

Christ in Prophecy

Interview 50: Tom Hughes on the Future of America

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: Is there any hope for America? That question is being asked more and more frequently these days as our nation shakes its fist at God and rebels against His Word. Megachurch pastor Tom Hughes, has written an insightful book in response to this crucial question. Stay tuned for an interview with him.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. My colleague, Nathan Jones, and I have a very special guest today Tom Hughes who is the pastor of a megachurch in San Jacinto, California called 412 Church. Welcome to Christ in Prophecy, Tom.

Tom Hughes: It is great to be here, Dr. Reagan.

Nathan Jones: Good to have you on, Tom, finally in person.

Tom Hughes: In person. This is not just over the TV.

Nathan Jones: Not over the TV. Well, tell us where is San Jacinto? And you have a very interesting name for your church maybe you can explain it.

Tom Hughes: A great pronunciation on the name by the way.

Nathan Jones: Jacinto, thanks to your coaching.

Tom Hughes: Yes, San Jacinto, we are northeast of San Diego, California, and we are just west of Palm Springs. So, we are in between the two. Pretty deserty community.

Dr. Reagan: I was going to say, is that desert area?

Tom Hughes: It is. It gets really hot in the summer. And it's dry. But it's a beautiful place, and a wonderful place to do ministry. But, it is in Southern California so please pray for us in California.

Nathan Jones: Yes, lot of prayers.

Tom Hughes: Because I feel like a missionary out there sometimes. And the more I'm into Bible prophecy the more things I see, wow, how much we need the Lord.

Nathan Jones: Well, is your church's name a missions orientated type name?

Tom Hughes: Well, what happened was it's a Calvary Chapel originally. Still is, we are still within the Calvary Chapel system. But, I wanted a name that conveyed the vision statement, the mission statement. Our mission statement is to win, disciple, and send. And all of the other names were taken. The name of Cornerstone, and Horizon, and all these names are taken, so I wanted something that would really stand out. Convey that vision statement. So, we went with 412 because it is very biblical we based it on Acts 4:12, Hebrews 4:12, and Ephesians 4:12, to win, disciple, and send.

Nathan Jones: Good verses.

Tom Hughes: They are and it causes people to ask well where do you come up with a name like 412? That's a number church. And I say, "Well, it is." And it is a great opportunity to be able to share three Bible verses right off the bat. Of course Acts 4:12, "There is no other name under heaven by which a person can be saved." And then the other two verses. So, it is a real blessing.

Dr. Reagan: So, it gives you a chance to share the Gospel if they ask you the meaning of the church?

Tom Hughes: It is, Dr. Reagan. And people say all the time, "Well, that's not even a biblical name." I say, "You find a more biblical name than the number of our church."

Nathan Jones: Yeah, than Acts 4:12.

Dr. Reagan: At least it's not 410 the shotgun church.

Tom Hughes: No, it's not that. We could have other names but there we go.

Dr. Reagan: Well, we want to talk to you about this new book of yours called, "America's Coming Judgment: Where is Our Hope?" And Tom in this book you make this comment, "The God things now painted as offensive by our society were once the roots that nourished, and anchored our republic." That is a profound statement. Are you saying by that that we were once a Christian nation? Or what are you saying?

Tom Hughes: Well, a few different things just in that statement alone. But with are we a Christian nation? I would say this, I know this can be offensive to some people. I believe our nation was founded upon Christian principles, and founded upon the Word. I mean you can look at the Bible and you can find, ok it was primarily our founding fathers were believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. All of them? We'll get to that in a minute. Was it all of them? But nevertheless, founded on Christian principles. Founded on the very Word of God, the Ten Commandments. So, we look at that. But a Christian nation, I struggle to say we're actually a Christian nation. But founded upon biblical principles, yes. You can say that Israel is a Jewish nation because it is ethnically Jewish. But to say that America is a Christian nation, founded upon biblical principles, absolutely. And it sets the charter for the course of America too because this is our principles.

Dr. Reagan: Well, our whole Constitution was based upon Judeo Christian principles because when you look at the separation of powers, and the balance that they put in there, these men did not trust men. They had the biblical view that man is basically evil and not basically good. And they put all kinds of checks and balances in there to make sure that they could control this power. And that all comes from a Judeo Christian viewpoint.

