

AMERICA AT A CROSSROADS, by Chris J Fenner, Nov 2020

Part 4 of 4 – Hidden Forces of Evil and a new Great Awakening (1900 to 2020 AD)

This is the final part of a four part series on “America at a Crossroads”, with one road marked GOD’S WAY and the other road marked MAN’S WAY.

In the first part we looked at how the first European settlers in America were part of God’s master plan for the completion of Genesis 1:28, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth”

In the second part we looked at the decline in reliance on God as the people in the emerging 13 colonies relied more and more on themselves.

We also looked at the renewed Holy Spirit fire of the Great Awakening led by the preaching of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield.

Their teachings dramatically emphasized the holiness of God and the depravity of man, with the vital need for Christians to become true and full followers of Christ.

In the third part we looked at how God’s mighty hand moved in the hearts and lives of the people in the 13 colonies, now united in faith and purpose, leading to:

- The Declaration of Independence,
- The War of Independence,
- The establishment of The Constitution of the United States.

We also touched on the events of the 19th century including the second Great Awakening, which again emphasized the holiness of God and the depravity of man.

In this final part we will look at the events of the last 120 years, including the powerful forces of evil that have infiltrated our nation, that have led to our nation being at a crossroads today desperately needing another Great Awakening.

THE 20th AND 21ST CENTURIES

We will quickly look at three aspects of the 120 years from 1900 to 2020 that have been tumultuous for America and the world.

First TECHNOLOGY

Genesis 1:27 records,

“So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”

Because we are created in God’s image, mankind has the ability to be creative: to discover things, to explore how God made things, to invent things. This has happened at a faster and faster pace over the last 120 years.

In the first half of 1900s the second Industrial Revolution was in full swing bringing mass production and the shift from agricultural work to factory work, and consequently the movement of many people from rural to urban locations.

By the end of the 1960 technology had advanced so far that America could put a man on the moon! Something that was unimaginable 20 years earlier.

During the same time period another huge step was taking place with the beginning of the Information Age that quickly went from the early IBM mainframe computers – to personal computers – to the World Wide Web – to the multitude of devices and information systems we see today.

Also advances in the medical field increased the average lifespan from 48 years in 1900 to 78 in 2020.

However, these tremendous technological advances also helped fuel the mindset that man was master of his own destiny, and God was no longer needed.

Deuteronomy 8:12-14 warns of this.

“Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God. Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down ... and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God.”

Second SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EVENTS

Although technology builds on technology, the same cannot be said for social and political events.

A quick look at the list of major events in this 120 year period shows that some are good and some are bad, but taken as a whole they bring out the underlying truth of Jeremiah 17:9,

“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?”

Here is the list:

1914 to 18, World War 1
1920, Women's right to vote – good!
1929 to 39, The Great Depression
1938 to 45, World War 2
1947 to 91, Cold War Era
1947 to 2005, Billy Graham crusades – good!
1950 to 53, Korean War
1954 to 68, Civil Rights movement – good!
1955 to 75, Vietnam War
1972 to 74, Watergate
1978 to 2005, Pope John 2 Catholic revival – good!
1990 to 91, Gulf War
2001 to today, 9/11 and the Afghanistan War
2003 to 11, Iraq War
2007 to 09, Financial Crisis
2013 to today, Racial Justice movement
2020 COVID-19 Crisis

The third major shift taking place in America in this 120 year period is a HIDDEN EVIL that has placed America at a crossroads today.

It came out of the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche, a German philosopher who made the statement "God is Dead" in a book published in 1883. ⁸

His philosophy had a powerful influence on both the rise in Communism and the Nazi Party of Germany.

The intent of this philosophy is to put man in the place of God.

It is the embodiment of Isaiah 14:12-13, which records the fall of Lucifer – Satan – who defied God and who has constantly deceived mankind into promoting ourselves over God.

"How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn!
You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations!

You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to the heavens;
I will raise my throne above the stars of God.'”

This philosophy has gained a powerful hold on many segments of our culture, yet the vast majority of Americans have only a vague idea of the people and organizations behind it.

- It has gained control over the majority of our universities and colleges whereby professors now influence – to the point of brainwashing – younger generations into an anti-God mindset.
- It has gained control over many of our Law Schools thus changing the worldview of many judges away from the “natural law” of God to the progressive worldview of evolving values and morals.

