

Vote for Righteousness

Proverbs 14:34: Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

Proverbs 16:12: It is an abomination for kings (politicians) to commit wicked acts (pass wicked laws), for a throne is established on righteousness.

Proverbs 20:28: Loyalty and truth preserve the king (politicians), and he upholds his throne by righteousness.

One Nation Under God

*Hold up a dollar bill. It reads "IN GOD WE TRUST." Why haven't atheists tried to remove it? Because they cannot rewrite our history.

Righteousness exalts a nation; sin is a reproach to any people. We are a nation under great reproach and consequently we are living in turbulent times. If we don't cast our vote for righteousness in our own lives first and then in our nation, I fear what will happen to us.

Let's go back in history for just a moment to another turbulent time so that we might see what part God plays in politics.

It was an unbearably hot day in July 1787 at the Constitutional Convention; just eleven years after America had declared her independence. Delegates from our thirteen states had gathered to create a historic document to unite them under one government. Sweat soaked their clothes so badly...they had to change their shirts twice a day! And their tempers, as torrid as the day, were flaring.

Men who were formerly side-by-side in their battle against England were now at war against each other! These states were anything but "united," and they weren't ready to be under any authority but their own.

A personal letter from James Warren to a friend in England described America's condition at the time: "Money is the only object attended to, and the only acquisition that commands respect. Patriotism is ridiculed; integrity and ability are of little consequence. . . .We are now in a state of anarchy and confusion bordering on civil war." (Does this sound troublingly familiar? There are Marxist rioters in American cities and it will get worse after this election.)

At this historic meeting, 81-year old Benjamin Franklin decided to give the document they were creating one last shot. He addressed George Washington and the assembly:

“Mr. President, the small progress we have made after four or five weeks close attendance & continual reasonings with each other—our different sentiments on almost every question, several of the last producing as many noes as ays, is methinks a melancholy proof of the imperfection of the Human Understanding. We indeed seem to feel our own want of political wisdom, since we have been running about in search of it. We have gone back to ancient history for models of Government, and examined the different forms of those Republics which, having been formed with the seeds of their own dissolution, now no longer exist. And we have viewed Modern States all round Europe but find none of their Constitutions suitable to our circumstances.

“In this situation of this Assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights to illuminate our understandings? In the beginning of the Contest with G. Britain, when we were sensible of danger we had daily prayer in this room for Divine protection. Our prayers, Sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending providence in our favor.

“To that kind providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful friend? or do we imagine that we no longer need his assistance?

(Pause and silence)

I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth- that God Governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the sacred writings, that “except the Lord build the House they labour in vain that build it.” I firmly believe this;

and I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better, than the Builders of Babel: We shall be divided by our little partial local interests; our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and bye word down to future ages. And what is worse, mankind may hereafter from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing Governments by Human wisdom and leave it to chance, war and conquest.

“I therefore beg leave to move that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the Clergy of this City be requested to officiate in that Service.”

The motion was seconded. Thus began the tradition of both the Senate and House of Representatives of the U.S. Congress opening each daily session with prayer to God requesting his aid in governing the USA.

They eventually completed the Constitution in 1789 and with it the first 10 Amendments known as the “Bill of Rights” in 1791.

In this time of “cancel culture” and “political correctness” when so many Christians are apathetic about taking a stand for righteousness, we need to be reminded of how God governs the affairs of men...how He cares about the state of our nation and longs for us to turn from sin and return to Him, acknowledging His sovereignty.

We are ONE NATION UNDER GOD according to the Pledge of Allegiance. I remember reciting the pledge in school facing the flag with my right hand over my heart! (A similar pledge was first composed by Captain George Thatcher Balch, a Union Army Officer during the Civil War and later a teacher of patriotism in New York City schools. The pledge went through various revisions and “under God” was added in 1954.)

Separation of Church & State

Church = All churches, Protestant and Catholic.

State = Government, national, state, and local.

Why is the Church so timid and afraid to proclaim the truth of God's word in the public square, to the culture? The myth of the separation of Church and State has silenced the Church. Also, the tax-exempt status of the Church has shut its mouth. (One of the Democrat candidates for President actually said the a church should lose its tax-exempt status if it refused to accept and perform same-sex marriages.)