Tom Hughes: Absolutely. And then when we look at it in today's society, or if you go to Washington right now, we look at the news every day and we can see the problems with men's decision, men's decisions, excuse me. You look at Romans chapter 1 God says, "Professing to be wise I am going to show them to be fools." And that appears to be exactly what is happening. That is what the Founding Fathers were concerned of. We have the Word of God which is our plumb line. It is the truth. And if we were to stay with the Word, and with the truth then we'd be able to stay on that right path. But when men start making up their own rules void of the Word of God then we are going to start having all the problems that we do have. And these things are only going to increase.

Nathan Jones: What about those who deny our Christian heritage in America by saying that the founding fathers were Deists? In other words God wound up the universe and then left, there is no personal God. Is that true? Were the founding fathers Deists?

Tom Hughes: Well, I hear that all the time. I'm sure you do also.

Nathan Jones: Yeah, they weren't Christians they were Deists.

Tom Hughes: Yeah, there were only very few Christians. It's actually just the opposite, most of them were Christians; they were believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. And with the few Deists that there were Thomas Jefferson, and I believe Benjamin Franklin were probably the most famous. And there is two of them there really weren't very many. And even in that as much as they were Deists; meaning God wound up the universe and now man is left up to his own demise which is crazy in of itself. But with that even with Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin they still understood that the Bible had this--it was this plumb line, it guided us. And they understood the truth that was in here. Thomas Jefferson although he created his own Bible so to speak, cut out the words that he liked, and kept them.

Nathan Jones: Took all the miracles out.

Tom Hughes: Yeah, took the things he didn't believe in thought were a little absurd he got rid of those. He still understood that these were true principles in here. And he understood the need to live by them.

Dr. Reagan: Yeah, both of them in their writings emphasize the fact that you simply could not have the kind of government they were setting up without there being a spiritual base. That you had to have, whether they were Christians are not they had to have a spiritual base in this nation, for the system to work.

Nathan Jones: Yeah, and didn't Jefferson say that this nation--democracy could not exist unless we were a moral nation.

Tom Hughes: Yeah.

Nathan Jones: Was it Jefferson?

Dr. Reagan: Well, speaking of Jefferson you put a lot of emphasis in this book called the Declaration of Independence, why?

Tom Hughes: Well the Declaration of Independence I would say is our charter. In fact I think it was Michael Farris who I quote in the book himself, constitutional attorney--but with that so the Declaration of Independence is our charter. And if we understand what a charter is, a charter

charts the course for a ship. It is mapping the course on the ocean. So, you have the Constitution of the United States which tells us here's how things are supposed to operate. And then we have certain laws that are brought in. But, all of them must follow this charter, here's the map. So, everything must be interpreted according to the Declaration of Independence. And ultimately when we look at the Declaration of Independence when we understand it, it's declaring our independence from King George, and at the same time declaring our dependence upon God and the submission to God. So when we look at that we go, okay, so the Constitution must be interpreted under the guidelines of the Declaration of Independence ultimately, declaration of dependence upon the moral God who has founded--our Creator who He is called throughout the founding documents.

Dr. Reagan: Now you assert in your book that America today is under the judgment of God. Why do you believe that?

Tom Hughes: Yeah. Well, I think that when I look at it like this--and I understand this can be somewhat subjective. But if we are to take biblical truth, and biblical principles and just take one thing like abortion just that alone. So what we are experiencing in our country is because of man's press in this country to abort babies we are experiencing all of the repercussions in the breakdown of the family, the economy, we are experiencing all sorts of thing. And much of what I put in the book is really founded upon what we have in the Old Testament principles.

Dr. Reagan: You know you mentioned something there that most people don't understand. You said abortion has an impact upon the economy.

Tom Hughes: Yeah.

Dr. Reagan: Well, look we've killed what? 60 million babies who could be producing today, and paying taxes, and keeping social security for example from going broke.

Tom Hughes: Yeah, we have that principle, right? And social security is another attempt by man to be able to fix man's problems that man created. But when you start looking at abortion and the economy, or the family what happened is in the mindset of people babies, well they are not that important. And so they become not just not important in the womb, they are not important once they're born. So, we have the complete breakdown of family.

Nathan Jones: The love of most will grow cold, right?

Tom Hughes: Absolutely. So, in the last days lawlessness will abound. The love of many will grow cold. And that is where we are. So, now we are raising up kids in the foster system. They find themselves in jails. Our jails are full because we disrespect life as God created it. And when you look at ancient Israel and you find out you know you have the murder of babies in ancient Israel on the arms of Molech for the issue of greed, and sex, and we're ultimately doing the same thing. But it is so sad because our families are suffering. And because the families are suffering we have the complete deterioration within our society.

