

KNOCK-KNOCK. WHO'S THERE?

By Marshall Foster

In 1940, in the early days of World War II, England's Prime Minister Winston Churchill was faced with what seemed an inevitable invasion by the forces of Nazi Germany. He told the English people that it was their privilege to stand alone and "save Christian Civilization" from Hitler's Third Reich. They did; and their resolve prevented a land invasion of their island nation. Now, 75 years later, our culture is about to be overwhelmed by evil forces and it is our turn to stand. In this generation, Providence has chosen us to pick up the torch and continue the great cause of building the Kingdom of God.

In his compelling book, *America Alone*, Mark Steyn documents why Western nations find themselves in such a vulnerable position. He presents demographic data revealing how Europeans are facing extinction or slavery under the shroud of Islamic domination. Because of increasingly lower birth rates among the native population, most of the nations of Europe and even much of Asia have chosen what Steyn calls "a one-way ticket on the oblivion express." The nations of Europe are at or below 1.5 births per native European woman. Islamic women in those same countries are giving birth at more than twice that rate. This will lead ultimately to the extinction of Western and Christian culture. This is a fact, and it echoes the observation of historian Arnold Toynbee: "Civilizations are not destroyed; they commit suicide."

The first command of Scripture is to "Go forth and multiply." Steyn says, "A people that won't multiply can't go forth or go anywhere. Those who do will shape the age we live in. Because, when history comes a-calling, it starts with the most basic ques-



tion of all: Knock-knock. Who's there?" Within a generation, in an aging, dying Europe there will be few to answer the door except young Muslims.

How did this happen? Post-war Europe, and to some extent America, turned away from centuries of a culturally transforming Christianity which had produced the greatest freedom and prosperity in history. Instead they chose to rely on a god-like welfare state to provide healthcare, education, care of the elderly, and the forced redistribution of wealth. This mutated societal design has some fatal flaws. It depends on a religious birthrate to sustain it and upon the virtues of voluntary Christian self-government (self-rule) to maintain liberty.

Where is our hope then? Our hope is in the unstoppable, loving power of God which transforms and liberates nations. The Kingdom of God has and will continue to spread regardless of the machinations of men and nations (see Psalm 2).

According to Jesus Himself, His Kingdom will spread to the entire world and live within the heart of every believer. He explains the Kingdom in several parables recorded in chapter 13 of Matthew's Gospel. In one parable He states that the Kingdom is like a mustard seed that will grow to be a tree and the birds will find shelter within it. This represents the small beginnings of His kingdom which grows exponentially over time, providing a place of refuge for people and nations. Next, Jesus teaches that the Kingdom is like leaven which when added to dough permeates the entire loaf of bread. Jesus portrays His Kingdom as growing throughout history and eventually permeating the whole world.

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History verifies this divine prediction. Christ's Kingdom grew from the Twelve to over 20 million disciples by the 4th century. It then peacefully swept into Ireland in 435 A.D. through St. Patrick and transformed a barbarian stronghold from human sacrifice and misery to freedom. Then the Kingdom spread across pagan Europe and beyond, eventually extending to America when we were just a fledgling collection of colonies. In the 19th century, America and England sent missionaries to nearly every nation on earth. Much of Africa, Asia and South America, after millennia in darkness, began to accept the liberating Gospel of Christ. Christianity became the first truly worldwide religion.

Today, Christianity has spread to every continent and is by far the world's largest religion. Well over two billion people identify themselves as Christians. More people came to know Christ in the 20th century than in the preceding 19 centuries combined. The Kingdom is spreading exponentially in the emerging world, far exceeding the growth of Islam. Europe and America, the bulwark of Christianity for centuries, are poised for a spiritual awakening that, by God's grace, may confound the prognosticators and pollsters.

It is God and His church, the army of compassion, which will triumph over evil through the Gospel, discipleship and procreation. We will win this battle, not with fleshly weapons but with spiritual power as we recapture our Savior's vision to go forth and multiply, disciple the nations and teach them to obey all that He has commanded.

May we have the vision and hope that John Calvin expressed while he was in exile 450 years ago in Switzerland. As tens of thousands of Christians were being martyred in France, his homeland, Calvin said in the face of the ensuing chaos: "We



must not judge the stability of God's Kingdom from the present appearance of things, but from the promise, which assures us of its continuance and of its constant increase."

Marshall Foster

People in Other Nations Are Praying... What About Us?



LEFT: 3,500 people gather daily at Prayer Mountain in Paju, South Korea

BELOW RIGHT: Thousands gather in Brazil to join their hearts in intercession for a lost world.



BOTTOM: Tens of thousands of Ethiopians climb Amboricho Mountain (10,500 ft) to pray



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