

This Is a Major Development for Israel ... and the World

In a surprise move that represents a drastic shift in Russia's policy, the Russian Foreign Ministry released a statement last Thursday recognizing western Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

Russia's statement represents the first instance of any country officially recognizing any part of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. The Israeli government was cautious to immediately accept the recognition, as it considers all of Jerusalem to be Israel's capital.

"We reaffirm our commitment to the principles for a Palestinian-Israeli settlement, which include the status of east Jerusalem as the capital of the future Palestinian state," the Russian Foreign Ministry stated. "At the same time, we must state that in this context we view west Jerusalem as the capital of Israel."

The statement also includes a reaffirmation of Moscow's support for a two-state solution.

Israeli officials initially interpreted the statement to mean that Moscow would recognize western Jerusalem as Israel's capital following the possible future establishment of a Palestinian state with eastern Jerusalem as its capital. Emmanuel Nahshon, a spokesman for Israel's Foreign Ministry, simply said Israel is "studying the statement."

Russian Ambassador to Israel Alexander Shein is due to meet with Israeli Foreign Ministry officials in the coming days to clarify the policy shift and to discuss its implications.

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What Jesus' Dying Words Can Teach Us About Heaven-Focused Intimacy

As our attention is drawn this month to the passion of the Christ, I've been reflecting on our Savior's final words spoken from the cross. By all accounts, Jesus didn't do a lot of talking. He was almost silent during those painful hours as He hung suspended between earth and heaven. These significant "seven last words," as they've come to be identified, provide a window into Jesus' soul.

The cruel torture of crucifixion would have virtually pressed the very life's breath out of Jesus' lungs, requiring Him to push on his feet, straighten His legs and relieve the weight of His body that paralyzed the pectoral muscles to utter these words. Christ's important, final expressions ultimately reveal not only His humanity and incredible determination, but also His extravagant, demonstrative love for us and His intimate relationship with the Father.

We tend to pay close attention to the words spoken by a dying loved one and hold them as treasured memories. How well do we remember and treasure the deeper meaning of these words of our Savior?

"Father, forgive them, they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34)—Jesus knew what it meant to be wounded in the house of His friends—the deepest hurt you can experience (Zech. 13:6). Yet, He prioritized His forgiveness of others, which preceded His petitions as our intercessor, who would be eternally at the right hand of the Father in heaven (see Matt. 6:14, 15).

“Today you will be with me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43b)—Not only did Christ demonstrate love and forgiveness toward His accusers, He interacted in a personal, relational way with the criminal who was hanging on a nearby cross. Regardless of the intensity of the raw agony He was enduring, our loving Lord demonstrated compassion and care for the one who was being punished justly when asked, “Lord, remember me when You come into your kingdom” (Luke 23:42). Paul described this amazing concept of being with Christ in heavenly places as a present reality for believers: “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and He raised us up and seated us together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:4–6).

“‘Woman, here is your son. ... Here is your mother'” (John 19:26-27)—In His final moments, Christ’s enduring love for those nearest Him was not diminished. Staring death in the face, He spoke of the continued care for His mother and the reciprocal parental affection that the beloved disciple would enjoy. How easily we become absorbed in our day-to-day lives and especially in our times of difficulty. Our intentions are good. We want to minister to the needs of others, especially the family of God or household of faith, but may God help us to remember not only these words, but the relational principle behind them

“My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mark 15:34b; Matt. 27:46)—Jesus was one with the Father and the Word made flesh, who came and lived among us (John 1:14). Yet, to reconcile fallen humanity to God, He experienced this time of separation from deep, intimate fellowship with His Father. What great punishment this must have been to be wounded, bruised and abandoned for us as the guilt of our sins was laid upon Him (Is. 53:4–6).

“I thirst” (John 19:28b)—Not only did the living Word long for fellowship, but the one who offered living water to an

ostracized woman by a well (John 4:14) cried out in thirst. Surely, the Father hears His children, who are supposed to embody springs of salvation and rivers of everlasting water flowing from our bellies, when we exclaim, "O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You, my flesh faints for You, in a dry and thirsty land with no water" (Ps. 63:1).

"It is finished" (John 19:30b)—In those final moments at the very point of death, when the one being crucified would normally not have the strength to cry anything aloud, Christ's cry of victory still resounds today. He fulfilled what was required to "save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, because He at all times lives to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25b).

