

National Moral Degeneracy (2)

by Albert N. Martin

God's Word to our nation is a call to repentance and reformation in the face of national moral degeneracy and horrible religious apostasy.

Duration: 1:10:00

Scripture: Psalm 9:8, Proverbs 14:34, Jeremiah 1:5, Ezekiel 18:20, Matthew 6:33, Romans 13:1, 1 Timothy 2:1-2

Topics: "Moral Degeneracy"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by clarifying that he is not claiming direct revelation or special inspiration, but rather deriving his message from the Word of God in Holy Scripture. He also emphasizes the importance of not equating Israel with any other nation, while acknowledging that there may be abiding principles. The sermon then focuses on the theme of God's Word to our nation, discussing four fundamental facts asserted in the Bible: God's sovereign rule over nations, His righteous judgment of nations, His unrivaled right to address nations, and the principle of individuals standing in solidarity with their nations. The speaker uses Proverbs 14:34 as the basis and framework for understanding God's Word to the United States of America, emphasizing the significance of righteousness for a nation's exaltation and the reproach of sin.

Transcript

Now, due to the unusual circumstances of our meeting last evening, I deemed it wise only to begin our consideration of the announced theme for last evening, namely, God's Word to our nation. And in what really was just an introduction to that very weighty subject and that very needful theme, I did basically two things. I first of all set a disclaimer before you, clearly indicating that in speaking on this subject I am making no fanatical claims to direct revelation or to special inspiration, but that all of the raw materials which constitute the Word of God to our nation at this critical hour are derived from the once-for-all embodiment of the Word of God in Holy Scripture.

And then I made a disclaimer of any irresponsible equating of Israel with the nation in which we live. Well-meant sermons and earnest preachers are often led into the error of making a direct equation between words spoken to the nation of Israel because of their peculiar covenantal relationship to God, which it is not proper to apply to any other nation in a direct one-to-one equation, though there may be some very abiding and permanent principles. And then I proceeded to lay before you a justification from the Scriptures for addressing such a subject.

Is it proper for a minister of the gospel to speak on such a theme as God's Word to our nation? Is it not the task of a minister of the gospel either to proclaim the gospel to the unconverted or to feed the sheep and the lambs of Christ? Is it proper for a minister of the gospel to address a word to the nation? And I sought to demonstrate from the Scriptures that it is indeed proper because of these four fundamental facts clearly asserted in the Word of God. First of all, God's sovereign rule over the nations. Secondly, God's righteous judgment of the nations.

Thirdly, God's unrivaled right to address the nations. And fourthly, God's establishment of the principle that individuals stand in solidarity with the nations of which they are a part. Now tonight, we come more directly to the subject in hand, God's Word to our nation.

And the text that I want to use as constituting both the basis and the framework for the more specific elements of that Word to our nation is found in Proverbs chapter fourteen and verse thirty-four. Proverbs chapter fourteen and verse thirty-four. Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. And surely if there is a text that speaks with unusual application and pointedness to our own nation and constitutes in a very real sense God's Word to our nation, the United States of America, at this point in its history, it is this text. Now as no doubt many of you know in Hebrew poetry, you have a structure in which often there are two parts to a statement.

The first is either amplified or repeated in different language in the second part. If we call the first A, the second part is B. But sometimes there is a structure in which B is the contrast or the opposite, the antithesis of A. And we have that structure in the verse before us. We have first of all this positive statement, righteousness exalts a nation.

And here the word righteousness is used in the second sense in which Pastor Christman said it before us this morning. It speaks of conformity to the norms and to the revealed will of God. Righteousness, which exalts a nation, is a reproach to any is that pattern of life which reflects a sensitivity to and a conformity to the norms of Almighty God.

And our text says that righteousness exalts not just the nation, in which case we would be tempted and rightly so to believe that the text spoke primarily if not exclusively to Israel, but the language down to the very singular or plural usage is very significant. Righteousness exalts a nation, any nation of the earth, including the nation of Israel, but righteousness exalts a nation. Righteousness is the basis of it being raised up to a place of exaltation, a place that is honorable, a place that is useful in the purpose of God in the unfolding of history.

