

The primary cause of our nation's disintegration in the political and economic realms, is our own moral and spiritual decline. The latest statistics show that almost 72% of Zimbabweans claim to be Christians and yet we are a people controlled and manipulated by murderers, thieves, liars and thugs. How can this be?

Many times Scripture shows the Israelites (while continuing with all their religious ceremonies and thinking of themselves as honourable and upright), being delivered by God into economic and political hardships because of the rampant injustice and unrighteousness in their midst. God has not changed! (Malachi 3:6). The difficult circumstances that fall upon nations, cannot be separated from that nation's moral condition.

Having wrong views about God affects every aspect of our thinking and wrong views are a result of our suppressing or rejecting God's revelation. Now, when our thinking is wrong about mankind, our understanding about the political and economic realms will also be untrue. Not only will our policies in these areas be defective, but our attempts to rectify the growing defects, will lead to greater problems. Short-term "solutions" might appear to offer or bring relief, however, in time, their failures will also become obvious. Such "solutions" only give hope to those who are incapable of seeing further than the short term and the reason they don't want to see further than this, is a moral issue—they are in wilful rebellion against God's eternal truth and so trust in man's wisdom.

Our present circumstances are a consequence of our ideas and the ideas that shape a nation have their roots in the prevailing faith of that nation. To prove what faith and ideas are guiding our nation, we must look at the fruit in our society—is there justice, liberty, freedom, peace and relief for the oppressed? No there is not! No matter what we might wish for, the fruit shows that the ideas and the faith that are guiding our nation do not have their roots in Christianity, but in something that is anti-christian. When a nation, whose population is 72% Christian, finds itself full of injustice, fear, increasing poverty, lawlessness and oppression and the Christians think they are faithfully worshipping and serving the true God, they are deceiving themselves. Their religion and faith is being defined by themselves, not God and is therefore apostate.

All man-made religions replace God's Lordship and word with man's lordship and word

(Matthew 15:6-9), while proclaiming their devotion to God. Our nation is reaping the fruit of our self-defined religion, whereby we have exalted the commandments, traditions and doctrines of men above Christ (Colossians 2:8,18,22,23). The fruit we see around us is proof of this. The crucial issue facing the 72%, is do we repent of our rebellion or do we self-righteously deny any relation between the condition of our nation and our religious devotion?

Man-made religions all have one thing in common—they are fleeing from their responsibility to the true God. Some do this by denying the existence of God while others replace God's revealed will with their own ideas. Either way, they are trying to escape from their God ordained responsibilities.

Eli, Israel's high priest and judge before Samuel, saw himself as a devout man who honoured the Lord, however, by ignoring his responsibilities, he was dishonouring God. Eli's grown sons were living in extreme perversion. They held positions of authority in the nation under their father's authority. Eli failed repeatedly to deal with his sons' perversions, but the primary authority he refused to exercise was not his parental authority (his sons were fully grown), but that of judge and priest. Eli not only failed in his responsibility to his family, but more significantly, in his God-given responsibilities towards society. To deny our responsibility to labour for a Godly society is to do what Eli did—he reduced his faith to merely a personal devotion and deceived himself into believing that this was the emphasis and extent of God's Kingdom rule. Scripture shows, however, that Eli's "faith", rather than honouring God, was despising Him, because he esteemed God's will and purposes very lightly (1 Samuel 2:30) and so easily replaced them with his own purposes and will.

If it were possible to divide Eli's life into isolated segments (which cannot be done), we might be tempted to say he was a personally devout man. God, however, does not allow such a dualistic approach to life. All of life is religious and is to be governed by His law-word. To re-define (and therefore limit) what God expects from us, is nothing but will-worship, that is, exalting our own wills above God's will, which is rebellion. The consequence of national rebellion, is national crisis—exactly where we find ourselves today. God's response to such rebellion is usually to hand rebels over to tyranny and political oppression.

The corruption and rottenness of the political leaders that are controlling our nation is plain for everyone to see. No one needs a coroner or some other expert to tell them when a corpse is rotting—everyone can smell the stench. It is only the corpse that appears to be comfortable with its own rottenness, but such comfort is proof of death. Only the dead are unconcerned about the stench and putrefaction of death—the living separate themselves from it.

