

Abomination - Righteousness Exalteth a Nation

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Date: 07 June 2015

[0:00] We're going to talk about our nation tonight. Abomination. I'd like to have written a different word over Australia than that. I'd rather have written blessing over it.

! I know some people that don't like the US President call America Obama. I'm talking about Proverbs 14 which I've preached on before but it's a new message. Righteousness exalts the nation but sin is a reproach to any people. Looking at the question of what makes a nation strong. As a people we Aussies enjoy many privileges and blessings. But as a nation we neglect God at our peril. What is it that makes a nation strong? Righteousness. I put it to you. Righteousness. Here's what someone put it as. It's not bravery in war but righteousness that makes a nation strong. That exalts a nation. It's not military might or weapons. Maybe a submarine fleet. No. It's none of that. It's righteousness that exalts a nation. It's not the academic prowess of our education systems. Our universities. No. It's righteousness that exalts a nation.

[1:32] It's not the wealth that lies in the ground. Not the gold or the uranium. But righteousness that exalts a nation. It's not our justice or our health systems. Our hospitals. Fine though they be. But righteousness that exalts a nation.

And the reality is that our whole world sadly is in the grip. It's in the sway of the wicked one. As 1 John 5.19 says. And righteousness these days. It's a rare commodity. It's vital but it's missing. Sadly missing.

When the astronauts in Apollo 13. When the astronauts in Apollo 13 noticed a major technical fault in the electrical system of one of the service modules oxygen tanks. One of them famously reported back to mission command. Houston. We have a problem. They were in big trouble up there in outer space. And you could say about Australia. Australia. We have a problem.

Where is the righteousness. It's gone. It's gone. It's gone missing. And who's to blame for that. Where does the buck stop. Our nation's leaders we could say. At all levels they bear some responsibility. For our nation's direction. Our nation's condition. But so also does the church. You and me. The church. As a nation. We've been weighed and found wanting. Weighed in the balance. Righteousness. Righteousness exalteth a nation. But sin is a reproach to any people. Proverbs 14.34. Let us pray.

[3:11] Dear Lord we pray. Dear Lord we pray. As we come to this time. To put our hearts in tune. Help us Lord to tune in to your word. Help me as a preacher Lord to bring something that's going to benefit. And bless. And lift up. And stir up. For your sake we pray Lord Jesus. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. John 16.8. John 16.8. Tells of the Holy Spirit's work. And it says of his work. That he will reprove the world of sin.

Righteousness and judgment. These are the themes of this message tonight. Sin. Righteousness and judgment. In the context of abomination.

Our nation. Australia. John 16.8. When he has come he will reprove the world of sin. And of righteousness. And of judgment. Firstly. Sin.

Consider sin. Australia. We have a problem. It's called sin. The sin problem. Where is the righteousness? Here we stand in this nation condemned.

[4:23] In how we treat the unborn. And in how we bring up those who are born. It's been said about one in four pregnancies end in abortion.

It's a sad fact isn't it? It's not to condemn anyone here tonight. Who may have gone through such a thing. Because there's mercy and grace with God.

They think nothing of it. Just another word. Even the fair name of our Lord and Saviour is just another curse word. Just another profanity.

[10:04] Treat it with disdain. With carelessness. Jeremiah 6.15, it says, of a time where people will not blush anymore.

Jeremiah 6.15, were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? There's that word again. It's interesting, Mick, in his ad hoc reading there, mentioned abomination a couple of times in the Proverbs there.

This word tells us about abomination. It defines it. You know, this world is trying to redefine marriage. God defines what abomination is. You don't need to redefine abomination and call it same-sex marriage.

God says it's abomination. As goes on, nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush. They'd lost the ability to blush. And it's when we become desensitised that we lose that ability to blush.

We should be blushing at some of the things that come across the screens. We should be blushing at some of the things that are going on in our nation.

[11:14] Yet we have become desensitised. It's like, you know, your fingers, your hands can get desensitised when you're playing the guitar.

Your fingertips get desensitised. You lose the feeling in them. We can be desensitised when things get hit against us. When we're hit against, hit against with sin so much, we start to lose the feeling, the reaction, the blushing.

We lose that. 2 Timothy 3 tells us of this time, of the perilous times of the last days. This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

For men should be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, crowd, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy. When's the last time you've been shopping and one of the shop assistants says thank you when you give them some money?

