

Can America Be Saved Before It's Too Late?

In recent days, evangelical and charismatic Christians have raised an ever more desperate cry to God to save America, to restore the nation to Him and pull us out of the pit into which we have fallen before it's too late.

Toward this end, great gatherings of prayer have sprung up in various places. I thank God for this, but prayer alone cannot win the day, and effective prayer needs an effective focus.

The key to the salvation of this nation lies squarely in the hands of the church. Despite the protestations of those who have abandoned the organized church, we cannot revive the nation without first reviving the church. With very few exceptions (and I acknowledge a few), every revival that has ever swept this nation has begun in the church and been sustained by and through the church. Historically, revival begins in the church and then works its way into the surrounding culture.

For example, the First Great Awakening under Jonathan Edwards in the early 18th century began in his church in Northampton, Massachusetts, and then spread to the other colonies, eventually changing the surrounding culture and influencing the values on which the nation was founded. The Second Great Awakening in the early 19th century likewise began in the church in Baptist and Methodist congregations. Again, the surrounding culture experienced radical transformation. The Azusa Street revival that birthed Pentecostalism likewise broke out in the church and was sustained in the church. This is the history of revival in America.

I don't believe we will see a revived America before we see truly revived churches. As goes the church, so goes the

nation. Overall, however, the church in this nation has increasingly fallen into sickness while huge numbers of people vote with their feet, many of them filled with emotions ranging from disappointment to bitterness.

The sickness is both moral and doctrinal. In too many places, including many influential megachurches, basic morality, godliness and holiness, clearly stated in Scripture and historically accepted, have not been taught or understood as extensions and expressions of the Father's love. Rather, they have often been rejected as mere religious-spirited rules and sources of condemnation to be discarded or reinterpreted in accord with the world's concept of mercy or political correctness.

In lockstep with this erosion of core values, an increasing state of fatherlessness has fed a culture that understands neither the true heart of God nor the meaning of covenant. Lawlessness and lovelessness then result as families disintegrate and God's beloveds find themselves deprived of a sense of heritage, calling and transcendent purpose. Scripturally, these things are fruits of a father's blessing.

Doctrinally, a Great Apostasy has been gathering steam as the foundation of the Word of God has been compromised or denied in ministry after ministry and in many influential megachurches. Core doctrines such as the sovereignty of God, the existence of hell, the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus and other core elements of our faith are being rejected or reinterpreted. Once more, this is the way of a fatherless culture that fails to pass heritage and blessing from generation to generation. We then wonder why society seems to be collapsing, crime rates rise and our children are lost to us. The foundations have been destroyed.

We don't need more manifestations and esoteric spiritual teachings in the church designed to give us an experience we call revival. Although I love supernatural manifestations and

stand steadfastly against the critics who deny them, what we need is a church infused with the selfless and loving heart of Father God. We need a church that understands the love behind every law and principle embedded in every line of Scripture handed down by God to enable us to live well. We need a church that reveals to the world how to apply these things relationally in love without altering the meaning or ignoring the content.

The revival to come therefore takes us beyond the teaching of the Father's love for remedial inner healing that has been the dominant approach to this subject in recent decades. We needed that message and still do, but it doesn't take us far enough. The revival to come will bring a new level of revelation of the Father's love that releases life, carries God's people beyond themselves in selfless sacrifice, imparts real purpose and enables them to rise higher into their destinies and callings. It's not so much about healing as it is about what we're becoming in Him.

In the Father's heart we each inherit a high calling and purpose from the Savior who longs for His children to do greater things than He did. "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father" (John 14:12). Every true father wants his children to rise above his own level of achievement or happiness in life and empowers and releases them to do so. Let leaders arise in the body of Christ who carry that heart, impart real life and truly set God's people free.

While I see a growing number of pastors and leaders whose character radiates the heart of the Father in relation to the people they lead, I also hear increasing stories of abuse, lack of love, domination and control. Fatherless leaders lead fatherlessly. As a result, without a vision, the people perish. We have suffered a generation of concerted attack on the institution of fatherhood and now we pay the price in

leaders of government, schools, businesses and the church who cannot father. Because they cannot father, life is cut off, chaos grows and society suffers. If ever there was a time for Malachi 4:5-6 to be fulfilled, it is now. "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse."

Can America be saved and turned before it's too late? Let revival begin in the church, but let it be a revival energized and centered in a revelation of the heart of Father God the like of which we have never seen. Let this revelation revolutionize the character of leadership and the body of Christ in a way that transforms the way the world sees the church. Let it revolutionize leadership styles.

Let a life-giving spirit flow from the hearts of a rising generation of leaders who, by their character imparted from the heart and spirit of a loving God, release freedom, life, heritage and destiny into the people of God. Then watch those people change their nation and their world.

Pockets of true revival are breaking out across America. Want to know more about the next great move of God? Click here to see Jennifer LeClaire's new book, featuring Dutch Sheets, Reinhard Bonnke, Jonathan Cahn, Billy Graham and others.

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