Jefferson wrote a letter to the Danbury Baptist Association in 1802 to answer a letter from them written in October 1801. The Danbury Baptists were a religious minority in Connecticut, and they complained that in their state, the religious liberties they enjoyed were not seen as immutable rights, but as privileges granted by the legislature — as "favors granted." Jefferson's reply did not address their concerns about problems with state establishment of religion — only of establishment on the national level. The letter contains the phrase "wall of separation between church and state," which led to the shorthand for the Establishment Clause that we use today: "Separation of church and state."

Here is the portion of Jefferson's letter that mentions separation of Church and State:

"Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should "make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," thus building a wall of separation between Church & State."

The phrase isn't in the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution, but a metaphorical "wall of separation" describes the purpose of the First Amendment when correctly understood.

Thomas Jefferson's "wall of separation" letter was about the division of labor. Separation means the Church has its assignment from God, and the State has its assignment from God. The State cannot administer the Sacraments nor fulfill Christ's Great Commission. God's assignment for the State is to maintain law and order and justice and to use force to restrain evil.

When Jesus was asked a test question about taxes, he held a coin with Caesar's image and he said, "Give to Caesar what belongs to him, and to God what belongs to Him." In other words, Caesar (i.e. government) has his assignment from God, and Judaism has its assignment. (Be a witness for God and pay the tax to maintain the Temple and its priesthood.)

Paul described God's assignment for the State (and Church): 1 Timothy 2:1-7: *First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle, a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.*

The only way we can live "a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way" is if the State performs its assignment from God.

(I am quoting long passages of Scripture to keep the verses I want to highlight in context.)

Here's the State's assignment, Romans 13:1-7: *Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. **For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad.** Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. **But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.** Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.*

The State's assignment from God is to maintain law and order and use force to restrain evil. It is to reward good behavior and punish evil behavior. We are seeing the failure of the State in its God ordained assignment in American cities - LA, Portland, Seattle, Minneapolis. We see governors and mayors who fail to maintain law and order and refuse to use force to restrain evil. (Always vote for a strong military and any government agency that maintains law and order - CIA, FBI, border patrol. Do not vote for any politician who wants to defund the police. They are the "thin blue line" that protects us from evil.)

Jefferson's "wall of separation" also means there must be no state church.

The Danbury Baptists of Connecticut were concerned about President Jefferson's understanding and application of the First Amendment. The Federalist-Congregationalists of Connecticut had much more power in the state than the small group of Baptists. Jefferson assured them that the First Amendment created a metaphorical "wall of separation" and the Federal Government would never establish a state church.

Separation of church and state has been misused by Supreme Court judges who do not fear God. It now means the separation of God and government. Separation of God from government leads to political tyranny and moral anarchy. Whatever sinful people want can become the law of the land; for example, liberal divorce laws, abortion, and same-sex marriage. (The perfect example of government without God is the Communist Party of China.)

When the state assumes autonomy from God it is the duty of the Church to remind the government it is accountable to God. The church is the conscience of the state. Because the human conscience is under the power and deception of sin it needs to be convicted by the word of God. The conscience of the state needs to be informed and convicted by the word of God. The OT prophets spoke the word of God to the kings of Israel (e.g. Nathan & King David, Elijah & King Ahab, Isaiah & King Hezekiah). Sometimes the kings killed the prophets. John the Baptist and Jesus condemned King Herod as a corrupt politician. John condemned Herod for his adultery and told him to repent. John lost his head. (See Matthew 14:1-13.) Being the conscience of the State is dangerous, but the Church must fear God and not man.

Vote for Righteousness

What does it mean to vote for righteousness? RIGHTeousness is doing what is right before God; it's doing what is right according to God's word.

I listened to a message by R. C. Sproul. He made two points about voting. One point I knew, but the other surprised me.

First, don't vote according to your selfish desires.

As a Christian you have an obligation on your conscience that non-Christians don't have. It's an obligation to vote for righteousness.

The word "vote" comes from the Latin *votum* which originally meant a vow, wish, or promise made to a god. So now it means an expression of a person's wish or choice with regard to a proposal or candidate. So, think of voting as making a promise to God to support what is righteous. When you go to vote you are not there to vote for what will necessarily benefit you. A vote is not a license to impose your selfish desires on the rest of the country. You have the duty to vote for what is right.

