

Is America Being Judged Already?

The title of this study is, “Is America Being Judged Already?” The reason I chose this topic is that I’ve been thinking about a number of issues as a result of our series on the Minor Prophets and the series called the Truth Project. All of these things converged together and I feel compelled to speak on this topic: Is America Being Judged Already? Two weeks ago I attended a conference called The Watchmen On the Wall Pastors Conference. I didn’t get an exact count; but as I looked over this enormous room at the Hyatt Regency in Washington D.C., there were probably at close to 500 pastors and a few wives. The message is the conference was attended by a lot of people.

The theme of the conference was that we are watchmen and the theme verse was Ezekiel 33:7-9. If you’re interested in what it’s all about, we’ll get there at the end of this study. This passage is a warning to us. It’s a warning to our nation. It’s a warning to people to return to God. That is the theme of the verse.

As I attended the conference I heard a speaker. I heard a number of speakers I should say in reality, and the Holy Spirit reminded me of the studies that we have been going through in the Minor Prophets. Each of the Minor Prophets is a warning. Each of them is a call to the people in the nation of Israel and sometimes the Southern Kingdom called Judah.

If you remember, Israel was divided into the northern kingdom called Israel and a Southern kingdom called Judah. The Minor Prophets gave warnings to the northern kingdom of Israel or the southern kingdom of Judah about their sin and called them to return to God. It reminded me of America as I was going through the Minor Prophets and as I was attending the conference. The conference echoed

the same thing. It was incredible the way these things converged together. They both reinforced the seriousness of the condition of our country.

The first speaker reminded us of our nation’s spiritual heritage. We were once a Christian nation, but we’ve drifted from that initial mooring. About two months ago I had a conversation with a woman. She insisted that our nation



was not founded by Christians and that we were never, ever a Christian nation. But while I was in Washington D.C., I found an interesting book that was sold at the National Archives. If you’re interested in the National Archives, the National Archives contains

some of our most precious documents.

In fact we saw the U.S. Constitution. It was in a case that was hermetically sealed and had argon gas inside in order to preserve the paper. There was another document, the Bill of Rights. The National Archives was an incredible place where all of our historic documents are stored and preserved and where people can go and see them. The room was packed with people trying to see these historical documents from

the 1700s. It's really incredible to see what is available at the National Archives. While I was there, I found a very interesting book that documents some statements from our founding fathers. I started reading the book and I said, "This is a fabulous book" so I bought it. Let me give you some quotes from this book that I found at the National Archives.

The first quote comes from Thomas Jefferson. Thomas Jefferson, if you remember, was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence of 1776 and there are those who want to claim that he really wasn't a Christian. Listen to this from Thomas Jefferson. He says,

My views are the result of a life of inquiry and reflection and very different from the anti-Christian system imputed to me by those who know nothing of my opinions. To the corruption of Christianity I am indeed opposed, but not to the genuine precepts of Jesus himself. I am a Christian in the only sense in which He wished anyone to be sincerely attached to His doctrines in preference to all others.¹

Did you get the message? He says, "I'm

not a Christian if it's not consistent with what Jesus taught but if it's consistent with what Jesus taught, the doctrines that Jesus taught, then I'm a Christian. That defines who I am. I'm a follower of Christ is what he was saying.

What was also amazing is that there's a quote from George Washington. He was our first U.S. President. He said,

I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life by commending the country to the protection of

1. Gordon Leidner. The Founding Fathers. Cumberland house. 2013. p 61.

Almighty God and those who have the superintendents of them to His holy keeping.²

Or how about John Adams? This is a long quote so hang in there. He was our second U.S. President. He says,

I have thought it proper to recommend and I hereby recommend accordingly that Thursday the 25th day of April next be observed throughout the United States of America as a day of solemn humiliation, fasting and prayer. That the citizens on that day abstain as far as may be from their secular occupation and devote the time to the sacred duties of religion in public and in private that they may call to mind our numerous offenses against the most high God . . .³

He says numerous offenses; change that to numerous sins. He goes on,

. . . confess them before Him with sincere penitence, implore His pardoning mercy and through the Great Mediator and Redeemer, for our past transgressions, and that through the grace of His Holy Spirit, we may be disposed and enabled to yield a more

suitable obedience to His righteous requisitions in time to come; that He would interpose to arrest the progress of that impiety and licentiousness in principle and practice so offensive to Himself and so ruinous to mankind; that He would make us deeply sensible . . .⁴

Now listen to these words,

2. Ibid., P. 69.

3. Ibid., pp. 67-68.

4. Ibid.



National Archive Building

... that righteousness exalteth a nation but sin is a reproach to any people.⁵

In the last part of that statement he quotes from Proverbs 14:34. That's John Adams.

