

PASSING THE BATON 16

PROBLEMS IN SOCIETY

26th July 2008

2 Chronicles 7:14

“If My people, who are called by My name, shall humble themselves, pray, seek, crave and require of necessity My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land.”

Beloved, this is **our** responsibility, and this is a conditional promise – ‘if’ My people.

Let’s pray.

Father, I thank You, Lord, I want to proclaim your Majesty and Your greatness over the situation we are facing in this country. I want to proclaim your faithfulness, your supremacy, your Majesty, You are always redemptive Father, you never let go. Thank You so much, You haven’t finished with this country.

I thank you that you are breathing on your church to show her what her responsibility is. I thank You, You are so longsuffering with us in our recalcitrance, when we hang back, You draw us forward with Your love.

Thank You, it is You who initiates, our task is only to respond. Let us respond today Father with whole hearts.

*Father this day my prayer is that you will make us into **responders**.*

That we will respond wholeheartedly to what you are saying to us, that You will cause us to rise up and take action in the way You want us to.

*That you will fill us with a Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the knowledge of You, that we may **know** the hope of our calling and the exceeding greatness of Your power toward us that you exerted in Christ Jesus when You raised Him from the dead and seated Him at Your right hand.*

That Father we will respond to our responsibility today.

That we will see clearly that this promise is a conditional one, conditional upon our response – work in us today Father to will and to do stir us up Father, in Jesus name and for His sake.

Stir Your church in this hour. This nation is Jesus’ inheritance, He died for it. Help us to understand our part, we confess our ignorance Father. Too long, we have been ignorant. Inform us today, Lord. Move us today, Lord, in Your purposes for this land of ours. Put a hunger in our hearts to know You and obey You. Help us to be willing Father, help us to will.

We want to stand before you – confident. Those of us Father who aren't confident in You, do something today that will reverse all that. Line them up, place them squarely in your Presence. Let them experience You. We want to know your heart, your mind, so come in your fullness and be and do just what You want with us today – we love You. We worship You. We bless You. We magnify You.

And Holy Spirit, how I love you, I am so in awe of You, but I love you. Please come and do what you do best, show us Jesus, show us what He has in mind, show us His heart for His people, this country. Thank you You never condemn, never accuse, you always lead us and guide us so may we come with thankful hearts to hear more of your precious Word today, may that Word live and outwork in us and through us.

Our families, our children, our land, and our nation are all a part of Jesus inheritance, bought by His blood. Enable us, Father, to hear what your Spirit is saying to the churches in these days. For Jesus' sake and in His Name. Amen.

Introduction:

God is moving in unprecedented ways in these days in His church, healing and delivering her, captivating her heart in order that she may become what He intended, that she may draw after her the great end time harvest before she is caught away to be with her Bridegroom.

But whilst she may have stars in her eyes about all this, God is serious; He is preparing her both for war and for harvest.

God is purposeful and intentional towards her; she has a function to perform in His end time purposes.

She is a bride with combat boots, knowing her Commanding Officer, and learning to be instantly obedient to His commands.

So all this is preparation, training for reigning, learning to hear and to heed, getting us fit for service, that we may know what it is like to live under a Theocracy.

We are living in exciting times where the glory of God is coming down on to His church to prepare us for the coming of our Bridegroom. When church is caught away, no-one will be in doubt of Who we represented. Our lives will have reflected His glory and will have drawn people to Him.

I am convinced we are living in a time when we will live righteous and holy lives; we will be people of the Word, showing ourselves to be 'other than' the people around us. *'In the world, but not of it.'*

A time when God will restore to us the joy of our salvation; that we will know and understand what it really means to be the redeemed of the Lord; that we are redeemed from what we were, not from what we were doing.

That we will live lives fully displaying the glory and power of God to regenerate fallen man, and present us faultless before His throne with exceeding joy. That we will be an aroma of

death to those that are perishing, but of life to those who are being saved. **2 Corinthians 2:15,16**. That this is the time when the church will rise up in all her glory to display **His** glory.

This is the time that has been prophesied of the Spirit and the Word coming together in the great end time outpouring on the people of God that will go on until Jesus comes.

We will be people *'who know their God, and do exploits'*. **Daniel 11: 32,33** and *'the people who **know** will instruct many.'* We must therefore be ready, and not have to spend time getting ready – for that glorious day of the Parousia, the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, to catch us away. Therefore, I say to you **"Be ye ready** for you know not at what hour your Lord will come". Smile please 😊!

Commercial:

God has told me to prepare a set of CD's covering such major topics such as: *'Should a Christian support Capital Punishment'*, *'The Doctrine of War'*, *'Sex and Sexuality in the 21st century church'*, *'Money Matters'*, and *'Did God really say...?'* Which is teaching on the issue of homosexuality.

These will be available as a package after the summer break, the cost of production will be about £25 – there's about 9 or 10 CDs altogether, so if you want one we would be grateful if you would consider making a contribution to same.

Similarly, we aim to have the notes for these bound and available as a set at a cost of £5 per set, same deal. If you watch the web site www.psalms131.com you will see what is coming up in the next 6 months or so. I shall also be putting out a Monthly Message on CD. If you want that you can subscribe to that in the same way. The new web site is due to be launched in early September and everything will be available on there. So -

The studies are to equip you in order that you might live and speak that which is truth, and that you might clearly understand the issues, and what the will of God is and what the ways of God are.

Next month the subject is *'Knowing God's Ways'*.

Israel knew His works, but Moses knew His ways; I don't know about you, but I want to be like Moses, knowing His ways.

In the coming months I sense I shall be speaking more and more about how we should conduct ourselves as Christians in a fallen society; a fallen world, as the redeemed of God, Holy and dearly loved, shining, as Paul says, *"as lights in the firmament in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation, as we hold out the word of life."* **Philippians 2:15,16** paraphrase, being as salt and light in the communities in which God has placed us.

These studies are not easy because they raise issues that, maybe for years the church has not addressed, or if it has, it has not addressed them fully, but in these end times, my remit is to bring the truth as lovingly as I can in order that we may be the people Jesus died for, that we may know His Kingdom *coming* into our lives increasingly on a daily basis. That we may live and move and have our being in the One Supreme God, His Majesty, the Lord Jesus Christ, as

we live out our lives in this world as strangers and aliens, whilst we live a Kingdom lifestyle here on earth.

Every time we do a study like this, we are lifting up the Lordship, the Majesty and the Supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ and the total efficacy of His work on the cross. An exchange took place at the cross, and daily we are coming into more, and more of what He won for us, we should be constantly experiencing more and more of His freedom in our lives experientially. This freedom is not a license to please ourselves, but an **empowering** to do the will of God, as He increases, and we decrease.