This has resulted in activist Supreme Court decisions in the last 50 years that...

- Restricted prayer in schools, ¹⁰
- Removed Bible reading from schools, ¹¹
- Legalized abortion, ¹²
- Removed displays of the Ten Commandments from most public places, ¹³
- Redefined marriage, ¹⁴
- Redefined gender identification. ¹⁵
- It has gained control over the majority of the media including: network television, major local newspapers, and online media, thus allowing an anti-God bias to replace objective reporting.
- It has gained a strong inroad into the Democratic Party changing it significantly from the party of John F. Kennedy.
- It has gained significant inroads into our school system – turning children’s minds away from parental influence to ungodly influence.
- It has gained major inroads into the culture of America’s major corporations, especially the giants of information technology.
- Sadly, it has even gained a foothold in some Christian church denominations.

This is the road marked MAN'S WAY

And so this finally brings us to the crossroads that we are at in America today.

Which shall we choose? GOD'S WAY or MAN'S WAY.

- MAN'S WAY that I have just described or ...

- GOD'S WAY ...
 - that brought the nations here together in America;
 - that brought God's Word here through the Pilgrims and the Puritans;
 - that established the American form of government;
 - that blessed the nation with prosperity;
 - that made America a shining light attracting immigrants from around the world;
 - that provides aid to countries in need;
 - that has defended Democracy around the globe;
 - that has sent missionaries to almost every nation.

If we do nothing the nation will continue to go down the road marked MAN'S WAY.

So WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?

First, we need to recognize that we are so far down the road of MAN'S WAY that there is nothing we can do in our own strength to reverse it. Our only hope is in God. More specifically, our only hope is for a mighty movement of the Holy Spirit in a new Great Awakening.

So the question becomes how can a new Great Awakening come about?

By crying out to God in the spirit of 2 Chronicles 7:14,

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

But, you might say, Christians across America have been praying this for decades and there is no sign of a new Great Awakening.

Yes, we have been praying it, but have we been living it in the Presence and the Power of the Holy Spirit?

Have we, who are called by God's name, HUMBLED OURSELVES?

To humble ourselves is to allow the Holy Spirit to identify any mindset we have that places us above God, other people, or groups of people, and to repent of this sin.

In this regard, Peter admonishes us in 1 Peter 3:8-9 ...

[to] be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

Have we, who are called by God's name, PRAYED AND SOUGHT GOD'S FACE?

To pray so as to seek God's face is not only to pray in earnest, but also to draw close to Jesus – through being born again and spending time with Him in God's Word and prayer – and building a relationship with Him so that we can say with Paul as recorded in Galatians 2:20...

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

This includes living for Jesus 24/7 – at home, at work and in all of life.

Have we, who are called by God's name, TURNED FROM OUR WICKED WAYS?

Our wicked ways – our sins – are any ways that are from our old nature rather than the nature of God in us.

To turn from our wicked ways is to allow the Holy Spirit – the Spirit of Jesus Christ – to sanctify us by identifying and repenting of the sins of our old nature, and to replace them with fruit of His holy nature as recorded in Galatians 5:22-23...

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

The first aspect of the fruit is LOVE. Love in thought, word and deed. Love that responds in love to the inevitable push-back and persecution that comes from living and speaking the Truth of God in a nation where a majority of people now reject GOD'S WAY.

Then as we truly humble ourselves and pray and seek God's face and turn from our wicked ways a miracle happens. His Presence and Power goes with us and distinguish us from all the other people on the face of the earth (see Exodus 33:16). This will attract those who are on MAN'S WAY to the Truth of GOD'S WAY, so that they too want to know His living Presence.

And this is the start of a GREAT AWAKENING!

It can happen here and now with us.

Amen

END NOTES

9. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (Germany, Ernst Schmeitzner, 1883).
10. Supreme Court, *Engel v. Vitale*, 370 U.S. 421 (1962).
11. Supreme Court, *Abington School District v. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203 (1963).
12. Supreme Court, *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 (1973).
13. Supreme Court, *Stone v. Graham*, 449 U.S. 39 (1980).
14. Supreme Court, *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015).
15. Supreme Court, *Bostock v. Clayton County*, 590 U.S. ____ (2020).