Or how about the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court John Jay? He says,

Providence has given to our people the choice of their rulers and it's the duty as well as the privilege and interests of our Christian nation to select and prefer Christians for their rulers.⁶

How much clearer can that be coming from the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court that we are a Christian nation, and he says what we ought to be doing is electing Christian leaders. I've heard some Christians say its okay to elect secular leaders on occasion because they might be more capable. Jesus said, "You're

either for me or you're against me." You should pick a Christian leader, somebody who is really for Christ. That's the message. John Jay has it right. We should prefer Christian leaders. That's what we ought to be preferring.

The fifth quote comes from Ben Franklin who some claim is a Deist. Listen to his words. He says,

I beg leave to move -- that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of heaven and as blessing on our deliberations be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business and that

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., P. 60.

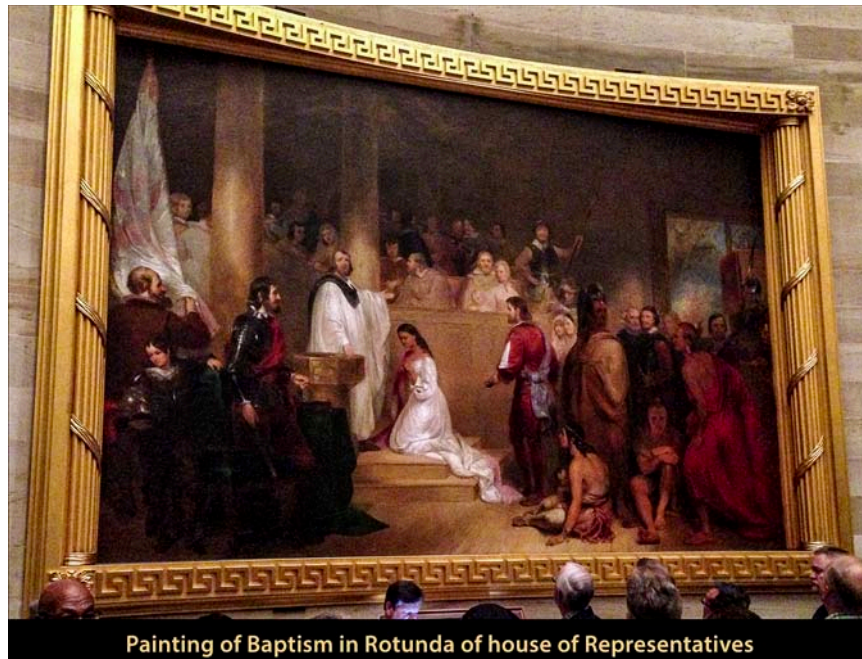
one or more of the clergy of the city be requested to officiate in that service.⁷

That's Benjamin Franklin, supposedly a Deist.

Our leaders were Christians and they believed that we were a Christian nation. Now I don't have time to read all of the other available quotes, but I do want to make a couple of other points. The first is that few people know that congress voted for regular church services to be held in the rotunda in the House of Representatives. The rotunda is a large area. One could seat probably 600-700 people in there for a church service and that's exactly what they did. We're

told that Thomas Jefferson regularly attended that service.

When my wife and I went to the Library of Congress, I was stunned to discover that there is a large library in the Library of Congress. The library that I'm talking about was Thomas Jefferson's library. It had 2,000 volumes and there was an enormous section dealing with



Painting of Baptism in Rotunda of house of Representatives

religion. I was looking at some of the books that were in his religion section. He had a commentary on the Book of Daniel. He had a commentary about death. When's the last time you heard some preacher preach just about death? When's the last time you heard that message? That was in his library. He had a copy of the Greek New Testament. He also had a book called Cruden's Concordance. Now not a lot of people know about that. Most people know about Strong's Concordance or Young's Concordance but there's also a concordance called Cruden's Concordance. Well, he had it in his library. Think about Thomas Jefferson having a library

7. Ibid., P. 68.

with some really credible Christian books in it.

