

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of July 18, 2010
Theme: "State of Our Nation: The Post-Christian Era"

Sunday..... Read Isaiah 5:18-23

"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness - woe unto them who are wise in their own eyes..." The United States had begun with the assumption that the Holy Scriptures were Divine law, the *"laws of Nature's God."* Our founding fathers were compelled to establish a new nation that would assure its citizens that they would have the rights that had been *"endowed by their Creator."* So convinced were they of the truth of the Bible that it became the primary resource for public education and the primary purpose for the establishment of colleges. God's righteousness was never questioned. What God called good was good; and what God called evil was evil. As a result of our founders' faith in Scriptures, the culture of the United States of America was based on the Judeo-Christian ethic. We have now seen our nation leave that blessed spiritual heritage to become a culture that could be best described as secularist with the emphasis on humanism. We seem to be looking at man to determine what is right and what is wrong rather than on the absolute authority of Holy Scriptures. As a result, we fall into the curses described by the prophet Isaiah in that we are calling evil good and good evil. A prime example of that is the Supreme Court decision to consider abortion as the right of a woman to kill the unborn child in her body. The cruel act of abortion is obviously evil, but the decision-makers in our culture (not necessarily the majority of the citizenry) consider it to be good in that it is one of the freedoms allowed in a free country, that it is a right to choose. This is far different from the statement in the Declaration that we are entitled to have a nation that gets its authority from God to provide its citizens with their inalienable rights. Any serious student of the Bible recognizes that God never intended people to have a right to kill babies in the womb. The use of the word tolerance to endorse the homosexual lifestyle is another play on words. Surely the Holy Law of God, which calls homosexual behavior as an abomination to God, does not suggest that any culture tolerate such a sinful practice. The Scriptures do teach that God loves sinners, but hates the sin; and our loving God has provided a plan of redemption to give people the opportunity to be granted an eternal pardon from the penalty of sin. This is why Jesus went to the cross: that He might shed His blood to pay the penalty of sin and allow a Holy God to forgive the sinner. If God were tolerant of sin, He would have never allowed His Son to be sacrificed to pay the penalty of sin. God, and God alone, determines that which is good and that which is evil.

Monday..... Read II Timothy 3:1-7

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves...without natural affection." God has revealed the signs of the last days and time of the coming of Christ. Although we are not party to the day and the hour of the return of the Lord Jesus, we have been made aware of the signs of His coming. Many of those signs are appearing in our day. It could be said that these have occurred for many, many years; that they are not new, and a case could be made for that. However, the United States had heretofore been a stalwart in adhering to Biblical authority up until more recent times. In the latter part of the twentieth century, we entered into what I feel was a post-Christian era in that we moved away from the Judeo-Christian ethic. One of the great examples of that is what has occurred in the American family. There are many single parent homes and many abortions. The numbers are staggering on these things that just a few years ago were minimal. I think there is no better example of people *"without natural affection"* than a parent abandoning his or her children and a mother choosing to abort a baby in the womb. Is there any greater affection than a mother for her baby and a father for his children? The fact that so many have been willing to pursue these actions is a strong indication that we are living in the days that Paul described to Timothy as a sign of the last days.

Tuesday Read Jeremiah 1:4-10

"Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee: and before thou comest out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee to be a prophet unto the nations." Abortionists seem to justify what they know to be a questionable action by saying that the baby in the womb is not really a person, that life has not begun as a person until the baby is actually born. With that line of reasoning they assure themselves that the mother who decides for abortion is making a decision about only her body, and not the life of another person. The courts seem to justify their thinking on the idea that the beginning of a life has never been defined. It is interesting that they come to that

conclusion while all the while courts have determined that a man who murdered his pregnant wife was charged with two homicides. It is also interesting to note that there have been at least two determinations that the beginning of life has been defined: one in medical journals and the other by court decree. Regardless, the Bible indicates that the baby in the womb is a work of God and to interrupt that life being created by God is fooling around with the amazing handiwork of God Almighty.

