

August 02, 2020

**The Role of the church in this time of
opportunity; COVID-19, racial unrest and
political upheaval!**

"United in Christ!"

**Galatians 3:28 ESV There is neither Jew nor Greek,
there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and
female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**

Introduction

In the midst of the virus, racial unrest, political
upheaval what should the church be doing?

Do what is good

Love justice, insure that justice is being done

Love being kind, work hard on loving one another

What is going on in the "Evangelical" church?

The enemy is out to eradicate from society not a
"god" but the God of the Bible

Now we are in the midst of fighting the battle for the
"sufficiency" of the Word of God

Is the Bible sufficient to deal with the complex issues
of the day? Tribalism, Misogyny, Homophobia

The last two Sunday's we looked at the history of
"social justice" and that "social justice" has no
Biblical support

We saw that "justice" is as old as the Genesis 9.6

We talked about feeding the hungry, tending to the
young, caring for the ill

We looked at current definitions for social justice

Social justice today entails a "redistribution" of
resources from those who have "unjustly" gained
them to those who "justly" deserve them (these
"unjust" and "deserving") are chosen as groups and
not as individuals

What we will see over the next few weeks as we continue to look at these issues that divide; the virus, mask, "racial" tensions, and political parties is this: the only possible unity is in and around Christ Ješus and our faith in Him

Changing our financial status

Changing our primary "assigned" station in life will not change our problem

Only changing our primary "kingdom" affiliation will give us contentment and a peace that surpasses understanding

Last week we say that the first attempts of "social" justice was attempts to promote association and cooperation

Please listen very carefully, we cannot be pressured into buying into all this separation, division and segregation

Cooperation and association have been used in great ways in the United States

These traits are hallmarks of free and capitalistic cultures

They are a must for a free society and the local church

What says the Scripture?

Galatians 3:28 ESV There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

All are simultaneously sinners in the flesh and the old self and saįnts in and through Christ Jesus

How about just a tad more Scriptural validation

Galatians 3:14 ESV So that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

Galatians 5:6 ESV For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

Galatians 6:15 ESV For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

Ephesians 2:19 ESV So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.

Romans 3:30 ESV Since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.

1 Corinthians 12:13 ESV For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

What motivates us and challenges us to take on these issues

A desire to be a part of a church that is salt and light to a dark world, that lives in direct and obvious contrast to the world

A desire to live in a civilized and free society in which people are given the opportunity to serve their "god" while we serve the only true God

2 Corinthians 5:18 ESV All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

1 Corinthians 1:10 ESV I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.

Only in Christ, only by His Spirit and holding closely to His Scripture can we find the guidance and unity that we will need to deal with these admittedly complicated issues

Hebrews 4:2 ESV *For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.*

Knowing that we are talking about being united in the assembly of believers as we deal with these "complicated" issues and sin in a lost world
What says the Scripture?

Colossians 3:1-4:6 ESV *If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

If we have been raised to new life

If we have been raised from spiritual death to spiritual life our focus will not be of this world
V1&2, 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 ESV *For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, 18 as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.*

V3, Galatians 2:20 ESV *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

Luke 9:23-26, Philippians 2:3-5

We have died to this world
So it does not have to be all about me
It cannot be all about what we have here
This world is not my home and I need to live like it
Colossians 1:5 ESV Because of the hope laid up for you
in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word
of the truth, the gospel.

V4, 1 John 3:2a ESV Beloved, we are God's children
now, and what we will be has not yet appeared.

V4, 1 Corinthians 15:43 ESV It is sown in dishonor; it
is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised
in power.

We are now by faith residents of another kingdom
We have to live as residents in and by faith in Christ

**5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual
immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and
covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 On account of these
the wrath of God is coming. 7 In these you too once
walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you
must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice,
slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. 9 Do not
lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old
self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self,
which is being renewed in knowledge after the image
of its creator. 11 Here there is not Greek and Jew,
circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian,
slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.**

Being tied up in and engulfed in the things of the
world bring great spiritual danger

V5, Mark 4:18-19 ESV And others are the ones sown
among thorns. They are those who hear the word, 19
but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of
riches and the desires for other things enter in and
choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

Romans 8:13 ESV For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

V6, Ephesians 2:2 ESV In which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

Romans 6:19-21 Modern, this is where I did live

V7, Titus 3:3 For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.

V8, 1 Peter 2:1 ESV So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.

