

# How Do We Respond

Across the nation recently, Americans were riveted to their televisions as scenes of the destruction in New York City and Washington, D.C., were replayed on national news broadcasts. The sight was surreal, more like footage from a disaster movie than real life. But as we listened over and over to the details of the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, reality hit. Our sense of security crumbled. The trespass by terrorists on our land ushered us into a time of war.

How should we as believers respond?

We might be tempted to fear. But throughout Scripture we are told not to be afraid because God promises that those who trust in Him are secure. Our peace and safety come from leaning on Him. Psalm 91 reminds us that in the face of disaster, God is our refuge:

“He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, ‘My refuge and my fortress, My God, in whom I trust!’ For it is He who delivers you from the snare of the trapper, and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with His pinions, and under His wings you may seek refuge; His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark” (Ps. 91:1-4, NASB).

During a time of tragedy like the one our nation has just experienced, there are many questions, and none of us has simple answers. Even evangelist Billy Graham admitted he can’t easily respond to the question of why a loving God would allow something like this to happen.

His daughter, well-known Bible teacher Anne Graham Lotz, gave some insight in an interview on CBS' The Early Show two days after the attack. She said God "has just quietly backed out of life, removing His hand of blessing and protection." Why? Because for years Americans have told Him we wanted it that way.

It is true that Americans have chosen to reject God at every opportunity in recent years. We have removed Him from our schools, our government, our businesses and most other areas of national and political life. The god of materialism has taken the place of Christian values. Godly character has become something to be ridiculed, and perversion has gained acceptance under the name of "tolerance." We have become proud in our strength and prosperity.

First Corinthians 10:12 warns us of the result of such a stance: "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." God didn't have to bring us down in response to our rejection of Him; He just had to remove His hand, which was holding us up.

Is there anything we can do? We can begin by following the admonition to pray in 2 Chronicles 7:14: "'If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land'" (NKJV).

We often forget that prayer is the most powerful weapon we have. We must pray for our nation, that it will turn from its wicked ways and seek God. We must pray for wisdom and direction for our national leadership. We must pray for those

who have been wounded through physical injury or the loss of a loved one.

As believers, we must also discern the season in the Spirit. Many leaders are declaring that we are on the verge of a revival. We need a great awakening like the one that occurred in the mid-1700s to bring sweeping change to our culture. But revival isn't a national movement; it occurs when individuals in great numbers are changed by the power of a personal relationship with Christ.

This happens when we look beyond our own situations to a world that needs Christ's love and determine to share it. If you truly believe you have the answer to the crisis of fear our nation is facing, declare it! Be led by the Holy Spirit, and look for opportunities to share the reason for your confidence concerning the future.

As we respond in obedience to the greatest commandments—loving God wholeheartedly and loving others as ourselves—what the enemy meant for the destruction of our nation may be the catalyst for its greatest hour. It is up to you and me. Will we follow the Holy Spirit's leading and move as He directs us to touch our shaken world?

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Joy F. Strang is the publisher of SpiritLed Woman magazine. This originally appeared as the Sept. 17 edition of Power Up, the weekly inspirational e-mail available free through . It was so timely we decided to reprint it here.