

## The Consequences when Believers Abdicate their Civic Responsibility

**Deuteronomy 28:** <sup>1</sup>*If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all His commands, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth...* <sup>12</sup>*The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of His bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none.*

As spiritual vitality rose in America, the national debt decreased. But as spiritual fervor waned, the national debt increased, as well as many other negative statistics.

After the American Revolutionary War, this country had a National Debt. It was quite significant for the small population. However, by 1835, we were able to erase our entire National Debt! It is fascinating to study what the spiritual climate was in America at that time the National Debt went to zero. In fact, one could even place a graph of the national debt on the same chart as a graph of the spiritual interest and notice that they would almost be the same. The time that our National Debt was plummeting toward zero was the same time as the Second Great Awakening was heating up. At the revival's peak in 1835 when Charles Finney and others were packing out public arenas due to the spiritual hunger of Americans everywhere, President Andrew Jackson was able to pay off the national debt. The revival was so strong that bars closed for lack of patronage, crime fell dramatically, the courts had little to do, and the jails were nearly empty for years afterward. The emphasis of the revival was not only the salvation of souls, but also the reform of society. As people were saved, they changed themselves and their surroundings. So as a result of the Second Great Awakening, the groundwork for significant reforms took place, including the crusade to abolish slavery, prison overhauls, the temperance movement, women's suffrage, rights recognition for the handicapped and mentally ill, and Sunday observance laws. Believers factored significantly in social reform; it was their duty! In the wake of this season of spiritual fervor, Americans even elected a minister to be President – James Garfield.

But throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the tide began to turn. Gradually, secularism crept into our ranks – first into the elementary schools and universities and also into the media and entertainment industry. Now it is a malignant cancer that is determined to take over the entire body of America. Whereas the emphasis of God and His statutes permeated our culture in the early years, today there is a deliberate attempt to excise God out of all public forums. Perhaps the point when the line was drawn in the sand was in 1962 when the Supreme Court handed down a notorious ruling that opened a floodgate of hatred toward Christ. In *Engel v. Vitale*, the Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional for a student to voluntarily pray at school – thus removing religious principles from education and overturning 150 years of precedent. Then a few months later, in *Abington v. Schempp*, the Supreme Court outlawed Bible reading in school and broadened the separation of religious principles from education. These cases were the watershed moment epitomizing the nation's rebellion against godly ways.

Now consider now our National Debt. In 2008, the national debt was \$9.6 trillion and was growing by \$1.77 billion per day! Those numbers are unfathomable, and they were before President Obama's stimulus packages when trillions of more dollars were added to the National Debt! As a consequence of out-of-control debt, the willingness of foreign nations to invest in America is dropping sharply. So the exposure to potential financial or political risk is a serious threat today should foreign banks stop buying Treasury securities or start selling them heavily. That is especially worrisome when we realize that the Arabs and Chinese hold a large portion of that indebtedness.

Notice the dramatic increase of all the negative statistics ever since. According to data made available by the Department of Health and Human Services, the Center for Disease Control, Statistical Abstracts of the United States, Vital Statistics of the United States, the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, consider the following:

1. College-entrance SAT scores have plummeted since 1962 after decades of stability. In recent international math and science testing, American high school students finish last or near the last on a regular basis. Out of 200 nations, America ranked a dismal 65<sup>th</sup> in the world in literacy. Several third world nations posted higher literacy rates, whereas before 1962, America ranked at the very top in literacy.

2. Cases of Sexually Transmitted Diseases sky-rocketed after 1962
3. Birthrates for unwed girls spiked after 1962 – up 460% among jr. high students – higher than any other country in the industrialized world.
4. Cases of pre-marital sex rose sharply in 1962 and has been on a steep rise ever since.
5. Single parent households increased dramatically since 1962, triple to what it used to be.
6. Unmarried couples living together has soared to over 1000% since 1962.
7. Divorce rates went up exponentially after 1962; America can now be ashamed that it has the highest divorce rate per capita than any other country in the world.
8. Alcohol consumption went out of control since 1962.
9. Violent crime rose much higher each year after 1962 – now to over 470% and has become the leader in the world in total crimes committed per year.
10. The increase in natural disasters in the US from virtually none in the mid-1800s to sky-rocketing amounts within the last 25 years – measured in deaths & property damage. Add to this terms to which our children are now exposed – ie: “short selling,” “ill liquid assets,” and “economic meltdown.”

**Conclusion:** So what is a believer to do? President John Adams admonished us years ago, “*We electors have an important constitutional power placed in our hands. It becomes necessary to every citizen, then, to be in some degree a statesman and to examine and judge for himself the political principles and measures. Let us examine them with a sober, Christian spirit.*” In other words, in a free society, the people have to hold their elected official accountable. We have a responsibility to be involved, know the issues, and vote our values. We can’t expect the world to possess values; but we must regard ourselves as salt and light!

**2 Chronicles 7:14** says, “*If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*” Notice that God is not waiting on the ungodly masses to repent of their sins; He is simply waiting on His own people to humble themselves, pray, seek His face, and turn from their wicked ways.