

HOW SIN AFFECTS A COUNTRY - August 9, 2020

As a country, we live in difficult and dangerous times. It's been a rough year or this country with the pandemic and the protests and the riots and the crime, and along with that, just the overall unrest and division that we are seeing.

- Some may ask why we are talking about our country - don't we just need to focus on our church and our personal lives? Yes, we do, but we need to see that we can't live in isolation, that what's going in our country affects us and will affect us much more than we realize. 1 Chron 12:32; Luke 3, Luke 3:18

And what we've seen over the past few weeks is that the main reason, the root cause of our problems is our sin, and the only real answer is Jesus Christ. A large portion of the Bible talks about this sin problem, especially in the Prophets. What the Prophets talked about way back over 2500 years ago is relevant to what's happening in the present, for they clearly show us that it's our sin that is really affecting and hurting our lives, our cities, and our country.

I want to take a little time to summarize what we have talked about so far.

1. We talked about our history, that over 100 years ago, there was error creeping into the churches, ministers who were denying the inerrancy and truth of the Bible, denying the deity of Christ, denying Christ's miracles, denying that our problem is our sin, and that salvation through Jesus Christ is the only answer. And entire churches and entire denominations were being poisoned by this error, by these lies of the devil. Rev. 2:9, 12-13

2. We talked about the 1960's and 1970's, when sin and evil became more apparent in our society. There was a rejection of God, and of His authority, a rejection of Him as Creator. Evolution was being taught, prayer was banned from schools, and there was an increasing lack of respect for those in authority. Divorce was more common, abortion was legalized, and families were breaking torn apart, with the result that there were more single parent families, one of the worst things to happen in our country. Sexual sin was increasing. Adultery, sex before marriage, and homosexuality were more and more commonplace.

3. We talked about Romans 1, the passage in the Bible that best shows this progression of sin. It starts with people not loving and worshiping God. - And when people don't love God, they love and worship themselves or other people or animals or things, which is idol worship. This progression of sexual sin in a person or a country, is one of the main signs that shows us that we are getting worse and worse, that we are spiritually going downhill. Rom. 1:31 - 2015 Supreme Court, Humanist Manifesto

4. We talked about how this rejection of God is the main sin, the root of all sins, and that there are all these other sins that are like the branches of a tree.

Mark 7, Rom. 1, Gal. 5, Eph. 5, 2 Tim. 3 all list out specific sins that become evident in a person or a country that turns away from God.

- We looked at the Ten Commandments, another list that shows us how we sin.

It talks about not loving God, of loving idols, of not taking time for God or church, of not honoring or respecting parents or for that matter anyone who's in authority. It talks about how we are not to lie, steal, murder, or commit adultery. It talks about how we are not to covet, we are not to be greedy. And all these sins are now clearly being seen in peoples' lives and in our country. Hosea 4:1-10, Amos 6:1-8

5. We read in Rom 1 that God gives people over to their sins, permits them to do increasingly sinful things. God says, *"If you want to sin, I will let you sin, I will not restrain you anymore."* 2 Tim. 3:8, 13

- And the people who sin in this way reject God, and so God rejects them. And the people who harden their hearts in this way against God are then further hardened by God. 2 Thess. 2:8-12

We talked about how God gives people over to a depraved mind. Sometimes, you will hear someone say something, and you will say to yourself, *"That person is not thinking right, he has lost his mind - that person is crazy, is nuts, is loco."*

- We are seeing this a lot more in our country. We see it in the government, in academics, and in the media. We see it in that there's a lack of civility, a lack of tolerance, a real hate for people. We see it in the outright lies, in slander, and we see it in this cancel culture. We see it in this breakdown of law and order. Defund police, jails, courts. Psalm 10, Isaiah 5:20

6. Romans 1:18. It says that God's wrath is being revealed. We know that God hates sin, and will judge sin, will pour out His wrath on sinful people, sinful cities and sinful countries. And you see God's judgment upon sin when you read the Bible. Cain, Noah, Sodom and Gomorrah, Israel. Isaiah 13-19

2 Chron. 12:1-4, 9 - We see how king Rehoboam and all Israel forsook God, and God then judged them. 2 Chr. 13:4-19 speaks about this civil war in Israel, the north against the south, and the result was division that lasted for over 200 years. And all this was part of God's judgment upon them because of their sin.

