

Thursday, January 24, 2013 – Silence is NOT an Option

Our country is a nation guilty of shocking practices. Our "one nation under God" is increasingly under the Devil and his disciples. Not long ago America was a spiritual promise land. Today, the United States is a spiritual wasteland.

Our lives have been cast at a time in history when values that have been recognized as true for centuries are being pushed aside. Truth has become relative, no longer absolute. The words of Isaiah properly reflect our situation: **"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 for bitter"** (Isa. 5:20).

While Christians in America have never needed civil leaders to be advocates of God's will in order to live peacefully, our founding fathers had a deep and abiding reverence for Jehovah God. Consider the following:

*"It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge to Providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and to humbly implore His protection and favor."*

**George Washington October 3, 1789 Proclaiming a National Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving**

*"Suppose a nation in some distant region should take the Bible for their only Law Book, and every member should regulate his conduct by the precepts there exhibited... What a paradise would this region be!"*

**John Adams 1756 America's Second President**

*"God who gave us life and liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are a gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever."*

**Thomas Jefferson 1781**

In the Declaration of Independence, they state:

*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...*

They went on to state:

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

How soon the leaders of this country have forgotten God. They have allowed themselves to be influenced by polls, the desire to be popular, and the urge to get re-elected. "Majority rules!!" But it is time that everyone, including the media understands that majority opinion does not equate to morality or being morally right!

The United States can no longer count itself as a Christian nation. America rejected God in the latter part of the last century, and it continues today, because a counterculture arose that wanted to be free from what they perceived to be "limits" that God put on them. And while the Christian community slept, or was in pursuit of less significant things, they were able to win the battle over truth and right. So, the counterculture became the culture. They now occupy the positions of greatest power in the land. They govern, and continue their attacks on Christian faith and morals almost daily. They could never have done what they've done, or are doing, if the Christian community had been awake and faithful. Look around and consider where the country has gone while some Christians have held a position of non-involvement and "political correctness" by keeping our mouths shut! Most of us would prefer not to think so, but our nation is on the decline. Do you doubt me?

- We Christians live in a land where one million children and teenagers get pregnant every year.
- We Christians live in a land where our young people are increasingly turning to suicide as a means of escaping their despair.
- We Christians live in a land where, since 1960, the number of families destroyed by divorce has increased over 200%
- We Christians live in a land where fathers spend over 50 hours a week in front of their televisions while spending an average of 7 ½ MINUTES with their children!
- We Christians live in a land where the most dangerous place for a child to be is inside its mother's womb. Every year over 1.5 million innocent children are tortured to death through abortion. Many of these deaths are financed by our tax dollars.

- We Christians live in a land where it is now legal to harvest the organs of a living baby provided the child has not been fully delivered from its mother's body. The tiny baby's body is turned by forceps so as to be delivered feet first. When all but the child's head has exited the birth canal, modern-day Jack the Ripper's begin their work. The harvester will take a spoon-shaped knife called a curette and remove from this squirming, unmedicated baby whatever organs are desired. After the deed is done, the tiny murder victim is fully expelled and thrown into the trash to be burned in an incinerator.
- We Christians live in a land where God has been kicked out of school and premarital sex education and condoms have been enrolled.
- We Christians live in a land where homosexuality has been given civil rights. In many places, homosexuals can legally marry and adopt children.
- We Christians live in a land where 48 states have legalized some form of gambling.
- We Christians live in a land where our tax dollars subsidize "art" depicting such ungodliness as one man urinating into the mouth of another.
- We Christians live in a land where women and children are victimized and dehumanized through pornographic movies and magazines being so laid on street corners everywhere.

Look at these facts and tell me who is winning the war for the souls of this country?

When Christians choose not to speak out, the full impact of Christian influence is not felt. If Christians can be led or frightened into non-involvement, others can pretty well have their own way. And, no one would be surprised that in such a void of Christian influence, the nation would suffer a downturn in Christian morals and ethics.

The job of a Christian is to demonstrate and proclaim God's will whether or not others are willing to listen and abide. Paul tells Timothy in **2 Tim. 4:1-4**, **"I charge [thee] in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables."** "In season, out of season" means whether people want to hear the truth or not!