"Into your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46b)—Just as Christ was able to release Himself into the Father's hands, Holy Spirit empowers us to completely abandon ourselves into the hands of a loving God. Although it may sound paradoxical, the reason we can endure the honor of suffering unashamedly for Christ's sake is because we have the assurance that He "abolished death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10). We can say with Paul, "for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him until that Day" (2 Tim. 1:12).

Perhaps as we reflect upon our "loved one"'s dying words, we might benefit from looking through the lens of Galatians 2:20—"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

Sharing in the experience of the cross with Christ is one of the highest and deepest dimensions of intimacy we can know with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Bob Sorge so vividly

describes it this way, “The cross’s shadow is the saint’s home.” We must always remember this is not a one-time accomplishment but rather an ongoing process as we join with the apostle Paul and “die daily” (1 Corinthians 15:31b).

Consequently, the profound death that comes through being crucified with Christ brings unparalleled affection from our loving heavenly Father and transformational resurrection hope. “For if we have been united with Him in the likeness of His death, so shall we also be united with Him in the likeness of His resurrection” (Rom. 6:5).

These are some powerful words to remember! {eoa}

Kay Horner is the executive director of The Helper Connection.

How These Intercessors Are Taking Back Territory From a Suicide Principality

Pastors and prayer warriors in Colorado fasted all day Sunday, then gathered in the evening to wage spiritual warfare against an enemy that’s killing more people in the Rocky Mountain region than any other part of the nation.

Suicide is the second highest cause of premature death among those aged 10-34, and Wyoming, New Mexico, Montana and Colorado lead the nation in deaths by suicide, according to the most recent data available from the Centers for Disease Control.

Landon Hairgrove, a youth pastor in Fort Collins, Colo., fasted all day and then led intercessors Sunday night in

praying for an end to suicides in his county, which reported 83 cases in 2016, double the national rate of per 100,000 people.

“I believe there is a spirit that’s attacking this region, and we’re taking down that stronghold through worship and intercession,” said Hairgrove, recalling a suicide death of a fifth-grader in 2015 that still rocks the church he now serves.

“But we also want to release identities over our kids. The only thing that’s going to break suicide, depression, anxiety and all of that is the knowledge of the Savior who gave Himself up on a cross to offer eternal life.

“John 10:10 says the devil came to kill, steal and destroy, but Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly,” said Hairgrove, a graduate of Christ for the Nations in Dallas, Texas.

The day of fasting and evening of prayer at Vintage City Church, which mourned the fifth-grade boy over a year ago, was the second round in the battle against suicide organized by a youth pastor in northern Colorado.

Isaiah Hupp, a middle school pastor in Loveland, organized the first suicide awareness program in January after conducting a painful funeral ceremony for family and friends of a victim.

The two pastors keep spiritual watch over young people, primarily, in Larimer County, where the suicide rate is 25 per 100,000 people, surpassing the state average of 19.5.

Supporting the pastors in the battle, intercessors and revivalists who travel to churches, businesses and homes to pray turned out once again on Sunday to wage warfare against suicide which, they believe, is primarily a spiritual issue.

According to a CDC report, increases in suicide rates occurred

for both males and females in all but the oldest age group (75 and over). Through 2014, the percent increases in rates were greatest for females aged 10-14 and for males aged 45-64.

Wyoming is the perennial leader in suicide across the nation.

Suicide—even among Christians—is prevalent in the Rocky Mountain region, where other pastors have organized similar fasting and prayer events against it.

In Colorado Springs, a pastor of one of the region's largest churches called for seven days of fasting and prayer in March after the 23rd teen in 14 months committed suicide. Specifically, he issued a national call to pray for teens struggling with mental health issues wherever they may be.

The National Director of Desperation Ministries, David Martin, made his broad appeal to fast and pray after speaking to thousands of people mourning the suicide-death of a well-adjusted, 16-year-old student athlete from Colorado Springs.

A pastor at 10,000-member New Life Church, Martin fasted and prayed himself, remembering the young man, his family and friends, and teens considering suicide.

“Well, for me, this was something I had to do personally,” Martin said. “I welcomed anyone to join me in fasting and praying in the (Colorado) Springs or not.

