

Not Just A Better America

The Millenium will not be patterned after the U.S.

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I've noticed a trend on the fringes of the church. I don't think that those who are really with it feel this way. But, it is a trend that is somewhat disturbing because it does touch on some of the people in or connected to the church.

However, being an American, I can understand it. It is something that works like this:

We are born in America and, pardon to all those not born in America, we learn certain things in our education and history. We learn that our nation was founded upon Christian principles. And, that the founders espoused Christian beliefs, and wrote them into our founding documents such as: life, liberty, justice, equality, tolerance, generosity, and fairness. We could name several other virtues and values that are in our founding papers by which Americans are supposed to live and govern themselves.

But because those Christian principles are in our founding documents and our founding fathers were men of fairly good faith (especially compared to what a lot of politicians are today) some people speak of things like the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence in the same terms, and with the same respect, as the Ten Commandments—as if God Himself, with His very finger, came down and wrote, "We the people..."

We also learn as we study our history and our Bibles, at the same time, that this nation descends in great part from the patriarch Joseph, particularly his son Manasseh. And our rise to greatness (we have to admit America is the greatest nation on the face of the earth at the moment) fulfills physical prophecy. Because, Jacob said to Joseph that these two sons who would become great nations would eventually do that, one would be a great commonwealth of nations, and the other one great nation, and the elder would serve the younger.

The founding of this nation, we have come to believe, was no quirk of fate and, many twists and turns in our history were guided by God Himself to bring about His purpose. We can even point to a few miraculous interventions in our history, and say that God was making sure that things turned out a certain way, and that America would be what it is today.

For instance, this is a recent set of miracles that happened in the Gulf War just 12 years

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ago now.

Did you know that the day before the Gulf War opened in Kuwait, rain fell on the desert! Rain! Do you know what that rain did? It washed all the sand off the land mines! Our troops had clear access all the way through the country into Iraq. They didn't have to get blown up to get in.

We also knew before the war of Iraq's chemical warfare capability. A lot of people were saying that Saddam is just going to let off a bomb or two, and our troops are going to be "toast." Do you know what happened?

February in the Persian Gulf region usually has winds coming out of the north. But, during the opening hours of our attack, the winds shifted directly opposite—out of the south. Do you know for how long the south winds blew? 100 hours! That is the exact length of time of the Gulf War.

Had they tried to use any of their chemical weapons, because of the dominant south winds, it would have blown back upon the Iraqi troops. Saddam could not use them! That whole scenario was taken out of the picture, because something happened that was beyond the power of men!

People look at this, and conclude that it could only have been God, unless it is a strange set of coincidences!

We see those types of things throughout our history. It isn't just these recent ones. But, we can point to those things and say that God seems to be with this nation.

Now add to these things that we have just talked about: America is indeed the richest nation on this earth—it is the engine of the global economy—it is the lone superpower that everyone depends upon to police things around the world, and that this nation is the prime exporter of Bibles, and missionaries, and Christianity, and it seems like the USA is God's country! It must be God's country!

Then what happens? People take this one step further!

They reason that if God has been so instrumental in the nation's founding and development, if He has blessed it so abundantly, and made it into what it is today, then will not the Kingdom of God—particularly the Millennium—be a lot like America, only better? If America is God's country now, won't God's nation be like America?

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My only answer to that is, no way!

It will not be a "better America." If there is any historic country you want to put in there like Rome, or ancient Israel, or any of the other great powers that have been like the Spanish or British Empires, it will be like none of those things. It will be like nothing that has ever happened upon the face of this earth. It will be an entirely different nation.

I began to formulate this sermon while in Europe this summer. I could easily see the differences between American culture, American government, the whole American system, and the way it is done in Europe, all these different things.

When some Americans go over there, they are somewhat brash, burly, and ugly, and they compare everything that the Europeans do, wherever they go, and they think, "The American way is better!"

You know, Americans know how to make toilets flush, and that bathrooms should be large enough to get their bulk into it. Showers should be with faucets that are "at the proper height," and that sort of thing. We Americans have worked all of this out already, and the rest of the world is behind us!

