

# Apostasy Rising: We Are Ignoring These Major Red Flags

Carl August Sandburg [1878-1967], winner of two Pulitzers for poetry and one for his biography of Abraham Lincoln, rendered an assessment on the demise of nations in world history: “When a nation goes down, or a society perishes, one condition may always be found; they forgot where they came from. They lost sight of what had brought them along.”

American historian, educator and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. (1917-2007), reached the same conclusion: “It is useful to remember that history is to the nation as memory is to the individual. As persons deprived of memory become disoriented and lost, not knowing where they have been and where they are going, so a nation denied a conception of the past will be disabled in dealing with its present and its future.”

How is it that red flags raised by such modern notables of genius as Sandburg and Schlesinger, as well as caveats issued by the first two U.S. presidents have been largely ignored?

George Washington and John Adams proved to be well aware of the danger of damaging “termites” entering through small cracks in America’s foundation:

- “Purity of morals is the only sure foundation of public happiness in any country” –Washington.
- “Religion and morality are the essential pillars of civil society” –Washington.
- “Of all the dispositions and habits that lead to political prosperity, religion and morals are indispensable supports” –Washington.
- “Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious

people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other" –Adams.

A false god has now held sway in America for so long that the true and living God is no longer recognized by the nation, or His ways known. A civilization established "for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith," as the Mayflower Compact attests, which no longer identifies itself as explicitly Christian, finds itself in a perilous position.

It reminds of fractious, insubordinate Israel departing from God, as Malachi 3:8 reveals: "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me.

"But you say, 'How have we robbed You?'"

The demand for clarification "suggests a frame of mind that reveals a shocking unawareness of the transgressions. The background of this 'ignorance' is apparently the failure of the priests to give true instruction in the law (2:6, 8) and therefore the people are destroyed from the lack of knowledge (Hos. 4:6)" (Pieter A. Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*).

Consider in this context the present civil unrest in America. Completely out of touch spiritually, many in America fail to recognize the religious significance of current predicaments such as Antifa savagery in Portland, the crisis at the southern border, pagan public education and higher learning programs, subversive indoctrination on college campuses, Main Street media and Hollywood leftist leanings, Soros ascendants strategically positioned in State and Justice Departments leading the "Russian collusion" subterfuge, social media censure and opprobrium, and San Francisco's self-styled Think Tank's subjugation of Sacramento and so on. It is a sad indictment.

"One of the hallmarks of a life of sin and rebellion is [U.S. Supreme Court Justices] calling 'evil' what God has deemed as

good and calling 'good' that which is inherently evil, which amounts to a confusion of ultimate reality" –R. Dennis Cole, *Numbers Commentary*.

If there is something like Christians' light to be found in America's public square, it is hidden under a bushel.

On the other hand, those who manifest a close relationship with God, a thorough knowledge of His word, as well as political sophistication and informed political engagement, possessed of God's wisdom, become spiritual combatants who enable kings to reign and rulers to decree justice (see Prov. 8:15).

Dr. Bruce K. Waltke informs us that "Wisdom's communicable attributes enable one to sway nations. [Proverbs] assumes administration by wise persons, not by an impersonal code of laws. Wisdom's skills for statecraft are intensified, clarified, and expanded by [wisdom's] attributes of 'shrewdness, discretion, counsel and resourcefulness,' which enables 'kings to reign and rulers to decree (Hebrew: 'to fix, to determine') justice'" (Bruce K. Waltke, *Proverbs*).

Jewish Hebrew scholar Michael V. Fox adds that "Counsel, competence and power are the faculties of statecraft, wielded by effective rulers to achieve their goals" (Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs*),

Our recent opinion piece entitled "Apostasy Rising" brought up the following question from an American Renewal Project email recipient: "I attended a Bible study last night, and the teacher stated, and I quote, 'I can find nowhere in the Bible where the church should discuss politics or play a role in government.' I stated that I didn't agree with him but didn't get into a lengthy discussion. Can you give me Scripture that I can give to him and the class?"

We replied: "Oklahoma Senator James Lankford (graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary) called on pastors

at one of our Pastors and Pews events to 'name one book in the Old Testament that is not written by, to or about political leaders.' Lankford then offered, 'I think there are three in total. I'll make you figure out the three ... Job is one.'"

We also cited Luke 19:13, where Jesus says: "Occupy until I come."

William McKane (1921-2004), distinguished Old Testament scholar and former professor emeritus of Hebrew and Oriental Languages, strongly makes the case, and ours, for pastors and churchgoers engaging the public square as the *ekklesia* called for by Jesus.

He wrote: "It is self-evident that [wisdom] is immersed in worldly affairs and tasks of government and that the situation described [by Proverbs] is the very reverse of wisdom withdrawn from the world and located with Yahweh as his counselor. Wisdom knows her way about the world and has expertise in earthy, hard-headed procedures and negotiations. Wisdom speaks in these verses like a statesman, using a vocabulary descriptive of the attitudes, skills and executive incisiveness associated with good government" (William McKane, *Proverbs: A New Approach*).

Evangelical and pro-life Catholic Christians are being called upon to take their efforts to a whole new level if America is to survive. Neither press conferences, press releases nor Fox News shout-outs count as political currency. What really counts is mustering and marshaling Christian troops to the voting booth. As it is now, Christians are using a tack hammer to try and drive in a railroad spike.

There is good news: Gideons and Rahabs are beginning to stand.