

LIFE CYCLE OF THE CHURCH
One Nation Under God
Hosea 14:1-9 (NKJV)

1 O Israel, return to the LORD your God, For you have stumbled because of your iniquity;

2 Take words with you, And return to the LORD. Say to Him, "Take away all iniquity; Receive *us* graciously, For we will offer the sacrifices of our lips.

3 Assyria shall not save us, We will not ride on horses, Nor will we say anymore to the work of our hands, '*You are our gods.*' For in You the fatherless finds mercy."

4 "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, For My anger has turned away from him.

5 I will be like the dew to Israel; He shall grow like the lily, And lengthen his roots like Lebanon.

6 His branches shall spread; His beauty shall be like an olive tree, And his fragrance like Lebanon.

7 Those who dwell under his shadow shall return; They shall be revived *like* grain, And grow like a vine. Their scent *shall be* like the wine of Lebanon.

8 "Ephraim *shall say*, 'What have I to do anymore with idols?' I have heard and observed him. I *am* like a green cypress tree; Your fruit is found in Me."

9 Who *is* wise? Let him understand these things. *Who is* prudent? Let him know them. For the ways of the LORD *are* right; The righteous walk in them, But transgressors stumble in them.

As we celebrate our nation's 240th year of independence tomorrow, I can't help but feel we should be so much further along in our societal development. Whether politically, financially, socially, religiously, vocationally or personally, our nation and the very world itself, seem to be slipping away from our collective ideals of global unity, social justice, unilateral peace, and economic prosperity, in addition to environmental harmony.

As a believer, I am convinced that the core issue standing in the way of what mankind has spent its entire existence trying to both understand and resolve, is its need of a relationship with God which can only be achieved through a saving faith in Jesus Christ. Nothing else can satisfy the human soul and its related desires