Living a kingdom lifestyle will mark us out as less ordinary.

Our value system will be completely different from that in society and in the world generally – we are not of the world, though we are in it.

I aim to present these truths to you simply, and clearly, expounding what the word has to say, and this month we are looking at problems in society.

During the preparation of this teaching a number of stabbings were reported in the press – our society is becoming more and more gratuitously violent every day – we as the church are the people with the answer.

May God bless our ears to *hear* what the Spirit is saying to the churches and may the truth of His word witness to our hearts this day, may the power of God fall upon us that we might rise to the high calling He has placed on our lives.

God never, ever, asks us to be or do anything without giving us the tools to do the job. The reasons why we miss the mark of His high calling are many and varied, but today He holds out His sceptre of power to us to overcome, and we will see how His ways are revealed to us by principles which are unchanging, as He Himself is unchanging.

My prayer is that you will reach out, by faith, and appropriate everything He has to offer you, that you might indeed reign and rule in *this life*, by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and so fit yourself for service above, as the old hymn says.

The Westminster catechism says, *“The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever”*. The primary pursuit of the church should be the glory of God in the midst of her. We should be hastening the day of the Lord, living every day as though it was our last; ready to meet Him and cast our crowns before Him. Our first duty is loving obedience to God – Jesus said, *“If you love Me you will do what I say”*, and what we are discovering in these days is - what He says.

A deep and consistent life lived in the Word will produce obedience, because it is by study of what God says about Himself, and His ways, we come to know Who He is and how He likes to do things and our love and obedience grow thereby. Without the Word, we are flying blind.

In this present Era, God is removing our blindfolds, and revealing Himself in all His ineffable qualities: inexpressible, indescribable, unutterable, unspeakable – deep - just a few definitions of ineffable.

Settling the Lordship issue:

Over the past few studies, we have had to come to a number of conclusions:

- If you accept Jesus as Lord, rather than just as Saviour, then you must do what He says and not what I or someone else says.
- If you see God's authority over you, you must obey those in authority who are over you in society.
- As God is in charge it is really under Him that we are submitted, or not
- If we have a confrontation facing us between what society believes on one side and what the Word of God says on the other, we have to choose what we will believe. Who has the greater authority society, or God?

Part of the aim of these teachings is to teach you His **commandments** in order that you might keep them. If you do not know what the Word of God says you are not in a position to obey it.

Evil proceeds from the heart of man:

Mark 7:21 - 23 AMP

²¹For from within, (that is) out of the hearts of men, come base and wicked thoughts, sexual immorality, stealing, murder, adultery ²²coveting (a greedy desire to have more wealth), dangerous and destructive wickedness, deceit; unrestrained (indecent) conduct; an evil eye (envy) slander (evil speaking, malicious misrepresentation, abusiveness), pride (the sin of an uplifted heart against God and man), foolishness (folly, lack of sense, recklessness, thoughtlessness. ²³All these evil (purposes and desires) come from within, and they make the man unclean and render him unhallowed."

The Bible clearly tells us that the fall is real and evil proceeds from the heart of man. What we see outwardly is a manifestation of that which is going on inside.

What I am speaking about is what is known theologically as the doctrine of the universal, or total, depravity of man. Immorality, corruption, decadence, wickedness - dictionary definition of depravity.

We don't like that do we?

Put another way, it is the fall. And it is real, and it is extremely ugly.

To set this issue in context, we need to look again at the four Divine Institutions given in **Genesis chapters 1 -12:**

- ✓ Free will
- ✓ Marriage

- ✓ Family
- ✓ National Government

Those are the four Divine Institutions that God put on the earth at the very beginning to produce a stable society within the nations.

These institutions are universal, that means they apply to all nations.

The first three were given before the flood, but the fourth one was after the flood.

These four, as we found when we looked at the issue of capital punishment, are found in **Genesis chapters 1 to 12** as I said, and they are universal for the Christian and non-Christian alike.

These are God's instructions for every nation on the earth. God's highest purpose for a nation is that the government

will put into effect the laws of God.

Once people start *rejecting* God's standards, that's when trouble starts in the nation.

Once the people reject God and His laws, judgement comes on a nation.

The primary purpose of National Government:

We have looked at the doctrine of war, and how God feels about that; and whether as Christians we should support capital punishment; but now we want to take it back to grass roots as it were, the cause of the problem, and examine the issues in our society and what is currently taking place in our own country, the reasons for this, and most importantly our role in it.

Today we need to look again at National Government.

The primary aim of **national government** as instituted by God is to deal with evil *within its society*. It is a way in which **mankind** is empowered by God to **judge** and deal with the evil in any given society. National government has been given to **restrain evil**.

If you asked most people what the purpose is of the Government, they would say it is economic or social, but that was **not** God's original intent. These are important, but first, government should deal with evil within society. Law and order come first. If you don't have these there won't be a good economy or society, there will be no money and therefore a breakdown in society.

So, the primary purpose of national government is to **judge evil** and to **restrain it**.

Government is firstly there to **restrain** mankind's evil.

That is why, until Jesus comes, men are put in a place of authority in which they can deal with evil.

Psalm 82

“God stands in the congregation of the mighty, He judges among the gods”.

If you ever hear anyone saying that this means we are gods, disabuse them will you - gods (small ‘g’) always refers to *human* kings, rulers, or judges. Let’s look at

Psalm 82:

“¹God stands in the congregation of the mighty; He judges among the ‘gods’. ²How long will you judge unjustly, and show partiality to the wicked? Selah. ³Defend the poor and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and needy. ⁴Deliver the poor and needy: free them from the hand of the wicked. ⁵They do not know, nor do they understand; they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are unstable. ⁶I said “You are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High. But you shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes”. ⁸Arise, O God, judge the earth; for You shall inherit all nations.”

God is saying here, I stand in the midst of your judges, **judging their judgements**.

This is quoted in the gospels – **John 10:34** - Jesus Himself quotes it ‘*I have called you gods*’, He says. It is obvious, He is *judging* them; their authority is of Him – **all** authority is God-given, and so has accountability attached to it - so a judge should be putting forward God’s judgement in the situation.

They used to, but it is not so in these days in this country as we move further and further away from restraint of any kind and punishment no longer “fits the crime.

If God is judging their judgements – what does He see?

This is why we studied the issue of capital punishment to see if our present government in this country is dealing with evil as it should and making attempts to restrain it.

Our role in the earth as Christians is to bring about God’s declared will through **our** prayer and supplication to Him when we see things are wrong.

We also need to speak out loud and clear to the people of the land so that they can hear the truth of God.

