

Deficit of Decency

I have never been a fan of receiving forwards in my e-mail. However, every once in a while, someone will send me a forward that is worth reading. During the past several weeks, I have received one of those forwards that is worthy of our consideration.

It is a speech that was made on the Senate floor by Zell Miller, a Democrat from Georgia. His speech is very interesting to read. It is not one that you would expect to hear on the Senate floor. It is a speech that both the politicians and the citizens of this country need to hear and need to be reminded of.

The basic theme of his speech is about the lack of morality in America today. He refers to several examples, and he especially uses the Super Bowl halftime show to show the lack of decency and morality in America. It does not take long for us to look around this country and see the lack of morality that we are facing. Senator Miller is encouraging his fellow politicians, as well as the public in general, to return to the morality that we once had. He encourages us to follow after the original intent of the framers of our constitution. He is encouraging us to set strong morals for ourselves, and encourage the same kind of morals for others.

In his speech, Senator Miller quotes from the Old Testament book of Amos. Amos was a prophet that tried to get the children of Israel to understand their sin and return to the Lord. Israel is a nation that is full of pride and care only for themselves. At the time of the prophecy of Amos, Israel is still several years away from their captivity. However, God sees the need to send them a warning in the form of Amos.

Throughout this book, Amos gives Israel this warning. One of those warnings (as Sen. Miller points out in his speech) is found in *Amos 8:11*. It is a warning that we need to be reminded of today. God says, "*Behold, the days are coming, that I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.*" The basic idea that God is giving His people is that if they do not begin to hear and obey His word, He is going to take it away from them.

It does not take long for us to realize that there is a "*famine of hearing the words of the LORD*" in our country today. People are living according to their own law. They are setting their own morals, and trying to force them on everyone else. To see this, all we have to do is look at places like San Francisco, Massachusetts, and New Paltz, New York; which are all trying to legalize same-sex marriage. We can look at the Super Bowl halftime show and other television shows and see the lack of morality that is sweeping this nation. There is even an attempt to remove everything that would remind us of God from our public buildings. There is a "*famine of the hearing of the word of the LORD*" in our country. The question that we must answer is this: "What can we, as the Lord's church, do about this lack of morality?"

First, we need to hold fast to the truths of the word of God. Throughout the Bible, God has always wanted His people to be set apart from the world around them. In *Leviticus 18-22*, God commands Israel to be morally strict. Laws concerning Israel's morality are also given throughout the book of Deuteronomy. God expected Israel to keep these laws at all times.

When we turn to the New Testament, and look at the commands that God gives us today, we again see that God does not want us to be like the world. He tells us to "*not be conformed to this world*" (*Romans 12:2*). He tells us that we should live a holy and godly life (*1 Peter 1:13-17*; *2 Peter 3:11-12*). He tells us that our conduct should be honorable among all men (*1 Peter 2:12*). Christ Himself teaches us that we should be a light to the world (*Matthew 5:14-16*). If we are going to change the morality of this country, we, as the Lord's church, must be an example of that morality.

Second, we must teach our children to live their lives according to the word of God. Israel was commanded on numerous occasions to teach their children the ways of the Lord (*Deuteronomy 6:4-6*; *11:18-21*). God also expects us to teach our children the same. The main duty of a parent is to "*train up a child in the way he should go*" (*Proverbs, 22:6*; *Ephesians 6:4*). When parents teach their children the word of the Lord, and thereby teach them the morality that God demands from His people, then we will have raised another generation with a strict sense of morality.

Third, we must also encourage others to live by the word of God. Part of our responsibility as a Christian is to teach others the word of God (*Mark 16:15-16*). If we are going to stop the "*famine...of hearing the word of the LORD*," it is up to us to make sure that the world has that word. When they see that we are living a holy and godly life, and they understand the reasoning behind it, they are more apt to live that same kind of life.

The only way that this country is going to return to a country of strong morals is if we, as the people of God, do what God wants us to do. We must live that moral life, teach our children to do the same, and also encourage others to follow the laws of God. It is only when we do our part that we can change this nation for the best.