

Franklin Graham: Young Pastors Are Caught Up in Pop Culture

Franklin Graham is a voice crying in the wilderness.

"I believe we are perilously close to the moral tipping point for the survival of the United States of America," Graham wrote in *Decision* magazine. "I refuse to be silent and watch the future of our children and grandchildren be offered up on pagan altars of personal pleasure and immorality."

The Supreme Court has already redefined marriage. The nation has become a killing field for Islamic radicals. And Christians have become targets for practicing their First Amendment rights.

"There now exists deep-seated antagonism and hostility toward Christianity in every seat of power in this nation—government, media, courts and education," Graham wrote. "It has become open season on Christians."

Instead of ignoring the rotting of America's culture, the president and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association has decided to do something about it.

Earlier this month, Graham launched the "Decision America Tour," a series of prayer rallies at the capitol buildings of all 50 states.

"The only hope for America is not the Democratic Party, and it's not the Republican Party," Graham told me. "The only hope for America is God."

I caught up with Graham just after his inaugural prayer gathering in Des Moines. More than 2,000 people turned out in frigid weather—to petition the Almighty.

It was one of the rare moments in Iowa when politicians were not recognized nor were they allowed to speak.

"If a candidate showed up—we're not going to recognize them," Graham said. "We're not going to give them a microphone."

That's because "Decision America Tour" is not about politics.

"It's trying to lead this nation in prayer, confessing the sins of our country, asking for God's forgiveness and encouraging Christians to get engaged in the political process," he told me.

Graham is doing what many young ministers refuse to do—address issues that some might consider politically incorrect.

He told me that while a number of older pastors understand the gravity of the situation, many younger pastors do not.

"The younger pastors—so many are caught up in the pop culture, and the pastor in a church is more about being cool," he said. "We're beginning to put theology in the back seat, and I'm concerned about the church."

And that's when he dropped this evangelical bombshell.

"To be honest with you, the problems we have in America today are the failure of the church," he said.

I reckon that comment just made a lot of folks start wiggling in the pews.

But Graham has a valid point.

The government has taken on many responsibilities that were once in the hands of the local church.

"The churches have allowed the government to take away their responsibility and so the government is feeding people, the government is clothing people, the government is now in charge of health care," he said.

Graham expounds on this topic during our podcast interview—but the point he is making is clear. It's time for Christians to re-engage the culture.

"We as a nation are in trouble, and only God can fix it," he said.