

Part II

The American Christian Dilemma

American-Christians are facing a dilemma. Most of us have been quite comfortable with our dual citizenship, i.e. as Americans, and as Christians and thus citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. The combination of our First Amendment right of religious freedom, and the fact that Biblical principles were woven into the fabric of America's culture, have historically worked together in a way that was supportive of Christianity.

Unfortunately, in recent decades that has changed more than most of us want to acknowledge. American culture is increasingly antagonistic toward unapologetic Christianity and even toward the moral and Biblical principles that our nation was founded upon. The "moral compass" of many in power in our nation and our churches has swung 180°. What we formerly called right is now wrong and what we formerly called wrong is now right. (Consider [Romans 1:18-32](#))

The terms "American" and "Christian" are becoming conflicted in a way that we have not previously known – or imagined possible. Americans who determine to truly be the Church, are increasingly faced with the need to reconsider the primacy of our two citizenships in terms of which most shapes our personal identity and family cultures.

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4) Change

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Have American-Christians ever been as philosophically separated and emotionally vested in a national election as we were in 2008?

Doesn't the political battle today center around embracing America's historic moral, spiritual and ethical beliefs and practices – versus *replacing them* with those that are not only different, but contrary? This is not about *an* issue, it is about the overall foundational premises which define our culture and dictate our laws. Was the division that Abraham Lincoln had to address after the Civil War *that* profound?

Certainly our nation's leaders will make sincere attempts at unity and across-the-aisle cooperation, but the tremendous pressure from global expectations that they produce results, undergirded by the mandate given to Mr. Obama by the American masses, will likely compel his administration to move from their core values. It will also cause many normally more conservative voices in government to cower.

It seems to me that every necessary ingredient is present for a major change in how America, and the nations of the world, function. We have a critical, emotion driven need; the will of the masses; the leadership; and the absence of the values which would previously have prevented it. We don't need world-wide war; only the threat/fear of it is enough to move leaders to consolidate their power; and to prepare the populous to accept it. The until-now unthinkable, "one world monetary system" is assumed by many in power to be the logical solution as they view the global crisis.

Christians ought to be prepared for many far-reaching changes in American life as our leaders apply to the unprecedented needs in our world, the new and untested moral and political assumptions which now govern us.

However, while some may be tempted to point fingers at our current national leadership, we must remember that, while they are facilitators in a certain way, they are only expressing the contemporary mindset and the will of many Americans. It is humbling for us to admit that we could only get to this place because the Church has not been salty enough to preserve our historic values and maintain the blessing of God.

5) God and Country

Our nation was established by God-fearing men who founded it on Biblical principles. Faith in and dependence upon Him were essential ingredients to the freedom, opportunity and prosperity which followed.

The Church (capital “C”), that is, the Kingdom of God which encompasses all who have chosen to come to God through Jesus Christ, and who are living for Him, is without earthly boundaries. It is worldwide, and exists and functions under God at a level above nations or their governments.

In the United States of America, while *separate* in important ways, the institutional church (small “c”) and the State were also mutually dependent. Each supported the other. Each helped maintain the culture in which the other could thrive. That has changed and American-Christians are facing a dilemma, and choices that we’re unaccustomed to.

The present division in the church and the nation over human sexuality issues is incredibly deep. A society’s response to abortion and homosexuality symbolizes its overall acceptance or rejection of the rule of God. Those who defy God by snuffing out the life of innocent little ones who are made in His image, and whose respect for life is instead expressed toward trees and animals, have abandoned the most basic of human virtues.

We could see that better if we would admit that “pro-life” and “pro-choice” actually represent the two spiritual kingdoms that compete for the allegiance of men’s hearts in the Cosmic Battle.

Abortion is unspeakably cruel. It not only violates everything Christian, it contradicts the most basic elements of human decency. Americans and even many American-Christians have slid into denial of the inhumanity of the abortion process because we can’t bear to consider how brutal it is against defenseless, innocent babies. This denial further protects the pro-choice movement against honest appraisal, thus enabling their continued contribution to our nation’s downward spiral.

Further, there is a fascinating correlation between spirituality and sexuality. Their shared ability to take us deeply into either light or darkness, ecstasy or agony, is unmatched by any other aspect of humanity. Each has shades of mystery, and characteristics that defy its being easily or fully defined. Either can effectively characterize us and to make us the person we are both inwardly and outwardly. Our expression of sexuality is a significant expression of our spirituality, revealing who we connect with in the Cosmic Battle.

Pure sexual intimacy, i.e. that which is practiced between a husband and wife who love and respect each other, symbolizes the intimate, pure and bonding relationship which God intends between mankind and Himself. Godly sexual intercourse is not just body to body, it is person to person; connecting each with the other at the deepest level of our innermost being.