V8-9, Ephesians 4:22 ESV To put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

V11, Galatians 3:28 ESV There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Summary

So what are we talking about today?

Associating and cooperating together in advancing God's Kingdom showing the lost world what this associating and cooperating looks like

In order to do that we have "another" Kingdom primary affiliation

We must live as if we are citizens looking forward to the rewards of the heavenly Kingdom

Realizing the devil is out to separate, tribalize, and make enemies of people who are all of one blood

The Lost Art of Worship

"Knowing God, in our day, is the 'easiest' thing in the world. Some of the symptoms of this: the flippancy in our worship, the casualness with which we stroll up to God in our prayers, the boredom that we display with the Bible unless the preacher's giving us the four steps to how you can be happy. In reality though, knowing God is no small matter. I wonder, are we so casual with God because we, in the twenty-first century, know Him so well? Or is it because we hardly know Him in our churches at all?"

— Dr. John Snyder, Week One, Behold Your God: Rethinking God Biblically

Aiden Wilson Tozer (1897-1963) was an American pastor, author, and theologian. At the age of just twenty-three and with no formal theological training, Tozer accepted an offer to pastor his first church. He spent his life pastoring, writing, and urging the church not to continue down its path to worldly compromise. He wrote books such as *The Pursuit of God*, *The Pursuit of Man*, and *The Knowledge of the Holy*.

We think this preface, written in 1948, applies to our world as much today as it did then. In *The Pursuit of God*, A. W. Tozer writes:

"In this hour of all-but-universal darkness one cheering gleam appears: within the fold of conservative Christianity there are to be found increasing numbers of persons whose religious lives are marked by a growing spiritual hunger after God Himself. They are eager for spiritual realities and will not be put off with words, nor will they be content with correct 'interpretations' of truth.

They are athirst for God, and they will not be satisfied till they have drunk deep at the Fountain of Living Water.

"This is the only real harbinger of revival which I have been able to detect anywhere on the religious horizon. It may be the cloud the size of a man's hand for which a few saints here and there have been looking. It can result in a resurrection of life for many souls and a recapture of that radiant wonder which should accompany faith in Christ, that wonder which has all but fled the Church of God in our day.

"But this hunger must be recognized by our religious leaders. Current evangelicalism has (to change the figure) laid the altar and divided the sacrifice into parts, but now seems satisfied to count the stones and rearrange the pieces with never a care that there is not a sign of fire upon the top of lofty Carmel. But God be thanked that there are a few who care. They are those who, while they love the altar and delight in the sacrifice, are yet unable to reconcile themselves to the continued absence of fire. They desire God above all. They are athirst to taste for themselves the 'piercing sweetness' of the love of Christ about Whom all the holy prophets did write and the psalmists did sing.

"There is today no lack of Bible teachers to set forth correctly the principles of the doctrines of Christ, but too many of these seems satisfied to teach the fundamentals of the faith year after year, strangle unaware that there is in their ministry no manifest Presence, nor anything unusual in their personal lives. They minister constantly to believers who feel within their breasts a longing which their teaching simply does not satisfy.

"I trust I speak in charity, but the lack in our pulpits is real. Milton's terrible sentence applies to our day as accurately as it did to his: 'The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed.' It is a solemn thing and no small scandal in the Kingdom, to see God's children starving while actually seated at the Father's table. The truth of Wesley's words is established before our eyes:

'Orthodoxy, or right opinion, is, at best, a very slender part of religion. Though right tempers cannot subsist without right opinions, yet right opinions may subsist without right tempers. There may be a right opinion of God without either love or one right temper toward Him. Satan is a proof of this.'

"Thanks to our splendid Bible societies and to other effective agencies for the dissemination of the Word, there are today many millions of people who hold 'right opinions,' probably more than ever before in the history of the Church. Yet I wonder if there was ever a time when true spiritual worship was at a lower ebb. To great sections of the Church the art of worship has been lost entirely, and in its place has come that strange and foreign thing called the 'program.' This word has been borrowed from the stage and applied with sad wisdom to the type of public service which now passes for worship among us.

"Sound Bible exposition is a must in the Church of the Living God. Without it no church can be a New Testament church in any strict meaning of that term. But exposition may be carried on in such way as to leave the hearers devoid of any true spiritual nourishment whatever. For it is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself, and unless and until the hearers find God in personal

experience they are not the better for having heard the truth. The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God, that they may enter into Him, that they may delight in His presence, may taste and know the inner sweetness of the very God Himself in the core and center of their hearts."