Wednesday **Read Ephesians 2:1-7**

“Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all had our behavior in times past in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the mind: and were by nature the children of wrath...” There are two major systems at play in the world today: the course of the world and the way of God. These systems are in direct conflict. Jesus in Matthew 7 referred to them as the *“broad way that leads to destruction”* and *“the narrow way that leads to life.”* Jesus mentioned that there are more on the road that leads to destruction than are on the way that leads to life. How sad! In our text for today, Paul referred to the broad way that leads to destruction as the *“course of this world.”* The course of the world is under the control of Satan, the ruler of the darkness of this world. The way of the world is the way of spiritual darkness. The only way out of this course is faith in the Light of the world, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is Jesus who, according to the truth of Colossians 1:13, *“delivers us from the power of darkness, and translates us into His kingdom.”* Unfortunately, the rulers of our nation in the latter half of the twentieth century have chosen to go the way of the world and have fallen back into the way that our forefathers fled. Those who were used of God to found this great nation were committed to follow the ways of God as recorded in Holy Scriptures. When the nation turned its back on God through various court decisions and executive decrees, we lost the blessings of God that heretofore had been our major source of strength. More than ever before, Christians need to step up and recommit to their faith in God!

Thursday **Read Romans 12:1-2**

“Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” The fact that the nation has determined that it is going to be conformed to this world makes it increasingly critical that individual Christians not be conformed to this world. They are our nation’s only hope because only they can implore the blessings of God. There is a tendency on the part of human beings to want to conform to those around, but this temptation must be met with determined resistance, not only for personal good, but for the good of our nation. A most vital thing in knowing the will of God is to avoid conformity to the world. The world does not look to God for His leading. The world does not consider God’s truth as revealed in the Holy Scriptures as the absolute authority for the conduct of human affairs. The world looks to the wisdom of man, which is foolishness when it ignores the mind of God. When the world chooses to ignore God and come up with conjecture in exchange for the truth of God, it incurs the wrath of God as we are warned in Romans 1. The Bible says, in Jeremiah 17:9, that *“the heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked.”* The only remedy for that wicked heart is the atoning blood of Christ. Faith in Christ and the cleansing power of His precious blood changes the wicked heart to a heart in tune with God. This is the greatest need of every human being, and the greatest need of our nation. The psalmist said this in Psalm 33:11: *“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.”*

Friday **Read Romans 10:2-3**

“They have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” Unfortunately, there are too many churches who have followed the way of the culture more than the way of God. Their intentions are undoubtedly noble, but the results are tragic. There are those who have bought into the idea that the separation of church and state is a doctrine that diminishes the role of faith in government when the writers of the Constitution were strongly influenced, and deliberately so, by the Word of God and prayer. The very practices - prayer and Bible reading in government agencies and places - now considered unconstitutional were a part of the Constitutional Convention when this great document was written. How could anyone consider the practices used in writing the Constitution to be unconstitutional? To me, that defies logic, but then again, when a person is blinded by the adversary of human souls, they are blinded to the truth and suffer the consequences of their lack of faith in our Creator. How vital it is to submit to the righteousness of God rather than form a religion that they hope will help them reach God. How much easier to place faith in the righteousness of God as recorded in Holy Scriptures!

Saturday **Read I Corinthians 9:19-27**

“I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” Sadly, some spiritual leaders in some churches have been found guilty of being pedophiles. They yielded to fleshly practices and have violated some young men

casting a stench on the churches in which they held high positions. What a tragedy it is when those who have preached the Word of God become a castaway because they could not resist the desires of the flesh! The only way anyone can resist the lust of the flesh is by yielding to the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the only way that a person can have that Spirit is to be born of the Spirit and then yield to the Spirit. Jesus said in John 3:7 that *"You must be born again to see the kingdom of God."* When a person is born again, his spirit that is dead because of our sin nature is regenerated by the Spirit of God. How is a person born again? In John 1:12-13, we read this: *"But as many as received him (Jesus Christ), to them gave he the power to be called the sons of God...who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."* What an invitation! Receiving Christ brings eternal life! Receiving Christ brings to a person spiritual life and spiritual light and the strength to resist the flesh!