



- Up Words # 21

INNOCENCE LOST



We've all seen it. As children grow up they change. There comes a time when they somehow lose the wonder and delight of discovering things about themselves and their world. As they become independent of parents they sometimes declare independence from God. As they quit playing some begin partying. As they sin their innocence oozes out. Though no one is truly innocent and all are born in depravity, the idea of a loss of innocence is sad and perhaps startling.

I was reminded of this phenomenon when I recently read Hosea 8:5. The final phrase of that verse states God's question: "How long will they be incapable of innocence? (NASV). God's rather pointed query can be especially understood in light of the contents of Hosea 8 where He brings numerous accusations against His people. The reality is that the nation God established had forgotten Him. A summary of the situation is found in v. 3 where God says they have rejected the good.

It seems that America, like Israel, is not good and less godly. We make bad choices. The Lord notes that His people set up kings unapproved by Him (v.4). Do we not elect politicians who have no regard for God? Are not many corrupt and selfish? Have not many forgotten that public service means serving the public and not just their promoters?

Have not we, like Israel, worshipped wickedness? Hosea 8:4 says that "...with their silver and gold they have made idols for themselves" Do we not make idols of our money? And even more literally, have we not multiplied silver and gold jewelry, accessories and bling?

Like Israel, America is guilty of multiplying altars for sin (v.11). We provide abortion, practice homosexuality and promote indecency. We are plagued by profanity, pornography and perversion.

America's mindset is warped. God accused Israel of regarding His precepts as a strange thing (v.12). Unfortunately we are a nation that makes light of God's standards and often mocks those who seek to learn from and live by the Bible, God's holy Word. Our leaders now debate our nation's mottos like "In God We Trust" and "One Nation Under God." The fact that we debate such is indeed disturbing.

Because we are not guiltless and have lost our innocence we need to return to God. Let us consider Hosea 6:1-3 for some prayer prescriptions. "Come let us return to the Lord." (v.1) We are reminded that He will heal, bandage, revive and restore (vs. 1-2). "So let us know, let us press on to know the Lord." (v.3).

Looking Forward,
Pastor Chuck Circle