

Whose Fault Is It?

You may think me extreme or alarmist (and I'm not so thick-skinned that this won't bother me), but I feel less free as an American today than I did before 2008, and this both frightens and grieves me. What troubles me even more, however, is that I am convinced Americans will once more believe the false promises and lies they will be told in the next election cycle—and the one after—so that we will once again vote away another batch of our freedoms.

You don't believe me when I say we are losing our freedoms? What little we're consciously aware of may seem small and negligible—even a small price to pay for things like health care and domestic safety—but over time it adds up. Most of us don't realize how much we've already lost. Lately I've been hearing firsthand stories I can't share because they were told to me in confidence. Trust me when I say that ominous trends are underway.

Maybe all of this is just my prophetic nature that lets me feel the future coming. Maybe you'll think I'm just wrong. But agree with me or not, this is a season for concentrated prayer. On that point I think we can all agree. At the very least, we in the body of Christ need more time to prepare for what must inevitably unfold. We desperately need an awakening and a turning toward holiness exercised in love and grace, and we need men and women of God in leadership both in and out of the church who will lead us there.

It would be a mistake to blame this on a sinister government. The root of the problem lies in the rapid disintegration of our culture of which our government is only a reflection. Historically, it seems to me that a culture can descend into lawlessness and evil very quickly but to develop a culture that conditions its people for the good takes a very long time. For example, although the seeds of evil were sown at the

end of the First World War, Germany, an educated and civilized nation, moved from democracy to dictatorship and genocide in the space of just five to six years. Had the victorious allies shown mercy and not exacted reparations, it might have been a different story, but once evil took root, it didn't take long to wreak havoc on the whole world.

We adopted slavery in the U.S. almost from the beginning of colonization. That evil institution established itself very quickly and began to warp the thinking of an entire people toward non-white races, blinding Americans to the application of the very principles of liberty and faith on which the nation was ultimately founded. Later, after decades of debate and conflict over abolition, we fought the Civil War, the bloodiest in our history, and freed the slaves—but then another hundred years passed before we could establish civil rights for the descendants of the slaves we freed. Wickedness took root very quickly and became a culture. It has taken a century and a half to begin to overcome the evil of the cultural attitudes slavery spawned and create a culture of equality and respect. And we have yet a long way to go! Evil comes as quickly as a momentary wrong decision—witness Eve in the Garden of Eden—but establishing the good takes time.

Western culture, especially in America, has deteriorated very quickly on a number of fronts in less than a lifetime, and it will take time to repair it, assuming we still can. The moorings that bound us to solid Judeo-Christian morality and integrity have largely been severed. The evidence? Divorce as a percentage of all marriages has increased from 4 percent to 51 percent since my childhood in the 1950s, with the resulting devastation to children raised in broken homes. For the first time in our history, more than half of all babies born in the U.S. are now born out of wedlock. Sexual abuse runs rampant. Our prisons have become overcrowded as the number of inmates has exploded. Drug abuse has reached epidemic proportions. We are crumbling as a nation.

All of this is reflected in our political situation in the laws and executive orders that government officials feel they must pass and the actions they take. When a self-centered population loses its sense of godly morality and accountability, rejecting the idea that a righteous God hands down absolutes to ensure the well-being of society and everyone in it, then government steps in to fill the vacuum with force and control to protect us from ourselves. Freedoms are lost when morality becomes relative to the feelings of the individual and when the culture rejects the concept of a holy God who judges evil.

Our Congress and our president have clearly failed us, even lied to us in order to manipulate our perceptions to get their way, but they are not the root of our problems. They merely reflect what we all have fallen into.

Where is the selflessness of the cross and the loving sacrifice it represents? Where is godly morality that ensures the loving sanctity of marriage, family and society as a whole? Where are the reconcilers who understand we have been given the ministry of reconciliation? Where are the Elijahs with the courage to confront evil and idolatry but to do it with genuine love?

Pray for the rise of a new generation of righteous leaders both in and out of the church who really get it while there is still time to prepare. The days are crucial, and the clock is ticking. We can shine gloriously as lights in the growing darkness or we can find ourselves overwhelmed by it. Let us choose the glory!

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