



Empowering People to Change the World

Ominous Times & the Power of Prayer Part 1

Steve Holt

Ominous Times and the Power of Prayer

2 Chronicles 7:12

I am growing to love Jesus with all of my heart, soul, mind and strength

I am growing to love people the way Jesus loves them

I am building up my faith with God's Holy Word

I am coming alive in the power of the Holy Spirit

With Jesus, all things are possible

BSA—Bloodstained Allies! I'm speaking on this next week! Both at Staff Meeting at 10:30 am and AIM at 6 am this week.

“The 7-14 Initiative”

What is the 7-14 Initiative? What does that mean?

- Last Fall, God came to me in a dream...
- God often uses dreams in Scripture to tell us something that we would not readily hear in our busy daily lives. And so it was, even with Solomon.
- Wednesday night is our 7:14 Initiative and I will be sharing there about the “The Mystery of Lawlessness” coming over our land and the next 4-month window we've been given...
- This is the 5th of July and I believe God wants me to speak on the power of prayer, even as it relates to the ominous times our nation is passing through.

There are numerous moments, but I'll choose the answered prayers attested to by Founding Father, Benjamin Franklin. About 5 weeks into the Constitutional Convention of 1787, when they were attempting to draft the U. S. Constitution, their efforts were a signal failure. As things were beginning to break up and delegates return home to their states, Franklin challenged them and called them to prayer. He told them:

“In this situation of this Assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our understanding? In the beginning of the contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayer in this room for the Divine protection. Our prayers, Sir, were heard and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor. . . And have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? Or do we imagine we no longer need His assistance? I have lived, Sir, a long time and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth – that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings, that “except the Lord build the House, they labor in vain that build it.” I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel. . . I therefore beg leave to move that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven and it’s blessings on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business.” Benjamin Franklin

Franklin believed their prayers over the Convention had been answered. After 5 weeks of failure, following the recess and time of prayer, they reconvened and in only ten weeks produced the document that has become the longest on-going constitution in the history of the world. Franklin definitely saw a difference after the recess and prayer. While he was not willing to say that the finished Constitution was inspired in the same sense as the Bible, he nevertheless believed that it was the product of God’s direct intervention, explaining:

“[I] beg I may not be understood to infer that our general Convention was Divinely inspired when it formed the new federal Constitution . . . [yet] I can hardly conceive a transaction of such momentous importance to the welfare of millions now existing (and to exist in the posterity of a great nation) should be suffered to pass without being in some degree influenced, guided and governed by that omnipotent, omnipresent and beneficent Ruler in Whom all inferior spirits “live and move and have their being.” [Acts 17:28]. Benjamin Franklin

2 Chronicles 7:12

God chooses places and people for a purpose through their prayers!

- God chooses Solomon because He heard His prayers!
- In other words, prayer gets God's attention. Would God have given such attention to Solomon if he was not praying? The answer is clearly "no" because God clearly explains Himself in saying that "I have heard your prayer." Many future kings in Israel did not pray, did not seek God and we see what happened to them—they were defeated in battle, it brought down the Nation of Israel and saw their kingdoms crumble.
- When the leaders of a nation—the politicians and pastors—don't seek God in prayer, the people usually follow.
- As goes the Pastor, so goes the Pulpit, so goes the Pulpit so goes the Pew.

Vs. 13

When a country drifts away from God, God drifts away from that country. When God drifts away from the country, His blessings also leave.

- God often shuts up blessings—personally and nationally—to get our attention. God allows Satan to impact our lives and country because nothing else will get our attention and spur us to action in our lives.
- When God shut's up heaven, it means that He quits blessing us! God holds back His blessing, anointing and peace because of His desire to create hunger in us for more of Him.
- Last Sunday, Al spoke on this "hunger for more." So many of you are hungry for more. God's got so much more!
- God shows us here what He does to discipline us:

- First, He holds back blessing us economically. He holds back the resources we and our nation need to succeed.
 - Second, He actually allows “locusts” to devour our land. That’s part of what’s happening right now. He is shaking our nation.
 - Third, He sends pestilence, in other words, plagues and viruses upon the people of the land.
- But there is this conditional clause...

