

Here's Why Politics and Preaching Should Mix

At the American Renewal Project, we are asking 100,000 evangelical pastors to begin praying to discern if God is calling you to run for political office in 2016. School board, county commissioner, city council, mayor or Congress—every arena of government needs the “salt and light” of Christian witness and participation.

If the Lord were to call 1 percent of that larger number, then 1,000 pastors would run for office in 2016. And if they each averaged 300 volunteers per campaign, that would create a 300,000 grass-roots, precinct-level explosion from the bottom-up. It would ignite a spiritual movement in the public arena of America not seen since America's founding.

Will you please pray about running for elective office in 2016? You may be thinking: *“Why is this even important?”* or *“Does God even want us to be so concerned about politics and government?”* Ronald Greer, a Methodist minister and author, wrote a book about the dark days of the Nazi takeover of Holland. Gestapo were everywhere and Jews were vanishing. Some Dutch Christians asked former missionary Hendrik Kraemer what they should do. He said to them, “I cannot tell you what to do, but I can tell you who you are. If you know who you are, then you will know what to do.”

Then Kraemer picked up his Bible and read to the scared Christians: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation” (1 Pet. 2:9). After hearing the Word of God, the people thanked Kraemer, left and started the Dutch underground resistance. So let me ask you—do you remember who you are? From one generation to the next, Christian courage is a requirement if we are to be found faithful. Even as the persecuted early church prayed for an increase in boldness

(not freedom from persecution), the various crises we face in America in 2015 should cause us to do the same.

And as we march forth in boldness, ready to do battle against our common enemy, the devil and “the spiritual forces in high places” (Eph. 6:12), we do well to remember that “our battle is not against flesh and blood.” For those of us who as Christians are actively involved in politics—campaigns, elections, coalition-building, etc.—this must never be forgotten. We must know who we are, and we must know who our enemy is.

America is in critical need of a spiritual awakening. We look to re-establish a biblically based culture in America and to halt the war on Christianity. But there is another aspect to our vision for Christians in America.

We want to help lead our pastors away from a false vision of their ministry, which would have them retreat from the public square. Because of this retreat of evangelical pastors from the public square over the last century, America no longer enjoys a biblically based culture. If, as I argue, the glory of a nation lies in its righteousness, and if virtue is an essential component of sustainable freedom, then we have placed our nation in harm’s way.

Jeremiah described the devastation and suffering of a nation as being the result of sin and rebellion of its people. “She defiled herself with immorality and gave no thought to her future. Now she lies in the gutter with no one to lift her out” (Lam. 1:9).

Exceptional men and women with biblical wisdom founded America. A nation rose and soared, saturated in “the understanding and knowledge of God.” Her moral absolutes were acquired from the Book—His Word.

And it was colonial-era pastors who led, walking in the arena of civil government. The early history of the United States

reveals that ministers running for elective office and serving the country as a statesman was standard practice.

The fact is until recently pastors have always been at the forefront of leading America to call upon God to send the miracle of repentance and revival in America. And often it has been the case that pastors led from both the pulpit and from the chair of elected office.

The anointed eye recognizes that what has happened to Christian America is part of the spiritual battle, an ongoing war throughout history, attempting to erase Jesus Christ from history and the founding of America. But the cross is the basis of all blessing and the source of all wisdom.

Will you bring wisdom to your city? Will you take Christ into the public square? This is the need of the hour.

David Lane is the founder of the American Renewal Project, an organization helping energize pastors to mobilize their congregations to “register and vote their faith.” David and his wife, Cindy, live in Thousand Oaks, California. To learn more, go to .