Redeeming the Time Part II

The Theme of our 2009 Camp Meeting is Redeeming the Time in 2009. Last time it was said, we must redeem the time, learning from the past, making the most of the present, and preparing the the future. The world thinks redeeming the time means to get all you can out of life, and "let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die" (1st Cor 15:32). However, today’s path is heading for judgment, destruction, and the last days when men run to and fro. To redeem the time starts with starting right, getting right, seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and returning back to the old times of Biblical Christianity. Far too many of Christian men today live for pleasure, but the men of old cared about what brought God pleasure. Revelation 4:11 says "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." If you look forward, you see the typical modern Christians too busy to pray and too busy to read their Bibles, but when you look back you see men who fasted, prayed, and sought God with everything in them. They weren't on a different plane than us. James 5:17 says, Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. They did however have different priorities. Jeremiah 29:13 says And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. We can look back to last year’s theme verse for a moment, Jeremiah 6:16, "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." The Bible says that they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, and the Bible says to rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him. (see Psalm 37:7). Our country needs to redeem the time back to the old paths, and the only way back is to get our churches fasting and praying. The solution starts and ends on our knees and on our faces, and this means humbling ourselves before All-mighty God. 2nd Chronicles 7:14 promises, If my people, which are called by my name, shall 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. Judgment must first begin at the house of God. The rub is we think we are doing fine. Old time revivalist Leonard Ravenhill said, "the Laodicean church of Revelation is like many churches today: Self-satisfied, so it does not need to pray. Self-sufficient, so it does not want to pray. Self-righteous, so it cannot pray." Theodore Roosevelt said, “the things that destroy America are prosperity at any price, peace at any price, safety first instead of duty first, and love of soft living and the get-rich-quick theory of life.” I think that describes our version of Christianity today. We’re not against the old paths, we just don’t see a reason to make a big deal of fighting to redeem the time, and the average American Christian wants revival as long as it doesn’t interrupt his favorite TV show. Psalm 11:3 asks If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? We can fast and pray, and we must take this seriously while we still have a country. If you look at the book of Jonah, everyone on board was in jeopardy because Jonah was running from God. Where was Jonah when the storm was at it's worst? Sound asleep. Who's fault was it? It wasn't because of the heathen on board. When Jonah finally woke up, he was asked, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; ...and whence comest thou?...and of what people art thou?(Jonah 1:8) Jonah answered, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land. ( Jonah 1:9). His answer sounded spiritual, but it was empty. His actions spoke volumes despite his bold profession. America has become the land of worship and idolatry. Our churches are asleep, and the world sails on the pleasure ship, America the Titanic, with an iceberg of judgment dead ahead. Jeremiah 18:8 says If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. We need to fast and pray for our churches and our country. First, the church must be awakened to the fact we're asleep while our country is sinking, and we must turn from our wicked ways. Second, the lost must be awakened to their sin and need for salvation and that they will have to face God one day for their actions. Jude 1:22-23 says, And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. The problem is to make a difference, we even have to hate the garments spotted by the flesh. It is impossible to get to that point without fasting and praying. Is there not a cause? Is there not still an America today worth salvaging? Are we going to redeem the time or wait like Johan did? Now the Lord had prepared a great fish....(Jonah 1:17)...Then Jonah prayed.... (Jonah 2:1). Christian, don't be a Jonah.

Instead be an Ezra. Ezra 8:21 says Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. Ezra prepared himself to survive the trial ahead, Ezra followed God's vision, Ezra proclaimed a fast to purge out the leaven, Ezra found the right way on the old path, and in the end Ezra redeemed the time. Before Ezra did these things, the work had ceased. (see Ezra 4:24). Let's proclaim a church fast, like Ezra did, with as much participation as possible. There are many varieties of fasts you can choose.