

"Make Australia Godly Again" - a look at Aussie history - Righteousness exalteth a nation!

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[0 : 00] Australia Day, Australia Day today, and the Word of God talks about nations, about the true greatness. That is what makes a nation great. Amen. God will exalt that people. He will honour them.

And here's the foundation of a nation's greatness. Righteousness exalteth a nation. So, on the other side of the coin, it says, sin is a reproach to any people.

So, there's two choices here. Two kinds of nations. Where is our nation? On the righteousness scale, if you like. Are we on the righteousness end, or are we on the sin end?

What is it that makes a nation, a people, great according to the Bible? I like this slogan, make Australia godly again. I know someone on social media and they say they're going to send me one of these caps.

So, make Australia godly again. Wouldn't that be something? Let's look at Australia through the lens of the Bible about Australia. Let's make a quote, Daniel 2 verse 20.

[1 : 05] Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His. And He changeth the times and seasons. He removeth kings. 23. And then God sets up kings.

He raised up a shepherd boy, David, to be a king of nations. God's got the say-so. He calls the shots. He sets up kings and He rememems. We can pray for the Prime Minister of Australia, can't we?

We can pray for the premiers of our states, of this state. We can pray for our mayor. And all of the various elected leaders, we should pray for them.

The Bible tells us to pray for all that are in authority. So, that's a big encompassing group, isn't it? All encompassing. And think about it, brothers.

And Bible truth should also be what dictates what our views are, our political views. We might say, well, I've always voted for such and such a party. Well, let's just check out the policies.

[2 : 09] Let's see, do the policies measure up? There's a truth there. Righteousness exalted the nation. We want righteousness above all. Not a particular flavour of whatever we customarily might vote for.

But what is of honour to God? Righteousness. Righteousness exalts a nation. And we wonder, how can we make Australia godly again? Has Australia ever been godly?

It's probably a good question, isn't it? And when you think about it, when you think about even our flag, the flag of our nation. Look at that. There's four crosses on our flag. When you think, that speaks to something about our heritage, about our land.

That we've got the Starry Cross, the Southern Cross. We've got the Cross of St. George. The Cross of St. Andrew. The Cross of St. Patrick. There's something Christian there. For what it's worth. For what it's worth. We could say, there's something there. There's something godly about even our flag. Of sorts. In the design of our nation's flag. So actually, Australia does at least have some history of a godly heritage.

[3 : 21] You can look back. I've just got some examples to illustrate that. For example, in the late 1830s, there was a group of German Lutherans. They were fleeing religious persecution.

Where did they come? They came and settled in Adelaide. Christian principles. That was the foundation. Morfett Vale, apparently, itself was founded by settlers. Some of these people might have only had a nominal kind of Christian background.

But for what it's worth, there was some godliness there. Back in history. In the mid-19th century, there was big religious revivals in the Copper Triangle. I know we've got some Copper Triangle people here.

There's a revivalist, a street preacher called California Taylor. And in 1865, California Taylor drew a thousand people to the opening service of a church at Moontemine.

We have some familiarity with some of these names. You can think of Gouja Street and Angus Street. Who were they named after? Robert Gouja was South Australia's first colonial secretary.

[4 : 23] He envisioned a society built on Christian principles. He supported churches and education. Edward John Eyre was an explorer, an early settler in South Australia.

He was also a devout Christian who believed in justice. He spoke up for the humane treatment of indigenous people. So we see, when I say make Australia godly again, maybe we've lost something.

Another Aboriginal leader here, William Cooper, he was a significant leader for indigenous rights. He was a Christian man. He stood up for justice.

That was in the 1930s. A Christian man. He was called Australia's Leonardo da Vinci. An indigenous inventor, preacher and writer. So there's a heritage there.

There is some godly heritage. Australia's got a lot of that. Christian heritage. Think of it. In 1901 at Federation, these words were penned on the Australian Constitution in the preamble, humbly relying on the blessing of almighty God.

