

TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Don Taylor /Opening Prayer by: Walden David

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Michael Simmons

#47 Holy, Holy, Holy

#549 There Is Sunshine In My Soul Today

Scripture Reading by: Rock Cary

#349 Ten Thousand Angels

Lord's Supper and Contribution

#590 Jesus Is All the World to Me

Sermon: "Christ: The Power of God"

1 Corinthians 1:22-25

#940 Only a Step

#535 The Glory Land Way

Closing Prayer by: Chris Young

Welcome by: Don Taylor

Evening Assembly Song Leader: Michael Simmons

#552 Have Thine Own Way

#622 Ring Out the Message

Scripture Reading: Brooks McKelroy

Prayer by: Daniel Balch

#611 Heavenly Sunlight

Sermon: "The Parables of Jesus: Priceless"

Matthew 13:44-46

#701 My Jesus, I Love Thee

#948 I Am Resolved

Closing Prayer by: David Smith

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 6:00pm — Worship

Wednesday: 10:00am — Ladies Bible Class, 7:00pm — Bible Study Classes

October 21, 2018

"Stand Firm in...Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

The State of the Church

For several weeks, we have considered Biblical principles that help guide us politically. We examined the sovereignty of God and the Lordship of Christ. Now let's turn our attention to the political status that accompanies being God's people.

The church is God's holy nation (**1 Pet 2:9-10**), the place where the Lordship of Christ is recognized. Christians live in this world as *strangers and aliens* (**1 Pet 2:11**) - those who define their reality as rooted in God's empire rather than any earthly kingdom - *for our citizenship is in heaven* (**Phil 3:20**). A number of implications emerge from this understanding.

First, as the center of identity, God receives primary allegiance. Other authorities and loyalties are relativized for Christians. This draws on a great stream of Biblical tradition seen in familiar examples: three Jewish boys refused to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's image and Daniel continued to pray because the laws they broke, though enacted by legitimate authorities, specifically enjoined an obedience to rulers over God. Peter states this principal unequivocally when the apostles are called before the Sanhedrin to account for proclaiming the name of Jesus: *We must obey God rather than men* (**Acts 5:29**).

This outlook entails a trust in God rather than in the mechanisms of human power. While exemplified most prominently by Jesus, it is characteristic of God's people throughout Scripture. In calling Abraham out of Ur, God asked him to leave the security of the foremost civilization of his day for a life centered completely on trust in God. This stance characterizes Israel in her earliest days, recognizing God alone as responsible for deliverance from Egyptian bondage. It comes to the forefront under Joshua and the Judges, with God fighting on behalf of his people and giving them victory when they hope in him.

By choosing to be ruled by a human king, Israel effectively decides to opt for human power and wisdom—to be like the nations around her—and reject this way of life characterized by dependence on God as their ruler (**1 Sam 8:7**). Samuel warns of the negative consequences that will follow; nevertheless, when they persist in their course, God does not abandon Israel, but attempts to guide those who rule the nation. Kings prosper when they rely on God; they fail when they trust their own strength.

In establishing his people in Christ, God reasserts this principle. God's reign has arrived in a new way, and those who are citizens of his nation must depend on him alone, even in the most trying of circumstances. To be God's people is to give him allegiance, obedience, and trust above all else.

Our Sick

Patrick Smith, Gayle Coleman's brother in law is in rehab.

Frances Petree has been placed in hospice care at Magnolia Place Health Care

Continued Prayers

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Gwen Pettit, Gary Nielsen, Harold Cryer, Steve Ward, Jackie David, Frank & Tina Garcia, Bill Lunceford, Eric Davis, J. P. Williams, Mark Wilcox, Robert White, Dayla Hale, Caitlin Smith, Phillip Cottle

Shut Ins

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Pauline Taylor, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Ronnie Rubit, Joe Leonard, Dr. Ronald Davis, Frances Petree

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Mwanza, Africa, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Plastic Bags

The Food Bank is in need of plastic grocery bags. A barrel is in the foyer.

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meet Monday, Oct. 22nd at 7:00 pm.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, Nov. 6th at 8:30 am.

Homecoming is Sunday, Oct 28th. We will be having a meal in the family life center after morning service. The meal will be catered and we will need to provide bread and desserts.

Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to the family of Pat Henley. She passed away last week and the funeral was Saturday.

Thank You

Dear Church family,
We would like to thank everyone for the cards, the visits, phone calls and the prayers since I have been out. Especially the cards from the kids Sunday School Class, they have made his days brighter.
In Christian love, Phillip & Louise Cottle

Communion Preparation: Kristi Burgess
Nursery Attendants: Pat Hobbs

Communion Preparation for Sunday, Oct. 28th: Barbara Cantu
Nursery Attendants for Sunday, Oct. 28th: Lynette Ward, Debra Faneros

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Secondly, because of this orientation, Christians will subject themselves to civil rulers as a manifestation of their obedience to God (**1 Pet 2:13-17**). This is a particular aspect of a larger ethic of subordination enjoined on Christians based on the teaching and example of Christ, particularly as exemplified in his death (**1 Pet 2:21-25**). Christ submitted to the machinations of the earthly authorities. He did so voluntarily, trusting himself to God against the powers of this world. As he identified with his people in paying their penalty, so are they called to identify with him in living out his example in their life.

This is a defining attribute of God's people, seen not only in Peter's injunction but in the social codes in **Col 3:18-4:1** and **Eph 5:21-6:9**, for example. Broadly construed, the ethic of Jesus and the NT is characterized by what John Howard Yoder called "revolutionary subordination." Whether the relationship is between husband and wife, master and servant, or king and subject, this idea of radical submission is pervasive; it does not depend upon the worth of the one being served, nor is it out of fear or compulsion, but is rendered voluntarily in reflection of a Lord who emptied himself in self-sacrifice, taking the form of a servant, and in token of obedience to the God who is sovereign over all.

As such, subjection to earthly rulers is urged in other familiar NT passages. Paul makes the same demand, grounding it explicitly in God's sovereignty (**Rom 13:1**). God makes use of existing political structures to ultimately accomplish his purpose – he is in control in the end, and to him alone fear is due (**Rom 13:7**). Jesus instructs his followers to *Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's* (**Mk 12:17**). Caesar has the right to collect a tax; repaying God what is due, based on his *likeness and inscription* (**Mk 12:16**) is offering one's very life in his service (**cf. Gen 1:26**).

The final implication of being citizens of God's nation is that this is a visibly counter-cultural status: the rest of the world will note the way of life characterized by trust in God alone, humble subordination, and good works. The goal of this witness is that others will be convinced to glorify God – that is, that they will be converted and decide to join God's people too (**1 Pet 2:11-12**). This is much like Jesus' call to be salt and light and do good deeds (**Matt 5:13-16**). God's people must not lose their identity by giving their loyalty to another Lord, becoming like the rest of the world, but they cannot just withdraw from the world either – they must be visible through their actions, inviting others into the community.

In sum: to truly be God's holy nation, the church must practice subjection to human rulers, trusting in God's power and sovereignty over the nations and following the submissive, non-coercive example of its Lord, in hope that the world will be drawn to its example and submit to Christ.

"Stand Firm in...Liberty"

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