

Time to Pray for God's Merciful Judgment on America

"Larry, I'm shocked that you say you are actually praying for judgment on our nation! That's not loving. That's not scriptural!"

I respectfully disagree. I'm not on a crusade, trying to convince others of my position, yet I do invite your prayerful consideration at this critical time in our history. My actions spring from God's recent dealings with me and the conviction that we have crossed a line in our ever-escalating sinfulness before a holy God who has blessed this nation like none other in history.

Some will dismiss biblical passages I cite as applying only to Israel, God's covenant people, whom He designated as a "city on the hill," yet they turned from God. Let's remember America was also established as a covenant people, designated as a "city on a hill" by our Pilgrim and Puritan forefathers. We have likewise turned away from God.

Survey the cultural landscape over just the past number of weeks:

- Unfettered baby-killing (now over 57 million) and selling of body parts goes unchecked, as Planned Parenthood, a private organization specializing in abortion (they do no mammograms), continues receiving our tax support.
- Homosexual "marriages" are now the law of the land, overturning 4,000 years of Western civilization history. President Barack Obama aggressively celebrates this. Former President Jimmy Carter, who says he is born again, declared, "I think Jesus would encourage any love affair if it was honest. ... I believe Jesus would approve

gay marriage.”

- Religious freedoms erode at warp speed. Dr. Paul Church, Boston urologist, expelled for “discrimination” in voicing his perspective on homosexuality and its high risk disease factor.
- A Portland bar owner was fined \$400,000 for respectfully requesting LGBTs refrain from patronizing his establishment to avoid the impression of being a “gay” bar.
- Hostility and persecution of Christians increases, including a recent college massacre of nine Christian students. *Saturday Night Live* mocks of Kim Davis as a crazed moron, along with Rick Santorum and Mike Huckabee portrayed as delusional, dementia patients.
- 177 congressional representatives vote down the law requiring doctors to save babies who survive an abortion–infanticide. Euthanasia/Assisted Suicide is legalized in numerous states, letting doctors drug patients to death. Get ready aging baby boomers!
- Cable and now network TV feature nudity, profanity and homosexuality as standard fare.
- Drug and sex-saturated concerts/festivals include “Burning Man” week of debauchery and Madonna’s profane “Rebel Heart” tour with the theme “Desecration of the Bride and Arrival of Fallen Angels.”

Let’s stop here and do a reality check. The trajectory is clear about where this nation is heading. We need a sense of urgency. Our children’s and grandchildren’s lives are at stake, in addition to the unborn babies facing the guillotine.

We need to shake ourselves and challenge our pastors that this is not a time for maintaining the status quo in religion by lifting up a few mini-prayers and enjoying some uplifting, happy “3 Ways to Beat the Blues” sermons! Are you listening?

America is on a precipice and our only hope is in the gospel proclaimed to transform hearts and fervent prayer that I

believe now includes a component of appealing for God's justice and His judgment. I know this message won't go over well with both unbelievers and many Christians, but the time has come. When respected leaders cited God's judgment after 9/11, remember the outcry and outrage that followed? Get ready.

America's last Great Awakening (1790-1850) was launched when a narcissistic, proud attorney was body slammed with the reality of God's judgment.

Charles Finney experienced divine intervention when God audibly questioned him about that for which he was living. When Charles faced the issue of death and responded tremblingly, "The judgment is next!", he ran like the "Roadrunner" a half-mile to the woods to get right with God. A dose of the fear of God and the prospect of God's judgment shook him to the core.

Charles entered the ministry and millions were saved when brought face to face with God's judgment and His mercy. For more than 50 years during the ebb and flow of America's Second Great Awakening, Mr. Finney and his "Revival Lectures" helped turn America back to God.

Clarifying the Call for God's Judgment

For the record, I am not calling for God to send fire and destroy human beings. I'm not petitioning the Almighty to send asteroids, tsunamis or city-destroying earthquakes. My fists are not clenched or my veins bulging. I just don't see any other way for our nation to turn back to God without some drastic and dramatic divine intervention.

We need a jolt to awaken us from our stupor. We need a loving "slap in the face" to jolt us back to reality and out of our present insanity and sexual anarchy—kind of like a parent reaching the saturation point with a rebellious smart-mouthed teenager constantly talking back disrespectfully and mocking

parental authority.

I'm aware of the episode in the Gospels where Jesus admonished His disciples about calling down fire to destroy resistant people. "You do not know what kind of spirit you are of, for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke 9:55-56). This is not what I'm describing.

I believe what the Bible says, "Mercy triumphs over judgment" (James 2:13). Yet these two are not mutually exclusive as God extends His mercy and when it is consistently rejected, Scripture reveals He eventually sends judgment so that people will repent, cry out for mercy and return to Him!

Psalms 107 is such a beautiful depiction of this dynamic. Some rebellious people experienced "bitter labor" (v. 12); others "suffered afflictions because of their iniquities" (v. 17); still others "were at their wits' end" (v. 27). Yet each grouping came out of God's judgment on their lives and experienced His unfathomable mercy when they "cried to the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them from their distress" (v. 13, 19, 28). In this way, mercy triumphs over judgment.

