

Chapter 3

Passage: Titus 3:1

Title: Be Subject to the Governing Authorities

Summary: In our passage today the Apostle Paul is instructing Pastor Titus in what we know as the pastoral epistles, to remind the church they were to obey the governing authorities, which at that time was the oppressive Roman Empire. This direction would have been a hotly debated topic among the church believers, no doubt controversial and divisive, but still yet a very clear inspired command of the Lord to His Church. Of course, the question always arises, is civil disobedience allowed, if so, when? Join us as we study through these things.

(Titus 3:1 NKJV) Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work,

Well I have been in pastoral ministry well over 20 years now, but never more in the last two years has the topic, and debate, about submitting to the governing authorities been ever such a hot topic. This pandemic has shown both good and bad regarding the intent of Government to protect the people, and the flipside of that, of the Government being overarching and overbearing. What a Believer to do? The Scriptures tell us.

Outline: Be Subject to the Governing Authorities

1. Why are there Governing Authorities?
2. Why are Believers to Submit to Governing Authorities?
3. Is Disobedience to Governing Authorities Acceptable for a Believer?

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

(Titus 3:1 NKJV) Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work,

Why are there Governing Authorities?

Simply put because God instituted government

God established 3 institutions on earth, with government being one of them:

- The Home (Genesis 2 – marriage and be fruitful and multiply)
- The Government (Genesis 9 – establishment of Capital punishment)
- The Church (Matthew 18 – on this rock I will build my church)

Genesis 2:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Genesis 9:1 (NKJV) ¹ So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.

Genesis 9:6 (NKJV) ⁶ "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.

Matthew 16:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Why are Believers to Submit to Governing Authorities?

The command to obey, be subject (submissive), is clearly declared in the scriptures.

Titus 3:1 (NKJV) ¹ Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work,

Romans 13:1–7 (NKJV) ¹ Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. ³ For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. ⁴ For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. ⁵ Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. ⁶ For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. ⁷ Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

1 Peter 2:13–17 (NKJV) ¹³ Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, ¹⁴ or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. ¹⁵ For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—¹⁶ as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. ¹⁷ Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

There is an obeying of the governing authorities, a submitting for the Christian witness. Part of our witness is to obey the Laws of the Land. We are to pay our taxes, pay for cable, not trash the roadside, etc, and to obey the speed limits, the State Troopers have a joke about Christians, they call them the flying fish because of the fish symbol on the rear of the car.

As we see in Romans 13, we reject God's authority when we reject man's authority, for God has established them (allowed them) to be the governing authorities. In Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2, we see the context of the governing authority is clearly the law that judges evil doers, brings punishment upon evil doers.

- Law enforcement against evil (murders, rapist, thieves, child abusers, and the likes). Hence why the people are to pay taxes, so to support these institutions that protect the people of a nation.
- Building Laws and Codes, and building inspectors are to keep people safe from shady contractors who cut corners to make more profit and threaten the lives of those people who live in those buildings, once again why taxes are paid to fund those institutions.
- Banking laws, stock market laws, business laws, to protect the citizens from evil doers looking to take advantage of people and robbing them of their money. Again, why we pay taxes
- Highways and infrastructure, laws to develop them, and maintain them. And, laws on who can and can't use them, what vehicles can and can't be driven on them, age limits and licenses, and of course speed limits. Again, why we pay taxes.
- And of course, healthcare laws, medical laws, licensing boards, who can and can't be a provider of medical care, all laws to protect people from physical harm and injury. Again, why we pay taxes.

It takes a government to establish all these institutions and evil the oppressive Roman Empire, with its heavy taxation, provided these things it's citizens, which even the overly taxed, were beneficiary of these things.

Governing authorities over these things are beneficial to every citizen, believer or not. Laws are good for societies.

Where in the scriptures do we see the examples of believers submitting themselves to the governing authorities:

- We see Jesus did regarding paying taxes to Caesar (Luke 20). If you play that all the way out, Jesus would have paid taxes when He was a carpenter.
- We see Paul did by saying I appeal to Caesar (Acts 25)

***Luke 20:21–25 (NKJV)** ²¹ Then they asked Him, saying, “Teacher, we know that You say and teach rightly, and You do not show personal favoritism, but teach the way of God in truth: ²² Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” ²³ But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, “Why do you test Me? ²⁴ Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?” They answered and said, “Caesar’s.” ²⁵ And He said to them, “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”*

***Acts 25:10–12 (NKJV)** ¹⁰ So Paul said, “I stand at Caesar’s judgment seat, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know. ¹¹ For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar.” ¹² Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, “You have appealed to Caesar? To Caesar you shall go!”*