But then by way of contrast we are told that sin, that is departure from the norms of God, sin when it becomes a way of life, sin when it is framed by statute and supported by the very so-called laws and jurisprudence of the land, sin when it comes out of its closet and becomes popular and becomes part and parcel of a national way of life, sin is a reproach or a disgrace to any people. Perhaps the best summary of the meaning of this verse is found in the few choice comments upon it in the commentary of Kyle and Dalish on the book of Proverbs. The proverb means that all nations without distinction, even Israel, not excluded, history everywhere confirms the principle that not the numerical, nor the warlike, nor the political, nor yet the intellectual, or the so-called civilized greatness is the true greatness of any nation and determines the condition of its future as one of progress.

But this is its true greatness, that in its private, public, and international life, conduct directed by the will of God according to the norm of moral rectitude, that is the law of God, rules and prevails. Righteousness, good manners, and piety are the things which secure to a nation a place of honor. Righteousness exalts a nation, while on the contrary, sin, that is sin prevailing, and more favored and fostered than contended against in the consciousness of the moral problems of the state, this is a disgrace to the people.

It lowers them before God, and also before men who do not judge superficially or perversely, and also actually brings the nation down to ruin. Righteousness exalts a nation, not righteousness once as its hallmark in the past, and though we can with great gratitude to God thank God for those periods in our national life, not when we were a Christian nation, we never were, but when righteousness, that is sensitivity to and submission to the great overarching demands of morality as expressed in the law of God, there have been seasons when righteousness has marked our national life, but it is not enough that righteousness once marked our national life, for it is only when righteousness is the present mark of the life of a nation that it will maintain a position of exaltation. Righteousness exalts a nation, not the past memory of past righteousness, but the present reality of present righteousness exalts a nation.

And sin, present sin, national sin, sin as a way of life, regardless of what the past has been, sin is a reproach and a disgrace to any people. And surely if that text embodies the word of God to our nation, then God's primary word to this nation at this hour is a word, first of all, of rebuke and denunciation for our aggravated national sins, and it is secondly, a word of summons to repentance and reformation in our national life if we would avoid the crushing judgment of Almighty God. Tonight, God willing, I want at least to begin to open up the fact that God's word to our nation based upon this text is a word of rebuke and of denunciation for our most aggravated national sins.

You see, the sins of any nation are like a mountain range. Those of you who are familiar with mountain ranges know that you, first of all, have the foothills of the mountain range. You may have been driving across a vast section of our country where everything was flat, and then you begin to see off in the distance little hills, the foothills of a mighty mountain range.

And when you press beyond the foothills, then you enter into the spine or the heart of the mountain range itself, comprised of many mountains, many of which are of the relatively same height and majesty. But in most mountain ranges, you move from foothills to the spine of the mountain range, and then jutting up among the ordinary mountains, there is the Mount Hood of the Cascades on our west coast. There is Mount Washington among the less majestic white mountains on the east coast.

And it's true with almost every mountain range that we move from the rolling foothills to the spine of the mountain range, and then we move to the Mount Hoods and the Mount Washingtons. We move to the Mount McKinleys and the other great mountains that jut up, mighty in their splendor, above even the great spine of the range of those mountains. So it is, I say, with national sins.

There are foothill sins. There are sins that comprise the spine of the mountains of iniquity in any nation. And then there are those high peaks that stand up above all others.

And it is certainly proper and biblical, both from the perspective of the New Testament and the Old Testament, to describe in some circumstances everything from the foothills all the way to the mightiest peaks. We see our Lord Jesus Christ doing this to the nation of Israel. We see the Apostle Paul doing it to the existing Roman world in Romans 1.18 through 3.19. We find the prophets doing it again and again and again.

And yet there are times when we need to concentrate upon those great peaks of national sin which above all others cry to God for judgment. Those sins which, if they are not averted and turned away by national repentance, will inevitably bring the nation to destruction. And I submit to you that God's word of rebuke and of denunciation to our nation for its aggravated national sins is a rebuke that concentrates upon two mighty shameful mountain peaks of national iniquity.

On the one hand, that that I am calling our sins of putrid moral degeneracy. And the second, our sins of horrible religious apostasy. And among them the multitude of our national sins, the many foothill sins, the many sins that comprise the spine of the mountain of our national iniquity, standing up above all of them are these two mountainous sins, our putrid sins of moral degeneracy and our horrible sins of religious apostasy.

First of all, then, our sins of putrid moral degeneracy. And that mountain has two great peaks that constitute it, such a mountain of iniquity. The first is the unrequited blood of the murdered multitudes and the second is the unrestrained abandonment to sensuality and sexual perversion.

