important than doctrine/truth. But when unity is sought between Christian groups, you can be sure it will be the conservative evangelicals who will be invited to lay aside their deepest convictions for the cause, and not the other way around.

It is the obligation of the Church, to ensure we are fervent students of God’s Word. The **warning** is that we are to seek to be approved by God for our handling of Scripture. The **danger** is that we may wind up ashamed before God, due to the manner in which careless Christians *mis-handle* God’s Holy Word of Truth.

And I would say this: Any Church Website that you cannot track down their doctrinal beliefs, should be viewed as suspicious and purposefully deceptive or non-specific on their beliefs. If a group refrains from adhering to any specific doctrinal statement, so as not to reject, offend or alienate any person or beliefs; they are in danger of being viewed as ecumenical in their position.

Pressure to unify and lay down our deepest convictions may even come from inside the “Christian” church.

Truth and Conviction

2Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, (17) that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

God, our Source, has given us His Truth, that is our Standard. Discount that and unity at all cost begins to sound quite noble to the secular unconverted mind. The Bible says there is danger of being unapproved and ashamed before God. Ecumenism says there is danger of being unapproved and ashamed before men. True *unity* has to include compromise. We have to decide whether God's perspective or the "unity" seeker's approval is most important.

THE CHALLENGE BEFORE THE CHURCH

How a person or a church views the gospel, will determine the basis for unity or *dis*-unity in fellowship.

The Watershed Issue of the Ages

The Church Must remain focused on the main thing. What is the gospel message and how is it appropriated to bring about eternal life? This is the watershed issue of the ages. Everything of spiritual importance, hinges on this!

The *message* of the Gospel must remain clear and Biblically accurate. The *Application* or appropriation of the message of the Gospel must be as exclusively presented throughout the Bible. This is the main thing and has been the watershed issue of the ages.

The gospel is the watershed issue of every group
and every generation

The Church must not become Unequally Yoked

As one believer must not be unequally yoked with an unbeliever, the true Church of Jesus Christ must take great care with whom it aligns itself. Not every group with the label “*evangelical*” is what it says.

2Cor. 6:14-17 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? (15) What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? (16) What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (17) Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you,

This doesn't sound very “unity” focused does it?

Jn.17:11 And I am no longer in the world, but they **are** in the world, and I am coming to **you**. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which **you** have given me, that they may be **one**, even as we **are one**.

Jn.17:21 that they may all be **one**, just as **you**, Father, **are** in me, and I in **you**, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that **you** have sent me.

Jn.17:22 The glory that **you** have given me I have given to them, that they may be **one** even as we **are one**,

NOTE: The Gospel of Jesus Christ: An Evangelical Celebration
www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/gospel-jesus-christ-evangelical-celebration/

The gospel is the watershed issue of the ages. It is the watershed issue of unity among all Christian groups. We must not simply stand up for the gospel, but *proclaim* the gospel.

1Cor. 15:3-5 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, (4) that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, (5) and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

Rom 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (17) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

How do we appropriate that Gospel Message? What must we do to be saved?

Act 16:31 And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

The gospel is the power of God to bring about eternal salvation, life transformation and culture re-direction. The gospel is the answer for a nation adrift and a culture in crisis!

It is the challenge before the church to ensure the purity and intent of the gospel at all costs. Compromise in this, and the disapproval of God is inevitable!



Where has America drifted from? – *Evidence of God In Country—*

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

Arlington National Cemetery

The Inscription reads:

“Here rests in honored glory
an American soldier, ***known but to God.***”



Union Station, Washington DC



On the front facade of Union Station three Scripture verses are engraved including, ***“Thou has put all things under his feet”, “The truth shall make you free.”*** And ***“The desert shall rejoice and blossom like the rose.”***

Lincoln Memorial

As an enduring symbol of freedom, the Lincoln Memorial attracts anyone who seeks inspiration and hope. Lincoln’s words on his memorial exclaim ***“that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom.”***



US House of Representatives

In the words of the U.S. House of Representatives in 1854: ***“The great vital element in our system is the belief of our people in the pure doctrines and divine truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”***

“The Crisis of Fighting and Standing”

Text: Ephesians 6

October 12, 2014

Theme: Spiritual Warfare

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places
--Ephesians 6:12

Great Battles make for great history, regardless of who wins or loses. Nevertheless, don't be satisfied with just a place in the history books. If you plan on fighting, plan on fighting to win!
-from THE WARRIOR

This crisis is a focus of a crisis within the church itself.

INTRODUCTION

Rev 12:7-9 Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, (8) but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. (9) And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world--he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

I believe there is a crisis in the church today, regarding fighting the good fight of faith and standing firm in the faith. We have to understand that our spiritual life is just as real as our physical life.

I can remember a big controversy going on in the Southern Baptist Church where I grew up. It was on the topic of Spiritual warfare. I remember people upset that our preacher was leading the Church to be a Charismatic church because he was preaching on demons and things like *spiritual warfare* too much.

