

## WHICH WAY FOR OUR COUNTRY?

**"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34).**

The United States of America needs to wake up before it is too late. We, as the Lord's church, must do what we can to wake up our country, and to help souls to turn to Christ, and to be obedient His word. This is our only hope.

"Vice is monster of so frightful mien--As to be hated needs but to be seen; Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face--We first endure, then pity, then embrace." [From *Pope's Essay on Man*]

### HAS AMERICA CEASED TO BLUSH?

A. Jeremiah said of those of Judah:

"14 They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. 15 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD" (Jer. 6:14-15).

1. They would fall to the Babylonians because of their lack of shame and failure to repent.
2. They were like those of Sodom, who were not ashamed of their sins (Isa. 3:9).
3. Those today who lack shame at the presence of sin have a bleak future.

B. Ezra new how to blush at the presence of sin among his people:

"5 And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness; and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the LORD my God. 6 And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens" (Ezra 9:5-6).

1. Godly people will blush at sin, and like Ezra, seek forgiveness and the right way.
2. They were drowning in iniquity, but turned to God for forgiveness (see Ezra ch's. 9 & 10).

C. "9 In like manner, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment; 10 but (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works" (1 Tim 2:9-10; ASV).

a. SHAMEFASTNESS (KJV, SHAMEFACEDNESS)--aidos NT:127, "a sense of shame, modesty," is used regarding the demeanor of women in the church, 1 Tim 2:9 (some mss. have it in Heb 12:28 for deos, awe": here only in NT). "Shamefastness is that modesty which is 'fast' or rooted in the character..."Aidos would always restrain a good man from an unworthy act, aischune would sometimes restrain a bad one" (Trench, Syn. Sec. xix, xx).(Vine).

b. SOBERNESS, SOBRIETY--sophrosune NT:4997 denotes "soundness of mind" (see SOBER, A), Acts 26:25, "soberness"; 1 Tim 2:9,15, "sobriety"; "sound judgment" practically expresses the meaning; "it is that habitual inner self-govern- ment, with its constant rein on all the passions and desires, which would hinder the temptation to these from arising, or at all events from arising in such strength as would overbear the checks and barriers which aidos (shamefastness) opposed to it" (Trench Syn. Sec. xx, end). (Vine).

D. The inability to blush indicates lack of moral restraint and purity of heart; it indicates a people rebellious to God's will, and who have no sorrow for sin. (cf. 2 Cor. 7:10; Acts 2:36-38; Joel 2:12-13).

### IS AMERICA IN DECLINE?

A. The increase of broken homes; fornication; adultery; sexual perversions; disrespect for authority; and among other things, the disregard for human life is flagrant in our land.

B. The breakdown of the home and moral values is at the core of our problems. The failure to regard God's marriage law and the Divine order for the family, we are in trouble (Mt. 19:4-6; Eph. 6:1-3).

C. Disrespect for authority is an obvious example of a nation in decline. This can be seen in the home (Eph. 6:1-3; 5:23-25--lack of respect for parents; for the head of the home); the civil law (Rom. 13:1-7--lack of respect for governmental authorities); the church (Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13--lack of respect for the eldership; lack of respect for the authority of God's word--2 Tim. 4:1-4).

D. Dr. Carle Zimmerman (professor of sociology at Harvard University), in his 1947 book *Family and Civilization*, (recently re-published) compared the disintegration of various cultures with the parallel decline of family life in those cultures. Eight specific patterns of domestic behavior typified the downward spiral of each culture Zimmerman studied.

