

Should the Church Prepare for the Fall of America?

For the past several years, a growing number of prophetically and culturally astute leaders have been predicting the decline of the United States. Also, books like the *New York Times* best-seller *The Harbinger* have issued dire warnings to America based on biblical principles and Old Testament prophetic passages.

There have been predictions as dire as the total breakup of our union, preceded by mass rioting and chaos (catalyzed by runs on banks and economic calamities), to a severe economic crisis far worse than what happened globally in 2008. All in all, most I speak to portend a major financial correction is soon coming in the market.

I have been saying for several years that I believe the year 2016 or sooner will be a time when many looming calamitous issues will converge and cause societal disorientation and economic woes equal or greater than the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Since the 2012 presidential election, there have been many ominous signs of huge American decline in global influence: China and Russia have been saber-rattling and spewing out military threats; the NSA spy scandal has alienated our allies and further validated our ideological enemies; the military is experiencing mass cutbacks in spending; Iran is continuing to move forward with its nuclear program with impunity; Obamacare has proved to be a disaster, with the president caught lying about its devastating effects from millions losing their health coverage (and, worse yet, losing faith in their leader); and the federal government continues to pump billions of printed dollars into the economy to superficially keep the nation afloat.

Possibly the biggest catalyst for mass chaos and social disorientation will be when the nations of the world stop

using the U.S. dollar as their primary currency and switch to other currencies to purchase oil and other major commodities. This would probably mean the Federal Reserve would no longer be able to print mass amounts of money to pay down our debt, which could result in our whole nation becoming like the city of Detroit—bankrupt!

Someone might ask me if I have given up hope for the United States. I have indeed given up hope that our nation will repent and turn back to God en masse due to the results of recent national elections and also because biblical and church history has shown that whenever a nation becomes prosperous and trusts in a (seemingly) stable government, its people are less likely to trust and seek God diligently. Mass disorientation may be the only thing that can happen to our nation in order to wake us up and turn us back to God!

In many ways, I believe the greatest call of the church today is to prepare to serve communities in the event our state and federal agencies go bankrupt and cannot function at capacity any longer. The church needs to almost function as a shadow government and be ready, in the same way the church leadership and bishops took the lead in serving cities in the late fifth century after the Roman Empire's infrastructure collapsed.

I have firsthand experience in this subject on a smaller scale. After the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, we in New York City were involved with mobilizing about 150 pastors to be clergy crisis responders. We networked and trained many professionals for future emergency responses, and we worked closely with the New York Police Department in our communities to monitor the state of affairs. The body of Christ in our city organized a multisite memorial service for the fallen heroes that was broadcast nationally. Also, after Hurricane Sandy, I and other leaders, both local and national, galvanized an emergency response to meet the immediate needs of the hardest-hit communities in the Tri-State area even before FEMA and the elected officials knew what they were doing!

Unfortunately, these emergencies may only be a microcosm of

the kind of national response we will need shortly if things do not change drastically for the good in our country. Whether or not the United States will have a full collapse or just a huge shakeup, everyone I speak to with any knowledge of economics knows a severe correction is just around the corner.

The following are some of the things the church can do to prepare for a national emergency:

1. We need to network our professionals.

In every church, there are professionals we can network who can be mobilized to serve a community in the case of a disaster. This would include folks in the medical field, emergency responders, military personnel, psychologists, community leaders, elected officials and the police.

2. We need storehouses of time-sustainable food and energy.

In case our distribution infrastructure is disrupted, churches can store generators, emergency equipment like first-aid kits, flashlights and food that can serve the needs of the most vulnerable within their congregations and communities.

3. We need alternate forms of savings other than paper money.

A coming economic crisis may wipe out whole savings accounts. This is why many are purchasing gold, silver and real estate and finding ways to protect their money long-term—although in an all-out emergency, gold and silver will not be any help in the short term. Food may be the most valuable resource. (I am definitely not saying it will come down to this.)

4. We need to prepare our local congregations to lead with a biblical worldview in every area of life.

When there is social disorientation, it grants believers the unique opportunity to fill the vacuum of leadership in all the major spheres of culture. We need to capitalize on this opportunity by providing leadership with problem-solving skills that are informed by what the Bible has to say

regarding economic and political principles so that newly formed policy measures will be blessed of God and not perpetuate the same humanistic systems.

5. We need unity and communication systems in place among churches in every region.

During the critical hours in New York City in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attack and Hurricane Sandy, we already had key relationships in place among pastoral leadership in our city that enabled us to have practical, strategic responses and galvanize help where needed.

6. We need long seasons of fasting and prayer for awakening and revival.

For several years before the 9/11 terrorist attacks, we had already been galvanizing hundreds of folks from many different churches to pray because we sensed something ominous was about to occur. Consequently, after the attack, an incredible church-planting movement was launched by several national ministries that has been slowly increasing the Christian demographic of Manhattan.

7. We need alternate systems to educate our children.

If there is a wholesale collapse of the infrastructure, the public education component will be greatly diminished, and in its place many churches may have to start schools and many parents may want to consider home schooling their children as an option moving forward.

8. We need to network with key elected officials and community leaders.

Every church will need to effectively utilize relationships with marketplace leaders on a large scale so they can respond to a community crisis if they want to remain relevant—especially if there is societal unrest and a deterioration of our most fundamental necessities.

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