



Are We
Losing
The
Battle?

River Road Baptist
Church
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Reflections

I was recently reviewing a current study regarding religion in America. The findings were not encouraging. The AP summary of the study is as follows. *“A wide-ranging study on American religious life found that the Roman Catholic population has been shifting out of the Northeast to the Southwest, the percentage of Christians in the nation has declined and more people say that they have no religion at all.”* The statistics given in the study support the summary conclusion. Since 1990, the percentage of those claiming no religious connection has climbed from 8.2% to 15%. It seems quite clear that the Church has not been very effective in reaching the general population of our nation over the past 20 years. Even marriages and deaths no longer carry religious connections. 30% of marriages have no church in their ceremonies and nearly the same percentage want no religious service in memory of their lives. Other surveys have indicated that, in addition to these challenges, we lose our young people from the Church at rates consistently exceeding 80% when they leave our homes into adulthood.

Unhappily, we must face the reality that the Church has been declining in influence in families, communities and at the national level. Jesus taught... *“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”* **Matthew 5:13-16** We have, it seems, lost our saltiness and our light seems to be hidden under a basket. A country that accepted the reality of God and His involvement in the affairs of men in its inception, has now rejected the very notion of God. A governmental system that was crafted with God’s standards of morality as an integral part of its checks and balances, has replaced Him with the “deity of man” and the results are increasingly tragic. Having abandoned the foundational principles of a nation under God’s providence blessed in wealth, prosperity and freedom, our nation is now swiftly becoming a hedonistic, immoral and self-centered people ruled by a small minority of powerful leaders.

If we remember that as members of the Church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we are engaged in a war for the soul of our nation, we can see that we are definitely losing the battle and are in danger of losing the war. We have not only lost our influence but have also have been losing our members, our children and our faith in God’s power. We have been deceived into believing that God, if not a myth, has nothing to do in the lives of men, had nothing to do with creation, and, by clear implication, can be ignored, blasphemed, and rejected in our lives, our communities, and our nation. Powerful leaders who, in some cases hate God, are quickly trying to extinguish His name from the public square, the nation’s schools, and from our government at all levels.

As a nation we have not only abandoned God’s laws but we have actually demonstrated our rebellion by our heinous practice of killing some 50 million citizens while they were still in the womb. We have further expressed our rejection of God in that we continue down the pathway toward perhaps eventually requiring the removal of the unwanted and the aged from our society, and that we have exchanged our culture of life under God’s laws for the leadership of men who believe in a culture of death and in a Godless society.

One wonders how much longer God will extend His grace toward men before He begins to express His wrath against those who have rejected Him. As in the days of Noah when God decided that it was time for judgement, there will, perhaps soon, come a day when God looks upon the decadence of the people on this planet and declares that it is time for His wrath to be poured out on His enemies.

In light of all these current circumstances and in the face of a battle being lost by the Church, it becomes imperative that we turn to God, repent of our apostasy, and, once again, be the salt and light that God has appointed us to be in Christ. The Bible records in the book of 2 Chronicles a conversation that God has with Solomon after the temple had been dedicated and He says... *When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.* **2 Chronicles 7:13-14** It’s time to pray for our nation and that we might be the Church triumphant in these perilous times. **Pastor Doug**