

Patriotism, Protest, and Proclamation

Thoughts on July 3, 2022

INTRO ...a Complicated Day

“Over the past five years pastors have become less likely to prioritize pro-America displays. ...Younger pastors, those 18-44, are the most likely to say the worship service doesn’t need patriotic additions (65%). **Aaron Earls**, “Fewer Churches Put Patriotism on Display for July 4”, *Christianity Today*, July 1, 2022

“One nation, under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.”

...Whatever America set out to be on July 4, 1776 ...It is and has been having a hard time pulling it off.

As Bible Informed Christians ...are You Surprised?

- **Gen 3 pronounces the presence of hostile forces invading the Human Arena**
 - A powerful Spiritual Foe has entered the Garden
 - A corrupting inner force called “sin” has entered into the human heart— as **Gen 4** would warn the world’s first Murderer, ***“Cain, sin is crouching at the door and its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.”***— 1 verse later, Cain kills his brother!

Here’s a spiritual fact of life—You can be told what is right and what you “should do”, but that doesn’t mean you can or will do what’s right!

- **Gen 6 tells the story of wide-spread evil**

Gen 6:5 “The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

- **Gen 11 tells the story of human cooperative efforts (the Tower of Babel)**

We are not surprised as Bible informed Christians—because we have been taught :

- The doctrine of DEPRAVITY
- The Doctrine of the LAST DAYS (“...*in the last days men will be lovers of self ...proud, arrogant, abusive, UNHOLY—2Tim 3*”)
- The DAY of FIRE & JUDGMENT upon this age that will bring an end to the corrupted Heaven and Earth and usher in a New Heaven and a New Earth— “where righteousness reigns”

America the Beautiful ! ?

- *Every civilization tells its story of power use and abuse ...*
- *Under the influence of the witness of the Scriptures—the founding fathers created a governmental system that sought to bring limits and boundaries to the corrupt presence of sin and the operation of evil in the human heart.*

*...Hate the government all you want, but **the American governmental system is pretty ingenious!***

*...**BUT, I am Biblically Informed MORE than CIVICS Class informed ...when you empower fallen, sin filled people to vote—you will often end up with fallen, sin filled outcomes!***

July 4 ...presents a unique opportunity for God's chosen PRIESTS to intercede on behalf of this nation.

...Sin + Satan ...Conflict & Corruption are rapidly at work in our day and at unprecedented levels.

"If someone says to me — which I thought they might, so I say it — “Aren’t you thankful, John, because lives are going to be saved? You seem distressed. ‘It’s the right thing.’ Aren’t you thankful that lives are going to be saved?” My answer is that I hope they are, and I will be thankful if they are. But there are too many variables at play here for me to know what is really going to happen in America as far as the loss of life goes.

For all I know, we may be entering an era of such visceral rage, and coldness of love, and multiplication of wickedness — both on the right and on the left — that a civil war right here in America could take hundreds of thousands of lives. It happened just 160 years ago. The issue of killing millions of children is as explosive as the horrors of slavery." **John Piper**, "Roe v Wade Has Ended, Our Fight for Pro-Life has Not", Ask Pastor John, June 30, 2022

The People of God in Exile... on July 4, 2022

... “My Kingdom is Not of This World” ...the job of your "Shepherds" and all those who partner with us to care for this flock--is to Get you to the New Heaven and the New Earth!

- The people of God were Exiles in Egypt, exiles in Babylon ...and Peter informs the 1st Century Christians in the Roman Empire that they too are Exiles.
- Exiles are mandated to “Seek the Good of the city” in which you dwell.

Jer 29:1, 4-7 These are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the surviving elders of the exiles, and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. ...⁴ “Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵ Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce.

⁶ Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. ⁷ But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

... We are Exiles on Earth (in America) ...we are to Seek the Good of This City! (***Overturing Roe v Wade is a Good Thing***)

...But More Than ANY Other "Good"—We Know of Ultimate Good!!

2 Peter 3:7-13 "...the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

¹¹ Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! ¹³ But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Let us be informed by the Scriptures about the Topic of “Government”—to help us live out our moment as Exiles who are Americans in the 21st Century.

And finally — and this may be the most important thing, Tony — we did not turn the church into a political or social think tank or action group for the sake of any earthly cause, including the cause of pro-life. For the sake of preserving the power and effectiveness of our prophetic witness, we did not make the pro-life cause the main thing. The main thing is the glory of God — and under the glory of God, the salvation of sinners from the wrath of God through the glorious substitutionary work of Jesus Christ dying for sinners on the cross. The glory of God — shining through the salvation of sinners by the blood of Jesus — is the main thing. **John Piper**, "Roe v Wade Has Ended, Our Fight for Pro-Life has Not"