

Coke County Comment

WHEN WILL BE A BETTER TIME?

By James B. Pentecost
 When I consider this country of my birth-- the matchless beauty from the snow-capped Rockies to the fertile plains of Kansas and Nebraska, the rolling hills of Oklahoma and Texas to the tree-covered expanses of the Southeast, and the mountain-clad areas of the Shenandoah to the sea shores on the East and on the West-- I think of what a wonderful, great land God has given us. We have the ability to enjoy such a land and its beauty, as well as its liberty and freedom which have been unparalleled in the history of the world. But yet I sit in deep fear and trembling, realizing that the God who gave us such great opportunity, has been abandoned and forgotten. Our fathers and forefathers, who paid, worked, fought and died to keep our freedom and all its privileges, have long since been forgotten. We have sat here in our wealth and our nice homes and our nice cars and our entertainment and our comfort, until we have convinced ourselves that we have gotten all this by ourselves and our own effort and that we don't owe the Creator anything.

It is a sad situation, especially when we understand that, "The God who gave us life gave us liberty, and can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis: a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are a gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and His justice cannot sleep forever." (Thomas Jefferson). Apparently God's justice is no longer sleeping. In the last several years we have experienced earthquakes in places where we have never before had earthquakes, storms where there haven't been storms for many years, floods, hurricanes, extreme drouth, tornadoes, and fires that, when viewed, look like the gates of Hell opened wide. These are just a few of the things that I think we are beginning to see.

We have just put back into office (through unconcerned ignorance of a large portion of our population, by manipulation or fraud, or by whatever means it happened) a man who is a non-citizen, a national socialist, communist, and worst of all, an enemy of Christianity. He has no regard for anything

except what will further his own agenda, and he does not care who or what he tramples on to achieve his goals. I don't think there are any limits or boundaries to what he and his cohorts will go to accomplish what they want. We saw the same things happen in 1933 when Adolph Hitler came to power. He committed crimes and blamed them on other people. He killed people and committed other atrocities in order to gain power. Then, after he had established a firm control over the country, he proceeded to methodically destroy it. We are seeing the same thing in our country. This president has begun methodically to destroy our economy, to weaken our defenses to the point where we cannot effectively defend ourselves, and he has decimated our health care system to the place where we cannot even begin to take care of our sick and infirm. He has sent our young men to fight in unwinnable foreign wars which drain us of our money, our supplies, and the very best of our young people, wars where our youth are being wasted on foreign shores in battles that there is no plan to win. And now, he and his cohorts are trying to take away the last vestige of our freedom: the right to defend ourselves. He hasn't yet been able to completely disarm us, but once that is done, he will have us in the death-grip of a tyrant. He and his cronies can always manage to turn a tragedy into an opportunity to further their agenda; "Never waste a good crisis," as they say. I have wondered if some of these shootings are planned-- why are they instituted by some maniac who commits suicide immediately following in order to not be questioned? You may think I am radical to hold such an

opinion. But each such incident conveniently and invariably serves to further their agenda of more gun control. Or, more accurately, people control; that is what they ultimately want.

I have seen in my lifetime the erosion of the principles upon which our country was founded, and the utter abandonment of God and everything He holds dear, in our attempts to be "politically correct."

And yet who would I blame this on? I blame it on the Christians, and I blame it on the pastors-- the Christians who go to churches that are more like social clubs than places of worship, and the pastors who preach only a "social gospel." We all go to church on Sunday and listen to a nice little sermon on the love of God, and on how wonderful everything is (oops, he forgot to mention the fact that we are all sinners and need to repent and turn from our sin), we feel good about everything, then we socialize, we discuss our latest business venture or our accomplishments, then we all go home and forget to think about God again until next Sunday. We start to think that if we inconvenience ourselves to give Him a little bit of our time and an offering of a little bit of our money, that should pacify Him. After all, He is a merciful God, good and gracious.

But we forget that He is also a just God. I think of II Chronicles 7:13 and 14. God says, "If I shut up Heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; if MY people," (He's not talking about the average unsaved person who is not following Him-- He means US, folks) "which are called

by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

I am not seeing people who are willing to do that. I speak not only to everyone else in this country; I speak to myself as well. It is easy to grow lax, and we all have the tendency to not give God the credit He is due for all that we have. But when I think of what is happening, it is disturbing; it is more than I can contemplate. People are too busy accumulating wealth, nice homes, possessions, and prestige. Our whole way of life is devoted to self, to the point where we have made ourselves the gods. We have convinced ourselves that we got our freedoms, rights, and privileges all by ourselves without any help from Almighty God, so we don't need Him any more. I am not seeing pastors calling people to repentance. Pastors have the opportunity to speak plainly to us, to tell us when we have sinned and gone astray, to tell us the truth, no matter how hard that truth may be. But, no, in the name of political correctness they are too afraid that they might lose their tax exemption, or they might offend someone in their congregation who might be contributing toward their salary. They preach something that feels good and sounds good and soothes or pacifies the people who come to hear it.

What will it take? The men who, with God's guidance and help, built this country, all pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. Nobody even understands what honor is anymore. Honor is the respect you have for yourself, and that others have for you, when you know you have tried, for all that you are

worth, to do what is right; to stand for what is right even if you get stomped for taking that stand. "There's right and there's wrong. You do the one, and you are living. You do the other, and you may be walking around, but you're as dead as a beaver hat." I heard a famous man once say that we become a part of what we condone. By not speaking out, we have condoned the slow confiscation of our wealth by the government, the obliteration of our liberties by people in government-- not just federal, but state and local as well. We don't say anything; we're afraid to speak out because we might be labeled "politically incorrect" or thought of as some kind of extremist or radical. When does it get to the point where we decide that it is worth fighting for? When does it get to the point where we decide it's worth praying for? What will it take? When will we decide that, first, we must bow in repentance to Almighty God, and, that, second, we need to take a stand in defense of what is right? I wonder, is America too fat, too complacent, or maybe too cowardly, or just too busy enjoying all our wealth, that it's just not worth the effort of fighting to keep it? Could we really lose it? Those politicians can't really mean to do anything that bad to us, can they? That's what the people of Germany thought in the 1930's. And Adolph Hitler came to power, took them into the worst conflict of our time; possibly the worst in history; and absolutely devastated Germany, Europe, and half of the world. Are we facing the same thing? For years we have had in this country a form of government that has been second to none. No one else has ever been given so many privileges and freedoms. From those who

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