If we believe in God, we certainly have to believe in the Devil. If we believe in heaven, we certainly have to believe in hell. If we believe in angels, we certainly have to believe in demons. All this is clearly taught in the Bible, but not accepted by all. This is part of the Crisis in the Church regarding standing firm in the faith and Fighting the good fight of faith.

As Christians, we are often guilty of fighting the symptoms rather than the problem itself. We may be upset at a person, circumstance or event and out of anger or frustration, attempt to address the problem in the physical realm. This is part of our problem and contributes to the crisis.

Today we focus on the Spiritual realm.

AN UNOBSERVABLE REALITY

In fighting the good fight of faith, we must realize that the spiritual realm is an unobservable reality. There is a spirit world around us and yet it is, for the most part unobservable. We are reminded that *Faith is the assurance of this hoped for the evidence of things, **not seen**.* ^[Heb.11:1] And that *We walk by faith **not by sight*** ^[2 Cor.5:7]

The reality of our faith and the spiritual realm are typically, unobservable.

Spiritual Beings

We have to consider the reality of spiritual beings. Spirit beings are made up of angels, arch angels, powers, thrones, principalities, dominions, messengers, ministers, good and evil spirit beings, demons

and unclean spirits, all too which are typically unseen and unobservable, but not always.

Gen 18:1-2 And the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. (2) He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, **three men were** standing in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth.

Then in chapter 29, it identifies these “men” as spiritual beings.

Then there is the account of Elisha and his servant.

2Ki 6:15-17 When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. And the servant said, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" (16) He said, "Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." (17) Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see." So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he **saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around** Elisha.

Heb 13:1-2 Let brotherly love continue. (2) Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have **entertained angels unawares**.

Spiritual beings are a reality. They are all around us, though we generally do not see. Nevertheless the spiritual realm which we don't see, is just as real as the physical realm which we do see.

Spiritual Powers

Just as spiritual beings are real, so is the reality of spiritual powers.

1) We see their Creation and Purpose

The creation of Lucifer / Satan

Eze 28:11-18 Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me: (12)Thus says the Lord GOD: "You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. (13) You were in Eden, the garden of

God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. (14) You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. (15) You were blameless in your ways **from the day you were created**, till unrighteousness was found in you.

Satan and all created beings, were created by God and with a purpose. One thing Satan has in common with each of us as the *sons of earth*, is that both we and Satan have a common Creator. Satan is a created being. He is an angel – a fallen angel, but an angel. He is not a god of some kind. He has not taken control away from God in any way. The only power and purpose he has is what God has given to him, nothing more and nothing less. Satan was created by God and He is submitted to God. ^[Job ch.1 & 2]

Col. 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be **thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers**: all things were created by him, and for him:

Even Spiritual powers and beings are Created for a purpose. God's purpose cannot be thwarted by fallen angels or demons.

*The spiritual, which is unseen, is just as real and as literal
as the physical which is seen.*

Gods Purpose for certain angels

Some angels are what we call, *Guardian Angels*.

Luk 4:10 for it is written, "'He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,'

Heb 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

Many, many times, I have prayed for our boys, as they were growing up. And many times I have prayed Hebrews 1:14 over them. *Lord, please protect our boys with your presence and with the power of your holy name. Please send your angels “which are sent forth to minister unto those who shall inherit eternal life.” “Send them to watch over and guard our boys, carrying out Your perfect will in their personal lives.”*

As one preacher said, “this is why we should never drive faster than our Guardian Angel can fly.” ; ^)

We Know of Their Fall and Defeat

Satan has fallen

Luk 10:18 And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

Rev 12:4 His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it.

Satan together with 1/3 of the angels rebelled against God, were cast out of heaven and are now at war with heaven. And Romans 8, evidences the limited of power of Satan and his army, while still under the ultimate Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Rom 8:38-39 (38) For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, **nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers,** nor things present, nor things to come, (39) Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And Colossians tells us of the defeat of the powers of darkness by Christ and the kingdom of light. Some state the war between heaven and hell and between God and Satan was won at the cross. While it was won, it has not ended. Practically speaking, we are at war every day. We are still in the cross hairs of the devil's sights. He is still at work, seeking whom he may devour,^[1 Pet.5:8] and killing, stealing and

destroying, all that God desires to bring to life.^[Jn.10:10] He fights and opposes God and His purposes on every front.

Col. 2:13-15 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; (14) Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; (15) And having **spoiled principalities and powers**, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

1Pet. 3:22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

Spiritual Places

The reality of spiritual places is also evident in Scripture. I'd like to encourage you to read the book of Ephesians all the way through in a couple of days. Read it with the focus of spiritual warfare and see how many times something is mentioned pertaining to the spiritual realm, spiritual powers or spiritual unseen places.

