

TAKING RECONCILIATION TO THE NATION

America stands divided today. The COVID-19 epidemic with its staggering loss of life, racial tensions, economic instability, and political turmoil have brought the nation to a breaking point. The underlying cause can be traced to the loss of moral authority and the breakdown of the brotherhood of man. Moral values that once strengthened the cord that bound our nation together have disappeared and altered the character of the nation. Without a moral filter, it was only a matter of time when age-old resentments and old grudges would stir up old wounds and set people on edge. From the marginalized to the powerful, they point the finger to each other and cannot come together in a time of crisis. Even Christians cannot agree among themselves. Most alarming is the spread of hatred at a time when sympathies for our fellow man should be on the rise. We seem to have lost liberty's connection to the moral principles that secured it. What happened to the fear of God that brought the nation to its knees in times of crisis? This one thing we know: While the nation may have forsaken God, God has not forsaken the nation. In spite of its backsliding, He stands at the door knocking.

With so much acrimony coming across the air waves and the chaos it brings, the grace of God is calling us to reconsecrate ourselves and seek His wisdom and discernment so that we might know how to navigate the troubled waters we are in. Without it, even the most spiritual can be deceived. We know that in the end of times, wickedness will get worse and worse (2 Ti. 3:13). The picture we are seeing today was prophesied by our Lord: *"And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold"* (Matt. 24:10-12 NKJV). Yet knowing this, the sudden onslaught of evil in such a short period of time took us by surprise. What caused this seismic shift to disrupt our agenda in such a life altering way? These winds of adversity, are they not to wake up the nation (2 Pet. 3:9)? And are we—God's people—not part of the nation? In the winds, God can open our eyes and heart to show us our works and their impact upon others, consider the plight of the weak suffering the greatest, and cause us to unite behind our common destiny and love our neighbor as ourselves. But unable to come to terms with our own need to repent, this is not happening. Though God has sent warnings of coming judgment, like in the days of Noah (2 Pet. 3:3-4), many of us are oblivious to the signs nudging us to repentance, and the winds continue to blow.

In the mid 1800's, there arose an intense political, social and religious upheaval that, like today, pitted brother against brother. The root of the upheaval was whether the love of money and power could triumph over the God-ordained human rights of a class of people they enslaved for their own enrichment. Though both the North and the South prayed, it took a civil war to put down the insurrection and restore the crumbling moral foundation. The nation was saved through moral judgment that ran down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream (Amos 5:24).

Less than 100 years later, in the 1960's, racial inequality and brutality against people of color once again rose to the surface. God heard their cry for deliverance, but it would take more violence and shedding of blood to bring the nation back to its founding principles. And so once again God rattled the foundation to bring the nation back to its spiritual roots. Out of darkness emerged the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose moral leadership stirred the conscience of the nation. In a powerful oration taken from the Bible, he spoke of a dream he had that there would come a day in America when every mountain would be brought low, every crooked place would be made straight, and the rough places would be made smooth (Lk. 3:4-6).

Fast forward to 2020. We are living in the midst of the same social, political, and religious upheaval brought about in large part by racial injustice and the love of money. And once again God is shaking the foundation to expose the hearts of men. Are we approaching the day Dr. King's prophecy will be fulfilled?

And so it is with great anticipation, God's people pray that America is on the threshold of the next Great Spiritual Awakening. In the Old Testament, there is a road map to the awakening. According to the prophet Isaiah, when God looked for judgment, He saw oppression; and when He looked for righteousness, He heard a cry (of the suffering). So He took away the hedge and broke down the walls (Isa. 5: 5-7), and the shaking began. On September 11, 2001, God took away a hedge (a means of protection and defense) as walls representing high finance crumbled to the ground in New York City killing thousands. Sadly, as the prophet explained, people who do not consider the operation of God's hands go into captivity because they have no knowledge (Isa. 5:12-13). *"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet or bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight"* (Isa. 5:20-21). Yet for all of this, God's hand is stretched out still, for it is the soul of America He is after. The day is fast approaching, and some say we are at the door, when God will pour out grace and supplication in the midst of evil, and in His mercy, remove the veil covering our eyes.

If ever there was a time to prepare ourselves and turn away from the world and look to Jesus Christ, it is now. Though the powers of darkness will scramble to blur it, when the light begins to shine its intensity upon man's ways, the powers of darkness will not be able to seize it (Jn. 1:5). With the brightness of the glory of God piercing spiritual darkness, it is certain that many of us will see the lies we had believed unfold before us, reverse course, and reconsecrate our life to walk with God in truth.

On many levels, God is unraveling the past and putting the spotlight on the underlying roots of hatred. With this in mind, the Holy Spirit brought back a passage I had hid in my heart years ago that speaks to this very thing occurring prior to His return: *"So do not go on passing judgment before the appointed time, but wait until the Lord comes, for He will both bring to light the [secret] things that are hidden in darkness and disclose the motives of the hearts"* (1 Cor. 4:5 AMP).

