

AMERICA'S DESTINY: A NEW HEART & A NEW SPIRIT

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*Jesus said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed **evil thoughts**, adulteries, fornications, **murders**, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these **evil things** come from within and **defile a man.**" (Mark 7.20-23)*

*"Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it **defiles the whole body and** sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell." (Ja. 3.4-6)*

Jesus called the Devil the "*the father of Lies*" and the one who "*comes to steal, **kill** and destroy.*" (John 8.44, John 10.10)

From these scriptures we see that **evil** is present in our hearts. It develops in the atmosphere of lies and accusation and is released with words that come out of our mouths and keyboards.

The near assassination of former president Trump, which arose from hateful political rhetoric, has shaken the nation and the world. Yet God intervened with an amazing miracle! He showed His power, protection and presence.

There has never been a nation like the

United States and yet our beautiful land is deeply defiled by hatred, inflammatory speech and violent action. We are all painfully aware that this must change. Legislation, more vigilance and lessons in civility have their place but **only God** can change our hearts and heal our land.

Jesus has never been more needed, and the gospel never more relevant. He came to reconcile sinful people to the Life and care of God our loving Father *and to reconcile us with one another.* He is the Lamb of God sent not to condemn the world but to **take away** the sin of the world and to give us a new spirit - His Spirit. We need to be aware that evil is also working in the world. Jesus calls the Devil "*the father of lies.*" We must choose to side with Him who is the Way, **the Truth** and the Life.

Religion alone is useless because it cleans the outside of the cup while leaving the inside of the cup filthy. Jesus explained that hatred, enmity, violence, strife, lust, envy and murders come from within our hearts. (See Mark 7.20-23) Because they come from within us, He reveals that our only hope is to be changed from the inside. He alone can do this by giving us a new heart and spirit **IF** we renounce the old and deliberately receive the new..

The work of God is deep. He wants us to get beyond the outer show of religion - even Christian religion - to remove our "hearts of stone" and replace them with His own life - the

Holy Spirit. Jesus came to deal with our inherited selfish, sinful, Adam, ego nature and to replace it with His Spirit. He wants to come within, to remove the deadness and evil that are in us and fill us with His loving and forgiving nature. Our part is to recognize our need to replace the sinful heart.

It is more than just saying: "*Jesus come into my heart*". It is a matter of recognizing and renouncing everything that comes from the evil, rebellious elements of our old nature which produce hatred, enmity strife, lust and rage. We all must ask Jesus to replace this with His Spirit through the work of His Cross and Resurrection.

It is not sufficient to say: "The other one needs to change." We admit that we too need to change. "It is I who needs to be changed from the inside out. It is I who need the hatred, enmity, lust to be removed from my heart and who needs a New Spirit."

"Create in me a new heart O Lord and renew a right Spirit within me." (Psalm 51.10)

Millions are praying for national revival in America. We need the Holy Spirit of God to come within us to manifest the fruit of the Spirit: "*love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.*" (Galatians 5.22-23) There is no other way. It makes no difference if we call ourselves Christian, Jew or Moslem. If we do not deal with the hatred that wells up within us then our religion is empty show.

The Republican or Democrat party cannot do this for us - but they can encourage and facilitate it - if they too get rid of hatred and

the words that inflame it. As a nation we need to come before God, our Father and Creator, to receive reconciliation with Him and one another and to deal with the *evil* that lies within.

It is not a matter of right or left - ***it is a matter of Spirit and truth.*** Jesus said: "*The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*" (John 4.23-24)

This means that we are to come before God not on the basis of religion or different political alliances but on the basis of the atonement that He has provided, renouncing all lies and receiving God's Spirit of love to replace our old nature. Ezekiel saw this when He said: "*I will take the heart stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh and put my spirit within them.*" (Ez. 36-26)

Through the turmoil that is in our land - which reached its zenith in the assassination attempt on former President Trump - the Holy Spirit is showing us the corruption that is in our hearts and in our society - not to condemn us - but ***to show us the way out.*** He is inviting us to receive reconciliation with God and each other and to be filled with His Spirit. Only this Spirit of Love can create a society where we live in peace and brotherhood with one another - each one walking in good will towards all - even of different sides and ideologies.

Our land is at a crisis point - we shall either destroy ourselves with strife and hatred or rediscover the power and relevance of Jesus and His ways. That is our choice!

"In the world we will have tribulation but fear not I have overcome the world." (John 16.33)

"Your kingdom come your will be done on earth as it is heaven" (Matthew 6.10)