“It wound up being a miniature movement of prayer and fasting, people everywhere coming together and saying, ‘We stand with you.’ “

Desperation Student Ministries then invited an expert in suicide prevention to speak to youth on the topic at New Life Church, the largest church in Colorado Springs and among the biggest in the Rocky Mountain region.

In Grand Junction, pastors issued prayer calls in December 2016 and again last month after the seventh teen suicide in a

six-month period.

“It’s time for us to realize the deadly despair that is seeded in young people’s hearts when they are told there is no God and, therefore, no hope,” said David Hale, pastor of Spirit of Life Christian Fellowship, of his and other pastors’ calls to pray on site at three public and one Christian high schools.

As great as suicide rates are in the four-state region so are mental health issues in Grand Junction.

A psychology major at Colorado Mesa University and a Christian young adult leader, Kristina Smith estimates that 30 percent of the population in Grand Junction struggles with some type of mental health condition, a figure that’s double the national average of 15 percent.

When her Vineyard pastor, Kirk Yamaguchi and his wife, led the charge to pray at schools, Smith chose the one with the most suicides, Grand Junction High, where some of the church youth group girls she leads attends classes.

On Grand Junction High School grounds, Smith joined a small group of intercessors, including her mother, the wife of an Anglican priest in the Denver-metro area.

After praying for students to be infused with hope and a supernatural revelation of God’s love for each person, Smith felt a dark presence following her as the small group began to leave the school property.

Recognizing her daughter’s spiritual perception, Heather-Beth Smith and other prayer warriors in the group commanded the darkness to leave Kristina and the school permanently.

The 10 girls who prayed with Smith—a Vineyard small-group leader—tell her they’re meeting regularly for prayer on and off Grand Junction High School property, which isn’t something they were prone to do previously.

Even one suicide anywhere is too many, according to Brad Tuttle, leader of the Spiritual Warfare Attack Team (SWAT).

When he read the appeal to fast and pray by New Life's Martin, Tuttle began two days of intercession without food. During that time, the Holy Spirit spoke to him about repentance, believers' identities in Christ and Christians' roles as guardians of the land.

With the intercessors he leads, Tuttle commanded in Jesus' name that the stronghold of suicide leave northern Colorado at the fasting and prayer event Sunday night.

And he's been encouraging intercessors elsewhere to do the same, sending emails and insights given him by the Holy Spirit.

"This is our region," said Tuttle, who founded SWAT and sister group Northern Colorado Revivalists (NOCO Revivalists). The two ministries work alongside churches and pastors through intercessory prayer and spiritual warfare on their behalf. Additionally, they pray at businesses and in homes when invited.

"We have been assigned to be keepers and guardians of the land," said Tuttle, whose motivation to do battle against a stronghold of suicide over northern Colorado is spurred by memories of his brother's 1984 death by suicide in Kansas, and the shocking 83 suicides in the county where he resides.

Recently, Tuttle was moved by another Kansan, this one a 15-year-old boy, who shot himself to death after his mother complained about his report card only months ago.

"Suicide is a fruit—a fruit of wickedness," says Tuttle, a licensed real estate broker who also intercedes, speaks and writes on spiritual warfare and intercessory prayer.

He believes suicide is a form of rebellion that—like other

sinful behaviors—is dealt with through confession and repentance, doctrines pastors should teach more about.

Tuttle and another intercessor closer to Colorado Springs agreed that rebellion has deep roots in Colorado.

The state was the first to allow abortion after the Supreme Court Roe v. Wade ruling that guarantees a constitutional right to one. It is one of only a few states where late-term abortions are allowed.

This year, a voter-approved assisted suicide law allows persons with terminal illnesses to seek lethal drug doses from doctors.

Colorado legalized marijuana use before others states followed.

And Colorado—along with Alaska—were the last two states to require real estate lenders (mortgage brokers, bankers and bank loan officers) to be licensed, Tuttle said.

Another intercessor whose name is widely known in Colorado said the state also holds the dubious honor of being the birthplace of the jihad movement.

A militant Islamic student at what is now the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley was incensed by images of men and women dancing and projecting romantic messages in the 1940s. He reportedly returned to his predominantly Islamic country to advocate for sharia law and hatred of the West.

The intercessor, who wishes to remain anonymous, also points to strongholds of Buddhism and Hinduism, which glorify death, as spiritual influences driving suicide in Colorado.