Heavenly Places

Eph.1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the **heavenly places**,

Eph.1:20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the **heavenly places**,

Eph.2:6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the **heavenly places** in Christ Jesus,

Eph.3:10 so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the **heavenly places**.

Eph.6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the **heavenly places**.

So we see the reality of spiritual beings, the reality of spiritual powers, the reality of spiritual places and now...the reality of spiritual kingdoms.

Spiritual Kingdoms

These aren't just vacant lots we're talking about. These kingdoms are domains, where the spirit beings, exert their spiritual powers over their subjects.

1) Kingdoms of this world

Revelation 11:15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of Our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

2) Kingdoms of God, Christ and Heaven

Revelation 11:15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of Our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

Mat 3:2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Then Jesus says, "*the kingdom of heaven is like...*"

Joh 18:36 Jesus answered, "My **kingdom** is **not** of this world. If my **kingdom** were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might **not** be delivered over to the Jews. But my **kingdom** is **not** from the world."

Rom. 14:17 For the **kingdom** of God is **not** a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

1Cor. 4:20 For the **kingdom** of God does **not** consist in talk but in power.

In other words, the spiritual Kingdom of God does not just refer to a physical earthly kingdom, but an eternal, spiritual, presently unseen kingdom both of power and of righteousness.

3) the Kingdom of Satan himself

Luk 11:18 And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul.

Rev 16:10 The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in anguish

Col 1:13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son

And all these kingdoms are at war!

The question may be asked: "Can 2 kingdoms co-exist? We may answer that they can co-exist, but that does not mean they will co-exist in harmony. We are still talking about God and Satan, good and evil.

AN UNDENIABLE REALITY

Our spiritual warfare is an undeniable reality. Spiritual warfare is not a Charismatic term, but rather a very Biblical concept. Spiritual Warfare is a term which references the conflict between heaven and hell, between God and Satan and between the new person we are in Christ and the old sinful human nature which still resides within us.

Rev.12:7 Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back,

Rev.12:17 Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. ...

Rev.13:7 Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,

Job 1:6-8 (ch.2) Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. (7) The LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." (8) And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like

him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?"

Not a Physical Battle

Spiritual Warfare is not a physical battle against physical or human elements. Our battle is between God and His soldier angels; between Satan and his soldier demons or fallen angels and us, the church. And the crisis of standing firm in the faith and fighting the good fight of faith exists because we often wind up fighting spiritual battles in the physical realm.

Eph. 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against **principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.**

2Cor. 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not **waging war** according to the flesh. (4) For the weapons of our **warfare** are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. (5) We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,

“Walk in the flesh” refers to living an earthly life and “not waging war according to the flesh” refers to not fighting our spiritual battles with physical means. Some may wonder, “what are you getting at?” Satan tempts and tricks us into fighting our battles in the physical realm, rather than the Spiritual realm. The physical realm is what we can see, hear and feel. The spiritual realm is that which we generally, cannot see or hear or perceive with our physical senses. Yet, it is the physical realm in which we most often respond.

Once we are at war with one another
the devil has already rendered us powerless

What tends to happen is that whatever we see and hear, is what we tend to respond to. People are physical. Circumstances present themselves as physical events which affect us physically. And when that happens we often respond to what we can see or perceive with our physical

senses. We respond to what we hear people say to us. We often treat people, in the manner in which they treated us.

When that happens, we are not fighting with the weapons of warfare which God has provided for us^[2Cor.10:3]. Instead we are fighting in the realm in which the Devil is tempting us to respond. People, relationships, spoken words, hurt feelings and actions taken. Satan tricks us into thinking we must respond in the physical real, which we believe, will have the most impact.

Therefore when we fight the devil's battle with fleshly, carnal, physical means, we are rendered powerless. Because our power is not in our physical weapons, but with the spiritual weapons. In fact that way of fighting for the faith actually advances the kingdom of the enemy.

Eph.6, reminds us that we are not fighting against people or anything of this earthly realm. What we are fighting against are the spiritual beings, powers in spiritual places that Satan has sent to us.

Spiritual Battles

God has given us Spiritual Power for Spiritual Battles in the Spiritual realm . The battle and our victory in that battle, rests in our proper Biblical understanding of the source of our battle, that is the enemy and the means with which we do battle, that is our spiritual warfare.

The Government is not our enemy. Our president is not our enemy. Your wife or husband or children or parents or boss or employees are not the enemy. It is the power behind them or the one using those physical elements, with which we are at war.

People who gossip and slander only advance the kingdom of Satan. Arguing and fighting is not fighting a spiritual battle. Worry is not a spiritual weapon of our spiritual battle. People who hate others and hold grudges, only advance the kingdom and cause of Satan. Those who People who call names and get revenge only advance the kingdom and work of Satan, because those are earthly, physical and fleshly ways of

fighting. It is through these worldly and physical means that Satan gains victory in our lives.