First of all, then, among our sins of putrid moral degeneracy, perhaps none is greater. And if viewed from the perspective of the Bible, none brings us closer to national judgment of the worst kind than the unrequited blood of the murdered multitudes. Now, what do I mean by the term unrequited blood? Well, to requite someone is to pay him back, generally to pay him back in kind.

And unrequited blood is the blood of murdered people that has not been paid back in kind, that has not been paid back according to the clearly revealed will of God. But you say, Pastor Martin, surely among all of the great sins of our nation, you are not suggesting that this, perhaps above all others, is the sin which, as it were, tempts God to bring us to oblivion. I am asserting that if we think biblically, more than many of the other sins that receive so much attention in our churches, in Christian literature and in popular preaching, it may well be that this sin, above all others, is that which cries to heaven for the vengeance of Almighty God.

And in order to try to convince you from the Scriptures that this is so, I want you to make a quick trip with me through the pivotal passages in the Word of God dealing with this problem of unrequited blood, how God feels when blood is spilt in wanton, willful, heartless murder, and that blood is not requited by taking the life of the murderer. Turn to Genesis chapter four, if you will, please. Here in the fourth chapter of Genesis, we have the record of the first murder ever perpetrated upon the face of the earth.

Most of you children are familiar with the story. Cain, the firstborn of Adam and Eve, has a brother named Abel, and in the process of time, Cain becomes both jealous of Abel, and according to 1 John, he also became irritated in his conscience with the righteous life of Abel. And so he took the opportunity described in verse eight.

Cain told Abel his brother, and it came to pass when they were in the field that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him. And as we shall see from the language of verse ten, he apparently slew him in a manner in which his blood was actually spilt, perhaps taking a sharp instrument and stabbing him or cutting his throat, but it was a violent, wanton, deliberate, high-handed act. No sooner is Abel murdered by Cain, but that God comes to Cain in a manner in which Cain speaks to him, verse nine.

And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel your brother? And he said, I don't know. Am I my brother's keeper? Am I the perpetual babysitter of my kid brother? How should I know? He's a big boy. Go ask him.

Where is your brother? I don't know. I am not my brother's keeper. And he said, That is God said.

What have you done? Now notice the language. The voice, the voice of your brother's blood cries unto me from the ground. And here God uses a vivid image of speech.

The place where Cain rose up, and if he used a sharp instrument and stuck it into the back of the heart of Abel by whatever means the blood was spilt, that blood dropped to the ground, and no doubt a pool of it collected where his murdered body lay. Every drop of that blood that has been soaked into the salt has been turned into a mouth and into a tongue and into a larynx. And now every drop of that blood is speaking and it speaks so powerfully, it speaks so eloquently, it speaks so forcefully that its voice has pierced my ear upon my throne in heaven and I've come down to see what the facts are.

It's a figure of speech of course. But oh, what a graphic figure of speech in which God is seeking to impress not only upon Cain, but upon all who would ever open the pages of the Bible. Right in its opening chapters, God is saying something tremendously important to us, and it is this.

Whenever the blood of a human being is shed in murder, innocent blood is spilt, that blood has a voice. And that voice is the voice of God. And that voice always, without exception, reaches through to the very throne of God in heaven and summons God to come and to do something to requite the blood of the innocent slain.

Now in this particular case, God did not kill Cain. He placed him under a severe judgment that caused him to cry, my punishment is more than I can bear. But the point that God underscores with tremendous force is this.

Unrequited blood of the murdered cries to heaven for the intervention of Almighty God in judgment. Now turn to Genesis chapter 9, where here we have the next instance of an explicit development of this whole theme of unrequited blood. God has blotted out the entire human race with the exception of the family of Noah.

God is now reinstating his whole arrangement with this earth in its present reconstituted state after the flood. He is giving directions. He is giving promises.

He is making a covenant with all men as men and with the earth as the earth. And these covenantal engagements will obtain until the Lord himself descends from heaven with the shout, with the voice of the arcane. And during this arrangement from the flood until the return of the Lord Jesus, God articulates this principle to Noah.

Genesis 9 and verse 5. And surely your blood, the blood of your lives will I require. At the hand of every beast will I require it. And at the hand of every man, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man.

Now notice this intimate connection. God says, I will require the blood that is shed of any one of my creatures. I will require it.

But notice he works by the instrumentality of man, the creature, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man. Whoso sheds man's blood by man, and in this situation the man, the nearest of kin in his family, shall his blood be shed. And here God is instituting what we call capital punishment.