As Christians, we have our part to play in society.

God put us in this land to pray for it and to be involved in it as His representatives, we are God’s ambassadors. An ambassador is the representative of his country living in another country.

This world is *not our home*; we are strangers and aliens in it. We are to represent another Kingdom. In doing that, we are not to rebel and to march against decisions that are wrong, we are to live in peace as far as within us lies and **pray and speak out where necessary**.

God’s purpose is that peace and order should be in the land for both Christians and non-Christians.

We are the hope of this nation.

Two aspects of evil that affect a society: inner and outer evil:

There are two areas where evil has to be restrained. Inner and outer evil. This is the duty of national government. Unless these two areas are restrained the people within the land will lose their freedom.

First of all there is inner evil - not evil within your heart - but evil within **society**. This is those who are committing crimes all over the place and the government must deal with that evil. Murder must be dealt with, as we saw last month. Muggings *must* be dealt with. Crime *must* be dealt with.

Through the police, magistrates and judges, the government should deal with evil within society so that you have some semblance of peace and order. Notice the line of authority, there has to be a chain of command. It is set there by God. And no-one as I said last month, is to take the law into their own hands, if these appointed people are there, they have to be used, that is why they are there, and we must **respect** them, whether they are doing a good job or a bad one.

It is **not** our function to speak against them and criticize them, but to pray for them and bless them. They are not our enemies – we only have one of those, Satan himself. Other people are *not* our enemies.

Summary: The fall is real:

Beloved, every person on the face of the globe has to come to terms with this issue sooner or later. Is man fallen, or is man not fallen. Is man basically evil inside, or is he not evil inside? That is the issue. That issue will affect your thinking on many, many subjects. The theory of evolution has done much damage even within the Christian church because it removes the fall if we evolved, rather than were created in His image, and subsequently fell, and leads to a kind of cross-less Christianity where we can stay the same but enjoy all the benefits of heaven.

Many people struggled with the last teaching on capital punishment, simply because **we** want to be the final arbiter on how God does things. We do not actually like very much some of the things He says.

Beloved, that is humanism and rebellion.

Remember the definition of humanism it is a system of thought that is based on the values, characteristics and behaviour that are believed to be best in human beings, rather than on any supernatural authority.

In other words, man's opinion is higher than God's.

Now we don't want **that** do we?

Respect and authority:

Many of you may not know that when the Queen was sworn in, in 1952, she took an oath of allegiance to the faith of her forefathers. The Queen has a royal heritage going back hundreds of years, her father before her was a Christian as was her mother. The Queen has been placed there by God (**Romans 13**) and she has faithfully carried out her duties for more than 50 years – you will have God to answer to if you are against the Monarchy.

We are very blessed to have her, without her this country could be a dictatorship by now and in an even worse state than we presently are. We need to consider these things and thank God for our leaders.

Respect and authority - for instance, discipline for children. Should they be disciplined at school, at home, for bad behaviour, or not? The issue here yet again, is the fallen nature. Are we going to allow it to run wild in our children, or are we going to bring them up in the fear and admonition of the Lord? As Christians will we dare to discipline? What does the Bible say?

Those who think children shouldn't be disciplined will say they are like they are because their parenting has been bad. Partly, yes, but by far most of the problem is the fall, or the total depravity of their nature that you are seeing – it is in their DNA – you just don't have to teach them to be naughty; you do, on the other hand, have to teach them to be good! But you will hear the argument that we mustn't discipline them because it inhibits the little dears - sure does, it's meant to - it stops them doing the things they want to do, destroying themselves and others in the process.

Those of us who believe in the universal fall of man, **know** that children are fallen from the moment they are conceived as are we all. *"Surely in sin did my mother conceive me"* **Psalms 51:5**.

The Bible says that *"foolishness is bound in the heart of a child"* **Proverbs 22:15** *"but the rod of correction drives it far from him."*

In other words, he doesn't know **how** to control himself.

He has uncontrolled desires in there.

Discipline gives a child **security**.

He knows you love him enough to stop him, doesn't mean he won't fight you every inch of the way, he will.

Children need boundaries.

What **we** have to do both as parents and if you are a teacher, this applies too, is to teach them how to *control* what is within them, we do them no favours if we do not.

Do you believe in corporal punishment? Abuse does not rule out correct use. It cannot be denied that there has been abuse in the use of corporal punishment in schools in the past, but we need to "apply the rod" where it is necessary. The Bible is not suggesting that you should beat the living daylights out of your child, but that you should bring that old sin nature

under control – for his or her own good. They won't learn self-control if they don't know self-control.

The purpose of discipline in children is to produce **responsible adults**.

Without discipline there *is* no **self**-control.

So this belief, or not, in the universal depravity of man, will affect our thinking as far as law and order is concerned, and as far as discipline as parents and in schools is concerned, and it will affect our attitude towards disarmament and our attitude to war, and our understanding of society.

The spirit of the age is total self-centeredness, anarchy, and rebellion. A few years ago, "granny bashing" made the headlines, now it is the youth who are killing each other, scarcely a week goes by without another young person being killed or maimed, often by other teenagers.

We will examine today, as we look at the rise of anarchy and rebellion in our own time and nation, how we have come to this pitiable state in our nation, where almost daily we read of another teenager being stabbed to death or injured by his peers.

Unless we as the body of Christ get the sovereignty of God and His commandments back into our thinking, we will never make an ounce of difference in society.

We of all people should be an example in our respect of authority, clean lives, honesty, kindness, generosity, love, polite and **well-disciplined** children – we should be an example in our lives and our homes of how to conduct ourselves with self-control.

We should be able to rule our own spirit well and be in submission to our King and His Word.

We should be able to give a reason for the hope that is within us; be salt and light in our community and know God's viewpoint on the vital issues confronting our society in order that we may hold out the Word of life – a return to God's commandments in this country.

We are not to Bible thump, but to show by our lives that there is another way to live, and that way is freedom from self-centredness and greed.

God's laws are for **all** societies, Christian and non-Christian – He wants that murder should not take place; He desires that stealing should not take place; He desires that adultery should not take place; He desires that a nation should not be in debt...

What is happening in society today?

The Bible says that as the days get darker, we as Christians must get brighter. What I want to do is to provide us with information that will help us shine in the world in which we live. But before we can shine, we need to understand the problem and our part in it.

What we need to ask is what does the Bible say is the cause of the problem? As Christians we are the only ones who can analyse the problem as it is. The Bible is an historical document as

well as being God's living Word. The Bible talks about the rise and fall of many nations, it also tells us why a nation became great and why it fell. This nation was known until relatively recently as Great Britain. Sadly, we do not live up to that title today.