But, when you get down to it, none of these differences are right or wrong. None of these ways are necessarily God's way versus man's way, or versus the evil way. When you strip away all the rhetoric about the two systems, both systems are wrong! We just happen to prefer one or the other. It is like Winston Churchill said about democracy: "Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time."

Man's way is never the best way. God's way is the only right way.

So, none of these things—the European way, the South American way, the African way, the Russian way, the Canadian way, etc.—are of God. None of them are based truly on godly principles. None of them have truly godly leaders. And, certainly, the citizenry are not godly either.

All of these things, though, are necessary for a godly culture, a godly nation, and a godly government. And they will be there and present in the World Tomorrow.

Let's begin in Genesis 3. It is the conclusion of the story—scenario—in the Bible that a lot of Protestants and Catholics call "The Fall of Man." But, I like to call it, "Man's Rejection of God." That is what it was. God offered them His way, and they outright

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rejected it after hearing Satan's proposal.

Genesis 3:22-24 Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Now, exile from the Garden of Eden, and being cut off from access to the Tree of Life represents loss of contract with God. He guarded that access back to Him with a sword so that no one could make contact with Him.

Suddenly, man was at arm's length from God. And, it was actually more than that. It was like an infinity's length from God. He wouldn't let anyone come near Him except those who He specifically chose to work with.

Do we really understand this? He—God—cut off all contact with humanity, except for those few that *He* chose to work with. And it has been that way ever since.

The Garden of Eden was swallowed up in the Flood. We know that. The Tree of Life disappeared under the waters of that flood.

But, the result of man's rejection of God remains. It hasn't changed. All man has to work with now, just as then, is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

So everything to which he puts his hand is part good and part evil—not necessarily half-and-half, either. Sometimes things are pretty good, and not so evil. Some things are pretty evil, and not so good. Very few things are all good, or all evil, because that is the way of human nature—part good and part bad.

Let's go now to John 6. Jesus Christ repeats what I've just read in Genesis 3 here in a similar vein with more spiritual intent.

John 6:44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him....

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Did you catch that? *No one* can come to Me unless the Father draws him. No one! Man is cut off! Invitations run from God to man only. No one can knock on the door and say, "Let me in, God" unless he has an invitation. "No one can come to Me." This is definite, and absolute.

Since nations of this world are made of men of whom the Father has not called, no nation, however blessed and guided by God, is God's country! And that includes the "good old U. S. of A."

Just because we are made up of Israelites, primarily, does not mean that we're God's people. God divorced that nation because they would not listen to Him! They would not follow His way. They're not God's people. He put them off for a time to work with those who *are* God's people—those that He has decided to call and issue an invitation or summons to. Those are now the people of God, and those are the ones He is working with, and everyone else on this earth is still cut off from God! That includes presidents, prime ministers, gurus, popes, and anyone else from any spectrum of life, and they are all cut off from God, unless He has specifically issued them an invitation.

So, everything that America does, whether it is to invade Iraq, or to drop bombs on Afghanistan, or to up the money supply, or close off the money supply, or to this or that, are not sanctioned by God, necessarily. Because America is a nation of this world just as all other nations are. He may be guiding and directing certain things to bring about His purpose, but America, as nice as it is to live in, is not God's country.

The Millennium and God's kingdom will not be like America.

Let's go to Amos 9. Listen to what God says to His people Israel.

Amos 9:7 Are you not like the people of Ethiopia to Me, O children of Israel?" says the Lord. "Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?"

What He's saying here is "I moved the Philistines to where they are, and I moved the Syrians to where they are, and I moved you to where you are. You are just like all the other nations of the world to Me. You might as well be Ethiopians!"

Amos 9:8-10 Behold, the eyes of the Lord God [this is the reason why] are on the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth; yet I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob," Says the Lord. For surely I will

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command, and will sift the house of Israel among all nations, as grain is sifted in a sieve; yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground. All the sinners of My people shall die by the sword, Who say, 'The calamity shall not overtake nor confront us.'

It is their behavior that shows what kind of people they are. He very clearly calls them a "sinful kingdom."

Were they really God's kingdom, they would not be sinful, because God's people who inhabit God's kingdom don't sin, because they are like God. And, obviously their behavior showed where the origins really were, and which god they were following. It certainly wasn't the God of the Old Testament, or the God of the New Testament, who is one and the same.