But God is saying that it is an expression of his own righteous government. Whoso sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed. Why? Because I require it.

Oh yes, I require it by the hand of his brother. But it is my requirement. For the blood of one innocently slain in murder cries to heaven, and the cry reaches my ear.

I shall require it. And there is this additional perspective nestled in the text. Notice the latter part of verse six.

For, this is the rationale behind it, for in the image of God made he man. In other words, man is such a dignified creature. Man is so totally and qualitatively different from all of the other creatures of God, that there can be no constant maintenance of that perspective, of the essential, the profound, the glorious difference between man and beast in a sinful world, where sinful hearts will break out in hurt hatred, the mother of murder.

There can be no maintenance. He who wantonly takes human life, pays no with the forfeiture of his own life. And contrary to all of the sentimental mouthings of current lawyers, judges, sociologists, and even evangelical theologians, it is a slap at the dignity and uniqueness to let murdered people's blood be unrequited.

It says man is cheap. He can be snuffed out, and all you'll pay for it is a few years of easy existence at the expense of hardworking taxpayers. It is not maintaining the dignity of man to forego capital punishment.

It strikes at the heart of the dignity of man. How dignified is man? So glorious is he in his dignity as an image-bearer of God that whoever takes upon himself wantonly to murder an image-bearer of God must declare, as it were, to the entire world that knows him that that worth is such as to demand the forfeiture of his own life. Now, I remind you that these perspectives predate the giving of the law upon Mount Sinai.

They predate all of the details of the Mosaic legislation. They are woven into the fabric of humanity by the will and purpose of God the Creator. But when we turn to the Mosaic legislation, what do we find? We find these great principles incorporated into the national life of Israel, expanded in great detail to what end? Not only to preserve righteousness in Israel, but remember, Israel was to be the mirror of God's righteousness to the entire world.

God said, I have set thee alight among the nations. And when the Queen of Sheba came and saw Solomon and his kingdom, she said, what nation has such laws? You see, the Mosaic legislation was not merely the legislation for the regulation of the national life of Israel for Israel's sake, but it was to declare the righteousness of God in human relationships to all the ends of the earth. And it's very interesting when one studies in detail the amount of legislation pertaining to murder, the distinction between manslaughter, that is, unpremeditated, accidental taking of human life, and wanton, willful murder.

And then again and again, we have the record of the establishment of the cities of refuge, the legislation for the necessity of two or three witnesses, all of these things. But I want you to look with me at just a couple of passages that have tremendous relevance to our own nation at this time. And remember, I am not equating the United States with Israel, but the principles are so clear in these passages that we cannot miss them.

Turn, please, to Numbers chapter thirty-five. Numbers chapter thirty-five. In Numbers thirty-five, verses nine through fifteen, give a description of the cities of refuge, these six cities to which a manslayer can go.

A man is out in the field, and he's working with his friend, chopping wood. And his axe head flies off and hits his friend in a vital spot, and he dies. He did not murder him.

It was accidental death. But the nearest of kin, who's called the Avenger of Blood, would seek to come upon this man who took his brother's life and kill him. God made provision that he could flee to a city of refuge and stay there until the death of the high priest, and he was protected.

But now, verse sixteen, but if he smote him with an instrument of iron, so that he died, he is a murderer. The murderer shall surely be put to death. If he smote him with a stone in the hand, whereby a man may die, and he died, he is a murderer.

The murderer shall surely be put to death. Or if he smote him with a weapon of wood in the hand, whereby a man may die, and he died, he is a murderer. The murderer shall surely be put to death.

Now notice what the nearest of kin is called. The Avenger of Blood, the Requirer of Blood, shall himself put the murderer to death. When he meets him, he shall put him to death.

And if he thrust him of hatred or hurled at him lying in wait so that he died, or in enmity smote him with his hand that he died, he that smote him shall surely be put to death. He is a murderer. The Avenger of Blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him.

And then in verses 22 and following, we have an expansion of some of the cities of refuge legislation, but now notice in verse 29. Why is God so concerned about this whole issue in Israel? What lies behind all of this legislation? All of this careful delineation of the difference between manslaughter and murder, and the place of refuge and the necessity of offending the blood. Here's the rationale.

Notice verse 29. These things shall be for a statute and an ordinance to you throughout your generations in all your dwellings. Whoso kills any person, the murderer shall be slain at the mouth of witnesses, but one witness shall not testify against the person that he died.

