

There are No Political Solutions for Spiritual Problems

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The Political World in which we live. Perhaps the one thing most Americans can agree on today is that our nation is in a hard place. We find ourselves crippled by a virus that has wreaked havoc on the health of much of the world, leaving behind devastating economic fallout.

Today, we are embroiled in another racial war—that of words, demonstrations, and, sadly, more violence, destruction, and death. Despite being the wealthiest, most powerful nation in the history of the world, our money and power are not able to save us from ourselves. This has often been described as a “class” war as well as a racial one, and is not unique to the US. But it is ours to deal with (again) today.

Part of the divide in our nation comes from people so immersed in political ideologies of various tenets and beliefs—whose existence seems tied to engaging in rhetoric along party lines. They seem only to love and trust those who think and believe like they do, while others are ignorant whose opinions hold no value nor worthy of consideration. We see this among those labeled “right” and “left” or “conservative” and “liberal”. (Who came up with those labels in the first place?)

I clipped this from the Declaration of Independence to remind myself these words are still there.

*“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.*

Do we still believe this? Or is this another one of those “truths” that depends on your definition and mine of what each element means. Founding Fathers did this through the Constitution that the established Bill of Rights and Amendments from which our laws are based. We do not need more laws. We need to enforce those we have with civility—the way they were intended. And if people do not like or agree with them, there are safeguards and processes in place to change them. That is how democracy works. It is essential if we are to protect those unalienable rights. In case you forgot or never really knew what that word means, it means *rights that cannot be taken away or violated by governments*.

As a born-again biblical Christian, I found it interesting to note that the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States speaks first to **freedom of religion** then to freedom of speech and the right to assemble (peaceably).

It is important to observe, now more than ever, that the preposition used in this guarded unalienable protection is **of** not **from**. That has become lost in our politically correct society where Christian voices of hope, in a nation desperate for it, are too often holed up behind the walls of elaborate sanctuaries we call churches or silenced by hateful, blasphemous words from those who themselves perpetrate the violence and hatred they claim to decry. They throw around the word “hate” more than anyone while their own hatred is clearly evident except to themselves. They have been blinded by the prince of this world...just as Jesus said they would be. As Christians, we must be the purveyors of the love of God in Christ for we are His ambassadors.

So I close this political commentary with the one question that demands an answer:

Where are the political solutions meant to save our democracy and protect the truths upon which our nation was founded?

Answer: There are **none!**

Where are the answers? Now we dive into the one true source in which answers may be found – **The Word of God.**

Originally, I had not planned to teach today because I had no word from the Lord to do so. But as happens sometimes, when I settled into my glider this morning to have some quiet time alone with the Lord, that changed.

As I continued to pray for our nation and the role of Christians and church during this civil unrest, a phrase came back to me that I had used before on more than one occasion.

“There are no political solutions for spiritual problems.”

Three words came to me to teach within the biblical context in which they were given.

♦ ***Recognition*** ♦ ***Repentance*** ♦ ***Revival***

This message is for those who confess aloud they are born-again Christians according to God’s Word. We are the light of the world whose lights are illumined only by Christ—the hope of our salvation Who sent us into the world for one reason:

Tell others about the hope we have in Christ that is also available to them! (1 Peter 3: 15)

Until Christians and the church, which exists only through their sacred assembly and obedience to Christ’s commands, do more than give lip service to Him, there is no hope for the hopeless in our world—whether family member, neighbor, friend, and people we cannot seem to love. But heed Jesus’ warning about obeying His commands because failure to do so does not bode well for any who stand before Him at the final judgement as goats among the sheep.

♦ Recognition

- We are in a (**spiritual**) war against a fierce **invisible** enemy Satan that has dominion over this world. Jesus told His disciples about that. He did so as a warning so they would know what they were up against. The Apostle Paul did as well.

"I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming.." John 14: 30

"you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience."
Ephesians 2: 1-2

- We are pilgrims just passing through not residents building our kingdoms on earth.

First the words of Jesus:

"If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you." John: 15: 19

"Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul." 1 Peter 2: 11

My dear brothers and sisters, there are aliens on this planet. We are the aliens!

- Finally the hardest one of all. Be a hater! The very humbled Apostle Paul got it:

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst." 1 Timothy 1:15

Recognize and hate your sin first and worst!

When we come to that recognition, the faithful Holy Spirit Who is God takes us to the place only He can.

♦ Repentance

The Greek word for repent is *“metanoeō”* which means *to change one’s mind or reverse course if you will, in this case regarding sin and living in a sinful life.* After His temptation by Satan in the desert, Jesus began His ministry. The first words of His teaching were these,

“Repent, for the kingdom of (God) heaven is at hand”
Matthew 4: 17

Now back up one page in your Bible and read the words of the forerunner of Jesus,

“In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, “Repent, for the kingdom of (God) heaven is at hand.” Matthew 3: 2

Despite the fact that we can clearly see this was the foremost message of Jesus, most people – even some who call themselves Christians – do not like to talk about sin or sinners and the need for repentance. That is so negative! It is. But it is truth. Without repentance for the forgiveness of our sins, we will not (using the words of Jesus and John) receive the “kingdom of Heaven”.

There is another application of repentance that also applies to Christians. Jesus speaking,

“Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. “You are witnesses of these things.” Luke 24: 46-48

We are His witnesses and the Great Commission (sometimes pathetically referred to as the Great Omission) was His last

command (not suggestion) to true believers. All of us who are part of His body called the church need to consider our testimonies, but more importantly, our talk in light of Jesus' command.

♦ Revival

Everything is personal with God. Let me repeat that to make sure you understand ***everything is personal with God***. There are no "national sins". The US is not a covenant nation like Israel. There are only personal sins committed by people who defy God and disobey His Word.

One needed clarification. 2 Chronicles 7: 14 applied to Israel (spoken during Solomon's temple dedication). It is out of context when dragged out for a national day of prayer or some reason like the issues facing our nation today. It is always good to confess, fast, and pray as Christians.

Revival is personal (in the heart) before it affects families, neighborhoods, churches, cities, states, and nations. It begins with the first two points of our lesson (Recognition and Repentance).

Christians today are heard to call out for "spiritual revival" in our nation. The Lord would have them answer two questions in reply:

- *Have you had a personal revival in your own heart and life beginning with recognizing your part in the problems you are so quick to point out? When you get that cleared up...*
- *What are you doing to bring about revival in any or all of those areas that concern every American and should grieve to our cores, every Christian American who realizes...*

God saves people (not nations) one at a time because a true

Christian obeyed Jesus' command and shared the love of God through the truth of the Gospel (John 3: 16) that Jesus alone can save them from their sins. Let's begin there and see what our gracious God may do for America.

For Christ's sake,

Walter