How many of you believe in the sanctity of life? It's a moral and political issue. Moral issues are also political issues.

Do you believe in the sanctity of marriage as God created it? It's a moral and political issue.

Vote for righteousness means to vote for the sanctity of life and marriage. You cannot vote for a candidate who supports abortion. That would be a vote for unrighteousness and offensive to God. Life begins at conception. Abortion violates a preborn child's 5th Amendment right to life.

The 5th Amendment protects the criminally accused by requiring indictment by a grand jury, prohibiting double jeopardy and forced self-incrimination, and forbidding deprivation of "life, liberty, or property, without due process of law"; bars the taking of private property for public use without "just compensation"

["**No person shall be** held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor **be deprived of life, liberty, or property,**

without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation."]

Here's how the Bible says it: Proverbs 31:8-9: *Speak up for those who have no voice, for the justice of all who are dispossessed. Speak up, judge righteously, and defend the cause of the oppressed and needy.*

The sanctity of marriage is the glue that holds society together. Any law that weakens or destroys marriage as God ordained it is unrighteousness. This includes easy divorce laws and not just same-sex marriage. The first modern no-fault divorce law was enacted in Russia in 1917 with the Communist revolution. TN has uncontested no-fault divorce laws due to "irreconcilable differences." It is advertised as the easiest and fastest way to get a divorce. You can do it online! A contested divorce is much more complicated and will require payment of significant attorney fees.

Second, don't vote as a lobby group of one. "Vote your pocketbook." (Vote in a way that helps you financially or don't buy as a boycott.) Vote for whoever promises to give you the most government money. Vote for the guy who promises to tax the rich more and the poor less or nothing. Our income tax structure is unethical and inherently unjust. God created a flat tax of 10% (to maintain the Temple and priesthood). The rich paid much more and the poor paid less, but they paid according to the same percentage, 10%. It is the politics of envy that legalizes theft. It is stealing. "You shall not steal." A Christian should not vote to fill his own pocketbook at someone else's expense. We have lobby groups that have created this inequity. Our unethical and inherently unjust tax system will continue until we have a flat tax. - We must all give an account before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ for what we did as His servants in this world.

Vote for the preservation of our Constitution.

James Dobson wrote, "This election is about the Constitution and the immutable, God-given rights it protects."

I hold the Bible in my right hand and the Constitution in my left hand. The Constitution protects our immutable, God-given rights.

One political party wants to corrupt our form of government to gain more control. This party lives by the mantra "The end justifies the means."

First, it wants to “pack the court” with liberal progressive judges because they cannot pass the legislation they want in the Legislative branch of government (Congress and House of Reps). The rule of law is the foundation of our Republic. A critical threat to our country’s constitutional order is an activist judiciary that usurps powers properly reserved to the people through other branches of government. Our Supreme Court has already deprived the “preborn” of their 5th Amendment right (i.e. deprived of LIFE, liberty, or property, without due process of law).

Second, it wants to remove the “electoral college” and use only a popular vote. This would disenfranchise many states. The most populous states with big cities would determine national elections.

Make yourself aware of issues that affect your Constitutional freedoms.

Prayer for government officials: 1 Timothy 2:3-7: *This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle, a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.* Do you pray for government officials?

When they do the work assigned to them by God and we live in peace and security it makes it easier for the Church to grow and share the Gospel. God desires all people to have knowledge of the truth and be saved.

The man Christ Jesus gave himself as a ransom for you. A ransom is a price paid to free a captive or computer files (ransomware).

We are held captive by Satan. But more significantly we are held captive by the wrath of God, the just punishment we are due for our sin and offending God’s glory. When Jesus paid the ransom price with his death, the justice of God was satisfied, and we could be freed from Satan’s captivity.

The greatest ransom price ever paid was a room full of gold. Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro demanded a ransom for the Incan king Atahualpa. The Incans filled a room with gold - in today’s value, \$2 billion. Now it’s ransomware and some states have paid up to \$500,000.

Jesus paid the greatest ransom of all with his blood, not money.

Do you believe in the One Mediator between God and sinful people?