[5 : 31] Righteousness exalted the nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. State of Australia today, sadly. Paul tells about our essential need of righteousness and of how we can know it.

If you go to Romans 1, it tells about the gospel. Paul says this, Romans 1.16, For I'm not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Verse 17, Here is the righteousness of God.

Righteousness exalted. As we trust Jesus as saviour, we know his saving, we know his righteousness, the righteousness of God. God's righteousness is revealed and he imparts it by faith to those who believe.

Our only hope truly is the gospel. Australia these days though is more and more faithless, isn't it? God's wrath. God's wrath is revealed.

[6 : 44] We read as it reads on Romans 1.18. As a nation, we face God's wrath. God's wrath is revealed. It says this is his rightful, holy response to sin.

The wrath of God, it says, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all. It's a disregard for his authority. It's a lack of reverence for God. Don't we see that today?

People don't care about God. They use his name as a curse word. They use his name as a swear word. There's a lack of acknowledgement of God. That's called ungodliness. And then it follows. Isis care little about the truth about God, don't they? Men routinely deny even his existence, that there even is a God. And that's really the first step towards degeneracy and the decay of society. Isn't it? It follows on. That's why we're in a mess. When we reject God, when we deny God, we defy God. A nation that rejects God falls into this chaos, this moral, spiritual, intellectual chaos.

[7 : 49] Paul paints a vivid picture here of what happens. We see verse 19. Of these ones who reject God, they deny God. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them.

For God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen. Being understood by the things that are made. Even his eternal power and Godhead. So that they are without excuse. It's telling us here that the visible things tell us of the invisible. It's almost every day I see some example of the wonder of creation.

The wonder of what he has made. The DNA. All of the intricacies. The micro and the macro of everything that is around us. But deep down men refuse to bow down and honour the God. Who's staring them in the face to honour him. And rather they pursue vain self-centred philosophies like secular humanism. And they praise lifestyles that are contrary to God's word.

[8 : 52] As if to defy God even more. Verse 21 it reads on in Romans 1. Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God. Neither were thankful.

But became vain in their imaginations. And their foolish heart was darkened. So there's this philosophy, this humanism. That they would deliberately refuse to glorify God.

They deliberately refuse to have their heart receive his truth. And it's a picture of that lifestyle then. That defies God. That's contrary to God.

Now comparing that to the godlessness of our world. So I've borrowed a few bits and pieces here. We think about Babylon. The nation of Babylon. It's an example to us of a godless, shameless...

Correlates with modern society today. For example, quote, One of the most influential political movements is a movement that marches under the banner.

[9 : 52] Pride. It's a banner that says, like Babel, I will exalt myself. To make myself, my sense of identity and who I am, as great as possible.

And to make the world revolve around that. And I will say, I am proud. Even when it goes against what God has said. Now that's not only pride.

But the next step from pride. Rebellion. God. And people deny God. And they defy God. We see in Romans 1 again. From verse 22.

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man. And to birds and four-footed beasts.

And creeping things. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. And this word fool is foolishness. It's a lack of discernment. It's like they're just deliberately not discerning.

[10 : 50] Their eyes are blinded. There's this lack of discernment. This intellectual arrogance that leads to a spiritual blindness. That even though the evidence is staring them in the face.

The wonders of creation at every corner of the universe. They profess themselves. Today's idols is things like materialism.

And fame. Modern idolatry. It's the worship of celebrities. You know, the worship of the self. The selfie. So self-obsessed, aren't they? With the wealth.

With technology. And then everything as a substitute. As an image. Of their own making. Of their own imagination. Verse 24. It reads on. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness.

Through the lusts of their own hearts. To dishonor their own bodies between themselves. The phrase here. Give them up. Gave them up. It's a technical term. Apparently it means a yielding.

[11 : 47] Another person over to punishment. Or judgment. It's a handing over someone. I suppose as the sheriff would hand over. A person to the prison guard. They gave them up.