In Britain, as in many other countries over the past 50 years, there has been a decline the like of which we have never seen.

Society is unrecognizable – the rise in violent crime, rape, drug addiction, drunkenness; every other marriage ends in divorce; and abortion is on demand, with girls little more than children being granted various ways of birth control; even as I wrote this there was an item in the newspaper about a 'reform' of the abortion laws to make it even easier to procure and abortion. Prisons are full; the police cannot cope with demands made on them, power is daily stripped from them making it more and more difficult for them to apprehend criminals and bring them to justice. More and more children are coming from broken homes, and even among Christian families, the divorce rate is high. We are not immune to what is going on around us.

If we do not understand what has happened, we do not know how to be effective in the present situation. If you ask people in the street what is the cause of the problem in Britain today you will get a variety of answers. If you listen to the radio and the television, you will get another set of answers, if you listen to the psychologists, again, more answers. Politicians of all parties blame each other, some people say unemployment is the problem, the sociologists say that the real problem is that people are deprived of certain things, and you can go on – there will be loads of different answers to what people think is the problem. None of them is right. None of them.

The real source of the problem in our land today is **spiritual**. We have **declined spiritually**. We have turned away from having faith in God and His commandments - we have broken them all - and **that** is what underlies all the problems in our land.

A few decades ago a lady named Mary Whitehouse was ridiculed for her stand against immorality in the media, she frequently made it to the TV screens, where she was made a laughing stock. I was not a Christian when she made her appearances on the TV, and it is only now that I clearly see that God raised her up as a watchman for the nation – we were without excuse. She laid it all on the line and was not afraid to fight for what she believed.

So because it is a spiritual problem, it is going to take spiritual people with **spiritual** information to provide the answer. We need to see the situation as it really is, but we also need to pray above the political stuff and open a window in heaven for our nation. Question number one then -

How does God deal with an apostate nation?

The word, apostate, as describing our nation: somebody who renounces a belief or allegiance, an absconder, traitor, runaway, fugitive, renegade. I was shocked when Father gave me this sub-title. '*How does God deal with an apostate nation?*' How does He deal with a nation that has gone so far away from His commandments? **The answer is, He brings judgement on that nation.** Beloved, this nation, this country, of ours is under the judgement of God.

I wrestled with this concept for many years, hearing various people declare that we were under judgement and thinking myself that we were under grace. But I have had to come to the reluctant conclusion that the evidence my eyes and ears is that we are indeed under the judgement of God. Paradoxically we are also in a time of grace because that is the way God works, He always gives the human race a time of grace, before He brings the ultimate, universal judgement, which is a different issue.

Psalm 82 Amp. What God is saying in Psalm 82 is, *“right, now you have judged perverted judgements, now I am going to judge you”*. *“Judgement is Mine”*, says the Lord, *“I will repay”*.

Once the people reject God and His laws, judgement comes on a nation, and it usually occurs like this:

1. People begin to laugh at the government and national figures and the media portray leaders and those in authority as fools.
2. Children see the adults making fun of those in authority; they pick it up and do the same and soon the country is without respect of any kind; and without respect for authority itself.
3. Marriages break down and divorce rises, ‘love’ becomes cheap; life becomes cheap; values go; morals decline.
4. The last thing to go is free will and you get a dictatorship in the country and the dictator decides what should and should not happen in the land.

That is the order of decline and that is what happens in God’s judgement on the land and history shows this time and time again. When people reject God’s standards, *that* is what happens.

The Bible talks about the rise and fall of many nations, and it also tells us *why* nations become great and why they fall.

The decline of the Roman Empire was due, the scholars say, to the loss of ‘civic virtue’ which is public goodness, righteousness, integrity, honesty, morality, uprightness. The antonym, the opposite, is wickedness. They had become wicked. But it is **God** who raises up kings and removes them -

Daniel 2: 20, 21.

“²⁰Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His. ²¹ And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.” KJV

In other words, God stepped in with judgement when the Roman Empire became dissolute, degenerate, depraved, immoral, debauched, self-indulgent and dissipated.

The earth is the Lord’s...

Romans 1:24-32 NIV - talking here about God’s righteous wrath revealed against mankind -

“²⁴Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator – Who is forever praised. Amen. ²⁶Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. ²⁷In the same way, the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. ²⁸Furthermore, since they did not think it worth while to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. ²⁹They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, ³⁰slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful. They invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; ³¹they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless.³²Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.”

These verses show us that we are under God’s judgement in this land. Just look at how many of those things are in our land today and the sign a land is going downhill fast is given in verse 32. **What is evil and against God is approved of.**

It is increasingly true that those who do evil get a better deal than those who try to live honestly. Those who are victims of crime are left to suffer.

Judges 2:11-15 AMP - and you can see the problem begins with rejection of God.

“¹¹And the people of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals. ¹²And they forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers, Who brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods of the peoples round about them and bowed down to them , and provoked the Lord to anger. ¹³And they forsook the Lord and served Baal (the god worshipped by the Canaanites) and the Ashtaroth (female deities such as Ashtoreth and Asherah).¹⁴So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and He gave them into the power of plunderers who robbed them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies round about so that they could no longer stand before their foes. ¹⁵Whenever they went out the hand of the Lord was against them for evil as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn to the; and they were bitterly distressed.”

We can see that the root cause of the problems in our land is that we as a nation have rejected God and thrown His laws behind our backs and instead of living in blessing; we are living in the reverse.

You may say that these laws were for Israel. Indeed, but the law of sowing and reaping is *universal* and **Romans 1:18-23** makes this clear. The wrath of God is revealed against **all** ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

Could it be that we as church have suppressed the truth in unrighteousness? Could it be that we have lost our inheritance, hard won by the men who went before us, who brought reformation not only to the church but to society? Could it be that somewhere in all this we have a responsibility to face, and confession of our part to make to God?

Just a thought.

People say if we allow the spread of sex shops, abortion, pornography and a breakdown in law and order in the land, God will judge us.

Beloved, the breakdown *is* God's judgement.

When God starts judging a land the first thing you see is breakdown in family life; a breakdown in morality; a breakdown in law and order and so on. If we do not move swiftly, the situation can only get worse.

Let's look at how we got to where we are as a nation:

For many years Britain has been living on the blessing from the past because there have been times when Godly men have moulded this country and God has blessed us because of it. The blessing and cursing of God are real in a national sense, just as they are in an individual sense.

We really do reap what we sow.

Deuteronomy 28:1-14 blessing, **Deuteronomy 28:15:68** cursing. What brings blessings? Verses 1-2, 8, 12-14.