Testimonies from people who have attempted suicide and professionals who counsel on the topic were on hand at the fasting and prayer night, offering their beliefs that sometimes there are non-spiritual causes for suicidal

tendencies.

In an ironic twist, the church where Isaiah Hupp is a youth pastor, , is one that's been impacted negatively and positively by suicide.

The church holds a video testimony from a woman who battled suicide most of her adult years until she moved to Colorado from California.

After visiting the church a couple times, Karen Archibald was immediately and permanently delivered from a spirit of suicide after a word of knowledge and hands-on prayer at a women's event.

"I still talk to youth about suicide whenever the opportunity arises," said Archibald from her home in California, where she returned with husband Duane.

Two of their three daughters who witnessed their mother's scary battle with suicide still reside in Colorado.

News of suicides in northern Colorado, Grand Junction and the Springs sadden Archibald, but she believes the power of God is greater than the seeds of death and destruction sown by the enemy of souls. {eoa}

FRC: What 'Draining the Swamp' Looks Like From a Christian Perspective

Tuesday at noon EDT, the Family Research Council will host a live stream of a speech by former Department of Homeland

Security frontline officer and intelligence expert Philip Haney, who sounded the alarm over the detrimental impact the politically correct Countering Violent Extremism policy was having on our national security.

The speech, titled "Draining the Swamp From a Biblical Perspective," just how deeply the submission, denial and deception run in the U.S. national security apparatus. Supported by internal memos and documents, Haney will further expose how the federal government capitulates to an "enemy within" while punishing those who reject its narrative.

In a press release announcing Tuesday's speech, FRC stated:

When the Department of Homeland Security was founded in 2003, its stated purpose was "preventing terrorist attacks within the United States and reducing America's vulnerability to terrorism." Unfortunately, due to a culture of political correctness, a policy known as Countering Violent Extremism emerged, downplaying the threat of supremacist Islam as unrelated to the religion and just one among many violent ideological movements.

When recently retired DHS frontline officer and intelligence expert Philip Haney bravely tried to say something about the people and organizations that threatened the nation, his intelligence information was eliminated, and he was investigated by the very agency assigned to protect the country. The national campaign by the DHS to raise public awareness of terrorism and terrorism-related crime known as If You See Something, Say Something effectively has become If You See Something, Say Nothing.

[Click here](#) to register for the live stream of the event. Those in Washington, D.C., may attend in person. {eo}

How Trump, Russia and North Korea Fit Into End-Times Prophecy

Tensions continue to climb internationally as all eyes rest on the Middle East and beyond.

With the advent of nuclear and chemical warfare, even more voices are asking if this is the prophesied end times.

But could it just be a season of war and not Revelation come to life?

Watch the video to get some insight!

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Clinton Front Group Launches 'Recess Resistance' Campaign

You can fully expect that if your Republican congressman or senator is hosting a town hall event during the current two-week Easter recess, there will be liberal protesters there, attempting to hijack the event.

The Center for American Progress, a political action committee founded by former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's former campaign chairman, John Podesta, is urging its followers to

engage in a “recess resistance.” Not only that, but the group is offering tips and resources to ensure those efforts are successful.

Here’s what the group wrote in an email to supporters obtained Monday by Charisma Caucus:

Members of Congress are back in their districts for two weeks for recess, which means we’re back to resisting at town halls, rallies and other district events. There’s a lot to resist from the past couple of weeks—especially the fact that congressional Republicans are trying to bring back Trumpcare, which threatens the health care of tens of millions of people and that they are doing little to avert an impending government shutdown. Additionally, it’s time to ask for an independent investigation on Russia, especially since the Trump campaign is under FBI investigation for colluding with Russia.

So whether you’re new to the resistance game or a pro, we’ve got the tools to help. Check out our [guide](#), which will help you plug into the resistance from anywhere. It includes questions to ask your member at a town hall, sample social media and more. Join the resistance, because with President Trump hurting people’s lives left and right, we might as well give it all we got.

There’s so much misinformation in those two paragraphs, it’s difficult to know where to start. Perhaps the best thing to do is to pray for our elected representatives, and if you have the time, offer yourself as a source of encouragement to them.

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Watch Out for This Oft-Ignored Signal of a Fizzling Marriage

Forty years seems like a long time, but it goes by in a flash. Today, my husband and I have been married for that long. I remember when we first got married. It was almost impossible to think of being married that hope that was there became wishful thinking only a few years into marriage.