They're yielding another person. Over to their punishment. Or their judgment. And God allows people to wear their own choices. To follow their own sinful desires.

And to wear the consequences of that. And we see that this uncleanness. This dishonoring. It leads to judgment. Verse 25. Who changed the truth of God into a lie.

And worshipped and served the creature. More than the creator. Who is blessed forever. Amen. When people turn from God. To guide their experiences. And we see the sad reality that.

For example. In the greenie movement. Some would hold even the planet itself. The environment itself. To be somehow sacred. And this total over the topness about the environment.

[12 : 49] Now of course we should be good custodians. We should be good stewards of creation. And look after the planet. But some take it to the extreme. Where they're bowing down. And worshipping the creation.

They're worshipping the environment. As if it's somehow sacred of itself. And this is just another picture of the godless culture. Isn't it? The deception is just so deep. That they even deny the truth itself.

And friends today. There's a lot of people. They deny objective truth. They redefine truth. Really you can't redefine it. The truth is the truth. Whether you like it or not. And the truth they try to make is something about their own perception of things.

As if to say. I am the author of truth. I've got my truth. You've got your truth. God's got his truth. It doesn't matter whether I agree with the truth of God. I've got my own truth.

It's a lie from the devil isn't it? It's deception. And that's why Paul uses this example here. The sexuality example. Because he says. People want to rewrite God's laws.

[13 : 50] The world is. And hopefully our nation can wake up. And not go this way. But there is the truth of these Romans 1 kind of nations. We see verse 26. It says.

For this cause God. One man. One woman. Marriage. Family. God's order. It's plain and simple. It's human biology. It's God's design. For life and relationships.

But some would go even against nature. Even against that which is so plain and obvious. And really even common sense. But yet they would defy God to such a degree. We read on verse 27.

And likewise also the men leaving the natural use of the woman. Burned in their lust one toward another. Men with men working that which is unseen. People to exercise their will. And they have to wear the consequences of their choices.

We see that in the immorality of our world. Even of Australia. Don't we? Promiscuity. The redefining of marriage. How dare they? Who's got the say so about what marriage is?

[14 : 51] Who defines marriage? God. God in Genesis. And God's design. It's all against God these days. In Australia today.

And then we've got modern society. They normalise it. And then they even go to the extent of celebrating it on top of that. And this is the world brother and sister isn't it? Verse 28.

And it says. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. God gave them over. Gave them over again. There's another recurrence of that phrase. God gave them over to a reprobate mind.

To do those things which are not convenient. So God gave them over to this reprobate mind. In other words a depraved mind. A mind without moral discernment. And when people refuse to acknowledge God.

They defy God. Their thinking gets corrupted. They end up in all kinds of confusion. And then they act like morality itself is subjective.

[15 : 48] That everything is relative. There is no black and white. It's all grey. That's what they would think. And there's this whole lot of confusion. Over ethics.

Gender. And the sanctity of life. Things that should be plain and obvious and clear. And Paul gives then a long list of sins. And it sounds a lot.

Breakdown of family structures. A loss of respect for authority. Of even the parents or authority. And it reads on verse 31. Of this society without understanding.

Covenant breakers without natural affection. Implacable. Unmerciful. Who knowing the judgment of God. That they which commit such things are worthy of death. Not only do the same.

But have pleasure in them. That do them. It speaks of this accommodation. This acceptance of sin. And modern entertainment. It glorifies immorality.

[16 : 44] Not only are they doing these things. But people are having pleasure watching it. People are having pleasure. Kind of as observers of it. And that speaks of modern entertainment.

Doesn't it? As modern entertainment feeds on this lust for that which is questionable. That which is ugly. People want more of that. That's modern entertainment.

That glorifies immorality. And then we see this progressive degeneration. This normalisation of sin. How do we see it? In the media. In legislation.

