

What the Debt Crisis Means for the American Church

By the time many of you receive this, Congress may have found a solution to the current debt-ceiling crisis. The immediate danger may be averted—temporarily.

The real issue, however, isn't the budget, the debt ceiling or anything else, as much as it is a philosophical battle over the direction of the country. This is the root of the intransigence and increasing bitterness exhibited by both parties.

People defend philosophies more vehemently than they do money. It's like defending one's religion as one side against the other claims to be the only source of truth. And make no mistake, politics and political ideology have the force of religion in America.

For this reason, no matter what solution Washington comes up with to deal with the immediate crisis, the danger will not have passed. The battles and the paralyzes will continue well into the future on this and other issues—progressives versus conservatives, neither side willing to concede anything to the other, and each characterizing the opposition as evil. The debates will remain bitter and

accusatory

while our president appears ever more impotent to provide the leadership necessary to carry us through.

Some

months ago I prophesied a serious third-year crisis at the presidential level that would profoundly impact the nation for years

to come. One would have to be blind not to see it shaping up in

current events. At that time I called us to urgent prayer concerning

this. I do so again.

In writing all of this, I am not being

political. I am rather pointing out the deeply divided condition of

our nation. Divisions range from politics to religion to race.

Not

since the Civil War have we seen so many fractures in so many places

at such deep levels. We are no longer "one nation" and no longer does our nation regard itself to be "under God" in any effective sense.

The

bad news is that we are beyond healing. Certain trends have been

allowed to go too far unchecked, and we now live with a shattered

national consciousness and a broken sense of who we are as a people.

This situation requires a change of strategy on the

part of Christians. We cannot make America what it once was.

The

America many of us grew up with and came to love is gone forever. We

must therefore surrender our bitterness and anger over this state of affairs and deal with the situation as it is rather than as we believe it once was or how we would like it to be.

I have long since surrendered the idea that we are a Christian nation or that we will return to any kind of admission we were ever such. I refuse to debate whether we ever truly were. What is important is my nation, my true citizenship is the church of Jesus Christ, and I will direct my prophetic cries to her heart. She is black, white, brown, Asian, Chinese, Japanese, Caucasian and Slavic, to mention a few. I cannot and will not confuse my loyalties by making my love of America a point of faith.

Use your vote in the coming days to express your conscience in the political realm but invest your truest effort in strengthening the Lord's bride and bringing about her health. This is a struggle we can win. The storm is coming, icebergs lie ahead, Titanic will sink because no one has the power to turn the ship, and we, the church, must be ready with lifeboats and supplies and lights to dispel the darkness and secure spiritual homes to rescue those who will be drowning as the ship founders.

I've been on record

saying that it won't be as bad as many are saying, but it will certainly be bad enough. For us who have prepared ourselves and our churches effectively, it will be the moment of glory as God increases His acts of mercy, His demonstrations of power and His love through us who will step forward boldly and with passion.

This is our time to rise and shine, not to join the world in fear and depression. The world will hurt as increasing sin bears its inevitable fruit in destruction. Many will cry out to be saved. We must be ready.

Let the "sons of God" (Rom. 8:18-19) who have absorbed His nature and character (Rom. 8:29) arise at last as the earth suffers the birth pangs of the coming kingdom of God.

About the author: R. Loren Sandford is the founder and senior pastor of New Song Fellowship in Denver. He is a songwriter, recording artist and worship leader, as well as the author of several books, including *Understanding Prophetic People*, *The Prophetic Church* and his latest, *Renewal for the Wounded Warrior*, which are available with other resources at the church's website.