Mess

This happens to many people, and unfortunately, marriages are abandoned because our mate was not the perfect person we thought he or she was. As a matter of fact, after about five or six years, we begin to think maybe God made a mistake when He put us together. Or we may think, *Did God really put us together in the first place?* Or the most dangerous of all, we think, *I just made a huge mess out of my life by committing to marriage.*

The biggest issue in failed marriages as I see it is one of the two persons has simply given up wanting to connect with the other. Small issues like dirty, smelly socks not being picked up and put in the hamper or the garbage not being taken out become huge issues that shove any caring, concern or love out of the way. It becomes more about the mess that we are rather than the promise we are becoming.

Dance

Marriage is an interesting dance between two people who are about as opposite as they can be. So we can either learn from each other and become helpmates, a mirror to reflect back to them, or we can become a sledgehammer to smash them to pieces in order to make them like us.

You would not want to marry yourself. You married that man or woman because you were incomplete. Having another person just like you would only make you even more incomplete.

Seeing your mate as God's gift to you to help you learn better how to walk through this life is the first step to lifelong love. Then, each day becomes a beautiful journey of learning and loving.

Communion

After 40 years, I finally love my husband for who he is, not for who I have made him to be. Discovering who he is has become a lifelong adventure, like a gift I unwrap each day and embrace each night.

Scripture says two become one flesh, which is indicated in Genesis 2:24 and reiterated again in Mark 10:8 when Jesus answered a question about divorce. Through these Scriptures, God is indicating one reason for marriage. Yes, He's talking about sex and procreation, but He's also talking about a beautiful communion of two people, which is culminated in one of life's greatest pleasures

Humans, though, have a tendency to pervert any gift God gives us. We do that by wanting more of the delights God has provided for us. So some seek those delights without marriage or outside of marriage.

The bigger issue is, though, we have not really understood what marriage is all about. It's about becoming more than one. It's about allowing God to work in the midst of our marriage to create a strong, deep union that will see us through whatever life throws our way. With Him we form a three-strand cord (Eccl. 4:12), which is not easily broken.

Through Thick and Thin

I've said many times that my husband has loved me through

thick and thin, more of the former than the latter. If it had only been about sex there would have been many years he would have left. The fact he stayed and walked with me through all my issues only makes me love him more.

He has not just been my mate, he has been my anchor, my teacher and my lover. However, there was a time that I loved sugary treats more than anything, even more than him. I didn't cognitively realize it at the time, but my behavior revealed the truth.

Gift

God transformed me, restored me and anointed me to share my message with others. I couldn't have done it without the gift he gave me more than 40 years ago when I met a tall, blonde-haired, blue-eyed man of peace who would become my husband for life.

God knew what and who I needed to steady me, calm me, love me and put up with me. He used Roy Irving Parker to train me to be who I am today. Though I didn't always assimilate all the lessons quickly, I finally learned the ones that matter the most.

My husband is created by God to be who he is. I am created by God to be who I am and together with God we are way more than one.

More than One

I am noise.

You are silence.

I am an abundance of words.

You are well-chosen, words.

I am talk.

You are thought.

I am quick reaction.

You are measured response.

I am weak.

You are strong.

I am faltering steps.

You are dancing on the wind.

I am the receiver.

You are the giver.

You pour your love into and over me

And I gladly receive your gift.

Eye-to-eye,

Skin-on-skin,

We wrestle in our exultations

Of one another's differences.

I am center stage.

You are behind-the-scenes.

I am options and research.

You are get-in-the-car-and-go.

I am work and then work some more.

You are work, play, rest.

Your rhythms are set,

Mine bounce with the day.

All through the night, I feel your heart beat

And I am deeply satisfied

To be the one you have been beside

For 40 years and beyond.

It is said there won't be marriage in heaven,

But something even more glorious.

All of life is but a dress rehearsal

For the day we both will be forever with the Creator.

It's beyond our experiences,

Past the brink of this reality,

Still I have known as much on heaven on earth

As one human being can have and still live in the super-abundance of it all.

I am turmoil.

You are calm assurance.

I am shouts of joy.

You are quiet whispers of love.

I am eyes that see.

You are hands that touch.

