

Look to God

(Sermon Notes) By Warren Zehrung – 11/2/2013

Brethren, there has never been a time when I felt that our country was in such mortal danger of devastation as it is now. There was a time in the past when the great majority of Americans prayed to God and **looked to God** for His blessings.

As a result of looking to God for His blessings and direct intervention in the affairs of this nation, we grew strong. We became the richest and mightiest nation that has ever existed on the face of this earth as a result of those blessings.

Today, we have moved on. We have moved away from looking to God. In fact, there is a concerted effort to remove God's name from everything. As a nation, we now think that our prowess, policies and institutions determine the course of our country – not God. We think that **we did it all ourselves** without God's help and bountiful blessings. That attitude is national arrogance against God.

Deuteronomy 8:

17 You say in your heart, my power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.

In America, we have come to really believe that we don't need God anymore. In fact, we have taken a fresh new look at our Constitution and concluded that it asserts that God must be removed from everything. It has become clear to us that a secular society, without Commandments, morality, laws and ethics, would be a much more wonderful paradise of liberty and freedom to do as we please.

God, in His infinite wisdom knew that modern Israel would walk the same rebellious path as their forefathers. And, as they went into captivity – God will soon send destruction and captivity to us.

Deuteronomy 6:

12 Beware lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

Israel was given tremendous blessings – just like us – and they turned their backs on God – just as we English speaking nations – modern Israel are doing. It is clear that God is dealing with us as a nation – just as He removed His blessing from ancient Israel.

So, how will our demise come about?

Right now, our nation is going through a most critical episode in our history as a result of "God" being removed from our nation and our thoughts. When we take "God" out of everything – as we are doing – that marks a **turning point in our destiny**.

We are about to learn a most harsh lesson for going against God. Seventy places in the Book of Ezekiel God says, "**Then** they shall know that I am the Lord."

Our impending healthcare debacle is only one of the ways that God will soon bring America to its knees. God is systematically removing our preeminence in the world.

Many of the promises made to the great majority of the American people with regard to the affordable healthcare plan have proven to be untrue. Recent political moves are threatening to destroy the most advanced hospital and care systems in the world.

If all goes as the plan is designed, our sophisticated medical field will be reduced to the level of the socialist European styled healthcare systems with long lines and sub-standard doctors.

It is God who is allowing this to take place.

We are losing our healthcare, and **much more**, because of our rejection of God. It is not only our healthcare, but our entire economy is also going to collapse soon. It is going to be devastating – and they are both, healthcare and our economy, tied together.

The Bible predicted that **ravaging curses** would come upon us when we failed to **look to God** and keep His Commandments. God said:

Leviticus 26:

14 If ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments...

Deuteronomy 28:

15 ...that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

Who believes today that we are about to totally lose control of our health system? It will soon fail drastically, leading to run-away infectious diseases, heart conditions, consuming cancers and a host of new untreatable, unheard-of diseases?

Deuteronomy 28:

22 The Lord shall smite thee with consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with fungus infections.

Leviticus 26:

16 I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart:

Our overextended economy is more fragile than most realize. The economy could snap at any moment. Only God is holding up time.

Recently, when gasoline went north of \$4.00/gallon our economy took a **nose dive** because millions of citizens did not have the extra money to spend on the thousands of incidentals that were helping to drive our floundering economy.

When people stop buying ice cream, and toys, and news papers, and pop corn and candy, and electronic devices and going to the movies – the **economy grinds to a halt**.

Herbert W. Armstrong gave us some good advice, “Simplify your lives.” Brethren, we do not need those nick-knacks – but the American economy depends on thousands of those things.

When most Americans are reduced to purchasing only the **bare essentials** – that puts the economy in a bad bind.

In the same way, the exponentially increasing bureaucratic costs and the resulting job losses associated with the new healthcare plan will rob the economy of its life’s blood.

There will not be enough money left in the pockets of consumers for the bare essentials of **food and housing**.