Such that you can't even raise your voice against it. In some quarters. Moral decay. It's everywhere. Brothers and sisters. This is the Romans 1 nation.

If you like. No wonder that there's challenging times. When you see Romans 1 unfolding all around us. In modern day culture.

[17 : 40] In the western world. Worldwide really. And no wonder there's challenging times. And Martin Ailes again to quote him. He says the statistics tell us. That this is the most depressed.

And anxious generation. That the west has ever seen. It's like a modern day Babylon isn't it? No wonder there's this depression and confusion. And chaos. Who's the author of confusion?

The devil. It's like a modern day Babylon isn't it? At Babel what did they do? They built a tower. It was a monument to their pride. It was a monument to their rebellion. And then we see today the bad ideologies.

That are in direct opposition to God. To quote Martin again. What is it that unites us? To define what he has already defined. God defines marriage.

Just one example. And think of it friends. I don't mean to labour this unduly. I'd like to get onto some positive side here. But we think about our culture. If we just open our eyes.

[18 : 40] Can't we see Australia? Our national song says. Advance Australia fair. You could say. Advance Australia where?

Where are we going? Advance Australia where? Where are we going? Where are we headed as a nation? Our culture is ever more godless. Isn't it? Godless. There's a growing hostility to the Christian faith.

If you dare to be a Christian and speak Christian truth. You dare to quote Bible truth. Then you're a target. The Lord says expect. To get persecution.

I think we need to toughen up. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye. When men shall revile you and persecute you.

But sin is a reproach to any people. Look at the society we're living in. The moral decay is radical. And it leads to destruction doesn't it?

[19 : 38] And think of it as examples of down through history. You see for example sobering warning. Look at Rome. And historians have examined Rome and what happened. And you see some kind of science that Rome illustrates.

Rome grew wealthy. And more and more decadent. More luxury. More excess. More indulgent. More personal pleasure and comfort. There was this breakdown of family values. Even Rome had some values. They had some morals. But then there was a decline of the sanctitivism. And this absorbing of all kinds of cultures and beliefs. And so traditional values and moral absolutes got lost.

And then they turned to gladiatorial games and entertainment. Oh who's down in the Colosseum today? Is it the Christians getting eaten by lions? Or is it the, you know, what do they call them? The gladiators battling out till their deaths. Lots of blood and gore. And they wanted that. They wanted to watch it. They wanted to watch the violence. They wanted to watch the death.

[20 : 44] The debauchery for their entertainment. Don't we see that today? Most modern movies have got something pretty graphic in them, don't they? Of one kind or another. The more graphic, the more people want to go and watch it.

And we see of Rome. They like Rome. I think we will. Paul told the Romans in the book of Romans of how societies turn from God, as we just read.

Of embracing, idolatry, immorality, false philosophies, unrighteousness. These are the trends. This is the world. This is where we're going.

And this decline is what's happening, brother, sister. If we'll just open our eyes and be conscious of it. It's happened in the Bible. It's happened down through history. And there's more to come. Where principles of decency, integrity and faith are lost.

These are what makes a nation strong. Righteousness exalted the nation. That's how to make Australia godly again. To make our nation great, if it be so. That we have an accountability to God.

[21 : 46] And you see, for example, I'm quoting Martin Isles again. Pride, a wicked sin. But the PR people saw it as something to be.

If your children are in school, you need to be especially praying for them. In the education system, there's the new set of ideals. Rather than Bible-based ideals.

In the education curriculum now in Australia, they have what's called identity workshops. Identity workshops. Even for fifth graders. And these identity workshops, the children work through where they are.

Who they think they are. And then over multiple years, they decide how they're going to live their life based on who they are. This is brainwashing.

It's ideologies. It's the philosophies and politics of our left-leaning world. And we see it happening. And our children are getting trained in it.

[22 : 47] And brought up in it. There's horrendous things happening, brother, sister. Healthy children are being irreversibly harmed through hormones. And they get the hormone treatments and the mutilation.