Moreover, you shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer that is guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death. You shall take no ransom for him that is fled to his city of refuge that he may come again to dwell in the land until the death of the priest. So you shall not pollute the land wherein you are.

For blood, it pollutes the land, and no expiation, no sacrifice can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it. Do you see the emphasis? Polluting the land. Blood pollutes the land.

No expiation can be made for blood, but the blood of the murderer. And wherever there was unrequited blood in Israel, the land was defiled. The land was polluted.

That blood cried to God for vengeance, even as did the blood of the slain Abel. Now, if you will turn over, please, from Deuteronomy 35 to the book of Deuteronomy and chapter 19. And please be patient.

You may not see the necessity of this at this precise moment, but I trust in about seven or eight minutes it will all come together. We read in the 19th chapter of Deuteronomy, again, a repetition and an expansion of this cities of refuge legislation. Verses 4 and following, and I want to underscore now why God is concerned with this legislation.

Verse 9, if you will keep all his commandments to do it, which I command you this day to love the Lord, your God, to walk in his ways, then you shall add three cities more for you beside these three, that innocent blood be not shed in the midst of the land, which the Lord gives thee for an inheritance. And so blood be upon you. God says, I must make this provision or else the man who's guilty of mere manslaughter, he'll be slain as a murderer.

He's an innocent man. Therefore, innocent blood will be upon the man who takes his life. And he said there must not be a situation in the land where innocent blood is shed and innocent blood is unrequited.

And now then notice verses 11 through 13, but if any man hate his neighbor and lie and wait for him and rise against him and smite him mortally so that he dieth and he fleed to one of these cities, here's a man who runs to the cities of refuge, even though he's a murderer, then the elders of his city shall send in fetching fence and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of the blood that he may die. Thine eyes shall not pity him, but thou shalt put away innocent blood from Israel that it may go well with thee. What we would call in our day a heartless, cruel, uncompassionate act.

The elders find out this man is not a manslayer. He's a murderer. They deliver him up to be stained.

It was the most gracious thing the elders could do for it meant that the land would not be stained with innocent and unrequited blood. Then if you turn to Deuteronomy chapter 21, you have one of the strangest bits of legislation in Israel, but oh how it speaks so eloquently of this great principle in a different way. If one be found slain in the land which the Lord your God gives you to possess it lying in the field, and it be not known who has killed him.

Someone goes out one day to plow his field. There he sees a dead man, a man obviously with all the marks of a brutal murder. Someone is slain him, but there are no witnesses.

You cannot bring forward the two or three to establish who killed him. What are they to do? Are they simply to say, oh God, you know, we don't know who killed him. Therefore, Lord, blot out that blood from the ground.

Lord, surely that blood does not cry for vengeance. We don't know who killed him. We can't requite the blood.

Lord, you'll not hold us guilty for that, will you? God says in one sense, no, but I want to impress upon you the seriousness of unrequited blood. Even when you don't know the guilty party, and so God gives them a ritual. They are to measure the distance between the slain man's body and the city's.

And then when they find out that his body was nearest to City A, the elders of that city have a solemn responsibility, along with the priest. Verse four and following, the elders of that city shall take a heifer and bring the heifer into a valley with running water, which is neither plowed nor sown, and shall break the heifer's neck there in the valley. And the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come near.

For them the Lord your God has chosen to minister unto him and to bless in the name of the Lord. And according to their word shall every controversy and every stroke be. And all the elders of that city who are nearest unto the slain man shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley, and shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it.

Forgive, O Lord, your people Israel whom you've redeemed, and do not suffer the innocent blood to remain in the midst of your people Israel, and the blood shall be forgiven them. So shall you put away the innocent blood from the midst of you when you shall do that which is right in the eyes of the Lord. Let me ask you children something.

Does God love heifers? Does he? Psalm 104 says that the goodness of God is over all his works. He feeds man and beast. In the original creation he beheld all that he made, and it was good.

God loves his creatures, even poor dumb heifers. Why would God tell them to do such a cruel thing, break the neck of this young heifer, then go through a strange ritual of washing their hands in clear water over the broken neck of that heifer? God is saying to them in ways that they could not mistake, the blood of the murdered cries for vengeance, and even when it is humanly impossible to lay hands upon the murderer and spill his blood to requite the blood of the innocent, a life must be given for that life. And so God says, take the life of the heifer, break its neck, and go through a symbolic washing, and then a plea, O God, take away innocent blood.