2Tim. 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

THE REALITY OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

The Challenge Before the Church is that spiritual warfare is a reality of true spiritual life. Spiritual Warfare is the fight of one kingdom and its subjects against another kingdom and its subjects.

2Cor 5:7 ...for we walk by faith, not by sight.

Col 1:12-14 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: (13) Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the **kingdom** of his dear Son: (14) In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

2Cor. 10:5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,

Accurate Biblical Understanding re: who we are, what is going on, and how we must fight the good fight of faith.

Eph 4:27 and give no opportunity to the devil.

To the Church, we are instructed:

Gal 5:16-18 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. (17) For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these **ARE** opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. (18) But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Gal 5:25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

Below are 7 or 8 points pertaining to spiritual warfare. I'd like to encourage you to pick 2-3 to work on for this week. If you master

those, then by all means move on to some of the others. However, you may realize how difficult it really is to fight the good fight in the Spiritual realm, without lowering your battle tactics to the physical realm which is powerless and void of victory.

1) FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH

This is standing firm in the faith when the rest of the world is falling away. This is fighting the good fight of faith in the spiritual realm with God's promised spiritual power.

Eph 6:16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;

This is faith strengthening and temptation rejecting battle tactics.

2) BE CERTAIN OF YOUR OWN SALVATION and personal standing before God in Christ. This is a knowledge and assurance that our sins are forgiven, our soul is saved, our home is in heaven and our purpose is making disciples.

Eph 6:17 and take the helmet of salvation...

Too many Christians are unsure of their salvation and their standing before God in Christ. Therefore the devil slaps them around like a rag doll, with crisis after crisis and excuse after excuse as to why they live life defeated, powerless and aimlessly purposeless – disconnected from the life of the church and meaningful service to Christ.

3) THE WORD OF GOD AND OBEDIENCE TO THAT, IS CRUCIAL TO EXPERIENCING VICTORY IN OUR SPIRITUAL BATTLES_

Eph 6:17 and take the helmet of salvation, **AND** the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

For Christians who name the name of Christ, but disobey the Word of God, there is no hope of living a life of confidence and victory in Christ. They can only hope of making it into heaven with a minimum of Christ honoring rewards, a ragged fragmented faith that remained

hidden from the world and a self-consumed earthly life of a detestable existence. True obedience must result in a noticeable holy lifestyle.

4) PRAYING - this is a key weapon of spiritual warfare.

Eph 6:18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

This is not a prayer life from lists of items wanted, desired or thought to be the answer to the ills of this present life. But this kind of praying involves intercession for the souls of the lost, for the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, opposing the spiritual powers of darkness, depending on the drawing work of God the Father, and the saving work of Christ on the cross. This is prayer that attacks hell and its power, while trusting in and evidencing the power of heaven in your life.

5) FORGIVING one another. Resentment, grudges and revenge are practical elements for sure fire failure in our spiritual battles. Forgiving others, on the other hand, is a God honoring tactic, that opens the door to God's blessing and working all things out for your good and His glory.

6) TREATING OTHERS like we would want to be treated ^[Mat.7:12].

BLESSING those who persecute you; ^[Rom 12:14] showing loving kindness and grace to your earthly "enemies." ^[Mat.5:44].

7) SHARING THE GOSPEL OF hope and forgiveness – It is the power of God unto salvation and a great and powerful tool in our battle against the kingdom of darkness.

Eph 6:15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

These are some spiritual weapons of spiritual warfare. If the devil can make us think all this is fringe theology or Charismatic religion that doesn't apply to us, we are mistaken. If he can make us too afraid or intimidated to share the gospel with others, then he is keeping us from using one of our most powerful spiritual weapons.

Satan tempts and tricks us into fighting our battles in the physical realm, with physical means, rather than the Spiritual means. When that happens, we are not fighting with the weapons of warfare which God has provided for us. Instead we are fighting in the realm in which the Devil is tempting us to respond.

Therefore when we fight the devil's battle with fleshly, carnal, physical means, we are rendered powerless. Because our power is not in our physical weapons, but with the spiritual weapons. In fact fleshly fighting for the faith, bypasses the actual spiritual battle and actually advances the kingdom of the enemy.



Where has America drifted from? – *Evidence of God In Country—*

William Bradbury and the signing of The Mayflower Compact (direct transcription)

In ye name of **God**, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyall subjects of our dread soveraigne Lord King James by ye **grace of God**, of Great Britaine, Franc, & Ireland king, defender of ye faith, &c.

Haveing undertaken, for ye **glorie of God**, and advancemente of ye **Christian faith**, and honour of our king & countrie, a voyage to plant ye first colonie in ye Northerne parts of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly & mutuallly in ye **presence of God**...



The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that **all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator** with certain unalienable rights....,



“The Crisis of Repentance and Revival”

Text:

October 19 & 26 2014

{ Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you? --Psalm 85:6 }

Repentance means you change your mind so deeply
that it changes you.