Only Six More Years? July 14th, 2020 Posted by Rabbi Daniel Lapin

The inflamed mob filled the area surrounding the despised statue. After flinging dozens of ropes over it, the crowd heaved and down came that hated symbol of repression. The happy horde celebrated. I was unable to be there to witness this historic first toppling of an American statue because it happened on July 9th, 1776. The leaden statue was of King George III and it was melted down to make cannonballs and bullets. That was 244 years ago. An important number? I think so.

My problem is that I don't believe in coincidences. Since there is no Hebrew word for it, I consider the concept to be false. Therefore a coincidence can be nothing but God's way of camouflaging His design. Thus, to me, it is significant that so many of history's empires and epochs of national dominance lasted about 250 years.

Long ago, the ancient empire of Babylon was formed under Hammurabi (of the famous 'Code') around 1780 BC and it was finally sacked by the Hittites in about 1530 BC. The exact dates are of course hard to pin down but what is clear is that it lasted about 250 years. Again, it is hard to pin the start of an epoch to a single year but there are good reasons to regard 1492 when Spain evicted the last Moslem from the Iberian peninsula as the start of the Spanish empire. Its natural ending can easily be seen to be about 1742 after the War of Spanish Succession which followed the death of Charles II. Thus for the Spanish Empire also, 250 years is a reasonable estimate for its duration.

There were several discrete periods in what we call the Roman Empire but the most stable of these, the Pax Romana, began with the rule of Augustus in 27 BC and pretty much ended when all illegal immigrants to Rome were granted citizenship in about 213 AD, about 240 years.

The further back one goes the more the exact dates are shrouded in doubt but a good guesstimate for the Assyrian empire is 860 BC to 612 BC for a total of 246 years.

More recently, the Mamelukes and the Ottomans enjoyed dominance for 267 and 250 years respectively. The pre-Communist Russian empire lasted from 1682 until 1916 giving them 234 years. The British Empire? 1700 to 1950. Two hundred and fifty years.

One can of course quibble with some of the exact dates but what is certainly unarguable is that throughout history, when large numbers of people have united to build a society, that society nearly always seems to last about an average of 250 years.

Why 250 years? Whether in the fields of social science, biology, or history, almost everyone agrees that a generation is about 25 years. This is because of unchangeable biological realities about average lifespan and average age of reproductive maturity. The word generation derives from the Latin generare meaning beget. It follows that most empires last about ten generations.

Apparently, the many strong and positive human qualities including steadfastness, initiative, vision, determination, resilience and courage so necessary to pioneer a society are the very qualities eroded by the affluence they create. They are eventually extinguished by the resulting decadence that comes from the success those qualities brought in the first place.

Each generation has a little less character strength than its preceding generation. Each generation's parents want their children to "have it better than we did." Invariably they mean materially not spiritually. Additionally, each generation views the previous generation's luxuries as its necessities. Eventually, this seems to lead inevitably to a generation incapable of sustaining its own virility. The sad process typically takes about ten generations.

I don't know about you, but when I hear the phrase "ten generations" here's what I think of:

Genesis chapter 5, verses 1-29 detailing the ten generations from Adam to Noah. Genesis chapter 11, verses 10-26 detailing the ten generations from Noah to Abraham.

Why does Scripture take over a dozen verses just to inform us that there were ten generations in each sequence? I could have done it in one sentence. In fact, I just did!

Why it takes so many verses is because the Torah takes the trouble to list both the birth and the death of one specific person as the representative of each successive generation. For instance, we see in chapter 5; Kenan

(v.9), Mahalaleel (v.12), Jared (v.15) and in chapter 11; Ever (v.14), Peleg (v.16), Reu (v.18).

The names are provided because each Hebrew name has a meaning which identifies that generation's characteristics in the cosmic pattern of ten-generation-decline. For instance, someone who doesn't know English well might read Shakespeare's play, Twelfth Night and not realize that the character, Malvolio possesses a name that sounds a bit malevolent which provides a clue to his character.

Similarly, familiarity with English helps the reader of Sheridan's School for Scandal recognize the implications of the names of characters like Sir Benjamin Backbite or Lady Sneerwell. None of them are merely names; they are meanings and clues.

