

Introduction: (Video Intro)

1. So you want to be in ministry

(1) No longer can I avoid this subject & be a good pastor.

(2) God & Caesar

1. Img # 1

Matthew 22:21 - They said, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

2. Img # 2

2. The Goals of this sermon:

(1) **Dismantle** our present, political ideologies and expose the inherent flaws brought about by ulterior agendas grounded in human idolatry.

(2) **Discover** an alternative praxis for Christian political participation within & apart from the existing political, American framework.

(3) **Disclose** the Biblical paradigm that our good and right desires for a fair and just society are only realized in the Gospel and only actualized in Eternity.

3. The City of God

(1) Background

1. AD 410 pivotal in western society
2. Rome was captured ≠ eternal city

(2) Two communities at each other's throats

Augustine of Hippo, City of God - "For certainly your desire for peace, and prosperity, and plenty is not prompted by any purpose of using these blessings honestly, that is to say, with moderation, sobriety, temperance, and piety; for your purpose rather is to run riot in an endless variety of sordid pleasures, and thus to generate from your prosperity a moral pestilence which will prove a thousand-fold more disastrous than the fiercest enemies. It was such a calamity as this that Scipio, your chief pontiff, your best man in the judgment of the whole senate, feared when he refused to agree to the destruction of Carthage, Rome's rival; and opposed Cato, who advised its destruction. He feared security, that enemy of weak minds, and he perceived that a wholesome fear would be a fit guardian for the citizens. And he was not mistaken: the event proved how wisely he had spoken. For when Carthage was destroyed, and the Roman republic delivered from its great cause of anxiety, a crowd of disastrous evils forthwith resulted from the prosperous condition of things. First concord was weakened, and destroyed by fierce and bloody seditions; then followed, by a concatenation of baleful causes, civil wars, which brought in their train such massacres, such bloodshed, such lawless and cruel proscription and plunder, that those Romans who, in the days of their virtue, had expected injury only at the hands of their enemies, now that their virtue was lost, suffered greater cruelties at the hands of their fellow-citizens. The lust of rule, which with other vices existed among the Romans in more unmitigated intensity than among any other people, after it had taken possession of the more powerful few, subdued under its yoke the rest, worn and wearied."

(3) Political victory requires us to embody what we hate about our political enemies & to lay our Christianity aside

4. The Nations Rage (Ps. 2:1)

- (1) A good question that only the Bible can answer
- (2) How can Bible empathize w/ our political climate?

5. The Politics of Palestine (Josephus; How to build a better Israel)

(1) Pharisees (image 3)

1. Separate
2. Resisters

(2) Essenes

The Essenes were a Jewish mystical sect somewhat resembling the Pharisees. They lived lives of ritual purity and separation. They originated about 100 B.C., and disappeared from history after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The Essenes are not directly mentioned in Scripture, although some believe they may be referred to in [Colossians 2:8, 18, and 23](#).

1. Separate
2. Abstainers

(3) Sadducees

1. Engaged
2. Collaborators

(4) Zealots

1. Engaged
2. Aggressors

You see! The issue of political division & disparity has always & will always exist in polarizing terms. So long as sin exists.

I. Dismantle Ideologies (v2-3)

1. Politics As Ideology

(1) Your politics have a backdrop \neq truth

(2) **Ideology** (Anthology): a system of ideas learned through experiences or cultural authorities

(3) Because ideologies produce gods

One of the top legal philosophers of the latter half of the twentieth century, Ronald Dworkin, made just this point. "Religion," Dworkin said, "is a deep, distinct, and comprehensive worldview" and "a belief in a [supernatural] god is only one manifestation or consequence of that deeper worldview." Religion is whatever gives a person's universe purpose and order. So Dworkin described himself as a religious atheist. Non-Christian novelist David Foster Wallace wrote, "In the day-to-day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism. There is no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship."

2. Ideologies tend To Be Hijacked

(1) **Black Lives Matter** (img #4)

1. A good \neq true ideology

2. **Co-Founder**:

"...we are trained marxists...we actually do have an ideological frame...we are super versed in ideological theories...our goal is to get Trump out."

3. **BlackLivesMatter.com**

"We make space for transgender brothers and sisters to participate and lead. We...do the work required to dismantle cisgender [God-given biological sex] privilege and uplift Black trans folk, especially Black trans women...We build a space that...is free from sexism, misogyny, and environments in which men are centered...We dismantle the patriarchal practice that requires mothers to work "double shifts" so that they can mother in private even as they participate in public justice work. We disrupt the Western-prescribed nuclear family structure...We foster a queer-affirming network. When we gather, we do so with the intention of freeing ourselves from the tight grip of heteronormative [male/female] thinking, or rather, the belief that all in the world are heterosexual (unless s/he or they disclose otherwise)."