Me-You-God, and God is the One who knows

This three-strand cord binds us together as more than one.
{eoa}

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This Is the New Christian Paradigm in the Public Square for the 21st Century

Last month, I wrote these words in an email to the 100,000 American Renewal Project pastors:

Evangelical and pro-life Catholic Christians can no longer operate on the model for civic engagement entrusted to us from the last generation, a sort of do-nothing approach.

The currency in the political arena is:

1. How many votes can you bring to the table or
2. How much money can you bring that brings votes to the table? Press conferences, mass distribution of press releases and getting an interview with Megyn Kelly is public relations-useful for boosting one's reputation, improving one's image and promoting one's self.

"Organizing" is the largest denomination in political currency. Speechifying is way down on the list of political

currency, worth maybe a half-nickel on a dollar. A Sunday sermon is not a denomination of political currency.

After watching this video filmed by 100 Houston area pastors in response to the Texas "Bathroom Bill" (SB6), I want to throw my hat in the air and shout hallelujah!

Pastors have begun to turn the corner and erect a new paradigm in public square for the 21st Century. And what is the goal? To restore America to her Judeo-Christian heritage and re-establish a biblical-based culture.

Over the past fifty to seventy-five years, evangelicals and pro-life Christians cowered under the false god of secularism.

Consider just two public displays of ignorance and lack of spiritual wisdom.

First, ponder the carnal inclination of Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor; they see God in nothing. It's sad in a way, that with all of their learning and God-given intellectual firepower, they have no understanding.

Why? Because wisdom has a moral dimension. As Bruce K. Waltke writes in *Proverbs Commentary*, "A person could memorize the book of Proverbs and still lack wisdom if it did not affect his heart, which informs behavior."

As Solomon explained, "Those who forsake the law praise the wicked; but those who keep the law contend with them. Evil men don't understand justice; but those who seek Yahweh understand it fully." (Prov. 28:4-5)

Second, Pastor Tim Keller, the founder of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Manhattan, was to receive the Kuyper Prize for Excellence in Reformed Theology and Public Witness by Princeton Theological Seminary, as "an innovative theologian and church leader, well-published author and

catalyst for urban mission in major cities around the world.”

But two weeks ago, the president of Princeton Theological Seminary stated that they were canceling the award because of Keller’s “lack of support for both the ordination of women and LGBTQ causes.”

Princeton withdrew the award, but Keller will still speak on campus. I suggest we pray for Keller’s lectures—for God’s grace to be on him and for a breakthrough in the campus in the lives of the students. Historically, Princeton has been a place where God initiated spiritual awakenings. Pray that God would do it again.

When I consider the Princeton debacle, I am reminded that ignorance is worst when it amounts to ignorance of God. But those steeped in His wisdom possess intellectual clarity and moral discernment:

“Have you ever met an individual who has lost their memory? Maybe they have Alzheimer’s? They cannot remember who you are, or who they are. Someone could easily take things away from them. In a sense, America has had national Alzheimer’s. We have lost our collective memory. Here we are the most prosperous and independent nation in world history, with more individual liberty and opportunity than any previous people, and yet we forgot how we got here.”

Virtue and freedom are inseparable. Freedom cannot be preserved long in the absence of virtue within its people and their representatives.

Question: How did America’s founders encourage virtue?

Government promoted Christianity, knowing that morality is the anchor of sustainable freedom. If you doubt this, then study the words of the Northwest Ordinance (1787):

“Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good

government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.”

Until a century ago, Christianity was the key component of America and its civil institutions and laws. For example, Sir William Blackstone’s four-volume *Commentaries on the Laws of England* was, according to The Founder’s Bible, “the second-most cited authority during the Founding Era (1760-1805), and Thomas Jefferson said that American attorneys used Blackstone’s with the same devotion that Muslim’s used the Koran. Significantly, Blackstone’s relied so heavily on the Scriptures that the Rev. Charles Finney (a famous minister in the national revival known as the Second Great Awakening) credited his conversion to Christianity with his study of that textbook in law school. Blackstone’s *Commentaries* remained the basis of American legal education until the 1920’s, when progressivism and evolutionary legal theory replaced originalism and original intent.”

