

## A SAD DECLINE

It has grieved me much over the years to see the decline of America both in church and state. Some no doubt would say things are as good as they have ever been here in the states, and I wish I could know it to be true, but I cannot. We do not see the degree of godliness even among our leaders that we used to see, or that existed long before we were born.

It is a fact of history that in 1787, eighty-one-year-old Benjamin Franklin addressed Congress over the question of whether small states should have the same representation as large states. He stated he was convinced that Scripture is right when it says, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Psalm 127:1). Then he said, "Gentlemen, I have lived a long time and am convinced that God governs in the affairs of men. If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?" He then made a move that prayer, imploring the assistance of Heaven be held every morning before Congress proceeded with business; and the motion carried.

It is greatly to be regretted that so many in our day seem to so flagrantly deny the power of prayer and very seldom, if ever, implore the Lord's blessings in a meek and submissive way. General Eisenhower once said, "Prayer gives us courage to make the decisions we must make in crisis and then the confidence to leave the result to a Higher Power." The famous English minister, Charles H. Spurgeon, said "Groanings which cannot be uttered, are often prayers which cannot be refused."

May the Lord help us to pray more often and more earnestly, even if it is only with those groans that we cannot put into words (Rom. 8:26). Prayer should never be far from our mouths and from our hearts (See 1st Thess. 5:17).

---Elder Ralph Harris