This chapter in Deuteronomy applies to every nation if they will keep God's standards, blessing will automatically follow.

Obedience attracts blessing.

The nation that rejects God is not going to thrive, no sir! What is happening in our land today is revealing to those of us who can see, God is saying – *"you have gone wrong, turn back to Me"*. We began with the scripture in **2 Chronicles 7** – perhaps you will, perhaps you won't, *"My people will..."*

Question is, will we, for the sake of our nation, humble ourselves, pray, turn from our wicked ways, seek His face.

All our responsibility church; we have the answer.

Examples of godly men of the past:

I made reference just now to our inheritance from the past. The Puritans of the 16th and 17th century. Now, if ever there was a group of Godly men who stood for the word of God and the laws of God it was the Puritans. If the king did something wrong these men would demand an audience and tell him that the law of God disagreed with what he was doing – these people were lions for the truth. Some of the greatest periods of English history came in the time of the Puritans.

The 18th century and we suddenly find that Britain is great again, why was it great? If you go back to the time of the French revolution the whole of France was turned upside down, they turned their back on God's standards and at the end of the same period as the French revolution, Britain stood in the same danger as France. What happened to save us from going

the same way as France went?

God did something. He raised up men who went about on horseback and started preaching the gospel. These men were **Wesley** and **Whitefield** and the importance of these two men and the others with them was this: not only did they see thousands saved, but those who were not saved were changed, and people who refused the gospel *still accepted the laws of God, and Parliament started accepting the laws of God, as the law of the land*. They were **reformers**, they were not afraid to challenge the laws of the land bringing about **national** change.

In the 19th century we as a nation had the **laws of God** as the law of the land and we became known as 'Great Britain' and we had an Empire as a result, over which we ruled. At one time it was said that *"the sun never set over the British Empire"*, our rule extended worldwide, and all our colonies had the same belief system as ours, we ran them as though they *were* Britain.

In the 19th century, as a result of **returning** to God's standards we were the most economically prosperous nation on the face of the earth, when we took over these countries sometimes we ran them well, and sometimes we ran them badly, but one thing we did was we sent missionaries all around the world and millions of people were saved as a result, and that was why God blessed us. We were a Godly nation.

But the British Empire declined.

Something began in the latter part of the 19th/early 20th century in Britain and in Germany, which was satanically inspired, and it was called 'bible criticism'. Suddenly a whole group of intellectual people instead of writing about the word of God as the Word of God began to say, *"this is just an ordinary book, it isn't God's word, it is a very interesting collection of myths"* etc. their 'brilliant' minds attacked the truth of the Word of God.

That attack on the Word started the decline in the nation that still continues today.

The relevance of this is that just about this time, the early 1900's the **decline** of Britain started.

You see if you criticize the Bible, you are on a very sticky wicket because you are criticizing God Himself.

Ultimately it all comes back to Him, as we saw when we studied capital punishment, it isn't my view, it isn't your view that matters, it's **His** view that matters! Oh that we would see and understand that. We need to come to the Word of God with a humble heart and let it read us. It is the mirror into which we look, it will reveal to us where we need to change, if we will let it.

Another very serious reason for our present decline is that we do not support the Jews as we should. Any nation who supports the Jews will be blessed, it says so in the Abrahamic covenant – *"I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you"*. That word still applies.

So, our country became more and more under the influence of man's ideas, than God's, with the result that our legal system is now, if I may use the words, an ass!

From using the Bible as our standard for the laws of the land, we have moved into consensus law.

This is where everyone gets together and says *“Well, what’s your opinion, what do you think of this?”* and we have decisions like the recent Law Lords decision to overturn a conviction of murder and order a retrial.

If you don’t know about that one you need to get the message on capital punishment.

Consensus law is dangerous because the next step is people start to say, *“I don’t agree with that, I will do my own thing, I shall do it this way”* - anarchy.

Simple example in this present day is the law on the use of mobile phones, we aren’t supposed to drive and use one, but what do you see all the time? One hand on the steering wheel and one hand to the ear, on the phone.

Anarchy, rebellion, on a national scale.

Nobody takes any notice of what the law says, they do what they think fit. *“Every man did what was right in his own eyes.”* **Judges 21:25.**

If you look at the law in this country, you can see the lowering of standards. Law today aims at where people are **going** not at the righteous standards of God. Example – homosexuality. God’s word says this is wrong, but the **law** goes towards where the people are heading and legalizes the practice. People are practicing homosexuality, so the law runs up behind and makes it legal. God loves the person, but not the practice, so homosexuality as we know is *against* the law of God.

For interest’s sake, the law of the land can be based on one of four things –

1. Direct revelation from God. There is only one nation who had that – Israel. **Exodus 20:1,2.**
2. Law based on the written Word. In other words, people who say that this is the inspired Word of God, and this is God’s law and this is going to be our law, and we are going to obey it. That is what we had in Britain until the middle of the last century.
3. Consensus law. This is the where everyone gets together and says *“what do you think the law should be on this?”*
4. The fourth and last is anarchy. Total chaos. This is a type of law where everyone is a law unto himself. They all do just what they want without regard to anyone or anything else, if you’ve got something I want, I’m going to take it and nothing is going to stop me.

In Britain we used to have Number 2, but that has gone now and what we see is Number 3. Consensus law. The legal beagles get together and they say *“let’s look at society and see what it will accept in this enlightened age”*. And so, the standard drops again.

We can easily see what has happened to us.

Before immorality and civil unrest comes apostasy.

Turning away from God and His standards. If you deprive a generation of the Word of God, you will breed a generation of hell raisers. They will not respect authority, so we as Christians must beware of watering down the gospel to please people.

If in this land we do not see a return to the Word of God, we will see more and more injustice and more and more evil. These things will come about if we do not return to God's law and His standards. Nine of the ten commandments are stated in the New Testament, one is not - that is the keeping of the Sabbath, or the Sabbath rest, this is because we are meant to *live* in that Sabbath rest, "*There remains therefore, a rest for the people of God.*"

When we are born again from above, we are *born into* the Sabbath rest of God, our struggle is to reclaim that ground and stay in that rest that Jesus died to give us.

Be encouraged, what we are seeing in our land is not the end of things – as Chris Larkin's recent word says, it is the *beginning* of the end, not the end. That should encourage us and spur us on. We as Christians *can* do something to reverse what is going on. We cannot stop God's prophetic clock from ticking, but we can return to being salt and light as we are meant to be.

When Israel went into decline, God raised up people to stand for His truth in the land, we too can be a trumpet sound in our land if we allow God to use us. However, as I said at the start of this teaching, judgement must begin in the house of the Lord. It all starts with us. If we are going to proclaim that as a nation we must live by God's laws, then we have got to start doing it ourselves, and that means resisting the tendency to ignore the Word of God when it doesn't suit us! Naughty, naughty!

