

© Protected by Common Law Copyright.
This may be copied for personal use only.

Commentary Concerning The Spiritual Aspects Of Our Recent National Crisis

by William P. Wilson, M.D.

-- *Commentaries from past newsletters* --

No one could have conceived of the magnitude of the national crisis that befell our nation on the 11th of September 2001. We have had a week of mourning for the more than 5000 persons who lost their lives in the destruction of the World Trade center. Surely our grief will not last, but in our recovery we should look at this event in the perspective of the spiritual health of our nation. I am writing this letter to do that. Jerry Falwell has taken a lot of flak for doing it. Even if his wording of his accusations were inflammatory there was truth in what he said. Putting that aside, we really have to examine ourselves and ask if we are in any way responsible for this event. Quite clearly unbelievers will not agree with us and some of you may not agree, but biblically we have responsibility.

If we first go to Scripture we find that in Deuteronomy 28 God promised the Hebrew people curses if they did not worship him and obey his commandments. He also promises blessings if they obey them. I do not find any place in the Bible where these promises were nullified. Going further into the Word, we can also read about what happened to Israel when they began to worship other Gods and began to sin grievously. They have catastrophe after catastrophe befall them. It is also true that prophets including Jesus spoke to the people warning them of the consequences of their behavior. Most often they paid the prophets no heed or even killed them, so disaster befell them. Jerry Falwell was behaving like a prophet when he condemned specific sins in our society. It is said that he apologized, but when I read his words he simply explained why he said what he said. He did not do it, however, in the light of Scripture. To make any statements prophetic we must apply scriptural principles to the current situation. Let us briefly do so.

The Bible is very specific about sin. We shall do no murder. What about the 36,000,000

2

abortions that have been done in our nation. It also condemns all kinds of sexual perversions, but we have encouraged them. It condemns adultery, we have not only indulged in it, but we have encouraged it. God condemns divorce and we have made it easy. Our greed has been manifest in our establishment of gambling casinos, lotteries, speculation in stocks and in women joining the workforce even when they do not have to. God has commanded that we worship him, but we have not done so, instead we have worshiped the idols of money, sex, alcohol, drugs, knowledge and sports and entertainment figures. In the Bible the leaders set the standards for the nation. When they set Godly standards the nation thrived. When they set ungodly standards the nation suffered.

You can see that the time has come for us to inspect ourselves both as individuals and a nation and realize that we have sinned. There is only one thing we can do to cleanse ourselves. WE must REPENT.

I am writing you to ask that you repent and call others to repentance also. I am sure some of you do not understand that you cannot repent yourself. It is a work of the Holy Spirit and we must entreat God to work repentance in us. We must pray fervently about it. It is our sin that made Jesus suffer on the cross when he took our punishment. Jesus knew that we must repent. That is why He told us that we should preach repentance and forgiveness in his name to all nations (Luke 24:47). I have written two essays posted on our website that address the subject of repentance. I am responding to the urging of the Holy Spirit to do this.

I hope that you do not consider what I am writing as some kind of fundamentalist claptrap. It is not. It is commanded by our Lord, who understood that sinful nature of man and who knew that the mechanism that brings about change in his behavior is found in repentance.

People do not often publicly repent. I was watching The History Channel this morning

and there was a program concerning the founding fathers. As they discussed the public roles of persons such as Patrick Henry, Aaron Burr, Paul Revere, and John Hancock, they also revealed that Alexander Hamilton was the subject of a scandal in which he was blackmailed by a man and his wife after Hamilton had an affair with the woman. Interestingly he issued a letter of confession and repentance to his entire community. The commentator observed that it was the only time in American History that a leader of his stature has done such a thing.

In the early Methodist Church participants in the *classes* that Wesley organized were expected to confess their sins of the week at each meeting. Whether they did or not is not clear, but they must have in some of them at least for a while. Only in the Catholic church do we find any effort being made provide and opportunity for people to confess and repent.

Do they apply to us? I think they do. Our nation was a nation founded under God. In the song *America the Beautiful* it has a line that says "God shed his grace on thee!" He has indeed. He did so because we for the most part did worship Him and obeyed his commandments. Our Constitution recognized his sovereignty. Our laws were based on God's laws. We did not murder little children as did the Canaanites. We used the Bible in our educational systems. We used The discourse on law in Romans in our Law Schools to emphasize the importance of God's law in governing our behavior as individuals, cities, states and as a nation. We have, however, allowed humanism to take over not only the educational establishment, the judiciary, but also all other institutions as well. The result is that we have allowed, yes even encouraged behavior that is sinful. Our churches have failed to respond and have not spoken out against the sin that is so pervasive in our society among the highest and the lowest.