Few people have ever gone to the National Monuments and just read the inscriptions on the walls and on the buildings. There are Bible verses all over the place. Watch this, all of the evidence screams that we were a Christian nation and we still are to some degree. We have a remnant of Christians in our country, but they are a minority at this point. That is clear. What has Satan done? Satan has been very effective in deceiving our nation. Ephesians 6:12 tells us that we struggle not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers. Satan, the political left, political progressives and the atheists have blinded the people in our country. They are rewriting our history.

Some people do not believe that we were a Christian nation; they think that that's a myth from Christians. It's not true, and many church leaders unfortunately are guilty of Lamentations 2:14. Do you know what Lamentations 2:14 is about? It's a rebuke of the prophets. In Lamentations 2:14, Jeremiah says that the prophets did not expose the sins of the people. You know what we've done in our country? Our preachers and our Christian leaders are not exposing the sin of our people.

Or how about Hosea 4:6 where it says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." Do you know what we're seeing? Increasingly Christians are being told that we cannot pray in public. We are being told that we cannot share our faith. We cannot practice our faith. We've been told that we cannot publicly mention Jesus or the Holy Spirit. In fact on occasions we are allowed to mention God just as long as we don't mention Jesus or the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately sometimes we're told that we can't even mention God.

And we're also being told that we must support abortion. We must support gay marriage. We must support sexual freedom. In April of 2015, Hillary Clinton made the statement, that the religious beliefs of America need to be overhauled.⁸ Now that's a startling statement: that the religious beliefs of America need to be overhauled to accommodate birth control, abortion and women's issues. The movement's on.

The movement's on, and our politicians have and are exploiting our greed. Our politicians are telling us that we

have the right to money that we have the right to prosperity. In fact they are promising us prosperity even though some of us haven't earned it, and they're doing it at the expense of others. Our politicians are exploiting our lust for pleasure. What they're telling us is that we have a right to have sexual freedom. If you end up with a pregnancy, then you can abort it. They're offering us condoms and offering us free pills in order to facilitate our sexual pleasures.

It's unbelievable what is happening in our country. In fact this morning I found an advertisement about Mount Vernon. Mount Vernon is in Alexandria right near Washington D.C. There was a little advertisement that was talking about "relax, enjoy and indulge." The word indulge says it all. That's the appeal of our culture. That's the appeal of businesses. That's the appeal you see on TV. That's the appeal of advertisers. That's the appeal of our politicians. Our politicians are exploiting our pride.

Currently the mantra that we're hearing is that we have the right to not be offended. If you are offended, you can riot. You can kill; you can do whatever you want to do in order to shut down those who are offending you. You know what we're not hearing? We're not hearing a call for forgiveness. We're not hearing a call for humility. We're not hearing a call for compassion. Where are the politicians that are calling us to forgive? Where are the leaders in our nation calling us to forgive? All that we are hearing is that we have the right to not be offended and then we can respond accordingly. It is all deception. In Matthew 5:6 Jesus stands and says,

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Matthew 5:6 (NASB)

Do you remember, Jesus said that?

What we're doing in our country is we're telling people that it's okay to hunger and thirst for satisfaction and you can sin in order to do that. A promise is that you're going to be satisfied if you do that. That's not what Jesus said. Jesus did not say that if we hunger and thirst for pleasure and if we sin in the process that we're going to be satisfied. Jesus said if we hunger and thirst for righteousness, called holiness, then we'll be satisfied. That is the way you get there. But that's

8. WND (<http://www.wnd.com/2015/04/hillary-change-religious-beliefs-of-nation/>)

not the message of our culture. That's not the message of our leaders and our country. You know what our real problem is; our real problem is spiritual. That's our real problem. Our nation has drifted from its initial moorings.

I'm concerned that America is already being judged or will be soon. I want you to see why I'm concerned. Turn to Hosea 4; but before I get there, I just want to make a couple points. The first point that I want to make is think about when God has judged certain groups or peoples or the whole world. You have to go to the Old Testament in order to see some of this. I want you to think about Noah's flood. Why did God bring Noah's flood? Why did Noah's flood occur? Why was the world enveloped in a worldwide flood that killed everybody except Noah and his family? Why did that happen? Was it because there wasn't enough money? Was it because there wasn't enough pleasure? Was it because somebody was offended and that was really bad so you had the right then to demand that people not offend you? No, the reason that God did it, Genesis 6:5-6 says,

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. The LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them. Genesis 6:5-6 (NASB)

Why did God bring a worldwide flood? Because of man's sin, really simple! Somebody might say, "Well, it's because they didn't believe in Jesus." First of all, Jesus hadn't showed up yet and there's no discussion about faith. It's all about man's sin. Do you know what God hates? God hates sin! We miss that. We have a low view of sin. We minimize sin. God destroyed the whole world because man was in sin. The thoughts of man's heart continually was evil. So God got rid of them and saved only one family.