Irreversible. Irreversible. Irreversible. Irreversible. In the West. In the West. In the West. Hasn't it?

Friends, we live in a time when godlessness is celebrated and biblical values are undermined.

What does Paul say? I'm not ashamed of the gospel. I'm not ashamed of the gospel. He says, here is the key to righteousness that exalts a nation. Here is where righteousness is revealed.

It's the gospel. And each one of you are to be light bearers. To carry that gospel word into the darkness. To not be ashamed of the gospel. I know in some workplaces it's harder than others to be outspoken with the gospel.

But can we dare to be like Daniel? To dare to be a Daniel? May God empower us. Irreversible means to stand alone. Like Daniel stood alone.

[23 : 49] May God empower us to be like Daniel. That we can reach this Babylon that we live. What is it that makes a nation great? Biblically. What does God command?

That's what matters. It's not about material prosperity or policies of man's making. And even the best efforts of the best or humanly best of man.

All flawed as we know. God commends a nation that upholds justice and righteousness. That defends the innocent. That enforces righteous laws. And stands strong.

King David. He was known for that reign of principle. Of leading Israel rightly. God commends a nation that stands for what is right. For example Psalm 33.12.

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. And the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. So we can see we can be a Romans 1 nation. Where it's all going down, down, downhill.

[24 : 48] Right? Or we can be a Psalm 33 nation. I like to be a Psalm 33 nation. Don't you? A nation that's blessed of God. Whose God is the Lord. A nation that stands for truth and integrity.

Such a nation. We'll be blessed. Advance Australia. Where? Where is Australia headed? Can we pray that God will help us to be more like a Psalm 33 nation?

What are the ways that Australia is lacking? There's a neglect of God's authority. We used to get the Bible in school, didn't we? In Australia. I can remember as a youngster, they used to pray, didn't they?

In school assemblies. There used to be some token. Some token. At least. But now Australia cares little for God. God. And if not, it's directly anti-God.

And our nation's policies, they're more and more framed without God even in the picture. The cultural norms, there's no biblical principles underpinning them. There's no absolute truths from God's word that are a foundation stone.

[25 : 53] And we see the breakdown of the family unit, the loss of traditional values. What is the answer for our nation? What is the answer? It's a answer. Turn to God, isn't it?

It happened in Nineveh. As Jonah declared judgment, word came to the king and he arose from his throne. He laid aside his robe from him and covered him with sackcloth and sat in ashes.

He called the people to prayer. He called the people to repent. He called the people to come and come and seek after God. And turn from their wickedness after hearing Jonah's warning.

And the people of Nineveh humbled themselves and fasted and prayed. God spared them. God can turn nations around like it happened in Josiah's day in Judah.

As 2 Kings 23 talks about, as they found the word of God, it had been kind of secreted away and lost. It wasn't to hand. And the high priest came and he brought the book to the king.

[26 : 54] And then the king responded and he commanded the high priest to get all of the vessels made for Baal, all of the idol worship, all of the pagan symbols and signs to tear it down and to restore true worship.

And Josiah's leadership restored a nation. Friends, God can yet bring revival to individuals, to communities. Let's pray for a nation, that God will make Australia godly again.

How is it that a nation is made weak? It's when we defy God, we deny God, we depart from God, we forget God. Psalm 917 talks about the nation that forgets God.

God help us not to be such a people, amen? God's wrath is against that nation. Against the false gods. The pride of man.

Pride goes before destruction. Pride is just one example, isn't it? And it's what our world's all on about. Nations exalting themselves. Even, you know, you see in the media, of course, there's been some turnaround of sorts in the USA.

[28 : 03] They're very prideful. That can actually be inappropriate. When it's a pride in man's doing, of man's making. But rather, let us humble ourselves before our God.

Wicked ways. And he promises he will hear from heaven. He will forgive our sin and heal our land. So we see revival here. It begins with humility and repentance. We see that Josiah discovered God's word.