What would Christ say today to a nation as disintegrated as ours, that has 72% of the population professing to be Christians? Remember, a nation's leaders merely reflect the predominant ideas and faith of that nation. What does that say about the faith of our 72% Christian majority?

The kind of people who are being allowed to hang onto political power, together with the socio-economic condition of our nation, are proof that the Christians in Zimbabwe are living in apostasy. The decay surrounding us is proof that the church in our nation does not want to live by every word that proceeds from God's mouth, though they want the benefits that come only from obedience. Every apostate church has behaved in the same way throughout the ages (wanting God's blessing, while denying their responsibility to Him) and God's judgement has been the same—political oppression and national destruction. The Scriptures confirm this time and again. Even Christ's own generation wanted political freedom and deliverance from Roman oppression while they continued in their rebellion against God and His truth.

Only true repentance can deliver a nation when God's judgement is resting upon it. However, a people who are living in rebellion against God (especially a people full of religious zeal), are also greatly deceived and think that their self-defined religious activities are proof that they are blessed of God. Any problems and difficulties in society, they say, are because others are living in sin, not them. However, what Christ said to the church in Sardis, He will say to us, "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead" (Revelation 3:1)—the proof is in the fruit and our fruit is a stench. A minority cannot control a 72% majority unless the majority's beliefs, in practice, are no different from the minority's. Christ went on to say to the church in Sardis, "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God". Christ's counsel to us is, "Repent, or else!" for He is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29) and He won't long tolerate rebellion (1 Samuel 15:23).

If we, who call upon the name of the Lord, esteem His justice lightly; if we despise His law and scoff at what He has said our responsibilities are, then we will be lightly esteemed by Him, which is another way of saying we will be living under His displeasure.

Remember, the predominant religious beliefs in Christ's day were not new, but had had a long history of acceptance and respectability, yet they were perverse and opposed to God's word. Christ was eventually murdered because He "rocked the boat" by pointing out the perversity of his generation's cherished and respected religious activities. The only way to evaluate the cherished beliefs and traditions of our own day, is by bringing them to the light of Scripture

(Isaiah 8:20).

If we want a modern example of religiously tolerating national perversion (though there are many others), then we need only look at Hitler's Germany where the vast majority of Christians remained either passive towards or proclaimed their support for the tyrant. The German church, for the most part, despised and rejected Dietrich Bonhoeffer for pointing to the injustice and perversion of Hitler's policies. How could a nation that professed to have a majority of Christians, allow the rise and then the continuance of a leader like Hitler? The exact same question must be asked of the Zimbabwean people and church. We can rightly say that for the most part, the faith of the German church during Hitler's reign was perverse, but then we must also acknowledge that the faith of the Zimbabwean church for the most part is perverse (i.e., unbiblical). We have a "faith" that desires the praises of corrupt politicians more than the praises of God. It is a faith that is more afraid of those who can kill the body than of Him who can cast body and soul into hell (Matthew 10:28).

There is only one hope for our nation and that is for God to bring His people to a place of real, heart-felt repentance, whereby we will forsake all our humanistic ideas about Him, His Kingdom and what He expects from us and seek to live by every word that proceeds from His mouth (Matthew 4:4). The choice is between will-worship and true worship. The fruit of these two positions are as obvious as they are opposite. There is a possibility that we will stubbornly insist that our will-worship is actually true worship, but the only way to do that is to deny the relevance of and our relationship to the social realm and withdraw more and more into our own personal, self-made, religious irrelevance.

The Lord is gracious and merciful and my prayer is that we will repent and strengthen the things which remain, that are about to die. If we, however, refuse to honour the Lord in this way, then it makes no difference whether those who profess faith in Him makeup 72% or 100% of the population, He will be against us. True faith is inseparable from works—and the works God expects from His people are that they do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with Him (Micah 6:8). God alone can define justice and mercy and thus we cannot rely upon man's twisted ideas about these things. To pursue anything in a way other than in the way God has revealed, is to promote injustice and oppression, no matter how loudly we might shout that we are merciful and just. To walk humbly with God, is to rely upon His revelation for all we need to know about all things. The greatest manifestation of pride is trying to live independently of God and His comprehensive word—pride goes before a fall (Genesis 3:1-7; Proverbs 16:18; 18:12; 29:23).

Think about these things!

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