

YIKES! WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

By Frank Erb

Those of us who follow Christ have many reasons to be concerned as we observe the rapid spiritual decline in our nation and the resulting social, moral, political, and economic slide. We know that God doesn't want us to worry, but what else can we do? Here are five suggestions, in order of importance.

1. Praise. No matter what happens in our state or our nation, let's continue to praise God. He is sovereign, His kingdom is solid, He is still in charge, He is not afraid. His plans will ultimately succeed. Remember, our God is not a Republican or a Democrat or even an American. He is above this temporary world system, and as his people we are secure and spiritually "seated ... with him in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 2:6).

2. Persevere. God calls us to stand firm in our faith. Our nation's moral decline is in large part a result of a spiritually weak church. I see this demonstrated firsthand in the Capitol. Unfortunately, few legislators, even among those who call themselves Christians, have a solid knowledge of God's Word and a commitment to follow Him in all things. No wonder they make some of the laws they do! We who follow the Lord must remain close to Him so that we can continue to bring His light to this increasingly dark world.

Philippians 2:15-16a You are "children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life."

3. Pray. God has commanded us to pray for those in authority. There is a very real spiritual battle being fought for the souls of our leaders, and we need to intercede on their behalf. This is why God's word tells us that praying for all people, especially for government leaders, is of first importance.

1 Timothy 2:1-2a "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life ..."

4. Proclaim. Jesus commissioned us to make disciples of all people, including our leaders, by proclaiming the Good News of Christ to them, baptizing them, and then teaching them to know and obey His word (Matthew 28:18-20). This is what the early believers did and it is what eventually transformed the society and government of the Roman Empire from one that viciously persecuted Christians into one that welcomed them. Making disciples among our leaders is what Capitol Commission is all about, and is what I am privileged to do. Those who can't personally do this can help send those who can (Romans 10:15).

Acts 26:28 "And [King] Agrippa said to Paul, "In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?" And Paul said, "Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am..."

5. Political involvement. It is good for believers to participate in the political process. After all, Abraham Lincoln declared ours to be a "government of the people, by the people, for the people." That's us! You might want to contact your legislators regarding some bills, and we should certainly vote in every election. Notice though - and this is sadly missed by many - that political or social action is fifth on our list of priorities and should never come before or replace the other four, which would be idolatry. As we do the first four steps, which only God's people can do, God may bless our efforts to lead our culture in the fifth step.

As we take action in these ways and in this order, God will be glorified and, by His mercy, He may even renew and restore our beloved America! This is our prayer, Lord!