2 Kings 6:15-17 and a very familiar passage. What was the mistake of Elisha's servant? Did he know too much about what was going on, or did he know too little? Was it the fact that the servant knew the army was there that disturbed him? Or was it that a piece of his information was missing?

The mistake Gehazi made was that he had too little information about the situation. He looked at it from a *natural* point of view, what he saw with his natural eye and said "*It's Christmas, we're the turkeys and we're stuffed!*" Elisha on the other hand, knew the situation they faced was a *spiritual one*, so he responds from the spiritual position. "*There's more with us than there are with them*".

There is yet a way out of the mess we are in as a nation.

The answer to our nation is in our hands, the answer to wherever you *live* is in your hands. The church has the answer, but it must *use* the answer. Our ministry in these days in addition to preaching the gospel, is to be a watchman in the land.

Today God needs people who can rightly judge the situation and loudly speak out as He directs them.

When I was studying this message, I was listening to something of Roger Price's and I said to the Lord *"He doesn't hold back does he?"* the answer was immediate *"And neither should you!"* So here I find myself teaching on a very sensitive, and neglected, subject.

Our ministry is that of **watchmen** to the nation and to stand up and speak as we are directed.

Wesley and Whitefield not only led people to the Lord, but they *changed the culture of their society*.

It is time for judgement to begin at the house of the Lord:

One of the reasons we have so many babes in the body of Christ is that instead of being given meat, they are kept permanently on milk, they are on basic rations. As I read recently in one of Rick Joyner's writings, *"many churches today are like giant sheep pens, where food is thrown at the sheep once or twice a week, as though that is all there is"*. Ouch!

I had a picture once of a field of fat, well fed, white fleeced sheep, the odd thing about them was that they were standing knee high in grass and were looking straight ahead. Now if you know anything about sheep – they have always, permanently, got their heads down - chomping! I asked the Lord why they were fat and looking up and He said *"Open their mouths"* – I did. Not a tooth in sight.

They were milk fed; they didn't have to make any **effort**; someone came and fed them from the bottle every day.

They didn't know how to eat the grass though it was up to their knees, and they had no teeth. A very sad sight. They had never been taught to graze for themselves, they were still on the bottle, babes in Christ, they were not ready for meat, even though full grown and fat.

Milk fed cattle put on weight very quickly. So, you are either getting a dry crust once a week, or you are still on the bottle, either way, you won't grow unless you start to study and forage for yourselves.

One of our responsibilities as Christians is to read the word and *put it into practice* as individuals. This sorts our lives out. If you do not get your life sorted out, nobody is going to listen to you.

If you are constantly talking about the things of the world; living the same way as the world does; doing the same things; when you talk to them about the things of the Lord you are saying, you can be just like me. Beloved, they are already. We disqualify our message.

We must realize that non-Christians read us by our **lives**, not by our words.

Judgement has to begin with the household of God.

Matthew 5:13-16

"¹³You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste (its strength, its quality), how can its saltiness be restored? It is not good for anything any longer but to be thrown out and

trodden underfoot by men. ¹⁴You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a peck measure, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶Let your light so shine before men that they may see your moral excellence and your praiseworthy, noble, and good deeds and recognize and honour and praise and glorify your Father Who is in heaven."

We often deal with symptoms rather than taking things back to the basic issues. If the symptoms that we see in our society are an indication of the major swing away from our Christian roots, this country's heritage, and its influence, toward hedonism, materialism, anarchy and rebellion, is it also true of the church?

Sadly, it is equally true in some sections of the church.

There is a swing or shift, away from things holy, from the fear of the Lord, from His word and from His **government** in our lives. Satan's uprising against God started with one step in the wrong direction.

Revival is coming to the church of Christ, but that is not sufficient, we need to **change** in order to **sustain** the revival that God gives us, we must begin to live as the much-loved people of God, according to the revealed Word of God. The Word must become flesh upon us. In other words, by experience, we know the Word because it has been worked out and worked in, in our everyday lives.

Israel came into revival time and time again, but there was no fundamental **change** in the way they thought and therefore, behaved; so, they slid back into the default position of anarchy and rebellion.

They could not enter the Promised Land because of their unbelief. This was God's grace to them, not punishment – they would have been useless on the battlefield, they couldn't possess themselves let alone the land that was being held out. They were untrained in war, disobedient, unruly, rebellious, and unready to possess the land which God was giving them.

God had released them from abject slavery and asked simply for the surrender of their self-will, but they were unwilling to relinquish it; they did not want a theocracy, they wanted a king to rule over them. It is only when restriction is imposed on human nature, however good that restriction is, that the ugly face of sin reveals itself. How many Christians break the speed limit, how many of those who profess Christ tell lies, cheat, and steal?

Being born again is not enough; it is just the starting point. Just because we are born again, doesn't mean that we instantly have the mind of Christ.

We are full of fallen human thinking, we see things from the fallen viewpoint, we have an opinion on everything, which does not line up with God's. What we need is **His** opinion - on everything. We need to become Christians who have **God's viewpoint** not the world's viewpoint; people of the **Spirit** and the **Word**, full of wisdom and understanding.

Too much Word and you dry up, too much Spirit and you blow up, Spirit and Word and you grow up.

You can only give the divine viewpoint on things if you *know* the divine viewpoint. So, when a society declines the believers are often the first to moan about it, without recognising that it is their responsibility to do something to stop it.

When an MP makes a statement, we should know if they are right or if they are wrong. We should know on the basis of the Word of God when a law is passed whether it is right or wrong. If the statement or the law is wrong, we should be courageous enough to write to the people concerned and state what has been said or passed is wrong according to the Word of God.

It is the duty of every Christian in the land to speak out loud and clear to the people of that land in which they live so they can hear the truth of God.

We as Christians have our part to play in society.

God put us in this land to pray for it and be involved in it as His representatives.

Like it or not, and mostly we don't like it – we are a part of the society in which we live and while we live here, we have a role.

What this means is that in our lives, in our marriages, in the way that our children are brought up in and in everything we do, we must preach the gospel. We must *“walk in the light as He is in the light.”* **1 John 1:7**. It is in our everyday living that we preach the gospel as someone once said, *“preach the gospel, if necessary, use words”*.

Just think for a moment, how do we treat one another. If you bring along someone who is unsaved to a meeting at your church or invite someone to your house, what impression would they get about Jesus? Fellowships for instance, does what James says apply in your fellowship?