Wow, almost, you've got to, you almost get knocked over when someone says the word thanks or please, common courtesies. It's interesting to see what the world is actually proud about.

[12:25] Men should be lovers of themselves, proud. What is this world proud about? What are our governments proud about? Notice what is praised and what the world has pride marches about.

Pride marches. Marching on. We should be the ones marching. But the ones who are proud in their sin are marching. And the government applauds and sponsors it and walks with it.

2 Timothy 3, without natural affection. There's that same abomination again. Truth breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heavy, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

Abomination. There's many things we could talk about. But we see pride. Even just the pridefulness of a life lived without God. People take pride in their sin.

It's one of the biggest problems that we have as a nation is our neglect of God. And righteousness is our big need. Yet righteousness is not something that the secular media talk about or the politicians.

[13:37] A flood tide of evil is sweeping our nation. It was interesting, I was hearing some radio talkback showing saying it was interesting how many of our politicians are trained by the Jesuits.

You know, of both persuasions. I think that the two main people, Tony Abbott and what's his name? The other guy? Shorten. Shorten.

Yeah, and numbers of others. They've been trained by the Jesuits. They haven't been trained by the Bible, sadly. Trained by a substitute. A flood tide of evil is sweeping our nation.

How can we turn the tide? We need to pray for our government leaders of the opposition and the government. Pray for our representatives representatives in parliament. How can we turn the tide? It's only as we, each one of us, turn individually. As we turn to Christ one by one, soul by soul. Our only hope is the soul-saving gospel, is the soul-saving message of his righteousness that he grants to us as a gift.

[14:46] So we see he shall convict or reprove the world of sin. And secondly, righteousness. Secondly, righteousness. Why is this all happening?

Why? Because we have lost something. We have lost something precious. We've lost the sense of the sacred. We've chased after gain and popularity and pleasure as a nation.

And sin is a reproach to us. We've lost virtue. We've lost the blessing of God. Now I thank God for young women and young men who want to uphold virtue in their lives.

They want to be virtuous. They want to be pure. They want to be godly and wait till marriage. It's a virtue.

It's a blessedness. And God blesses them. We have lost the blessing of God as a nation. And Bible values have been tossed aside. How we desperately need for our nation, for this generation, for the next generation, to seek after and proclaim the gospel.

[15:58] We need the gospel. It's righteousness that exalts a nation. That is the missing ingredient. He shall convict the world. He shall reprove the world of righteousness. Down through history we see righteousness.

Of course we know as nations, the whole nation doesn't necessarily be righteous. There's only people within the nation. And we know that the history of church, church history has been tainted with many errors and falsehoods through the dark ages when people have gone astray from the Bible.

When they didn't have a real Bible. They didn't have the whole Bible. They don't have the Bible as we have today. And we see those dark ages as they were called. Yet down through history we see the church as a remnant, as a body, as a group of people.

We see the church of God having a positive impact on society. As Christians down through history have been the ones who promoted justice and compassion. They've been the ones who built schools and hospitals and orphanages.

Christians have been the ones who have used their energies to lift up the downtrodden. To look after the hungry, the sick, the homeless, the widows, the orphans, the visiting the prisoners with the gospel.

[17:10] As Christians down through history have promoted that which is good in art and literature and music and science. And it's believers, it's God's people who have obeyed the scriptures and been law-abiding citizens and a witness to their people.

Faithfulness to God has been evident down through history. And we've seen that as believers have exerted that influence. What of today?

When righteousness is missing, we see a decline. We see things in decline. A decline in law and order. A decline in peace.

A decline in justice and honour. And we see a rise in arrogance and selfishness and greed and unbelief and hatred and scepticism. There's people making a living out of mocking this book.

Mocking Christianity. Sceptics. Destroying young faith. Destroying. God will judge them.

[18:16] Righteousness exalts a nation. What is righteousness you might say? What is this word righteousness? Here's a good definition. Someone has defined righteousness this way.

It means right character according to God's will. It means rightness. It means right thinking. It means right doing. Righteousness. It means that which is holy and pure.

It means that which is inclined to godliness and virtue and honesty. Righteousness. It means when the rubber hits the road that you're not just going to talk the talk you're going to walk the walk.

I know Christians have borrowed money and haven't paid it back. It's a mockery. Be a fair dinkum Christian. Do the right thing. That's righteousness. Righteousness.

