

THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE POLITICS OF OUR TIME

(You can't resist the devil when you're not submitted to God)

Recent events have underscored the need to focus in on the Bible principles of dealing with the present world political situation. In the U.S., what seemed like political gains by Christian conservatives has evaporated by the simple decision of one man. On the world scene, the U.N. has shown its inability to deal with the problems of our time by placing those countries with the worst human rights records in charge of overseeing violations of human rights. What should be our reaction? Do what Jesus told us to do. Seek the Kingdom.

God is still on the throne. All is not lost. God has a plan that cannot be defeated. Jesus understood this. He came to earth when the present world political system was not just evil, the leader actually claimed to be a god. What did He do? Did He try to change the world by running around decrying the evil of worshipping the emperor? Did He try to change things by placing a godly emperor in charge, or becoming the emperor Himself? No!! He focused on The Kingdom of God.

As Jesus said, His Kingdom "is not of this world." It will never be established by the worlds political system. It will only be established by carrying out God's plan.

Why do the attempts to establish righteousness through reforming the world political system fail? They fail because they too often have the wrong focus. They focus on external appearances and laws rather than the hearts of men. Jesus understood this. That is why He did not focus on the worldly politics of His time, but on the Kingdom. He did not come just preaching salvation; He came preaching the Kingdom. He also told us His priority should be our priority. He told us clearly that to defeat the enemy of our souls, who is responsible for the wickedness of the political system; we must be part of His Kingdom. We must be operating under the leading of His Spirit from a heart that is totally surrendered to do His will no matter what the cost. We cannot defeat the enemy simply by resisting him. We must be submitted to God and His will before we can resist the devil and overcome him.

The reason most Christians in the U.S. want to reform the political system is so we will not lose the American way of life. They are not burdened with reaching the lost masses of humanity, but with fear of losing their materially comfortable life style. They are not surrendered to God to do his will. They think of Him simply as some benevolent daddy in the sky who is supposed to bless them with what they want in this life, and take them to heaven when they die. They do not know they were saved to fulfill God's divine purpose for their lives. They don't realize that true success in life is finding and fulfilling God's will. Their plans are not birthed by the Spirit of God, but by their own fleshly desires. The results of what they do are very temporary because they do not produce the real changes that are needed.

Jesus showed us how to change society. With almost no money, no big organization, and in a relatively short period of time, He made an impact on the world that is still felt today. He left us with a plan that when carried out has made a tremendous impact on many nations around the world. It was not a plan to produce political reform, but heart change. It has four simple steps: pray, share the word, make disciples, and minister to needs.

Prayer consists of basically three things. First we should pray that we are personally sold out to Jesus 100%, and seek to repent of anything that would keep us from being all we should be for Jesus and fulfilling His purpose for our life. Secondly we should pray for others, that they would be sold out to Jesus 100%, and seek to repent of anything that would keep them from being all they should be for Jesus and fulfilling His purpose for their life. Finally we should pray for those in authority. We should pray that they will lead their nations in such a way that they would facilitate people being sold out to Jesus 100%, and seeking to repent of anything that would keep them from being all they should be for Jesus and fulfilling His purpose for their lives.

Sharing the word consists simply of telling others the truth of God they need to hear, as we have opportunity, with love, grace and humility. It can be simply speaking to someone at work, school or

elsewhere as we go about our daily task. It can be giving them a living example by the way we respond to life situations, and by our lifestyle. It can be putting a copy of the written word in their hands so God can speak to them as they read. If we have opportunity, it can be speaking the word publicly to large or small groups. It is planting the seed of truth that will turn on the light and dispel the darkness in people's souls.

Discipleship involves spending time with God so that we learn and walk in the BASIC BIBLE PRINCIPLES of personal life, family life, Church life, evangelism, discipleship, and ministry. It also involves helping others learn to walk in these principles as we have opportunity.

Ministering to needs is simply meeting the physical, material, mental, emotional, and spiritual necessities of people as we have opportunity and resources. This should be a Kingdom work. It should always be done for the purpose of showing them the love of Jesus, and bringing them into relationship with Him. It should not be done as good works to get favor with God or impress others with what a good person we are.

Simply put, this is God's plan for changing the world and establishing His Kingdom. It has been and can be carried out despite the politics of this world. To carry it out we must be surrendered and submitted to Him, and live for The Kingdom.

In closing we should make it clear that we are not saying that Christians shouldn't be involved in politics. Thank God there are many Godly people whom He has called to serve in the political arena. As good citizens of heaven we must take advantage of every opportunity we have to be a Godly influence on the politics of this present age. Daniel, Joseph and Cornelius are good examples of this, just to name a few. We praise God for those who feel led of God to track what is happening in current politics. They are God's means of helping us know how to pray for those in authority. What we are saying is, that our hope is not in reforming the present political system, but in establishing The Kingdom of God in the hearts of men by carrying out His plan. If we submit to God we can resist the devil. He will flee and God will bring the victory.

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Luke 8:5-15*