

Unleashing Psalm 133's Blessing on America Through Prayer

The Bible speaks of unity as something that is “good and pleasant” (Ps. 133:1), and in unity “the Lord has commanded the blessing” (Ps. 133:3). Jesus prayed for Christian unity, “I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfect in unity, and that the world may know that You have sent Me” (John 17:23a).

For 200 years after the Protestant Reformation, churches had tried to achieve unity by force. Countless martyrs, both Protestant and Catholic, were created by wars and persecution. The only unity achieved was the unity of the grave.

By the early 17th century, nations were starting to appreciate the benefits of tolerance but were unable to find a way to realize the promised benefits of Christian unity. They had not yet learned that unity is not the same as uniformity. To quote Pope Benedict XVI, “We should first try to find unity through diversity, in other words to accept what is fruitful in our divisions, to detoxify them, and to welcome the positive things that come precisely from diversity.”

It was not until the 18th century that Christians were taking their first halting steps toward unity in diversity in the American Colonies.

The 13 American colonies were a patchwork of religious beliefs. The Puritans were in Massachusetts, Quakers in Pennsylvania, Anglicans in Virginia and Catholics in Maryland. Many other denominations were represented, and quite a few Americans who had no religion at all. To reach this diverse group of people, God had to send something which would transcend their religious communities, which came to be known

as the Great Awakening.

Beginning in 1739, George Whitfield preached the same message to all denominations, including Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Anglicans, Catholics, Quakers, Puritans and Moravians. And, whereas prior reformers had tried to form new, pure denominations, Whitefield wanted his followers to reform the denomination they were in. Whitfield was the first to unite the Christians in the diverse denominations in Christ.

The Great Awakening prepared the American colonies to unanimously come together to declare in the Declaration of Independence that God created all men equal. After the revolution, the Americans united in their diversity to form the United States of America. When the Second Great Awakening came in 1801, it featured the largest ecumenical meeting up to that point in modern history, and Americans united in their diversity to help the needy and spread the gospel at home and around the world.

Today America struggles under the weight of division as churches seem to be split between those who want only to help the needy and those who want only to spread the gospel. Yet, if the nation is to survive, churches must unite in their diversity to both care for the needy and spread the gospel.

We must cry out to God for an awakening of unity in diversity which transcends the denominations, like the Great Awakening and brings Americans together as in the meetings of the Second Great Awakening.

We ask you to pray for repentance, church unity and healing for our land during the 40-day Jewish season of Teshuvah, which begins with the Great American Eclipse on August 21 (see), and participate in ecumenical meetings such as Kairos 2017 to be held in Kansas City on October 24-26, 2017 (see).

Above all, pray that another Great Awakening will come to

America as we unite in our diversity once more. {eoa}

Ron Allen is a Christian businessman, CPA and author who serves in local, national and international ministries, spreading a message of reconciliation to God, to men and between believers. He is founder of the International Star Bible Society, telling how the heavens declare the glory of God; the Emancipation Network, which helps people escape from financial bondage; and co-founder with his wife, Pat, of Corporate Prayer Resources, dedicated to helping intercessors.