Is it possible that a culture's approval of homosexuality similarly symbolizes the depth of intimacy and bonding which it has chosen to enter into with the one who opposes God in the Cosmic Battle?

Our nation's refusal to consider creationism as a viable option for dialog in the classroom further defines how we juxtapose God and man. The fact is that all of creation was designed to function according to a divine plan. Everything from relationships to gravity to the solar system to economic principles. Certain things work and certain things don't and God gets to say which is which. Those who refuse to acknowledge His creation design, and who think that they can make things work in their own way, sentence us to utter chaos. Today's worldwide crisis is stark testimony to that and it has only begun.

Creationism establishes God as the Creator and thus as the God of history – past, present and future. Its rejection goes beyond the discussion of how physical matter came into being, and symbolizes our refusal to acknowledge the Creator God whose existence we would then logically be obligated to consider in all of life.

The church in America has been demonstratively ineffective in responding to these shifts in our country's way of thinking. Never have our challenges been global in the way they now are. And never has America been so destitute of moral fiber and respect for godly values – and thus so incapable of bringing life-giving stability into our world.

6) What It Means

We can predict some of the eventual outcome of an actively pro-abortion, pro-gay American mindset where radical non-discrimination and anti-hate sentiment can easily evolve into protecting everyone except genuine followers of Jesus. The thing we can't reliably predict is when and to what extent it will happen.

Yes, American-Christians who support politicians who justify the sacrifice of some 50-million innocent lives on the altar of "right to choose," and who affirm their ongoing slaughter, have little right to expect God to continue to bless them. And we who defend life have so sold ourselves to love for the world that we've had little influence on the direction of our nation.

Our founding documents boldly declared America to be a people under God. The engraving of the Ten Commandments and other scriptures on public buildings further asserted who we saw ourselves to be before God, but we have now defiled ourselves. We will sooner or later have Ezekiel 36:23 to deal with: *I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I show myself holy through you before their eyes.* And possibly we could replace "Jerusalem" with "America" in [Ezekiel 5:5-6](#).

Christians should ponder the relevancy of Ezekiel 7:3b to America: *I will judge you according to your conduct and repay you for all your detestable practices.* This phrase is repeated several times in nearby verses and it is a timeless principle.

America deserves to experience the consequences of having turned away from God, but only He knows when or in what measure He will withdraw His hand of mercy which has thus far restrained it. Wouldn't five-million abortions have been enough to bring judgment upon a nation that declares itself to be God-fearing? – in which case it could have happened decades ago!

American-Christians *have* been a preserving factor in our society but I suspect that we have become presumptuous about that. Our previous faithfulness only "covers" so much and then there's a price to pay. Ezekiel 14:13-14 is sobering: *Son of man, if a country sins against me by being unfaithful and I stretch out my hand against it to cut off its food supply and send famine upon it and kill its men and their animals, 14 even if these three men - Noah, Daniel and Job - were in it, they could save only themselves by their righteousness, declares the Sovereign LORD.* It won't work, for us to appeal to God on the basis of our past.

The release of our judgment will certainly be hastened if we waiver in our historic support of Israel. [Genesis 12:2-3](#) is as true today as ever. And we will pronounce our own sentence if we take deliberate steps to further lower our defense of the unborn or our standards for acceptable sexual practices, and especially so if we mandate by law the acceptance of these new standards.

7) Looking Ahead

It is obvious to anyone who has the courage to look, that Americans have already suffered great losses. Consider the attitude toward our freedom of speech including the reading of the Bible in schools, or even Christian students making a personal statement in class or at a school function such as sports events or graduation.

Think about the attitude toward a local government's Christmas displays. And the growing restriction of our freedom to publically declare what God says about certain sins. And then there are the vast losses that we have suffered in the collapse of our financial systems. Obviously we didn't take "9-11" seriously and one wonders how much further things need to go before Christians wake up!

I don't know if I'm a pessimist or a realist, but my sense is that the course of America is fairly well set. Our younger generation lacks the spiritual and moral values and absolutes that had guided our nation from the beginning. Even when we previously disagreed as Democrats and Republicans, it was basically over differences in the application of our foundational assumptions – not because one or the other rejected them.

Our new core values have reached nearly to the bottom of the taproots of those which had previously sustained us but which we are now abandoning. Said another way, we are now attempting to build on sand instead of rock.

In Matthew 7:24-27, Jesus speaks of **what we can expect next**: *Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.*

The principles which formerly guided our nation reflected the wisdom that is based on creation design. If our national leaders humbled themselves under the pressure of crisis and sincerely sought the heart of God, He would give them that wisdom and things would change dramatically. James 1:5-8 speaks of that: *If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. 6 But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7 That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.*

Until that time, we should prepare ourselves for national policy and laws which set our nation adrift, like a ship without a rudder on a stormy sea.

If the situation is really this bleak, how did we get here and what can we do now?