

June 29, 2014

TIME OF REFLECTION

“No one living in an established democracy should be complacent about its survival...[T]he power of the democratic ideal remains immense...Even as we raise questions about how soon everyone will get there, we should have no doubt as to what kind of society lies at the end of History.”

~Francis Fukuyama, American political scientist and author of
The End of History and the Last Man

“His kingdom is an eternal kingdom.”

~Daniel 4:3

“The only real power comes out of a long rifle.”

~Joseph Stalin, leader of the Soviet Union 1924-1953

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.”

~Acts 1:8

“Society in every state is a blessing, but Government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil.”

~Thomas Paine (1737-1809), *Common Sense*,
English-American philosopher and political activist

“The authorities are God’s servants.”

~Romans 13:6

“What identifies an individual as a king is how other people behave towards him. All authority is assumed, and if other people don’t accept your authority then you don’t have it. Perhaps the critical thing to being a convincing figure of authority is actually not to try too hard.”

~Patrick Stewart, British actor

“There is no authority except that which God has established.”

~Romans 13:1

“Our faith, our nation, our safety and our future depend on decisions made by our government each and every single day. It *is* a matter of life and death. It *is* the end-all and be-all. It is the world’s last best hope.”

~ Justin Haskins, *Our Lousy, Lying, No Good, Government*,

“If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.”

~*I Corinthians 15:19*

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “Fear God. Honor the Emperor.” – *Lindsay Whaley*

SERMON PASSAGES – *Acts 5:17, 25-29; Romans 12:14-13:7 (ESV)*

Acts 5:17, 25-29 (ESV)

¹⁷ But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy ¹⁸ they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison.

²⁵ And someone came and told them, “Look! The men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people.” ²⁶ Then the captain with the officers went and brought them, but not by force, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people.

²⁷ And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying, “We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.

Romans 12:14-13:7 (ESV)

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. ¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” ²⁰ To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Chapter 13

¹ Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ³ For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴ for he is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God’s wrath on the wrongdoer. ⁵ Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God’s wrath but also for the sake of conscience. ⁶ For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. ⁷ Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

1 Peter 2:9-18 (ESV)

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

¹³ Be subject for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, ¹⁴ or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. ¹⁵ For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. ¹⁶ Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. ¹⁷ Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

¹⁸ Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust.