

ELECTION SEASON: Swing Vote

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Many believe this upcoming presidential election will be “the most important of our lifetime,” one that could greatly affect our children, grandchildren, and the very future of America.

The alarming reality is America, like ancient Rome, is witnessing all the historical warning signs of an empire on the verge of implosion. As a nation it seems we are in the midst of the greatest moral and spiritual crisis we have ever witnessed, both inside and outside the church.

Through our sin, complacency and compromise we have selfishly sold out our nation and our children’s future—now we are seeing the fruit of it at every level. Not only have we lost the cultural war in a moral landslide, we have a nation on the brink of collapse under the weight of great sin, runaway debt, greed and corruption. In addition to this, we are seeing ever-increasing unrest and contention in our government and in our streets that threatens to rip our nation apart at the seams.

The progressive war against God and our nation’s foundations has taken its toll and continues to thrust America further down a path of self-destruction. Our Founding Fathers warned us that if America were to abandon God and His biblical truths and principles that our nation was founded upon then everything would fall apart.

Many have looked to a president for hope and change, but the truth is the real hope and change America desperately needs begins with God, and His church, the body of Jesus Christ. The fact is, the American church carries the ultimate swing vote

for the future of our nation, one that goes beyond a mere political solution to a divine solution. For what we as the church do or don't do at this pivotal time in history will determine the course of this nation—either the collapse and destruction of America or the greatest awakening ever seen.

The Root of the Problem

At this time, it is critical that the church in America wake up, rise up and lead the way. We must engage on every level and every front before it's too late. However, our focus cannot just be Washington, D.C., and the issues of the day, for in order to see substantial and lasting change in our nation we must first deal with the root of the problem, which is the hearts and souls in the nation.

Although electing the right president and leaders (who honor God) is very important, that is only part of the equation for positive change. For right now, putting a new political party or person in place or just changing laws will be like putting a Band-Aid on a deeply rooted cancer. Overall, the disturbing fruit we are seeing throughout America is merely a reflection of the inward spiritual and moral condition of the people. And the sad reality is America's dark condition is actually a brazen statement against the American church, the one called to be the light to the nation (Matt. 5:14).

The Most Influential Position in the Nation?

While the president and our nation's other leaders play a critical role, we believe there is an even more essential role in influencing the course of our nation—the pulpits of America.

Confirming this is Charles Finney. It is said his life and writings influenced more people toward revival and reformation than any other preacher of the 1800s. He recognized the critical role the church—especially the pulpits (the five-fold ministry)—plays in the shaping of our culture and nation. A

portion of his sermon "Decay of Conscience" says it well:

Our preaching will bear its legitimate fruits.

If immorality prevails in the land,

the fault is ours [the pulpits] in a great degree.

If there is a decay of conscience,

the pulpit is responsible for it ...

If the church is degenerate and worldly,

the pulpit is responsible for it.

If the world loses its interest in [God],

the pulpit is responsible for it.

If Satan rules in our halls of legislation,

the pulpit is responsible for it.

If our politics become so corrupt that the very foundations of our

government are ready to fall away,

the pulpit is responsible for it

We believe the case could be made that, biblically speaking, the highest place of ultimate authority and influence for our nation lies not in Washington, D.C., but rather in the pulpits of America; for the spiritual greatly affects the natural (Eph. 6:12). God's leaders and people hold the greatest spiritual authority as ambassadors representing the supreme kingdom of God, and Christ, the King of kings (Matt. 28:18-20; Rev. 19:16). And what the church allows or disallows both inside and outside the church can affect the entire nation (Matt. 18:18).

In relation to all this, Martin Luther King Jr. prophetically wrote in 1963: "The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority."

Something Has Gone Wrong

As the church, we are the body of Christ in the earth, anointed and equipped by God to lead and be "agents of change," a shining light releasing heaven and God's will into the earth (Matt. 6:10). But something has gone terribly wrong.

For decades much of the American church has been like a sleeping giant who has fallen into a lukewarm and disrepute state. Instead of taking our place as salt and light, we have instead given way allowing the kingdom of darkness to invade, to sow, and take root all across our nation. "While men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares" (Matt. 13:25). And in spite of numerous efforts to influence society and the culture, much of the American church instead has been influenced and conformed to the culture and its ways. As a result we have allowed the progressive stripping away of our godly foundations as our nation continues to spiral downward.

It's undeniable; we are in an epic battle for the soul of our nation. And now the American church and our nation are like a war zone with casualties everywhere. We are seeing burnt-out, broken and backslidden pastors, as well as lives, marriages and families with broken hearts, broken homes and broken dreams. So many are confused, are deceived, have gone astray and become prey to the enemy (the kingdom of darkness).

What Has Held Us Back?

Many with great concern have been speaking of and praying for a great awakening and reformation to bring change, but why

have we not yet seen it? And why have most of our efforts seemed to be—one step forward, two steps back?

The reality is the American church has been greatly hindered and largely ineffective because she has been compromised at most every level. Not only have we compromised and watered down God's Word of truth, but in both the pulpits and pews, we are seeing unbelievable statistics of adultery, divorce, drunkenness, homosexuality and abortions. More than 68 percent of men in church and in excess of 50 percent of pastors are regularly viewing pornography! Sin and compromise abounds in the pulpits and pews of America.

Because of all this, like Samson with Delilah, we have been stripped of our strength, our vision, and our voice. Is this perhaps why the world scoffs at our calls for righteous change?

The fact is, we (the American church) are actually part of the problem! And before we can bring true reformation to our nation we need to reform our own house first. Before we can get the White House in order we need to get our house in order.

What is it Going to Take?

First, we should understand, we can fight day and night to change laws and legislation, but only God can change the heart and soul of a nation.

True change will come when souls are so shaken under the convicting power of the Holy Spirit that their eyes are opened to see how great their sin is, how great is God's love and how great their need is for Christ and His ways.

It's going to take this happening on a scale that has never been seen before—the greatest awakening ever!

Second, the body of Christ is the vessel that will usher in

this great awakening.

Therefore, the depth of change we need in our churches and the nation must begin at the top—in the pulpits of America.

What The Church Must Do

Right now, God is calling all of us to our knees, beginning with those in the pulpits (the real swing vote), for they hold the keys to change everything. God is calling the five-fold ministry (especially pastors) all across America to unite, humble themselves and lead the way—in genuine repentance and massive daily prayer. If they will truly respond in obedience to God's cry and instructions—we will see the heavens opened and a holy visitation—a cleansing and purifying fire that will hit our pulpits and send ripple effects throughout the pews and out into the city streets and across our nation from shore to shore!

Note: Our new book *God's Answer for America* is a very timely and prophetic message that reveals exactly what God is instructing pastors and churches to do to bring the greatest awakening ever seen, the three keys to bring dramatic and lasting change, and more.

With all this in mind, we point to Peter who declared that judgment must first begin in the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17). This is not a condemning judgment, but rather a purifying and purging that will bring the change within we must have in order to rise up in the earth as the glorious church Christ is returning for (Eph. 5:27; Is. 60:1-2). It's time for a holy visitation!

The Coming Great Visitation

Malachi 3 prophesies of a sudden great visitation, which results in a cleansing of God's house, His leaders, and restoring righteousness. In Matthew 21, we also see Jesus cleansed the temple, followed by great miracles. We believe

once again God is coming to cleanse and purify His house for the great work ahead. The following is the first part of a prophetic word that came during prayer in January 2008, after Cindy had seen a vision of the dire condition of the American church.

"There is coming a great visitation to the earth.

A great visitation by My Spirit.

A visitation such as the earth has not seen or heard.

I will move in unprecedented ways

I will visit the White House

I will visit your house, O man of God!

So prepare, O man of God, prepare!

Prepare everywhere, prepare!

For I will come with great power,

And I will cleanse and I will purify this hour.

I will separate the precious from the vile,

I will remove all things from My house that defile ...

I will have a glorious church,

And she will rise up and do great wonders in the earth!

It's time to cast aside every weight and sin

That would hold you back and pen you in.

Remove every impure and unclean thing before your eyes,

The enemy has sent them for your destruction and demise.

Arise, O man of God, it is your day of visitation ... !"

Although it seems darkness has been advancing everywhere, Satan and the powers of darkness had better beware, for the church of Jesus Christ is about to arise in all the earth—a glorious, victorious church (Is. 60:1-3; Eph. 5:27).

A new day is dawning and the old things will pass away.

God is getting ready to take His church to a whole new level, and now is the time to prepare because church as usual is coming to an end.

The Time Is Now!

There are times in history when God moves through His leaders and people in such a way that everything changes.

That time is now! God has a divine solution, the prescribed way and plan to radically change both our churches and nation.

He is counting on us to seize this moment, rise up and run with His answer, before it's too late.

Together, with God, we can dramatically change the course and future of our nation.

To learn how you and your church can help transform your community, city and nation, and help birth the greatest awakening ever, we encourage you to read our new book, *God's Answer For America: How to Save and Change a Nation*.

Then join with pastors and churches all across America and run with God's answer!

Darrell and Cindy deVille are founders of *Shekinah Today Ministries* and authors of the book, *God's Answer for America: How to Save and Change a Nation*. They have a call to raise up the church and turn America back to God. They are founders and senior pastors of *Victory Today Church* in Frisco, Texas. For more information, visit their website at .