As I pray for God's judgment on the nation that I so love, I am not dictating or demanding how or when it comes. God is Sovereign and the specifics are left with Him. But if we sense an increasing God-given burden that it will take judgment to turn this sinking ship around, I encourage people everywhere to enter agreement with God on this plank before it's too late.

It's Biblical to Pray for God's Judgment

Genesis 6 reveals the grieving heart of God as He "saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was continually only evil. The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him in His heart. So the Lord said, 'I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—both man

and beast, and the creeping things, and the birds of the sky, for I am sorry that I have made them'" (Gen. 6:5-7). Judgment came to return people to Himself.

Following in the footsteps of David, Jeremiah and Paul, there come times when God stirs people to agree with Him that the time for judgment to be released has come. We should then pray accordingly and with a right spirit.

- David was "a man after God's own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14). Read in Psalms 35, 55, 58, 59, 69, 109 and 139 how this giant of the faith prayed for and proclaimed God's judgment in his day. He did not pray for carnal revenge but to highlight God's abhorrence of evil and ongoing sin.
- Jeremiah struggled with deep inner turmoil concerning the judgment he proclaimed. This came from anguish of spirit and deep identification with what God was feeling as His heart broke over people's persistent sin. He said, "I am pained in my very heart" (Jer. 4:19) as he called for justice and judgment. Like Jesus who wept over the sinful state of the Jews, Jeremiah was not gleeful or gloating when he prayed for and pronounced judgment. He was overwhelmed and in tears (Jer. 4:19-22). God even directed him to stop praying for the people because of the depth of their wickedness (Jer. 7:16; 11:14; 14:11)! Child killing. Homosexuality. Apostasy. Idolatry. Blasphemy. Lawlessness. Sound familiar?
- Paul, in his masterpiece to the Romans, quoted David's judgments in Psalm 69:22-23. In proclaiming judgment upon the Jews, his words are sobering, disturbing and straight from the heart of God.

Let's stop kidding ourselves; apart from divine intervention in holy judgment, America will simply slide deeper down the spiral of sin and destruction. We are deceived if we buy into the misguided approach of many who believe there will eventually come some kind of backlash to all our wickedness, corruption and brazen immorality.

Some believe that people, like a rubber-band, will return to God if we just remain patient and pray long enough. I don't think so, and I am a four-decade board member of a ministry promoting prayer and fasting for America for over 40 years!

It's time to examine our lives in light of God's holiness and turn from our wicked ways as 2 Chronicles 7:14 tells us. I am persuaded that it is also time to add another dimension to our petitions. Rejecting any self-righteousness, praying with a humble heart and passionate to see a massive harvest of people who get right with God, having experienced His judgment in their lives, are you ready to pray like David did in Psalm 28:4-5? The passages reads: "Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavors; give them according to the work of their hands; return to them what they deserve. Because they do not regard the works of the Lord, nor the work of His hands, He will destroy them and not build them up."

It's time for us to appeal to heaven for God to take a stand and show himself strong. The "bowls of incense, which are the prayers of the saints" (Rev. 5:8) will overflow in the judgments described in chapter 8. These are terrifying and intended to cleanse the earth of sin and bring those remaining back to the living God! It is the "great and dreadful day of the Lord" described in Joel 2:31 and Mal. 4:5. These times will be both gory and glory!

God's judgments are intended to bring people to repentance so they can be blessed and live in union with Him as a bride with her bridegroom. God's zeal is designed to purge the earth of

all rebellion. Will we rise to the occasion and embrace a call to pray some gutsy, muscular prayers for both justice and the necessary judgments to bring this to pass? We don't have a lot of time left.

Prayer for Justice

"Lord, You decreed, 'He has shown you O man, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you? To do justice and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God' (Mic.6:8). We pray that You hear our plea for justice. May our hearts align with Yours and break with those things that break Your heart. As Your ambassadors may we look out for those that are in legitimate need—the weak, neglected and less fortunate. As Christians, help us to live authentically and make a difference as change agents for Your glory and the establishment of Your Kingdom. In Jesus Name, Amen."

Prayer for Judgment

"Lord, you decreed, 'Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people' (Prov. 14:34). Like Moses, Nehemiah, Daniel and Paul, we identify with sins committed brazenly and increasingly throughout this land. May our hearts grieve with Yours at our serious, sinful state. We have departed from Your liberating Word and removed You from Your rightful place as the One, true and living God in whom we are to trust. Repeatedly ignoring Your warnings sent through Your servants and shamefully yielding to the fear of man instead of speaking up for righteousness, we humbly ask that You release Your necessary judgments that they may awaken us from our ongoing rebellion and deception. 'Lord, we have heard of Your fame. We stand in awe of Your deeds. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in Your wrath remember mercy' (Hab. 3:2). If this is Your will and Your time as we believe, help us to emerge as a holy people of whom it is said, 'Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord' (Ps. 33:12)."