EXPOSING THE HIDDEN THINGS OF DARKNESS

The light of revelation will illuminate the unrepented motives of the heart. No one will escape the glare of God's refining light (Isa. 24:2). When God lifts the cloud over spiritual darkness, He looks at those whose rights were violated and those whose personal wrongdoings were covered up. Leaders who abused their God-ordained authority will come to the light of day. Victims who bore injustice and shame without a voice will be vindicated. But God's refining light will also examine the heart of the victim. If victims continue to impute the transgressions of their oppressors against them to retain grudges and keep them imprisoned, their own wrongdoings will not be forgiven (Matt. 6:15; Mk. 11:25). God will turn around and expose their evil deeds. *"For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light"* (Lk. 8:17 NKJV).

This brings us to the greatest obstacle to healing the nation promised in God's Word (2 Chr. 7:14)—the rock of offenses. Failure to deal with them is a major stumbling block to liberty. Standing as a witness to the force of offenses and the concurrent loss of freedom and liberty is the incivility toward one another we are seeing today in our nation. This is because unresolved

offenses and secret enmities create a perpetual, intermittent battleground for strife, kill empathy and compassion, and instill deep-seated hatred with a thirst for violence for generations to come.

These are signs of a nation on the brink of losing its soul. To heal the land, we have to go back to where the moral breakdown first occurred—in the home, for the family is the backbone of the nation. When the family stops reverencing God and His word in the home, the cord that binds the family together, and ultimately the nation, is broken. When offenses are routinely covered up, the unpaid debt from unforgiveness mounts, and without moral leadership, is destined to pass down to the sons and daughters. They in turn pick up the same coping behaviors and continue fighting a battle that was never theirs to fight (Ex. 34:7), and in time pass it down to another generation. And so the cycle continues.

If we want to be free from unpaid debt of generational sin, there is only one place to go, for there is only one remedy, and that is found in Jesus Christ. The blood He shed on the cross is the remedy, because when the blood is applied, it remits sin as if it never occurred (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:38-41). Then all the unpaid debt of prior generations cannot touch us. Instead of recycling the sins inherited through our birth father in perpetuity, we are freed from them and inherit the forgiving nature of our Heavenly Father and His righteousness, and if we walk in it, we will take on His nature (Eph. 4:20-24). This is what we then pass on to succeeding generations, and this is what we must pass down to the nation.

Our nation was formed on the basis of brotherhood. The passing down of unpaid debt to succeeding generations has to be seen in the broader sense that all families, nuclear and otherwise, comprise one nation under God. This is because there is one Father from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named (Eph. 3:14-15). This makes us brothers and sisters of one very large family. So while the passing down of unpaid debt starts in the birth family, we are not an island unto ourselves, because we interact with the world and cross boundaries every day. Offenses do occur against the brotherhood of men, and as part of the brotherhood, we are not immune from its impact.

Denying rights and justice to one creates a national offense that is felt by all. Before long, battle lines are drawn, and the darts start to fly in all directions. We are not ignorant of Satan's devices to lure us into the battlefield—among them, lies, hate, wrath, seditions (disunion), and strife. These are missiles launched from the kingdom of darkness to steal, kill, and destroy our nation that was built upon Biblical principles and take down moral authority. National offenses that deprive people of their rights and liberties are deeply offensive to God whose throne is established in justice and judgment (Psa. 89:14).

What can the righteous do? Pull away from the worldly system, call for justice, plead for the truth, and hope and pray that God sends forth His Word that there may be light, for it will pierce the shield of deception and illuminate the truth. Without God's intervention, we can get caught in the whirlwind of a falsehood distorting or suppressing the truth so we believe a lie and end up justifying the evildoer and condemning the innocent. For the sake of the country, for the sake of the Church in a world of contradictions, and for the sake of revival, the Spirit is saying to us not to get embroiled in partisan battles pitting brother against brother and so become a respecter of persons, which in God's eyes is not good (Prov. 28:21; Acts 10:34-35). Rather, if we want the mind of God, we must “...*come out from among them and be ye separate.*” When we do, God will take us into His favor (2 Cor. 6:17), open our eyes, and then we will see clearly. But whoever believes an evil report and walks in “*crooked paths*” has eyes that cannot see, ears that cannot hear, and a heart that cannot understand (Isa. 6:9-10). God said such a one would not know peace, but darkness, and the reason is because judgment and justice are far from him (Isa. 59: 8-9).

Injustices not cured, infect subsequent generations, and like a virus can destroy the body's defenses, hatred from offenses among the brotherhood of men can just as surely destroy

America's soul, and with it, everyone's freedom and liberty. Before healing can occur, the cause of the infection has to be brought to a head and lanced, and the most efficacious instrument that can bring the infection to a head and cut through it is not political, but spiritual, that being reconciliation. As uncomfortable as it may be, reckoning the legacy of injustice from the past with the present is part of the process. (Please get my book, *Calling a Nation in Turmoil Back to God*, and read the chapter entitled "National Reconciliation." See the end of this article for ordering information.)