Righteousness is something that recognises God's law. The perfect standard of truth. And it stands firm and sure upon that foundation. God's perfect standard of truth and of justice that demands a conformity of heart and life.

[19:18] Righteousness. It stands against sin. It stands with God. It stands for that which is right in act, in thought, in purpose, in word or desire.

And look, this one here needs to lift his game. This is not to condemn anyone here. righteousness is a standard we should all aspire to. And God helping us will see an ever increasing righteousness. That the path of the just will grow brighter and brighter until the perfect day. Righteousness, it lifts up a standard, God's standard, that declares right from wrong, that divides between truth and error,

between good and evil.

righteousness. It says that there is a God with whom we have to deal. There is a God who sets a standard of righteousness, a standard that doesn't budge, a standard that stands fast.

And we have that standard. We hold it. We love it. We read it. We love and study it whenever we can. It's God's written word, the absolute word of God, the Bible.

[20:23] The sure word of prophecy. And today's society doesn't want the more sure word of prophecy. Today's society by and large doesn't want to have a standard, doesn't want to have someone to answer to.

That's why they pretend to deny that he exists. But there is a standard that says what's right and wrong. It says what is true and what is false.

God's word, it declares a just condemnation in the eyes of God. upon a nation that by and large has rejected God and his word. We stand condemned as a nation when a people will purpose in their hearts to know God and walk in his will.

Then the nation, the people will be a righteous people and they will be the blessing of God. Much rather that we aspire to that. Amen. That we aspire to that.

And when leaders and citizens choose righteousness, that nation will bring forth its best and highest. But sin destroys a nation.

[21:28] It destroys, it erodes. It's like white ants sometimes too. You ever seen a house infected with white ants? You might look at that wall and it looks perfectly good.

You poke your finger through the paint and whoa, there's a big hole there. The termites have done their work. And sin is like that. It eats away from the inside out.

And that's what's happening in our nation is a gradual erosion. But we need God's word people tonight. We need God's word. We need God's standard.

God's word is the best way to know how we can be better citizens. How we can be better neighbours. How we can be better Australians.

How we can be better husbands. How we can be better wives. How we can be better children. How we can have better communities. Better lives. Now I've got occasions to go to certain things that talk about our community and how we can be a better community.

[22:35] And there's all kinds of platitudes and theories and principles and research and such things that people talk about to try to make the society better. But really they're missing the whole point.

Without God it's in vain isn't it? And it's time to stand for righteousness. I thank God that there are other Christians who are elected to our local council that we can stand that we can be a voice.

And more of the same we need more of the same more men and women who will stand for righteousness in all parties of political persuasion.

Stand and speak out speak up while we still can. While it's not been declared a hate crime let's tell it like it is and then still we'll tell it like it is.

Sin is a reproach. It is a reproach. Someone has said sin will take you further than you wanted to go. It will always keep you longer than you wanted to stay and it will cost you more than you wanted to pay.

[23:37] Sin. It's a trap. Nowadays it seems like the abnormal is becoming the new normal. And we're seeing it. It's plastered in the headlines.

It's the top of the news stories lately isn't it? The abnormal is becoming the new normal. If you feel like, if I feel like a woman today then I'm a woman.

It doesn't matter about my, you know, it's ridiculous. It's ridiculous. It's insane. It's insanity. And yet we're seeing these things where a man calls himself a woman and then the world says well we've got to call him a woman now because that's what he says he is.

God help us. God help Australia. We're witnessing the end of right and wrong. Who decides? God says. But if there is no God well wouldn't that be convenient?

If there is no God then who's to say what is right anymore? And values are just opinions. Your opinion is just as valid as the next fellows or woman's.

[24:43] Everything has become relative and subjective. We're witnessing a war on the family. There was a recent news story of a woman who was recently kicked out of Planet Fitness.

It was a gym that she went to. This woman went into the gym and she objected to a man in the woman's locker room. She was kicked out for intolerance because the man said he felt that he was a woman.

So he could just go into the woman's change room. He felt that he was a woman. abomination. Abomination. It's now something cool and to be applauded.

Society is becoming more secular and more perverse, more liberal, more beer-soaked, more godless. And who is to blame? We see when he has come, the Holy Spirit has come, he will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and judgment.

The third aspect tonight, judgment. When that which is abnormal is called the new normal, it's a reproach. It's a shameful thing.