God shows here that He's not interested in the form of government that they have. He's not interested in the purity of their capitalism. He's not interested, necessarily, in their global outreach, whether economic, cultural, or governmental. He's not interested in anything like that.

What does God say, here, that He is interested in? He is interested in sin and obedience. He will reward obedience, and punish sin. That is what He has told them.

"Look, you are just like the Ethiopians to Me because you are full of sin. I've told you time and time again, that if you will sin, I will judge."

He says He is going to judge and destroy, because they didn't listen to Him, and didn't do what He said. He says here that He will bring justice down upon the head of every sinner and those that are righteous will escape it. He will sift them in a sieve.

It is like you have all the people of Israel in a big pot and below that you have a big sieve. A bowl or cone with holes in it so you can send something through and catch what you don't want—or sometimes it's catch what you do want—and let the rest of it go through.

God said He will tip over this big bowl of Israelites into the sieve, and would shake the sieve to separate them, and that not even the smallest grain would fall to the ground.

You can look at this in two different ways. The way I prefer is that He lets the sinners fall through and keeps the righteous—the grain that He wants. He won't let any of the good

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grain slip through because He wants them. The remainder He will destroy.

The other way you can look at it is from a criminal justice point of view. That is, all the good people go through, but it catches all the bad people in the sieve, and has something else in store for them.

You can look at it either way. I'm not sure which one is the actual way to view this, but you can be sure, He will catch the ones He wants to catch, and let through the ones He want to let through. Not even the smallest grain will escape His notice.

All the sinners will be punished, and all the righteous will be saved. He is that particular. He is interested in sin and obedience. He will punish or He will reward.

Please go with me to Jeremiah 3 because this same problem cropped up with Judah. Israel proved that she was not God's people. Jeremiah shows the same with the Jews.

Jeremiah 3:6-11 The Lord said also to me in the days of Josiah the king: "Have you seen what backsliding Israel has done? She has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there played the harlot. And I said, after she had done all these things, 'Return to Me.' but she did not return. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it. Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot also. So it came to pass, through her casual harlotry, that she defiled the land and committed adultery with stones and trees. And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah has not turned to Me with her whole heart, but in pretense," says the Lord. Then the Lord said to me, "Backsliding Israel has shown herself more righteous than treacherous Judah.

Even as God's people, with all the laws and all the experience of the nation of Israel, still acted like the rest of the nations. He said in Amos, "You might as well be Ethiopians to Me!" They were, like everyone else, cut off from the Tree of Life. And they acted like it. Their access to God was only marginally better than any of the other people.

Did you know that God set up the entire Levitical system for pretty much one reason: To keep the people away from Himself! One man one time a year was allowed into His presence! That was the High Priest on the Day of Atonement.

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It was a show for us, an example for us, to show that these people were cut off. There are many other things in there, many types beyond this. I don't want to restrict it totally to that, but the set up, with the curtain, and the chambers, and the access here and there, was to show just how far they were away from God.

Even the sacrifices that were given—the blood of bulls and goats it says in Hebrews—could not take away sin. The way that God set up the religion was to show that there needs to be something greater. That access to Him could only come through His son, Jesus Christ.

So like the rest of the nations, Israel was cut off from God.

He says in other places that if they would only return to Him, He would forgive, and they could move on from there. But, they never did! Like it says here, they got so bad that they were committing adultery with the trees and stones—if you know the understanding that is there. They were worshipping groves. They were making idols from stone, wood, brass, gold, silver and bowing down to these things. To God that is adultery! "You are like Ethiopians," He says. "You all have shown that you are not my children."

Is Israel God's nation? Will He form His own kingdom after something like that? Upon a basis like that? Upon a system like that? Upon governments and principles that are a mixture of good and evil?

I wouldn't bet my salvation on it! I wouldn't bet a dollar, or even a penny on it! It is a losing proposition if one thinks that the kingdom of God—the Millennium in particular—is going to be anything like the nations of Israel. Because, they are saturated through and through—it says in Isaiah "From the head to the foot"—with sickness, with sin.