--Bruce Wilkinson

INTRODUCTION

THIS WEEK IN THE NEWS

City of Houston demands pastors turn over sermons

By Todd Starnes, Published October 14, 2014, FoxNews.com

Re: Houston Mayor Annise Parker

The city of Houston has issued subpoenas demanding a group of pastors turn over any sermons dealing with homosexuality, gender identity to Annise Parker, the city’s first openly lesbian mayor. And those ministers who fail to comply could be held in contempt of court.

“The city’s subpoena of sermons and other pastoral communications is both needless and unprecedented,” Alliance Defending Freedom attorney Christina Holcomb said in a statement. “The city council and

its attorneys are engaging in an inquisition designed to stifle any critique of its actions.”

ADF, a nationally-known law firm specializing in religious liberty cases, is representing five Houston pastors. They filed a motion in Harris County court to stop the subpoenas arguing they are “overbroad, unduly burdensome, harassing, and vexatious.” (AP)

Is America Adrift or what?

Jim Cymbala, in his new book, STORM, offers 3 Warning Signs for the Church for our culture.

WARNING #1 – WE’RE NOT AS BIG AS WE THINK

Statistics are still high for people who claim to be Christians. 80% of Americans claim to be Christians.

GALLUP ORGANIZATION states that only 40% of Americans state they attended church the previous week.

[Cymbala cont’d] We don’t see 80% of the population in church. In fact church attendance in America is at its lowest in history. Do you think 8 out of 10 people at your work are Christians? Do you believe 8 out of 10 people you meet at the bank, in the store or pass on the streets are really Christians?

In the church of America, we are not as big as we think.

If this doesn’t **trouble** you,
You aren’t paying attention!

WARNING #2) Personal Life Transformation is rare.

Over the past 10 yrs. Many Christian denominations have invested time and risked their reputation, in order to realistically evaluate the present faith of converts and effectiveness of discipleship. Southern Baptist, Assembly of God, Willow Creek and along with many others, have discovered that true Christian conversion – that is conversion where life

transformation is evident, is rare.

Personal Life Transformation is Rare in the American Church.

WARNING # 3 – BIBLICAL LITERACY IS DECLINING

Fewer Christians believe in absolute Truth today than in any time in the history of the church. More Christians know less of the Bible than ever before. And the Bible, Church attendance, personal worship and obedient disciple making has become an issue of convenience, personal taste, and unconvicted excuses, as to their own personal involvement.

The Fact is, Biblical literacy is declining.

THE GREAT EVANGELICAL RECESSION, by John S.

Dickerson, 6 factors that will crash the American Church

First chapter entitled “Inflated” or Evangelicals think too highly of themselves. Evangelicalism is smaller than we had imagined. This tends to give evangelical’s a false sense of security, sort of like sticking one’s head in the sand.

THE BARNA GROUP, in the 2011 book, *Futurecast*, found that approximately 7% of the public consider themselves to be evangelical. That finding was from info gathered in 2007, which was down about 1/3 from 1991 statistics. --

So America is a nation adrift, and seemingly the American church in America is also adrift, and negatively so.

IN His Book, THE AMERICAN CHURCH IN CRISIS, David T Olson of American Church Research Project, finds that 7% of Americans are evangelical.

We are a nation adrift and a culture in crisis. And it seems the church in America is adrift as well.

THE CRISIS OF REVIVAL

Over the years, the people of God have cried out to God for revival. Some have prayed and sought God for a great moving in the lives of

His people.

Psa 80:18-19 Then we shall not turn back from you; give us life, and we will call upon your name! (19) Restore us, O LORD God of hosts! Let your face shine, that we may be saved!

The Psalmist does not separate himself from the sinful, drifting nation. Instead he includes himself as part of the ones who are in need of revival.

There is a crisis of Revival in America because there is a Crisis of prayer and Passion within the church in America. And Our Culture is in Crisis because there is a Crisis of Hope in our land. Not merely an absence of Hope, but a misplaced focus of hope.

Tit. 2:13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

America is in a Crisis of Capitalism. America's Hope is in money. Her confidence is in investments. There is a dependence upon entrepreneurial opportunities and the financial prosperity of America. It seems like hope in capitalism is at an all-time high, while hope in God is at an all-time low.

It sounds like America is in need of Revival.

What is Revival?

When we pray for revival, what are we asking for?

The Definition of Revival,

"It has been said that Revival is the return of God to man, once man has returned to God."

Duncan Campbell Welsh Revivalist of the 1900s, said "Revival, is a community saturated with God"-

Greg Laurie - "Revival is something that God does for us. We don't do it for God," Laurie said. "You can't create revival, you cannot organize revival, but you can agonize for revival in prayer. "Revival is nothing

more or less than a new beginning of obedience to God... it is to get back to the original position God wants me to be."

Charles Finney believed Revival is merely what takes place when the Church of Jesus Christ is living the way it ought to live.

