

An open letter to the American church – A call to repentance

Over the last several decades I have seen a number of wake-up calls made to the American church, with the last election cycle being the loudest shout yet to wake up. Yet the church for the most part is still asleep. If we are worrying, its usually only about the erosion of our 'rights' as Christians. They are rapidly eroding, but that is only a symptom, a part of the wake-up call.

The number of people in this country heading for an eternity apart from their creator is rapidly increasing. Does it bother us? Secular America increasingly sees the church as 'haters' and just see us for what we are against. It's because we have been too long asleep. We have not shown the world what a true relationship with our loving savior looks like. If they are going to hate us, let it be for the same reasons they hated Christ.

I hear some people calling for a revival in this country. But revival must start with God's people. And I know of no revival in the past that did not start with repentance. "Because you are neither hot nor cold, I am about to spew you out of my mouth." If God's people do not repent soon, ... judgement may be already on the way in this country. We need brokenness before our Lord.

We need to repent of our lukewarmness. We need to individually and corporately spend sleepless nights of repentance, prayer and fasting.

- Repent about not loving Him with our whole heart, soul mind and strength. And letting that love for Him lead to loving our neighbor as ourselves.
- Repent for not spending more time seeking His face.
- Repent about continuing to worry more about our favorite sports team than our neighbor's need for a relationship with their savior.
- Repent of not spending as much time in His word and Godly writings than we do watching sporting events or TV shows.
- Repent about worrying more about the loss of our constitutional rights instead of seeking the salvation of the ones trying to take our rights.
- Repent of just sitting back and enjoying the 'American dream' instead of using those blessings we've received to bless others.
- Repent of not giving as much resources He has blessed us with for His work as we do on _____ (fill in the blank with what the Lord pricks your heart about).

The mounting evil around us, and the task before us is overwhelming if we continue to look at it with our own eyes. But when we fix our eyes on Christ, the author and finisher of our faith, He will show us step by step the path He has set for us.

I again say, the American church for the most part is asleep and shrinking. But globally, there is an explosion of his followers! The church is growing dramatically in many parts of the world, even under growing persecution. Even in places long resistant to the good news, movements of people to Christ are taking place. Much of that growth is going hand in hand with the

increased persecution. The western church used to be the beacon sending out missionaries to the world. But now God is sending out his people from every nation and tongue, and going to every tongue! We need to see the big picture and join in on what God is doing around the world, starting with our own family and friends. Do they know your love for the Lord? Is it showing?

I recently read an article by a missionary who rightly expanded on the expression "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life". The better saying is "God loves his son and has a wonderful plan for Him, to bring all the nations to His feet as Lord of all, and He loves you and me enough to give us a place in it." (David Bryant) God is doing wonderful things in this world and he is inviting us all to be a part of it. Will you join?

The increased hatred towards things of God in our country and around the world along with the simultaneous accelerating of His bringing people to himself from all peoples, tongues, and tribes, tells me His return is very soon. Will we be a part?

So, what next? If you are successful at coming to deep repentance and long prayer, He will likely show you what His next step is for you. But here are some possible responses.

- Bring your church body together for corporate repentance.
- Is there someone you have wronged or even simply taken for granted that you need to go to and ask for forgiveness (especially a loved one)?
- What things in my routine do I need to cut out? What will open up time that I can now spend more with the Lord?
- How can I turn the daily tasks in my life to acts of worship to you?
- Is there a friend or loved one who is hurting right now that you want me to call or visit?
- Is there a local outreach ministry you want me to start serving at (examples; soup kitchen, Christian pregnancy help center, international student outreach at a nearby campus,...)
- What mission field have you brought to my doorstep? Is there an immigrant family that has moved to my neighborhood you would like me to befriend?
- So many other ideas the Lord can bring to mind...

Will we as the followers of Christ in America finally respond to God's wake-up call? I pray we all start praying toward that end.