The Millennium is going to be something entirely different!

The only reason that America is so nice to live in right now is because of the faith of one man—Abraham! God has decided to give the blessing He promised to Abraham to these nations of Israel in these times.

I think that the only reason He has decided to do it now is because He needed it to happen now for His work to get done, and bring about the "time of the end."

We don't deserve these things! We heard this yesterday in my dad's sermons about just how sinful this nation is. And we're exporting it to the rest of the world as entertainment, or as intellectual knowledge, and the peoples of this world are gobbling it up. We are

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just sending our sin here, there, and everywhere. We do it by satellite uplink every prime time, every news hour, every single minute of every single day.

Do you think God is pleased that we've squandered the blessings of Abraham on sharing our sin? No.

The nations of Israel—America, Britain, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada—they are not proper patterns for the Millennium. Not in the least!

Let's turn back a chapter to Jeremiah 2. As we read this think not of ancient Israel, but think of modern Israel.

Jeremiah 2:1-13 Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Go and cry in the hearing of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the Lord: "I remember you, the kindness of your youth, the love of your betrothal, when you went after Me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. Israel was holiness to the Lord, the firstfruits of His increase. All that devour him will offend; disaster will come upon them," says the Lord.'" Hear the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob and all the families of the house of Israel. Thus says the Lord: "What injustice have your fathers found in Me, that they have gone far from Me, have followed idols, and have become idolaters? Neither did they say, 'Where is the Lord, who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, who led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and pits, through a land of drought and the shadow of death, through a land that no one crossed, and where no one dwelt?' I brought you into a bountiful country, to eat its fruit and its goodness. But when you entered, you defiled My land and made My heritage an abomination. The priests did not say, 'Where is the Lord?' and those who handle the law did not know Me; the rulers also transgressed against Me; the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit. Therefore I will yet bring charges against you," says the Lord, "and against your children's children I will bring charges. For pass beyond the coasts of Cyprus and see, send to Kedar and consider diligently, and see if there has been such a thing. Has a nation changed its gods, which are not gods? But My people have changed their glory for what does not profit. Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid; be very desolate," says the Lord. For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.

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America's beginnings were fairly good. The people who came to this nation over 400 years ago came here because of religious persecution, and they wanted freedom to practice their religion. They were a very God-fearing, Bible-thumping type people. There were Sabbath-keepers within a few years of the founding of the colonies. They tried very hard to keep God's word, as they understood it.

But, just like ancient Israel over these few centuries God has indeed been forgotten. Just like it said here, the land's resources were used for ungodly purposes. The people ascribed the greatness of this land to their idols, to the Baals, to their own ingenuity, to their own smarts, and their own strength. And God says when you do stuff like that, "Be very afraid." "Tremble in your shoes!" Because you don't know what is coming, especially if you are a people who "live by the Book" or at least say that you do.

We could go to Amos where such a thing is said of Israel, "Of all the nations of the earth, I knew you." They were the ones that were closest to God even though it was only a little bit more. They had God's law among them. They had the Levites teaching them. And when they went away from Him, they took idols to themselves. They did all those adulteries. He punished.

We haven't seen anything like what happened to ancient Israel: Invasion after invasion of Assyrians. They were the cruelest of the warmongers that have ever crossed this globe. People led away with hooks in their noses, where an Assyrian had the tether attached to his wrist. Just like a cow being led from place to place. It says in another place that he would lead Israel with fishhooks. These fishhooks must have been the ones that were put in their nasal passages upon which the Assyrian tugged. Thousands of people were killed and many thousands were taken into slavery.

That's not what we want. We are horrified when we hear things like that. We think of the degradation, and the pain, the death, the misery of people.

What God says is that when these things start to happen, we should start getting very afraid. Thomas Jefferson said once, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just."

That was 200 years ago when he said that! What would he be thinking now? He would just be a pile, a blob because he would have just trembled down into nothing!

God zeros in here in verse 13 on two real problems. One is put negatively, and one is put positively.

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The first one, the negative one, says, "They have forsaken Me." They rejected revelation from God. We did this early on as Americans. We rejected God's revelation to guide our policies and behavior.

