

Lifelines

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Topic: Peace in the Tumult

Peace during Tumultuous Times

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It seems that today there are way too many folks bent upon destroying America. Those who embrace this view have obviously never lived, or spent significant time in other countries. If they had, they would realize that life in other countries, even in democracies overseas, provides nowhere near the freedoms and quality of life which Americans have in America. Ignorance is no excuse, nor does it diminish one's personal responsibility to appreciate this fabulous country God has given to us.

During my lifetime, I have had the privilege to spend time in at least 25 different countries and cultures, and spent eleven years living and working in a wonderful foreign country and functioning in a language which was not my own. I have encountered many great people in each, and I have experienced various living accommodations, foods, customs, and the languages and cultures in all of those in which I spent time. I enjoyed and valued each and every experience. Yet, like Dorothy in the *Wizard of Oz*, when you come to your senses in the middle of your nightmare, you realize that "There is no place like home." For me, the United States of America provides the best life available anywhere in the world. It really is rather disappointing to hear people bad-mouth America, and show disdain for America which has given, and continues to give, each of us so very much, most of which we certainly do not deserve.

I am growing concerned today with the increasing hatred that is conquering more and more people, because hatred is never constructive, but rather destructive. Hatred really says more about the hater than the things they hate. Hatred does not come from God, but rather from Satan, the Destroyer. The Apostle John, writing in the First Letter of John in the Bible, states in 1 John 4:7-8 (NASB95): "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love." Love is constructive, hate is destructive. Love builds up others; hate tears down others. Love is from God, hatred is from the demonic.

While it is obvious to all, it must be stated that not all Americans are Christians, in name or practice; it is also obvious that those who were the founding fathers of our country, while not perfect, came from cultures immersed in Christian values. It was they who stated that this new American system of government would require moral people to sustain right decisions, for America to continue. Real morality comes from the eternal nature of God and His love for humanity. We were created in God's image ... that is, we are relational beings that by nature need to live in healthy relationships with God and with one another. Love is a choice, and it's the glue that holds people together. Hatred is a choice that diminishes the value of others, divides people, and destroys healthy relationships with others.

If we are to help America survive and thrive, we must avoid destructive emotions and actions which decay this country, one person at a time. In truth, each of us needs to consider our own life in light of the beauty and majesty of God, who created us to be constructive participants in the world and universe He created. We cannot control the values or emotions of others, but we can commit

ourselves to God, and allow His Spirit to live in and through us, transforming us into people who are part of building up a great country, instead of tearing down what God has entrusted to us.

We are coming up on America's 250th Birthday! Begin today to celebrate God's life and work that has been accomplished by those who have been, or currently are, citizens of this great land. Thank God for what He has given to us, and has accomplished through us in the world. Pray for God to raise up more generations of Americans who love God more than self, and love what God has entrusted to us in these United States of America.

May God bless our nation, continue to pour out His grace, love, and other core values into our lives, so that we can once again be "One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all!" "Beloved: Let's love one another!" Amen!

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