

REDEMPTION CHURCH

Two Lies and a Truth | The Church Falls First

BIG POINT

Lie #1: God abandons the church and then it falls.

Lie #2: Culture falls first, then the church reflects culture.

Truth: The church falls first, and then culture follows.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

1. It's NOT God's fault; He is still in charge.
2. OUR sins separate us from God.

ISAIAH 59:1-3

Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; ²but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear. ³For your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies; your tongue mutters wickedness.

In week 2 of this series we'll take a closer look at Isaiah 59:1-3 and Hosea 4 to better understand how we ended up in the state of cultural decay we're in today.

Isaiah 59 begins with the prophet offering Israel (and the church today) a huge reality check. He points out that the problems of their day are not God's fault, but their own. Hosea 4 then offers us further insight and understanding.

Notes:

Hear the word of the Lord, O children of Israel, for the Lord has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land.

There is no faithfulness or steadfast love, and no knowledge of God in the land; ²there is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and committing adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. [Hosea 4:1-2](#)

Indictment 1: "There is no faithfulness..."

Here, "faithfulness" is a commitment to Godly behavior, or obedience.

What is Isaiah saying?

- If we aren't standing on God's Word, then anything goes.
- The church is no different! What's the point of being called "Christian" if we act exactly like everyone else? Almost every study and statistical analysis through 2020 shows that identifying as a Christian had almost a 0% impact on actual behavior.
- The first cause of a "truth-free" public square here is that the people of God are exactly like the world.

Action step: Ask, are there any sinful patterns in our lives that reflect the world more than they reflect Jesus? Allow the Holy Spirit room to convict. What should we be instead? "Holy as he is holy..." (1 Peter 1:16)
Repent!

Corporate step: Weekly church prayer

James 1:22-23; 27

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But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁷Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

REMINDER

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 What do we do?

1. Hear the Word, do the Word. Have knowledge and exercise it.
2. Seek true Biblical justice. Show steadfast love. Forgive.
3. Keep oneself pure and undefiled. Be faithful.

God's still God; and, when we humble ourselves, repent, and are obedient, He moves!

What an optimistic time to be alive. We can make such a HUGE difference in the world by being obedient to what God has called us to –then letting God save, restore, and rebuild. The church has to stand as the counterculture and Christians have to stand as the counter-way, or all will be lost. But where there are those who do stand, revival is always possible!

Indictment 2: "There is no steadfast love..."

"Steadfast love" in this context is synonymous with justice, mercy, grace, and forgiveness. It's God's way of reminding the church of her important role in justice, forgiveness, and poverty-related issues. Biblical justice is not to be confused with the world's response to these issues –social justice. We are free to be radically generous because we are free from the trappings of this world!

Here are some Biblical examples:

Defend life: *"Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. ⁹Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy."* Proverbs 31:8-9

Care for the needy: *"Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do."* Galatians 2:10

Forgiveness: *"He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' And Jesus said to him, 'You go, and do likewise.'" Luke 10:37*

Indictment 3: "There is no knowledge of God in the land..."

There's a direct correlation between the level of Godly knowledge in the land and the level of truth in its public squares.

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children. Hosea 4:6

The rise of theological liberalism began to take root in the church in the 1920's. We've arrived at a state of Christendom that has limited knowledge of the Word of God. This leads to destruction of society and culture. A lack of knowledge in the pulpit led to the same in the congregation, which led to a lack of knowledge in the public square. There was a large population with no knowledge of God, so eventually the old foundation was demolished and a new one erected.

The Solution:

To summarize, God is accusing Israel (drawing a comparison to the modern church) of creating an environment where they don't live in Godliness, uphold true justice, or have a firm grasp of the word of God. Practically, what do we need to do? Know our Bibles. Educate our children. Become partners, not passive.