He rediscovered it. What about us? Can we rediscover the Bible? It used to be the foundation for lawmaking, for governance. But it seems like the Bible's been put aside now by our lawmakers. We need to restore the Bible in our policymaking. For principles that will guide the next generation. We need to pray for leaders who will not be fearful to stand.

Thank God there's some who are not afraid to be outspoken. Even in our local parliament. There's some who are not afraid. They fear God more than men. And they want to stand for the riot.

[29 : 04] Pray for righteous individuals to rise up in government and culture. Brother and sister, you know, think about it even for yourself. The next local government elections. Why not stand?

Why not stand? Make a stand. Make your voice heard. Stand for riot. And they'll mock you for it some. But God will bless you for it. We need strong Bible-based churches, don't we?

In our land. That will stand fast in preaching the gospel. That's the answer. The gospel. And we'll live it right. We'll live it out. We'll put our faith into action. And we need a return to a focus on the family.

What's going to bless families? Strengthen marriages? Build homes on biblical principles. On the biblical foundation. And brothers and sisters, let's be a people as Romans 1 exhorts us to recognize God is the creator.

We're under his hand. And we want to be in his plan. Following his design for liable ourselves and praying. And brothers and sisters, the great hope of our nation, of our world, is the gospel.

[30 : 06] It's the gospel. The good news. Like Paul, let's remain unashamed of the gospel. So that we would rather be reviled. If it be God's will.

That we will stand for the gospel. The gospel truth. And that doesn't mean we have to be kooky about it. But we're not afraid to say, hey, I'm standing on principle here.

I'm standing on principle. And I'm unashamed of the gospel. And we know it's going to be seen as controversial to some. Even countercultural. But let's all of us intend to live that circle of influence you can influence.

Be that gospel influence. Be that salt. Be that light wherever you are. You can be that one. A testimony of God's grace. And Australia, like any nation, can rise to greatness.

Despite all of our failings. The greatness of a nation. It's through righteousness. It's as we honour God. As the failure that we return to God.

[31 : 05] Now, of course, we can talk corporately and nationally. But really, it's very much an important truth for you. Right here, right now. We can pray for our nation nationally. We can pray for leaders and governments of all kinds.

But it starts with you and me, doesn't it? It starts in your shoes. Do you know the Saviour? Do you know the Saviour this morning? Turn to God. And determine to live righteous. As God enables you to.

The righteousness that you receive, He gives it. It's by His grace that you have His righteousness. It's not a righteousness of our own works of righteousness. It's a righteousness of His work.

His finished work of righteousness. But you can be righteous before Him. And then that's going to flow out of your life into your walk. And righteousness. Righteousness. Righteousness exalts a nation.

Let us pray. Lord, we thank you for Australia. As we think of Australia Day, we know there's been sad history at times. There's been unsavoury things in Australia's history, Lord.

[32 : 04] Lord, we know that there's still much, much to be desired in our nation as we see the godlessness that abounds. As somewhat of an abomination of a nation at times.

Lord, we pray for our leaders, for our governors, for our governments, federal, state, local. Lord, for all who are our representatives there. Lord, that they might come to know you and to follow you.

And at least that they might have some eye to Christian values and what is righteous and decent and true. Lord, we pray for each one present here. Those that might be joining, watching.

Lord, that you would work in every heart. Lord, help us to be a people. A people whose God is the Lord. Blessed is that nation whose God is the Lord.

We pray that you would be our Lord, our Saviour. One by one, we know that trust that you saved us from our sin. You've given us eternal life as a gift and even our righteousness as a gift.

[33 : 05] That will be a righteous testimony in this world where righteousness is forgotten, even cursed and derided. Lord, that we would be willing to be a Daniel in this Babylon that we live.

And God, help us, Lord, that you would send those, as it were, those sprinklings of revival. That you would revive your people. That we would seek your face.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.