The second one, though put in a positive sense, is also bad. It says, "We fashioned our own set of standards." That's what He means there when He said they had hewn themselves out cisterns. They decided that they would set up their own set of values.

God says that these values, standards, ideas, theories, and purposes that they have don't hold any water. We use that expression even now. "What a stupid idea! That won't hold water!" That's what He says about this second thing. The things we have decided to replace revelation with are full of holes. They don't work. Only God's way works. Only God's way produces lasting results.

Because they have rejected revelation, the things that they have thought up cannot be eternal. Why? Because they have been cut off from the Tree of Life, and all that they have to work with is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

What He says is, "because you rejected My water,"—meaning His revelation, the fountains and springs that He said that He would give them—and you have made yourself broken cisterns to hold your stupid ideas, you are going to fail! You are doomed to failure. Your downfall is prophesied. It won't be that far off. And, it is all because we have chosen to follow the pattern of this world, the same way of life, the same way of thinking as Babylon the Great.

It is just the Israelite version of it. It is just the American version of it. It is just the Canadian, English, South African, Australian, New Zealand, and French version of it. That's just the way it is, because these people are cut off from God.

Jeremiah 2:33-35 Why do you beautify your way to seek love? [God asked.] Therefore you have also taught the wicked women your ways. [Remember we televise our sins around the world.] Also on your skirts is found the blood of the lives of the poor innocents. I have not found it by secret search, but plainly on all these things. [Their sins are not hidden. They are right out front. They boast of them.] Yet you say, 'Because I am innocent, surely His anger shall turn from me.' Behold, I will plead My case against you, because you say, 'I have not sinned.'

Now the imagery here is of a harlot. God's says that this harlot—Israel—is all dolled up.

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She's got all her makeup on. She's got her seductive clothing on. Everything about her is alluring. And why is she like this? It is very simple. She's all dolled up to conduct a sinful act. Her purpose is to commit sin.

God says, "I don't have to look very carefully to see your guilt. It is obvious. It is out in the open." What do they call homosexuals who have admitted it? They have "come out" of the closet. It is all right there for everyone to see.

God says that the whole spectrum of sin is like that. Not just homosexuality, but everything. We wear it like a badge on our clothing. He says, "I didn't have to go searching and digging, and looking here and there, and prying this open, and pounding on this to see if there was anything behind it. It is all right there. The blood is right there on your skirt for Me to see, and anybody else who walks by."

And then, to make matters even worse, Israel maintains her innocence! "Me?" "I'm doing everything that is right!" "God can't judge me for sinning!" "I haven't done any sin!"

She fully expects God not to punish her because she does not consider that what she does to be sin, because she is doing it. It must be ok.

What have we heard in the sermon just this morning? The whole way of thinking is that "I'm god. I can establish my own righteousness. If I decide that it is good, then it is good! So, I'm innocent if I want to do something that other people think is bad."

That is all post-modern thought is. Everything is relative, everything in its context. If I decide at that time that what I need to do is to lie, cheat, and steal, and stab my brother in the back, then it is perfectly OK. "I'm innocent because the situation demanded it!"

And God said, "Not so fast! I see it right there on your clothes. You are guilty. Guilty as sin!"

She has it completely turned around 180 degrees. She doesn't recognize that God is the One who sets the standard. And, for this God says, "I will punish." He'll punish drastically, and completely.

So, America cannot be a model for the World Tomorrow. We've seen very clearly in these three sermons so far (this Feast) that America is full of sin. Though it has its good points, it isn't godly. It is no pattern for the World Tomorrow.

Let's get more positive here. Let's go to I Corinthians 2:9. I want to go to this scripture

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because it sets the tone, and gives an overall principle about the way it will be in the World Tomorrow.

I Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit.

But, He has only revealed a very tiny bit! We know many things from the Old Testament about the way that it will be in the world to come but they are couched in prophetic language. A lot of them are very general. The desert will blossom like a rose. There will be a well-watered land. There will be springs. The young child will play by the cobra's hole, and the lion will dwell with the lamb, and eat straw like the ox, and that sort of thing.

