

Do You Suppose?

The question came from an email: "Do you suppose that circumstances and situations may come to the point that Christians in America will finally turn to God for answers?"

It is a rhetorical question. We know the answer: YES!

As we celebrate the independence of American Colonies in the Revolutionary War let us take a look at one great moment of heroism, courage and initiative. Smallpox and bitter weather ravaged the impoverished troops at Valley Forge, PA. Of every ten soldiers contracting smallpox, six died. Inoculation was a new science. General Washington in a bold and daring move took scrapings from infected soldiers and inoculated healthy soldiers. Of those inoculated only one in ten who contracted smallpox died. From six to one. This single bold move by General Washington may have saved the Revolution.

I wonder what it will take for Christians in America to come to the conclusion that following Jesus includes a cross and death of the Old Man. Sin must be crucified. Sin must be brought to the cross.

We seem to use bifocals as a people. We celebrate heroes who are not godly. We look through the top part of our glasses and imagine that fame and glory are based on popularity, money, and pleasure.

Time and again we have celebrated funerals in America. We look at tenure of political lives and assign glory and honor of immortality. We hear words of praise that intimate expectation of life eternal because someone advocated political causes.

Can it be so that persons who vote for abortion and perverted sexual lifestyles will inherit eternal life? Are we not trying to bifocal life? Are we not trying to build towers of Babel to heaven without God? Are we not pretending that worldly fame is enough to save souls?

We drop our eyes and look through the lower part of our bifocals. We pick up our Bible and go to church. We sing a hymn, tell the pastor it was a fine sermon, socialize, and give a

token offering. We say light-hearted prayers without repentance and with no blood or cross.

May I suggest that the anti-christ spirit is running powerfully? Who is the anti-christ? I do not know. My understanding is that no one will know the anti-christ until Christ comes for His Church....i.e., what is referred to as the "Rapture." However, any person or spirit that denies that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Only Savior of our souls is the "spirit of the anti-christ." Again, the spirit of the anti-christ is powerful.

Yes, the Church is being driven to her knees. Yes, saints are having to re-evaluate whether we will play "footsie" with the world, pretending that we can define secular terms for entrance into heaven. We know better. We know that the Bible only allows one way...Jesus. We know there is a cross.

Our winter is long. Our challenges are many. Perhaps we will have the courage of a General Washington to take a daring and bold move. Perhaps the Church will awaken to the deep need of intense prayer, focus on the Word, and coming together in the Holy Spirit to fulfill the Great Commission.

Of this I am confident: When the Church is built on Christ we will crucify the flesh. Our mind and bodies will become servants. We will serve with joy. We will polish the lens of our glasses and see Jesus only. We will take up our cross and follow with rejoicing. We will renew our hope for His Coming.

Much love
Pastor Bare
2 Chronicles 7:14



Dr. Harold Bare is a former social worker/counselor and college lecturer. While serving Covenant Church since 1981, he has authored numerous articles and several books, including: They Call Me Pentecostal, Hell is War, and A Month of Sundays.

He is married to Laila Bare, Ed.D. (VT). They have three children, Danny, Dana, and Joshua, and 7 grandchildren.

New SBS Series Begins THIS Sunday, July 11: *THE PRODIGAL GOD: Finding Your Place at the Table* study is based on the Luke 15 parable of the tale of two sons. One son kept all the rules. One son broke all the rules. Both sons broke the Father's heart! But yet the Father loved both sons more than anyone could imagine. The Prodigal God is a teaching/small group series that helps us understand what authentic faith is. Whether we are the "younger brother type" and have wasted our lives in sinful living, or "older brother type" and have tried to keep all the rules, we will discover that the only way to find a place at God's table is to recognize the reckless, abundant, unexplainable love of "The Prodigal God!" More than a story about two sons and their inheritance, this story is about our Father God and His heart for us. It teaches us what really matters to Him! Join with other adults in the NT Sanctuary this Sunday for the launch of this exciting SBS series! In addition to the introductory video by the author of the lessons [a don't-miss opportunity laying the groundwork for the whole series], you will be introduced to the facilitators for the following weeks. **See you in the sanctuary at 9:45 AM THIS Sunday, July 11!**

Wednesdays 6:30-7:45 PM: Special activities and Bible study for everyone one. Pastor Bare is teaching from the prophecy chart in the NT sanctuary. Our current discussion is regarding the anti-christ.

Alternate Choir Rehearsal Night: We are currently offering an alternate choir rehearsal night for those who wish to join the choir but cannot make our regular Thursday rehearsals. This will take place on Wednesday nights from 6:45-7:45 PM in the OT Café. Please contact Pastor Tim for more information.

Water Baptism: Give witness of your faith in Christ through Water Baptism on Sunday, July 18th during the 10:45 am service. Please notify Pastor Bettie Christian if you want to be baptized this month. The next opportunity will be in September.

Sunday Prayer: You are invited and encouraged to begin your Sunday morning worship in the new prayer room from 7:45 - 8:15 A.M. as we pray for our pastor and church. Please remember your prayer room is open during regular office hours for individual prayer as well.

Ladies Sunday Night Live: Our next SNL for Ladies will be Sunday, July 18th at 4 PM in the OT Café. In addition to motivating us to move closer to God and each other, this one promises to be a lot of fun! Mark your calendar now and invite a friend.

Youth Summer Camp in Roanoke:
Middle School: July 5th -9th (Pastor Angela)
Ages 9-11: July 12th - 16th (Pastor Angela)
Ages 6-8: July 19th -22nd (Pastor Angela)

Men's Breakfast: Our next Men's Breakfast is scheduled for Saturday, July 24th at 7:30 AM in the OT Café. Mark your calendars men and plan to be with us for good food and fellowship!