Vs. 14

- This is an unconditional warning with a conditional blessing! In other words, God is clearly warning us that He is allowing the Enemy to attack and potentially destroy our land, our family, our government and our lives, BUT IF MY PEOPLE...
- America is not going to repent or change! The White House is probably not going to repent and change! Congress is not going to change.

A praying church can change the White House, Congress and society!

- A praying church is an empowered church. An empowered church is a Kingdom Revolution church.

Alexis de Tocqueville, was a French aristocrat, diplomat, political scientist and historian. He is best known for his work, *Democracy in America*. He came to America in the 1830’s.

“I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers – and it was not there . . . in her fertile fields and boundless forests and it was not there . . . in her rich mines and her vast world commerce – and it was not there . . . in her democratic Congress and her matchless Constitution – and it was not there. Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good and if America ever ceases to be good, she will cease to be great.” Alexis de Tocqueville

4 Big “ifs” of the Empowered Church:

- 1) If we will Humble ourselves before God. Stop, look and listen to the Lord.**
- 2) If we will Pray, call out to God.**
- 3) If we will Seek God’s face, it means to seek His presence and power.**
- 4) If we will Turn from our wickedness. Meaning that we must turn from those things we are involved in, looking at, or addicted to, that are blocking God’s favor in your life.**

George Barna, an eminent national pollster, who especially surveys issues related to Biblical thinking and values, reports that of the thousands of surveys he has conducted over recent decades, “of more than seventy moral behaviors we study, when we compare Christians to non-Christians, we rarely find substantial differences.”

This is very dangerous for a nation...

Founding Father, Samuel Adams wrote, “While the people are virtuous, they cannot be subdued, but when once they lose their virtue, they will be ready to surrender their liberties to the first external or internal invader.”

Benjamin Franklin wrote, “Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters.”

- Join us for our Wednesday Night Prayer Gathering at 6 pm!

Vs. 15-16

- God’s eyes and God’s ears are open to our prayers. He is just waiting on us to seek Him, that He might be found.

Isaiah 55

**Seek the Lord while He may be found,
Call upon Him while He is near.
Let the wicked forsake his way,
And the unrighteous man his thoughts;
Let him return to the Lord,
And He will have mercy on him;
And to our God,
For He will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55:6-7).**

- God is looking for churches that He can perpetually gaze upon, bless and anoint. A place of His presence and power!
- Don't you want to be a part of such a place? It will impact your marriage, your family and your job.
- God wants this place to be filled with young people coming to know Jesus!

2 Chron. 16:9

For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of *those* whose heart *is* loyal to Him. In this you have done foolishly; therefore, from now on you shall have wars.” (2 Chron. 16:9).

Vs. 17-18

- If we will humble ourselves, pray, seek God's face and turn from our wicked ways, God will not fail to raise up great leaders!

Final Warning to the Church

- Another “if then” statement.
- Another proposition from God, this is His final warning to the Church.

Vs. 19-22

So, what's an idol today? You don't need wood or stone to create one.

An idol is anything that takes our focus and reliance off of God.

John Calvin was dead on when he said, "Man's nature, so to speak, is a perpetual factory of idols."

The **Seven Deadly Sins**, also known as the **Capital Vices** or **Cardinal Sins**, is a grouping and classification of vices within Christian teachings, although it does not appear explicitly in the Bible. Behaviors or habits are classified under this category if they directly give birth to other immoralities. According to the standard list, they are pride, greed, wrath, envy, lust, gluttony and sloth, which are also contrary to the Seven Heavenly Virtues. These sins are often thought to be abuses or excessive versions of one's natural faculties or passions (for example, gluttony abuses one's desire to eat, to consume).

- The gods of America:
 - Greed (which led to slavery, exploitation of poor people and children and today, with many billionaires, monopolies).
 - Lust (which has led to sex slavery, prostitution and the largest porn industry in the world. Largely, this has been centered in the exploitation of women).
 - Pride (which has led to arrogance, boasting and exploitation of nations at times).

Wednesday Night Prayer I want to speak on "The Mystery of Lawlessness" and the resulting lifting of the "Restrainer" over our nation.

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