[25:57] When what is wrong is applauded as right, then God pronounces judgment against it. Isaiah 5, verse 20, it says, whoa!

In other words, judgment, condemnation, whoa! Unto them that call evil good and good evil, that put darkness for light and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

You can redefine it as much as you like, it's still what it is. The truth is still the truth, evil is still evil and good is still good. You reap what you sow. That's judgment.

That's the principle of judgment. I ran into an old friend lately, not literally with my car, but I did run into him, an old acquaintance of mine, down at the hospital. He was visiting someone and I hadn't seen Vince for a long time, only 15 years.

And I gave him a lift from the hospital. He wanted to go and get some food and then go home and he was evidently not well. And I got to the KFC and he was wheezing, he just couldn't even get in the shop.

[27:09] He was wheezing and breathless and he looked like he was going to have a heart attack. So he didn't get to eat his tea that night. So I had to take him back to the hospital.

His body had become so ravaged by the years of damage, of drink and drug abuse. It had taken its toll on him. You know people like that.

You reap what you sow. You reap what you sow. And Australia is a bit like my sick friend. Sin takes its toll. And sin is taking its toll on this nation.

It's leaving many wounded and hurting in its way. You reap what you sow. this nation faces a reaping time. When we think of judgement, the question really is who is to blame?

Who is to blame for all this? Who's at fault? We've talked about our national leaders. They bear some responsibility.

[28:13] But the fault could also be laid at the feet of the church, of the pastors, of the preachers, of the Christians of this nation, the church of this nation.

The fault could lie at the feet of us, God's people. Judgment is at the doors and where does the judgment begin? 1 Peter 4, 17 For the time has come when judgment must begin at the house of God.

And if it first begin with us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Judgment must begin at the house of God.

When falsehood abounds, we need a resounding voice of the truth. Judgment begins with the false teachers and preachers, with the false gospels, with the false converts, with the false Bibles, with the false prophets, with the false revivals.

Judgment must begin at the house of God. There's a scripture that talks about how the holy convocation, in other words, the holy gathering, is something that God hates.

[29:25] He hates the solemn assembly. He hates it when some people get together to worship. It repulses him.

He says, take away from me the sound of your noise. I can't abide it. God gets sick of church. Sick of it.

Sick to the stomach. Literally sick of the lukewarmness of the church. Brothers and sisters, we must be awakened in these times.

While we're in this mess that we are in, we can ask, where is the church? Where is the church when there's an abomination in our nation? Where is the church that will speak out?

There was an article in a Christian paper that read, tongue-in-cheek like this, religion has gotten popular. This was 1995. It's sweeping the country.

[30:23] Jukeboxes grind out the latest popular songs. Movie magazines carry news of religious activities of the movie stars. More money is coming into religious treasuries than ever before.

Great church buildings are being built. A greater percentage of faith belong to churches than ever before in history. I think this is talking about American statistics, but it could be said in some cities too.

There could be some big churches in Australia. It goes on, the tragedy is that the church has been diluted, streamlined, condensed, smoothed down, made palatable enough to meet the public demands.

A carnival spirit has developed, the bands are playing, the flags are waving, and everyone is on the hayride of happiness. Popcorn, peanuts, and paper hats are seen everywhere.

Our churches have that cotton candy atmosphere. There's that kind of false kind of church today, where it's all a big game, it's just a big razzmatazz, and they're missing the point.

[31:32] Apostasy, it yields a bit of fruit. And friends, I'll put it to you today, this can be what we can see at times, sadly, and we pray for other churches.

We pray for this church, no church is immune to this, where preachers become diplomats who will not sound the alarm. Isaiah 58, cry out loud, spare not, show my people their transgression.

In some places, church goes right on, as it always has done. Only problem is that the king has left the building. The king has left the building.

And we read of a place called Ihabod, where it says the glory has departed, God's glory has gone. And in some churches we see that, where we neglect to pray, where we neglect to worship, and it tells in Isaiah 59, 12, how his word, his truth has fallen on the street.

It's just like a piece of garbage blowing along in the wind. And in many quarters the church is compromised and clueless. It's utterly sold out to the agenda of the world.

[32:39] Judgment is at the doors. Friends, judgment is at the doors. And when I spoke to a lady just earlier how she was talking about judgment and the terror of it, I've been to court.

I've sat in a courthouse and it's scary. I was on the jury thankfully, but it was still scary because someone's life was hanging in the balance.