BLM + _____

4. You can't get disparage someone for their unwillingness to say BLM, when

the ideology has been hijacked by those purporting an ideological agenda that includes things having nothing to do w/ BLM

5. A church becomes more Republican / Democrat than Christian

6. I'm not against what's on the door, just what's on the website.

(2) Make America Great, Again (img #5)

1. A good & true ideology

2. "The Crusader" (img #6)

3. Idaho Bathroom (MAGA)

4. Hijacked over & over by those who mean "their" America ... not one that is fair and equitable for all.

5. This is why I also don't use MAGA

6. I believe we need to be working towards making America great as an ideology ... but I'm no longer comfortable w/ how often that ideology is hijacked

3. Ideologies Tend To Be Polarizing

1. Royal Rumble
2. There's a reason 12 years of no politics
3. Racist or Marxist?

How about gracist?

Is that a word?

4. Ideologies Tend To Be Self-Serving

- (1) Because ideologies don't require self-denial or personal growth (they can but not require)
- (2) Ideologies don't require convictional living
- (3) which leads us to our 2nd Goal...

II. Discover Another Praxis (34-6, 10)

1. Politics As Theology

(1) When oldest daughter moved out, she had two addresses: one legal, one functional

(2) A Christian has dual citizenship:

Philippians 3:20 - But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ...

Colossians 1:2 - To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

(3) This is not heaven

(3) you're going to have to decide which is your primary residence

1. Is your primary residence your community of race?

2. Your political party?

(5) And then decide what Heaven looks like if you choose here

1. You want be happy until it is.

(5) The better option to see yourself in Christ at America

2. A Living Ballot

You who call for immigration reform, do you practice hospitality with visitors to your church who are ethnically or nationally different from you?

You who vote for family values, do you honor your parents and love your spouse self-sacrificially?

You who speak against abortion, do you also embrace and serve the kids here in our church? Do you prioritize your own children over financial comfort?

You who talk about welfare reform, do you give to the needy in your congregation?

You who proclaim that all lives matter, do all your friends look like you?

You who lament structural injustices, do you work against them in your own life? Do you rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep?

You who fight for traditional marriage, do you love your wife, cherishing her as you would your own body and washing her with the water of the Word?

You who are concerned about the economy and the job market, do you obey your boss with a sincere heart, not as a people-pleaser but as you would obey Christ?

You who care about corporate tax rates, do you treat your employees fairly? Do you threaten them, forgetting that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven and that there is no partiality with him?

Finally, as you share your opinions about all these issues on social media, do you gladly share the Lord's Supper with the church member who disagrees? Do you pray for the spiritual good of those you want to see lose power?

3. Vote inside Out

(1) Set the King on your political wills

1. IF God dignifies life...
2. IF God loves the stranger and alien...
3. IF God sees marriage as holy
4. IF God makes no distinctions of race

III. Disclose Biblical Paradigm (v 7-8, 11-12)

1. The better leader (v 7-8)

(1) A leader who will hold Kingdoms & nations accountable

Zephaniah 3:8 - "Therefore wait for me," declares the LORD, "for the day when I rise up to seize the prey. For my decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out upon them my indignation, all my burning anger; for in the fire of my jealousy all the earth shall be consumed.

(2) We are looking for a leader who will actually represent our best interests

1 John 2:1 - My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

2. The better government (11-12)

(1) A peaceful government!

Isaiah 9:6-7 - For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

(2) A just government!

Augustine of Hippo, City of God - "But the families which do not live by faith seek their peace in the earthly advantages of this life; while the families which live by faith look for those eternal blessings which are promised, and use as pilgrims such advantages of time and of earth as do not fascinate and divert them from God, but rather aid them to endure with greater ease, and to keep down the number of those burdens of the corruptible body which weigh upon the soul. Thus the things necessary for this mortal life are used by both kinds of men and families alike, but each has its own peculiar and widely different aim in using them. The earthly city, which does not live by faith, seeks an earthly peace, and the end it proposes, in the well-ordered concord of civic obedience and rule, is the combination of men's wills to attain the things which are helpful to this life. The heavenly city, or rather the part of it which sojourns on earth and lives by faith, makes use of this peace only because it must, until this mortal condition which necessitates it shall pass away. Consequently, so long as it lives like a captive and a stranger in the earthly city, though it has already received the promise of redemption, and the gift of the Spirit as the earnest of it, it makes no scruple to obey the laws of the earthly city, whereby the things necessary for the maintenance of this mortal life are administered; and thus, as this life is common to both cities, so there is a harmony between them in regard to what belongs to it."

Conclusion

1. The Church Embassy

(1) The City of the World

1. Mirrored in the State - man's attempt to make heaven on earth

(2) The City of Heaven

1. Mirrored in the Church - God's embassy established to reflect Heaven on earth.

2. Med/Law School

Augustine of Hippo, City of God - "While this Heavenly City, therefore, is on pilgrimage in this world, she calls out citizens from all nations and so collects a society of aliens, speaking all languages. She takes no account of any difference in customs, laws, and institutions, by which earthly peace is achieved and preserved - not that she annuls or abolishes any of those, rather, she maintains them and follows them (for whatever divergences there are among the diverse nations, those institutions have one single aim - earthly peace), provided that no hindrance is presented thereby to the religion which teaches that the one supreme and true God is to be worshipped."

2. God is always in control

Isaiah 2:4 - He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Isaiah 60:18 - Violence shall no more be heard in your land, devastation or destruction within your borders; you shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise.

Psalm 46