How about unrighteous nations? Time prevents me from addressing every nation in our world, but let me address America, as we have learned from Israel. Sometimes God gives the Nation what they asked. Israel time and time again we find them in the scriptures doing well and serving God, and then into captivity, bondage, and/or oppression for not serving the Lord. The Book of Judges is a continual cycle. Throughout the book, we will see a cycle that is repeated seven times, a cycle very similar to the one in which we so often find ourselves:

- First, we see the people of Israel serving God.
- Next, we see them surrendering to sin.
- Then they are enslaved by sin.
- Fourthly, they are sorry about their sin.
- And finally, they are saved from their sin.

Sometimes, God gives the people/nation what they ask for, and there is a consequence to pay. Speaking of a great submission to governing authorities, God for years, and prophet after prophet told Israel to repent and return from their sin, but they disregarded and lived as they would.

Jeremiah the prophet said repent, or judgement is coming. Then he said, judgement is coming, Babylon is coming and don't try to resist them, but submit to them, for this is what you voted for.

***Jeremiah 38:18–22 (NKJV)** ¹⁸ But if you do not surrender to the king of Babylon's princes, then this city shall be given into the hand of the Chaldeans; they shall burn it with fire, and you shall not escape from their hand. ¹⁹ And Zedekiah the king said to Jeremiah, “I am afraid of the Jews who have defected to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they abuse me.” ²⁰ But Jeremiah said, “They shall not deliver you. Please, obey the voice of the LORD which I speak to you. So it shall be well with you, and your soul shall live. ²¹ But if you refuse to surrender, this is the word that the LORD has shown me: ²² ‘Now behold, all the women who are left in the king of Judah’s house shall be surrendered to the king of Babylon’s princes, and those women shall say: “Your close friends have set upon you And prevailed against you; Your feet have sunk in the mire, And they have turned away again.”’*

We see at the time of this writing of Titus, Israel had rejected the Messiah, they would not let this man rule over us, and so the consequences, Rome ruled..... with an iron fist.

***Luke 19:14 (NKJV)** ¹⁴ But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us.’*

***John 19:14–16 (NKJV)** ¹⁴ Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” ¹⁵ But they cried out, “Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar!” ¹⁶ Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led Him away.*

Sometimes the oppression and unbearableness is because the Nation, gets what it voted for. I believe America is very much in that place, we live as we are because the people have voted.

How does that apply to the believers who didn't vote the way the Country went? I will address that shortly

We are called to pray for our leaders, and the church corporately should be doing that. We as a church and we in this great nation, we don't only get to pray, we get to vote. We get to vote them out of office through prayer, and after prayer we get to go cast a ballot to confirm it.

***1 Timothy 2:1–3 (NKJV)** ¹ Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, ² for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. ³ For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,*

Is Disobedience to Governing Authorities Acceptable for a Believer?

Now back to the individual Christian, is there a place to disobey the governing authorities?

Yes, clearly, and the Bible shows when it is a must to do so. Peter and John healed a lame man at the temple during the hour of prayer, all the people ran to them to see what just happened, and Peter preaches a word in power, and 5,000 get saved, but the religious leaders are filled with religion, care less lives are being changed, and throw them in prison (which by the way shows that there was Roman laws and Jewish laws that were permitted under the Roman law which was supreme in the land). The religious leaders concur that there was a miracle, but again they chose religion (man's self-righteous ways of coming before God), rather than God's way, through the cross, and thus threaten Peter and John to preach no more, to which we know their answer:

Acts 4:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. ²⁰ For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

Acts 4:13–22 (NKJV) ¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. ¹⁵ But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, ¹⁶ saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name." ¹⁸ So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. ²⁰ For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." ²¹ So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since they all glorified God for what had been done. ²² For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.

We see a repeat of this scenario in Acts 5, as the apostles did signs and wonders and many people were saved, and so the religious leaders rise against the apostles, back to prison they go, God supernaturally opens the prisons doors and sends them back to the temple to preach, and the religious leaders say hey we told you not to preach anymore, to which Peter gives the classic word of power we know:

Acts 5:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men."

Acts 5:27–29 (NKJV) ²⁷ And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, ²⁸ saying, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!" ²⁹ But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men."

Believers are not to submit to the governing authorities if the authorities law defies the Law of God.