Jesus intends for his disciples to make a difference. In **Matthew 5:13-16**, our text this morning, Jesus tells us:

**You are the salt of the earth** (*meaning we are the preserving influence on the world, without which the world will go into a state of decay and corruption*); **but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world** (*meaning without the light the world will be plunged into a deep, deep darkness*). **A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.**

How do we salt the earth and let our light so shine if we refuse to oppose candidates or policies that promote immoral practices?

Salt will not save unless it contacts that which it is intended to save, and light must penetrate the darkness to light the way. Christians cannot isolate themselves from the world and be the salt and light of the world.

Consider the actions of Jonah at Ninevah and Noah to his generation--righteous men preaching to wicked people. They were clearly outnumbered, in the minority. But majority does not equate to morality.

In **Acts 13:45-46**, Paul gives us a clear example of a Christian attitude that we should possess when we find ourselves confronted by those not holding to God's teachings:

**“But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul. Then Paul and Barnabas grew *bold* and said...”** He didn't back off, he became bold starting speaking the truth.

Paul spoke to a God-ignoring world in **Acts 17:30** when he says:

**“Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent”**

Also in **Romans 1:18-25**:

**“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made,**

**even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man--and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator..."**

How do we apply this scripture to our topic at hand? God's wrath is legal not emotional. God cannot be God and simply overlook sin. His righteousness and holiness demand that he not tolerate sin. It is indeed a wicked thing for a man to resist God's truth. God has given evidence of himself by the things that he has made and by giving to man the record of what has happened in God's dealing with other human beings. This fact leaves men without even a semblance of an excuse for their sins. While men profess to be wise, they actually become fools because having all the evidence of God, they neither acknowledge him nor thank him for the things he does for us. Instead of worshipping God, they choose to worship those things God has made. (**SOUND FAMILIAR?**)

Paul's job then, and ours now, is to proclaim "**the power of God unto salvation**" (**Romans 1:16**) which is the Gospel. One cannot proclaim the Gospel fully without detailing what it includes and implies; righteousness, holiness, abstinence from sin, honor, justice, mercy. These alone are reason enough for the Christian voice to be heard in society. What happens if they choose to ignore or persecute us? **2 Timothy 3:12-14** says: "**all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them.**"

The current importance being given to prosperity and pleasure has overshadowed the former values of family, character, loyalty, patriotism and honest labor, creating a general atmosphere of selfishness and greed and dishonesty (I mean lying, stealing, fornication, homosexuality, drugs and all that sort of thing), which in turn have festered ugly sores on our society, namely uncontrollable violence and corruption of public office. Such principles as the sanctity of human life, monogamous marriage, sexual purity, mutual respect for each other, personal integrity and honest labor have been trodden under foot in irresponsible pursuit of uninhibited freedoms and pleasures. We booted God out of the classrooms of our schools and replaced Him with gangs and guns and drugs and violence.

Clearly there are issues that need to be addressed. In a sense they're political, but in another way they are moral. People both in and out of the church should be able to distinguish between the two. The church's advocacy for Christian morality in the social order is not a political statement. It's a statement for Christ and his way of life!

The Scripture says that the church is the **"pillar and ground of the truth"** (1 Tim. 3:15).

We know that there is such a thing as doctrinal truth and that the church is to preach and support and uphold doctrinal truth.

**2 Tim. 4:1-2** tells us: **"I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching."**

The word being **"the word of righteousness"** (Heb. 5:13). The word of righteousness is one of the most powerful weapons in the Christian's arsenal with which to fight evil. In **Ephesians 6:17**, it is called **"the sword of the Spirit."** It is ridiculous to think of entering the culture war in which righteousness is so severely under attack nowadays without unveiling the sword of the Spirit. No amount of education or learning, no amount of wisdom or wit, no amount of charm or charisma will be more effective or powerful in turning the tide of American morals than the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." That's why the Bible is so feared by its enemies. They don't want it taught. They'd rather our young children and youth would take a knife or a gun to school than a Bible. They'd much prefer they wave or wear a Nazi swastika than to be seen carrying a Bible. Why? Because the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God is said to be **"living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing, as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart"** (Heb. 4:12). When we bring out the word of God, it's light exposes the darkness of the world.

We need to lead others away from immorality but we can't if we remain silent.