We know some generalities, but in a way we know so very little about the world to come. God has purposed that it would be this way. But, this is the overall principle that I want you to understand, that what God has revealed to us tells us something, but the time to come will be so different from what has entered our minds, from what we've experienced especially, that in a way, we know nothing. It will just be so much better, so much grander, so much more efficient, so much more beautiful, so much more of everything that it will transcend anything that we have ever thought it would be like!

We just can't imagine!

Let's go now to Isaiah 11. I just mentioned the ox and the lion. This is at the end of that portion.

Isaiah 11:9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Now this will be a major factor in the make-up of the kingdom of God. The knowledge of God—the right way to do anything and everything—will just literally saturate this world. It will be like Noah's Flood. You know how high Noah's Flood had to be to cover the mountains—instead of there being water, it will be the knowledge of God that totally infuses everything! It will cover it all. It will be the guiding way, guiding thought, guiding purpose, and guiding standard for everything that is done, no matter what it is that man will set his hand to do. It won't be just the government.

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It will be like it says there in Deuteronomy how we are supposed to teach our children. It will be there when we get up, when we lie down, when we walk by the way, when we eat, when we go outside our gate, when we work, when we do that, and so on.

God was giving us an idea in that simple illustration about rearing our children and teaching our children God's Way about how it is going to be when He does indeed set up His kingdom. That will be the way it will be done then. Everything that is done will be done according to the knowledge of God.

Do you realize how this will change things? I mean this in all the stark wording that I can do; nothing will be like it is now. Everything will be different!

This doesn't mean that everyone will do what is right all the time. There will still be times when people sin. But, they will know the right way. I don't think that there will be very many sins done in ignorance at that time, if the knowledge of God is going to cover the earth like the sea!

People will not have the excuse of being cut off from God, because everyone will have access to God. God's way of life will be lived by the majority of the people, the majority of the time.

We just have no idea how that will work, because we've never experienced anything like that. We may have a little inkling of trying to do that in our own families, but once we step outside our door, we're in the world. We don't expect our neighbor to do right by us. Not the local cop, or the local schoolteacher, or the busman, or the guy giving us change at the grocery store, or anyone we meet on the street. We have no idea what it would be like to live among (let's use America's population) 280 million converted people!

You would have to have a church building in every sub-division in town! It would possibly be the center of one's life! It's unfathomable!

I told certain people that I've already got my job in the kingdom. I beat out quite a few of you I want you to know! I'm going to be in charge of driver's training! You know, I was thinking about this—what if everybody on the road actually practiced the laws of God? I hope I'm out of a job real quick! But just think about it! What would it be like to be able to pull out onto the freeway and not have to worry about being broadsided, or given a very crude expression from the guy in the next lane? Wouldn't it be nice not to worry about being tailgated, or being run over by that semi trailer truck rig, or cut off? Everybody would use his blinker, and everybody would turn it off when they are finished with their

turn.

Can you imagine how life would be? It is hard! It is really hard to understand.

What I'm getting at is that we have no idea what life is going to be like then, because we have never experienced even an inkling of it. I hope that by thinking about it we are looking forward to it! I sure am, because I feel the weight of sin and all the destruction and all the oppression starting to gather and surround us. You can feel the doom approaching like a drumbeat that you hear just at the edge of the range of your hearing. You know what is coming. And there's nothing you can do to really avoid it from the standpoint that it is inevitable because the people aren't going to change, and we're just waiting for it to happen. But, we feel the pressure building.

Thinking of this from the time when life will be so much better, it helps to lift that pressure just a little bit. It helps to know that we will have a chance to be architects of that society, and to be able to patrol it, police it, guide it, direct it, and help it along, making it work; being that tap on the shoulder that says, "This is the way, walk in it."

Let's go back to Isaiah 2. We were here this morning. I will read it one more time because at the end of it, God gives us an example of what it will be like.

Isaiah 2:1-2 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it.

This shows God's government being put into place over all the other governments of this world, and that the people of the nations of this world will turn toward it, and take it's instruction from it, and be attracted to it.

Isaiah 2:3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths."

What we see here are people allowed to approach God, and their being of the mind and attitude to listen, and then more importantly to put it into practice. We will walk in His paths.

