



The President's Perspective



When God Gives Up

Romans 1:18-32, is a frightening passage of Scripture when one considers where America is as a nation and what is happening in this once "Christian" country. Verse 18 says that God's wrath is actively against men who "hold" the truth in unrighteousness. The word "hold" does not mean to "carry" but rather to "hold down" or "suppress." When one has had access to, and knows the truth, but then tries to suppress that with ungodly living, that person becomes the target of Almighty God. Three times in this chapter, we are told that God either "gave them up" or "gave them over" to judgment (1:24,26,28). What is interesting about God's judgment is that He allows men to have a full plate of what they desired. That is, God's judgment on men is allowing them to have what it is that they wanted. When Israel became dissatisfied with God's provision of manna and demanded "flesh to eat," God gave them what they wanted. His fulfilling of their desire WAS, itself, His judgment on them.

Most intriguing is the statement in Romans 1:28, "even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind." A reprobate mind (adokimos-literally "disapproved") is one that no longer has God's approval or blessing. This rejection by God comes as a result of not wanting God in one's knowledge. God's blessing cannot come to or remain on an individual or nation that doesn't desire to have God in their knowledge.

Consider the ramifications of this truth in light of recent events in our nation. Three attempts have been made recently to further remove any knowledge of God from the public square. In Las Cruces, New Mexico, one man (with the backing of the ACLU) as demanded that the city's logo be changed because of its overtly religious symbolism. Las Cruces means "the crosses" and has three crosses in its logo. In addition, Michael Newdow, the same gentleman who brought the lawsuit that resulted in the 9th Circuit Court's decision to declare "under God" unconstitutional, has filed another suit asking that "In God We Trust" be removed from our coins. As well, Wal-mart and other retailers have succumbed to the pressure of the "church-state separation" group, and are eliminating the traditional season greeting "Merry Christmas", opting instead for "Happy Holidays." It's almost as if some in America want any concept of God eradicated from our thinking, replacing it with something totally secular.

Janet Folger has written a fascinating book entitled "The Criminalization of Christianity" in which she chronicles the attempt, not only to remove God, but to actually criminalize Him. She is not far off when she says that "pastors will be called into court

for the content of their sermons." In fact, that has already happened in other countries. If God is allowed to be "criminalized" in America, then He most certainly will "give up" on us.

The good news is this. The Michael Newdows of this nation represent only a fraction of the country, albeit a very vocal segment. It's time for those of us who love God and our nation to stand up. In fact, we need to KNEEL first. We must petition the LORD of heaven for His continued mercy and grace on us and our nation. Once we have done so, its time to STAND UP and declare that enough is enough. We will not allow a Supreme Court nominee who is pro-life to be declared ineligible because he is deemed "out of the mainstream." It is rather those on the opposite poll who are "out of the mainstream." While tolerance of opposing views is part of what America is, we must declare that we will not be marginalized and "criminalized" for our Christian beliefs and practices. Its time for us to graciously, but firmly, enter the arena of public debate and stand for what we believe and the basis on which this nation was founded. As our President has stated emphatically, "we must not allow our history to be re-written." That is true politically, but especially religiously! God has always extended his mercy based on a remnant of his people.

At its inception, this nation was a grand and glorious experiment in freedom. Freedom to declare the gospel of Christ without inhibition. Freedom to believe in a Sovereign Creator who moves in the affairs of men. Freedom to practice one's beliefs based on the dictates of one's heart. We have certainly allowed ourselves to be secularized, to have arrived at the point we are today. However, I am not willing to concede this blessed nation. I, for one, am going to believe and pray for repentance and revival so that God won't give up on us. Simultaneously, I am going to, by God's grace, enter the public arena as never before with the gospel and truth. Not only are our freedoms to do so hanging in the balance, but our very existence is, as well.

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