The extremist patriot says that a person should always follow and obey his country, no matter what the command. As shown, this view also does not have biblical support. Moreover, it is not supported in the history of nations. For example, during the Nuremberg trials, the attorneys for the Nazi war criminals attempted to use the defense that their clients were only following the direct orders of the government and therefore could not be held responsible for their actions. However, one of the judges dismissed their argument with the simple question: "But gentlemen, is there not a law above our laws?"

Jesus defied the governing authorities when He would not hail Caesar as Lord:

John 18:37 (NKJV) ³⁷ Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

There is a future day, that a man called the Anti-christ, who will be the world leader of the world government, will require all men and woman to take a mark of allegiance to him, or not buy and sell and thus not eat. Then ultimately, he will kill them. Should a Christian take the mark of the Beast because the government dictates, they should, absolutely not!

Revelation 13:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, ¹⁷ and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the

beast, or the number of his name. ¹⁸ Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.

Revelation 13:7–8 (NKJV) ⁷ It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. ⁸ All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Here is Where Church Today Misses It

But here is where the church is missing it today, as the believers argue and divide over mask mandates, vaccine mandates, no church meeting, or limited capacity – as everyone feels they have a strong position that is justified by the scriptures.

And the church is divided, neutralized because of its division within itself.

The church is called, as we have studied, the pillar and ground of truth. The church is to be the pillar that the whole community looks up to and sees what truth is, what God looks like. The Church is to be the pillar and ground of truth for the Country... not the country or the government!

1 Timothy 3:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; ¹⁵ but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Here is the problem, the government is not to be shaping the Church, the Church is to be shaping the government – we are the Pillar and Ground of Truth to the whole world! A divided body is called cancer; cancer attacks itself from the inside out and destroys itself. A Pillar is solid, and the concrete is mixed together for strength; a foundation is solid and immovable.

And here is where the church ultimately misses it, they miss the power they have to shape the government, and not the government shape the church.

Back to Acts 4, after Peter and John released, they come back to believers and it turns into a spontaneous praise and prayer session, and God confirms their actions by a prophetic word (Psalm 2), and then by a sign as the whole building was shaken, and then an outpouring of the Holy Spirit (a subsequent baptism of the Holy Spirit), and it says after they were filled with the Holy Spirit, they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4:23–31 (NKJV) ²³ And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. ²⁴ So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, ²⁵ who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: 'Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? ²⁶ The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the LORD and against His Christ.' ²⁷ "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together ²⁸ to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. ²⁹ Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, ³⁰ by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." ³¹ And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

The church did not go into civil disobedience regarding obeying the things of God over the things of man, until a prayer meeting, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Christians should not be submitting to the governing authorities, just because they say to; and nor should Christians go into civil disobedience just because they think so..... civil disobedience or obedience should only come through prayer and fasting, and a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit.

Do you realize it was only... took 120 people in the upper room, just 120 in corporate prayer and it turned the world upside down. And I like to see the Lord do it again right here through us. But note clearly, a people who were in one accord

Acts 2:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Jesus speaking of the pillar and ground for truth, the church should be a House of Prayer, for that is where He hears and that is where He speaks.

Matthew 21:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. ¹³ And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.' "

Jesus said, kinds like these do not come out without much fasting and prayer, and so the continual calling for fasting and prayer to fight. Fight for what? The souls of our Countryman

Matthew 17:14–21 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, ¹⁵ "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. ¹⁶ So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him." ¹⁷ Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me." ¹⁸ And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. ¹⁹ Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" ²⁰ So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. ²¹ However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

Fasting loosens us from the world, from our flesh being in charge. As I like to say, I am going "too" fast, I need to slow down, therefore I am going "to" fast. Fasting slows me down, fasting breaks me away from my routine, and when we fast, we "attach" ourselves to the Lord in a special way. There is power in fasting in that every time your stomach growls you are reminded why you are praying (joke yes but true), fasting puts the flesh in subjection to the Spirit, as the Spirit says "no" I am in control not you, and to me one of the most powerful aspects is as you fast for extended times, you find an amazing clearing and clarity of your mind. Fasting, breaks through surface and superficial prayer, and connects us to heart-to-heart prayer, as we weed through why are we praying for this, is my heart serious about this prayer..... am I desperate for this thing I pray for.

The Church has missed its power because it has lost its power, because it is a divided church, that misses the power afforded it.

