

December 9, 2019

A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand

In 1858, in a speech before the Illinois State Republican Convention, Abraham Lincoln said, "a house divided against itself cannot stand." He was running against the democrat, Stephen A. Douglas for the U.S. Senate, and he lost. His law partner, William H. Herndon advised him not to use the "house divided" language in his speech. He apparently thought quoting Jesus was too radical even for those times, but later he said the speech lost Lincoln the Senate election, but made him the President.

Our Country is more divided than it has been since the Civil War. We are divided economically, and politically, but more importantly, spiritually.

In his book "The Ultra Rich," which was published in 1989, Vance Packard (1914-1996) wrote a protest against the increasing concentration of vast wealth among a relatively few people. He wrote:

"Free enterprise still remains the most successful method of stimulating economic growth. The fact that does not mean it requires a reward system that creates and sustains increasingly grotesque accumulation of family wealth."

Notice he said, "... free enterprise still remains the most successful method of stimulating economic growth" Capitalism is still the best system ever devised, but is easy to see why professors in colleges and universities, with the help of the media, are able to sell socialism.

Lee A. Iacocca (1924-2019) is widely credited as being the first celebrity CEO. He rescued Chrysler from bankruptcy, and when he was paid a yearly salary of \$2 million plus, it made front pages all over the US. He also got stock options worth many millions.

In 1965, the CEOs of the 350 largest public companies earned 20 times more money than the average worker. In 2017, the CEOs made a little more than 310 times more money than the average worker, and today, it sometimes is in the thousands. It would be a gross oversimplification to say that's the main reason the academics are able to sell socialism in college classrooms, but is indicative of the problem.

Politically, our system is failing ... or has failed. There are thousands of local politicians all over the US who have no other job, or income other than politics. There are many examples of average people being elected to Congress, and after a few years, they leave wealthy. If you want to understand the "deep state" read the 2013 book by Mark Leibovich "This Town: Two Parties and a Funeral-Plus, Plenty of Valet Parking!-in America's Gilded Capital."

Leibovich is an entrenched member of the “deep state,” as the Washington correspondent of the New York Times Magazine, and when I read this book, I thought his days were numbered. It’s highly entertaining, as well as educational.

Stephen Brill writes in the May 17, 2018 issue of Time Magazine: “Although the U.S. remains the world’s richest country, it has the third-highest poverty rate among the 35 nations in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), behind only Turkey and Israel. Nearly 1 in 5 American children lives in a household that the government classifies as ‘food insecure,’ meaning they are without access to enough food for active, healthy living.”

Arguably, the middle class has largely disappeared in the US, and it was preceded by the death of traditional family and the mainline church.

The aforementioned Vance Packard (among others) has said a strong middle class maintains stability between both the immorality of the upper class and the lower class. There is no argument that our country was founded as a Christian nation. We are being called post Christian America now.

“Rosie the Riveter” became symbolic of all women in the workforce in WW II, but with the end of the war, many wives continued to work. And it was the beginning of the failure of the family. Divorce still wasn’t socially, or morally acceptable at wars end, but in the 1950's it became acceptable on both fronts. With the War on Poverty by LBJ, it became profitable to have children, with or without a known father. According to the CDC, in 2017 39.8% of the babies born in the US were born out of wedlock.

The US main Line Church is largely in a total state of failure. According to Pew Research, 90% of Americans believe in a higher power, but Christianity is on the decline. They estimate that 23% of those raised as Christians, no longer identify as Christian. The Presbyterians and the Episcopalians have had major splits, and the Methodists are going through one right now. The church split in the Civil War was over slavery, and now it’s over the LGBTQ issue. That’s only a symptom. The sickness is much deeper.

Many of the largest churches in the country are preaching a “prosperity, feel good gospel” now.

The Lakewood Church in Houston is the biggest church in the US. It was started by John Osteen, the father of Joel Osteen, the current pastor. John Osteen was theologically trained, and Joel is not. Joel produced his father’s TV shows, until his father died. He is a perfect example of making you feel good about yourself.

The Lakewood Church is just the largest of many that don’t talk about sin, or repentance. Some deny the virgin birth and the resurrection, and some preach that Jesus is one way, but certainly not the only, to get to Heaven.

Economically, politically, and spiritually; that’s a trifecta.

Mark 3:24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.