

Will an Awakened Church Save America?

BYLINE: Eddie L. Hyatt

I agree with many who are saying that the 2024 presidential election will be the most significant of our lifetime, and perhaps in American history. America is on the brink of losing its soul and the freedoms for which so many have fought and died. There must be a change in Washington, D.C., come November.

There is, however, something deeper and more fundamental than the 2024 election that must be addressed if America is to be saved. At its very root, our problem is not political; it is spiritual and moral. This is why an awakened American church is the real key to the future of America at this time.

When America's Pulpits Were 'Aflame With Righteousness'

The idea that an awakened church is the key to America's future was confirmed by the French sociologist and political scientist Alexis de Tocqueville.

Tocqueville came to America in 1831 to study the country's penal system and to see if he could discover the cause of its rapid rise to influence and power among the nations of the world. He arrived on the heels of the Second Great Awakening and was struck by the prayers and talk about God he encountered everywhere. He exclaimed, "The religious atmosphere of the country was the first thing that struck me on arrival in the United States" (Hyatt, "1726: The Year that Defined America," 166).

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He also noted that Christianity and civil liberty seemed to have been merged in the thinking of Americans. He stated that he knew of missionaries being sent to the western frontier because of concern that the settlers there could not enjoy the civil liberties promised in the Constitution apart from the influence of the gospel. He wrote, "Thus, religious zeal is warmed in the United States by the fires of patriotism" (Hyatt, 167).

Although the quote below is not found in Tocqueville's writings, it has the sound and feel of Tocqueville, and has historically been attributed to him. After nine months of continually traveling and taking notes, Tocqueville is reported to have said,

I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers, and it was not there; in her fertile fields and boundless prairies, and it was not there; in her rich mines and her vast world commerce, and it was not there. Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.

If we are to see America saved, the pulpits of America must once again be "aflame with righteousness," as Tocqueville put it. This is of utmost importance, for as America's founders warned, only a moral and virtuous people can be a truly free people. This is why America's second president, John Adams, said, "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

May God Awaken the American Church

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As a nation, America can no longer be described as a “moral and religious people.” This has happened because we, God’s people, have not been light, driving back the spiritual darkness; or salt, restraining the moral corruption (Matt. 5:13-14). This has happened because of our burning desire to be seen as cool and to be liked by contemporary culture. As a result, we are lacking the power of Pentecost.

I recall, for example, attending a Sunday morning service at one of the best-known megachurches in America I sat through an impressive church production that would rival anything from Nashville or Hollywood. However, I noted an emptiness in my spirit after it was over. My soul had been entertained, but my spirit had been left dry.

On the day of Pentecost there was a “sound from heaven” like a mighty rushing wind that filled the room and “tongues, as of fire” that sat upon each one of those gathered in the upper room (Acts 2:1-4, NKJV). It was not their audiovisual department creating those sights and sound. It was not a production of their arts department. Heaven had come down and was filling their souls in response to their prayers and obedience.

We have become very adept at producing lovely earthly sounds for our church programs. These, however, will not save America. If America is to be saved, we must recapture that sound from heaven, and it comes only through sincere prayer and obedience to the risen Lord. Only then will the pulpits of America once again be “aflame with righteousness.”

Only an awakened church will save America.

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Dr. Eddie Hyatt believes that America can be saved, but only

through a revived and awakened church. This article is derived from his book, "1726: The Year that Defined America," which documents the impact of the First Great Awakening on the founding of America and the abolition of slavery.