Dr. Reagan: Well, folks, we are going to take a pause here for just a moment. When we come back I am going to ask Tom to tell us what he thinks is America's greatest danger?

Part 2

Nathan Jones: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and our interview with Pastor Tom Hughes of the 412 Church in San Jacinto, California. We are discussing his new book that is titled, "America's Coming Judgment: Where is our Hope?" Now, Tom on page 136 you say that there is a great danger to the United States. Can you tell us what that danger is?

Tom Hughes: Yeah, let me back it up a little bit, back into the 1700's and understand a little bit about our foundations even pre-Declaration of Independence, and pre-Constitution. When America in its beginning stages began in teaching their kid's one of the school books that was used was the primer. And looking at that I found this phenomenal in all my studies is that the kids were taught how to read based upon biblical things. For example the ABC's you started with A for Adam, in Adam's fall we sinned all. And you go all the way through the alphabet like that. B for Bible. And so forth. You get down to Z all the way through to Z with Zacchaeus climbing the tree, and Jesus he would see. You look at that and you go, wow, could you imagine, just think if that was done in a school today.

Dr. Reagan: But Tom the interesting thing is that in the 1950's when I was in high school our senior English reader was Bible stories with a moral at the end. And that was in the mid-1950's.

Tom Hughes: That's not that long ago.

Dr. Reagan: That's how fast the decline has occurred.

Nathan Jones: And that is our greatest danger then? A switch from Christian teaching to secular?

Tom Hughes: Well it really is. So you fast forward from the 1950's you hit the 1960's God is kicked out of the schools essentially. I mean, but I've heard it well said that as long as there are math test there is always going to be prayer in schools. So no matter what man wants to do--

Nathan Jones: My daughter was doing a lot of praying this morning before her Spanish test.

Tom Hughes: Yeah, no kidding, I had my son praying a lot. I'd say, "You'd better pray over this because you need help." But so we look at that right. So, God's been removed in that what we have is this great moral decline that has just affected everything. So, you could look and say, "Well, some people say well the military is the biggest problem, or it is the economy, or the earthquakes, or the hurricanes." Look it is morality because we have removed God. So it starts with what we've done with God. And these are conscious decisions that our leaders have made. And again you can go all the way back to ancient Israel. In ancient Israel you know Daniel loved God. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego loved God. The Old Testament prophets loved God but the nation still went under judgment because their leaders were the ones who were making the decisions had turned from God and removed God from everything, including the killing of babies. Right? So, we have that. So this is where we are. So there are still some wonderful people in our country but our leaders have said we don't want God and it just gone absolutely to the dark side.

Dr. Reagan: And so fast.

Tom Hughes: And so fast. And you know myself being in California, California seems to be leading the charge on everything that is immoral. And it is heartbreaking just to watch. And I have two young kids, one is in high school and one is in junior high. And you have young

children too and I watch them, wonderful kids but I know what is being taught. I know there are wonderful teachers out there that love the Lord. But the system is so bad.

Dr. Reagan: It broke my heart to watch California when they were debating whether or not to approve same-sex marriage and the churches organized and millions were spent. And you won the election and then one judge, just like that.

Tom Hughes: Yeah. And you know so here it is you look at our government and we are supposed to be a democracy so to speak. You vote. California voters voted in favor of traditional marriage.

Dr. Reagan: Right.

Tom Hughes: And a judge says, "Well, we don't agree with that." And there you have it. And now we are watching still the pendulum of thought in California is still getting further, and further towards the immoral side since that has happened.

Nathan Jones: And is that what the result of sin is; as we pull away from God we reap what we sow. And what we're reaping is what?

Tom Hughes: We are reaping--you sow to the wind you reap the whirlwind. This is exactly what we've done. I have a large garden. I love to garden.

Nathan Jones: Me too.

Tom Hughes: I plant all kinds of fruit trees, plant vegetables and everything. So, if I'm going to plant a particular type of tomato it is going to grow a particular type of tomato. So, we reap what we sow, we have sown to the wind in the immoral things, we are reaping the whirlwind. And again you can look at our prisons. You can look at our schools. You can look at our courts. You can look at the judges. You can look--look at what is going on in Washington right now and it is absolute madness. We look at what is coming out of the entertainment industry. All the way around the entertainment industry.

Dr. Reagan: Speaking of California you have a section of your book titled--about San Francisco that is titled, "Wealth and Decadence." What do you mean by that?

Tom Hughes: Well, I think San Francisco is a great illustration for the problems that we are--that this whole world is facing. So, on the one hand I know this is going to be disgusting to your viewers but on the one hand in San Francisco the homeless situation is so severe that with that you know where do people go to the bathroom and that sort of thing or whatever else? So, they have actually stepped up what's called poop patrols.