These enormous cost increases for insurance, taxes and fines that have been thrust on one-hundred million Americans will crash our economic system and bring America's economy to a grinding halt.

The greatly reduced number of wage earners will not only pay for their own insurance - they will be charged and taxed to pay for abortions, social diseases, cancer treatments for smokers, drug programs, and mental care, etc... of those who **live lawless lives**. Just the huge increase in Medicaid enrollees – many of them able-bodied people – will greatly dilute available resources.

Who still believes that highly trained medical doctors will double and quadruple their patient workload while working for Walmart wages?

Leviticus 26:

20 Your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase.

This major disruption in one-fifth of the American economy will rapidly lead to – not a recession – but another depression. This time it will be a **great – great depression**. God says:

Deuteronomy 28:

17 Cursed shall be thy food-basket and thy storehouse.

This medical disaster that our nation is facing is only the beginning of much greater catastrophes if we do not repent and **look to God**.

There is still time for America to **repent**. Read the Book of Jonah. Nineveh repented and was spared!

This move toward a government run single-payer financing system is not **compassion** for the poor, as they claim. It is just the opposite; this government policy is driving great segments of our society into the untenable position of becoming unemployed, underemployed and perpetually impoverished.

From all around the earth foreigners come to these shores to imbibe of our rich heritage. There is a reason they do not clamor to get into Haiti, Mexico or Bangladesh. They come to share in America's well-being and quality of life. They come to share in the blessings that God has bestowed on our country. From the President of our country down to the single proprietor of a taco stand, they will not be able to believe their eyes at America's sudden collapse.

Leviticus 26:

32 I will bring the land [America and the other Israelitish nations] into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be **astonished** at it [when it happens].

The many lies involved, and promises that were never intended to be kept, show the satanic involvement in this scheme to bring down America.

But, what would happen if America would repent of turning its back on God, and begin again to **look to God**? The answer is that it would be the **salvation** of America.

Micah 7:

7 Therefore I will **look unto the LORD** [today's sermon title]; I will wait for the God of my **salvation**: my God will hear me.

Leviticus 26:

40 If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;

Leviticus 26:

42 Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.

Leviticus 26:

45 But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.

Brethren, the world is blind because they do not **Look to God**.

Our leaders in Washington DC have totally lost the ability to discern **Right from Wrong** – because they have allowed “God” to be removed from everything.

The concepts of God’s goodness have literally been pushed entirely out of their thinking.

They can lie and, lie after bald faced lie to us. They can **fraud** the American people – all the time believing in their **evil** hearts that they alone know better than God.

2 Corinthians 4:

4 In whom the god of this world **has blinded** the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

John 12:

40 The Lord] has **blinded their eyes** [spiritually speaking], and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

OK, we realize that the world does not look to God. But we in God’s Church are not spiritually blind.

That in no way means that we are not in danger. All these Scriptures are preserved – not for the world – but for us – for the precise reason that **we are in jeopardy**.

How do we keep our eyes on God? How do we come out of this **blinded world** we live in – into the glorious light of Truth wherein we are able to see and experience the Deep things of God?

How do we **make sure** that we are **looking to God** so that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto us?

What about us, brethren, in the Church of God? Do we look to God as we should? Why do we need to look to God? It is because we are easily led astray.

Where are God's people who look directly to Him?

Brethren, we need to understand something. The apostles and the disciples, who were being taught by Jesus Christ, were never fearful that Jesus would kick them out if they did not understand what He was teaching. Somehow, Jesus exuded and conveyed to them an acceptance of their presence. From Jesus there emanated a favorable reception towards those who desired to hear His words.

However, today I find in some of the church corporations that God's people are being held in bondage to organizations through fear. Fear of retribution, Fear of ridicule, Fear of being kicked out, Fear of being exposed and mocked. Fear of being disfellowshipped. Fear!

Unfortunately, for years – even for decades – even way back in Worldwide the brethren were **not** taught how to **look directly to God**.