DL Moody, stated Revival is God so ordaining and moving in such a manner as to bring the church back into alignment with the will of God, each believer filled with the Spirit of God, thereby affecting the pagan culture to come along with them, back to God.

Revival is no doubt a work of God, but it must also be a work of Man. It is a work of God convicting the church and drawing and convicting and saving the godless.

The Purposes of Revival

...To Bring drifting humans and nations back to God - *AND* -

...To purify and impassion the church

History shows that Revival typically starts with the church and then overflows, impacting the surrounding pagan communities.

Revival is typically preceded by...

- 1) increased pagan and spiritually depraved activity. America certainly qualifies in that area.
- 2) increased passion and spiritual hunger of a united group of believers.
- 3) a deep longing for a move of God; personal and congregational dissatisfaction with the status quo; extended seasons of prayer; beliefs that the end was surely near; conversations and strategizing regarding unified efforts of preaching the gospel and reaching the world.

The Church of the past

1) The church over 2000 yrs – As the church spread over the first centuries, all the ministry efforts were the result of the first time spread of the gospel and the work of God promoting Christ. Also, much of the

earliest documented history is vague, incomplete or believed to be unreliable.

Therefore, the descriptions of revivals of the early church, seem most often descriptions of the gospel spreading, rather than a once, Christian area being “revived” to renewed spiritual life.

Descriptions of revivals are more clear in the 1300s, 1500s and late 1700s in various areas of Europe, Ireland, Britain, etc. While some revivals have been accompanied by what has been described as “holy laughter” and other unexplainable and unsettling behavior, nevertheless revival has historically been characterized by weeping and grief over personal sin; horrific fear regarding their spiritual direction; mass conversions of pagans and “religious” alike; and an extended, but not permanent change of the moral climate and overall spiritual interest of a community or country.

Waldenses, were members of a Christian movement that originated in 12th-century France, the devotees of which sought to follow Christ in poverty and simplicity. (britannia.com)

The story of the faithfulness, endurance, and heroism of the Waldenses down the centuries is unique in Church History. Where they live “there is not a rock that is not a monument, not a meadow that has not seen an execution, not a village that does not register its martyrs.” In the twelfth century they experienced a revival which resulted in great evangelistic activity.

This movement was led by Peter Waldo. All were missionaries, and preached in the houses, streets, and market places. Rev. Clarke says of them, “The sect spread with extraordinary rapidity, and extended from Bohemia, through the south of France and in the mountain districts of Savoy, Switzerland and Northern Italy.” (Revival-Library.org)

2) Then there was the revival that resulted from the reformation. Or was it the Reformation that resulted from Revival. In the **1500s - The Reformation** with Luther and others in the 1500s, proved to be a

pivotal time in the spiritual life of the modern church, in Germany and Europe and eventually affected the world.

The Welch Revival 1904, - As revival fire spread across Wales in late 1904 and early 1905, although no official records were kept of the actual number converted, 150,000 is considered a very conservative estimate, during the first six months! People's lives were transformed by the thousands. This was indeed, a sovereign move of God's Holy Spirit!

3) Religion in America 300+ yrs ago - Prior to 1776 and our nation's birth. Some of our religious heritage resulted from...

* **The Landing of Columbus** – Columbus said he was convinced to sail because “it was *the Lord who put into my mind*” and that “*the Gospel must still be preached* to so many lands.”

* '**Charter of 1606**', also known as the *First Charter of Virginia*, is a document from King James I of England to the Virginia Company assigning land rights to colonists: who came to propagate the “*Christian Religion to such People*, as yet live in Darkness and miserable Ignorance of the true knowledge and *worship of God*.”

* **From Inside the Capitol Rotunda**, hangs the painting entitled: “Departure of the Pilgrims” from Holland – depicting the Pilgrims observing a day of prayer and fasting. William Brewster is holding an open Bible upon which is written: “*The New Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*.” And “*God With Us*” is written on the ship's sail.

This is what America has drifted from. This is what Revival for America could restore. But if not America as a nation, then the Church of America needs this.

William Bradbury:the signing of The Mayflower Compact 1620

In ye name of **God**, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyall subjects of our dread soveraigne Lord King James by ye **grace of God**, of Great Britaine, Franc, & Ireland king, defender of ye faith, &c.

Haveing undertaken, for ye **glorie of God**, and advancemente of ye

Christian faith, and honour of our king & countrie, a voyage to plant ye first colonie in ye Northerne parts of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly & mutually in ye **presence of God**, and one of another, covenant & combine our selves together into a civill body politick; for our better ordering & preservation & furtherance of ye ends aforesaid;
[End of document]

These had Conviction and a sense of the calling of God Almighty,
AND they lived with Passion for their purpose and praying for Revival.

This is what **America** has drifted from.