Or how about Sodom and Gomorrah? God judged Sodom and Gomorrah, those two cities. Why did he do that? Was it because there weren't enough gay activities or enough gay marriage? No, it was because there was sin called

homosexuality. Or how about the Book of Daniel? In the Book of Daniel we're told that Nebuchadnezzar was warned by God that he needed to give God honor for the things that Nebuchadnezzar thought he had accomplished. He didn't and what we're told in the Book of Daniel is that God made him insane. He acted like a calf for seven years. At the end of the seven years, he acknowledged God. He gave God glory and he got his sanity back. His insanity was God's judgment.

Or how about the prophecy of Obadiah? In our study in the Minor Prophets, the first book we looked at was Obadiah. In that book the prophet prophesied about the destruction of Edom. He prophesied that Edom would be destroyed. And why? Because of sin. Really simple. Or how about Jonah? Jonah was supposed to go to a city called Nineveh. He was supposed to go, preach and call the people to repent. God said, "If you don't repent, I'm going to destroy you." And what did the people do? They believed Jonah and they repented.

God did not destroy the city. We're told in the book their sin was exceedingly great. No discussion about faith in God. Their sin was exceedingly great. You can go on in the Old Testament - one minor prophet after another minor prophet. Did you know that most of the minor prophets preached against Israel or preached against the sins in Judah?

God warned Israel that they needed to return to Him. They needed to stop sinning or judgment was coming. So if you're still there in Hosea 4, look at verse 1. It says,

Listen to the word of the Lord, oh sinners of Israel, for the Lord has a case against the inhabitants of the land, because there is no faithfulness or kindness or knowledge of God in the land. Hosea 4:1 (NASB)

Hosea is writing to the Israelites. The northern kingdom is called Israel. One of the first things he says is that there is no faithfulness. The word for faithfulness actually means truth. That's the Hebrew meaning of the word. So, it's better to say there's no truth in the land. I want you to think about what's happening in our country. Our history has been rewritten. Where's the truth? Where's the truth about the

beginnings of our country? What we're also seeing is that there are lies about the Bible.

We see that there's complete distortion on so many fronts. In fact, recently, there was a poll about how many Christians there are in the United States. At the pastor's conference, they pointed out that what's happening currently in our country is that the left and the progressives are intentionally under reporting the number of Christians in our nation.

You might say, "Well, why is that important? Why would they want to do that?" Because it makes us look like we're not very influential. They do not have to worry about us. So they can make us look like we are a minority in the country. Increasingly, they are under reporting how many Christians there are, or at least people who claim to be Christians. Whether or not they are Christians is another issue. They are under reporting intentionally to make us look less influential.

Our country right now is based on lies - more and more. I'm not saying it in an absolute sense. I'm talking about it in a relative sense. And when it says kindness, the actual Hebrew has the idea of loyalty. Where is our loyalty to God? 1 Corinthians 10:31 tells us that we are to give glory to God in everything that we do. We are to honor God in everything that we do.

Where is the glory; where is the honor for God in our behavior and everything that we do? Where is the love of the Lord God with all of our heart, with all of our soul, with all of our mind, and then acting accordingly? It's sad what we're seeing in our country. Hosea 4 goes on in verse 2. He's speaking against the nation of Israel, but the application can also fit America. There is swearing and deception and murder and stealing and adultery and they employ violence so that bloodshed follows bloodshed.

All of that can be found in your newspaper. We're just hearing more and more, and more and more. Verse 3. And therefore, the land mourns and everyone who lives in it languishes along with the beast of the field, the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea disappear. I want you to notice the first part of this verse. It says, therefore, the land mourns. What does that mean? The land is having difficulty yielding its produce.

