

## ***WE WILL WALK IN THE NAME OF THE LORD***

**July 4<sup>th</sup> is the time** when Americans celebrate our nation's declaration of independence from British rule. It is a remembrance of when we became a sovereign nation; a nation founded by people, many of whom, if not most, were devout believers in God and Christ. In fact, enshrined in that monumental document can be found clear affirmations of faith in God:

Those who wrote and signed their name to that document spoke of “**a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence.**” They spoke of the rights entitled to them by the **Laws of Nature and Nature's God**”

They also said with great passion their conviction that all men are created equal, and that they are **endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights.**

**In recent times, however,** in this great nation of ours, different sounds have been heard. Instead of affirming faith in God and calling for godliness, there have been many voices calling us away from our Christian heritage. These are voices that are changing our culture; changes that many of us would agree are not good. Many in the media, university professors, Hollywood actors and actresses, and many political leaders are leading an attack on historic Christianity; undermining the foundations upon which this nation was built.

One of the things that I really **enjoyed about the Red River Family Encampment** this year was the frequent reminder that as Christians, we need to be men and women who can be counted on in this culture war. We need to stand up and let our voices be heard, both in the halls of heaven and in our political institutions. We need to “**Make America GODLY again!**”

Incidentally, **this evening at five,** I plan to share with those of you who are present (and that will be everyone, right?) one of the many lessons that we heard. I ordered DVD's of some of the best lessons, and in my opinion, tonight's lesson was one of the best of the best!. You will be hearing brother Chuck Monan, preacher for the Pleasant Valley congregation in Little Rock. The theme this year was *I Love To Tell the Story*, and each of the speakers built their lesson around one of the phrases in that song. Brother Monan had the subject, **For Some Have Never Heard.** I want you to hear and be blessed by that incredible lesson!

While we were at Red River, my daily Bible reading one morning took me to the book of **Micah, and in chapter 4:1-5**, I found the words that inspired me to bring this lesson. Speaking through the prophet, the Lord said:

**Micah was** one of the 8<sup>th</sup> century prophets to the nations of Israel and Judah. He was a contemporary with Isaiah and probably knew Amos, possibly Jeremiah. Israel, of course, was running away from God at breakneck speed, and Judah wasn't very far behind. Judah was in the midst of an economic revival. Times were good, but in both nations, faithfulness to God had all but disappeared. The profession of faith was still there, and the priests and people were still going through the motions, but the worship of idols was rampant.

Personal and collective morals and ethics had become so corrupt that the Lord **says (1:9)**, *"For her wound is incurable, and it has come to Judah; it has reached to the gate of my people, to Jerusalem."* **Do you understand?** When God says that their wound was incurable, he wasn't saying that His people had gotten off course a little bit. He was saying He had basically given up on that generation with the exception of a small remnant. Their unfaithfulness and their ungodliness had reached the point that there was nothing left for God to do except deliver them over to their enemies (in this case, the Assyrians).

I think a lot of us have the feeling that **as a nation**, once known for its association with Christianity, the U.S. is rapidly approaching the tipping point, (maybe we already have) and that there may not be anything left for us except to be delivered over to our enemies. I know I don't have to go through a litany of ways in which Christianity's influence on our nation is being flaunted and overrun. Most of you know, as well as I do, what is going on in this country and in the world.

- We remember, for example, the ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court just a couple of years ago. Most of us were greatly disappointed, if not outright shocked when same-sex marriage was declared legal. And I would like to remind you that legal does not mean right. In the Compromise of 1850, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that owning slaves was a protected right.
- I recently read of a high school student who gave God credit for his success in a profile written for the school yearbook. Without the student's

permission, school officials replaced “God” with the word “others” before publishing the yearbook.

- Alberto Gonzales, former U.S. Attorney General for President George W. Bush recently made this statement: “I am dismayed at the assault on the Christian church and our religious liberties. The rhetoric today is not for neutrality; it is for the elimination of religion from our national discourse. Opponents of religion expect unequivocal tolerance from Christians on various matters yet quickly call us intolerant for our beliefs on such issues as gay marriage.”
- Now, there has been some good news to celebrate. Recently, the governor of the state of Kentucky signed a bill permitting the teaching of the Bible in public schools. The content of both the Old and New Testaments will be taught as a part of the social studies curriculum because of the impact and influence they have had on this country.

Many speakers and writers talk about this as a culture war. And that is very appropriate metaphor although it is not physical, it is spiritual. And to fight a spiritual battle successfully we must look to our God for the wisdom and the power and the strength.

In **2 Corinthians 10:3-5**, by inspiration Paul wrote:

*“For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. (4) For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. (5) We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,*

Brother **Chris Swinford** who was here a few years ago had a class at Red River on *Making America Godly Again*. He suggested three ways we can do that. He spoke about...

- Living Righteously
- Praying Diligently
- Evangelizing Fervently

In the lesson you will hear tonight, **brother Monan** says that if the world is going

to see the glory of the Son of God who came to bring us grace and truth, then there are three things every Christian must do.

- We must dispense grace,
- We must commit to truth
- We must practice faithfulness.

Now understand, I'm not suggesting and neither were those brothers that we can save our nation; that it is even possible to turn things around. I'm not saying we are going to win the culture war I'm just saying, as the Lord said through Micah, ***"For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever."***

The world is going to continue doing what it does. Jesus said **in this world we will have tribulations** (John 16:33). Sometimes tribulations come in the form of physical trials; health problems, accidents, earthly disasters, wars and violence that erupts around us. Sometimes however, the tribulations come in the form of spiritual trials. There is a clash of values and ideas; philosophies and beliefs, temptations and evil desires. Sometimes it may seem like the other side is winning all of the battles but when God is in control, the other side's victory is always going to be cut short.

The **culture war is not a war between** Democrats and Republicans, or liberals vs conservatives. The nationalism and populism of Donald Trump is not going to save us, nor is the socialism of people like Bernie Sanders. This world, this nation, this age has but one hope, and that is Christ— Christ preached, Christ believed, Christ confessed and Christ emulated!

I challenge you today to walk in the fear and the name of your God, which is Christ. Peter said (**Acts 4:12**), ***"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."***

- Live every day & every minute of the day as you believe Jesus would live it.
- Live it to honor his name.
- Don't be afraid or ashamed to talk about Christ. Remember, every time you talk about him to others he talks about you to the Father.
- Put all of your faith, all of your hope, all of your worries in him and on him.
- Don't listen to the world and all the devil's lies

- And make sure you are feeding on God's word every day, and don't get distracted from what is important.

In closing, hear these words from the apostle Paul. In **Ephesians 6, beginning in verse 10**, Paul writes to encourage Christians and how to keep from becoming a casualty yourself in the spiritual battle taking place in the culture and world around you. He wrote:

Keep on keepin' on and lets' never let up walking in the name of the Lord,