Isaiah 2:3b-4 For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Never again! God's ways and laws, teachings and principles, will flow out of His government, and people will desire it, and they will see in Israel how that this way works. They will be able to see the pleasant towns and villages. They will be able to see the traffic going without a problem on the highways. They will see that the economic system is producing, and producing, and producing! Everybody in Israel has more than he needs.

They are happy people. They don't have all the stress levels of other people. This Kingdom that came out of the sky and set itself up as the chief kingdom of all the earth works! It produces. It is gobbling up nations like you wouldn't believe! Because the people are beginning to turn to it, and see that it works. Then Isaiah gives us an example of this.

Under the Kingdom of God, the nations will not have to teach war or to produce any war-making material. Think about that! It is hard to imagine a nation, much less an empire like the Kingdom of God, functioning without a defense industry and all that goes with it. But, it will!

Think about this. Let's crunch some numbers here. I looked this up about a week or so ago. The US defense budget for 2002 is \$329 billion. That is one-third of a trillion! That is a lot of money.

Remember we said that there are 280 million people in this country? Each man, woman, and child in this country could have \$1,200 right on the spot if we didn't use it for defense.

For me, that would be \$7200. I could use that! I could pay off my van. But it really goes a whole lot further than that.

What would change in the country without the need for a military? Think about it! Think of all the things that we would no longer need to support! Thousands of people would be suddenly out of work. Many thousands of people would be able to lead productive lives in something other than making war—killing people and destroying things.

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A great many useless deaths would be avoided because when you devise ways to kill people and break things, you end up having to kill people and break things! And then the other people are trying to kill your people and break your things. Not only that, how often do we turn on the radio in the morning and hear that some jet or helicopter has gone down. We lost some airmen. A lot of people would stop dying useless deaths.

It says that an army moves on its belly. You would free up a great deal of food for a lot of other things, if we didn't have to store so much up for our army.

What about things like steel, fuels and other materials that could be used for other projects of a kinder and gentler nature? Like buildings, automobiles, or toys, or whatever else we would be making with this steel and other materials. They could all be used elsewhere.

Our military and defense budget funds a great deal of our nation's science and industry, because they're always looking for more efficient ways to kill people and break things. Those people with advanced degrees—with a great deal of smarts in engineering, and other sciences—could put their talents toward peaceful things, instead of destructive things.

Vast tracts of land would become available for whatever we wanted to do with it: Homes, recreation, agriculture, industry, you name it; there is just acres and acres of land that these bases take up, because they have to have room to maneuver, and for maneuvers. Room to house all those people that are in the armed forces.

I'm sure that there are many, many more things that I have not even considered. And this is just one sector that comes under a nation's purview. What would we do with another third of a trillion dollars every year? It is just amazing.

Let's go to Zechariah 8 and look at one more example.

Zechariah 8: 3-5 Thus says the Lord: 'I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth, the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain.' Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each one with his staff in his hand because of great age. The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.'

Here's another sector that we don't need, or which will be greatly pared down: The

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criminal justice system. Won't it be great for people to actually be able to go out into the streets without fear? The old men and old ladies could go out there and they could watch their grandchildren playing soccer, stickball, or whatever. They won't have to worry about some thug coming up there and grabbing one of them and taking them away and holding them for ransom. They won't have to worry about so many things.

I looked up the numbers for the Department of Justice. That wasn't quite as big as the Department of Defense. It was only \$23 billion that we spend on just the Department of Justice. And that is just the Federal Department of Justice.

Then add the gains we would get from such things as not needing insurance against criminal acts like fraud and theft. When I worked in the insurance industry, that was part of the beginning education given me as a new employee about why there is such a need for insurance. They had just piles of statistics about fraud. That's the one I remember the most. I don't remember the exact figures. But, the need to insure against fraud was just incredible because there are so many nice looking people like you and me who skim off the top of their company; accountants who write themselves checks, if you understand my meaning. These companies insure themselves against that so that they won't have to feel the loss.

Guess where that comes from? That money comes from you and me in the form of higher premiums of this or that. So that would be billions more dollars that we wouldn't have to worry about. Billions more dollars the nation would have for more fruitful pursuits.