Recently I was online looking for reports about drought in America. I found a very interesting article from the New York Times dated in April of 2015. In the article they made a point that 37% of the US is now experiencing drought. So you know what they do? They blame it on global warming. Yet, interestingly enough, both meteorologists in the UK as well as Australia and even some here in the United States are reporting that the polar ice cap is growing much more than we ever expected.

In fact Al Gore about ten years ago reported that the polar ice cap would not even exist today if we did not implement some kind of control on global warming. Well, our nation didn't respond. Other nations in the world did not respond. There was no response to minimize global warming to any significant level and yet, here the polar ice cap is growing by millions of square feet. It's incredible what's happening. I think there's another possibility to explain the drought here in the United States - God's judgment.

The verse says,

**Therefore the land mourns,
And everyone who lives in it languishes**

We've been hearing for some time that the animals in our country are experiencing diseases like we have not seen before, and that fits the rest of the verse. It says,

**Along with the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky,
And also the fish of the sea disappear.**

The keyword is disappear. Verse 4.,

**Yet let no one find fault, and let none offer reproof;
For your people are like those who contend with the priest.**

Hosea goes on to rebuke the nation, and he says, "Let no one find fault. Let none offer reproof." In other words, the message is that people were preaching tolerance and Hosea rebukes them for the idea of tolerance. Their idea is that if you sin, that's okay. I'll let you do it, you're okay, I love you, you're great. They just ignore the sin. There's no rebuke. Then

he goes on to say they contend with the priest. That's exactly what we're seeing in our country. Governmental activities are contending with pastors. They're telling us that we can't preach what we believe is the right thing to preach.

Verse 5 and 6 goes on to say,

So you will stumble by day,
And the prophet also will stumble with you by night;
And I will destroy your mother.
My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.
Because you have rejected knowledge,
I also will reject you from being My priest.
Since you have forgotten the law of your God,
I also will forget your children.

The people are being destroyed for lack of biblical truth. Our conservative seminaries are telling us that incoming freshmen students are more biblically illiterate than they were 20 or 30 years ago.

You might ask, "Why are students coming into colleges and seminaries biblically more illiterate than they were 20 to 30 years ago? Why is that happening?" The answer is that our churches are not teaching them as they used to. We've dumbed down what's taught from the pulpits. What's happening is that we are telling people the nice, warm, fluffy stuff that they want to hear, but we're not really teaching scripture in depth. So our people are being destroyed for lack of knowledge.

Verse 7 and 8 says,

The more they multiplied, the more they sinned against Me;
I will change their glory into shame.
They feed on the sin of My people.

(talking about the leaders)

And direct their desire toward their iniquity.
And it will be, like people, like priest;

The message is that there will not be any difference between the religious leaders and the people in the churches, and it

will be, "like people like priest."

So I will punish them for their ways

Now, watch the last part of verse 9.

And repay them for their deeds.

Isn't it interesting what God does? God does not say, "I'm going to repay them for their faith." He says, "I'm going to repay them for their deeds." Do you know what happened to us as Christians? We've missed how offensive our sins are to God. What we've missed is that God wants us to stop our sinning. He wants us to repent. He wants us to believe in God. The message we have from scripture is that if we don't, He'll give us some rope. He will be patient for a while, but eventually God will judge a nation.

He will judge people. He hates sin. He calls us to repent. He calls us to Christ to have our sins forgiven in order to live with Him eternally. But if we don't do that, eventually He will remove a nation. In Amos 6, Amos also rebukes Israel for its excessive ease and prosperity. Verse 1 says,

Woe to those who are at ease in Zion
And to those who feel secure in the mountain of Samaria,

Now verse 4.

Those who recline on beds of ivory
And sprawl on their couches,
And beat lambs from the flock
And calves from the midst of the stall,

When was the last time you went to bed on a bed that was made out of ivory? That's expensive, and back in those days it would be even more expensive. And they "sprawl on their couches." The idea is that they just lay down; they're at ease. That's the idea that they have no cares in the world, and "they eat lambs from the flock." The implication is that they are into excess, "calves from the midst of the stall." They can't even wait for the calf to be become a full adult. They're so indulgent.

Verse 5,

Who improvise to the sound of the harp,
And like David have composed songs for themselves . . .

They're into music. Music is their thing. They're into eating; they're into ease. They're into enjoying music. Consumption is the idea. Verse 6,

Who drink wine from sacrificial bowls
While they anoint themselves with the finest of oils,
Yet they have not grieved over the ruin of Joseph.

