

# **In light of the coming election**

From prayer 10/24

Preached via video 10/25/2020

## **Introduction**

- As I share this message, we are just a little over a week from an historic election here in the United States.
- We are facing political division, the likes of which I've never seen
- In addition, there are economic stresses and global pressure as the world looks to us and waits for the outcome of this vote.
- Finally we are combating a pandemic - which is taking the lives of hundreds of thousands of Americans!
- What are we to do?
- As I was praying this week for our church and this nation, I believe the Lord gave me a message to share for American Christians today

## **Message**

### **Text**

- I want to base my thoughts on the truth Paul asserts in Romans 13:1 (I am sharing today from the NIV)

- Here we read **Rom 13:1 (NIV)** (1) *Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.*
- Paul was writing to believers who were at that very time being persecuted by the Roman emperor - the ruler of the world
- My goal today is not to expound on this particular text, but to use its truth and draw some biblical conclusions and applications for the day in which we live.

## **God is in control of the government**

- Point of the passage (and the verses that follow) is that God is in control of the civil authorities!
- No matter who wins the election - and the leadership that is established as a result, God is the one who puts the people in place
- **Note:** He works through us! We should be praying for this election and exercise our right to vote. More on this later
- No matter what happens on Election Day (November 3), know this - God is the one who chooses the leadership of this nation!

## **Sometimes he allows evil to reign**

Given the assertion made by Paul in Romans 13:1, then this is also true. Sometimes God allows *evil* to reign. I know this is hard to accept - but it is absolutely biblical. I want to cite three examples from Scripture for this point (and explain the different reasons God allows it)

## **To bring repentance through discipline**

- The Bible is filled with examples of this truth.

- It's part of the cyclic theme of judges - where God's people would fall away, and he'd allow an enemy to oppress and rule over them until they'd repent, etc.
- We recently read Isaiah 3,
- See the opening of Isaiah 3 - where God was going to give them ineffective leaders as a consequence of their rebellion against him
- **Point:** God uses the civil authorities to call his people back to himself. The role of the wicked leader in this case is to cause God's people to return to him!

### **To prepare a people for wrath and judgment**

- Sometimes God uses wicked leaders to harden people's hearts for judgment
- This is a harder one for us to understand, but consider the example of Pharaoh. His hard heart ultimately brought judgment on an entire nation. Even his own advisors encouraged him to repent - but he refused to listen and the nation suffered.
- Consider **Rom 9:17 (NIV)** (17) *For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: "I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth."*
- **Point:** Sometimes the actions of the wicked leaders God allows are the beginning of the end!

### **As an opportunity for his glory**

- Just like Pharaoh - whose immoral actions and hard heart prepare people for God's wrath - they also brought the Lord glory
- God revealed himself not only to Egypt, but to Israel through his actions. In fact the entire promised land became aware of his awesome glory and power.
- God gaining glory through the actions of evil leaders is a third and final biblical reason why He allows immoral, ungodly leaders.

- The ultimate fulfillment of this is when the antiChrist rules - but Jesus will come and destroy him and establish his earthly kingdom.
- See **2 Thess 2:8 (NIV)** (8) *And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.*
- **Note:** the Lord has given me a message from this passage (2nd Thess 2:1-12) for the church. I hope to share it in person with you when the Lord permits.
- **Point:** Sometimes God is preparing to gain glory as he triumphs over evil and Christ is exalted.

## He will protect his people

I don't want this message to make us fearful or discourage us. God is in control of politics - and as His children - we are under his protection

## Not destined for wrath

- Let me make this distinction for the people of God: we are not here to be consumed by God's wrath
- See **1 Thess 5:9-10 (NIV)** (9) *For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. (10) He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.*
- He sent Jesus to take away the wrath we deserve. By faith in his blood - we are saved.

## Historically

- There are so many biblical illustrations of the truth that *God protects and preserves his people.*
- We are reading Jeremiah - who stood opposed as he proclaimed God's message to the people. They hated him for it, had him arrested, etc. When judgment came via the king of Babylon, Jeremiah was saved and spared!

- God has protected his remnant through everything and every trouble.
- He spared the people of Israel - protecting them from the very plagues that brought judgment on Egypt.
- See the end **Rev 12:11 (NIV)** *(11) They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.*
- It is prophesied that we will overcome through the blood and the word and a fearlessness!

### **As these days unfold**

- So no matter what happens with this election, He will see us through
- We trust in the Lord our God - the only Sovereign.
- We don't put our trust in the president or the elected officials - our help comes from the Lord
- **Psalm 121:1-2, 7-8 (NIV)** *(1) A song of ascents. I lift up my eyes to the hills--where does my help come from? (2) My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. ... (7) The LORD will keep you from all harm--he will watch over your life; (8) the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.*
- Fear not little flock - the Lord has chosen to love us!

## **Application**

Let me close by making some applications for the believer in this hour in America.

### **Repent**

- Time for the American church to get right with God
- No more "playing religion"

- Let's return to a relationship with Jesus as our first priority
- Let's once again live an authentic, biblical Christianity with biblical priorities!

## Pray

- This is still true **2 Chron 7:14 (NIV)** *(14) if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*
- We need a healing in our land
- **1 Tim 2:1-3 (NIV)** *(1) I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone-- (2) for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. (3) This is good, and pleases God our Savior, Regardless of the leadership God establishes - we should pray*

## Influence

- We are the salt of the earth the light of the world.
- Without preaching that passage (Matt 5:13-15) the bottom line is we are supposed to be making a difference in the world
- We cannot do that if we are not exercising our influence in the world
- Love - one another, the souls from whom Christ died!
- **Note:** Vote biblically. This election is about more than two candidates, it's about two very different views of America. As a believer we must vote, and the guideline should not be who will do best for me, but who will permit and protect the welfare of God's people!

## Respect and honor the government God has established

- One of the take aways from meditating on Romans 13:1 is this truth: if we respect God. We will respect that authority He has established!
- Our text was from Romans 13, and if you will study the opening 7 verses, you will see that's the point Paul is trying to make.
- **Truth:**Disrespect for authority is disrespect for God
- Peter urges Christians in the middle of persecution - to respect their leaders! See **1 Peter 2:13-17** Where he tells believers to *Submit yourselves to every authority, and to honor the king*. In so doing - we will *silence the ignorant talk of foolish men*
- It grieves me when Christians are disrespectful to the leadership God has established. No matter what happens with this election - as a Christian we are to respect authority!

## Fear not

- Finally don't be afraid
- As God's child you are under His protection and He will take care of you
- Fear is the enemy's tool
- Don't take your eyes off of Jesus - our true King, glorious Savior, ever-present Friend and Shepherd of our souls

## Prayer