Their destiny was hanging in the balance and they would have been sweating copiously because they faced judgment. And friends, we face judgment today. So what must we do?

As we see the principles of justice and truth ever eroded, we must turn to God. We must turn to Him. What is it that the heathen people of Nineveh did at Jonah's preaching?

It says they trembled and repented at the divine warnings. Jonah 3. So can we. What did Pharaoh do when Moses confronted him?

[33:40] Pharaoh scoffed at the warnings and the nation of Egypt paid a terrible price. There's a man called Sisera. He was a godless man.

He scoffed at the divine warnings in Judges 4. 21. And a godly woman grabbed a tent peg while he was asleep and drove it through his head. Judgment fell on him because he would not hear the warning.

Sin is a reproach, people, tonight. In other words, sin will bring a nation to its knees. It will take us from the heights of glory down to the depths of degradation and ruin. If we're unheeding of God's word, of God's counsel, the honour of our nation's people depends on these things.

What must we do? Let us pray for Australia. Let us pray for our nation. Let us pray for our nation's leaders of all levels. Let us pray for our communities.

Let us pray that our nation will not go astray from the foundations. There was some early times where there was some establishment of laws of constitution that was founded on biblical truths and godly principles.

[34:51] But we have gone astray. What of our nation today? On what do we rest? What is it that we prize, that we value? Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. I know it's been said that Sunday is fun day, it's sports day, it's no longer the Lord's day.

People have got no sense of that, of the sacred. We must return unto righteousness. Of course there's reasons why some people must work on the Lord's day for whatever reason, but we know that God helping us will worship when we can, will worship as much as we can.

Let us return unto righteousness, let us be the salt and the light that our world desperately needs. It's why the church is being trampled on, it's trampled underfoot, because we've lost the savour, we've lost that flavour, we've lost that potency of our Christian witness.

The salt has lost its flavour, its savour, and righteous people are needed in these days, you and me as God's people, that we live according to the fear of God, that we live in the sense of God, that we want to live lives that are honouring unto Him, that reject the sinful behaviour, and that we want to select other righteous people to serve us in government, that we'll vote intelligently, so that we'll vote in those who stand for Christian values, or at least are more so than the others, that we can be that nation of a decent citizenship, that will live the Christian walk.

Psalm 917, it says, the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. I pray, brothers and sisters, let's pray for our nation, that we will not forget God.

[36:41] Sin, righteousness, judgment. Judgment is sure, but it can be avoided, that God's pardon is extended, yet what a shame it would be to miss out on that blessing.

Wouldn't it be better to write blessing over the map of Australia, instead of abomination, to write blessing on our nation? Blessing is the nation whose God is the Lord, it says in Psalm 33, 12, and the people whom he has chosen for his own inheritance.

What must we do? We must repent corporately as a people and seek daily renewal before God. I know a brother this morning was challenging me how we can have daily time in the Word.

I must confess, there's times I don't have that, but it's an aspiration that we should aspire to, isn't it? Amen. Daily time, daily time, time with God's word, that we don't get so busy to miss that, because our true wealth is not in mines and industry, the real value of our nation is not the economic power of our country, but our trust in God.

Righteousness is our greatest need, and God sets the standard. He defines what's right and wrong, He defines marriage, He defines truth, He defines error, and righteousness is our greatest need.

[38:10] Godlessness is the greatest blemish on our nation, when we see corruption in high places. Again, I say, where is the church? Where is the church?

And let's be the church. We heard this morning about a healthy church. We want to be that church. We want to be a church that impacts our community, our culture, and that means we're going to be counter-cultural, it might mean some of the things that you say that I say the world might one day call that hate speech, make it illegal.

The world wants worldly wisdom, and sometimes the church just falls into line, and goes along with the Pied Piper, and sings along to the same hymn sheet.

But we should be counter-cultural, we should stand up and be counted for godly principles. It's been said that as goes the church, so goes the nation.

You know, that's a telling truth, isn't it? I think there's truth in that. As goes the church, so goes the nation. Let's pray for our church, let's pray for the church of God worldwide, Australia-wide, for a genuine revival, a genuine revival, a revival, re-enlivenment, a re-awakening by God.

[39:34] It says in 2 Chronicles, if my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves. Now, of course, we know this is for a set time and place, a specific purpose and application, but are we his people?

Yes, we are. He says, if my people humble themselves, pray, seek my face, turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.