MAKING PEACE

Our country is being torn apart from the inside by its own people biting and devouring one another. Isn't it time to see our common humanity and at least try to see the good in our opponents, joining hands to resolve disputes wherever possible, and coming to agreement for the common good, while holding fast at all times to our moral convictions? Jesus said we should love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 19:19). To me, this means to treat people, especially our enemies, the way we want them under the same circumstances to treat us (Matt. 7:12); and when we meet opposition to either reconcile (Matt. 5:25) or shake the dust off our feet and move on (Matt. 10:13-14, Mk. 6:11, Acts 13:50-51). We serve a cause and a Power higher than party politics.

God's people have a unique role to play. As ambassadors for Christ, we can serve a healing balm to this generation if we sow principles of reconciliation into the public discourse and model it in our behavior, willing as the Apostle Paul testified of himself, "...to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men" (Acts 24:16). Just maybe there will be people with enough fear of God to listen. And, if listening, maybe the daystar will arise in their heart to receive the revelation of Jesus Christ and be saved from this corrupt generation. "And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts" (2 Pet. 1:19). This is the message we must take to the nation.

God's people must not just use their voice against the invisible forces of darkness to drive out insurrection, but also to give attendance to the causes driving it so truth can enter in (Isa. 59:14), and shut the door to its entrance. And the truth that shuts the door in this political turmoil is reconciliation with God and our fellow man. "And do not give the devil an opportunity [to lead you into sin by holding a grudge, or nurturing anger, or harboring resentment, or cultivating bitterness]" (Eph. 4:26-27 AMP). Unremediated, offenses become a breeding ground for hate and crimes against humanity. In turn, this gives Satan a weapon to stir up the masses in a diabolical scheme to divide and conquer them, but acknowledgement of past wrongdoing and forgiveness robs him of this weapon. You will see this in the example that follows.

During the 1650's, the colonists had backslidden in their walk with God, and the thing they had feared the most came upon them—indian uprisings and massacres. They prayed and fasted to stop the insurrection, but did not consider the causes, and the uprising continued. Their turnaround came when church leaders called for the renewal of church covenants with God and one another. Repenting individually and corporately, they confessed their sins and reconciled broken relationships. God heard and in time the tide of the battle turned in favor of the colonial militia.¹

¹ David Manuel, Peter Marshall, *In God They Trusted*, p. 29.

Sadly, people who are bound in the bitterness of unforgiveness cannot see their need of God until the winds of adversity visit them (Isa. 26:9). In the winds, the love of God breaks down human barriers to create a path to redemption. It is in suffering that we identify with the humanity of those we once hated. It humbles us because we see that we are not much different than they are. It is in suffering that we forgive and are forgiven so that the bonds of brotherhood can be restored, because it is in suffering that we find mercy.

Mercy comes to the accused when God brings to light the hidden things of darkness and reveals the counsels of his heart so that he sees what God sees (1 Cor. 4:5). The disgraced leader may think the sky is falling upon him, but if he hearkens to God's voice, he will find a way of escape (1 Cor. 10:13), and a new day will dawn upon him. In His mercy, God sends an ambassador who sees the humanity in the fallen and leads him to the cross. There he reconciles with God and finds the grace to repent of his sins, reconcile with his enemies, and obey the good news of the Gospel. As he turns to God and acknowledges his moral failures in repentance, Jesus is present to forgive him, and He will not impute his transgressions against him, though there may be many, because He died for him.

HEALING AND RESTORATION

What the fallen leader thought was the end, actually turns out to be a new beginning. He soon discovers that God wants to redeem his life from his self-destructive path (Psa. 103:4), not condemn him, and that healing and restoration are possible. (Read Jonah 3:8-10, 4:11.) And so it is with all of us. God is faithful to revive the spirit of the humble and heart of the sorrowful.

"For I will not contend forever, nor will I always be angry; for the spirit would fail before Me, and the souls which I have made...I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will also lead him, and restore comforts to him and to his mourners" (Isa. 57:16, 18 NKJV).

Indeed, the message the nation needs to hear is reconciliation, reconciliation with God, and reconciliation with their fellow man. So important is reconciliation that Jesus incorporated principles of forgiveness, anger management, and confession in the "good news" of the Kingdom to address the deep-rooted problems people live with from day to day. These problems, rooted in the family, rob people of life and liberty and collectively tear at the moral fabric of the nation (Matt. 5:22-25 and 18:15; Lk. 17:3-4). For this reason, we have the Word of the Lord through the Prophet Malachi before the New Testament saying, *"...And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse"* (Mal. 4:5-6). This describes a day of reconciliation, which will break the curse of hatred that keeps passing down from generation to generation.

For those who look for deliverance from the chaos enveloping the nation, it will come when we put our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, who died not only to save us from our sins (Acts 2:38), but in saving us to deliver us from this present evil age (Gal. 1:4). If we follow Him, He will take it upon Himself to "deliver, protect, heal, preserve" us from this "crooked" generation (Acts 2:40). [Click here for article entitled, "Your Homeland Security."](#)

Our mission is to take the principles of God's kingdom in heaven and bring them down to earth, for this task of reconciling men to God and each other must begin with us.

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