The Crisis of Revival

“As long as the church thinks it can live without revival, it will.”
-- L. Ravenhill

America needs Revival. It needs to be Revived and returned to that from which we have drifted; that is God as our Source and His Holy Word as our Standard.

There is a crisis of revival because there is

THE CRISIS OF REPENTANCE

Without Revival there can be no repentance. And without Repentance, there will be no Revival.

“It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

--Jesus Christ

What is Repentance?

Repentance is an awareness of and purposeful turning away from sin.

2Chron. 7:14 if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

OT Repentance is often described as being more emotional, evidenced

by weeping over grief from sin, resulting in changed behavior. OT repentance often is associated with sack cloth and ashes, and is very demonstrative

NT Repentance is described as being more mental, evidenced by a change of mind regarding sin, resulting in changed behavior. The changing of the mind results in the changing of the attitude, which in turn results in changed choices and actions.

Ultimately both Old and New Testament repentance was intended to result in changed behavior and lifestyle.

But there is a crisis in Repentance.

The Crisis of Repentance

The sense of *Need* of revival, must present a prerequisite for the actual *coming* of Revival. A good example of the effects of repentance and revival is the Welch revival.

- The Welch Revival 1904, (continued)

Whole communities were turned upside down, and were radically changed from depravity to glorious goodness. The crime rate dropped, often to nothing. The police force reported that they had little more to do than supervise the coming and going of the people to the chapel prayer meetings, while magistrates turned up at courts to discover no cases to try. The alcohol trade was decimated, as people were caught up more by what happened in the local chapels than the local public houses and bars. Families experienced amazing renewal, where the money earning husband and father, the bread winner, had wasted away the income and sowed discord, but now under the moving power of the Holy Spirit, following the conversion to be a follower of Jesus Christ, he not only provided correctly for family needs, but was now with the family, rather than wasting his time, and wages, in the public houses of the village or town. Souls were saved, individual lives were changed and Society itself was changed. Countless numbers were converted to Christ.

But as important as revival, it is important to remember that revival is not permanent. In early 1744, shortly after the most "successful" revivals ever held, Jonathan Edwards commented that the state of religion "in New England is, on many accounts, very melancholy".

Revivals don't last indefinitely, because Sinners are prone to sinfulness, as The Church is prone to apathy. The church in America must not drift with our nation's cultural currents, nor coast in its efforts to reach the lost and change the nation.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES BEFORE THE CHURCH?

Overall it is our challenge to keep from drifting with the culture and from coasting due to apathy. The challenge is to live with conviction and calling and to live with passion and purpose to fulfill that calling. Historically, revival took place because of a conviction and calling of believers and the purpose and passion, as they lived out their lives with a sense of calling from God.

1) Be sure the problem does not lie with me.

In the end, a person can only give account for himself or herself before God. While true revival cannot be scheduled or induced, effective preparation for revival can most certainly be made.

a) prepare a man's own heart – personal preparation – as much as it is in our power to do so – repent to prepare the way for revival in my life.

b) confess our own personal sins, without glossing over sin and without making excuses. When convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit of God and our own conscience – confess that sin to God. 1 Jn. 1:8-10 ("If we confess...")

If God does a work in my heart that is personal revival. If God does a similar work in your heart and brings us together, that is the beginning of a great and national spiritual awakening.

c) obey the call to share the gospel with others. This is the inward work, resulting in the outward ministry.

Repentance and true Revival is marked by the purity of the church, but also of the conversion of the pagans. Pagans must hear the gospel in order to be genuinely saved and converted.

2) Re-Examine and evaluate our goals as a church and as individuals.

The church is what its population is. It is individuals that make up the church as a whole. We must ask, “Am I living with spiritual conviction and the calling of God in my life? Am I living with purpose and passion to accomplish God’s calling in my life?” Surely, Life is too short and too precious to live otherwise.

3) Faithfully nurture a sensitive and healthy inner life.

Don’t ignore the conviction of the Holy Spirit. (1 Jn.1:9) Don’t nurture any kind of attitude or character trait or practice that you know in your heart is wrong before God. Don’t live your Christian life off some experience you had several years ago.

Live and experience God every day. Believe in, follow, serve as the motto and mission of your earthly existence.

4) Obediently share your faith and the message of the gospel to those God brings into your path.

This is what Bea were encouraged to do last week. When you eat too much and don’t get enough exercise, you’re going to get fat. That is a physical life reality. But there is a spiritual correlation to that.

There should be no spiritually fat Christians. Christians must get a steady diet of the word of God, but we also need a steady avenue of exercise. We must be living the Christian life and obediently putting God’s word into action, so we don’t become fat Christians. We must be **PASSING THE FAITH ALONG.**

What will America look like in 2100AD? Perhaps a better question would be: What will the *church* in America look like in 2100AD? Will it look like the “7 Churches of Revelation”? No one really knows what happened to those, other than they were displaced by pagan religions for various reasons.