Nathan Jones: What?

Tom Hughes: And this is disgusting and so I don't want to--

Nathan Jones: Pooping in the streets?

Tom Hughes: In the streets. On the sidewalks. This is humans. This is not dogs. We think of dog parks and that sort of thing. This is human beings. Right? And some of the infrastructures, the buildings the street lamps, and so forth. This is really disgusting, but from people relieving themselves on the side of buildings and on the side of street lamps and so forth the actual construction is crumbling. And this is happening in San Francisco. So, San Francisco at the

same time is one of the most expensive places on the entire planet that you can live. And I give an example in the book of a gentleman interviewed in an article, his name is Michael; \$700,000 a year salary. Alright, that is a lot of money. And he cannot afford to live in San Francisco. He has to commute 2 ½ hours to work. \$700,000 a year salary, yet when he gets to San Francisco he has to step over this.

Nathan Jones: Well, you think they could afford to build some bathrooms in San Francisco.

Tom Hughes: They can afford to.

Nathan Jones: Some public bathrooms.

Tom Hughes: But you look at that and we start looking at things, you're going you've got to be kidding me. No, this is reality. And I believe what is happening in San Francisco is a magnified picture of what is coming to every part in America. We are watching man's decisions to fix things. Man can only make things worse. Again Romans chapter 1 professing to be wise, God says, "I'll show them to be fools." But it is hard to believe \$700,000 a year, so expensive in San Francisco you can't live there.

Dr. Reagan: Well, I can remember 20-30 years ago when Billy Graham used to say, "If God doesn't judge San Francisco soon he's going to have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah." And in your book you talk about that we are in the days of Sodom.

Tom Hughes: Yeah. Well, indeed when you look at it, you go back to the book of Genesis. You see what happened in Sodom and Gomorrah and you have these--we can tell from how it worked out with Lot there was these men who went around the streets looking for someone they could rape. I don't know how else to put it.

Nathan Jones: Without any law against that?

Tom Hughes: And it seems to be just fine with society. Accepted by society. Right? But what's most fascinating about this--so this is where we are in America on the one hand. But what is most fascinating and most scary about this is when Jesus was alive in the Gospel of Matthew He sends out His disciples into the other communities, the other cities to tell them His word. Right? Give them the hope. If they reject you He says it will worse for them than it was in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. Why is that? Because they have the truth that is coming to them. Sodom did not have the truth. So, when we look at America we've got preachers, we have the Word of God. There are more Bibles sold every single year than any other book, probably than all the other books. When we start looking at history it is just phenomenal the amount of Bibles that are sold. But every single year it is the best seller. And so we have the truth. There's Bibles in homes. But yet we are living like Sodom and Gomorrah.

Dr. Reagan: You know Tom, you and I don't just don't understand because every time I get into a discussion of this with somebody on the other side they always say homosexuality had nothing to do with Sodom and Gomorrah and their judgment. They were a lack of hospitality.

Tom Hughes: Yeah, lack of hospitality. Yeah. How many times have I heard that? So, if we don't even go to Sodom and Gomorrah we can go back to the days of Noah. Right? And look at that. Okay, what was it? You have the violence. You have the rejection of God.

Dr. Reagan: Violence and immorality, those were the two characteristics.

Nathan Jones: Every thought in their mind was evil. Right?

Tom Hughes: Every thought in their minds was evil. So, you still have the same progression.

Dr. Reagan: Well, in your book you say that the chief criminal organization in America today is the government. That is a mouthful.

Nathan Jones: Wow, that is brave.

Tom Hughes: It is. And I don't think many people would disagree with me anymore. When you look at what is going on in Washington. If we were to take the current temperature of Washington and you see we have issues with the FBI. You have issues with Congress. We have what you could call--we have two mob families, the Republicans and the Democrats, I don't know how else you can put it right?

Nathan Jones: They are pretty well linked together in all decision making.

Tom Hughes: Very well linked together, however it is what family is going to come out ahead, or which family are you going to decide you want to be adopted by.

Dr. Reagan: The President said he was going to drain the swamp. And he's discovered that some of the members of his own party are part of the swamp.

Tom Hughes: They are part of the swamp. You know what? Those crocodiles in that swamp are pretty vicious too.

Dr. Reagan: And recently the revelation for example that they had this slush fund at the Treasury Department to pay off the woman who have been harassed by members of Congress using your money, and my money to pay them off.