1. Marriage loses its sacredness; it is frequently broken by divorce.

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2. Traditional meaning of the marriage ceremony is lost.
3. Feminist movements abound.
4. Public disrespect for parents and authority in general increased.
5. Juvenile delinquency, promiscuity, and rebellion accelerate.
6. People with traditional marriages refuse to accept family responsibilities.
7. Desire for and acceptance of adultery grow.
8. Interest in and spread of sexual perversions and sex-related crimes increase.[tolerance for and spread of sexual perversions of all kinds, especially homosexuality and including rape, incest and bestiality.] E. DeGeneres & Portia de Rossi are scheduled to "marry" this weekend-FoxNews 8/15/08.
9. Another factor, in addition to these, attributed to the decline of the Greek and Roman civilizations by Zimmerman was this: "support for negative interpretations of heroes and virtues of the past."
  - a. Does this sound like our country? Look at each one of these. Dr. Zimmerman was correct with his conclusions, because God's word is against all of these things that bring civilizations to ruin.
  - b. Apply God's word to every one of these factors and see if this is not the case: No's (1 & 2) Mal. 2:16; Mt. 5:31-32; 19:4-6, 9. (3) Eph. 5:22-25; Tit. 2:3-5; Col. 3:18; 1 Pet. 3:1-6. (4) Eph. 6:1-3; Col. 3:20; Mt. 7:21; Rom. 13:1-2. (5) 1 Sam. 15:22-23; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Jude 8; 2 Pet. 2:10-11; Heb. 13:4; Gal. 5:19-21; Rom. 1:28-32. (6) 2 Tim. 3:3; 2 Th. 3:10; 1 Tim. 5:8. (7) Heb. 13:4; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 6:9-11. (8) Gen. ch. 19; Rom. 1:26-27; Jude 7; 1 Cor. 6:9. (9) Isa. 5:20; Prov. 17:15; 3 Jn. 11; 1 Cor. 11:1; Psa. 22:4-5; Heb. ch. 11.
- E. One of the most flagrant examples of a nation in decline is a disregard for human life. Since Roe V. Wade (1973) legalizing abortion, some 40-50 million babies have been aborted. Just as God heard the cry of Abel's blood when he was murdered by his brother Cain (Gen. 4:10), no doubt He has heard the tender cries and screams of multiplied millions of babies in this "the land of the free and the home of the brave." This should cause great shame and blushing and an outcry to be heard around the world! God hates "the hands that shed innocent blood" (Prov. 6:16-19) !
  1. God's word declares concerning the first man: "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). Every soul, whether in the womb or outside, is a precious living soul before the Almighty God. The living thing inside the mother's womb is referred to as a "child" or "babe" (cf. Mt. 1:18; Lk. 1:35; 41-44). The Hebrew word *bane*, (translated "children") was used to designate the born children of Keturah (Gen. 25:4); and the exact same word was used to describe the unborn children of Rebekah (Gen. 25:22). Surely, the Holy Spirit, Who supplied the words of the inspired text (2 Pet. 1:20-21; 2 Sam. 23:2; 1 Cor. 2:13; Jer. 1:9; 1 Pet. 1:12) did not consider that which was conceived in the mother's womb as simply a "fetus" or blob of "fetal tissue" or "fetal mass." H
  2. However, one of our presidential candidates has exemplified disregard for the sanctity of human life. "He promised at a Planned Parenthood event in July 2007 that 'the first thing' he will do as president — his top priority for the nation — is sign the Freedom of Choice Act, which would erase every federal and state restriction on abortion, no matter how modest. His top priority, again, is to re-legalize partial birth abortion under all circumstances, abolish all laws on informed consent and parental notification, and eliminate all state restrictions on taxpayer funding of abortions" (David Freddoso). [In Partial birth abortion the abortionist delivers the baby's entire body, except for the head. The abortionist jams scissors into the baby's skull. The scissors are then opened to enlarge the hole. The scissors are removed and a suction catheter is inserted. The child's brains are sucked out, causing the skull to collapse. The dead baby is then removed.]
  3. Not only this, but Obama has opposed measures to protect infants who survive an unsuccessful abortion, and would thus leave them to die outside the mother's womb. Even among his most liberal colleagues in Congress there is disagreement with him on this matter.

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[8/13/2008. Life with Obama--Abortion champion. By David Freddoso. This story has been adapted.]

"...He had been born four months premature. 'At that age,' says nurse Jill Stanek, 'their lungs haven't matured.' Stanek is the nurse who found herself cradling this baby in her hands for all of his 45-minute lifetime. He was close to ten inches long and weighed perhaps half a pound. It's just a guess -- no one had weighed or measured him at birth. No happy family had been there to welcome him into the world. No one was trying to save his life now, putting him into an incubator, giving him oxygen or nourishment. He had just been left to die. Stanek had seen it all happen. That family had wanted a baby, but when they learned that theirs would be born with Down syndrome, they wanted an abortion. For that, they went to Christ Hospital in the southwestern suburbs of Chicago, which is affiliated with the United Church of Christ. (The United Church of Christ is a denomination not to be confused with churches of Christ. Moreover, it is indeed ironic that a hospital bearing the name of Christ would shed the blood of innocents. D. Douglas.)

Stanek says her friend had been told to take this baby and leave him in a soiled utility closet. She offered to take him instead. 'I couldn't let him die alone,' she says. Stanek was horrified by this experience...Could it be legal to take a living and breathing person of any size, already born and outside his mother's womb, and just leave him to die, without any thought of treatment? Stanek's effort to right this wrong would lead her to testify before various committees. It would lead her to a state senator, Patrick O'Malley, who would propose a bill to stop what was going on at the hospital. Her attempt to change a corrupt medical practice and bring hope to defenseless infants would put her on a collision course with a state senator named Barack Obama. On March 30, 2001, Obama was the only senator to speak in opposition to a bill that would have banned the practice of leaving premature abortion survivors to die. The bill, SB 1095, was carefully limited, its language unambiguous. It applied only to premature babies, already born alive. It stated simply that under Illinois law, "the words 'person,' 'human being,' 'child,' and 'individual' include every infant member of the species *homo sapiens* who is born alive at any stage of development."