- 2 Chron. 15:3-6. Verse 3 tells us how things were bad, that God wasn't part of their lives and people weren't living for God. Vss. 5-6 said there was no peace and that God was troubling them, afflicting them, that is, was judging them. But they sought God and He had mercy on them and blessed them. 2 Chron. 15:12-15, 19

Then we come to Ezek 14:13-14. This was over 300 years after what we had just read took place, and God said, *“That’s it, no more mercy.”* And God ordained Babylon to be His tool of judgment, to come in and destroy Jerusalem, to kill many people, and to exile others, which included Daniel and his three friends going to Babylon.

- And God has been judging our country. This pandemic is a judgment of God, that our economy is hurting is a judgment of God, that we are having all these riots, and destruction of property, and all this division and unrest - this is all a judgment of God upon our country. Ezek. 23:46-47. NYC - 9/11 - today. Chicago

7. We talked about how God’s patience with us is coming to an end. And how close our country is to the point of no return, or if we are at this point of no return, no one knows. But we’re sinking because of our sin, with the result that sooner or later we will either be weakened or completely disabled and we’ll lose our status as the #1 superpower in the world.

- And again, what all this means is that God is judging this country.

8. I say this in view of the fact that we’re now living in the end-times, and we’re getting closer to that time when the Antichrist and his 10-nation kingdom takes over the world and becomes the most lawless, evil, and wicked dictator this world has ever seen, and persecutes Jews and Christians like never before.

- The fact that the Antichrist is coming to power means that our country, the United States, sooner or later, will have to decline in power.

1 John 5:19 - *“We know that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.”*

The devil has control of this world. With his demons, he influences this world much more than you realize. And he works through people. There are evil people who are parents, who are teachers, who are businessmen, and who are politicians.

- There are people in churches who call themselves pastors, but they’re not, they’re false teachers, the devil’s agents. 1 Tim 4:1-2, Acts 20:29-31, Dan. 10:13

There are evil people in hundreds kinds of groups, organizations, and think tanks, with their evil agendas, ones who are working hard trying to influence businesses, families, schools, governments, the media, music, TV, movies, our entire culture.

- They don’t believe in God or Jesus or the truth of God. They are promoting the lies of the devil. And I am sure you have heard the names of some of these groups. Lots of these groups have nice names to make them seem like they’re nice groups, good groups, helpful groups, but they’re not - they’re evil and destructive, and they’re wolves in sheep’s clothing. Burning Bibles, Smart phones. 2 Cor. 11:13-14

We now live in what many people call a post Judeo-Christian country. In many ways, our country was founded on what we call Judeo-Christian principles, principles related to God, family, government, and a respect for life.

- Since the 1960's, these principles have been viciously attacked, and are eroding. And since that time, we have been seeing many movements that are anti-God, anti-Christ, and anti-Christian. Many of these believe in what is called socialism, Marxism, or Communism. And their beliefs, their philosophies, their methods, their ways of governing, and their leaders are very evil.

They don't believe in God or Jesus. They don't believe in the truths about salvation, the truths about marriage, work, and the real purpose of government. They don't really care about people. They don't really believe in the value of life, the value of every single person, no matter their age, race, sex, or color.

- They're dictatorial, authoritarian, and totalitarian, and they are often violent, even willing to kill people to achieve their objectives. And they want to control people's lives, they want to control the schools, they want to control industries and businesses and what you can buy. They want to control healthcare, and even your finances. And they want to limit your freedoms and make you their slaves.

We have seen this in countries like Russia, China, Cuba and Venezuela. Now I'm not trying to scare you, but there's a large groundswell of support for this evil, for this way of government, for politicians who want to do similar things here. And it's very possible that they will gain more power in the months and years ahead, power that relates to the control of our country and control of your life, and their attempt to control the churches, even this church here. China

I believe God wants us to know what's happening in our country. 1 Chron. 12:32. God also wants us to know that he is sovereign over all that happens. Dan. 4:35.

- Now I bring all this up because it relates to some of the things we are now seeing in our country, some of the sinful activities that have been taking place, some of the things being said at these riots, and in speeches, and by certain politicians.

- I want you to know that life may get very difficult for the church in the months and years ahead. In the past few months, we've already seen how governors of states have tried, in unlawful and wrong ways, to shut down churches, to control what we as a church can or cannot do, and it's not right. Grace Comm. - MacArthur

Of course, we're to never worry or fear. Prov. 3:5-6, Psalm 56:1-11. Trust and Obey. It's important that we keep trusting God and keep doing the work He tells us to do. Psalm 37; Matt. 6:33, 16:18, 28:19-20.

- Persecution may affect our country sooner than you think. I leave you with three things: 1) Do not be surprised by what happens (1 Peter 4:12-14).

2) Pray for churches and church leaders (1 Thess. 5:25). 3) Keep looking to the Lord. Psalm 11:7