Will it look like the church in Thessalonica? Something that is an historical marker, that tour bus drivers point to as they pass by?

Better yet, what are we doing to affect the church and preserve our culture today? If Jesus Christ is not truly Lord of the Church, He will never become Savior of the World. In other words, if He is not Ruling as master of our hearts and lives and actions, then the message of the gospel will never be proclaimed to the lost and those who do believe will never be disciple.

5) **Revival Focused Prayer**

To keep from drifting or coasting we must be involved in...

- 1) Personal - to revive ME first,
- 2) Congregational - to revival the church in America
- 3) National – to revive our nation – bring America back to that from which we have drifted; that is God as our Source and His Word as our Standard.



Where has America drifted from? – *Evidence of God In Country—*

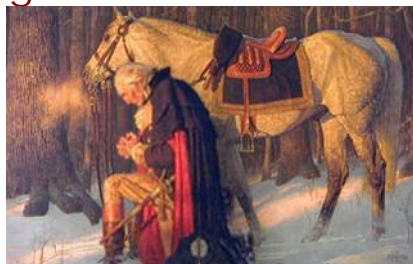
General George Washington

“What students would learn in American schools above all is the religion of ***Jesus Christ.***”

--George Washington in a speech to the Delaware Indian Chiefs May 12, 1779

"It is impossible to rightly govern the world ***without God and Bible.***"

"It is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of ***Almighty God***, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favors."



President John Adams

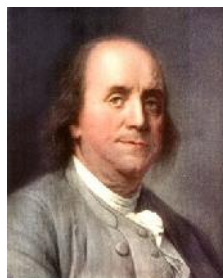
“We recognize no Sovereign but ***God***, and no King but ***Jesus!***”

[April 18, 1775, on the eve of the Revolutionary War after a British major ordered John Adams, John Hancock, and those with them to disperse in “the name of George the Sovereign King of England.”]

Benjamin Franklin

In Benjamin Franklin's 1749 plan of education for public schools in Pennsylvania, he insisted that schools teach "***the excellency of the Christian religion*** above all others, ancient or modern."

In 1787 when Franklin helped found Benjamin Franklin University, it was dedicated as "a nursery of ***religion and learning, built on Christ, the Cornerstone.***"





Don't close this booklet yet

without considering this all important question.

Is Jesus Christ the Savior of *your* soul and the Lord of *your* life?

Every person is born guilty of sin and in need of forgiveness.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; --
Romans 3:23

Our sin is against God, therefore our forgiveness can only come from
God.

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. --*John 3:16*

God has appointed His Son as the payment for sins and sent Him to die
in our place.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal
life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
-- *Romans 6:23*

God's love is demonstrated through the sacrificial payment of Jesus
Christ in our place for our sins.

...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still
sinners, Christ died for us. ---*Romans 5:8*

For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord
will be saved." -- *Rom 10:13*

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he
gave the right to become children of God, - *John 1:12*

Before you close this book, why not be absolutely certain that you are
truly a citizen of God's eternal kingdom and loving family?

*Trust in Jesus Christ today and receive forgiveness for your sins
and citizenship into God's family and His Kingdom.*

The ABCs

A - Admit you have sinned and are in need of a Savior.

B - Believe Jesus died in your place, and you can no way help yourself.

C - Confess your sins to God. *He already knows.*
- also Confess Jesus as you LORD.

Prayer: Take time to talk to God right now and open your heart and life to His instruction and leadership.

Connect with a local Bible believing, Christ centered church.

Commit yourself to meeting regularly with other Christians who are growing in their faith.

Heb 10:24-25 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Act 2:41-42 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (42) And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

For more information or for spiritual help, please contact us at:
Christ E. Free Church, PO Box 619, 19682 Hill Rd,
Saegertown, Pa, 16433, Ph: 814-763-2934, www.christefca.org

We have a free booklet on:

Water Baptism: *The First Step of Believer's Obedience.*
and also

A New Creation: *Beginning Your New Life In Christ*

1 PETER, (5Vols): *Suffering in Sojourning / The Church God Always Wanted*
A NEW CREATION: *Beginning Your New Life In Christ*
ADVENT: *The Submission of Christ*
AMERICA ADRIFT: *A Culture in Crisis and the Challenges Before the Church*
BALANCING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: (2VOL) *Growing together in the Basics*
CHALLENGES OF FAITH *From Characters in the Bible*
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CPR Evangelism: *Helping others Step from Death to Life*
DRAWING NEARER: *Purposeful Steps Toward The Next Level of Spiritual Growth*
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WATER BAPTISM (& INFANT DEDICATION): *The First Step of Believer's Obedience*
WHAT GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER: *A Handbook for Pre-Marriage Considerations*



May each lesson bring a growing submission, a deeper obedience and an increase of the righteous reign of the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the fullness of His Spirit, in His Church and throughout our mission field.

--- Downloadable free resources at: www.christefca.org --

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