Though the ordinary way is by the blood of the innocent to be requited with the blood of the guilty, the blood of the slain with the blood of the slayer, O Lord, it is impossible, so God forgive. Wash us of the guilt of innocent blood, that our land be not polluted before you. When we turn to the New Testament, we find that this power to requite the innocent blood of the murdered has passed beyond the family, beyond the elders and the priests of Israel, and now is deposited in the state as an institution of God.

This is clearly taught in the thirteenth chapter of the book of Romans. There is no power but what is of God, and Paul goes on to say the civil power is placed there to be a terror to evil worlds. O workers, what kind of a terror? Even the terror of executing capital punishment, for we read in verse four, he is a minister of God to thee for good.

If you do that which is evil, be afraid, for he that is the civil governor bears not the sword in vain. He is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath upon him who does evil. Now notice, chapter twelve closes with the individual Christian ethic, in which God says as an individual believer, when I am individually wronged, I am never to return vengeance upon evildoers.

I am to give place to the wrath of God. I am never to requite personal injuries on a personal basis as a Christian. But the same Holy Ghost who inspired the apostle to write the words at the end of chapter twelve for individual Christian ethics has a totally different framework for the ethics of the state, and the woolly-headed evangelical theologians who are trying to empower a Christian believer to bring innocent blood upon us to the place where almighty God will come forth and requite the blood with his own hand.

He is a minister of God for vengeance, and when self-confessed and duly convicted murderers are not executed, the blood of the innocent slain cries to heaven for vengeance. Now do you see something of the biblical doctrine of what a horrible thing it is for a land to be polluted with innocent blood? This land is polluted with blood, not just a few clods. From the blood of one innocent able slain at the hand of Cain, not just a few clods of blood.

There, because a few murders have gone unrequited, but I suggest it is nothing less than a pool of blood from the children and adults who are wantonly murdered and whose murderers are not put to death. The murders that go on in our country by the dozens every single day. Self-confessed, duly convicted murderers who yet live.

Do I stand as a vengeful man longing to see murderers get what they deserve? No, I know enough of my own heart to know that if anger is the seed of murder, I stand as a cleansed sinner, purged in the blood of Jesus from the sin of murder in the heart. I do not stand here with a personal vengeful desire that murderers will get what they deserve. That is totally foreign to the spirit of a Christian who knows that he is what he is by the grace of God.

But I stand here to speak God's word to our nation, and our nation is stained with innocent blood. There is a veritable pool of blood from all of the murdered boys and girls and men and women whose murderers live, and there is nothing according to the word of God. There is nothing no rank.

I say it reverently, if God were sovereignly to send the Holy Ghost and regenerate every self-confessed, duly convicted murderer in murderers role, they should still die to requite the blood of the murdered. Thank God they would die and go to heaven. But the blood of Jesus that cleanses their souls does not.

It can only be cleansed by the blood of the Son of God. That is the teaching of Almighty God. And no Supreme Court, and no judge, and no country, and no system of jurisprudence has any right to defy the God of heaven with impudence, with a high hand, and think you can long exist upon the face of the earth.

If there is a pool of blood from the children and adults wantonly murdered, whose murderers are not put to death, then surely there is an ocean of blood from the murder of unborn children in their mother's wounds. I say if the one constitutes a pool, the other constitutes nothing less than a river with cold and calculating statistical analysis. We are told last year 1.5 million registered, state-of-the-art, state-of-the-art, state-of-the-art, state-of-the-art eight condoned murderers in mother's wounds in our nation.

Oh, the blood that cries from the trash bins of our sterile operating rooms. Oh, the blood that cries from the soap sterile rags of the Dempsey posters at the back of our houses. What an outrage there would be If on the front page of all of our papers tomorrow we read something like this, madman goes berserk in hospital in New Jersey.

Nearby us there is a very advanced medical center with a very large nursery, and within that nursery, unusually advanced equipment to care for little preemies, some of whom hardly weigh a pound and a half or two pounds, born four, sometimes even a little bit less than that, months before full term, born in the second trimester when one can still legally get an abortion. And suppose the byline read that a madman went into that particular part of the nursery where all the preemies were kept, some of them weighing only two pounds, kept alive by the life support system of the incubator with its oxygen hose and with the intravenous feeding. And if that man were to take a machine gun and riddle the bodies of six little preemies until they were nothing but raw flesh and bones, oh, what an outcry there would be! Madman slays six helpless preemies under the life support system of an incubator with its oxygen hose and its intravenous tubes.

