

CONTENDING FOR A NATION IN CRISIS

REACHING FOR SPIRITUAL AWAKENING THROUGH INTERCESSION 2016

**This resource was used to aid a regional solemn-assembly prayer meeting in Buffalo, NY in 2016.*

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.” -Proverbs 14:34

Our nation currently finds itself at another crucial crossroads. With the election bearing down on us America scrambles to define herself according to two primary candidates. In the last handful of years, we have witnessed an almost unprecedented erosion of traditional biblical values alongside the rapid rise of militant secularism in the highest positions of influence in our land. Social infrastructures are once again being shaken as deep-rooted fissures are awakened related to a sudden re-emphasis on racial injustices. Our economic future balances precariously on the edge of a global program of nations fighting relentlessly for their own supremacy. Issues such as border protection, religious inclusivism and the redefinition of marriage and gender [re]assignment push their way to the forefront of the current cultural swell. The church has witnessed the downward spiral of a trending in the last decade leading to the increasing influence of postmodernism as a critical hermeneutic as well as, in some cases, a full-fledged retreat from the encroachment of federal regulations in the form of an abandonment of biblical absolutes. Compounded, we have begun a dangerous shift in our allegiance with the state of Israel and the Jewish people and issues such as domestic terrorism, the increase and protection of abortion at a federal level and the proliferation of hyper-sexualization in our elementary and middle schools remind us that we have yet to see the full manifestation of wickedness in America.

The good news is that God has a hope and a redemptive plan for America should she return to Him. The scriptures tell us that if any nation should turn from their wickedness and embrace Him, that God would not only relent from judgment, but that He would release tremendous and wide-spread blessing in its place.

“The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it. And the instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it does evil in My sight so that it does not obey My voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it.” -Jer.18:7-10

God has not tasked either the Republican or Democratic parties nor any other social or political movement with the responsibility for turning a nation. Instead He has chosen to grace His own people with such a great trust. He has determined that repentance and intercession would lead the way to massive cultural and spiritual awakening whose cultural transformation would be reflected in the leadership, values and direction of America.

Many of us are familiar with the potential of such glorious passages as 2 Chron. 14:7, **“If My people who are called by My name will 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.”** God has chosen the ministry of intercession as the way forward for His kingdom in the affairs of man. Since the beginning God has sought for friends who would seek His mercy and intervention on behalf of those who do not know Him and even His enemies.

Passages such as Joel 2, Is.58 and Mal. 3 tell us that if we, His people, would return to Him with all of our hearts, then He would restrain His hand of judgment and release blessing instead.

Some have been discouraged over the years though, as prayer meetings and intercessory gatherings have seemed to yield little in the way of nation-wide repentance. But we must remember that God is summoning an entire nation to Himself and this takes endurance, clarity of message and real time and effort. If the problem persists than the prayers must persist. We are to be an intercessory first-responder people whose repentance takes the form in real-time of genuine love for Jesus and love for our neighbor. Continued intercession on God’s terms will always produce long-lasting fruit in our words and works. Jesus taught in Lk.18 that we are to pray and not lose heart because He would hear our prayer and in response would bring justice.

“And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?” -Lk.18:7

The scriptures promise spiritual awakening for a repentant nation as well as protection at our borders, economic and agricultural prosperity, restoration for lost years and a global reputation for mercy and compassion (Joel 2:12-32). In addition, God promises to personally deal with witchcraft and the encroachment of false religions, rampant immorality, the sanctity of marriage and governmental and corporate corruption and greed as well as to insist upon reform in foreign policy (Mal.3:1-5). Is.58 tells us that when our repentance translates to responding in love in practical ways to those around us, in particular to the poor and oppressed that God will respond in great power to our prayer meetings while giving the church supernatural protection from difficulties and using her as a light which gives direction to the nation.

As a church we begin our return to Him when we respond to the Spirit's exhortation through the word to acknowledge the sin in our midst, to address it clearly, to commit and begin to turn from it and to call others to live righteously. God honors our returning to Him with a returning to us. His return to us involves the release of his presence in our gatherings and the working of His Spirit in our families, businesses and witness.

America's hope does not ultimately lie in the Oval Office. There is One who sits sovereignly enthroned over every nation, who as He wishes, can turn the hearts of even the most powerful kings (Prov.21:1).

Our job as intercessors extends long past the election. Our righteous actions combined with our ceaseless prayer will serve to guide a nation into encounter with God while we contend for the release of His Kingdom in fullness in the form of an historic spiritual awakening sweeping through every city and every state in our Union.