James 4:1-5 AMP –

¹What leads to strife (discord and feuds) and how do conflicts (quarrels and fighting) originate among you? Do they not arise from your sensual desires that are ever warring in your bodily members? ²You are jealous and covet (what others have) and your desires go unfulfilled; (so) you become murderers. (To hate is to murder as far as your hearts are concerned.) You burn with envy and anger and are not able to obtain (the gratification, the contentment, and the happiness that you seek), so you fight and war. You do not have because you do not ask. ³(Or) you do ask (God for them) and yet fail to receive, because you ask with wrong purpose and evil, selfish motives. Your intention is (when you get what you desire) to spend it in sensual pleasures. ⁴You (are like) unfaithful wives (having illicit love affairs with the world and breaking your marriage vow to God)! Do you not know that being the world's friend is being God's enemy? So whoever chooses to be a friend of the world takes his stand as an enemy of God. ⁵Or do you suppose that the Scriptures is speaking to no purpose that says The Spirit Whom He has caused to dwell in us yearns over us and He yearns for the Spirit (to be welcome) with a jealous love.”

The day of Pentecost had no sooner come than splits started developing in the church. Within 30 years of the day of Pentecost when the church was empowered by the Holy Spirit, the

church was reeling under splits that had become so large, it has never recovered.

Historically Church splits came because men refused to accept God's authority in everything.

When we talk about the early church, we tend to think of the day of Pentecost and just afterwards, and think that wouldn't it be lovely if we went back to that? Beloved, God doesn't make carbon copies and the early church was less than perfect because it contained people like me and you.

They had problems and they were big ones.

God wants to produce in us a powerful and effective body, but He also wants to produce unity which is missing so much in the church. Satan and his tactics have not changed very much. He has always wanted to split the body of Christ down the middle so that the church will be ineffective and there are far more hours spent trying to get unity than there are preaching the gospel. Satan is behind this, using man's inbuilt anarchy and rebellion to do his work.

Today, what's the cause of problems in a Christian group?

Is it the devil?

No of course it isn't.

He simply uses what is there already.

The basic problem for **all** Christian groups is, that you have people there who have a desire to do something, to achieve something, to get something, to establish something that they haven't at the moment got; and because of that, jealousy, bitterness, division, and inflamed desire, come in. We are at war with ourselves and each other.

Galatians 5:19-21 The Message –

"¹⁹It is obvious what kind of life develops out of trying to get your own way all the time: repetitive, loveless, cheap sex; a stinking accumulation of mental and emotional garbage; frenzied and joyless grabs for happiness; ²⁰trinket gods; magic-show religion; paranoid loneliness; cutthroat competition; all-consuming-yet-never-satisfied wants; a brutal temper; an impotence to love or be loved; divided homes and divided lives; small-minded and lopsided pursuits; ²¹the vicious habit of depersonalizing everyone into a rival; uncontrolled and uncontrollable addictions; ugly parodies of community. I could go on. This isn't the first time I have warned you, you know. If you use your freedom this way, you will not inherit God's kingdom."

Paul is talking to believers. Judgement indeed begins at the house of the Lord **1 Peter 4:17**.

The reason why this teaching is so important to us as the people of God, is that we have to recognize our part in this because our country is at stake, the future of our children is at stake. We cannot any longer beat our gums at the state of the nation without seeing our part in it, and the mid-course corrections we may ourselves as, God's people, need to make.

If this country is indeed under the judgement of God, it is up to us, as His church to spearhead change, to become the people He needs us to be to pull our nation back from the brink: we know moral standards are becoming lower and lower. We are not immoral in this country, we are amoral.

Ungoverned desires:

In a 'Plumblin' entitled "*Ten words and ungoverned desires*" Bob Mumford, talking about the ten commandments, says -

"Allowing God to rule our desires changes the way we approach our Christian walk. The ten words given in Exodus 20 are repeated in Deuteronomy 5. They are the basis of culture in western civilization. There is nothing more valuable and fundamental for our civilization than these commandments. Sir William Blackstone, an English jurist, who wrote the basic laws for western civilization, based our entire law system on these 10 commandments. In our amoral society, we have ceased to define anything as sin or transgression against the law of God. We have taken away the absolutes. In the absence of religious, community and family restraint there is less and less self control."

There has been a movement towards what Bob Mumford calls "*ungoverned desires*".

Ungoverned desires are unprincipled, unethical, unscrupulous, and immoral.

The centre of their attention is what is in it for **me**, how can I get my needs met, I am entitled to this, it is my right, and ultimately, if you stand in my way, I will remove you. The whole thrust is entitlement. You owe me. Selfish ambition and personal gain. Yes, we could say, that is the world. But is it true of us in some measure? Is personal gain high on my agenda? I have met Christians like this – they have a chip on their shoulder which says, "*you owe me – this is my right.*"

A well-dressed 18 year old woman came up to Bob Mumford ten years ago now and said "*Mr. Mumford, I no longer see why I should help anyone other than myself*".

Many people share the same view today both inside and outside the church.

Beloved, before we can make any difference in the world, we must put our own house in order.

James puts his finger on it in **James 4:1-5** AMP - notice the number of times he uses the word 'desire' or 'desires' - we looked at it just now.

Running quickly through the 10 commandments, how many of these do we as Christians break?

Do Christians lie, in my experience indeed they do. Do they bear false witness, O yes; do they steal, in my experience, yes; do they have other gods, indeed; do they murder with hatred and bitterness, O yes; do they commit adultery....regrettably yes; do they covet, indeed they do; do they honour their parents – sometimes.

Even at a casual glance we can see that although we name the name of Christ, we are not walking in all the light as He is in the light -

1 John 1:6,7 -

"⁶If we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

Conforming the truth to our desires:

Let's take a brief look at just one of the 10 commandments to see an example of what I mean when I speak of ungoverned, or uncontrolled desires – the first commandment "*you shall have no other gods before Me*", for example **Exodus 20:3**.

Man was created to worship. He was created to worship God, his Creator, but in the absence of worshipping God, my desire, if uncontrolled, will find another god who will allow me to do what I want; because the God of the Bible makes demands and sets limits on me which restrict me, so I need to find a god that will allow me to do what I want, one that I *can* worship without too much discomfort.

Given half a chance, we will worship the one who will let us have our own way.

Remember I told you the story of the young girl who would not have it that the lake of fire was real because her 'god' was too nice and wouldn't let anyone go there, everyone was going to be all right in the end. I tried to explain that if this was the case, Jesus would not have gone to the cross to redeem us, but she couldn't cope with it.

Even in the last week I have been handed a magazine (coming from America) where one of the lead articles went to a great deal of trouble to explain that everyone would be all right in the end because God was too nice to mean that there was such a thing as the lake of fire, and the Bible didn't mean what it said.