They were somehow inexorably taught to look to some specific corporation of men – instead of directly to God.

We came to the point where somehow there is more **security** derived by looking to a man-made corporation, than the security of **faith in God**.

Isaiah 5:

20 Woe unto them that **call evil good**, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

Isaiah 29:

16 Surely your turning of things **upside down** shall be esteemed as the potter's clay:

Somehow there is more **fear** of being found on the wrong side of a corporation or its representative than there is fear of being on the **wrong side of God**.

Hebrews 10:

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The end times are upon us and our trials are increasing, both physically and spiritually.

Don't be fearful of the ministry:

Matthew 16:

18 [Jesus said] ...I will build **my** church.

We need to write down the things that are the correct things that should be being preached – like repentance, doctrine, etc... And if your organization is moving away from the basics – you need to seriously evaluate where they are headed.

Remember you are **empowering** all those you attend with. If you show your approval, by your presence, of wrong teachings – then, you have become a part of the problem. At some point we need to realize that the other brethren might be staying there in a dangerous place – just because they see you there.

There are some wrong reasonings and teachings in the various political corporate organizations that need to be reevaluated.

Many of the brethren who joined a particular corporate organization – did so believing that the physical organization was the legitimate continuation of the Worldwide Church of God.

They had been incorrectly taught that the Worldwide Church of God was the one true Church; they now viewed their new corporate organization in that same incorrect way.

Many brethren never examined closely what Jesus meant by “Church” when He said, “I will build **my** Church.”

There were many true members of the Church that Jesus built **in** Worldwide, but the Worldwide Church of God was **not** that Church that Jesus built.

We need to understand the difference. Are we making every effort to become even more sensitive to anything that doesn't put God first? Do we really **Look to God**? Do we get on our knees and ask God for more understanding and strength?

Let's continue on this subject of **Fear** again:

1 John 4:

18 There is no fear [phobos - like phobia] in [Godly] love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear hath torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love.

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

When we assume that some corporate organization is a great threat to us,... we give it unwarranted power in our lives, for in truth, their threats are foolishness.

Matthew 10:

28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

The Bible mentions over and over the "Fear of God." God does not expect us to be cowering in fear – unless we are living outside of His law.

A right Christian "fear of God" means having reverence and respect for God and His law. God's law is always for our own ultimate good.

Everything around us competes with God for our attention. It is **not** only the ways of this **evil world** all around us.. It is even our work career, family, relationships, activities, emotions, security, even **church attendance** sometimes can be the cause of our not looking to God as we must.

You might ask, "How could **church attendance** possibly be the cause of our not looking to God as we should?"

Brethren, let's keep in mind that those who attend Sabbath services are not immune from the wiles of Satan. Everything that goes on before and after Sabbath services does not necessarily represent proper conduct.

If your church leaders are **not pointing you** directly to God – there's a problem there. We'll get to that subject in a little while.

When do we look to God? Not just every Sabbath – but every day and every moment of our lives. How do we **look to God** as we should? **Where** do we look to God?

Brethren, we must **Look unto the Lord**. We must return to God's foundation – our roots – the basics – the principles of Jesus Christ – and weed out all wrong practice and teaching that has crept into our Church culture.

You might say, "Well, I've never taken my eye off God – not from the beginning."

Let's be careful because Satan is the master of bait and switch. It is not only the USA that could have a good strong foundation at the beginning – only to let down – and plunge into **oblivion**.

God warns us that it can happen to us in the Church, also.

If the organization you attend with is getting off track – and they **will not** even listen to your concerns – there is something seriously wrong.

In the old cowboy movies you would sometimes hear an old cowpoke say "I'll **study** on it." - meaning that he would diligently consider the matter.

2 Timothy 2:

- 14** Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.
- 15 Study** [strive, and be diligent] to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. [correctly handling the word of truth.]
- 16** But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

Do we follow a God directed life? Can we then discern our spiritual state to determine if we are truly following God **FIRST** as shown in Scriptures or are we yielding to wiles and tenants of man.