Secularism has taken apart America’s Christian godly heritage brick-by-brick. The wages that secularists bargain with are life, pleasure and profit; but the wages they pay are death, torment and destruction. As Robert South, quoted in Charles Spurgeon’s, *The Treasury of David* noted, “He that would understand the falsehood and deceit of Secularism must compare its promises and its payment together.” {eoa}

Cultivating the Culture of the Kingdom in This Sticky

Area of Your Life

God's righteousness, His character and His perfection have always been covenant-based. His covenant of commitment to us cannot be broken. As I seek to reflect that element of His kingdom and character in my own life, I must ask whether my relationships are in good shape. Why am I in them? Is it for me? Or is it for the kingdom of God? Am I in relationship with people for my personal benefit, for how they make me feel, or for what they can do for me? Or is it so that the kingdom of God can be revealed on Earth regardless of the prospect of any benefit to me?

I have relationships that are easy, and I have some that are difficult. All of my "easy" relationships are covenant relationships, but not all of my covenant relationships are easy. How then must my heart be changed?

There are people to whom I give my life because it's not difficult to do. They make it easy. Others are not so easy. I, therefore, bind myself in covenant to the difficult ones because it's the kingdom thing to do in spite of the fact that they give me a royal pain in the backside: "For the love of Christ constrains us" (2 Cor. 5:14).

I am compelled to do this because it's the heart of my God who loves each of us with a depth of grace not conditioned on the performance of the ones He loves.

This calls for a deep shift of emphasis. Three times Jesus commanded Peter in John 21, "Feed My sheep!" (vv. 15–17). He meant: "Get out of yourself, Peter. Put the kingdom first, loving others first, ministering the love of the Father first, and go take care of My people. Be poured out for them!"

We must cultivate a culture of the kingdom reflecting the heart and character of God; a collective mind shift, a fresh mentality, a different way of thinking and living. Do you

understand what you're really asking when you pray, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done"?

A culture is a group of people who belong to one another, who identify with one another; and it takes more than you alone for the fruit of that kind of mindset to manifest itself, even in your personal life. It requires all of us being in it together, encouraging one another, reinforcing one another, and seeking the Lord together.

Jesus performed miracles because of oneness with His Father. In relationship and intimacy with His Father, He knew when He was moving and moved with Him because He knew it wasn't about Him. It was about revealing the Father. The kingdom of God, therefore, calls us to demonstrate the true nature of the Father on the earth and to walk in it. Jesus told the disciples, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9b).

As a people together, therefore, we seek to develop a kingdom way of thinking and living until the air around us is as alive with the presence of God, as the air around Jesus was almost 2,000 years ago.

Jesus did not mean that His command to seek the kingdom of God would set us upon a quest to see miracles. Especially in renewal circles, it seems we've too often equated it with that. The miracles of the kingdom begin, not with a desire for miracles, but with the Father's compassion for people flowing through us. The Father's heart of mercy and love is revealed on Earth through His disciples. Miracles were the by-product.

A kingdom mentality focuses not on self and personal need for fulfillment. The heart of the kingdom of heaven is compassion, the Father's love, and concern for those we touch. It's the reach beyond ourselves. It requires that we seek intimacy with the Father and become in our character what He is in His love. Miracles and experiences of the supernatural will be the

result, not the goal, but in a true kingdom mentality we understand that we can only go there together.

We must come into this together because it won't work for us one at a time. It's a culture that nurtures the individual, but it's not a private, individual thing. This is why we're alive. This is what we were born for. God has ordained a destiny for us in the kingdom of God. He will manifest the truth of who He is as destiny flows from the intimacy with Him that all of us who hunger for Him will come to know. {eoa}

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Prophecy: Payback—the Angels Are Troubling the Water

Payback. The message is going viral because it's a word of the Lord that is inspiring hope for those who have seen injustice.

For the month of April, the Lord told me the devil has stirred trouble in the lives of some, but that He is sending angels to trouble the water. He said healing and deliverance is coming to who so ever will press into Jesus. In other words, it's time for payback.

I believe this is part of the angels of abundant harvest

prophecy that the Lord gave me for 2017. It's time to press into the fulness of that prophecy, which you can read at .

In the meantime, let this video inspire your faith. I've had testimonies of people in my church who had money stolen from a fund that they never thought they'd see again. It was returned this week. I've read headlines about former Wells Fargo executives this week who are being mandated to pay back \$75 million. This is just the beginning.

It's time for payback!

{eoa}