In this fashion, the Hebrew names associated with each generation of chapters 5 and 11 in Genesis hint at the fundamental characteristics of that generation in the 250-year journey up to greatness and then-down to oblivion.

The ten generations might be briefly summarized as 1. Bold breakout and conquest, 2. Commercial expansion, 3. Splendid buildings, 4. Widespread affluence, 5. Zenith and the best of days, 6. Extending influence beyond borders with money instead of military, 7. Rising political power of women and of the intellectual and academic elite, 8. Influx of foreigners, 9. Eat, drink and be merry, 10. Internal political and civic fracture.

It is not hard to see how the roughly 250-year histories of many empires correspond to that Biblical schematic. In America, the era of bountiful foreign aid was followed by the growing influence of universities along with those they trained and then uncontrollable illegal immigration. The pattern is particularly clear in historical accounts of the rise and fall of the Roman Empire like that written by Edward Gibbon.

In America, the writing on our wall is no less clear than it was on the wall of Belshazzar's palace (Daniel 5:5) when it signaled the end of the Babylonian Empire. In our case, we see not only the rampaging rioters and the destruction of statues. It is also Boeing, the troubled aircraft builder recently firing its director, Niel Golightly, a former Navy fighter pilot, only because thirty years ago he wrote these eminently true words: "Introducing women into combat would destroy the exclusively male intangibles of war fighting and the feminine images of what men fight for — peace, home, family." Back then they were not controversial words. Today they are the reason to destroy his livelihood and harm the company.

More evidence of impending national extinction is the so-called environmental opposition that has just canceled the vital Atlantic Coast Pipeline that would have carried oil and gas to the fast-growing southern states. The Dakota access pipeline which was to have carried energy from northern Canada to the rest of America is also being canceled by the same extreme left lobby.

Meanwhile, with Denmark and Germany's wholehearted cooperation, Russia is close to completing its Nord Stream 2 pipeline which will make much of Europe

dependent on Russian oil and gas. Presidential candidate Joe Biden's response? Destroying our energy independence and losing hundreds of thousands of blue-collar jobs is a small price to pay to stop global warming. Only six more years for America? Maybe if we're lucky.

So, does America really have only about another six years? That would be the natural course of history. However, America's destiny just might be supernatural! Though I cannot describe in detail the exact events that would mark the milestones of this nation's restoration, I think it could happen. No guarantees, but a distinct possibility.

My reason is that one other nation has successfully escaped the fateful pattern of 250 years —Israel. It is the society in which Jewish children can today comfortably and fluently read and understand the words of the Torah which appeared over 3,000 years ago. No other nation on the planet possesses a culture whose language is materially unchanged for three millennia.

Italian children cannot read the works of Cicero written in the language of Rome only two millennia ago. Greek children cannot read the Iliad or the Odyssey written by Homer in ancient Greek. But to the consternation of secular historians like Arnold Toynbee, Hebrew culture has remained alive. Jews are not fossils of history. The fuel that has granted the Jewish people immunity from the 250-year time limit is the system of Judeo-Christian Biblical values and its accompanying rules and restrictions that prevented their slide into decadence.

This system lay at the root of the culture that accompanied the Pilgrims across the Atlantic and it later informed the founders as they meticulously composed the documents of American exceptionalism. As a result, nobody was surprised that the War of American Independence was propelled from the pulpits of colonial churches. Those momentous days are still thought of as the First Great Religious Reawakening.

Fewer than 100 years later, nobody was surprised when the force behind America's grand abolition of slavery emanated from its fervent Christians. That period is often considered America's Second Great Religious Reawakening.

In spite of how far down the 250-year slope America has slid, I remain hopeful because I think the country is about due for its Third Great Religious Reawakening. If and when this happens, all bets are off. If and when fervent Christianity enjoys a healthy revival and perhaps 100 million American Christians unify under the Biblical banner that the Pilgrims carried to Plymouth, everything comes back.

Because of America's uniqueness and its deliberate similarities to ancient Israel, a comeback scenario is real. Even prominent political scientist and religious agnostic, Charles Murray, insists that the American republic can only survive with a revival of the religious values that the Founders depended on. The indomitable Christian warrior, David Lane, through his @AmericanRenewalProject continues to enlist thousands of courageous pastors and millions of their followers in

bringing Biblical wisdom into the public square. There is hope.

There were times in Hebrew history mentioned by the Prophets when Israel slid further down than America today. But the nation repented and returned. America can do the same. I pray that it will.