The actual losses from such acts would be gone. People who burglarize an office and go away with \$1,000 dollars here, \$1,500 dollars there—that money would be kept. And it could be used for what is necessary for the company to use.

Think about the fact that we would no longer need a complex court system like we have with so many appellate courts, and so many supreme courts—there is one in every state—and then they turn some of their cases over to the Supreme Court of the Federal government. We won't have that multi-tiered behemoth of an organization where people get lost in it for decades while they sit on death row.

The system that Jethro told Moses would work, does work. Something like that could be very easily managed within a community. You won't need the system that we have now because this system is built on the fact that people lie and people cheat, and people will do whatever they can to not have to pay the price. Nobody trusts anybody else.

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In the World Tomorrow, there will be thousands of expert spirit witnesses to say, "Yes you did."

Just think about the profession of law. We don't have very many lawyers here in the audience, but the profession of law will be quite different then as opposed to now.

Prisons! Think about it. Are we going to have them? Maybe a holding cell in every big city or something? I don't know. But we won't have these huge fortresses where we hold thousands of prisoners. Leavenworth might not even need to be anymore.

Just think of all those people who could lead productive lives in other sectors of the Kingdom of God. They won't have to be "nannies" over prisoners.

You can do this in just about every sector of society. Just think, what if this particular thing was run godly? How much money would that free up for other things? I haven't even gotten to anything spiritual! I'm just talking about physical plant type stuff.

The World Tomorrow is going to be quite different. I've heard people in the past say things like, "I'm just a housewife. I don't know anything about running a city! I don't know the first thing about waterworks, or this, that or the other thing. I wouldn't know how to run a mayor's office."

You do not need to. Jesus Christ Himself will give us a pattern. We will know how to run it because of the character that has been built in us. There will be people to be able to do all the little things that need to get done, but we will be managing.

And, of course, we will have a mind just like God's. So, water systems are not going to be all that difficult. The other 90% of our brain might get turned on! We will be able to use that mind for all these technical things. God wants us to develop the character so that when the physical things need to get done, we will have the right mind to make the proper decisions.

We don't need all the technical stuff to run the cities that we will have. We will just need to have God's mind knowing what is right. The rest will come!

Habakkuk 1. I'm taking this a bit out of context. But I just want to, in a way, reiterate this point. The sentiment that God Himself through Habakkuk says here is certainly true.

Habakkuk 1:5 Look among the nations and watch. Be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days, which you would not believe, though it were

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told you.

Now this is talking about the Babylonian invasion primarily. But, I want to think of it on a little bit of a higher level in terms of the Millennium.

Even though I've told you just a little bit this afternoon, if we were placed in the World Tomorrow right now, let's say in the next blink of an eye, and could look around and see it work, it would be something so utterly astounding to us that even had we been told that it would be something like this, we wouldn't have believed it.

That's how God works. God's way is just so much higher than anything we could really even imagine. Even we, knowing what we know, are going to be astounded by the way that it all turns out because, from our own experiences, we have nothing to compare it to. It will be so new and so wonderful, and so blessed, so prosperous that we're just going to give glory to God that He would bring something this wonderful about.

We'll look and think back on the way it was here in America when we thought we had it so well, and we'll say, "What were we thinking?" This new world—I mean, we say that this is the new world, this western hemisphere—but the *new world* beyond all this, the *new world* that Jesus Christ will found and build will be just miles beyond what the people who came into this nation 400 years ago thought of it.

It will be just so much better—transcendently better. Beyond what we could even imagine.

Let's finish now in Revelation 21. This, of course, applies to the time after the Great White Throne Judgment when the new Jerusalem comes down out of heaven. But the principle applies to the time of the Millennium and the Last Great Day.

The government, the economics, the culture, and the society will be entirely different from anything in this present evil world.

Revelation 21:3-5a And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men [Think of that! The access to God will be reopened!], and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." Then He who sat on the throne said [And this is what I was getting toward],

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"Behold, I make all things new."

The World Tomorrow will be totally new! It is a way, a society, and a kingdom that this earth has never seen. It is beyond everything that we'd ever imagined, or even hoped for. But it is something that we, given this revelation from God, can hope for, and look forward to with great anticipation.