**Five Keys to Healing the Soul of our Nation**

Dr. Paula Price

When people ask me what I do, I’ve taken to describing myself as a “soulologist.” It’s much better than telling them I’m a pastor. As you might imagine that tends to shut down conversation pretty quickly. But “soulologist” is a word they’ve never heard before, and they’re curious to learn more. ​ As a “soulologist,” I view and touch the soul the way God created it with the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. When people — and nations — have healthy souls, they can think differently and live powerfully. ​ When the soul of a nation is strong, it’s because its citizens unite, and each person’s soul becomes one with the other in the land. What happens to one happens to all. America’s motto on its coins — and its deep aspiration — says it best: “E Pluribus Unum” — out of many, one. ​ Today’s America is further from this than at any time in its history because the America that declared it — the American envisioned by our Founding Fathers — no longer exists. Instead, its melting pot rages and fumes at its very existence, and the soul of our nation becomes ever more divided and feeble. So, what will it take to heal our nation’s struggling soul? I believe there are five keys.

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1. Leaders must take the lead and define precisely the America of today. Until then, treating the soul of our nation is dubious at best. We can’t treat the patient until we diagnose the patient. As with any entity, a household, city, company or nation, it all begins with the leaders, the thinkers, the social engineers, the problem solvers and the visionaries.

2. Leaders must take the lead in recruiting, teaching, training, empowering and commissioning change agents. We must identify the changers committed to America’s healing and restoration. Leaders who conceive change hold power to achieve it by begetting change agents. If leadership is from the head down, then so are people’s answers and solutions.

But America must first find the leaders that want it healed — not the ones laboring for its failure, whether intentional or not. Many calling for the healing of the soul of our nation are peddling ideas that will cause the downfall of our country. These are the destroyers and destabilizers, the ones who must be rooted out to overturn the schemes and tactics sickening the nation’s soul and perforating the land state by state.

3. Leaders must take the lead in peacemaking. Manipulated anger, riotous rages, and anarchy must be replaced with mediation, arbitration and peacemaking. Dissent can be registered without violence and destruction. Given today’s motivational climate, some type of incentive may be needed to induce dissenters to come to the table instead of taking to the streets.

4. Leaders must take the lead in reform and reconciliation. All over the country, strenuous efforts are taking place to improve government, increase cooperation between law enforcement and the community, and reform the judiciary. I have personally witnessed the increase in the training of law enforcement and other public officials that has led to community reconciliation. Laws are being revisited and obsoleted, and some explosive ones are even being repealed. Courts are taking up the change and repair mandate. The mayhem fanned throughout the land notwithstanding, authorities on both sides want to see the change and be the change. The problem is, not everyone wants a healed America, and those that do not must be outvoiced and outmaneuvered.

5. Leaders can only do so much. Reform at the highest levels is critical, but it’s not enough to heal the soul of America. Citizens, too, have a duty to take action to apply healing balm to our nation’s ailing soul. Government and police reform must include civil reform if they are to work. Citizens must be brought face to face with themselves and take responsibility for the means they choose to air their views and provoke change. Those that stoke the flames of unrest should be identified and converted to peace, especially African Americans whose first response is rage and rampage. Dignity and diplomacy have to replace destruction if the soul of America is going to heal.