Two related bills introduced that day included slightly more controversial provisions about liability and medical procedure, but SB 1095 did not go nearly that far. This bill did not apply to those *not born*, nor did it grant *born* persons anything beyond recognition of their rights as persons. Under this bill, SB 1095, babies born alive during an abortion would have to be treated just like every other baby that is born alive and prematurely — not left to die as at Christ Hospital, but given treatment according to an acting physician's medical judgment as to what is necessary and what is possible — the same standard that applies to any other human being..." These things speak very loudly concerning his view of human life.

Among other things, Obama implied that "pre-viable" babies born prematurely, even without abortions, are less "persons" than babies who are born full-term (9 months), when he said on the Senate floor:

...whenever we define a pre-viable fetus as a person that is protected by the equal protection clause or other elements in the Constitution, what we're really saying is, in fact, that they are persons that are entitled to the kinds of protections that would be provided to a — a child, a nine-month-old — child that was delivered to term. That determination, then, essentially, if it was accepted by a court, would forbid abortions to take place. I mean, it — it would essentially bar abortions, because the equal protection clause does not allow somebody to kill a child, and if this is a child, then this would be an antiabortion statute. (Notice that he said: "if this is a child..." This says a lot about his beliefs!)

F. God condemned the offering of children in human sacrifice to false gods in the days of the kings (cf. Jer. 7:30-32; 19:1-6; 2 Kings 21:6; 23:10). God will bless the righteous and bring down the evil: "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them" (Jer. 18:6-10).

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### OUR NATION NEEDS GOD!

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psa. 9:17).

- A. Since efforts to remove God from public life came into force through the Supreme Court over 40 years ago, we have seen a decline in morals and stability, and an increase in moral decay, violence, and corruption.
1. June 25, 1962 - Engle vs. Vitale – This was the first time there was a separation of religious principles from public education. The courts ruled that there should not be prayers in school. The N.Y. state prayer was: ***"Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers, and our country."***
  2. Murray vs. Curlett (1963) – Removal of Bible reading in school. Bible study used to be required to graduate from High School.
  3. June 17, 1965 - Abington vs. Schempp – Removal of religious instruction from school. The courts stated, "If portions of the New Testament were read without explanation, they could be, and have been psychologically harmful to the child."
  4. 1965 - Reid vs. Vanhovan – It is unconstitutional for a student to pray aloud in school.
  5. 1967 - Decab vs. Dispain – The courts took a four-line nursery rhyme used in pre-kindergarten and ruled it unconstitutional. The courts said, "The rhyme is unconstitutional since it might cause someone to think of God."
- B. Brother Bob Spurlin writes: "However, in 1962-63, the Supreme Court decreed that it was unconstitutional to have prayer in the public schools. Banishing prayer and Bible reading to the closet sends a signal that God is no longer welcomed in our schools making this a focal point in our history. Since the mid sixties, when the courts repudiated Bible reading and prayer, there has been a crumbling of our culture. We have seen a dramatic decline in national morality since 1963. This is God's judgment on a nation that once prided itself biblical morality: \* Unwed birth rates 15-19 year olds has risen dramatically. \* Unwed birth rates 10-14 year olds rose 553% by 1983. \* Sexually transmitted diseases for 15-19 year olds shot up 226% by 1975. \* Divorce had been declining for 15 consecutive years prior to 1963. After, the number of divorces tripled every year until 1983. \* SAT scores declined for 18 consecutive years after 1963; unprecedented in our history. We are now graduating a generation of students that, academically, knows less than their parents. \* Violent crime has increased 544% since 1963."
- C. John Adams well-stated: "We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is whole inadequate to the government of any other." Ben Franklin and the Constitutional Convention stated, "We need God to be our friend not our enemy. We need Him to be our ally not our adversary. We need to make sure we keep God's concurring aid. If a sparrow cannot fall without God's notice, how can our nation rise without His aid?" He further called for regular daily prayer to keep Him close to us. Thomas Jefferson, upon leaving the office of president, said, "Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that His justice cannot not sleep forever." 1774 - Ben Franklin stated, "Introduce into public affairs the principles of Christianity and it will change the face of the world."

### **Conclusion. God has the answer. He knows what is best. His way is the good and right way!**

1. "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein" (Jer. 6:16).
2. Let us as Christians be the godly influence that our nation and the world needs (Mt. 5:13-16; Phil. 2:15-16).
3. Let us pray fervently for the Lord's church & the nation (Jas. 5:16-18; 1 Pet. 3:12; Phil. 4:6-7; Heb. 4:14-16).
4. Let us work diligently for the Lord & take the gospel to the lost (Mk. 16:15-16; Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 15:58).
5. Oppose all evil, including false doctrine & worldly philosophies, immorality, etc. (2 Tim. 4:2; Eph. 5:11).
6. Let us have homes that are truly Christian--dedicated to God and His way (Lk. 6:46-49; Psa. 127:1-5).
7. We desperately need Jesus Christ, Who said: "for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

To become a Christian: Acts 18:8; 2:38; 8:12; 32-39. To be restored: Acts 8:22-24; 1 Jn. 1:9; Jas. 5:16.

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