

## *Juan Arias*

### *Taking Action*

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, our Founding Fathers formed this nation. America was founded as a Christian nation by people who believed in God. John Adams stated that “the general principles on which the fathers achieved independence were...the general principles of Christianity” (“John”).

Today, however, our nation has become corrupt and evil. People have lost respect for God and His almighty authority. The God whom America trusted is now excluded from everything its citizens do. The Christians of America fail to do all that they should in the dying world around them. Christians are not spreading the cure that can save and heal so many people. Instead of doing what the Word says, we are only hearing. “What has happened to our America? God has been shoved aside in many instances, yet the daily happenings prove that He is needed more than ever” (Paints). The church needs to show that there still is a God who has power. The body of Christ must be a functioning body, not a lifeless corpse. It is time for the church to take a renewed stand against the world and its evil ways.

We Christians hear the Word all the time – at church, at home, and in our private devotions. But James gives this warning: “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like” (James 1:22-24). It is very hard to imagine that a person could look at himself in the mirror and then, a moment later, forget how he looks. Scripture reveals that it is a big deal to hear the Word and not do what it says. We may claim to have faith, but if we have no deeds to show for it, that faith is dead. Many people like to be spectators of an event. God does not call us to be spectators; He calls us to be participants.

Martin Niemoller was a German pastor arrested by Hitler because he refused to give in to Nazi threats. When this man was about to be arrested, he made this startling statement. “In Germany, they came first for the Communists, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a Communist; and then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a trade unionist; and then they came for the Jews, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a Jew; and then they came for me and by that time there was no one left to speak up (“Who”). This is an example of tacit consent. Although it may not be our conscious intention, the church is showing tacit consent to the world. Although we see what is wrong, we choose to “go with the flow” rather than stand against evil. Edmund Burke, a British statesman and philosopher who lived during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, said this: “All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing” (Kreis). Unfortunately, because the church has chosen not to act as it should, evil has triumphed over most of the world and the culture. Christians must stop giving tacit consent to this decline and start taking action.

The Old Testament contains the great account of how the Lord used Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. As they reached the Red Sea, Pharaoh and his Egyptian army were in hot pursuit of them. When the Israelites saw that they could not go anywhere, they were terrified

and asked Moses why he brought them to the desert to die at the hand of Pharaoh. Seeing that the Israelites were panicking, Moses told them, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.’ But the Lord said to Moses, ‘Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on’” (Exodus 14:13-15). At this, Moses lifted his staff, and the power of God divided the Red Sea. The Israelites escaped to the other side, and the Egyptians died in the Red Sea. In this moment of need, Moses thought that crying out to God would save him, but the Lord wanted him to act! Moses had faith in God, but until he took action, his faith was useless.

After Jesus was resurrected from the dead, He went to speak to His disciples. He rebuked them for lacking faith and doubting that He had truly risen from the dead. When He spoke to them, He told them to “go into all world and preach the good news to all creation” (Mark 16:15). He also told them that there will be signs that will accompany all who believe. These signs are that, in the name of Jesus, believers will cast out demons, speak in different tongues, pick up snakes and drink deadly poison without being harmed, and heal the sick. Jesus told the disciples and tells all the believers that if we will only believe, we will be able to spread the Gospel all over the world. Not taking action is usually caused by a spirit of unbelief. If a Christian doubts what God can do for him, he will not receive anything he asks.

Jesus also said, “Not everyone who says to me ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven”(Matthew 7:21). Jesus says that all who *do* the will of the Father will enter the kingdom of heaven, not those who hear it or say it. We Christians should not “merely listen to the word, and so deceive ourselves” (James 1:22), but we should do what it says! Ecclesiastes speaks about there being a time for everything (3:1). There is a time to cry out to God and a time to act. We Christians should continue to spread the gospel all over the world. We must also stand for what we believe in. It is time for the Church to arise and not only hear the word, but do what it says.

#### Works Cited

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