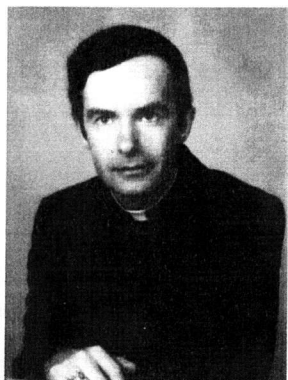


Chaplain's Corner, Hughes Camp Chaplain Richard W Rudd...



Beginning with Adam, we are told that "...the Lord God formed man of the dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." (Gen. 2:7) Our bodies and those of our ancestors as well as the food we eat come from the earth. Without a soul or spirit, they

are only lifeless forms composed of the elements of nature. Christ tells us, "It is the spirit that gives life..." (Jn. 6:63) When each of us is created, "...the spirit comes to the bones in the womb." (Eccles. 11:5) We can testify with Job, "The spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life." (Job 33:4) Unlike our bodies formed from the earth, our souls are of higher, heavenly, divine origin. And, when we become a Christian, though our physical appearance remains the same, unseen by the mortal eye, our souls "...are being changed into His likeness from one degree of glory to another..." (II Cor. 3:18) We should not wonder why we cannot see our own souls, when we cannot see our own faces as others see us, but only a reflection.

Across rural America small towns, once vibrant corporate entities alive with the souls of those who lived within them, are dying. Younger generations have lost their sense of community spirit, leaving empty store fronts and decaying neighborhoods in their wake. They are the same places, but not the same towns. They are only faint reflections of what they once were.

Like men and the communities they inhabit, nations conform to the same pattern. America's form is composed of its geography and founding documents. The spirit of 1776 gave life to America at its birth and lives within the souls of its citizens. While America's physical form remains the same, there is a movement to destroy the spirit of 1776 and make counter-revolutionary changes in the soul of America from one degree to another, from one generation to another. The Constitution appears to be the same as it was written, but it is being misinterpreted. Its original meaning is being replaced with the philosophy du jour by implication.

The Declaration of Independence, affirming a belief in the Creator Who gives us our rights, is completely ignored. If this continues unchecked, America will be the same place, but not the same nation.

"But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of stress. For men will be...proud, arrogant, ...impacable ..." (II Tim. 3:1), meaning, to put it bluntly, irreconcilable, unyielding, inflexible, relentless, unwilling to compromise or be appeased or engage in a rational discussion of issues, vindictive, uncivil, motivated more by what they are against than what they are for. For example, the Speaker of the House declined to give the traditional introduction of the President before his State of the Union speech, but her allies wail and moan over the slightest perceived offense to themselves. Across the nation, people who share the name of Trump are being harassed solely because of their name. How long will it be before people named Davis, Lee, or Jackson are castigated? Women's rights and a secular society are advocated, yet a vigorous defense is made for Islam that considers women property and seeks to establish a theocracy. Racial equality is promoted by legislation, but Planned (Infanticide) Parenthood, founded by racist Margret Sanger, is supported with government funds. Prosperity for all is championed, while a socialist economy is sought that has a record of creating poverty by demoralizing one's work ethic to seek a higher standard of living. Stopping just short of strip searching every airline passenger and invading our privacy with cameras in public places is insisted on, yet the defense of the nation's borders is stubbornly resisted.

During the years leading up to the WBTS, division in America was concentrated between the regions of the North and South. Today, the polarization that threatens America's spirit is not organized into separate locales; it permeates the land from coast to coast, pitting neighbor against neighbor. "Now the works of the flesh are...strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy..." (Gal. 5:19) America is in danger of losing its soul. The pilgrims who first settled here dedicated this land to God and our national motto is "In God We Trust."

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The issues dividing America cover various categories, but many of them can be reduced to a single root and common denominator; at their core they are spiritual problems that require a spiritual remedy. Members of Congress who belong to Christian caucuses know this. They are more likely to resolve differences with equitable compromises and civility. As Americans become less Christian, the non-Christian representatives they elect will strangle Congress and the nation with increased selfishness and gridlock. More government bureaucracy, regulation, and expensive programs are not the answer. They are only vain attempts to compensate for our spiritual anemia. The solution can be found in how dedicated each one of us is in effectively defending our faith and values, communicating to and sharing them with our neighbors, and exemplifying them in how we live our lives each day. "If we live by the Spirit, let us walk by the Spirit." (Gal. 5:25) This is how each one of us can join with others to make America great again.

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