

Save our country from political insanity

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Unless we all rise now to rebuke the insane political rule of our time, there will be no country for generations to come.

It is no longer a matter of, "I do not want to be involved." We make a statement through sheer quietness and passiveness when every life tapestry goes down the drain during our watch.

Truth be told, the suffering of our people during the Coronavirus pandemic is mainly due to looting, greed and get-rich-quick tender schemes that went through government channels without monitoring.

Maybe the Church's complicity was justifiably because of respect for authority.

Scripture enjoins us to "submit...to governing authorities..."

But the Scripture is quite clear that we "submit" in the context of good governance. That context implies our obedience in terms of contributing to the general welfare of society. This includes voting and payment of our taxes.

However, any authority that harasses, kills, loot, steals and focuses on internal rivalries while governing God's people has little moral authority. That kind of government cannot be a structure as described in Romans 13;1.

Any church leader keeping quiet when the governing authorities do what we currently see happening in South Africa today is equally complicit. The Scripture teaches that St Paul and other apostles refused, at the threat of death, to obey instructions from the authorities that they were not to preach of the Word of God (Acts 27-29).

It is equally evil for any Godly person to have blind nationalism or patriotism that prefers to ignore what is happening.

Church leaders, wherever you are, don't bury your heads in the sand. Lift the Word of God in "teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness." This is the time your voice and action must be clearly heard.

Rev Frank Chikane, speaking at the launch of the Civil Movement "Defend our Democracy," said "the time has come for ordinary citizens to take a stand against what has happened because the people are the last line of defence."

The socio-political confusion and the impasse being created by the revelation of what our political leaders have done when we trusted them is not only frustrating, but depressing to the centre of our human core.

We are not just shocked by the revelations of corruption at Zondo Commission of State Capture. Daily we and our congregations suffer from the deterioration of service delivery, collapse of the infrastructure like water and electricity, low level of local government

leadership, resurgence of crimes like murders, abuse and the killing of children and women, as well as a flourishing drug trade.

They create a sense of helplessness.

Pastors go into the community trying to wear a smile, but deep down, they are affected by the hypocrisy of having to pretend things will get better, when the value and the integrity of how we should be governed is collapsing on our watch.

But, we are not powerless. The fountain of power and resilience is vested by God in Churches.

While they may seem to have limited resources, the church is a permanent constituent and a pillar of a healthy community.

What a pity that some of us pastors support injustice in our own self-interest, masking the Gospel of God so as to appease our masters who feed us. Many of the people responsible for stealing, looting, rape and murder are members of our churches.

A blind eye is turned in return for financial support. Only if we take a stand can our country be healed.

The church has a responsibility as a moral custodian of God's creation.

- The church is represented in almost all spheres of governance. Most of the individuals who are destroying the social fabric through theft and delinquent behaviour have, at some stage, been part of a church. For this reason, the church must be strong in its mission calling of facilitating spirituality, education, justice and reconciliation. These are also the pillars of an ordered society.
- As long as churches are competing to be "bigger and holier than thou," or are caught up in doctrinal rhetoric, they will continue sacrificing their unity in Christ, and will not be seen as the credible "Body of Jesus Christ."
- There is also a practical component. There should be no hungry congregants when churches have so much land at their disposal. The Church has hectares of land lying dormant, which can be profitably and productively utilised for the benefit of the starving community affected by Covid-19 and decades of misgovernance. The church has resourceful people who can rescue people out of poverty through the utilisation of that available land. Many people can be saved if we, the church, are called on to address poverty through utilisation of available land. Nobody must go hungry in such a land of plenty.

People of God, the great Scottish Bible expositor Alexander MacLaren once wrote:

"We may have as much of God as we will. Christ puts the key of the treasure-chamber into our hand, and bids us take all that we want. If a man is admitted into bullion vault of a bank and told to help himself, and comes out with one cent, whose fault is it that he is poor?"

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