What an outcry there would be! But let the surgeon with his sterile gloves and his suction tube and the consenting mother agree not to riddle the unborn life with the support system of a womb instead of an incubator, an umbilical cord instead of an oxygen tube, but let that baby be slain in her life! And that's called the destruction of fetal tissue, termination of pregnancy. It's called a woman's choice. I say to this nation, Almighty God, and dear Christian, if it hasn't gripped you, it better, because if anything will move God to move somewhere, I say it is the blood of the millions of unprotected, helpless lives in the life support system of mothers' wombs.

I break for animals, the generation that produces bumper stickers to protect animals that has an outcry when some bear are brutally killed and destroy the natural beauty of the poor bear. The generation that speaks so movingly of women's rights and human rights is the generation that with heartless calculating brutality and cruelty slays unborn life that is made in the image of God. And I believe that decision of our own highest courts and our own highest halls of legislation, most of you know the thing to which I refer, I fear that more than anything else that has happened in our national life in a long time.

I say, oh God, how long? Oh God, how long? Oh God, how long? This is the generation that is trying to rub the conscience of the world raw because of Dachau and Buchenwald and all the rest where they say six million Jews were killed over a period of those years. We've all since exceeded that number. The slaying of unborn life in the life support system of a mother's womb.

What is God's word to our nation? I say without any reservation on the basis of the word of God, it is a word of rebuke, a word of condemnation. It is a word that summons us to repent of this sin of unrequited blood. Because you know how God describes himself.

In the ninth psalm, turn there for a moment. This passage is so appropriate to our subject. The ninth psalm, beginning with verse seven.

Psalms nine and verse seven. The Lord sits as king forever. He has prepared his throne for judgment.

He will judge the world in righteousness. Not just the nation of Israel. He will judge the world in righteousness.

The very passage Paul quotes in Acts 17 and verse 30 and 31. Then he speaks of his being a high tower for the oppressed in times of trouble. Now notice verse 12.

For he that makes inquisition for blood remembers them. He forgets not the cry of the needy. God is described as an inquisitor, an avenger of blood.

He makes inquisition for blood. When he sees blood spilt, he becomes the great inquisitor. God becomes the heavenly sluice to track down who is guilty of this blood.

And having tracked him down, he will requite it with his hand. But now someone says to me, But Pastor Martin, is it not contrary to the spirit of the gospel? Are you not talking as a man whose thinking and whose spirit is too much affected with the overtones of Sinai and not enough permeated with the glories of the full revelation of God's grace in Jesus Christ? My friend, turn with me to the book of the Revelation in chapter 6. We shall here see a description of the disposition of saints who have joined the company of just men made perfect. Every glorified, I'm sorry, every departed spirit of every believer joins the company of the spirits of just men made perfect.

Hebrews 12. That is not glorification. Glorification awaits the resurrection of the body.

But they join the company of the spirits of just men made perfect. And from the time the spirit leaves the body and looks upon the face of Jesus with bliss, by the mighty work of the spirit begun in regeneration, God purges from the human soul every last remains of sin and makes it totally conformed to the image of Christ and confirmed in that righteousness forever. Now how do glorified spirits view unrequited blood? I read now from Revelation chapter 6 and verse 9. When he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God and for the testimonies which they held.

Here are the souls of martyred saints, murdered at the hand of ungodly and unprincipled and unrighteous men. And they cried with a great voice. And remember this is a cry coming from a soul made perfectly holy.

How long, O Master, the holy and the true, do you not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And there was given to each one of them a white robe, and it was said unto them that they should rest for a while until their fellow servants and their brethren, who should be killed as they were, should have fulfilled their course. Glorified spirits long for God to avenge innocent blood. And listen to me, Christian.

If you were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy, if you were predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, no little part of true inward conformity to Jesus Christ is an entering in to His own holy passion that innocent blood should... In the way of God's appoint. Am I saying that a murderer can find no forgiveness? No. Paul says, Who before was a murderer and a blasphemer? Am I saying if I'm speaking to a woman who had an abortion that you've committed the unpardonable sin and you ought to be stoned? No, I am saying no such thing.

I am not giving a detailed exposition of the ethical implications of the past sin of a believer with regard to such matters as an abortion. What I am saying is God's word to our nation, of which you and I are a part, is this. It is a word of denunciation.