We do the monthly prophecy update to keep us awake, to stay alert, so we don't fall asleep of what is happening around us. But most of the world is asleep, and sadly much of the church is sleeping or slumbering, being lulled to sleep. Slowly, bit by bit Americans, very much the church, are losing their liberty, and government (inspired by Satan) is pushing a godless agenda. How are we to respond

I look north up our Canadian neighbors and I find it ever so interesting how Satan has worked there. Just this past month they have launched one of the most aggressive homosexual agendas in the world, and the threat is if pastor, churches, anybody for that matter tries to convince a person otherwise (as in accordance with God's Word) they can end up in jail. How fascinating, that for two years they have had some of the strictest covid measures in all the world, they still have capacity limits for worship gathering. They are divided over all the mandates like we America church are. But if you follow it, Satan divided the church in Canada, kept them apart from each other, and divided them to fight among themselves, and then Satan moved to pass this law. We need to see church, and we need to respond accordingly, through prayer and fasting..... in one accord.

We are called to pray for our leaders, and the church corporately should be doing that. We as a church and we in this great nation, we don't only get to pray, we get to vote. We get to vote them out of office through prayer, and after prayer we get to go cast a ballot to confirm it.

1 Timothy 2:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, ² for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. ³ For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

Sometimes the oppression and unbearableness is because the Nation, gets what it voted for. I believe America is very much in that place, we live as we are because the people have voted. I saw lets do something about that..... together in one accord!

America

How about what happened on January 6, 2021, how does that align with the Word? It doesn't, and it doesn't align with American history either. There was insurrection before the one we saw on January 6th, 2021. It happened back in 1776 when the colonist rebelled against England. The difference between the two then and now, did you know before our forefathers declared a unanimous independence from England, they did not do it without first a proclamation and a day of fasting and prayer. But that's not what we see in America today. We see men moving in the flesh and evil motives for evil gain. What a difference we saw from our forefathers. If anyone questions whether they led civil disobedience, we see that they were led by more than flesh and carnal desires.

Many are unaware that the Declaration of Independence was not even to be considered until a day of fasting and prayer had been observed. Appointed by the Continental Congress, it was kept by all the colonies on May 17, 1776. When the nation was finally born on July 4th, 1776, our forefathers rang the Liberty Bell with great enthusiasm, and a legend says that it cracked as they zealously proclaimed their freedom. Years later the White Chapel Foundry of London offered to recast the huge carillon, but their proposal was of course refused. Apparently, the symbolic value of the damaged bell, which recalls the religious and patriotic fervor of those early days, is something that America still wishes to preserve.

America is the greatest nation in the world, but for how much longer. America is great because America was founded on "The Pillar and Ground of Truth"

George Washington, our Nation's first President wrote:

- *It is impossible to rightly govern a nation without God and the Bible.*

John Adams, our Nation's second President wrote:

- *"We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."*

Patrick Henry – our founding father and signer of the declaration of Independence, the man who fired up a nation with those words: Give me Liberty or Give me Death! Also said:

- I wish I could leave you my most cherished possession, my faith in Jesus Christ. For with him you have everything; without him you have nothing.
- It cannot be emphasized too strongly not too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

National Day of Prayer

By the President of the United States of America.

A Proclamation.

Whereas, the Senate of the United States, devoutly recognizing the Supreme Authority and just Government of Almighty God, in all the affairs of men and of nations, has, by a resolution, requested the President to designate and set apart a day for National prayer and humiliation.

And whereas it is the duty of nations as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions, in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord.

And, insomuch as we know that, by His divine law, nations like individuals are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war, which now desolates the land, may be but a punishment, inflicted upon us, for our

presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole People? We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!

It behooves us then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

Now, therefore, in compliance with the request, and fully concurring in the views of the Senate, I do, by this my proclamation, designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th. day of April, 1863, as a day of national humiliation, fasting and prayer. And I do hereby request all the People to abstain, on that day, from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite, at their several places of public worship and their respective homes, in keeping the day holy to the Lord, and devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion.

All this being done, in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the Divine teachings, that the united cry of the Nation will be heard on high, and answered with blessings, no less than the pardon of our national sins, and the restoration of our now divided and suffering Country, to its former happy condition of unity and peace.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this thirtieth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty seventh.

*By the President: Abraham Lincoln
William H. Seward, Secretary of State.*

Conclusion

America is the greatest nation in the world, but for how much longer. America is great because America was founded on "The Pillar and Ground of Truth"

We must not forget our Christian Heritage, and must live up to our heritage, let's be a people, a church, that prays in one accord, and then does what the Spirit tells us to do, with the power and boldness to do it.

Acts 2:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

May the Church shape the government, not the government shape the church!

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?

Calvary Chapel Anne Arundel
Pastor Ray Bollas

- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do His mighty work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.