

Don't Believe the Battle in Our Nation Is Spiritual? Just Look at California

In an article for The American Spectator titled "Welcome to 'Hotel California,'" novelist and screenwriter Patricia Mahon submits: "After more than 20 years here [in Los Angeles], the landscape has changed. Rarely does a day pass when I do not encounter the genderless homeless and their dogs encamped at a traffic signal or in the littered brush at the edge of a parking lot. Errant shopping carts routinely make their way from local markets to freeway underpasses, where they function as the support columns for an endless tract of tent homes. Sleeping bags, plastic bags, poly tarps, and cardboard are the cooperative building materials of the street.

"With a burgeoning homeless population of some 50,000, Los Angeles now boasts one of the largest unsheltered communities in the United States. It is a rough group of heroin addicts, prostitutes, the mentally ill and folks who are simply down and out in Tinseltown.

"Residents walk their dogs with pet boots in downtown L.A., not because it's trendy but to protect them from Hepatitis A, which has blanketed Skid Row.

"The Democrats have presided over the California Legislature for 40 years. The State Controller has been a Democrat for over 44 years. There has not been a Republican senator elected from the state in over 25 years. There has not been a Republican attorney general or a Republican state treasurer in over two decades."

What's happening in the state of California, as in the rest of the nation as a whole, is neither a clash between Democrats and Republicans nor a debate about improving methods and

objectives. Two distinct religions are contending for domination of the public square. The battle is not political but spiritual, as secularists contrive how best to decouple the last vestige of Jehovah God from America's underlying structure and foundation. This is happening in a nation founded constitutionally by Christians "for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith."

Tragically, the church slept through most of the last century, stone-deaf and stone-blind to the spiritual disintegration of America. What will it take to arouse modern Christendom? For if the present course holds, the nation is about to learn something that can't be learned in any other way.

In a sermon delivered in the pagan setting of Caesarea Philippi, the "Gates of Hades", a city much like our nation today, dominated by immorality and idolatry, Jesus urged his disciples to not shy away from evil but to confront it and storm the gates of hell. He encouraged them to build an ekklesia that would overcome the worst evils, against which "the gates of hell shall not prevail."

Ed Silvos writes that "Jesus did not declare, 'I will build My temple' or 'I will build My synagogue,' the two most prominent Jewish religious institutions at the time. Instead, He chose a secular entity first developed by the Greeks when He said, 'I will build my ekklesia.'"

According to *A Dictionary of Classical Antiquities*:

"The Ekklesia was not religious but governmental. ... Every city had an Ekklesia. The Ekklesia had expansive authority in determining the affairs of cities and territories. It functioned as the legal ruling assembly of a city, meeting 40-50 times a year to lead and govern. Ekklesias were regularly summoned to actively participate in legislation, declare war, make peace, negotiate treaties, make alliances, elect officials, and more."

Christ's use of the Greek word ekklesia is captivating since, in the Hebrew mind, "The temple is the place on earth where God rests his foot – it still belongs to the heavenly sphere: Yahweh sits on his throne in heaven as well as in the temple," according to Rolf Paul Knierim.

Jesus chose the ekklesia to be and function as His spiritual government, legislating heaven on earth.

"The Gates of Hades," says Pastor Greg Simas of Convergence House of Prayer in the San Francisco Bay area, "represents all that opposes God's will. Crime, corruption, lying, sexual immorality, pornography, ungodly ways of doing business, humanism, abortion, to name a few. All these, and more, have come out of these gates into our society. Our responsibility is [to] co-labor with Jesus and bring the gospel to these 'gates', redeeming and reclaiming lives and systems."

America finds itself at a crossroads.

In public education, the three R's of basic skills that trained America's youth for the last 300 years—reading, writing and arithmetic—have taken a backseat to social engineering and the secular indoctrination of children. This entails depicting same-sex intercourse and marriage as "moral," gender pronoun pronouncement as "diversity," murder of the pre-born as "choice," copping out through euthanasia as "courageous," lack of discernment as "inclusiveness," coercive government distribution of wealth as "social justice" or "repairment," and socialism as "woke." All of these are the forerunners of totalitarian tyranny.

What can we do?

"We have to make a choice, are we going to continue 'doing church' or rise up to our calling and become Christ's Ekklesia?" writes Simas. "The Gates stand as Goliath did over our cities, towns, regions, and nations defying the armies of the Living God. Are we going to try and suit up in Saul's

armor and 'do church' or take what God has equipped us with onto the battlefield as Christ's Ekklesia?"

There can be little doubt that for America to survive, public education must be reversed or even completely revoked. Whereas at one time sexual perversities could be encountered or obtained solely in back alleys and houses of ill repute, they now have been recycled into the mainstream by national education bureaucrats, positioned front and center in public education.

When a mass exodus from government-run education comes to pass, American Christendom will have to take its game to a whole new level. In order to accommodate and educate Gen Z and America's 21st-century incoming generations, the game will have to be moved from the "church-house" to the public square.

The departure from government indoctrination camps will require biblical educators, resources and pastoral leadership all over the country to manage the deluge of youth from public schools. Banding together will be imperative, so that the spiritual crippling inflicted by secularists on the American culture can be undone.

On the bright side, an exodus from public education is highly likely to trigger a third Great Awakening in America, a "healing of the land," initiated by a merciful and loving God.

By God's grace, Gideons and Rahabs are beginning to stand.