I want you to notice the last part of that verse. "Yet they have not grieved over the ruin of Joseph." Can I change it? They have not grieved over the nation.

I have a question for you. Are you grieving for America? They've dishonored God. Sin is rampant in our country. The rejection of God is all over the place except among the remnant. How about you? Are you grieving over what is going on in our country? The prophet Amos tells the Israelites, "You've not grieved over the ruin of Joseph."

Do you know what our country is in? I think our country's in judgment. Full judgment may not be here yet, but it's close if it's not here already. I want to show you how God wants us to respond. I want you to turn to Ezekiel 33. Ezekiel 33:7. I want you to see what God wants you to do. What does God expect from you? Ezekiel 33:7 says,

Now as for you, son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel . . .

So far, we've been talking about the nation of Israel. So this fits. And,

. . . so you will hear a message from My mouth and give them warning from Me.

So God says, you're a watchman. I appoint you a watchman.

And what you are supposed to do is give a message. It's one of warning and it's from God. Verse 8.

When I say to the wicked, "O wicked man, you will surely die,"

I want you to notice what He says. He says, that we're supposed to do is speak to the wicked man, and tell him that he's going to surely die. It is important to notice what is in focus. The sin of the people is in focus here. God says,

"O wicked man, you will surely die" and you did not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity but his blood I will require from whose hand?. Ezekiel 33:8 (NASB)

Your hand. Not the wicked man's hand but from your hand, from the one who is to be the watchman.

In other words, what God was saying is if we do not warn the wicked and he ends up dying in his iniquity, God says I'm going to require the blood from your hand - our hand. Verse 9,

But if you on your part warn a wicked man to turn from his way and he does not turn from his way, he will die in his iniquity, but you have delivered your life

So the message is that if you warned the wicked person and they don't turn from their wicked way, and they end up dying in their wickedness, then you've absolved yourself.

You won't be judged. This is a serious warning. It was a warning given to Ezekiel. It's a warning that's given to us. You say, "Well, how do you know that it applies to us?" Turn to Matthew 5. I want you to see something. We often disconnect these two. Matthew 5:13,

You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.

Do you know what Jesus is telling us to do? Jesus is telling us to be salt. We know what salt is. We put it on food and it tastes good. But salt in those days was used to preserve something. That was the primary use of salt in Jesus' day. It was used to flavor food, but the primary purpose was to

preserve something.

What Jesus is telling us to do is that we need to be salt. Same theme as Ezekiel. We are to tell others about their sin. It's the idea of preservation and what happens when you put salt in a wound? It hurts! People do not like to hear that what they're doing is sinful. Then it goes on in verse 14. It says,

You are the light of the world.

Jesus connects these two together,

A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works,

That is, we are to be examples. We are to be godly examples, and glorify our Father who is in heaven, and notice what it says.

. . . and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Do you know how I'm going to give glory to God? By being godly and by being salt and light. That's how we give glory to God. We give glory to God by being salt and being light. That is, we are an example. We warn and we are an example of how others are to behave.

So what's our response? We need to be watchmen. We need to give a warning. We need to tell people when they are in sin and do it lovingly. Don't beat them on the head with a sledgehammer, as they say. We need to be responsible. We need to warn them. We need to be godly.

Light should say it all. Talking about biblical truth is what He's talking about. I'm afraid that it's a message that, too many times, we have missed as Christians. We teach about Jesus Christ, but we sometimes fail to call people to godly behavior. We fail to call them to repentance. Ezekiel tells us that if we don't, then we will be accountable.

The last thing I'd like to say is that we need to pray. Pray for our nation. Pray that the Holy Spirit will sweep across this nation, convict hearts, and our nation will turn. In Mat-

thew 6:10, Jesus tells the disciples how to pray. Pray,

Your kingdom come.

Your will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

That's what God wants. God wants His will done here on earth as it is in heaven. God hates sin. So, do I think the United States is being judged already? I don't know. I wouldn't be surprised in fact if some of the things that are happening to us is because we have been judged.

Judgment may already be in process. I wouldn't be surprised at all. But do you know what was interesting in the Old Testament? There was always a remnant and there's a remnant here in America. If we pray, maybe there can be a deferment of judgment in our lifetime. I trust that you see that not only do you have a responsibility to share Christ, but also to call people to godliness. That would give honor and glory to God as we are salt and light.