

Follow the Lamb: Primary Christian Responsibilities

Bethany Assembly of God

9.29.2024

Central Proposition: You can seek the welfare of the nation through righteousness.

Introduction

Two weeks ago in the opening message of our current series, *Follow the Lamb*, we learned that we are citizens of heaven and exiles in this world. As exiles, we could be tempted to think that what we do here doesn't matter. Perhaps we should just stay out of civic life and politics because we will be leaving soon anyway. But Jeremiah told the exiles of Babylon that they were to set up their lives, raise families, seek the welfare of the city where they were exiled, and pray for it. See Jeremiah 29:4-7. Let's take a look at what the Bible instructs us to do to seek the welfare of our nation through righteousness.

1. We must pray for our leaders. See 1 Timothy 2:1-4.

If you are an action oriented kind of person who is really tuned-in to what is happening politically in our nation, you may think that this is a cop out, but it is not. We should be no more surprised that God would act through our prayers than that He acts through our work, ministry at church, encouraging words, generosity, or any other action we do on behalf of God's Kingdom. Prayer is an activity God has chosen to bring about His will through His people. The basic reason Paul instructs us to pray for leaders is because God wants all people to be saved. So we can pray for their salvation and that they might be used to create and maintain an environment conducive to the spread of the Gospel and the salvation of many.

2. We must submit to authorities. See Romans 13:1-7; Luke 20:25; Romans 12:19.

Seeking the welfare of the nation through righteousness also means submitting to the authorities established in the places we live. There are at least three ways that we are to submit to authority. First is that we should pay our taxes. Another way that we are to submit to governmental authority is with respect and the reason for this is that all authority comes from God. Respecting these offices means giving them appropriate honor and obeying laws so long as they don't compel you to disobey God. We give to Caesar what is Caesar's, but if Caesar, that is, governmental authorities, demand what belongs to God, we do not give it. But where Caesar does not step on what is God's, we should submit and so, honor the Lord.

3. We must vote Christian values.

There are many things that we value as believers and most of those won't be represented by any one candidate. Neither will we ever have a perfect candidate who aligns with everything that we believe, but we should vote for laws and people who will benefit our society and bring about righteousness as much as possible and we have to prioritize our values. I only have time for two this morning, but they are two that I think should be at the top of our list of voting priorities as Christians: The Sanctity of Human Life and The LGBTQ Agenda and the Sexualization of Children.

Conclusion

There are other values that I would like to discuss when it comes to voting. I tried to include *Religious Freedom* but ran out of room. I want to encourage you to listen to the Leftovers Podcast this week because we will be discussing that value and this sermon further as there is much more to be said. Some Christians would like to keep religion and politics separate, but if we're going to seek the welfare of the nation in which God has placed us, we can't.