Tom Hughes: Now this is pretty unbelievable. So we have them preaching their morality. Trying to pretend like they were moral people all along. And now we have what has come up out of Hollywood, what happened in Hollywood has been conveyed over to Congress and to the Senate.

Nathan Jones: Oh, yeah, all politics all levels.

Tom Hughes: And all these politicians saying, "Shame on you, you shouldn't do this." And they are doing far worse things behind the closed doors. Now it doesn't surprise us I don't think. But it is finally coming out in public. And God I believe is exposing the sins of America giving us an opportunity to get right with Him too.

Dr. Reagan: Well, I want you to explain a statement that is on page 200 of your book. It is a very interesting statement in which you say--I've got it written down here, "When a nation falls under the curse of Romans 1 it can't make laws fast enough to keep up with the evil growing in the hearts of human beings."

Tom Hughes: Yeah. Yeah.

Nathan Jones: Which results in totalitarianism?

Tom Hughes: It's the direction everything is going. You know? And we know biblically the direction this will go. I think George Orwell "1984" with his predictions in that book we are watching this happen.

Nathan Jones: It is getting that way in Great Britain.

Tom Hughes: Yeah, we are in America. So, I gave an example in the book of this. In 2011 there were 40,000 laws that were passed. These are laws regarding the 50 states and territories. They were not federal laws. They were not city or county laws. 40,000 laws in 2011, not including federal, or city, or county. You look at that and you think, okay, this is man's attempt because we are so depraved we've gone so far south. You can't do this. You shouldn't do that. And so we start making law. We can't keep the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are removed from schools and court houses and everywhere. And yet, since we can't keep the Ten Commandments let's add 40,000 laws per year and try to keep them. It's impossible. The lawmakers can't keep up. How do you interpret the laws? What was really meant to be said in those things? That takes us back to the Declaration of Independence.

Nathan Jones: The Bible's got it right, love God, and love each other; vertical, and horizontal and it covers everything.

Tom Hughes: Two things.

Nathan Jones: Two things.

Dr. Reagan: This reminds me of a brief video, you probably saw it that was put out by a Harvard University professor who teaches in the Business Administration Department of Harvard University. And in this he talked about how he was conversing with a Chinese student that he had. And the student said, "You know the thing I've noticed that is a difference between the United States and China is all these churches. Churches everywhere. And the fact that you all put so much importance upon following moral law and that sort of thing." And he said, "You know in our society we don't have that so we have to have a totalitarian dictatorship to--" And this Harvard professor said, "Yes, that is exactly right." If you don't have the moral foundation then you can't hire enough policemen.

Tom Hughes: Absolutely.

Nathan Jones: Well does that mean there's no hope? I mean would you say we are sliding towards totalitarianism. Have we reached the point of no return?

Tom Hughes: I believe there's always hope. And I would liken it to this. I'm a pastor and I visit a lot of people in the hospitals over the years. And I believe America is in a lot of trouble, but I always believe there's hope. But where I would liken America to possible being, and probably being; is when I've been with families when they've had to remove the breathing apparatus. And you watch a body--for anybody who's ever witnessed it it's a horrific thing to watch. Very painful, the heart break from the family. But the patient that is dying right before their eyes. Then they begin to take their own breathes, and their last gasps. And they are violent, and they're noisy. And America seems to be there. We are taking our last breathe, and it is really in a very real sense it is violence. We are seeing it in the streets. But it's also you wonder if America can survive. This is what I do know. Jesus loves us. And God forgives sinners. And there's always a chance to get right with God. There is always hope in the Lord. He's desire is that none should perish. There is still hope in America. There is still preachers preaching the Word. There are still people that are being forgiven. There are still people that are feeling convicted of their sin. There is always hope. And I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ loves people and wants to save even America.

Dr. Reagan: Tell our viewers how they can get in touch with you and get a copy of your book.

Tom Hughes: You can get a copy of the book through hopeforourtimes.org. That is our website hopeforourtimes.org. The book is there. The book is also on Amazon, and wherever else it is too.

Dr. Reagan: What is your churches e-mail, or your website?

Tom Hughes: Website is hopeforourtimes.com. Church e-mail is 412church.org. [412church](http://412church.org) you can get hold of all sort of things there.

Dr. Reagan: Okay, thank you.

Closing

Dr. Reagan: Well folks that is our program for this week. I hope it's been a blessing to you and I hope the Lord willing you'll be back with us again next week. Until then this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries saying, "Look up, be watchful for our redemption is drawing near."