It is a word of rebuke and exposure for this great mountain peak of iniquity, our sordid, our putrid moral degeneracy, of which perhaps none is greater than the unrequited blood of the multitudes of the murdered. What does this say to you and to me who are Christians? It says you better take this doctrine of the word of God seriously. You better begin to think of your land as a land stained with blood.

Don't look upon it after the seeing of the eyes of the flesh. And when I was out running this beautiful day on a back country road and saw beautiful waving grains of wheat and corn that stood far higher than knee-high at the day after Fourth of July, quiet, peaceful, beautiful fields, I said, Oh God, they are not what they appear. They appear verdant with the blessing of heaven and in one sense, but those very fields and lands are stained with blood.

And they cry to heaven for vengeance. And you and I better begin to cry to heaven. We better begin to plead with God to pour out of His Holy Spirit upon every preacher of the gospel that he will dare to hurl this truth into the conscience of his community that God might be pleased to raise up men, whether saved or unsaved, who have some biblical convictions about the doctrine of unrequited blood, men who will dare to face those who sit on the Supreme Court and who sit in the seats of Congress and dare to speak to them.

We cry to God for our president in whom we have some reason to believe there may be at least the seeds of sympathy for these biblical truths. Only God knows His heart. But we are commanded to pray for Him in 1 Timothy chapter 2. And whatever else we pray for, let's pray that somehow God will get into His ears this biblical doctrine of unrequited blood.

Until the president sees a far greater dread is the unrequited blood of the murdered multitudes than the silos and the missiles and the submarines that are set against us. I do not fear the nations that are set against us. I fear the God who in righteousness will requite innocent blood upon every land that is stained with that blood.

Dear child of God, it's time you stop playing. The hours you spend frittering away in front of your boob tube, the hours you spend sitting around licking your wounds and feeding your hurts, you need to begin to give those hours to crying to God, writing letters to your elected officials, seeking to band together with other believers and cry to God, purge our land of unrequited blood. Above all, cry that the Spirit of God would be poured out upon our churches, and that once again we should see multitudes brought to true evangelical conviction and repentance and faith and submission to the Word of God.

And out of such a mass of people turning to Christ, God would then raise up men of stature who would once again enunciate these principles in the key places of our national life. I had hoped to go on to that second part of that first mountain, but frankly, dear people, I've come with a constraint upon my spirit, and I must say not in a nasty way. I don't know when I've cared less about a conference program, and I've never done this before in all my years of speaking at a conference.

I have always stuck diligently to the subject aside, but I feel like a man possessed. Our time may be much shorter than we realize, but it's God's Word to our nation. Righteousness exalts a nation.

The righteousness that requites the blood of the innocent slain. The righteousness that protects the helpless blood of unborn infants. But sin, the sin of unrequited blood, is a reproach to any people.

Frankly, that's why I'm a loyal patriot. I believe I would give my life's blood if necessary to defend the liberties I know for the sake of my children and unborn grandchildren. But I have to say, I blush.

I am ashamed. I cannot look up. What's your posture? What's your posture? What is your posture? May God bring us to a season of holy blushing that will lead to earnest prayer, that will lead to sanctified, Spirit-directed, scripturally-governed conduct that the church may indeed be sought and light with respect to the sin that is our national reproach.

Let us pray. Our Father, we do confess with your servant of many centuries ago that we do blush and are ashamed to look up. Our sins have gone over our head like a mighty flood.

And, O God, we confess we have done perversely and wickedly, turning from your precepts. O have mercy upon our nation. Have mercy upon us who are called upon to be light and salt.

Forgive us for our flabbiness. Forgive us for our lack of principle. Forgive us for our sinful silence.

Forgive us, Lord, for being carried along with thought patterns that do not grow out of your holy word. Forgive, we pray, those who sit upon the benches of our courts. Have mercy upon the members of the Supreme Court, to the members of Congress, upon our President.

Lord, God, have mercy. In wrath, remember mercy. Lord, we know that all this blood must cry with a cry so vehement as to cause you at times to stuff your fingers in your ears.

Lord, God, do not yet give us what we deserve, but turn away your wrath by turning our nation away from its sin. O God, hear our cry. Take this band of people, great God, who turn to flight the armies of the Midianites with three hundred.

Great God, who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we could ask or think. O God of Elijah, God of the patriarchs, God of your servants of bygone days, come, we pray, and purge iniquity from the land to the praise and honor of your own beloved Son. Hear us in this our cry.

Amen.

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