The same magazine also maintained that Britain was part of the lost tribe of Israel...

As I have said before there is a lot of dossy stuff out there and we need to know the Bible in order to discern it or we will get caught up in it and end up with mixture.

God hates mixture.

The young lady's desire to have it her own way was greater at that time, than her desire for the truth. She was conforming the truth to her desires, making it mean what she wanted it to mean.

Do you conform your desires to the truth of God's word, or do you conform the truth of God's word to your desires?

Think about it.

Conforming your desires to the Word of God means you are twisting the scriptures to make

them say what you want them to say.

People have said to me in the past, God isn't speaking to me so I can't do what He says. Meaning that they have no current instruction from Him. The question is, have you obeyed what He has written?

Our hearts need to be in agreement with His stated commandments.

How about --*"This is My commandment that you love one another as I have loved you"*.

There's one to start with.

Take the rest of your life just to get around that one.

If we all managed that, splits and divisions in the church would stop overnight. You see what I am getting at. We want to be doing something **BIG** but God says, make a start, obey what is written.

When we looked at capital punishment, some of us found that we had to change our minds about what we believed was fair and just, when we discovered it was not about what we thought about the matter, but about what **God** said on the subject.

Often without realizing it, we are being led by our desires, rather than His.

This is not condemnation, this is growth.

If we can hear this message it can save us a lot of heartache.

We are all learning in the school of the Holy Spirit. Just let's be teachable, eh?

We constantly want to attribute to God the characteristics of our own fallen nature **Psalm 50:21**, *"You thought I was altogether like you"* God says. Our God often does things we distinctly disagree with and certainly don't like. He surprises, frightens, and sometimes frustrates us, even, dare I say, makes us angry, because we want him to satisfy our fallen nature. *"But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases"* **Psalm 115:3**.

A W Tozer in his book 'That Incredible Christian' talking of the way we portray Jesus as a shepherd says:

"The artists took up the idea and depicted Christ as a real shepherd and their work has become so fixed in the minds of Christians that when our Lord returns many of them will be secretly disappointed if He is not carrying a crook in His hand and a woolly lamb under His arm."

This is an image that Paul and John would never recognize; Paul declared that he would not know Jesus after the flesh anymore and John fell at His feet as dead when he saw Him as He now is.

We have this innate ability to portray Jesus as we want Him, not as He really is. *"You thought I was altogether like you."*

If we as a church are steadily moving away from God and toward these uncontrolled and ungoverned desires, it is because we have set **our desire** against the Spirit of God. Not only are our desires uncontrolled, but anarchy, which accompanies it says *“no-one has any right to tell me how to control them!”*

We will not have Him to rule over us.

We are in a sad state both as church and nation.

Summing up then -

- As Christians we have a duty to be upright citizens in our land.
- We have a responsibility to pray for our land and our government, whether we agree with it or not, **Romans 13**.
- We should identify with the nation which is made up of ordinary people just like us. Our prayer for them is powerful and effective to bless and preserve them.
- We should pray for Israel, because praying for Israel is a way of bringing blessing to our nation.
- We should be prepared to speak up for the truth and to write to Parliament or our MP when laws are passed that are blatantly against God’s law.

Beloved, we need to see a return to Godliness in our land and if that is to happen, we must play our part in it.

Augustine said *“Love God and do as you please”* – if your motive is love for God, there will be only one thing you will desire, and that is to do the will of your Father, just like Jesus.

In that, you will find true freedom because God is ruling your desires, and your desires will no longer rule you.

This is the nature of the Kingdom of God, it is neither coercive nor tyrannical, but it is effective making you free and more concerned to see God’s will done in this world than anything else.

That is the goal to which we are inexorably moving in these teachings – *“not my will, but Thine be done”* – absolute surrender and submission to the will of God in each of our lives. May God bless His word to us all. Amen

Crafted Prayers

The following are the prayers for the nation crafted by those present at the teaching day. You are invited to join us in praying all or some of them daily for the next 30 days. You may of course, wish to continue after the 30 days has expired!

Prayer No. 1:

“Lord God, heavenly Father, forgive us and our nation for straying so far from Your word, laws and ways. We plead with You to allow the Prime Minister of this land to encounter You so

mightily that he cannot resist You and let him lead with the authority You have given him. Enable our MP's to turn our laws and country away from evil and lead us straight to You Lord. Guide our government; give them Your wisdom and Your understanding. Lord we know that man plans, but we ask that You govern their footsteps. Amen."

Prayer No. 2:

"Dear Lord, we pray for Godly influences to be powerful in our Government. For Christians to be influential in our Parliament and have access to those who make our laws, so that Your law and word will have a greater weight and influence in our land. We want to see Your will – all-powerful over the media in this country. Stop the way the media controls the opinions of the people and stop the way it reports sleaze as something to be celebrated. Give Christians a greater voice in the media. Give Christians a great voice in the media. In Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen."

Prayer No.3:

"Dear Lord, we ask you to help our nation to begin again to live the life that You have shown us in Your commandments and in the example of love and forgiveness and justice that Jesus taught us.

We ask for Your mercy on us, your church, at this time. Raise up those at Government level to bring righteous laws and bring down unrighteous laws. Empower the prayer groups in Parliament. Enliven the believers in the police force to give Chief Officers power that enables them to administer justice without hindrance.

Bring the Holy Spirit into the hearts of the young and open their eyes to Your truth and connect them with God appointed leaders. Father, let Your light into the world around us and banish the dark. Let Your people follow Your precept to 'love one another as I have loved You and your neighbour as yourself'. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen."

Prayer No.4:

"God, we acknowledge You to be our Great Warrior King Who rides through the heavens in Kingly power and majestic glory.

We are grieved by the state of our nation and cry out to You for help. May the minds of the people be set free from the powers of darkness. God You are the Giver of Light. May Your light shine through us, your people, in this land. Amen."

**Scripture references for 'Passing the Baton 16'
Problems in Society
26th July 2008**

2 Chronicles 7:14

2 Corinthians 2:15,16

Daniel 11:32,33

Philippians 2:15,16

Mark 7:21

Genesis chapter 1 – 12 universal instructions for mankind.

Psalms 82:1-8

John 10:34

Romans 13

Psalms 51:5

Proverbs 22:15

Psalms 82

Daniel 2:21,22

Romans 1:24-32 (NIV)

Judges 2:11-15 (AMP)

Romans 1:18-23

Deuteronomy 28:1-14

Deuteronomy 28:15-68

2 Chronicles 7: 14

Judges 21:25

Exodus 20:1,2

Hebrews 4:9

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