Sadly, even in God's Church there is all too often a proclivity in our brethren to respect a celebrated and distinguished name – rather than to **Look to God**.

Herbert W. Armstrong's message to this evil world was "Repent." "Repent and be obedient to God."

But, where are the efforts **inside of** God's Church today to get out the warning to the world, and to the Church of the coming tribulation and **imploring** everyone to deeply **repent**?

Where, in the Churches of God, do we find this message of "Repentance" being preached today?

Living a God Centered Life is to place God first in absolutely Everything we do. To make sure that God does direct and manage our life.

Do we glorify God in all that we do? Do we know how to glorify God? We give glory to God when we seek to do His Will. Putting the Old Testament and the New Testament together, we find that glorifying God means, not only acknowledging His brilliance and greatness, but **doing** those things that are pleasing in His sight.

When we are doing those things that are pleasing in His sight our prayers are answered.

1 John 3:

22 Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we **keep** His commandments, and **do** those things that are pleasing in his sight.

Do we recognize the difference between a **God – centered** life and a self centered life? Do we “Love” God above everything?

2 Timothy 3:

- 1** This know also, that in the last days [now] **perilous times shall come.**
- 2** For men shall be lovers of their own selves, [not God first]

Let’s look at what God is giving to us – His Children – and to all of our Church brethren.

Deuteronomy 8:

7 For the LORD thy God brings you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills;

Yes, cool, clear running water for the ancient Israelites, but for us brethren water and fountains are symbols of God’s Spirit:

...His Holy Spirit that is leading us into all righteousness – if we continue to **Look to God.**

Deuteronomy 8:

8 A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey;

God fed them physical food – but we are given so much more than the world – if we **Look to God.**

America has more iron and steel, more coal and oil, more natural gas and available resources than any nation on earth.

Deuteronomy 8:

9 A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you may dig brass.

Those elements are the wealth of a nation – but for us His Children – He withholds no good thing – as we **Look to God**.

Psalm 84:

11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: **no good thing will He withhold** from them that walk uprightly.

Deuteronomy 8:

10 When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.

11 Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:

This is why we fast once in a while – so that we remember to **Look to God** for our spiritual sustenance.

Deuteronomy 8:

12 Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein;

13 And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;

14 Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God,

We are at the time in Church history when we, in the Church, think we are rich and increased with all spiritual wisdom.

There is a good instruction for us here:

Revelation 3:

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and do not know that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou may be rich; and white raiment, that thou may be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou may **see**.

See what? See God! See his way, truth, life and light. We've gotten so used to having **others** do our thinking for us.

Look at where that has gotten us. We are a scattered people – not allowed by church leaders – to even assemble together any more – not even for the Feasts of the Lord. There aren't going to be any political corporate organizational separations in the Kingdom of God.

It is time we each begin to **Look to God** for ourselves. Look to God and depend on God. Remember, we need to realize that the other brethren might be staying in a dangerous place – just because they see you there. Is it more important to attend with all your comfortable friends – or seek truth and pursue it earnestly?

It used to be that if you said, “the Church” people would automatically think, “Pasadena.” Let me tell you something brethren, I have worked at Pasadena – and it was certainly not the “Church.” Today, when you mention “Church” – a transformation and relocation has taken place – now, people think, “Cincinnati.” That is almost funny – if it weren’t so painfully true.

Some of you would substitute, “Charlotte” or some other city, or some political corporate organization – or **worse yet** you might insert **some man’s name** – as the one you **look to**. The Scriptures are so definitely clear when they say don’t do that.

The First Commandment teaches us to **Look to God**.

Exodus 20:

- 2** I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
- 3** Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Do we put God first – really?

Deuteronomy 5:

- 6** I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.
- 7** Thou shalt have **none other gods before me**.

End: Look to God